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SSTMI clinch seventh MJHL overall title



Happy bunch: SSTMI Thunderbolt players and officials posing with the trophies and prizes after clinching the MJHL overall title last night. — M. AZHAR ARIF/The Star

By AFTAR SINGH

KUALA LUMPUR: It is seventh heaven for Tunku Mahkota Ismail Sports School (SSTMI)-Thunderbolt in the Malaysian Junior Hockey League (MJHL).

The Johor sports school edged Pahang Hockey Academy (AHP)-MSP-Thunderbolt 4-3 in a penalty shootout to win their seventh overall title in the final at the Tun Razak Hockey Stadium last night. The match ended 2-2 in regulation time.

SSTMI now boast a total of 13 titles in the Under-19 league, winning seven overall and six league crowns since 2010.

SSTMI, who were 2-1 winners over Pahang Hockey Academy 2-1 in the league, grabbed the lead after just nine minutes. Mohd Akhimullah Anuar Esook beat a defender in the semi-circle before hammering the ball past goalkeeper Muhd Hamiz Mohd Ahir. It was his 16th goal and it landed him the top scorer award.

But SSTMI's joy was shortlived. Pahang Hockey Academy equalised a minute later through Muhd Hazzim Amin Hafidz from close range.

SSTMI then regained the lead in the 24th minute with Muhd Fikri Ammerrunizzar sounding the board off a penalty corner.

Pahang Hockey Academy went all out in the last quarter. They were rewarded when Mohd Idris Samad equalised in the 55th minute.

In the shootout, Mohd Hanif Saad, Syarman Mat Tee, Mohd Amirul Hamizan Azhar and Shello Silverius netted for SSTMI. In contrast, Pahang Hockey Academy could only manage to convert through Syamil Azim Dzulkafly,

FINAL RESULTS

BOYS
AHP-MSP-THUNDERBOLT 2 SSTMI THUNDERBOLT 2
(SSTMI win 4-3 in penalty shootout)
GIRLS
SSTMI 1 WIPERS KL 1
(SSTMI win 3-2 in penalty shootout)

Muhd Izham Azhar and Wan Muhd Asyraf Ahmad Dzaib.

Said SSTMI coach Wan Roslan Wan Abdul Rahman: "Pahang Hockey Academy gave us a fierce fight. I'm relieved that my players did well in the shootout.

"It's great to win the overall crown. But the other teams have improved a lot and we need to start preparing from now for next year's league."

Pahang Hockey Academy coach Mohd Sufian Mohamed was disheartened for failing to win their maiden title.

"We played our hearts out. It was rather unfortunate that we lost in the shootout. But I'm happy with my players' commitment. We will be back with a much stronger team next year," said Sufian.

It was a double delight for SSTMI as the girls' team also emerged overall champions by beating Wipers Kuala Lumpur 3-2 in a sudden-death penalty shootout. The teams were tied 1-1 in regulation time.

Hasya Syahida Saifuddin gave the Wipers the lead in the fourth minute off a penalty corner. But SSTMI, who won the league title last week, equalised through Norrobiatun Norhisham in the 49th minute.

Nur Hafizah Maznan then starred for SSTMI, converting in the sudden-death shootout while Wipers' Nur Natasha Mohd Asrul Effendi failed in her attempt.