Snip, snip and he loses $1,800

Undergrad takes nap outdoors at night, wakes to find trousers cut open

H. E. WAS taking a nap at an HDB neighbourhood pavilion but was stirred from his sleep when he felt that it was “airier” than usual.

Looking down at his pants, he was shocked to find a large hole where his pocket was, and his wallet missing.

Undergraduate Tan Kong Hwee, 24, was studying at the void deck of his neighbourhood at Block 426, Ang Mo Kio Ave 3, in the wee hours of the night yesterday. Feeling tired, he decided to take a short nap at one of the benches at a nearby pavilion at Block 438, Ang Mo Kio Ave 10.

While he was asleep, someone made a cut about 10 cm in length and left a split where the side pocket used to be. (See picture.)

The incident is believed to have happened between 2.30 am and 3.30 am.

Said Mr Tan: “The area surrounding the pavilion is brightly lit and it is a very open space.

“I like studying in the area because it is peaceful. There are usually some people walking around the area even in the middle of the night.”

The thief got away with his Ferragamo wallet, a gift from his brother who bought it from Italy.

It contained $180 in cash along with his supplementary credit card from his brother, ATM card and identification cards.

Mr Tan got another rude shock when he called the bank at 7 am to report the loss of his supplementary card and ATM card. He found out that his entire savings of $1,620 had been withdrawn from his account.

He had accumulated the savings over two years, from part-time jobs that he took up during holidays.

Said the undergraduate from Singapore Institute of Management (SIM): “My ATM PIN is a combination of my IC number.

“I did not report the loss of my card immediately because I would never have guessed that the thief would be able to crack my pin number.”

ATM machines allow the user three attempts at entering a PIN number before the machine confiscates the card, effectively blocking the user from withdrawing any cash.

In spite of his loss, Mr Tan is relieved that he escaped unscathed from the incident.

He told The New Paper: “I am actually very lucky that I was asleep when it happened. The person had a knife and he could have stabbed and injured me in panic if I woke up.”

The police confirmed that a report was lodged and investigations are ongoing.

Mr Tan’s sister, Ms Tan Wei Ru, 33, who is self-employed, claimed that her brother was not the first victim in the neighbourhood, although this could not be verified by the police.

Added Mr Tan: “I have lived here for all my 24 years and I always thought that the neighbourhood was safe. I guess I am also to be blamed for my own complacency.”