Takraw extravaganza on today

By Arfandi Jaafar

KOTA KINABALU: The live takraw action begins today as the state Sukma Squad aim to oustshine the competition at the prestigious ASTAKA Deputy President’s Cup Sepak Takraw Championships 2012, happening at the Tun Mustapha Hall in Kudat, this weekend.

Sabah Sepak Takraw Association (Astaka) deputy president, Mahmud Awang Hussin, among others.

“Takraw has undergone some training changes under Thai coach, Suthep, in the past month and their performance has notably improved.”

This gives us reason to expect greater achievements from them at this tournament, which we hope they will carry through to Pahang for this year’s Malaysia Games (Sukma) in July, said Mahmud, when contacted in Kudat, yesterday.

The state Sukma boys are tokongs: Mazlan Baalon, Radzi Awang, Aminuddin Kimin and Fanie Azhar, killers: Fakrullah Abdul Muda, Jemis George, Abdul Muda, Jemis George, Famie Azhar, and their performance has notably improved.

The boys have been training under Suthep for the past month and their performance has notably improved.

“We have high expectations to see some top-quality takraw action in this tournament, especially from the State Sukma men’s squad, who have undergone some training changes under Thai coach, Suthep Chamtransuwarong.

“The boys have been training under Suthep for the past month and their performance has notably improved. This gives us reason to expect greater achievements from them at this tournament, which we hope they will carry through to Pahang for this year’s Malaysia Games (Sukma) in July,” said Mahmud, when contacted in Kudat, yesterday.

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The national women’s squad will also be competing in the tournament, while the two national men’s regus will feature in a special exhibition match, which is scheduled to start at 10am, shortly after the opening ceremony.

The three state Sukma men’s teams and two state Sukma women’s teams will feature in the tournament, along with entries from Sandakan, Labuan, Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM), Beaufort, Kota Belud, Penampang, Kota Kinabalu, Nabawan and Keningau.

The women’s teams, Wanita Malaysia and Sukma Wanita A and Sukma Wanita B, have been drawn in Group A, while Group B comprises Sahabat Masjid Nabawan A, Sukma Boys B and Astaka Sandakan A.

Also expected at the opening-closing, tomorrow.

Close to RM6,000 in cash prizes plus trophies and medals will be up for grabs including RM2,000 for the champion, RM1,500 for runner-up and RM750 each for joint third place teams.

Also expected at the opening ceremony is Malaysia Sepak Takraw Association president, Datuk Hj Ahmad Ismail and National Sports Council director-general, Datuk Zulkiflee Ambong.
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**GROUPING:**

- **Group A**
  - Wanita Malaysia
  - Sukma Wanita A
  - Sukma Wanita B

- **Group B**
  - Sahabat Masjid
  - Nibawan A
  - Sukma Boys B
  - Astaka Sandakan A

- **Group C**
  - Sahabat Masjid
  - Nebewan C
  - UMS A
  - Beaufort A

- **Group D**
  - Perlis Kota
  - Belud
  - Sukma Boys A
  - Matunggung B
  - Binanding United

- **Group E**
  - Masab
  - Kota Belud
  - Astaka Sandakan C

- **Group F**
  - Kimanis Paper
  - UMS B
  - Beluran A

- **Group G**
  - First Touch
  - Pekan Paper
  - Beaufort B

- **Group H**
  - Kg Perpaduan
  - Sukma Boys C
  - Astaka Sandakan B

- **Group I**
  - LA Junior
  - Beluran B
  - Sahabat Masjid
  - Nabawan B
  - Matunggung A