Complacent soldiers

Sathia unhappy with Armed Forces’ inconsistent form

BY ERIC SAMUEL

PETALING JAYA: Big spending Armed Forces have not lived up to their five-star status.

And coach B. Sathianthan is far from happy over the team’s inconsistent form even though the soldiers are perched at the top of the 12-teem Premier League standings together with Pahang on 26 points.

“It is just not working out the way we want. The rot has got to stop... the players are getting complacent as seen in the last four games when we could manage only five points,” said a concerned Sathianthan.

Since the middle of last month, the team have showed a slide in form when they drew with Muar MC (2-2), lost to Pos Malaysia (0-2), beat Police (2-0) and on Friday drew (2-2) with the cops in the second round match.

Sathianathan is furious by the teams lacklustre attitude against Police, which saw them lose a 1-0 lead before allowing the cops to crawl back into the game and go in front 2-1. Forces were fortunate to walk away with a point after they found the equaliser in the dying minutes of the game.

“It could have been easily our third defeat of the season. Yes, we have big names and national players but it is not as easy as we thought. The biggest obstacle for the Premiership title is going to be ourselves,” said the former national coach.

He said Forces with eight wins, two draws and two defeats, so far, have not been playing to their true form.

“I have got to find a solution to stop the rot. This is not what I expected of the team and of the national players. I won't be surprised if they do not make the national team. They are only national players by name but not on the field.

They lack concentration and don't show urgency for goals. It is no point dominating a game when you can't win it,” said Sathianathan.

Asked whether the team were bogged down by injury problems, Sathianathan said: “The only injury is in their heads.”

Sathianathan roped in five players from Negri Sembilan’s Malaysia Cup winning squad. They are the Razak twins - internationals Mohd Aidil Zafuan and Mohd Zaquan Adha – striker Hairuddin Omar, defender Irwan Fadzli Idrus and goalkeeper Farizal Harun.

Former Kedah striker Marlton Alex James and former MPPJ FC midfielder Bruno Sebastian Martelotto are the two established foreign signings. Promising youngsters K. Reuben (from UKM), Amiridzwan Taj Tajudin (UITM), Fitri
Omar (Muar Municipality), Christie Jayaseelan (PKNS) and A. Varathan (Sime Darby) have also added depth to the squad.