

Singapore’s Schooling ends golden streak for China and Japan

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — It took a swimmer from one of the smallest countries in the region to finally end the streak of gold medals going to either China or Japan in the Asian Games pool.

Singapore’s Olympic champion, Joseph Schooling, had an emphatic victory in the men’s 100-meter butterfly final.

By his own standards, the 23-year-old Schooling was a touch slow to get off the blocks and resurface because he dove a little too deep, but once he was in motion, he was unstoppable.

He covered the first lap in 23.79 seconds, then powered home on the last length to win in 51.04 seconds, beating the Asian Games record of 51.76 he set when winning in Incheon four years ago.

It wasn’t his best time or even close to his biggest win. They happened simultaneously when he beat Michael Phelps to win the Olympic gold in Rio de Janeiro



two years ago, but he’s savvy enough to know it was still another big triumph for his southeast Asian nation.

“It’s all about standing up for your country and yourself and trying to get your hand on the wall first,” Schooling said. “I had some jitters before, but that’s

good, it shows I’m taking nothing for granted. Every gold is special, it has its own story.”

Once the Singapore anthem was played out over the stadium speakers, normal service resumed with Japan and China splitting the other seven gold medals decided that day.

After losing the 4x200-meter freestyle relay, China officials figured they couldn’t match Japan’s sprinters in the 4x100 freestyle relay, so they gambled on bringing in Sun Yang, hoping he could produce something special.

He was on a scheduled day off

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after winning the 200, 400, and 800 on the first three days and with the 1,500 still to go when he got the call around midday.

He obliged, but it didn’t make any difference as Japan pulled away to win.

“I swam great and we did everything we could, but the Japanese sprinters are simply faster at the moment.” Sun said, “That’s a fact.”

China did win the mixed relay by little more than a fingernail, giving backstroke Xu Jiayu his third gold medal in Jakarta and butterfly Zhang Yuefi her second in a little over an hour.

Tottenham’s Son Heung-min avoids military duty with Asian Games gold

By Stephen Wade
The Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia — Tottenham forward Son Heung-min will get to skip military service.

Son avoided the service obligation when South Korea defeated Japan 2-1 in the Asian Games soccer final.

The South Korean government rewards holders of Asian Games gold medals and all Olympic medals with the exemption. Military service is compulsory for South Korean males, and Son would have faced at least 21 months of service and the loss of millions in income.

Son had a hand in both goals, and ran wildly around the field at the end, hugging teammates while hundreds of South Korea flags were whipped about in the stands.

He thanked Tottenham for allowing him to play in Indonesia, where he captained the South Korea squad.

“I feel great, feel unbelievable, feel amazing,” he said.

With the match in extra time after 0-0 in regulation, Son got the break he wanted from teammate Lee Seung-woo.

In the 93rd minute, Son broke toward the middle and shuffled a pass to Lee, who drove the ball with his left foot into the top of the net. He immediately posed atop signage beside the field, celebrating his



minute of glory.

South Korea scored again eight minutes later on a leaping header inside the far post from Hwang Hee-chan. The 101st-minute goal prompted Son to embrace South Korea coach Kim Hak-bum on the sidelines.

Japan’s Ayase Ueda scored on a header with five minutes left to make it close.

South Korea had 65 percent of the possession in regulation time, and had a wide edge in shots, and shots on goal.

Son almost got the winning goal himself, but his shot just seconds into extra time sailed inches wide of the far post.

China, Japan, and South Korea — as always — dominated the 2018 Asian Games. But several other nations closed ground slowly, making the Big Three not quite as dominant.

China had 289 overall, with 132 gold, 92 silver, and 65 bronze. Japan won 204 (74-56-74) and South Korea took home 176 (49-57-70). They were followed in the

GOLD-MEDAL GAME. Son Heung-min (left) of South Korea dribbles the ball during the men’s soccer final against Japan at the 18th Asian Games in Bogor, Indonesia. South Korea defeated Japan 2-1 to win the gold medal. (AP Photo/Bernat Armangue)

gold-medal ranking order by Indonesia (31), Uzbekistan (21), Iran (20), and Taiwan (17). India and Kazakhstan each had 15.

Japan came up short as South Korea won gold in baseball with a 3-0 victory. In the bronze-medal game, Taiwan pummeled China 10-0.

China won in women’s basketball, defeating the combined Koreas team 71-65. Shao Ting topped China’s scorers with 17 points. Lim Yunhui was the top Korean scorer with 24. Park Ji-su had 15.

“I still believe that we could have gotten a gold medal if we had enough practice time,” Park, a star in the Women’s National Basketball Association (WNBA), said through an interpreter. “We just trained as a combined team for a month.”

The women’s squad included nine South Koreans and three from North Korea.

Dragon boat races also delivered a gold medal and two bronzes for the combined Koreas teams — the feel-good story of the Asian Games.

China’s men’s basketball team also took

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