



AWARD RECIPIENTS ... the UMS Sports Award 2013/2014 winners including Best Sportsman and Sportswoman, Eldy (5th left) and Laura (3rd right).

# Eldy, Laura are UMS best athletes

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By Lester J. Bingkasan

**KOTA KINABALU:** Eldy Sham Irlon and Laura Simon were named Best Sportsman and Best Sportswoman at the Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) 2013/2014 Sports Award on Tuesday.

The top performers received their respective prizes from Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Tawfiq Abu Bakar Titingan at one of the leading hotels here.

UMS Vice Chancellor Prof. Datuk Dr Mohd Harun Abdullah and UMS Sports Centre director Mohd Asyraf Fong Abdullah were among those present at the prestigious award ceremony.

Eldy was outstanding in the Malaysia Higher Learning Institute (Sukipt) and Malaysian Universities Sports Council Sports (Masum) 2014 games, winning the men's 400 hurdles on both occasions.

The highly talented track athlete was also named as the UMS Inter-School top athlete

award recipient.

Laura was gold medallist at the women's Epee individual event at Sukipt 2014, Malaysia Games (Sukma) 2013 and Shenzhen Open in China as well as winning individual and team gold in the Hong Kong Open.

And the highly talented duo have set their eyes on more success at the bigger stage.

Eldy said the victory would be a good motivation to fight for a place in the national squad for the 2015 SEA Games in Singapore.

"I'm extremely happy to have won tonight because I did not expect it. It is very important to realise the dream of competing in the SEA Games.

"I was deeply disappointed to have been omitted from the national team at the last minute in the last two SEA Games (in Indonesia and Laos).

"I've improved since but I will train even harder to try and be part of the national squad," said

Keningau-born Eldy when met after the prize presentation.

Laura, unlike Eldy, has already competed in the 2011 SEA Games in Indonesia and hopes to get another crack at the region's premier multi-sports event.

"I was quite new and inexperienced then...I did not win any medal.

"That's why I really hope to compete in the Singapore SEA Games, which will be my main target, and hopefully return with medals," said Laura who sees sports as an important factor to be successful in university, apart from being good academically.

The lanky 22-year-old athlete from Kuala Penyu, who was UMS 2012/2013 Most Promising Athlete recipient, revealed she has started running the marathon which she hoped would build her fitness and performance level in fencing.

Laura was first spotted during the Talent Identification (TID)



TOP PERFORMERS ... Eldy (left) and Laura pose after being named Best Sportsman and Sportswoman at the UMS Sports Award 2013/2014.

programme here as a 13-year-old. She has since studied and trained at the Bandar Penawar Sports School and Bukit Jalil Sports School before pursuing her tertiary education as a second year Sports Science student at UMS.

Both Eldy and Laura each received RM1,000, blazer, trophy and certificate for their efforts.

Meanwhile, El Said Abdul Aziz and Cheong Pui Siong won the Most Promising Athletes award which carried RM500, trophy and certificate as prizes.

Perlis Sukma-bound El Said excelled in the men's triple jump and long jump events with gold and silver medals at Sukipt and Masum Games in 2014.

Taekwondo exponent Cheong performed well enough with

gold and silver medals to her name in the Poomsae events at Sukipt 2014, 4th TM National Championship, 1st Sabah Interclub Championship and Masum Games.

Karate won the two remaining awards on the night, with kata exponents Nur Syahirah Brynna Gomes, Vivian Grace Gordon JG and Nyuk Yin Tseu taking the Best Team title and Jesyntha Chong Yee Shim named as the Best Coach.

The Best Coach and Best Team awards offered RM300 and RM200 respectively as well as other prizes to the winners.

UMS also showed appreciation to its staff and undergraduates who excelled in various tournaments as well as the media for their continuous support covering UMS sporting activities.