

Japanese teenager Rikako Ikee takes home six gold medals at Asian Games

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — Rikako Ikee turned Jakarta’s Asian Games pool into her own golden pond. Each time she dove into the water, she came out with another medal.

When swimming the butterfly leg for the Japanese team that won the women’s 4x100-meter medley relay, the 18-year-old Ikee did it again.

The victory gave her a fifth gold and her seventh medal overall in Jakarta, which left her in a tie for second in two of the most significant medal categories in the 67-year history of the region’s biggest multi-sports event.

Only North Korean shooter So Gin Man had tallied more at one edition, winning a total of eight medals, including seven gold, at the 1982 Asian Games.

Then Ikee earned one more on the sixth and final day of swimming, winning the 50-meter freestyle final by a fingertip in 24.53 seconds, and becoming the first woman in any sport to win six gold medals at a single Asiad.

“I feel a bit broken and my body aches,” Ikee said. “I’m proud to be an Asian champion, but I want to achieve more.”

Ikee may get her chance. She also won four medals at the recent Pan Pacs against opposition from the United States,



GOLDEN STREAK. Japan’s Rikako Ikee swims in her heat of the women’s 100m butterfly during the 18th Asian Games in Jakarta, Indonesia. Ikee earned six gold medals at the competition, becoming the first woman in any sport to accomplish the feat at a single Asian Games. (AP Photo/Lee Jin-man)

fourth gold of the games, winning the 200 in one minute, 53.99 seconds, then straddling the lane rope and raising his arms in the air in triumph before slamming his fists into the water.

Already a world champion for the 100 backstroke, he is shaping up as one of Asia’s best Olympic hopes for Tokyo 2020. He earned three backstroke titles in the meet, scooped up a bonus gold in the mixed relay, and won another in the men’s medley relay. He is now only the second male swimmer to win five gold medals at a single Asian Games.

China’s Wang Jianjiahe beat the Asian Games record to win the women’s 800 freestyle in 8:18.55, but Japan won the two other events that day.

Shinri Shioura beat his Japanese teammate, Katsumi Nakamura, by a fingernail to win the men’s 100m freestyle gold in 48.71, with Nakamura clocking in at 48.72, while Satomi Suzuki won the women’s 50 breaststroke in 30.03 to collect her third gold in the Indonesian capital.

By John Pye
AP Sports Writer

JAKARTA, Indonesia — A day after delivering a historic first medal for a combined Korea team, the women’s dragon boat crew upgraded to gold at the Asian Games.

The crew comprising South Koreans and North Koreans won the 500-meter dragon boat final at Palembang, which is co-hosting the Asian Games with Jakarta.

A Korea crew won the bronze in the 200-meter final on Saturday, and celebrated by joining together to sing a popular folk song “Arirang.”

At the medal ceremony on Sunday, the “unification” flag was raised into the top position with the adopted anthem played during the medal presentations at a major multi-sports international event for the first time.

South Korean news agency Yonhap quoted Kim Kwang Chol, a North Korean coach of the traditional canoe team, as

Canada, and Australia and is surfacing as Japan’s great hope for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

Hong Kong and Singapore also won medals in the relay, but only after China and South Korea, which initially finished second and third, were disqualified for leaving the blocks too early.

Only the tiny city-state of Singapore has broken the domination of Japan and China in the pool, courtesy of Joseph Schooling’s titles. The 100 butterfly Olympic champion wasn’t at his best in the 50 fly but he found a way to get his hands on the wall first in 23.61 seconds, edging China’s Wang Peng by 0.04.

“I think it’s more like a controlled rage, all I was thinking about was trying to get my hips up and down as quick as I could, try not to spin, try not to slip too much. The rest, you can only hope for the best,” he said.

Chinese backstroker Xu Jiayu was more animated than usual after he captured his

Combined Koreans crew upgrades to gold



COMBINED KOREAS CREW. Members of the combined Korea team, top, celebrate after winning the women’s 500-meter dragon boat race at the 18th Asian Games in Palembang, Indonesia. (Kim Ju-hyung/Yonhap via AP)

into the opening ceremony together behind the “unification” flag, which features the outline of the peninsula in blue on a white background. It took a week to reap the medals, a big achievement considering the joint canoe crews only had three weeks to prepare for the games.

In the 500, the Koreans finished the six-team final in two minutes, 24.788 seconds to hold off China and Thailand.

South and North Korea have entered joint teams in previous international events, starting with the 1991 table tennis world championships, and more recently at the Winter Olympics in PyeongChang, South Korea.

The women’s ice hockey team at the Olympics had huge support despite losing all of its games, and inspired more cooperation.

Ostrich skin and Neo-Viagra? A shopping guide to North Korea

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which began in 2003 as a joint venture with Phoenix Commercial Ventures in Britain, is one of the best known. It is promoting karaoke boom boxes, flat-screen TVs, and DVD players. Other well-known brands, like Achim and Pyolmuri, are pitching TVs — 3D compatibility appears to be a hot extra these days — along with laptops and tablets.

It’s unclear if the products are fully produced in North Korea or just assembled and rebranded.

But they do basically work.

saying he “felt the strength of a unified nation when we came together, dedicated our minds to a single purpose, and paddled the boat forward.”

Rather than being added to the tally of either nation, the gold was awarded to Korea — the name given to the combined teams that are entered in rowing, canoeing, and women’s basketball.

The Koreans, still technically at war after their 1950-1953 conflict ended in an armistice, fielded 60 athletes in combined teams in the three sports along with larger contingents for their respective national squads.

Athletes from both countries paraded

Some of the guidebook’s ads — for bags of cement, for example, and medicinal stone tiles for use in saunas — are clearly directed at industrial buyers.

But it also has sections for lipsticks and skin creams by the Pyongyang Cosmetics Factory, lingerie from the Korea Ponghwa General Group, as well as herbal toothpaste, brassware and Neo-Viagra-Y.R., which is touted as “the best sexual function activator at the moment.”

The Kangan Trading Co. advertises nanodiamonds, useful for quantum computers and chemotherapy.

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Talmdage is The AP’s Pyongyang bureau chief.

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