



(Standing from right, in white shirt) Hoh, Mak and Ang with the players of the invitational tournament. — Photos: LOW LAY PHON/The Star

# Turning on the style on two wheels

## National wheelchair basketball team perform admirably at 3x3 championship

By C.Y. LEE  
chenyoong@thestar.com.my

THE national wheelchair basketball team secured the top two rungs on the podium at the 2nd MWBF International Invitational 3x3 Wheelchair Basketball Championship with their strong performance.

Four Malaysian teams were up against two teams from the Philippines along with Indonesia and Myanmar with one team each.

Malaysia's Swish Jersey and VAG collected full points in the round-robin stage over the two-day competition to book their berth in the semi-finals against the Filipino national team.

Philippines completed the fixtures with both teams finishing second in both groups.

The local lads, capitalising on home ground advantage did not struggle to dispense with their opponents to progress to the final round with scores of 10-6 (Swish Jersey v Philippines B) and 8-4 (VAG v Philippines B).

Even though the title falling to a Malaysian side was a foregone conclusion, VAG claimed the title (11-6) against Swish Jersey after fully committing to the agenda with a solid performance.

VAG had set the pace of the final from the get-go and kept matters under control to deny their counterparts the title.

Meanwhile, Philippines A took third after edging out their compatriots Philippines B in the third placing match 9-7.

The competition held at the Kampung Pandan Paralympic Excellence Centre in Kuala Lumpur was one of the few times the national wheelchair basketballers faced opponents from outside the country as they begin preparing for the 2020 Asean Para Games in the Philippines.

Organised by the Malaysian Wheelchair Basketball Association, the invitational was also an opportunity to give the teams a platform to play the three-on-three format under the newly introduced IWBF 2018 half-court 3-on-3 rules.

The top three teams were awarded RM1,000, RM600 and RM300 in prize money.

Retail chain 99 Speedmart returned as the main sponsor of the tournament and was supported by Burger King, CIMB Foundation, Li Ning and Nestle Milo.

Competition organising vice-chairman Datuk Hoh Hee Lee said the association is facing difficulties in funding development programmes to prepare the national athletes for the international stage.

"Cost is a factor, local players still do not have enough international exposure, most of the development games take place during the local league and circuits," he noted.

"Competitions like these are crucial to



A Filipino player falling after losing his balance from wrestling possession from Malaysia.



Malaysia's Muhammad Azzwar Hassan Assari going for the lay-up.

give wheelchair basketball players the much-needed international match exposure that will also allow them to gain experience and improve their game.

"The participation of the three countries is strong encouragement for the Malaysian wheelchair basketball team to do even better and push the development of the sport in the country to a higher level," he said.

"Their performance can also give confidence and encouragement to many disabled people to get involved in some kind of sport, so that they may develop a perspective that can allow them to live a freer life," Hoh added.

MWBF secretary-general Ang Kean Koo concurred, adding that the association would try to attract more teams next year.

"This event is one of the few times where we get to play with international teams because we cannot really afford to send the players overseas with our budget."

99 Speedmart Sdn Bhd senior account manager Mak Pooi Hin was left impressed after watching the teams in action on the final day of the tournament.

"The fact that the athletes are able to perform like able-bodied athletes is impressive. Their confidence on the court is really inspiring.

"Not only do they need to be good in basketball, they also need to have additional skills to play the game on a wheelchair.

"Our founder Tan Sri Lee Thiam Wah has always been very supportive of people who are handicapped, and we see this as a very valuable initiative by MWBF."

**MST GOLF**

# OUTLET STORE CLEARANCE

**@ Kelana Parkview, PJ**  
Now till 16 December 2018

**ADDITIONAL 10% OFF**  
on all final clearance items (red tagged)

**FINAL CLEARANCE APPAREL**  
(Yellow & Red Tagged)

**Buy 1 @ ADDITIONAL 10% OFF**  
**Buy 2 @ ADDITIONAL 15% OFF**  
**Buy 3 & more @ ADDITIONAL 20% OFF**

Ground Floor, Kelana Parkview, Jalan SS6/2, 47301 PJ. Tel: 03-7806 5090 MST GOLF SDN BHD (189204-P)

Shop online @ [mstgolf.com](http://mstgolf.com) Follow us on [f](#) [i](#) [t](#) [m](#) [mstgolf](#)