Tenaga lack power

Strikers were a big letdown in league campaign, says coach

By AFTAR SINGH

KUALA LUMPUR: Tenaga Nasional team manager Nor Saiful Zaini is annoyed with his team for “not playing to their true potential” in the Malaysia Hockey League (MHL).

“We started off well by winning the Charity Shield match against double champions KL Hockey Club last month. I then expected my team, powered by 10 national players, to kick on and lift the league title which we last won 10 years ago,” said the former international.

“But much to my disappointment, our league challenge faded badly.”

Tenaga are in third spot behind leaders KLHC and second-placed Maybank in the Premier League with 18 points from five wins, three draws and two defeats. KLHC, with 28 points, have wrapped up the title with two matches to spare while Maybank are second with 19 points.

Nor Saiful blamed his team’s failure on his strike force.

“We have four national forwards in the team but only Faizal (Saari) and Mohd Firhan (Ashaari) have scored regularly. The other two – Amir Farid (Ahmad Fuzi) and Mohd Azammi (Adabi) – have been a big letdown, having scored fewer than five goals in 10 matches,” said Nur Saiful, who guided Tenaga to the 2003 league title.

“I’m disappointed with Amir and Azammi .., as internationals, they’ve failed to deliver in the league.”

Tenaga will face KLHC on Friday before wrapping up their league fixtures against Terengganu on Sunday.

Nor Saiful said that his team must buck up if they hope to finish second and book a place in the semi-finals.

The top two teams in the league will be seeded for the knockout stage while the third and fourth-placed teams will take on the fifth and sixth teams in the Premier League to qualify for the semi-finals.

To make matters worse, Tenaga’s national defender Mohd Sallehin Abdul Ghani is down with an ankle injury and is not expected to play in this weekend’s matches.
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Talented: Mohd Hafif Elkan has been praised by his coach S. Arulselvaraj for showing improvement in his game.
**PREMIER DIVISION**

**FRIDAY**
- KLHC vs TENAGA NASIONAL - 6pm
  (Pitch I, National Hockey Stadium, Bukit Jalil)
- NUR INSAFI vs SAPURA - 6pm
- MAYBANK vs TERENGGANU - 8pm
  (Pitch II, National Hockey Stadium, Bukit Jalil)

**SATURDAY**
- UNIKL vs KLHC - 6pm
  (Pitch II, National Hockey Stadium, Bukit Jalil)

**SUNDAY**
- SAPURA vs MAYBANK - 6pm
  (Pitch I, National Hockey Stadium, Bukit Jalil)
- NUR INSAFI vs UNIKL - 6pm
- TERENGGANU vs TENAGA NASIONAL - 8pm
  (Pitch II, National Hockey Stadium, Bukit Jalil)

**DIVISION ONE**

**TOMORROW**
- BJSS vs Uitm - 6pm
  (Education Ministry Turf, Jalan Pantai)
- SSTMI vs SUNDAY 2030 - 6pm
  (Taman Daya Hockey Stadium, Johor Baru)
- MBI vs UNITEN - 8pm
  (Sultan Azlan Shah Hockey Stadium, Ipoh)

**FRIDAY**
- TNB THUNDERBOLT vs BJSS - 8pm
  (Pitch I, National Hockey Stadium, Bukit Jalil)

**SATURDAY**
- SUNDAY 2030 vs MBI - 8pm
  (Pitch II, National Hockey Stadium, Bukit Jalil)
- TNB THUNDERBOLT vs Uitm - 6pm
- UNITEN vs SSTMI - 8pm
  (Both matches at Pitch I, National Hockey Stadium, Bukit Jalil)