

13 SEP 1998

Games-Wrap-up

HIGH DRAMA ON THE SECOND DAY OF THE GAMES

By: Ross Gilligan

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 13 (Bernama) -- A day of high drama at the Commonwealth Games today saw a world swimming record smashed and host nation Malaysia garner its first gold medal at these Games.

In the swimming pool the Australian men's 4 x 200m freestyle relay team smashed a world record that was set at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics.

And on the tenpin bowling lanes Malaysia, which had racked up three silvers in as many sports in the opening two days of the Games, finally broke through for gold when the men's team shrugged off a strong Bermudan challenge.

An added celebration for the Malaysian tenpin bowling team was the silver medal won by the women in the doubles and the fact that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad was at the Pyramid Bowl at Bandar to see the men snare gold.

Later, at the Aquatic Centre, the Australian swimming team put on a 100 percent performance -- winning all five gold medals on offer.

Highlight of the night -- and of the swimming carnival so far -- was the world relay record of 7:11.86s set by teenage swimming sensation Ian Thorpe, Daniel Kowalski, Mathew Dunn and Michael Klim.

Their time eclipsed the previous record of 7:11:95s set six years ago by the Unified Team of Dimitri Lepikov, Vladimir Psyshnenko, Veniamin Tayanovich and Evgeni Sadovyi.

The Australians' gold medal swimmers took their country's tally at the Games so far to 13. Australia, which tops the medals table, also have seven silver medals and seven bronze.

At the end of the second day Malaysia was fourth on the medals table with one gold, three silver and one bronze, trailing second-placed England (four gold, five silver, three bronze) and Canada (two gold, three silver, seven bronze).

But while some Games participants were celebrating their performances and victories tonight, Taani Afu, the Tongan rugby captain was left ruefully reflecting his foul tackle on a New Zealand player that resulted in a two-match suspension.

Tomorrow's programme puts up 16 gold (plus the accompanying silvers and bronzes) -- five in aquatics, four in shooting, two in badminton, two in tenpin bowling, two in gymnastics and one in rugby.

The rugby competition ends tomorrow and netball matches will commence at the Juara Stadium, Bukit Kiara.

-- BERNAMA

RG SHY