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## More exciting matches assured in the MHL this season

By S. RAMAGURU

**KUALA LUMPUR:** There will be extra spice in Division One of this season's Malaysia Hockey League (MHL).

After years of resisting the move, the Malaysian Hockey Confederation (MHC) have finally decided to open the door to foreign players.

Each team will now be allowed to have three foreigners in their ranks.

The move is a big departure from the past with the MHC refusing to allow foreigners in Division One since the MHL's inception in 1987.

Only teams in the Premier Division enjoyed the luxury of hiring foreigners. A total of 29 foreigners, mainly from Pakistan, featured last season.

Competitions committee chairman George Koshy said the presence of foreign players would make the matches more interesting and exciting in Division One.

"In the past, Division One sides also lost out on the hiring of local national players. Almost all our national players played for Premier Division teams last year," said George.

But he added that the MHC may restrict the number of foreign players for each team in the top flight.

Last season each team were allowed to sign up to six foreigners.

Only Tenaga Nasional fielded an all-local side. The other teams who took part in the six-team Premier Division were Terengganu, Kuala Lumpur Hockey Club (KLHC), Sapura, Maybank and Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UniKL).

Terengganu, powered by eight national players and five foreigners, were crowned double champions - league and TNB Cup - for the second straight year.