



Yip Pin Xiu, who has three Paralympic golds and a silver, will be defending her 50m and 100m backstroke (S2) titles at the Tokyo Games.  
PHOTO: COURTESY OF SINGAPORE DISABILITY SPORTS COUNCIL

# PROGRESS FOR YIP A MUST EVEN AMID VIRUS

Para-swimmer is Sportswoman of the Year for a second time

Laura Chia

Three-gold Paralympic champion Yip Pin Xiu added a second Sportswoman of the Year trophy to her collection yesterday, picking up the accolade for the second time in three years.

This year's awards are a special 'Resilience' edition owing to the lack of local and international competitions amid the Covid-19 pandemic, and are supported by Haw Par Corporation via a \$120,000 donation to the Singapore Disability Sports Council.

Para-swimmer Yip, 29, was honoured for her determination. The former Nominated Member of Parliament was also recognised for her contributions to the community. She now serves on the World Para Swimming high support needs group, Singapore's National Youth Council and the Safe Sport Commission.

Yip's coach Mark Chay was awarded the Coach (high performance) of the Year (Resilience) prize. Para-cyclist Steve Tee, along with his pilot Ang Kee Meng, took

home the Sportsman of the Year (Resilience) gong.

Yip, who has muscular dystrophy, was happy and honoured to win a second sportswoman title, adding that she is excited and nervous ahead of her fourth Paralympics.

At the Aug 24-Sept 5 Tokyo Games, she will defend her 50m and 100m backstroke (S2) titles – she also holds the world record in both events.

Not having competed overseas in the past 1½ years is strange, she admitted. In place of international competitions, she has raced in local meets and timed trials.

She said: "Even though there were no competitions, progress was still necessary. I didn't have a single day off because sport waits for no one."

"As an athlete, I hold that responsibility to myself and my team that I give my 100 per cent at every session, so my mindset is always on."

While she has not set a medal target, she hopes to "come back with a timing I'm happy about".

Chay, 39, who has been coaching Yip for two years, added they have been working on the basics of a good race, such as starts and turns.

He said: "What I'll be looking out for is her approach to the races. She has to give herself a chance to take it out and be aggressive because... she is up there aerobically so she has to have faith in the training."

Sportsman winner Tee, who is visually impaired, was unable to attend the ceremony as he is training in Wales but said in a press statement that he was honoured to receive the award.

The 39-year-old began para-cycling in 2017 with former national cyclist Ang. In tandem para-cycling, a visually-impaired athlete, called the stoker, is paired with a sighted counterpart, or the pilot.

The duo, bronze medallists at the 2017 Asean Para Games, will make their Paralympics debut in the 32km time trial (road) and 4km individual pursuit (track) in Tokyo.

Tee said: "This journey has taught me the need to trust the process and to stay focused on what I can do to improve."

"The situation is mostly out of our hands but the onus is on my pilot and I to continue training hard and improving our craft."

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## HONOUR ROLL

### SPORTSMAN OF THE YEAR (RESILIENCE)

Steve Tee (cycling) and athlete competition partner (ACP)  
Ang Kee Meng

### SPORTSWOMAN OF THE YEAR (RESILIENCE)

Yip Pin Xiu (swimming)

### SPORTSBOY OF THE YEAR (RESILIENCE)

Aloysius Gan (boccia) and ACP Gan Keng Aik

### SPORTSGIRL OF THE YEAR (RESILIENCE)

Faye Lim (boccia) and ACP Lim Boon Ghee

### TEAM OF THE YEAR (RESILIENCE)

Women's goalball team (Norliana Mohamed Ajam, Inez Hung, Joan Hung, Christina Aw)

### COACH (HIGH PERFORMANCE) OF THE YEAR (RESILIENCE)

Mark Chay (swimming)

### COACH (DEVELOPMENTAL) OF THE YEAR (RESILIENCE)

Hansen Bay (goalball)

### COMMUNITY IMPACT (VOLUNTEERING) AWARD

Goh Nigel Mark Jian Huang (powerlifting)

### COMMUNITY IMPACT (EVENTS & INITIATIVES) AWARD

Goalball Singapore