

Way to go, girl!

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Well done: Nur Dhabitah Sabri (left) bagged the women's 1m springboard individual silver at the Asian Diving Cup at the Macau Olympic Aquatic Centre yesterday. Cheong Jun Hoong snatched the bronze.

Nur Dhabitah misses gold to world champ by 1.25 points

By LIM TEIK HUAT

PETALING JAYA: Malaysia's Nur Dhabitah Sabri came close to pulling off a stunning opening-day win in women's 1m springboard individual at the Asian Diving Cup in Macau.

Still, the 17-year-old KL SEA Games bound-diver did well to bag silver with a five-dive total of 278.35 points in the final at the Macau Olympic Aquatic Centre yesterday.

China's Liu Huixia, a two-time world champion in 10m platform synchro, won gold with 279.60 points.

Rio Olympic silver medallist Cheong Jun Hoong produced a decent performance on her return from a back injury to snatch the bronze for Malaysia with 267.25 points.

China's Xu Zhihuan was fourth with 265.05 points.

This was Dhabitah's first attempt at the 1m springboard, which is not an Olympic event. Dhabitah was a finalist in the 10m platform individual at the Rio Olympics last year.

Jun Hoong has participated in the 1m springboard before, winning bronze in the 2010 Guangzhou Asian Games.

National coach Yang Zhuliang praised Nur Dhabitah for her effort and expressed delight at the progress made by Jun Hoong, who withdrew from the Diving World Series legs in Kazan, Russia, and Windsor, Canada, in April with a back injury.

"I'm very happy with Nur Dhabitah. She lost to Huixia by only 1.25 points.

"It shows that there is only a small gap between Malaysia and China in this discipline.

"I thought only one Malaysian would be on the podium today because China had two divers in

the event. It's always tough to beat divers from China.

"Jun Hoong performed quite well today. For her to finish in the top three is a commendable effort, considering she recently injured her back.

"Nur Dhabitah and Jun Hoong managed to deny Zhihuan a podium finish and that was a momentous effort," Zhuliang said in a phone interview from Macau.

The coach also added that Jun Hoong performed with a lower level of difficulty "as she only recovered from her injury recently".