

# Angels to live up to their name



Serdang Angels took the gold medal at the Malaysian Institutions of Higher Learning Games last year.

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**S**ERDANG Angels may be the new kids on the block in the Malaysian Rugby Union (MRU) Super League but it would be no surprise if the Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) outfit upset the formbook in only their first outing in the competition this year.

Angels coach Zyuraiddi Abdul Majid said the top-flight tournament will be a big step up for his boys but is nevertheless eyeing a top-four finish for his team in their debut season.

The team have already tasted success at lower levels last year, having won gold at the Malaysian

Institutions of Higher Learning Games and clinching the Selangor Division One title.

"Our main goal in the Super League is to give the boys exposure. However, the team management and myself have also set a top-four target for the boys this year," said Zyuraiddi.

"We have a big pool of 56 players in our setup at the moment which includes a new batch of 15 players that we have handpicked from schools across the country.

"I feel we have the potential to do well with this group of players but will have to raise our game to make an impact.

"They (players) will have to adapt quickly to playing against the country's top clubs on a weekly basis if we are to finish well."

Angels' success in capturing the Selangor league has earned them a berth in the National Inter-club Championships (NICC) this year where they finished runners-up to Negri Sembilan Wanderers in the competition.

Their NICC's result subsequently saw them promoted to the Super League by virtue of their top-three finish.

Despite the MRU's new ruling this season which allows clubs to register up to eight foreign players per team, Zyuraiddi has stressed that the team will remain a purely all-local outfit.

UPM is the Malaysian Universities Sports Excellence Centre (PKS) for rugby in the country. Under the programme, the Higher Education Ministry channels up to

RM500,000 in funds to UPM to develop the sport in universities across the country.

Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) Lions are the only other university team playing in the Super League.

"Being the PKS for rugby in the country, our goal is to produce and develop players capable of representing the country one day.

"I believe that most of the clubs competing in the Super League will be taking advantage of this new ruling which will leave us as possibly the only team without imports.

"We will have to find a way to play to our strengths and try to avoid falling into the trap of letting our opponents play their favoured game."

## CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOMED

The sports page in Streets is dedicated to the community and we welcome contributions from residents associations, schools, the private sector and institutions of higher learning.

E-mail your reports and pictures to [nstsport@nstp.com.my](mailto:nstsport@nstp.com.my).

Angels have been placed in the same group as defending champions Cobra, Asas RFC, Bandaraya Dragons, Royal Selangor Club and RAMD Warriors.