

Razor-sharp Razie

UniKL bank on defender to enter TNB Cup final

By T. AVINESHWARAN

KUALA LUMPUR: Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UniKL), as expected, swept into the final of the TNB Cup but only after fending off a tough fight by Maybank in the semi-final at the National Hockey Stadium in Bukit Jalil.

UniKL won 2-1 and will meet Terengganu, 4-3 winners over Tenaga Nasional in the final but the league champion's coach A. Arulselvaraj had only respect for the Tigers after his team's win.

"The first two quarters were the best in the league in terms of fight and energy. They really pushed us," he said.

Maybank showed from the start of the match that they were no pushovers but a brilliant double from Mohd Razie Abdul Rahim were enough to put them down.

The 32-year-old, who made his Malaysia Hockey League debut in 2006 with Kuala Lumpur Hockey Club (KLHC), has his eyes on the double after UniKL won the league last Sunday, and his two goals in the 33rd and 35th minutes showed his desire to win for his club.

Razie, who joined UniKL last year, admitted that Maybank made them work for the win, especially in the fourth quarter.

"I am happy to get the win. Maybank gave us a strong fight until the very last minute of the game," he said.

"I am satisfied to see that each and every one of us had a higher desire than Maybank to win

TNB CUP SEMI-FINAL RESULTS

UNIKL 2 MAYBANK 1
TERENGGANU 4 TENAGA 3

the match.

"Now that we are in the final, I hope we can go for the double. It will be wonderful to achieve it in my first outing with UniKL.

"I do not know if I will play for them next year, so I want to win it this year."

Asked if that was an indication that he would leave the team, Razie said: "It is not like that. We have our contract, we do not know if people need me or not. When they need me, I will give my all."

In the first two quarters, UniKL had a flurry of chances and four penalty corners, but all their attempts were thwarted by the impressive saves made by Maybank's goalkeeper Mohd Zaimi Mat Deris.

In the second quarter, he made two double saves to deny Roel Bovendeert and Mohd Hafiz Zainol, and Tengku Ahmad Tajuddin Tengku Ahmad Jalil and Kieran Govers in the 18th and 25th minute respectively.

However, Zaimi was finally beaten in the third quarter when Razie intelligently thumped in a low flick off a penalty corner in the 33rd minute.

Two minutes, national vice-captain Razie doubled the lead when he buried a penalty stroke, taking his tally this season to 14.



On the double: Mohd Razie scored both goals for UniKL.

Maybank reduced the deficit in the 54th minute when Adam Aiman Mamat scored off a penalty corner, and Maybank had a flurry of chances to equalise after that but UniKL's defence, led by Razie and Timothy Deavin, stayed resolute to take the team to their third TNB Cup final in a row.

"It was a good game by Maybank and they deserved more for the way they pushed us," acknowledged Arulselvaraj. "It was a good warm-up for the

final. I told the boys in the fourth quarter, to run down the clock, and just see us to the final whistle."

In the other semi-final, Terengganu got their goals through Jiang Jong-hyun (7th, 27th, 28th), Luqman Nul Hakim Ahmad Shukran (37th) while Mohd Azrai Aizad Abu Kamal (33rd), Syed Mohamed Syafiq Syed Cholan (35th) and Mohd Aminuddin Mohd Zain (41st) scored for Tenaga.