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Singapore Canoe Marathon a hit despite wet weather



The 17th edition of the Singapore Canoe Marathon saw 800 paddlers take part in 51 categories at the Singapore Sports Hub yesterday. ST PHOTO: JONATHAN CHOO

🕒 PUBLISHED JAN 15, 2018, 5:00 AM SGT

Natalie Choy Ching Mun ✉ (mailto:choycmn@sph.com.sg)

The chilly weather did not deter some 800 paddlers who took to the waters of Marina Reservoir for the Singapore Canoe Marathon yesterday morning.

Competing in distances between 6km and 30km, participants paddled against the backdrop of iconic landmarks such as the Singapore Flyer and Marina Barrage.

This year's event at the Singapore Sports Hub featured 51 categories - the most since its inception in 2002.

National junior paddler Jovi Jayden Kalaichelvan, 17, proved that age is just a number when he beat 48 other competitors to win the 30km Senior Men K1 event in 2hr 47min 20sec.

What made Jovi's win more impressive was that he was making his debut in the event, having competed in the 23km category last year when he finished fourth.

"I was expecting to get a good position but not so much a win," said Jovi, who will be starting school at National Junior College next month.

In the Senior Women K1 (24km) event, national paddler Deborah Saw crossed the finish line in 2:25:51 to win the gold.

Para-canoeists also saw action in the 6km para-canoe race.

Minister for Social and Family Development Desmond Lee, who is also the Singapore Canoe Federation's adviser, and Lim Wee Kiak, chairman of the Government Parliamentary Committee (Culture, Community and Youth), joined in the day's action by rowing around the Marina Reservoir with former national paddlers.

Lim, who flagged off the races in the morning, noted that more youths are picking up paddle sports, and hopes to see more retirees in action.

"Those who thought of canoeing in their younger days but didn't have a chance to should jump on this opportunity now," said Lim.

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