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TUE 30 JUNE 2009



ELECTRIC NEWS

After The New Paper wrote about girl with cancer...

Football stars raise money

June 30, 2009

THEY had just played in front of many fans in a curtain-raiser last month.

Still, the legendary 'Dream Team' attracted more than 2,000 fans to the Tampines Stadium yesterday to watch them in a charity match, which they won 11-5.

The likes of Fandi Ahmad, V Sundramoorthy and Malek Awab took to the pitch against a celebrity team, which included TV hosts Sheikh Haikel and Andy Penders, to raise money for 4-year-old cancer patient Charmaine Lim.

Her story was first featured in The New Paper on 13 Jun. Charmaine has a rare form of cancer and needs at least US\$350,000 (\$510,000) to undergo a special treatment in the US.

Former Singapore international Rafi Ali read the report in this newspaper and was so moved he organised the match with his former team-mates.

Most of them had just played in a curtain-raiser, on 31 May, before a friendly between Australian club North Queensland Fury and S-League club Tampines Rovers.

Rafi said: 'The turnout today is fantastic, it's like playing in the Malaysia Cup again. When I read the story, I wanted to do something for Charmaine, but I'm not a rich man.'

'With this charity match, we can raise more money for her. It's very heartwarming to see Singaporeans all coming together to help her and I'm thankful to everyone involved.'

Twenty booklets of 100 tickets each were sold, with each ticket being priced at \$10.

That means a total of \$20,000 was raised from ticket sales. Another \$40,000 was raised through donations, taking the total to \$60,000.

Charmaine's mum Ms Cynthia Lim, 29, was visibly moved when Rafi presented the cheques to her.

'I'm very touched and grateful for what everyone has done for Charmaine. I was stunned to see such a great number of people,' she said.

Sam Wen Jun, 15, a student, said: 'It's very cool that I can spend just \$10 and see so many goals and former stars, and at the same time do something good.'

Proceeds from the S-League match between Tampines Rovers and Geylang United that followed the charity game were also donated to Charmaine's cause. For the record, Tampines won 3-1.

- **Shea John Driscoll and Kay Tan, newsroom interns**

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FOR A GOOD CAUSE: Charmaine mum's Cynthia Lim (in pink) with members of Singapore's Malaysia Cup team of the 1990s who got together to raise funds for her. TNP PICTURE: NG XI JIE



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