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Thunderbolts ready to enter uncharted Territory

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PETALING JAYA: TNB Thunderbolts will be entering into unknown territory as they will be the first team in the Malaysian Hockey League (MHL) this season to play Australian team Territory Stingers.

Although there is some time before Thunderbolts take on the MHL debutants on Feb 5, the young team's head coach M. Kaliswaran are treading carefully.

He is aware that the team will be heading into the match with no experience playing the new team, and he wants to remain cautious.

"We are going into the fixture quite blindly because it's a team that I don't have any knowledge on.

"I can't afford to be too adventurous because they can capitalise on mistakes, but at the same time I can't be too open in the game because they could get past us easily," he said.

Kaliswaran does have confidence in his team after they thrashed Matador 6-2 at the National Hockey Stadium in Bukit Jalil on Sunday, but tactics will need to be adjusted on the go against the new team.

"I will need some time to study the Australian team. I will stick to my plan as usual at the start.

"Maybe, after we play the first quarter with them, then I will make some changes according to the team's strengths and weaknesses," he said.

At the end of last year, Malaysian Hockey Confederation (MHC) president Datuk Seri Subahan Kamal announced that the Australian team were interested in joining the league through a three-year memorandum of understanding (MoU).

TNB Thunderbolts are currently fourth in the league after five matches, having won three of them and have nine points behind Maybank in third, followed by Tenaga Nasional in second and Terengganu at the top.