

SOFT HEARTED TOO

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(SPORTSWRITER)

WHEN I was with Malay Mail Sports, Punch Gunalan, Malaysia's badminton chief coach, asked me to locate Tan Yee Khan.

So I drove up to Ipoh, found him and managed to persuade him to join the Badminton Association of Malaysia coaching panel.

In his first appearance at the training hall in Kuala Lumpur, Yee Khan asked the Sidek brothers Razif and Jalani why they played so many backhand shots.

He told them that they should be leaping up and playing overhead smashes.

Fast forward to the 1982 All-England, Yee Khan was a nervous wreck. He would be puffing on cigarettes incessantly.

He was on the edge watching his doubles proteges battle the Scottish pair Billy Gilliland - Dan Travers in the final. They won in three sets (8-15, 15-9, 15-10).

The day before in the semifinal, the brothers overcame the highly rated Indonesia pair of Hariyanto Kartono and Rudy Kartoro (15-11, 15-12).

When the Sidek brothers won the All-England doubles title, you could see the relief on Yee Khan's face. All the tension was drained away.

Yee Khan, was indeed the driving force behind Razif and Jalani's surge in the All-England and the many successes that followed.

The badminton legend turned golfer was always willing to impart his badminton knowl-

edge.

In all the months I was around Yee Khan, I found that despite being a disciplinarian he was soft hearted too.

It was an honour and a privilege to have known him.

