

It's a matter of the heart

Sukri switches focus to hockey after breakup with girlfriend

MHL RESULTS AND STANDINGS	
DIVISION ONE	
BJSS	0 MBI 2
UiTM	2 THUNDERBOLTS 1
	P W D L F A P
UiTM	4 4 0 0 15 5 12
THUNDERBOLTS	5 3 1 1 15 5 10
UNITEN-KPT	5 3 0 2 11 6 9
MBI	5 2 1 2 13 11 7
SUNDAY 2030	4 2 0 2 8 10 6
BJSS	3 0 0 3 1 9 0
SSTMI	4 0 0 4 4 21 0
FIXTURES AND STANDINGS	
TODAY	
PREMIER DIVISION: TERENGGANU vs KLHC	
6pm; MAYBANK vs NUR INSAFI 6pm; SAPURA vs UNIKL 8pm; (All matches at Pitch 1 and 2 of the Kuantan Hockey Stadium)	
	P W D L F A P
KLHC	4 3 1 0 19 6 10
MAYBANK	4 3 0 1 14 9 9
TENAGA	4 1 3 0 13 11 6
SAPURA	4 1 2 1 10 10 5
TERENGGANU	4 1 1 2 12 11 4
UNIKL	4 1 0 3 5 14 3
NUR INSAFI	4 0 1 3 3 15 1



Easy decision: KLHC's Mohd Sukri Abdul Mutalib (left) says his hockey career is more important than having a relationship.

By **AFTAR SINGH**

KUALA LUMPUR: National defender Mohd Sukri Abdul Mutalib was distraught after breaking up with his girlfriend last year. But the KL Hockey Club (KLHC) player never let his emotions affect his hockey career.

The 27-year-old Perak-born player said he went through a devastating time after breaking off with his girlfriend of three years.

"I don't want to have another girlfriend after breaking off with my first love," said Sukri. "I just want to focus on my hockey career ... it's more important than having a relationship.

"I also don't want to think about getting married. I just want focus on my studies and get a degree in Physical Education from Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM)."

Sukri also intends to help KLHC retain their Premier Division title.

KLHC lead the seven-team standings with 10 points from three wins and a draw. They face debutants Terengganu today before taking on Sapura on Sunday on the blue astroturf in Kuantan.

Sukri, who has donned national colours 167 times, is confident they can win both the matches and stay on course for the league title.

"The match against Terengganu will be awkward as they will be fielding six former KLHC players," he said.

"The six were key players of KLHC and we know their game well. But, we'll have no time for sentiments and will go all out to secure full points against them."

The six national players from KLHC who joined Terengganu this season are Azlan Mison, Tengku Ahmad Tajuddin, Mohd Shahrin Nabil, Ismail Abu, Mohd Fitri Saari and Mohd Amerullah Abdul Aziz.

Chance to gauge SEA Games exponents

By **ASHREENA PILLAI**

PETALING JAYA: National coach R. Puvaneswaran intends to use the SEAKF Karate Championships later this month to gauge their rivals' strength for the December SEA Games in Myanmar.

The SEAKF meet will be held at Clark, Pampanga in the Philippines from April 16-21.

"This is a very important meet for us. Since it's a regional karate meet, it will allow us to size up our competition for the SEA Games. It's like a free pass for us to gauge the strengths and weaknesses of our rivals. It will give us a good idea on what to expect in Myanmar," he said.

Puvaneswaran also said that the SEAKF meet was one of two crucial tournaments - the other is the Asian Championships in Dubai in September - for his exponents ahead of the SEA Games.

And he wants his charges to also take full advantage of the Dubai meet as it would be almost like a prelude to the SEA Games.

Puvaneswaran will be hoping for an improved performance from his charges after their positive showing at the K1 Slovenia World Cup in March, when they returned

home with four bronzes - through Nisha Alagasan (women's kumite below 55kg), Nur Eleena Malik (women's kumite below 50kg), S. Senthil Kumaran (men's kumite below 75kg) and R. Govinash (men's kumite below 60kg).

The coach is also counting on the back-up squad - comprising Senthil, Govinash, Thanaseelan (men's kumite below 55kg), R. Sharmendran (men's kumite below 67kg), J. Sharrma (men's kumite below 75kg) - as well as youngsters P. Tarshyent (men's kumite below 55kg) and Priya Shankari (women's kumite below 48kg) - to step up their game.

Puvaneswaran warned his charges that much will be riding on their performances at the SEAKF meet as he would use it to map out his team selection for the Games.

"They did well at the World Cup last month. Hopefully, they can come up with another good performance this time. Everything has gone well during training and I'm confident we'll be able to win a few gold medals in Pampanga," he said.

"The tournament is the lowest-tier competition ... but that does not mean our exponents will have it easy. All I ask of them is to give it their best."