

Harvinder opts out

Forward forgoes hockey training for studies

By AFTAR SINGH

KUALA LUMPUR: Forward Harvinder Singh is the third player to withdraw from the national hockey training squad.

Last week, defenders Engku Malek and Azreen Rizal Nasir pulled out of the training team.

The Kuala Lumpur-born Harvinder, who is pursuing a degree in account-



For the greater good: Forward Harvinder Singh (right) is the third player to withdraw from the national hockey training squad as he has to undergo six months of internship starting from next month.

Harvinder has decided to sacrifice hockey for his studies.

"I love to play hockey for the country and was looking forward to representing Malaysia in tournaments this year.

"But I have to undergo six months of internship this year otherwise I would not be able to graduate next May," said Harvinder.

"I have been called up for national training a few times but I have only played for Malaysia once in the nine-a-side hockey tournament in Perth last October. It was not even a proper hockey tournament.

"My hopes of playing for the nation-

al team this year will not materialise now because my internship will only conclude in July.

"By the time my internship is over, the players would have played four major tournaments. However, I hope to be called up for national training next year," said Harvinder, whose elder brother Kelvinder is now a Police Inspector at the Police Training Centre (Pulapol) in KL.

National chief coach K. Dharmaraj said that it is unfortunate Kelvinder has to go for his practical this year. He added that if the 24-year-old stays fit, he will be called up for training next year.

Dharmaraj said that Engku Malek withdrew because he is overweight and needs to lose a few kilograms while Azreen also pulled out because of an internship.

Azreen is pursuing a degree in sports science at UPM.

The national team will kick off the season at the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup in Ipoh from March 13-23.

The other tournaments lined up for the year are the Champions Challenge 1 in Kuantan from April 26-May 4, World Cup in The Hague (May 31-June 15), Glasgow Commonwealth Games (July 23-Aug 3) and the Incheon Asian Games (Sept 19-Oct 4).

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ancy at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), has to undergo about six months of internship from next month.

Harvinder, who is the younger brother of former national midfielder Kelvinder Singh, will begin his internship with accountancy firm Ernst & Young here on Feb 10.

Harvinder was among 45 players initially called up for national training early this month after undergoing a week-long fitness test.

Although he passed the fitness test,