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WILL COMPETE IN OLYMPICS WITH JOVINA CHOO

# THIRD TIME THE CHARM FOR NG

## Windsurfer turned sailor finds second wind, wins Rio spot, after switch to 470

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**SINGAPORE** – Four years ago, national windsurfer Amanda Ng's Olympic dream lay in tatters after she missed out on qualifying for London 2012. It was second time unlucky for the 22-year-old — who had taken a year off from her GCE 'A' Level exams to train and compete — who had also failed to make the cut for the Youth Olympic Games in 2010.

But a switch to the women's 470 proved a game-changer for Ng. At this month's 470 Open European Championship, Ng and 470 partner Jovina Choo edged out team-mates Priscilla Low and Lee Shu Xian, as well as Elsie Yukie Yokoyama and Joan Poh, to top the Singapore Sailing Federation's (SSF) selection trials for the Rio Olympics.

The news has yet to sink in for the duo, as Ng told TODAY: "We were leading the whole way and were in a comfy position until the pressure affected our performance and the gap started to close.

"In the last race, they (Low and Lee) finished in front of us and we were so disappointed because we thought we didn't make it. But our coach told us we made it and we didn't believe him!

"We were just so overjoyed as we couldn't believe it was possible."

Both sailors had only linked up in November last year after Low and Lee earned Singapore an Olympic berth in the women's 470 at the International Sailing Federation World Cup in Qingdao.

Choo, a gold medallist in the women's keelboat at the 2015 SEA Games, was hunting for a crew, while Ng needed a helm. The partnership was not smooth sailing from the start, as Choo said: "We have very different personalities and come from different sailing backgrounds. Amanda is chirpier while I'm more introverted.

"But there will be problems in all partnerships; it's about finding a way to work together. What's guiding us is that we want to qualify, and go to Rio."

Ng's experience as a windsurfer and sailor — she had previous-



ly sailed the optimist, and the 470 with Savannah Siew at the 2015 SEA Games — has also been a boon.

She explained: "In windsurfing you use your legs to steer and that really trains your feel of the boat. Sailing is more tactical and you have to use the wind to help you get back and I enjoy the challenge."

After spending four months travelling and competing overseas — the stint cost them an estimated S\$30,000 — the pair are in Singapore before heading back to Spain this month for a three-week training camp. They plan to spend another week home after that, before heading to Rio to acclimatise ahead of their

**Jovina Choo (left) and Amanda Ng say their partnership was not smooth sailing from the start, but they are guided by their shared focus on Rio success.**

PHOTO: SINGAPORE SAILING FEDERATION

Olympic debut in August. Team Singapore have qualified for six sailing events to date — the women's 470, 49er FX, nacrA 17, men's RS:X, laser standard, and laser radial.

Whatever the outcome in Rio, Ng has already set her mind on her next Olympic qualifying campaign, in Tokyo in 2020. However, she has yet to decide if she wants to continue sailing or return to windsurfing.

"My experience in 2012 was what made me dream of the Olympics," said Ng, a year 2 accountancy student at the Singapore Management University. "The Olympics is the pinnacle of every sport, I want make it to Tokyo and to do well."