UPM, UiTM share squash honours

KUCHING: Universiti Putera Malaysia (UPM) emerged the biggest winners in the squash competition of the Malaysian University Sports Council (Masum) Games when they swept aside UiTM 5-0 to win the women’s team title on Thursday.

On Tuesday, UPM made a clean sweep of the top three positions in the women’s singles contest with Siti Munirah Jusoh taking the gold, Pushppa Devi Paramasewa the silver and Zulhijjah Azan the bronze.

In the women’s team final played at the squash centre of University Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas), UPM won the first two ties as their fourth and fifth ranked players proved too good for UiTM by scoring easy 3-0 wins.

When singles champion Siti Munirah stepped in court, it was almost a formality as she thumped Nur Assila 11-3, 11-0, 11-4 to hand UPM the gold medal.

Despite achieving an unassailable 3-0 lead, UPM did not let up and went on to win the last two games.

In the play-off for the bronze medal between UM and UNISZA, the former raced to a 2-0 lead before Raja Nurul briefly gave UNISZA a glimmer of hope by defeating Wong Lee Mel 3-0.

However, when athlete turned squash player Tang Wei Ling with some tennis style serves stepped on to court, she proved to be better than Nor Madinah by winning 11-1, 11-6, 11-1 to clinch the bronze medal for UM.

Lee Xin Yin won the last tie for UNISZA but it was too little too late. The gold and bronze medal matches were played on a format of 4-5-1-3-2 meaning the teams’ fourth ranked player would play the first tie while the second ranked player the last should the score was tied at two matches apiece.

Meanwhile, UiTM made up for the disappointment in the women’s team defeat in the final to UPM by beating UMT 3-1 to lift the men’s team gold.

They won the first two matches easily with a 3-0 scoreline.

However, UMT’s top ranked player Md Haflizuddin kept his team’s challenge alive much to the relief of their partisan coach and supporters by winning easily against Nazirul Izzat 3-1 despite a second game slip-up to reduce the scoreline to 1-2.

In the fourth tie, UMT’s Md Rasdi gave further hope by winning the first game against Al-Ardy 11-8.

However, UiTM fought back by winning game two. In the third game UMT had the chance to take a 2-1 game lead but Md Rasydi could not close out when leading.

That proved to be decisive as he lost tamely in the fourth game and with that UiTM had an unassailable 3-1 tie lead and the men’s gold medal in the bag.

The last match was abandoned as the UMT player could not continue.

In the bronze medal play-off, a spirited UM bounced back from a 2-0 deficit to break the hearts of UPM by winning 3-2.

Squash Association of Kuching provided technical assistance in the running of the squash competition.
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88,150

166,173

527 cm²

RM 6,068

RM 18,204

VICTORIOUS: Winners of the men's team competition showing their medals after the prize presentation.

TRIUMPHANT: Winners of the women's team competition pose for a group photo after receiving their medals.

— Photos courtesy of Squash Association of Kuching