Sapura on a roll

SAPURA consolidated their superb win over Tenaga Nasional on Friday with an equally impressive 3-1 triumph over Terengganu in the Malaysian Hockey League Premier Division at Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang yesterday.

The first half was a case of missed opportunities for both sides. Terengganu had their fair share of chances when they were awarded three penalty corners but failed to convert any.

It was the same story for Sapura as they too squandered scoring opportunities presented by two penalty corners in the 21st and 32nd minutes to see both sides enter the break tied 0-0.

The match, however, came to life in the second half when Sapura took the lead in the 39th minute through Faridzul Afiq Mohammad but soon found themselves back on level terms when Terengganu’s Ismail Abu found the back of the net just two minutes later.

Sapura’s penalty corner specialist Khasif Ali, however, found his touch at the right time when he converted in the 59th minute to give his side the lead.

Faridzul Afiq then made it 3-1 for his side with he sneaked a field goal in the 61st minute.

With 14 points in the bag, the result saw Sapura close the gap with third placed TNB, who are on 15 points but have a game in hand.

Sapura coach Tai Beng Hai said he was delighted that his charges managed to neutralise the threat of Terengganu’s dangerous counter attacks.

“It was quite a close game but we managed to take our chances when they came and as a result, managed to get the win,” said the former national coach.

“On paper, I believe they are a stronger side than us as they have many national players.

“However, we managed to mark their key players and avoided being punished by their strong counter attacks.”

The attention will now turn to the match between Maybank and KLHC today as a win for the latter will see them seal the title.

Today — Premier Division: Maybank v KLHC (4pm), UniKL v TNB (6pm), Terengganu v Nur Insfai (8pm). (Matches at Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang)

Division One: Sunday 2030 v Uniten (National Stadium II, 6pm), TNB Thunderbolts v SSTMI (National Stadium II, 8pm), MBI vs BJSS (Sultan Azlan Shah Stadium, Ipoh, 6pm). By Fadhli Ishak