

Friday January 21, 2011

Veteran Ismail yet to meet KLHC's expectations

By AFTAR SINGH

KUALA LUMPUR: Former national forward Ismail Abu (*pic*) is not jumping for joy even though he has managed to chalk up a hat-trick for Kuala Lumpur Hockey Club (KLHC) in a 10-0 win over UiTM last week.



The 27-year-old Kuantan-born player, who has scored six goals in seven Premier Division matches, said that as the experienced player in the team, he had not met expectations to score in every match.

"I only scored goals in three of the seven matches and that is not good for my standard," said Ismail.

"I believe that I have not yet reach my peak form in the league. My mission in the league is to show my ability to score goals and earn a call-up to join national training."

Ismail last represented Malaysia in a playing tour of New Zealand in September 2009 and he has 172 international caps to his credit.

He said that it was a big disappointment for him last year in not getting a call-up to play for the country.

"I still love to play hockey for Malaysia and I will continue to give my best to impress the national selectors. I know that it is difficult to get back once you are dropped from the national team," he said.

Ismail made his debut in the MHL in 2002 and was with Maybank for two seasons. He featured for Sultan Ahmad Shah (SAS) for two years before joining Ernst and Young in 2006. In 2009, Ernst and Young changed their name to KLHC.

KLHC are the defending league champions and they now lead the nine-team standings on 18 points from six wins and a defeat.

They lost the season-opening Charity Shield match against Tenaga Nasional (0-2). But KLHC have struck back, scoring a total of 36 goals.

KLHC will only play one fixture in the round of matches in Penang this weekend – against Maybank today.

The Tigers are struggling and are in seventh place in the standings with five points from one win, two draws and three defeats.

"I will go all out to score against Maybank to make sure my team maintain the lead in the standings at the half-way mark of the league," said Ismail, who scored six goals for KLHC last season.