

Written by John Crumlish
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Jeremiah (Phay Xing) Loo of Malaysia looks to build on the momentum he has gained in the past few years to challenge for a gold medal at the 2017 South East Asian Games that his country will host in Kuala Lumpur in August.

"The most memorable moment for this year was when I won my first all-around medal at the Malaysian (SUKMA) Games, which were held in Kuching, Sarawak (Borneo)," he said. "I will keep my training momentum and need to improve my stamina and gymnastics skills in preparation for the SEA Games."

Born September 28, 1997, Wood is a second-generation Chinese born in Malaysia. His parents were also born in Malaysia, and his grandfather emigrated from Fujian, China, to Malaysia in 1946.

Loo's 2012-14 training term in China has yielded some of the best results of his career. He placed 18th all-around, seventh on parallel bars and eighth on pommel horse at the 2014 Youth Olympic Games in Nanning; and won the silver medal on high bar at the 2015 South East Asian Games in Singapore. His time in China also made him self-reliant and sharper.

"The training in China was really tough for me because I used to train three sessions every day,

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for three hours each session," he said. "The stint made me be more independent and disciplined. I was not allowed to go out at night, and that helped me focus on my training needs."

In 2017, Loo intends to solidify his routines on all six apparatuses but continue to concentrate on his specialties.

"I will continue my training on all the events to make sure my routines are stable and clean," he said. "But my main focus will be on pommel horse and horizontal bar because these two events are my best events. And my best chance to a win gold medal should come from these two events."

While many gymnasts around the world might be taking time off to enjoy the holiday season, Loo still has gymnastics as a top priority this month.

"Since I don't celebrate Christmas, I don't think the coaches are going to give us any time off in December," he said. "More so there is a tournament in Hong Kong in January which I am preparing for. I hope to do my best for my upcoming tournament and to start my new year on a good note. And I am really hoping that I can win a gold medal at the SEA Games."