

Hong Kong's rising star hurdlers, who won medals in Morocco and China, tell us why trust is so important to athletes

The two 17-year-olds see each achievement as validation for their hard work, and encouragement to work harder

By Kelly Ho | May 17, 2018 Youngpost



Hong Kong's 17-year-old **Kiko Shing Cho-yan** and Addis Wong Lok-hei won silver and bronze at the All China Youth (Under 18) Athletics Championships in Jinzhou, Liaoning Province today after qualifying for the finals in the hurdling event. A wonderful achievement that came just a little over a week after they brought home gold and silver medals respectively from the Morocco Gymnasiade 2018.

In Jinzhou today, **Kiko** finished second in the women's 100m hurdles, with a result of 13.94s (+1.5 wind assistance). She sees this silver medal as a recognition of her efforts, and a boost for her confidence.

“After winning a gold medal in the Gymnasiade, I have set higher standards for myself,” said **Tin Shui Wai Methodist College student Kiko**, who hopes to qualify for the Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires, Argentina in August this year. She also hopes to meet the entry standards for the IAAF World U20 Championships held in July 2018.

Similarly, Cheung Sha Wan Catholic Secondary School student Addis believes his bronze medal from the men's 110m hurdles All China Youth (Under 18) Athletics Championships is proof that his hard work is not for nothing, and it encourages him to reach the highest step of the podium.

In an intense final race, Addis finished with the time of 13.78s (+1.1), only 0.01s faster than the 4th place hurdler. Addis, who aimed for the gold, said he was disappointed and anxious as he crossed the finishing line.

“I knew I missed the gold medal, but I finished almost at the same time as two other athletes, so I had idea if I'd won or not,” he said.

His ranking was eventually determined by the digital stopwatch, which compares results to the thousandth of a second.

Looking back at the his achievement at the Morocco Gynasiade, Addis does not see it as a source of pressure but rather a driving force.

“The silver medal in Morocco made me realise that even when I am surrounded by top hurdlers from around the world, I still have a chance to win. That is why I keep pushing myself to reach to the next level.”

Taking part in a nation-wide competition shortly after the Gynasiade was challenging for both young hurdlers, but trusting their coach and managing their mental and physical well-being were key to their ability to perform well consistently.

“I think trust is extremely important. Not only should we trust our coach to plan our training, we also need to have faith in ourselves, because confidence empowers us to do incredible things,” said Addis.

After spending almost half a month participating in overseas competitions, the young hurdlers plan to devote more time and energy to school work when they're home. Striking a balance between training and studying is a common struggle for student athletes in Hong Kong, but Kiko and Addis are determined to excel at both.

“We always bring along study materials when we travel to make sure we do not fall behind in school. Who says athletes cannot do well in school?” Addis asked.

Edited by Heidi Yeung