

LICENCE TO EXCEL

OVERDUE: NSC wants coaches to move up a grade

THE National Sports Council plans to soon make it compulsory for all coaches aspiring to guide national teams to have licences.

The move, said NSC director general Datuk Seri Zolkples Embong, was also aimed at reducing Malaysia's dependency on foreign coaches, who have been a mainstay here since the country won the bid to host the 1998 Commonwealth Games.

"I would also like to see Malaysia export coaches to other countries and this can only be possible if our coaches and former athletes are willing to upgrade themselves."

→ Report on **Page 47**



National Sports Council director general **Datuk Seri Zolkples Embong** (fifth from left) presents a coaching licence to a participant in Bukit Jalil yesterday.

Coaching licence a must soon

THE National Sports Council (NSC) will soon make it compulsory for locals to obtain licences from the National Coaching Academy (NCA) before they become national coaches in any sport.

NSC director general Datuk Seri Zolkples Embong said the move is to reduce Malaysia's dependency on foreign coaches while former athletes can look to coaching as a full-time career.

However, the former athletes must have at least sports science and sports specific certificates in order to earn their licences for better knowledge and expertise.

"Fast-tracking retired athletes into coaches is still being practiced by the national sports associations (NSAs) due to shortages of coaches.

"However, we may have to make it compulsory for them to have coaching and sports certificates to earn their licences first," said

Zolkples.

"Coaching is one of the integral areas where NSC is looking to develop and we want more ex-internationals to become qualified coaches and consider it as a full-time career.

"It was really hard to coax former athletes to undergo coaching and have sports science certificates initially and there are some senior coaches who have not attended those courses even until today.

"When I was the BA of Malaysia secretary several years back, there were so many coaches without certificates but it is changing now.

"We have spent so much on hiring foreign coaches since the Jaya '98 programme and this can be reduced if our coaches are well trained and are licensed.

"I am looking forward to the day where Malaysian coaches are hired by other countries on a regular basis."

Zolkples launched the coaching licence pro-

gramme, organised by Universiti Putra Malaysia sports academy in collaboration with NSC and NCA, where 20 former athletes obtained their certificates in Bukit Jalil yesterday.

The UPM sports academy's goal is to assist NCA by focusing on students interested in becoming licenced coaches at local universities and other institutions of higher learning.

UPM sports academy director, associate professor Dr. S. Shamala said their focus is to increase the number of qualified coaches by conducting courses for university students and also offer current national athletes the chance to have coaching certificates as it would become an advantage when they retire.

A total 39 wushu national senior and back-up exponents are currently attending the sports science and sports specific courses under UPM sports academy. They will be the second batch to receive coaching certificates next month. **By K.M. Boopathy**