

Sapok delivers first ever boxing gold ¹⁵

SHAH ALAM: It was a historic day for Malaysian boxing in the Commonwealth Games yesterday.

Sapok Biki delivered Malaysia's first gold medal when he defeated fancied Moses Kinyua of Kenya 19-13 in the 48kg light flyweight final at the Malawati Stadium in Shah Alam.

Until KL '98, Malaysia have never won a boxing medal in the Games, let alone the gold.

Watched by Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Malaysian Amateur Boxing Federation president Tan Sri Mohamed Isa Abdul Samad and a near-capacity crowd of 8,000, a cool and confident Sapok dominated the fight from the start.

The crowd chanted "Sapok! Sapok!" and "Malaysia Boleh" everytime, he landed a punch.

Sapok, who wept openly during the post-press conference, attributed his success to the hardwork and feedback on his Kenyan oppo-

nent from chief coach Adun Pasu.

"My coach kept himself awake late into the night yesterday (Saturday) watching video clippings of Kinyua's fights in the earlier rounds.

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"However, I did not see the clippings myself as I could not afford to sleep late."

On the fight, Sapok said he tested and observed Kinyua's weak points in round one.

"Kinyua is also fast with his punches but his defence is weak and this enabled me to sneak in some accurate blows to his head. This boosted my confidence further."

Sapok thanked the Prime Minister and the fans for their excellent support during his bouts.

"There are no words to describe how happy I am for the historical win. I am happier because I achieved it in front of our beloved Prime Minister and my parents.

"Their presence and the support from the home fans was an inspiration," Sapok added.