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## Roel has striking role for champs UniKL

By AFTAR SINGH

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Dutch international Roel Bovendeert (*pic*) wants to add firepower to Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UniKL) in the Malaysia Hockey League (MHL) which begins today.

Reigning league champions UniKL face defending overall champions Terengganu in the Charity Shield match at the National Hockey Stadium in Bukit Jalil.

This year, UniKL are planning on wresting the due overall champions' title from Terengganu.

Bovendeert's experience playing in the Champions Trophy in Breda, Holland, in 2018 and last year's FIH Pro League will definitely play a big part in helping UniKL bag the double - league and TNB (overall) Cup.

The 27-year-old Bovendeert, who

plays for Dutch club HC Bloemendaal, said it was always a new experience playing in a foreign league.

"I am excited to be here, excited to be welcomed by my teammates. Even the rain is welcoming me (it rained when UniKL had their training on Wednesday night at the Bukit Jalil Stadium)," said Bovendeert, both hands pointing to the sky.

"I learned a lot about UniKL and the MHL from my Dutch teammates like Robbert Kemperman, Valentin Verga and Martijn Peter, who played in here last year.

"They spoke highly of UniKL and the opposition teams.

"It is a good league and I am looking forward to having an enjoyable outing.

"I hope to add more bite in the forwardline and start the league by collecting full points in the Charity

Shield match," added Bovendeert.

UniKL are also powered by three other imports in Australians Kieran Govers and Timothy Deavin and Irish international goalkeeper David Harte.

Harte, however, will not play in the first two matches against Terengganu today and Hockey Academy of Kuala Lumpur on Sunday as he will only arrive on Jan 15.

Sabah-born goalkeeper Adrian Andy Albert will play in his absence.

Eight teams will feature in the men's league.

Besides Terengganu, UniKL, powered by seven national players, will also face a strong challenge from Tenaga Nasional who have 13 national players.

Meanwhile, UniKL unveiled their new jersey and introduced players



for the 2020 MHL at the Tengku Abdullah Hockey Stadium in Bangi yesterday.

Also present were UniKL director of sporting club and assistant manager Jaldin Ahmad, head coach Arul Selvaraj, team captain Marhan Mohd Jalil and players.

Representing UniKL hockey president Datuk Amir Azhar Ibrahim at the event, Jaldin said UniKL have

### MALAYSIA HOCKEY LEAGUE

#### > TODAY'S MATCHES

KEDAH-NURINSAFI vs UITM 5pm  
*(Sungai Petani Hockey Stadium)*

MAYBANK vs HOCKADEMY KL 5pm  
*(National Hockey Stadium in Bukit Jalil, Pitch 2)*

TENAGA NASIONAL vs TNB 6pm

UNIKL vs TERENGGANU 8pm  
*(Matches at National Hockey Stadium in Bukit Jalil, Pitch 1)*

renewed hope and optimism for the MHL.

"For the first time, we have set our target of a double after winning the TNB Cup in 2018 and league title last year.

"Our greatest challenge is expected to come from Terengganu and Tenaga Nasional and we are also not underestimating any team in the league," added Jaldin.