

Polytechnic Merlimau grab Men's Open crown at meet

SERDANG: Rugby went back to its basics at the Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) College 12 Touch Rugby Championships at the university's main campus recently.

The tournament, in its sixth edition, saw a total of 47 teams taking part in five age categories: Men's Open, Women's Open, Boys' Under-18, Girls' Under-18 and Boys' Under-12.

Teams, comprising five players each, competed in a round robin before proceeding to the knockout stages of the cup, plate and bowl competitions.

Programme director, Dayang Nurul Syahida Awang Fadzallah, 21, said the tournament has always been

about promoting the sport of rugby.

"Touch rugby is a great way to introduce people to a sport which is generally seen as a rough game as it is a safe and fun way to learn the sport regardless of age and gender," said Dayang.

"We sent out invites to schools all over the country prior to the event as we wanted more kids to get involved," added Dayang Nurul, a Bachelor of English student.

Nor'izzati Shaipudin, 23, who was part of the UPM College 16 team that finished runners-up in the Women's Open Cup, said the tournament was a good way to introduce the sport to the fair sex.

"Touch rugby is not dangerous in

any way and really brings the game to many people who would not usually play," said Nor'izzati.

"We have been playing touch rugby for a few years now and we thoroughly enjoy the game.

"We normally practise every day at our college and managed to get to the cup final this year after winning the Plate final last year," added Nor'izzati.

Faridzal Ismail, 22, who captained Polytechnic Merlimau to the Men's Open title, said touch rugby should not be looked down upon especially by players who have already been involved in full contact rugby.

"Touch rugby helps focus on developing the basic skills of rugby such

as defending and teaching players how to look for holes in which to attack the opposition," said Faridzal.

The winners received certificates and rugby goods from the event's sponsor, Carisbrook.

RESULTS — Men's Open, Cup Champions: Polytechnic Merlimau; **Runners-up:** UPM Alumni 10; **Plate Champions:** Pahang Matriculation; **Bowl Champions:** Multimedia University Malacca Campus.

Women's Open, Cup Champions: KTG Kaize; **Runners-up:** K16; **Plate Champions:** Polytechnic Merlimau.

Boys Under-18, Cup Champions: Kisass A; **Runners-up:** Malay College Kuala Kangsar; **Plate Champions:** Kisass B.

Girls Under-18, Cup Champions: MRSM Pekan A; **Runners-up:** MRSMFelda C; **Plate Champions:** Sekolah Menengah Sains Selangor.