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An uphill task for shuttler

By NG WEI LOON

LANKY junior shuttler Eng Pui Yee is hoping to earn a place and join the national junior training set-up at Bukit Jalil Sports School (BJSS) for the new academic season at the beginning of next year.

Although she has attended the one-week training session hosted by the national association (BAM) in October, the 12-year-old admitted it is going to be an uphill task to convince the selectors for a place against a competitive field of other hopefuls.

“It is my dream to join the national junior stable and bring my game to a higher level. But, I have not been accomplishing outstanding results in the singles. Usually, I will be eliminated in the quarter-finals in the match up against either the top seed or the second ranked player in the draw,” said Eng, who is ranked among the top six in her age-group in the country.



This year, Eng continued her partnership with 11-year-old M. Thinaah to dominate the girls' Under-12 doubles contest at several major local junior tournaments.

Besides emerging as champions at the Malaysian Schools Sports Council (MSSM) meet, the duo from Selangor also bagged the first and second leg of the National Junior Badminton Circuit before wrapping up the season on a good note winning at the National Junior Badminton Circuit grand prix finals.

“Based on our previous outing at the MSSM, we were confident of doing well this year. We were the runners-up last year and went one up better to capture the title,” said Eng.

For next year, the Selangor Badminton Association (SBA) trainee will be stepping up to feature in either the Under-14 or the Under-15 categories.

“It is going to be tough matching the more matured players in both categories,” she said.

Besides attending training sessions under the SBA programme three times a week, Eng is also complementing her routine on alternate days under former national men’s doubles back-up player Liew Gavin at the newly set-up Challenger Badminton Academy (CBA) in Taman Cuepacs, Cheras.

“The academy’s chief coach has been guiding me to polish up my skills. After training at the academy for more than a year, I have also improved on my speed,” said Eng, who only takes a break from training on Sunday.

Eng will be gauging her strength against her peers from other countries in her debut at the international junior meet in the girls’ Under-13 age-group of the Li-Ning Singapore Youth International scheduled at the republic from Dec 14 to 20.



FACT FILE

Name: Eng Pui Yee

Date of Birth: Jan 16 1997

Ht: 1.56m **Wt:** 39kg

School: SJK (C) Kampung Baru, Ampang (Year Six)

Hobby: Swimming

Ambition: Policewoman

Favourite Sports Personality: Lee Chong Wei (Malaysia)

Coach: Budiyanto (SBA), Liew Gavin (CBA)

Achievements:

2007

- MSSS girls' Under-12 singles quarter-finalist and doubles champion

2008

- MSSS girls' Under-12 singles third and doubles runner-up
- MSSM girls' Under-12 doubles runner-up

2009

- Selangor Closed girls' Under-12 doubles champion
- MSSS girls' Under-12 singles and doubles semi-finalist
- MSSM girls' Under-12 singles quarter-finalist and doubles champion
- National Junior Badminton Circuit first and second leg girls' Under-12 singles quarter-finalist and doubles champion
- National Junior Badminton Circuit grand prix finals girls' Under-12 doubles champion
- Bakti-MSSKL- Yang Yang-DBKL-Milo Junior Open Badminton Championships girls' Under-12 singles quarter-finalist and doubles champion