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Mind over matter works for Amita

Teen fencer says a stronger mindset and mental stamina helped in her second Junior World Cup title

✦ SAZALI ABDUL AZIZ

Singapore fencer Amita Berthier pointed to improved mental strength as key to her second Junior World Cup title on Sunday.

The teenager, who started school at the University of Notre Dame in September, beat Hanna Andreyenka of Belarus 15-3 in the women's foil final of the Guatemala leg. Her first title came last December in Havana, Cuba.

When asked what helped her to go one better than last year's silver, Amita told The Straits Times: "Just having a stronger mindset, and maintaining mental stamina, especially with balancing university studies and fencing training."

She also enjoyed the intriguing challenges posed by different fencers in Guatemala, where there were 17 competitors from 12 countries across four continents.

"It is always interesting to

have the opportunity to meet fencers from different regions whom you normally don't meet frequently at other World Cup (legs)," said Amita, who turns 18 next month. "A variety of fencing skills are at play, and I find every bout exciting."

She was in dominant form in the knockout stages, beating American Christina Gong 15-5 in the quarter-finals, outclassing Maxine Esteban of the Philippines 15-4 in the semi-finals, before making light work of Andreyenka.

Her triumph in Central America follows a couple of breakthroughs on the international stage this year.

In April, she was part of the foil team - along with Maxine Wong, Tatiana Wong and Nicole Wong - who won a silver at the World Junior and Cadet Fencing Championships in Verona, Italy, despite being ranked 13th out of 26 teams.

In February, she reached a career-high No. 2 in the world



Singapore fencer Amita Berthier has been balancing university studies with fencing training. PHOTO: SINGAPORE FENCING

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- Amita Berthier

junior rankings. Last year, she won the individual gold on her SEA Games debut in Kuala Lumpur.

Fencing Singapore vice-president Yau Wee Sian said Amita's

win "once again proved her mettle".

"Her sacrifice and commitment to fencing are most admirable despite having a heavy school workload," said

Yau. "She had to rush back from the (Aug 18 to Sept 2) Asian Games to start her first day at school in the US.

"With the recent launch of the Fencing Singapore Olympic Pathway Programme, it is in our hope to help inspire and bring out the best in our athletes who are committed to the next level.

"Amita's results are a constant encouragement that Singaporeans can make it on the podium."

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VALUATOR

Company(Brand)	Mention	Tone	ROI
Economic Development Board (EDB) (EDB (Arts) Lifestyle Programme	5	0	S\$ 0
Education News (Education News)	4	0	S\$ 0
Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) (FIFA World	3	0	S\$ 0
Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) (Italy)	3	0	S\$ 0
Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) (USA)	3	0	S\$ 0
MCCY - Sports (MCCY - Games)	13	0	S\$ 0
SEA Games (SEA Games 2017)	1	0	S\$ 0
Sentosa Indstry News (Service Quality)	1	0	S\$ 0
Singapore Press Holdings Ltd (SPH) (Singapore Press Holdings Ltd	6	0	S\$ 0
Singapore Press Holdings Ltd (SPH) (The Straits Times)	1	0	S\$ 0
Sport SG - Current Events (SSG - Asian Games 2018)	1	0	S\$ 0
SSG-National Sports Association (NSA) (SSG-NSA events)	2	0	S\$ 0
SSG-Sport Events (SEA Games)	1	0	S\$ 0
SSG-Sport Events (SSG-Major Games)	2	0	S\$ 0

GIST(ENGLISH)

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