

TEAM-MATES IN THE POOL, BEST FRIENDS OUT OF IT

SINGAPORE – “Did she say the same about me?” Yip Pin Xiu squealed, when asked if Theresa Goh, 25, was her best friend.

With the feeling reciprocated, Yip, 20, smilingly slid back into her wheelchair and chomped on her breakfast, in the knowledge her buddy felt likewise.

Despite differences in personality and age, the two have been friends for eight years.

They spoke about their food adventures while devouring McDonald’s burgers after training, and enthusiastically regaled their “cafe-hopping” tales. “We see each other every day ... Probably more than I see

my classmates. And especially when we trained for the Beijing Olympics,” said Yip, who is studying at the Singapore Management University.

Goh described Yip as a “girly kind of girl” with unbelievably good grades in school, although the self-assured swimmer, who does not believe in idolising athletes, conceded she is inspired by Yip.

“She’s very driven. She’s somebody who can inspire a lot of other people,” said Goh.

The pair are Singapore’s top Paralympic swimmers, and will compete at the Aug 29 to Sept 9 London Paralympics.

Both will race in the 50m and 100m

freestyle, although Yip and Goh are in the S3 and S5 categories respectively. Although in different races, they insist no rivalry exists between them.

Together with three other partners, they plan to set up a swimming school, with “The Golden Chicken” among its proposed names.

It embodies their love for swimming and desire to give back to the community, with swim lessons for people of all ages and the disabled.

This project will see them together more often. “I see her a lot but I’m not bored of her!” said Yip.

Goh did not reply. But hidden behind that burger was a subtle smile of agreement. **ALYWIN CHEW**

● For the full version of this story, visit tdy.sg/poolfriends



Yip Pin Xiu (left) and Theresa Goh have been friends for eight years. PHOTO ALYWIN CHEW