

In good hands

Keeper Adrian proves worth in Charity Shield match

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PETALING JAYA: Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UniKL) have found a safe pair of hands in Adrian Albert.



Without imports this year, the goalkeeper justified his presence by playing a key role in their win over Tenaga Nasional in the Charity Shield match at the National Hockey Stadium on Friday.

UniKL retained the trophy after triumphing 4-3 in the penalty shootout after the match ended 0-0 in regulation time.

Adrian was in his element as he thwarted numerous attempts during the match and made two saves in the shootout.

He has proven to be the right replacement for Ireland's David Harte, who was imperious in helping them sweep all the titles (Malaysia Hockey League, TNB Cup and Charity Shield) last season.

The 23-year-old Adrian is just happy to live up to the team's expectations.

"The game against Tenaga was tense, but each one of us played their roles," said Adrian.

"I just kept calm and try to read the situations during the shootout.

"My job is to make saves and

I'm glad that it led us to retaining the Charity Shield for a third consecutive time.

"I wasn't the only match-winner but the ones who converted the goals are our heroes too," added Adrian, who attributed his growth to his former coach A. Arulsevaraj.

While happy with the fantastic start, Adrian wants his teammates to stay grounded as the season had just begun.

They play their second match against Terengganu today.

“We have to do better than this game. I hope all players will work on their weaknesses and show their true strength against Terengganu, who are another tough side,” he said.

Meanwhile, Tenaga coach Nor Azlan Bakar praised his players despite the defeat.

“We controlled the game, but it’s pointless if you do not convert your chances. I guess we do not have the luck to win the Shield,” he said.

“We face Nur Insafi next. They may not be as illustrious as UniKL or Maybank but we cannot underestimate any team.

“This defeat I’m sure will whet the players’ appetite to bounce back stronger and eventually snatch the league title from UniKL.”