

Malaysia confident of getting better of Australia

MALAYSIA'S fighting qualities could pose a threat to defending champions Australia when the two teams meet in the final fixture of the Sultan of Johor Cup round robin at Taman Daya Hockey Stadium today.

Coach Wallace Tan said his much-improved team are confident of a good show against the Australians.

"Our penalty corner executions are better now.

"The percentage of scoring goals from penalty corners is on the upscale and the players now understand each other better.

"We scored 11 field goals and seven from penalty corners in the 18-0 win over the United States on Thursday.

"This is definitely good for my players' confidence.

"Scoring from penalty corners was a problem in earlier matches but we seem to have overcome this area," said Wallace yesterday.

Wallace said: "Australia are a strong team, but we can give them a tough fight. "There is no



Malaysia's Aiman Nik Rosemi tries to get the better of USA's Colin Hennessy and goalkeeper Nathaniel Olari on Thursday. Malaysia won 18-0.

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doubt about that," said Wallace, adding that there are also no players on the crock list.

Malaysia, fourth in the standings, need to beat Australia to move up the ladder.

With no hope of qualifying for the final, Malaysia's best chance is to feature in tomorrow's third-fourth placing match against India, Australia or Britain.

However, if Malaysia lose or draw, they will be relegated to play in the fifth-sixth playoff

match.

Australia coach Brent Livermore acknowledged that Malaysia could dent their hope of qualifying for the final.

"I am disappointed that we lost to Britain (4-2) on Thursday and now we look towards to our encounter against Malaysia to rise again.

"The Malaysians are a good side and can pose a real threat. It is important that we focus on the way we play and also stick to tac-

"We have a lot of variety and execution of penalty corners is not a problem. We will go into the match positively" he added.

Australia will depend on Nathan Ephraums, Joel Rintala, Andrew Scanlon and captain Coby Green to curtail Malaysia's attacks.

FIXTURES — TODAY: Britain v India (4.05pm), Australia v Malaysia (6.05pm), Japan v USA (8.05pm).