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Three-horse race

Sapura, KLHC and Terengganu to battle it out for Premier Div title

By AFTAR SINGH

KUALA LUMPUR: Three teams will be battling it out this weekend for the Malaysia Hockey League (MHL) Premier Division title.

Sapura lead the six-team standings with 18 points from six wins and two defeats. Kuala Lumpur Hockey Club (KLHC) are breathing down their necks with 17 points.

In third spot and two points adrift of the leaders are double champions Terengganu on 16 points. And with two matches to go, the race for the title will be intense.

Sapura, who won the inaugural Tan Sri P. Alagendra Knockout Trophy on Tuesday, will face Terengganu at Batu Buruk Stadium in Terengganu today.

And on Sunday, Sapura hosts Maybank at the Tun Razak Stadium. Sapura have the psychological advantage as they have beaten Terengganu (2-0) and Maybank (2-1) in the first

round matches.

KLHC will take on Tenaga today before the wrapping up their fixtures against Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UniKL) on Sunday. Terengganu will play their final game at home against Tenaga on Sunday.

Sapura coach Yahya Atan said that it would be a crucial weekend for them as they eye another title within five days.

"My players are in high spirit after winning the Tan Sri P. Alagendra trophy. And they have vowed to give their best in the final two matches and win our second title," said Yahya.

"We would face a strong challenge from Terengganu as they will also be going all out to beat us to stay on course for the title.

"I hope my players will be mentally strong to get the better of Terengganu in their own backyard," said Yahya.

Terengganu coach Sarjit Singh said the leaders are playing well

but they would go all out to deny them full points.

"I believe KLHC have a better chance of lifting the title as they face minnows Tenaga tomorrow and UniKL on Sunday.

"For us we'll be more than happy if we can finish in the top two," said Sarjit.

Faizal Saari will be back to lead the Terengganu strike force after serving a two-match suspension.

KLHC team manager Ahmad Anuar Sham Kamar said their hopes of winning the league title would depend on the outcome of the Sapura-Terengganu match.

"If it ends in a draw then it will give us an advantage. But we must win against Tenaga and they are not easy meat as they held us 2-2 in the first round.

"They could turn out to be the spoiler for us," said Ahmad.

Winless Tenaga are bottom of the standings with just three points from three draws and five defeats.



TODAY'S FIXTURES & STANDINGS

PREMIER DIVISION

MAYBANK vs UNIKL 6pm
(Bukit Serendit Hockey, Malacca)

TENAGA vs KLHC 6pm
(Kuala Lumpur Hockey Stadium)

TERENGGANU vs SAPURA 5.30pm
(Batu Buruk Hockey Stadium, Terengganu)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
SAPURA	8	6	0	2	14	11	18
KLHC	8	5	2	1	25	11	17
TERENGGANU	8	5	1	2	22	14	16
UNIKL	8	2	1	5	8	12	7
MAYBANK	8	2	1	5	16	30	7
TENAGA	8	0	3	5	14	21	3