Sailors give $10,000 of Asiad money to start SMU bursary

BY LIAW WY-CIN

NATIONAL sailors Renfred Tay and Koh Seng Leong earned a combined $205,000 for their achievements at last month's Asian Games.

Yesterday, the Asiad medallists donated $10,000 to the Singapore Management University (SMU), to set up the institution's first sports scholarship.

The fund will go towards an annual, one-year scholarship valued at $2,000, for one first-year, full-time SMU undergraduate.

The recipient must not only have a good academic track record, but also be an accomplished sportsman or woman.

Under the Singapore National Olympic Council's Multi-Million Dollar Award Programme, Koh earned $125,000 for his efforts in Doha, while Tay bagged $80,000.

The pair's gesture was prompted by their desire to give something back to their university, which had supported them in their sporting aspirations.

Said Tay, who teamed up with four others to win the Asiad's keelboat gold: "They were very understanding and flexible in allowing us time off school for training."

He pointed out that Koh, a silver medallist in the Laser Radial in Doha, has been given a year off his business management course to prepare for next year's Beijing Olympics.

The pair's $10,000 contribution — $5,000 from each — will be matched, dollar for dollar, by the Government.

Added Tay: "We also hope to inspire other athletes to give back to the community."

The Nanyang Technological University (NTU) gives out two sports scholarships a year. They are worth $2,000 each.

The National University of Singapore (NUS) gives out four sports grants a year, each valued at $2,500.

Tay presented the sports scholarship cheque to SMU's president, Professor Howard Hunter, yesterday at the university's Patron's Day.

President S R Nathan was the guest of honour at the event.