iCUSU World Cup Football Tournament Report

March 9th 2013. A new tournament called the iCUSU World Cup was born and CUMaS sent a team to represent Malaysia and battle it out, led by Captain Victor Chang. The team list was as below:

* Victor Chang
* Paul Tern
* Lim Tian Xi
* Fong Kah Jo
* Ian Beh
* Ng Zhu Shen
* Ramaraj Sundraraj

The Malaysians were paired in the same group as Pakistan, Hungary and Mauritius. There were 4 groups of 4 and the winner of each group would progress to the semi-finals. Our team was determined to qualify for the semi-finals after a 3rd place finish in the previous indoor ChiSoc football tourney.

Game 1 : Malaysia vs Pakistan (1-0)

The first game started off very intensely and the Malaysians pinned the Pakistanis into their own half after fine work and pressuring by Paul, Tian Xi, Ram and Victor. The game began to get scrappier as the width of the pitch was underestimated (literally!). Both teams started using long balls instead of short passing to score the opener. The first half turned into an ebb and flow of counterattacks with both teams having chances to score. However, in goal was the eversolid and dominant figure of Ian Beh who dealt with the onrushing Pakistani attackers brilliantly. It was still all square in the second half as the Malaysian brought on Kah Jo (Kahjotelli) and Zhu Shen to score goals and solidify the back. Kah Jo’s direct attacking caused the Pakistanis problems while Zhu Shen’s boxout(basketball term) defending kept them at bay. The deadlock was broken after a quick counterattack by Victor who stabbed the ball in the nearpost and the Malaysians held on for a well-earned win.

Game 2 : Malaysia vs Hungary (2-3)

After observing the 6-0 demolition of Mauritius by Hungary, we knew this was the game we had to win to reach the semis. Torok a.k.a Toruk Makto of the Navi’ (of Hungary) was their star player with his blistering pace and technique helping his team run riot against Mauritius. We were wary of this before the game began. It started off with great intensity. The Hungarians were good on the ball, but we looked dangerous on the counter. The deadlock was broken when Tian Xi brilliantly poached on a Hungarian error at the back after a long ball from Ian and coolly nestled the ball in the bottom corner. The Hungarians were riled after going behind and attacked repeatedly. The equaliser came when Toruk Makto raced down the right and crossed to his teammate, who couldn’t miss from 3 yards out. The Hungarians pressed and pressed against the backline of Paul and Ram but the two couldn’t prevent a second going in due to a defending error by yours truly. Ian Beh made incredible saves to keep the score at 2-1 before halftime while Victor, Kah Jo and Tian Xi’s runs and passing threatened to level the score. Toruk Makto seemed extremely threatening on the right wing throughout the first half. In the second half, Zhu Shen was given the monumental task of keeping Toruk Makto quiet. And that he did, brilliantly tackling and pressuring Toruk giving him no chance to use his pace. Meanwhile, Paul and Ram found more space to run in midfield because of this and Kah Jo, Tian Xi and Victor were threatening to score more and more frequently. The equaliser came through a perfectly flighted pass from Victor to Paul, who reacted quickest and nicked the ball past the onrushing keeper. 2-2, one goal away from an almost certain qualification into the semis. The Malaysians defended valiantly, most notably when the goalpost collapsed twice when defenders, attackers and goalkeeper tangled to win the ball. However, Toruk Makto showed his class at the end when he smashed the ball in point blank range into the top corner. In desperation, the Malaysians attacked in numbers leaving the defense empty in the dying minutes. Ian’s long goal kick was passed around by Victor and Kah Jo and it fell to Tian Xi who striked the ball sweetly in the dying seconds but alas the post was in the way and the ball rebounded harmlessly out of play to give Hungary a hard-fought victory.

Game 3: Malaysia vs Mauritius (4-0)

Gutted after losing in such a tight match, the team intended to win by a 7 goal margin against Mauritius as that score line would give us a tiny glimmer of hope to qualify if Hungary loses to Pakistan. The first goal came from a tiki-taka passing play between Paul, Ram and Victor ending with a clinical finish by Victor. Our team pressed Mauritius relentlessly in search of a second with fluid attacking plays by Tian Xi Victor and Kah Jo while Paul, Ram, Zhu Shen and Ian were tasked with snuffing out counterattacks. Just before the first half, Tian Xi made it 2-0 with a very well taken goal after a great first touch and follow-up. Second half started like the first, constant bombardment of the Mauritian goal with a rare Mauritian counterattack. Sadly, many good chances that were created were not converted; credit goes to the Mauritian keeper who saved a couple of one-on-one saves. It was 3-0 when yours truly darted past an opponent and curled one into the bottom corner past the helpless keeper. The 4th came when Victor’s two shots rebounded off the keeper only for it to fall to Paul who linked with Tian Xi to set up Victor for a fine finish. Final score was 4-0, clean sheet due to the stalwart goalkeeper, Ian Beh and defenders.

We ended up 2nd in the group with 6 points as Hungary beat Pakistan 4-2 to boast 9 points and a superior goal difference. Hungary went on to the finals and lost to India by 3 goals to nil, but they claimed the top goal scorer prize in Toruk Makto (11 goals). It was a wonderful display by the squad as the match against Hungary was probably the match of the tournament. We showed many teams that the Malaysian team is strong and improving very quickly!! Had loads of fun and looking forward to the next match, in Oxbridge Games!!

Report by,

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