No regrets joining UniKL
Young Faeez feels his hockey career has blossomed

BY AFTAR SINGH

KUALA LUMPUR: Defender Mohd Noor Faeez Ibrahim (pic) guided Malaysia to victory in the Junior Asia Cup in Malacca last year and was wooed by Malaysia Hockey League (MHL) debutants Terengganu with an irresistible offer to play for them.

But the Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UniKL) penalty corner drag flicker turned down the offer although six other national players joined the east coast team.

And now, as the 22-year-old looks back at that moment, he knows he had made the right choice as he’s now UniKL’s top scorer with eight goals in as many games. He’s also the third highest scorer in the league behind Tenaga Nasional’s Faizal Saari (10) and Maybank’s Khasif Ali (nine).

On Tuesday, Faeez was delighted to lead the National Juniors onto the stage to receive the 2012 Best Team Award at the National Sports Award ceremony. They were picked based on their first ever Junior Asia Cup triumph. The victory ensured Malaysia a place in the Junior World Cup in Chandigarh, India, in December.

However, Faeez will not get to feature in the Junior World Cup as he’ll be overaged.

Faeez, who was named the best player in the South-East Asia (SEA) Cup in Bangkok in 2009, was elated with the best team award.

“It was indeed an honour for me and the team ... it will spur us to do better in future tournaments, including the Junior World Cup,” said the soft-spoken Faeez.

“The National Juniors have talent and they just need to believe in their ability to ensure at least a top six finish in India.”

He reiterated his desire to continue playing for UniKL.

“UniKL are one big happy family and the officials have been great in encouraging us.

“What UniKL do for hockey should be emulated by other institutions of higher learning ... they not only give youngsters a chance to improve in hockey but also provide educational opportunities for the players’ future,” said Faeez.

UniKL are fourth in the Premier Division with nine points from eight matches. 

UniKL face a daunting task this week as they have two tough matches – against Maybank tomorrow and Tenaga Nasional on Sunday in Penang.
**PREMIER DIVISION**

(All matches at USM Hockey Stadium, Penang)

**TOMORROW**
- SAPURA vs TENAGA NASIONAL - 4pm
- UNIKL vs MAYBANK - 6pm
- NUR INSASI vs KLHC - 8pm

**SATURDAY**
- SAPURA vs TERENGGANU - 6pm

**SUNDAY**
- MAYBANK vs KLHC - 4pm
- UNIKL vs TENAGA NASIONAL - 6pm
- TERENGGANU vs NUR INSASI - 8pm

**STANDINGS**

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**DIVISION ONE**

**TOMORROW**
- Uitm vs MBI - 6pm
- UNITEN vs TNB THUNDERBOLT - 8pm
  (Pitch II, National Hockey Stadium, Bukit Jalil)
- BJSS vs SSTMI - 6pm
  (Education Ministry Turf, Jalan Pantai)

**SATURDAY**
- SUNDAY 2030 vs Uitm - 6pm
  (Pitch II, National Hockey Stadium, Bukit Jalil)

**SUNDAY**
- UNITEN vs SUNDAY 2030 - 6pm
- TNB THUNDERBOLT vs SSTMI - 8pm
  (Pitch II, National Hockey Stadium, Bukit Jalil)
- MBI vs BJSS - 6pm
  (Sultan Azlan Shah Stadium, Ipoh)

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