MHL: Champions fight back to tame UniKL

KUALA Lumpur Hockey Club (KLHC) overcame an early scare from UniKL before coming back to clinch a 4-2 win and emerge unbeaten in the Malaysian Hockey League (MHL) Premier Division this season. UniKL were dominant in the first half at the National Stadium in Bukit Jalil against a KLHC side missing Australian Timothy Deavin and Pakistani Waseem Ahmad due to suspension. Their attacking efforts paid off and found themselves leading KLHC by a goal going into the break thanks to a penalty corner converted by Mohd Noor Faeez Ibrahim in the 28th minute. UniKL, who lost 1-0 to Tenaga Nasional last week, looked on course for an upset victory when Muhd Syafiq Zulzairin netted just 10 minutes after the restart but it was not to be as KLHC proved why they recently clinched their eighth consecutive league title. The league champions found an extra gear and reeled-off four quick goals from Harvinder Singh, Muhammad Najib Abu Hassan and Akthar Ali (two) in the final 20 minutes. KLHC coach K. Dharmaraj said he was pleased with the character shown by his charges in their final league match this season. "We had quite a heavy match yesterday (Friday) against Tenaga and the boys started a bit slowly as we were also missing some players due to injuries and suspension," said Dharmaraj. "It is really good for team morale to finish the season unbeaten. The last time we managed to do it was in two years ago (2011)." Meanwhile, UiTM clinched the Division One title with a dramatic 5-4 win over second-placed TNB Thunderbolts, also at the National Stadium yesterday. It is UiTM's second after having also won the title in 2009. UiTM, whose only loss this season came in a 3-2 defeat to Tunku Mahkota Ismail Sports School, had lead Thunderbolts by only two points going into the final match. TODAY: Premier Division -- Nur Insafi v UniKL (National Stadium II, 6pm), Sapura v Maybank (National Stadium I, 6pm), Terengganu v TNB (National Stadium II, 8pm). UniKL's Baljit Singh Charun Singh (left) and KLHC's Nabil Fiqri Mohd Noor fight for the ball in their match yesterday. Pic by Sairien Nafis