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TNB end 20-year wait to win MHL Cup

TENAGA NASIONAL BERHAD (TNB) ended a 21-year wait to clinch the 2024 Malaysian Hockey League (MHL) title after demolishing JM Antsbees 22-1 in a goal-spree at Padang 1 of the Bukit Jalil National Hockey Stadium on Tuesday night.

The victory was also the sixth for TNB, after having won the league in 1990, 1991-92 (competing as Kelab Kilat), 2000-2001, 2002 with the last title in a distant 2003.

Standing out in the goal-fest was Muhammad Azrai Aizad Abu Kamal who became the top scorer in the match with lightning-quick goals in the 10th, 12th, 33rd, 33rd, 47th and 53rd minutes.

Meanwhile, team coach Nor Saiful Zaini admitted that the presence of South Korean penalty corner specialist Jang Jong Hyun helped tremendously in changing the rhythm of the team's game on the field.

"In the beginning, it was hard to win. We didn't start well this year because we have a lot of new players.

"However, we learned a lot about having to prepare right, that before the first match is the pre-determined (spirit to win) it.

"The way we play, we are really looking forward to the action in the TNB Cup... we want to keep the momentum in the TNB Cup (top

four teams in the league play in the semifinals) until the final. We don't really aim for goals, we want to play like they do as national players," he said.

The title-lift was even sweeter as Nor Saiful Zaini's men had earlier won the 2024 Charity Shield after winning 3-1 in a penalty shoot-out against the Terengganu Hockey Team (THT) on Feb 1.

In deciding the league title, TNB's goal fest made all the difference as the powerbrokers had entered Tuesday's last match tied with Maybank and THT on 23 points each from nine matches but TNB topped the 11-team league with a huge goal difference. – Bernama