

# MIND & BODY

FitAndFab

## SEA Games medallist casts aside stereotypes

Hannah Lee may not look like a typically fit person, but she is a dedicated athlete who has lived her dream. **Ng Wan Ching** reports

**Q** What is your secret to looking so fabulous?

**A** Train hard. Eat well. Love myself. Food is my life. Exercise helps me balance out the caloric intake. And, no matter what, I love myself. I think my confident personality is what makes me fabulous.

**Q** Has there ever been a time when you were not fit and fab?

**A** My body mass index of 31.2 puts me in the obese category. I'm fit, but the scale tells me I'm obese. What's a girl going to do with that? I have never been a skinny girl, nor will I ever be. I could try to cut down on what I eat to get into the leagues of skinny and muscular girls. But where's the fun in that? That said, when I was in primary school, I used to be very fat. Other children used to call me mean names, such as "fatso". And I really hated it. But my parents always reassured me that what was within was more important than what was outside. Once in a while, I still catch myself wanting to be one of those slender girls whom boys adore. But I found a way to make my weight work for me. I did shot put from the age of 10 and became a discus thrower at 19. I found a way to become fit, even though I didn't look typically fit. And I think I have made something of myself now.

**Q** What is your diet like?

**A** My tragic fat stories aside, I do make an effort to eat healthily. Breakfast is usually a medium-sized bowl of Alpen cereal, usually the dark chocolate flavour because I need some happiness in the morning, with low-fat milk or two slices of wholemeal bread, two eggs, one slice of cheese and two slices of ham and soya bean milk. Lunch is usually a bowl of brown rice, omelette, vegetables, tofu and meat. I usually have dinner at home, consisting of half a bowl of rice, a palm-size portion of meat, vegetables, fruit and half a cup of yogurt. I snack on grapes and biscuits,

just one or two at a time.

**Q** What are your indulgences?

**A** Ice cream once a week, chocolate once in two weeks and cake once a month. I also indulge in a Ya Kun steam bread set for breakfast on either Saturday or Sunday.

**Q** What do you do to relax?

**A** I love watching TV. But I rarely have the time to do it. My work-life balance is not very good at the moment. I have just started my first job and it is quite demanding. I finish work at about 6.30pm. I aim to be asleep by 10.30pm eve-

ry night in order to get about eight hours of shut-eye.

**Q** Would you go for plastic surgery and why?

**A** No. It would make me a fake me.

**Q** What's your favourite part of your body? And the least favourite?

**A** My favourite is a toss-up between my face and my legs. My legs aren't skinny or slender like most girls' legs are, but they are not fat and flabby. They have solid muscles on them.

They may look chunky to most people but they are constant reminders of how hard I have worked to get to where I am today. You don't get muscular legs by doing nothing.

My least favourite part would be the fatty layer over my abs. I am sure my abs are there. I can see the shape through the layer of fat that covers my abdomen.

Unfortunately, I do an anaerobic sport, and that does nothing to burn fat in the body, especially in the abdominal area.

So, when I build muscle without burning fat, I end up looking bigger and fatter.

**Q** What is the biggest sacrifice you've made for your sport?

**A** Giving up a fully paid scholarship from Khoo Teck Puat Hospital to pursue my degree in Australia.

I have always wanted to study overseas. But going abroad would have put my participation in the SEA Games at risk because of uncertainties with training and studies.

So, I gave up that opportunity and got my degree at the Singapore Institute of Technology instead.

**Q** How has your active lifestyle impacted your family and friends?

**A** I've made my friends and family very proud of me. But I feel both apologetic and thankful towards them because of the sacrifices they have had to make for me. They have had to sacrifice time spent with me, helped me out with my schoolwork and been very understanding when I have to work ap-



Discus thrower Hannah Lee gave up a fully paid overseas scholarship from Khoo Teck Puat Hospital so she could focus on her participation in the 2015 SEA Games, and her bold move paid off when she won a bronze medal. ST PHOTO: LIM SIN THAI

### Fitness routine

Monday (1.5 to 2 hours)	Tuesday	Wednesday (1.5 to 2 hours)	Thursday (1.5 to 2 hours)	Friday	Saturday (1.5 to 2 hours)	Sunday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>30 to 40 throws of a 1kg discus, focusing on the throwing technique.</li> <li>Gym work - weight training, including squats, dead-lifts, bench press and shoulder press.</li> <li>Power workout, including sprints and jumps.</li> <li>Core workout to strengthen abdominal muscles, including crunches and planks.</li> </ul>	Rest day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>30 to 40 throws of a 1kg discus.</li> <li>Gym work - weight training, including squats, bench press and shoulder press.</li> <li>Core workout to strengthen abdominal muscles, including crunches and planks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>30 to 40 throws of a 1kg discus.</li> <li>Power workout, including sprints and jumps.</li> <li>Power throws with a 4kg medicine ball.</li> </ul>	Rest day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>30 to 40 throws of a 1kg discus, focusing on the throwing technique.</li> <li>Gym work - weight training, including squats, dead-lifts, bench press and shoulder press.</li> <li>Power workout, including sprints and jumps.</li> <li>Core workout to strengthen abdominal muscles, including crunches and planks.</li> </ul>	Rest day

Source: HANNAH LEE ST GRAPHICS

pointments around my training schedule.

**Q** How extensive is your collection of sports-related paraphernalia at home?

**A** I have about 10 pairs of throwing

shoes, two pairs of weight-lifting shoes, two pairs of spiked shoes and five pairs of track shoes.

I also have a whole lot of medals from competing over the years and Singapore Team apparel.

My most prized possession is my

bronze medal from the 2015 SEA Games.

Competing in the SEA Games and winning a medal has been a lifelong dream - and I lived it.

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