

**“Competitions turn me on!”**

Ong She-Na, a freshman from the Accounting & Finance Diploma.

**Tell us a little about yourself and how you get started in bowling.**

I'm a freshman in TP and I'm turning 18 soon. I was influenced to start bowling by my parents who were also bowlers. This is my fourth year in bowling and is my second year in the National Squad.

**How were you selected for the national team?**

I was selected into the National Team through trials for the last two years. Basically, the trial consisted of 6 games over 2 days. Base on the last trials I had, only the top bowler from both the male and female category were choose by scores to be in the team. The remaining 3 males and 2 females were picked through skill tests. This skill tests consist on launch angles and sparing of different pins such as pin 7 and pin 10.

This trial is opened up to the public and anyone can register for it. I wasn't very anxious nor nervous during the trials. To me, it's just another selection and I'd given my best to it.

**How many times have you taken part in competitions so far? Can you share some of the memorable moments in competitions & what have you achieved in bowling so far?**

For my three years in competitive bowling, I've taken part in more than 20 tournaments including international, Asian and world level. The highest score I've ever hit was 288.

One of the best place I've ever been to is Guam. It is part of USA and its neighbouring countries are Saipan and Japan. Guam is like an island located away from urban cities. It is surrounded by sea and it took us about 10 hours to travel from Singapore. It gives me a feeling somehow like Sentosa, it is care-free and a beautiful place to be. The people there are friendly and the food is rather expensive. There's a variety of food there such as Chinese, Japanese and Italian. They have about 3 big shopping centres and we can travel around by buses. Their buses are non-airconditioned and it's pretty old, unlike modern days, where you can never find them in Singapore.

There was one unforgettable incident happened to us when we travel to Taiwan about four months back. We've experienced typhoon there and it was the worst typhoon Taiwan ever had in the history. It is pouring and windy. Sign boards were being blown away and motorcycles were toppled. The ground was flooded and the trees were being rooted. Even when we're in the bus from our hotel to the bowling alley, we could feel the bus shaking. Because of the typhoon we have to buy cakes and cup noodles for our breakfast as the food provided in the hotel was expensive and we couldn't go out to eat. The typhoon lasted about 3 days. It was an experience I've never felt before in Singapore and from there I learnt that typhoon is really scary and you might lose your life.

**Tell us how you prepare for a major competition?**

I will always prepare myself through a standard routine. My style of playing is spinner.

My routine is often like this:

- I'll reach the alley half an hour before to get used to the surrounding and to start preparing myself;
- I will check my bowling balls- make sure my thumb and finger holes is in perfect condition;
- Then, I'll go to my assigned lanes and change my shoes and do my stretching exercise;
- I'll practice mental exercise and test the approach before the start of tournament.

**What are the qualities required to be a top bowler?**

In my opinion, these are the quality:

Commitment;

Interest;

Physical fitness;

Mental strength; and

Determination to win and to overcome difficulties.

I recall that in one of the recent tournaments, Cathay Bowl Super Classic, it posed a high level of difficulties. It is an open tournament to all international bowlers. Top bowlers from Australia, Taiwan, Malaysia, Korea, USA, Finland and Indonesia, etc. came to participate in this tournament. This was because of the attractive prizes. Top prize was \$25,000, second \$12,000 and third \$8,000, and a bonus for the perfect game award of \$100,000. The lane condition was tough due to its different oiling patterns over 3 days. Another factor was that there were many strong opponents, and it was a mixed tournament for both men and women. Women were entitled to 7 pins handicap which meant 7 extra points were added to each of our game. It wasn't an easy job for me to make it into the quarter-finals. This entire tournament required determination and high level of focusing skills. I had to be alert and responsive to the lane changes. At the end of this tournament, I finished at the third place.

I lost to the second bowler by only 4 pins. From here, I've learnt that I wasn't experienced enough to handle the situation as it was a step-ladder. There were a lot of spectators and reporters from the media.

**Was it difficult to balance your commitment to bowling and study at TP? How did you overcome the difficulties?**

Yes, it is difficult up to a certain extend. I believed that proper time management is important in order to balance up my bowling and academics. Usually, I will plan things ahead and make arrangements with tutors for those lessons that I will miss. I will do some self-study in order to keep up with my class pace.

**How do you see your future in bowling? Can it be a full-time career?**

I do not know about the future at this stage. I think, in future, the sporting conditions in Singapore may change. Thus, I cannot tell if it can be a reliable full-time career at this point.

**Any advice for TP students interested in bowling?**

They have to be interested and committed to bowling. They will have to put in effort and train hard.