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KLHC targeting fifth double

KL HOCKEY Club (KLHC) are aiming for a fifth Malaysia Hockey League (MHL) double as coach Dhaarma Raj Abdullah believes his side, led by six foreigners, can go unbeaten this season.

Following an impressive 5-0 thrashing of Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UniKL) on Friday, KLHC are confident of winning today's Charity Shield-cum-league match against a disorganised Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB) at the National Hockey Stadium in Bukit Jalil.

KLHC have signed five foreigners — Pakistan's Muhammad Imram, Wassem Ahmad, Fareed Ahmed, Muhamad Umar Bhutta, Akhtar Ali and Australian Timothy James Deavin — following the departure of several reputed players.

Despite the lack of training time as most of them represented their teams in the Azlan Shah Cup, KLHC have gelled well as shown by their win over UniKL.

"Our foreign signings showed mobility and adjusted to my strategies. It shows they are quality players but anyway, I expected them to adapt quickly so it was not a surprise," said Dhaarma in Bukit Jalil on Friday.

TNB, coached by former international Nor Azlan Bakar, failed to take advantage of an early 2-0 lead as newcomers Terengganu bounced back to force an unexpected 4-4 draw on Friday.

"I am happy that TNB slipped as it gives us a slight advantage. However,

it does not mean we can take them lightly on Sunday. They have experienced players and probably it was not their day against Terengganu."

KLHC did the double in 2008, 2010, 2011 and 2012.

Nor Azlan, meanwhile, said his players have not quite adjusted to play as some of his regulars were involved in the Azlan Shah Cup.

"We need to improve defensively and hopefully, will not concede goals on Sunday (today). Yes, the draw against Terengganu was unexpected but we must forget about it and build our confidence ahead of the Charity Shield," said Nor Azlan.

Meanwhile, Ipoh City Council-MBI have submitted a protest following their 4-2 defeat to Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) on Friday.

The protest, submitted by team manager Hakimi Abdul Hamid, claimed that UiTM had 12 players on the pitch until the 63rd minute of the match.

The MHL technical committee will deliberate on it today.

RESULT — Maybank 2 Terengganu 1.

TODAY — Premier Division: Nur Insafi Warriors v UniKL (USM Stadium; 6pm), Sapura v Maybank (6pm), TNB v KLHC (8pm).

Division One: TNB Thunderbolts v Uniten (6pm), UiTM v SSTMI (8pm), Ipoh-MBI v Sunday 2030 KL (Sultan Azlan Shah Stadium; 6pm).

(Matches at National Hockey Stadium pitches unless stated otherwise) **By Ajitpal Singh**