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HOCKEY

HOCKADEMY JOIN MHL FRAY

KL team will be powered by two Australian women

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HOCKADEMY is the new face that will add an exciting element to the Malaysia Hockey League (MHL) which starts today.

The Kuala Lumpur-based HockAdemy will compete on two fronts in the national league: men's and women's divisions.

They want to make an instant impact in the women's category with a top-two finish.

But as for the HockAdemy men, they are not as ambitious as their

women, they will be happy to avoid the bottom spot.

Yes, that would be good enough, according to Kuala Lumpur Hockey Association (KLHA) president Datuk Seri Megat D. Shahrman.

"We have assembled a development squad peppered with three seniors for the men's MHL challenge, so we do not expect much from them.

"All we want is for them to enjoy the sport, and try and avoid the bottom spot among eight teams."

The three seniors are Baljit Singh Sarjab, Harvinder Singh and Harmesh Singh. HockAdemy's foreign players from Pakistan are Riaz Rana Suhail, Nadeem Ahmad and Ali Rizwan.

"As for the women, we have managed to secure six national players and so their target will be a top-two finish in the League," said Megat.

KLHA will compete in the MHL for the first time, and Megat hopes their effort is emulated by other states and clubs.

"In recent times, the MHL has become very expensive to compete in and the top rich clubs have the resources to get national, as well, as top foreign players.

"KLHA want to break this tradition because we want to propagate "hockey for everybody".

"That is why we have included as many young players as possible to give them a chance to play in the elite league.

"We might not produce results, but we will give more budding players a chance to play in the MHL," said Megat.

The other teams in the men's category are Maybank, Tenaga Nasional, Nurinsafi, TNB Thunderbolts and Universiti Teknologi Mara.

In the women's category, HockAdemy will be challenging Terengganu Ladies Hockey Team, the League champions, for the major titles.

"We have invested in the women's team and got two guest players from Australia this season. KLHA plan to secure more quality players next season," said Megat.

HockAdemy's two Australian "signings" are Hannah Kate Astbury and Ashley Kate Fey.

The MHC Charity Shield will begin with Overall champions Terengganu Hockey Team (THT) battling League champions Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UniKL) today at National Stadium in Bukit Jalil.

UniKL will have to do without Irish No 1 goalkeeper David Harte as he will only arrive in Malaysia on Jan 15.

That means THT will have a better chance of beating UniKL for the Charity Shield as well as getting three points today.



Kuala Lumpur Hockey Association president Datuk Seri Megat D. Shahrman (standing centre) with the HockAdemy men's and women's players who will be competing in the MHL at a press conference in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. PIC BY OWEE AH CHUN