

SPORT

School sports

ACS (I) trump Raffles to secure B Div hat-trick

Su Thet Hnin San

With the B Division boys' tennis final between Anglo-Chinese School (Independent) and Raffles Institution (RI) going down to the wire on Wednesday, supporters of both teams converged around the court armed with banners and flags to cheer on their respective doubles pairs.

What began as a contest between two school rivals at the Yio Chu Kang Squash and Tennis Centre had become a fierce battle as

supporters waved their school flags vigorously, cheering and shouting with each winning point.

But Christopher Phay and Nicholas Lim did not hear any of it, as the ACS (I) duo were so focused on their doubles match against RI's Ethan Ho and Mitch Phua.

Victory would secure ACS (I)'s third consecutive B Division title and, while the defending champions were the favourites, the doubles pair were feeling the pressure.

"RI as a whole is a strong school. It's a 50-50 when we play them. So we were quite nervous at the



start," said Nicholas, 14.

They started off strongly in the first set, leading 5-2 before their rivals fought back to level at 5-5. But the Year 3 students held on to

win the first set 7-5 before claiming the next one 6-2 to secure the trophy for their school.

Nicholas added: "I felt more at ease because I already won the

first set and I can win the next. Once we heard that our teammates on the other courts were doing well, our whole team spirit got better and we all played better

The tennis team from Anglo-Chinese School (Independent) celebrating after defeating Raffles Institution 3-2 in the B Division boys' final on Wednesday. ST PHOTO: GIN TAY

as a whole."

RI, who last won the B Division title in 2019, had dealt the first blow with team captain David Yong thrashing Isaac Lai 6-1, 6-0 in the third singles. But their rivals levelled the score when Chua Min Jie defeated Caden Kong 6-2, 6-2.

ACS (I) claimed their second point when Ethan Chan and Nigel Chen beat Brandon Lim and Evan Yeo 6-4, 6-3.

With the doubles pair of Christopher and Nicholas clinching the crucial third point and the trophy, RI then made it 3-2 with Owen Lien beating Anand Suresh 6-4, 6-4 in the singles.

David, 16, who was part of the team who lost to ACS (I) in the 2022 final, said: "Looking at the line-up, I thought our skill levels were quite even... At the end of the day, it all comes down to performance during the match itself."

jamsan@sph.com.sg