Koo books semis berth in tricky conditions

LUMUT — Liga Layar Malaysia (LLM) leader Jeremy Koo of Sime Darby Foundation-KRT maintained an iron grip in his quest for a second-leg victory by sealing a semifinals berth in Lumut yesterday.

Koo continued his commanding round-robin form in the last eight as he took an early 1-0 lead over Mohd Faizal Norizan in the best-to-three tie. Tricky wind conditions, however, played in Faizal’s favour in the next round as the Royal Langkawi Yatch Club/MYA captain hauled his side back level at 1-1. The decider was an intriguing affair, but Koo and Co held on to clinch a 2-1 victory and sail into the last four.

The 32-year-old was a relieved man after a brief scare from Faizal in the last eight.

“We had a good lead in the second round, but missed one of the windshifts and went into a light patch. The wind conditions were tricky today, but I’m happy we learnt from our mistakes and raced a lot smarter in the third round. I’m confident with my crew and am looking forward to tomorrow,” said Koo.

Joining him in the semis was Nik Ashraf Qaed of KFC Malaysia/MYA Racing Team, who inspired his team to a similar 2-1 win over the promising Mohd Saifullah of MSNT Sailing Team.

Mohd Masyuri Rahmat, who had earlier succumbed to Koo in the final flight, stormed back in the last eight with a resounding 2-0 win over 2012 Olympian Khairulnizam Mohd Afendy of Uitm/MYA Match Racing Team to join the semis cast.

Beaten quarterfinalists Khairulnizam, Saifullah and Faizal will contest it out in a three-way battle today, with the first winner to two wins joining the trio in the last four.

The LLM second-leg in Lumut also concludes today with the semifinals, petit-finals and final fixture.