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Dragons fire their way through to ABL playoffs

Kuala Lumpur, Tuesday: - The KL Dragons will now set their eyes on the inaugural ASEAN Basketball League title after some brilliant performances in their last four games of the season and a little help from their Filipino counterparts put them through to the inaugural playoffs.

Having won three of their last four matches, all of which were against the top three sides of the league, the Dragons also welcomed a Philippines Patriots win over fifth-placed Brunei Barracudas which allowed them to clinch the final playoff spot ahead of the Bruneians. The Patriots on Sunday won 87 – 65.

Dubbed the underdogs of the tournament, credit must be given to the Malaysian team who have gone on a giant-killing rampage in the past month defeating among those, league leaders the Patriots, second placed Singapore Slingers, and Indonesian powerhouse Satria Muda BritAma in what Coach Goh Cheng Huat describes as “proving our doubters wrong”.

“When people saw the list of teams we had to face in our final four matches prior to the playoffs, they immediately wrote us off. But like I’ve said many times before, we relish being the underdogs – the lightweight guy who sceptics doubt could mount any serious challenge – because that is exactly what gives us the edge and extra motivation to push ourselves further and to pull off results like how we’ve done to qualify for the playoffs”.



The Dragons now will be meeting the Philippine Patriots in the playoffs in a best of three games series which begins on Jan 31 at the Ynares Sports Arena in Philippines. Though the Patriots are recognized as favourites to win the tournament, the label however, does not intimidate Goh and his players.

He said, “We’ve shocked the bigger teams, created upsets, and beaten the odds. There is absolutely no reason why we can’t be in the Finals. Our confidence is at an all time high and now more than ever, our will to win is even stronger. I believe it’s time we stepped out of the shadow of being an underdog and to be seriously considered as one of the best basketball teams in the region because that’s what we are, or at least should be”.

Following the game in Philippines, the second game of the series will be played at the MABA Stadium in Kuala Lumpur on Feb 3, which Goh cites as a vital fixture, prompting him to already rally for support among fans.

“Our home game on Feb 3 against the Patriots is going to be absolutely crucial. And the individuals who will help make a difference in this game are the fans. I sincerely hope they will turn out in full force to throw their support behind the team. They have been fantastic throughout this season but particularly, at this critical stage of the season, we need them to be phenomenal”, he said.

Fans of the KL Dragons can logon to: **www.kldragons.com** for team information, fixtures and results. Alternatively, to follow the team’s tour around ASEAN, visit the official KL Dragons Facebook fan page.



Issued by : KL Dragons Sdn. Bhd.

For media enquiries, kindly contact :

Yap Ken Han
Tel : +6012.266.4797
E-mail : ken@kldragons.com

League Standings

Pos.	Team	Played	Won	Loss	For	Against	Points
1	Philippine Patriots	15	11	4	1106	1023	26
2	Singapore Slingsers	15	10	5	1133	1079	25
3	Satria Muda BritAma	15	8	7	1119	1075	23
4	KL Dragons	15	7	8	1093	1154	22
5	Brunei Barracudas	15	6	9	1183	1234	21
6	Thailand Tigers	15	3	12	1109	1178	18

Playoff Schedule

Team 1 vs Team 4

Date	Time	Home	Away	Venue	Remarks
31-Jan-10	4.00pm	Philippine Patriots	KL Dragons	Ynares Sports Arena	
3-Feb-10	7.00pm	KL Dragons	Philippine Patriots	MABA Stadium	
7-Feb-10	4.00pm	Philippine Patriots	KL Dragons	Ynares Sports Arena	*if required