

HOE YEAN SINKS WELSON'S RECORD

Malaysian also beats Vietnam's Sea Games champ at world meet

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MALAYSIA'S Khiew Hoe Yeap produced a record breaking swim at the World Aquatics Championships in Budapest, Hungary, yesterday.

The 20-year-old clocked a superb time of 3:48.72 in the men's 400m freestyle to send Welton Sim's national record of 3:49.29 (clocked at the 2019 New South Wales Open) to the bottom of the pool.

Yesterday, Hoe Yeap finished second in Heat 2 of the world meet behind South Korean Kim Woo Min who clocked 3:45.87.

Hoe Yeap's feat in Budapest has certainly cemented his status as Malaysia's No 1 swimmer as he now holds national records in the 400m and 800m freestyle and 200m backstroke.

However, Hoe Yeap was placed 15th overall out of 43 swimmers, and did not advance as there were no semi-finals. Only the top eight swimmers qualified

directly for the final.

Nonetheless, Hoe Yeap can hold his head high with his latest performance.

In fact the Kuala Lumpur swimmer was the best Southeast Asian finisher, and he fared even better than Vietnam's Sea Games champion Nguyen Huy Hoang.

Huy Hoang could only muster 3:54.05 for 26th spot yesterday. At the recent Hanoi Sea Games, he clocked a Vietnamese national record of 3:48.06 to beat Hoe Yeap, who posted 3:52.03, for the gold medal.

"I didn't think of breaking any records. I was only focusing on doing everything right to swim well," said Hoe Yeap.

"But it's definitely nice to break the national record though."

Hoe Yeap had swum in Budapest before, competing in the 2017 World Junior Championships in the Hungarian capital.

The teenager, who is set to swim for Malaysia in the Birmingham Commonwealth Games next month, will compete in the 200m freestyle today while Goh

Chia Tong will race in the women's 1,500m freestyle.

Meanwhile, Tokyo Olympian Phee Jing En, who was due to swim in the women's 100m breaststroke, has pulled out after testing positive for Covid-19.

