

## 4,500 from active ageing centres take part in inaugural Seniors National Games

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Madam Adeline Chong has been worried that she might get dementia ever since her mother suffered from the condition for years before she died.

While the 68-year-old retired administrative assistant has stayed physically active to stave off the danger, she recently discovered a

new activity that has helped improve her concentration and focus.

In June, she was introduced to sport stacking at Sunlove Active Ageing Centre @ Serangoon, where she has been attending activities for four years.

Sport stacking – also known as speed stacking or cup stacking – is a sport in which participants stack and unstack cups in specific sequences, which promotes hand-eye coordination and dexterity.

The activity is adaptive, allowing

individuals of varying abilities to participate meaningfully.

While initially she used to stumble and get confused with the sequences, Madam Chong now enjoys the sport.

"I feel more alert mentally and enjoy the activity very much with my friends," she said.

Making new friends is an extra benefit: Through the sport, Madam Chong met former software engineer Ng Joo Leng.

Mr Ng, 64, used to think that

sports were no longer for him as he had lost confidence in his physical abilities with advancing age.

He feels differently now.

"What once felt out of reach is something I now look forward to each week. It has given me the confidence to stay active again, and I am grateful that there are now more inclusive opportunities for seniors like myself," he said.

Madam Chong and Mr Ng took

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Madam Adeline Chong and Mr Ng Joo Leng taking part in sport stacking at the Seniors National Games on Oct 4. The event aims to inspire seniors to stay active, participate in sports and forge friendships. ST PHOTOS: KELVIN CHING



Deputy Prime Minister Gan Kim Yong (centre) at the launch of National Celebration of Seniors 2025, flanked by Minister for Social and Family Development Masagos Zulkifli and Agency for Integrated Care chief executive Tan Chee Wee.

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part in the final stage of the inaugural Seniors National Games organised by Sport Singapore on Oct 4 at Our Tampines Hub.

The event aims to inspire seniors to stay active, participate in sports and forge friendships with other participants.

It also seeks to address the reticence that seniors may have about joining sports and physical activity for fear of being too old, by making it easier and more accessible.

A total of 4,500 seniors from 110 active ageing centres islandwide took part in five different types of adaptive sports in zonal heats from Sept 8 to 12.

Besides sport stacking, competitions were also held in four other

adaptive sports – including boccia, a precision ball sport adapted for players with limited mobility, and disc golf, where players throw a disc towards a target under modified rules to enhance accessibility.

There was also ladder toss, where players score points by throwing a set of balls connected by a string onto ladder rungs from various distances. Another sport was seated floorball, played from a seated position with the seniors using lightweight sticks to pass and shoot a plastic ball.

Mr Marcus Tan, chief of the sport development group at Sport Singapore, said the Seniors National Games is more than a competition; it is an initiative to empower seniors of all abilities to embrace active ageing through sport.

Recent findings from the National Sports & Exercise Participation Survey revealed that regular participation in sports at least once a week among seniors aged 60 and above fell from 74 per cent in 2022 to 67 per cent in 2024.

Among women aged 65 and above, non-participation increased from 18 per cent in 2022 to 32 per cent in 2024, highlighting the need for more inclusive sporting opportunities for seniors.

"We want to demonstrate that age, mindset and physical abilities are not a hindrance to making lives more meaningful," Mr Tan said.

"The games are also an avenue for participants to strengthen social bonds by creating opportunities for seniors to support and cheer for one another.

"In doing so, we promote health and fitness while building stronger, more connected communities."

The finals of the national games were held in conjunction with National Celebration of Seniors 2025, an annual national initiative that encourages active, healthy and meaningful ageing.

The celebration, which is taking place from Oct 4 to 10, was launched by Deputy Prime Minister Gan Kim Yong. It is organised by the Agency for Integrated Care.

Key highlights include programmes tailored for frailer seniors, cooking demonstrations and e-sports experiences. About 3,000 seniors participated in activities at the launch event.

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