

Imperfect champs



Unbeatable: UniKL players celebrate after winning the Malaysia Hockey League title. — IZZAFIQ ALIAS / The Star

UniKL rule MHL unbeaten – but 100% record blemished

By T. AVINESHWARAN

PETALING JAYA: Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UniKL) have ended their Malaysian Hockey League campaign unbeaten, but not all's perfect. It's a record with a blemish.

UniKL would have ended their league campaign with a 100% record if they had beaten Tenaga Nasional yesterday.

The side led by coach Arul Selvaraj had to fight back to hold Tenaga 1-1 in their final league match at the National Hockey Stadium in Bukit Jalil yesterday.

The first three quarters proved to be a drab affair but the game came to life in the fourth quarter as both sides went all out looking for a goal.

Shahril Saabah drew first blood for Tenaga when he scored in the

MALAYSIA HOCKEY LEAGUE RESULTS AND STANDINGS

RESULT							
MAYBANK	2 TERENGGANU 2						
TENAGA	1 UNIKL 1						
STANDINGS							
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
UNIKL	14	13	1	0	54	10	40
TENAGA	14	10	2	2	53	14	32
TERENGGANU	14	10	1	3	51	20	31
MAYBANK	14	6	2	6	37	37	20
UITM	14	4	2	8	23	37	14
NUR INSAFI	13	2	2	9	30	64	8
HOCKADEMY	13	2	1	10	16	53	7
TNB T'BOLT	14	1	3	10	25	54	6

51st minute but five minutes later, Ashran Hamsani equalised for UniKL.

Tenaga were looking to shock

the champions as they needed a win to confirm the second spot.

But they still secured second place after third-placed Terengganu only managed a come-from-behind 2-2 draw with Maybank, thanks to Jang Jong-hyun's double from penalty corners.

For Arul, he was happy to see his team end the campaign unbeaten but there was some dissatisfaction.

"I was a little disappointed with their mindset, but it is good to do it now than to do it during the semi-final," he said.

"Our passing was also a little affected. The drive was not there. I wished they had shown more determination.

"Right now, the semi-final will be our focus. Instead of looking at tactics, we have to build up the

players' confidence."

UniKL will be facing fourth-placed Maybank in the TNB Cup semi-final at the National Hockey Stadium on Feb 19.

Meanwhile, Tenaga coach Nor Saiful Zaini was happy with his charges as they showed great determination in the fourth quarter.

"We could have won the game. Our forward line was a little inexperienced but they will learn from this match.

"The young players have shown progress, and the fight shown in the fourth quarter was good to watch.

"We have a tougher assignment coming up against Terengganu, so it is time for me to prepare the boys for the game."

His side will face the east coast side on Feb 19.