

Headline	Surprise result costs Kedah two valuable points again		
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Surprise result costs Kedah two valuable points again

KEDAH were held to a scoreless draw by Penang in a highly charged Group B President Cup soccer match.

It was the second time Kedah had dropped two points in six matches after a surprise one-all draw against Kelantan at the Sultan Mohamad IV stadium in Kota Baru.

Going into the match against third-placed Penang without suspended striker Halim Shaari and injured Akmal Chin and Noor Izzat Idris, Kedah found the going tough against a solid Penang outfit.

Both teams gave nothing away and fought for every ball and, in the process, two Kedah players and a Penang player were booked by referee Shaharudin Man of Perlis

in the first half of the match at the Universiti Utara Malaysia mini stadium on Wednesday.

The first to go into the referee's book was Penang forward Amirul Syazni-Roslan in the 5th minute for a foul on Kedah defender Aliff Fuad. Soon after it was Kedah Nazrul Naim's turn to be cautioned for a high tackle on Mohd Ukhmal Ibrahim in the 12th minute.

The game continued to be littered with hard tackles and nagging

fouls and Kedah centreback Mohd Norfiqrie-Talib was booked in the 20th minute for a crude tackle on Abdul-Qayyum.

Play was mostly concentrated in midfield as the first half came to a fruitless close.

The pattern of play in the second half replicated the first with unnecessary trippings and tackles. Defender S. Cheevaneswaran became the second Penang player to be booked in the 49th minute when he scythed Kedah's leading scorer Syazuan Hazani.

A minute later, Mohd Muzaimir Hadi became the third Kedah player to be cautioned when he pulled down Penang striker Fareeza Amar from behind.

Both coaches made a couple of changes, hoping to turn the game around.

Kedah coach Mohamad Ramlee brought in defender Mohd Azrie

Reza for Mohd Aliff Fuad and replaced Syazuan Hazani with Aqmal Alias in the 64th minute while Penang coach Velo Sinathamby brought in Som Keat for Abdul Gayyum and Mohd Faizal for

Amirul Syazni in the 70th minute.

Just after three minutes of his appearance, Penang substitute Mohd Faizal was flashed the yellow card for a foul on Kedah's Mohd Azryl Reza in the 73rd minute to become the third Penang player to be cautioned.

The changes failed to give any advantage to both teams even though they changed tactics, resorting to overhead passes to try to overcome the impasse.

The match finished in a stalemate as both teams failed to create any goal scoring opportunities in the remaining 20 minutes of play.

The draw for Kedah did not affect their position as leaders because their closest rivals Felda United were displaced by PDRM in second place. PDRM shocked Felda United 2-1 at MMU Cyberjaya mini stadium to leapfrog to second place with 10 points while Penang remained in third spot, also with 10 points, but with an inferior goal difference. Felda United dropped to fourth place with nine points.

Kedah will play PDRM away on Wednesday at the Pulapol stadium in Kuala Lumpur.