FOOTBALL

Referees commended

MEN IN BLACK: FAM general secretary says match officials doing a good job

AJITPAL SINGH
ajitpalsingh@nst.com.my

DESPITE many complaints from teams over the poor refereeing standards in the M-League, FA of Malaysia (FAM) general-secretary Datuk Hamidin Mohd Amin has commended the match officials.

Last year, 17 referees were suspended or demoted following negative reports by match assessors.

FAM referees committee chairman Datuk Astaman Abdul Aziz disclosed recently seven referees and two assistant referees were each suspended for two weeks for various offences.

FAM also received six other complaints but only two were substantiated for further action.

“We have been monitoring match officials in the league but except for a few cases, we are happy. According to our referees department’s report, 70 per cent of decisions by match officials in over 400 games so far this season were spot on,” said Hamidin yesterday.

“We have come to a conclusion that fans and some players do not understand football rules. Sometimes, the provocation from concerned parties make matters worse.

“Of course, every referee has his flaws and limitations but those, who underperform are dealt with accordingly.

“As the parent body, we are trying our best to improve the quality of refereeing. We have 150 qualified referees in the league.”

Goal line referees and communications sets will be introduced in stages in the Malaysia Cup, which starts on Aug 1, and if everything goes well, it will go full-scale next season.

“We are studying other methods to improve things. One of them is to introduce professional referees.

“Modern football is different. Fans today are more passionate about the game compared to five years ago. We have to tighten rules and introduce new things to make the league better,” said Hamidin.

His comments come in the wake of the men in black coming under fire for poor decisions during matches.

However, most coaches avoid making negative remarks despite being unhappy with referees fearing repercussions.

Sime Darby coach Ismail Zakaria and his Armed Forces counterpart B. Sathianathan were the last ones hauled up by FAM’s disciplinary board for criticising referees but the charges were dropped.

On April 19, Darul Ta’zim manager On Jabbar allegedly punched referee Sukri Abdul Rahman in the 2-2 draw with Universiti Teknologi Mara at Pasir Gudang Stadium. Jabbar was subsequently relieved of his duties and fined RM25,000 by the Johor FA.