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## Haziq more clinical after surgery

**KUALA LUMPUR:** An eight-month layoff due to a knee surgery has not affected former international Mohd Haziq Samsul's (*pic*) performances in the Malaysia Hockey League (MHL).

The 26-year-old forward, who underwent surgery last May, showed he is in good form scoring six goals in four matches for Maybank in the MHL.

Haziq, who last played for Malaysia in the Asia Cup in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in 2017, scored a brace against Hockey Academy of Kuala Lumpur in the opening match on Jan 10 as the Tigers won 4-1.

The Perak-born player also scored against Universiti Teknologi Mara (UTM) in the 4-1 win and was in his element with a hattrick to steer the Tigers to their biggest win, a 9-3 whipping of

minnows Kedah-Nurinsafi.

He only failed to score against Tenaga Nasional in the match that they lost 0-2.

Haziq, who is top scorer for the Tigers in the MHL, said he was enjoying his hockey after the long break.

"I am playing well and not showing any rustiness in my game after the knee surgery. I am also quite pleased with my goalscoring in the league.

"It felt nice to score a hattrick against Kedah-Nurinsafi on Saturday but I still believe I need to be sharper," said Haziq, who joined Maybank last April.

"I have scored against the weaker teams but I must score against stronger teams like Tenaga Nasional, Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UniKL) and Terengganu.

"I did not score against Tenaga who have 13 national players but I hope to do so against UniKL and Terengganu," said Haziq.

The Tigers have nine points from three wins and a defeat and they next face TNB Thunderbolt on Wednesday at the National Hockey Stadium in Bukit Jalil.

Their biggest challenge will be playing two away matches against reigning league champions UniKL in Bangi on Jan 29 and defending TNB (overall) Cup winners Terengganu in Kuala Terengganu on Jan 31.

Haziq said his goal is to help Maybank finish in the top four to qualify for the TNB Cup.

"I also want to continue scoring goals to impress the national selectors before the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup (in Ipoh from April 11-18).



"I believe I am on the right path for a national call-up but I must play much better in the MHL to get my place in the national team," said Haziq, who has 68 international caps.

He featured in the World League semi-finals in London in 2017 when Malaysia did well to finish fourth and qualify for the 2018 World Cup in Bhubaneswar, India.