

# UPM captain hopes for a win

Good record means there is hope for a final spot

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**T**HE Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) women's futsal team captain Syazwani Shahudin is urging her team mates, comprising employees of the university, to pull together in their bid to edge their counterparts from other public institutions of higher learning at a meet scheduled at the Universiti Malaysia Terengganu from June 3 to 13.

The 22-year-old Syazwani said they needed to improve on their individual playing abilities to strengthen the line-up and develop a balanced team.

"Initially, we faced an uphill task to convince our colleagues to join the team for our debut in the inter-university tournament hosted at our campus last year.

"We have achieved respectable results in two recent tournaments and we are committed to doing well. Although we have been playing together for less than a year, we are gelling well to establish good teamwork. But, we cannot only rely on one or two key players to put up a strong fight against the better sides," she said.

Early this month, UPM settled for the third spot at a meet with a total of 12 teams from other government agencies and semi-government bodies in the fray in Langkawi.

UPM team manager Saheh Said said they were satisfied with the overall performance as they only went down 2-3 to the eventual champions Bank Simpanan Nasional (BSN) in the group.

And the pint-sized Syazwani slotted the winning goal for a narrow 1-0 victory over a more fancied National Sports Council (NSC) to advance to the semi-finals.

However, their campaign came to an end when Employees Provident Fund (EPF) denied them with a similar 1-0 margin.



**Taking a shot:** Syazwani urges her team mates to pull their weight to strengthen their line-up.

Considering that UPM were the losing semi-finalists at their previous two competitions, they are eyeing to book their place in the final at the upcoming assignment.

Saheh admitted they were wary of the threat coming from the formidable Universiti Malaysia Perlis (Unimap) as the northern side would be starting off as the favourites with the services of several national players in the squad.

Currently, UPM have 10 players aged between 20 and 24 going through the paces two times a day as a build up to

the tournament.

"Each session goes on for two hours. For the young squad, it will be a learning curve for them to polish up on their passing, shooting and dribbling techniques.

"We want them to be in top shape for the physical challenges on the pitch.

"It has been a joy to build a team from scratch and see them progress. We are hoping to field the team for other open tournaments in the future," added Saheh.



**Staying in shape:** Saheh (in blue) keeping a watchful eye on his charges.



**Stretching out:** Goalkeeper Norazlin A. Aziz attempting to block a shot from going into the goal.