

Key injuries may prevent UPM-KPT from advancing

KUALA LUMPUR: Injuries to three key players could scupper Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM)-KPT's hopes of reaching the President's Cup semi-finals.

UPM-KPT will go into today's quarter-final, return-leg match against Bukit Jalil Sports School (BJSS) at the Education Ministry Turf without the services of defender Muhd Faizzil Zairollail (ankle), midfielder Mohd Hafif Elkan Nordin (foot) and forward Ahmad Termidzi Ismail (hamstring).

With another player – forward Muhd Hafiz Seleman – down with fever, UPM-KPT team manager Wan Zaharuddin Wan Abdullah is worried that his team may not have the strength in depth to deal with BJSS after the two teams drew 1-1 in the first leg at the Kuala Lumpur

Hockey Stadium on Thursday.

“We’re hoping that Hafiz will be able to recover in time for the match,” said Wan Zaharuddin.

“Otherwise, how are we going to put up a strong challenge against BJSS without the four key players?”

“BJSS are no pushovers ... they defeated us 4-3 in the Division One league match.”

UPM-KPT finished third in the eight-team Division One behind champions Nur Insafi and runners-up Police. BJSS finished sixth.

BJSS will have only one player ruled out of today's match, with first-choice goalkeeper Mohd Amirul Abdul Halim serving out the second of his two-match ban.

He was handed with a two-match suspension after being sent off in the match against Petaling Jaya City

Council (MBPJ) last month.

Amirul and MBPJ player Ahmad Hariz Ezani Syazani threw punches at each other during the match.

But BJSS coach Lokman Yahya isn't too concerned as reserve goalkeeper Luqman Nur Harith Azman proved his worth in the first-leg match.

“Luqman has proved that he can play just as well as Ahmad and that's good for us,” said Lokman.

Another quarter-final match that's finely poised is between favourites Nur Insafi and Johor-based Politeknik.

Nur Insafi had to fight back from a goal down to hold Politeknik 1-1 in the first leg.

Nur Insafi can expect a torrid time as the return leg will be played in Batu Pahat.



QUARTER-FINAL, RETURN LEG FIXTURES

PRESIDENT'S CUP

> TODAY

(All matches at 5pm)

POLITEKNIK vs NUR INSAFI (1-1)

(Taman Daya Hockey Stadium, Johor Baru)

JOHOR vs POLICE (3-7)

(SMK Bentara Luar Pitch, Batu Pahat)

BJSS vs UPM-KPT (1-1)

(Education Ministry Turf)

RMAF vs MBPJ (2-1)

(Subang Hockey Stadium)

(Note: First-leg results on the right)