MHC to push 5s format

Confederation looking at including it into next year's calendar

KUALA LUMPUR

THE introduction of Hockey 5s, which made its debut at the 2014 Nanjing Youth Olympics, could just be the answer to nurturing a bigger pool of players in the country.

With this in mind, the Unity Hockey 5s will be held for the second year running at the Ministry of Education pitch in Kuala Lumpur on Saturday.

There will be a total of 10 Under-16 teams in both the boys' and girls' categories with seven players in each team.

Malaysian Hockey Confèderation (MHC) senior vice-president S. Shamala said the five-a side tournament could complement the 11-a-side format in terms of supplying talent to junior and senior teams.

The Selangor Hockey Association (SHA) has already given its assurance it will organise at least one tournament next year while the MHC has discussed the format of play for starters.

"Hockey 5s has the potential to emulate what futsal has done for football... more people are playing the sport," said Shamala after launching the Unity Hockey 5s one-day competition at Wisma OCM recently.

"The format is more exciting because of its fast nature. Furthermore, it's easier to put up a team for the 5s as it requires less players.

"We (MHC) have discussed the format and I believe its prominence would be reflected in the

*(From left) Selangor HA secretary general **P. Kuganeson**, Nestle sports marketing manager **Ng Ping Loong**, MHC vice-president **S. Shamala** and Selangor HA president **Datuk Seri Subahan Kamal** at launch recently.*

2015 calendar as we need to do more research and development and have more seminars, especially for coaching and umpiring," she said.

The 5s was first introduced at the 2014 Nanjing Youth Olympics, and is being promoted by Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Selangor HA, Milo and Sports Unite.

Teams will play two six-minute halves with a one-minute break at halftime. Scoring is allowed from anywhere on the pitch and one-on-one challenge replaces the penalty corner.