



Headline	Former champions aim to collect full points from two tough		
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Former champions aim to collect full points from two tough matches

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KUALA LUMPUR: Former champions Tenaga Nasional face a tough weekend in search of their first win in the Malaysia Hockey League (MHL). They play Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UniKL) today before taking on Sapura tomorrow knowing that nothing short of maximum points will put their title ambitions back on track after two straight draws. They drew 4-4 with newcomers Terengganu and 3-3 with double champions KL Hockey Club (KLHC). Tenaga stand-in manager Nor Saiful Zaini admitted that this was a crucial weekend for them. The only way to stay in the title mix is to collect full points from both matches. We are not underestimating the two teams, he said. Our target is to win at least one of the two titles at stake this year. So, there's no way we want to be left behind in the chase for the league title. Nor Saiful said that the team was more settled now after the two matches. Yes, we have more national players this time around. But they are still young and need time to play as a unit. We are confident of turning our fortunes around but, like I said, it has to start with victories this weekend, he said. UniKL and Sapura also have reliable players and have been on team-rebuilding exercises the last few years. I think the results of the first weekend have shown that no team can be taken for granted. Tenaga's quest for a double joy this weekend will hinge on the form of three key players: skipper Mohd Amin Rahim, who is also their penalty corner specialist; goalkeeper S. Kumar; and former national skipper Mohd Madzli Ikmal. All three are at the heart of the Tenaga defence. Tenaga also has an exciting forward line comprising Faizal Saari, Amir Farid, Mohd Ramdhan Rosli, Mohd Azzami Adabi and Mohd Firhan Azahari. Faizal, last year's top scorer in the MHL, has already notched four goals in two matches. He is also adept at taking penalty corners as he is the national team's main flicker. What's exciting about this group of players is that they are all very young and members of the national team. So this is a chance for them to mould themselves into a good attacking unit and enhance their playing potential. I expect this combination to be lethal but it will come with a lot of hard work. They must be committed, said Nor Saiful. Another interesting clash today will see leaders Maybank taking on KLHC. A win for the Tigers will confirm them as real title contenders. The match is also important for the champions to get their title tilt back on track.