

Hockey: UniKL 100% win record halted by feisty Maybank

By S.RAMAGURU



KUALA LUMPUR: Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UniKL) maintained their unbeaten run in the Premier Division of the Malaysian Hockey League when they drew 0-0 with Maybank at the Tun Razak Stadium yesterday.

Tenaga Nasional took over as new leaders after their 3-0 win over Nur Insafi in the second match of the day.

KL Hockey Club (KLHC), who were the leaders yesterday, were leading 1-0 against UiTM in the third match of the day when heavy rain forced their game to be abandoned in the 21st minute. The match will be replayed at a later date.

Tenaga and UniKL both have 13 points but the former have the better goal difference. KLHC are now third with 12 points.

UniKL had won four matches in a row but yesterday failed to register their fifth win as they muffed the six penalty corners that came their way.

But credit must be given to former champions Maybank who defended well and also had several good chances of their own. It was the Tigers' second draw after the 1-1 tie with Tenaga last month.

The match was scrappy throughout as both teams struggled in the heat.



Saved: UniKL goalkeeper Stephen Graham (right) hooks the ball away from Maybank's B. Namasivayam during their Premier Division match at the Tun Razak Stadium on Friday. - Rohaizat Bin Md Darus

But the coaches did not use it as an excuse other than to say the weather did slow down the game a little.

UniKL coach Darren Smith said that the game was slower due to the heat but they had ample chances to put away the game.

“I think we knew that somewhere along the line we will face a tough match and drop points. At any other time a draw with Maybank would have been a fair result. But since we had four wins the expectations were high for another win,” said Smith.

Smith said there would not be any undue pressure in the game against KLHC today.

“We know it will be a tough game and we have to be prepared for the worst. They are the 2010 league champions and are certainly the favourites for a title this year. But we have had some good results and there is no reason to think we cannot play against them,” he said.

Maybank coach Wallace Tan was happy with the point and felt they played much better than their outing last weekend in Ipoh.

“It was a much better game for us and the younger players are slowly getting used to it. We defended well and had four penalty corners but the finishing was a not good enough. Still we hope to get better especially when injured players like Engku Abdul Malek and Hafifhafiz Hanafi returnsto the line-up,” said Wallace.

PREMIER DIVISION RESULTS AND FIXTURES							
UniKL	0	MAYBANK	0				
NUR INSAFI	0	TENAGA NASIONAL	3				
KLHC	1	UiTM	0				
<i>(Match abandoned in the 21st minute due to rain. To be replayed)</i>							
ATM-AIROD	5	YAYASAN NS	1				
	<i>P</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>Pts</i>
TENAGA	6	4	1	1	13	5	13
UniKL	5	4	1	0	9	5	13
KLHC	5	4	0	1	22	10	12
YAYASAN NS	5	3	0	2	20	12	9
NUR INSAFI	5	3	0	2	10	13	9
SAPURA	5	2	0	3	14	13	3
MAYBANK	6	1	2	3	4	9	5
UiTM	4	0	0	4	6	15	0
ATM-AIROD	5	0	0	5	5	24	0
TODAY							
UniKL vs KLHC				4.00pm			
* NUR INSAFI vs YAYASAN NS				6.00pm			
* SAPURA vs TENAGA NASIONAL				8.00pm			
<i>(Matches at Tun Razak Stadium, KL)</i>							
ATM-AIROD vs UiTM				5.00pm			
<i>(KL Hockey Stadium)</i>							
* Denotes live coverage on Astro Channel 801							

Tenaga’s win yesterday put their title ambitions back on track after their defeat to UniKL on Jan 8 in Ipoh.

They played it safe with three well taken goals from the penalty corner set piece moves to move to the top in the standings.

Mohamed Amin Rahim converted a penalty stroke in the 34th minute. Then Faisal Saaris scored a field goal in the 53rd minute

off a shot from the top D and Amin completed the win with a direct flick in the 70th minute.

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