

Winning start for UMS footballers

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KOTA KINABALU: Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) kicked off their Malaysian Higher Learning Institutions (IPT) Division 1 Football League campaign with a slim 1-0 home win over University Malaya (UM) at the UMS Stadium over the weekend.

Puvaneswaren Samyvellu's solitary strike in the 68th minute was enough for the host to see off their opponents and eventually begin their season on the right footing.

UMS Sports Unit Director Mohd Asyraaf Fong Abdullah when contacted said he was happy with the team's slim victory, despite missing several scoring opportunities which could have ended the game by a bigger margin.

"Although we won by only a slim margin, I am still happy with the outcome. It marked a good start to the tournament and I hope there will be many more victories to come," said Asyraaf.

UMS will continue their campaign next week with two tough matches on the road.

They face defending champions, MARA University of Technology (UiTM), at the UiTM Shah Alam Stadium in Selangor on February 22, before facing last year's finalists, Kedah Community College, at the Alor Setar Stadium in Kedah three days later (Feb 25).

Asyraaf said this is UMS' third straight year competing in the eight-team Division 1 League, which includes The National University of Malaysia (UKM), Multimedia University (MMU), Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM) and Polytechnic Kota Bharu.

The tournament also has a Division 2 and Division 3 League, which, in total, is participated by 144 teams (from 20 public higher learning institutions, 40 private higher learning institutions, 44 community colleges and 28 polytechnics) that are all recognised by the Football Association of Malaysia.

Asyraaf said UMS is targeting a top four finish in this return leg league competition.