NATALIA Ng Mei Mei has no plans to sever her ties with golf. The 18-year-old lass took a six-month sabbatical from pursuing an American degree course at the Sunway University College to prepare for the recently concluded Sukma in Alor Star. She will soon resume classes but Ng, who plays off a 9-handicap, said she would continue to be active in golf.

"I don't have any plans to give up golf. Now I have to divide my time between studies and golf. I hope to continue training and play in competitions as well. My aim is to improve my game and play for the country," said Ng.

Since early this year, Ng did not play in any competitions as she and her teammates - Erika Tobuse Khairun Hanisah Azlan Ramli, engaged in an intensive training programme for Sukma - under the guidance of Harris Zainal.

And it proved worthwhile, as the trio were successful in Sukma, where Selangor won the team gold as well as the individual title through Erika.

A key component of the Selangor team, Ng also featured in previous two Sukma in Seremban in 2004 and Sabah in 2002. She had previously represented Kuala Lumpur, but did not win any medals.

Though not be eligible to play in the 2008 Sukma in Terengganu, Ng still has reason to be pleased, and admitted as much after saying that her game was not up to scratch at Sukma.

"My game was not up to expectations. My long game was out and I was trailing on many occasions. But my teammates - Erika and Kahirun Hanisah - were consistent and gave a good account. If not for their scores, I could not have won a gold medal as a team member," said Ng.

But Ng is not letting that affect her pursuit to excel in golf.

"I will resume training soon. I hope to start working on my long game. My father (Larry Ng), who has been coaching me since I started playing golf when I was 12, has also promised to help me overcome my shortcomings in golf. With his guidance, I am confident of getting better results in competitions," said a determined Ng.

Damansara Jaya, started her golf trail when she was 12. She then used to tag along her father for his regular golf sessions at the Saujana Golf and Country. Soon she was making her presence felt in age group competitions. Her first competition was in 2001 and to her surprise she won the title in the age group competition.

Naturally Ng was excited and motivated. Soon she was playing regularly in club competitions and other age group competitions. In 2001, she won the Under 18 title in the 100 Plus junior championships. The following year, she represented Kuala Lumpur in the 2002 Sukma.

Last year was an impressive year for Ng. In the Milo Malaysian Schools Sports Council (MSSM) championships, Ng was a member of the Selangor team that won the gold medal. In the individual category Ng won a silver medal.

She also had a good outing in Sukan Selangor (Sukses) earning herself a place in the Selangor team for Sukma.

FACT FILE
Name: Natalia Ng Mei Mei
Date of Birth: Feb 24 1988
Height: 5' 8" Wt: 49kg
Education: Sunway University College (American degree programme)
Handicap: 9
Home course: Saujana Golf and Country Club
Hobbies: Reading and modelling
Coach: Harris Zainal and Larry Ng (father)
Ambition: play for the national team

Achievements
2006: Sukma (team gold)
2005: MSSM (team gold and silver in the individual)
     Sukma (team gold and silver in the individual)
2004: Represented KL in Sukma
     Champion in 100 Plus junior championships
2003: Represented KL in Sukma
     Champion in 100 Plus junior championships

Natalia: 'I want to improve my game and play for the country'