

# DUTCH DELIGHT FOR MALAYSIAN

Nuramirah wins Best Player award in Four-Club tournament in Europe

JUGJET SINGH  
jugjet@nst.com.my

**N**ATIONAL coach K. Dharmaraj is so impressed by teen titan Nuramirah Syakirah Zulkifli that he even added a spin to the adage "The sky is the limit."

"The sky is not the limit for this girl", he gushed.

This was what Dharmaraj has been saying about the 19-year-old, and she proved him right in Groningen, the Netherlands on Sunday.

Amid many European players, Nuramirah was named as the Best Player in a Four-Club tournament held in the run-up to the German League.

Representing Bremen HC, Nuramirah must have done something exceptional to land her club the gold medal, as well as to be chosen as the best among the best.

The two other Malaysian women playing for Bremen are Maizatulhanim Syafi and Juliani Din.

"Since I first laid my eyes on her, I knew she was special and that's why I selected her for the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games even though she was only 17 then.

"She has made Malaysia proud by being named as the Best Player in a club tournament in the Netherlands, which is not an easy feat as women's hockey is played at a very high level there," said Dharmaraj.

Nuramirah and 11 national women's players are now in Europe to play for various teams in the leagues there, and this is the only way to progress, said Dharmaraj.

"I believe for women's hockey to progress in Malaysia, as many players as possible need to play in foreign leagues and this dozen who are in Europe now will come back as better players.

"And since we are waiting for the confirmation to play (or not) in the final round of the Olympic qualifier in October, these 12 are receiving invaluable exposure.

"The two-match playoff to



(From left) Juliani Din, Maizatulhanim Syafi and Nuramirah Syakirah Zulkifli in Groningen, the Netherlands.

qualify for the Olympics is not like preparing for a tournament, because it needs a totally different approach.

"More than half my team are playing in Europe while waiting for the FIH (International Hockey Federation) to announce the final

list, and that is the best way to prepare," said Dharmaraj.

Nuramirah has already set a record in the women's Junior Hockey League which ended in

early August, by scoring 33 goals for Petaling Jaya City Council (PJCC) Black Widows.

And she is set to blitz the German League next!