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Shot in the arm

Possible national team recall a big boost for Terengganu's Tengku Ahmad

By S. RAMAGURU

KUALA LUMPUR: Terengganu forward Tengku Ahmad Tajuddin has received a timely boost ahead of his team's Premier Division title-deciding clash against Kuala Lumpur Hockey Club (KLHC) today.

National coach Stephen van Huizen said yesterday that he is considering recalling Tengku Ahmad to the national team.

Tengku Ahmad last donned national colours in the World Hockey League Semi-Finals in Antwerp, Belgium, in July 2015.

"There is no doubt that if we were to pick players based on merit, then he has to be among those who should be considered. That means we will also considering him for the Dhaka tournament (World Hockey League Round Two).

"It is up to him to prove himself and make the cut," said Stephen.

The 31-year-old Tengku Ahmad was the top scorer among local players last year. He is set to upstage the other national players for a second time this year.

Tengku Ahmad, who has scored 12 goals so far this season, was called up to train with the national team on an attachment basis for the last few weeks.

With a possible national team recall on the cards, Tengku Ahmad will be all fired up to help Terengganu chalk up a unique record of winning four consecutive Premier Division titles at the KL Hockey Stadium today.

Terengganu coach Sarjit Singh admitted that Tengku Ahmad "has played an important role for us over the last two years".

"Based on his form, he deserves a (national) call-up. But right now, our focus is on the Premier Division title.

"KLHC are getting stronger with each match and we have to work extra hard. It is going to be touch-and-go," said Sarjit, who has also decided to register the injured Faizal Saari for today match.

Faizal has not played for the last three weeks after suffering a torn hamstring.

"He is getting better ... we're hoping that he will recover for this match.

"We have included him in the team list for the game."

This will be the fourth time since 2014 that Terengganu and KLHC will be involved in a straight fight for the Premier Division title.

Both teams drew their opening match



FIXTURES

PREMIER DIVISION

> TODAY

TENAGA NASIONAL vs UNIKL 6pm
KLHC vs TERENGGANU 8pm

(Both matches at KL Hockey Stadium)

SSTMI vs TNB-T'BOLT 5pm

(SSTMI Hockey Stadium, Bandar Penawar)

MAYBANK vs UITM-KPT 6pm

(Bukit Serendit Hockey Stadium, Malacca)

STANDINGS

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----|
| TERENGGANU | 13 | 10 | 3 | 0 | 71 | 11 | 33 |
| KLHC | 13 | 10 | 3 | 0 | 58 | 19 | 33 |
| TENAGA | 13 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 45 | 19 | 25 |
| UNIKL | 13 | 7 | 2 | 4 | 35 | 19 | 23 |
| MAYBANK | 13 | 5 | 1 | 7 | 29 | 38 | 16 |
| TNB-T'BOLT | 13 | 4 | 1 | 8 | 23 | 42 | 13 |
| UITM-KPT | 13 | 0 | 2 | 11 | 15 | 67 | 2 |
| SSTMI | 13 | 0 | 2 | 11 | 7 | 68 | 2 |

RESULTS

DIVISION ONE

| | | | |
|---------------|---|--------------------|---|
| RMAF R'JAWALI | 1 | NUR INSAFI | 6 |
| JOHOR | 4 | POLICE | 5 |
| MBPJ | 3 | P'TEKNIK M'SIA-KPT | 2 |
| UPM-KPT | 3 | BJSS | 4 |

this season and they both accumulated 33 points to be joint leaders in the eight-team standings.

Terengganu, who top the table with a superior goal difference, need only a draw today to clinch retain the title.

But Sarjit has ruled out any plans to park the bus.

"No, we will go all out for a win.

"I will not take the risk by playing for a draw," he said.



Formidable forward: Terengganu's Tengku Ahmad Tajuddin (front) last donned national colours in the World Hockey League Semi-Finals in Antwerp, Belgium, in July 2015.