



St Joseph Institution celebrating their B Division title in the Schools' National Artistic Gymnastics Championships. ST PHOTO: KUA CHEE SIONG

SCHOOLS SPORTS

SJI gymnasts upset odds to overthrow HCI

By **TOH TING WEI**
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ST JOSEPH'S Institution (SJI) clinched their first Schools' National Artistic Gymnastics Championships team title in dominant fashion yesterday.

Their B Division team claimed six out of the eight golds available to topple defending champions, Hwa Chong Institution (HCI) after the four-day competition at Bishan Sports Hall.

Said captain Keefe Cheong, 16: "We did not expect to win, since HCI has been traditionally dominant, even though we knew we had a strong team."

The driving force behind SJI's

victory was Han Guang, who won the individual all-around title and took home two golds (vault and pommel) and one silver (parallel bars) in the individual apparatus events.

The 16-year-old only resumed training in December after suffering a hand fracture, and said: "I thought I wasn't prepared enough as I had not trained much due to injuries."

"The real winners are actually my family, coaches and teachers who always supported me throughout."

He also credited his team-mate Marc Koh for the victory, saying: "We've been buddies since Secondary 1, and there is a friendly rivalry between us as

we always seek to outdo each other, which pushes us both to improve."

While favourites HCI were dethroned, Raffles Girls' School (RGS) took home the B Division title for the sixth year running.

With three national gymnasts in their squad, they swept all six golds on offer – the team championship, individual all-around and four apparatus titles.

Cheryl Lam, 15, was instrumental in RGS' dominance, winning the all-around title and the apparatus titles for the vault, floor exercise and balance beam.

The national gymnast, who is flying to Uzbekistan to take part in the 13th Juniors ART Gymnastics Asian Championships today,

came into the competition with the intention of improving on her past performances, and took her individual title as a bonus.

"I didn't really think about winning anything, I was just focusing on doing my routines properly, so winning came as a surprise," she said.

The Singapore Sports School's Lincoln Forest Light Man and RGS' Tan Sze En were the C Division (optional) individual all-around winners in the boys' and girls' categories respectively.

Raffles Institution's Martyn Danial Hazwan Armada clinched the A Division (optional) boys' all-around title.

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