



Paulaner Oktoberfest beer completes the day for everyone.

# Living it up for Oktoberfest

■ By Gerald Chuah

IT was raining on a Friday evening in November but that didn't stop a group of people celebrating Oktoberfest at Bukit Kiara Equestrian and Country Club in Kuala Lumpur. The Bavarian celebration with food, drinks and dance, held at a spacious indoor arena, was irresistible.

Organised by Essence Communications Sdn Bhd, the cultural event, usually celebrated on a big scale in Munich, Germany, was recreated here for friends and families of employees of German companies based in Malaysia like Siemens, Bayer,

Leiderhosen and Fresenius Kabi. Spokesman from Essence Patrick Cusick has this to say to those who haven't been to Munich for the celebration: "Save the airfare, it's all right here!"

The idea was originally mooted by Siemens when it organised the first Oktoberfest in Malaysia five years ago. It later invited other German companies to join the bandwagon. They wanted to share a slice of German culture and hospitality with Malaysian friends and associates.

Oktoberfest is celebrated on a large scale in Munich, Germany, each year with drinks, sausages and dance. It is said to have originated from a wedding



Inntaler Musikanten performs for Oktoberfest.



Beautiful damsels added excitement to the evening.

ceremony which has evolved into an international event, celebrated by thousands around the world.

Cusick said Germans are a very precise and hardworking people but they also know how to let loose and enjoy an occasion such as this.

To create an authentic feel, the organisers invited traditional German band Inntaler

Musikanten, which had just completed its stint in Munich, to perform here. Dressed in shirts, shorts and leiderhosen, they performed many folk songs and dance items accompanied by wind instruments like the trumpet and accordion.

Not dampened by the rainy weather, some took to the dance floor, while others sat on long tables munching sausages and

drinking Paulaner Oktoberfest beer which was specially imported from Germany.

On why this year's event was held in November instead of October, Cusick said many people had plans during the DeepaRaya celebrations and it would not have been feasible to schedule it then. "Each year's celebration is held at different venues which are often well attended."