AFC WOMEN'S CHAMPIONS LEAGUE™

TECHNICAL REPORT

2025/2026



CLUBS


MELBOURNE CITY
MC FC
FOOTBALL CLUB


武汉江大女子足球俱乐部




BAM KHATOON FOOTBALL CLUB


TOKYOVERDY


SUWON FC
2003
SUWON FC


I.S.P.E FC
Since 2016


STALLION
20
LAGUNA FC
02


LION CITY
SAILORS
2020


EAST BENGAL
FC


1986
FC NASAF


HWFC
1998
HO CHI MINH CITY WOMEN'S FC

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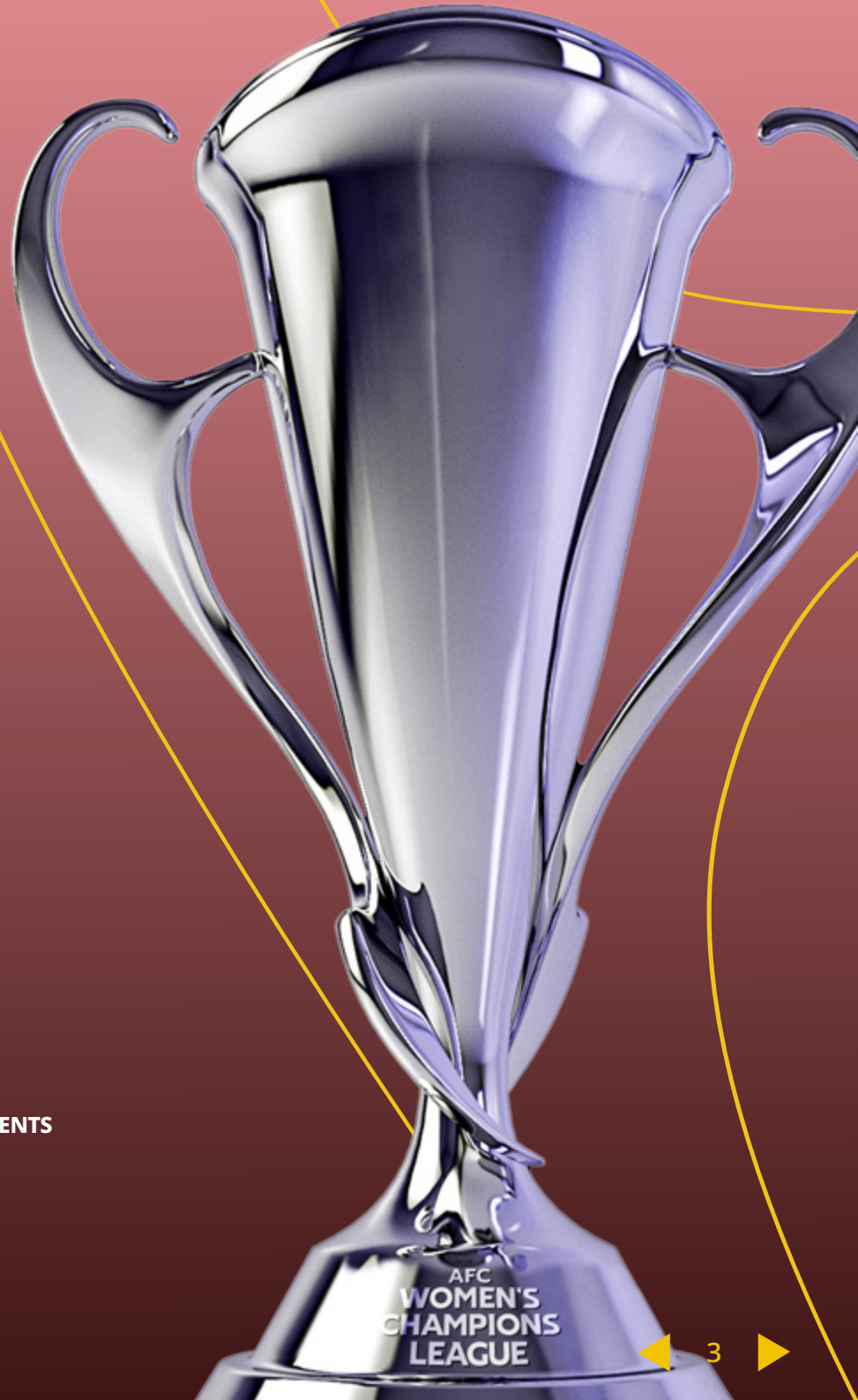
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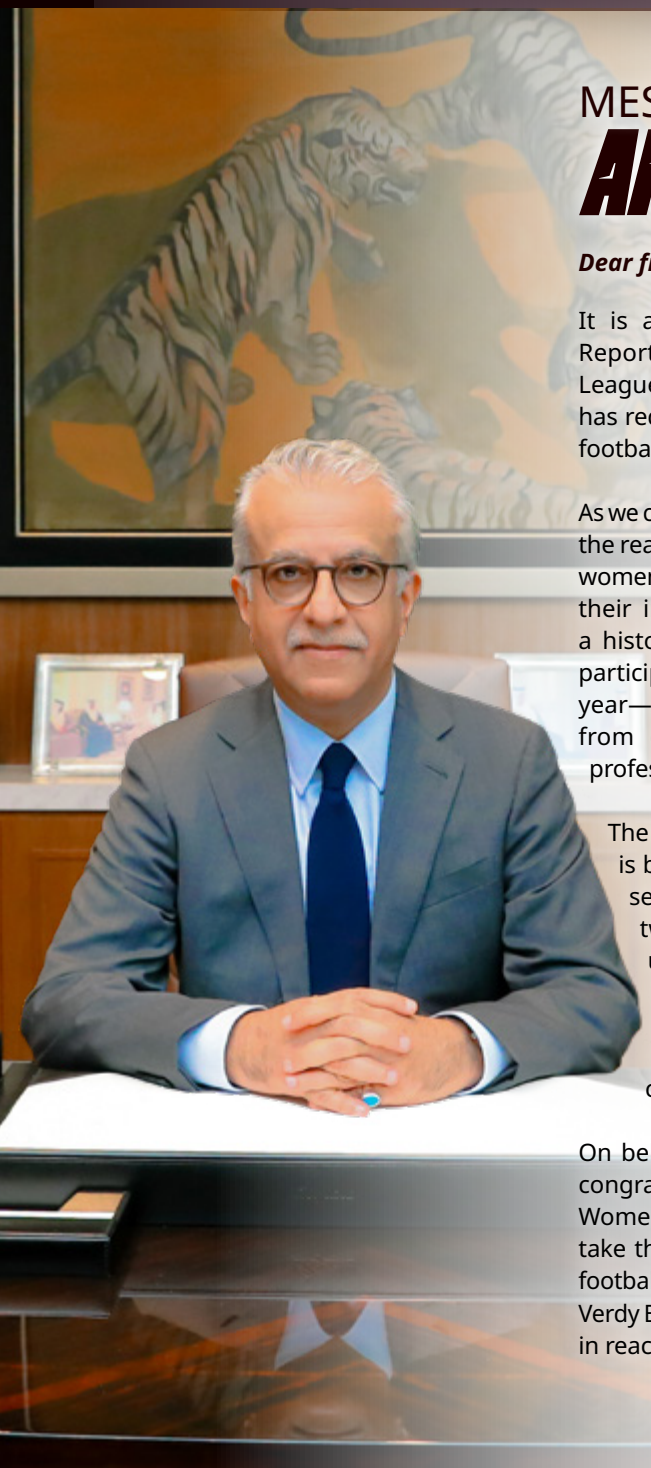
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MESSAGE FROM THE
AFC PRESIDENT

Dear friends,

It is an honour to present the Technical Report for the AFC Women's Champions League 2025/26™ – a landmark season that has redefined the landscape of women's club football across the Continent.

As we conclude this second edition, we celebrate the realisation of a vision to provide Asia's elite women players with a platform that matches their immense talent. This season reached a historic milestone with a record 25 clubs participating—four more than the inaugural year—signalling a deepening commitment from our Member Associations (MAs) to professionalise the women's game.

The fierce competition across the Continent is best illustrated by the fact that we have seen four different finalists across the first two seasons. This remarkable diversity underscores the increasingly competitive landscape we have cultivated, where excellence inspires more MAs to raise their standards as the sporting balance continues to intensify.

On behalf of the AFC, I extend my warmest congratulations to DPR Korea's Naegohyang Women's FC on their historic victory as they take their place as true pioneers of women's football. I also commend our runners-up, Tokyo Verdy Beleza, for their exceptional performance in reaching their maiden Final.

As a flagship initiative of our Continental calendar, the AFC Women's Champions League™ is in a formative yet transformative stage of its journey. With the competition still in its infancy, it is critical that we establish a robust technical repository from the outset. By capturing these early insights, we bolster our collective technical capabilities and build a foundation of knowledge that will be instrumental as we look to refine and elevate our future editions.

In this regard, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to our Technical Observers Team. Their meticulous analysis and expertise are the backbone of this report, ensuring that the lessons learned on the pitch are transformed into actionable growth for our MAs.

Furthermore, this report celebrates our match officials, who upheld the highest standards of the game. Most significantly, we continue to break new ground by expanding the pathways for our women referees to lead the way as trailblazers on the global stage.

Success on this scale is only possible through immense collaboration. I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to all our MAs, and our centralised and neutral hosts across the Preliminary and Group Stages, with a special mention to the Korea Football Association (KFA) for providing the perfect environment for our elite teams and players during the decisive Finals stage in Suwon.

We are equally grateful to our valued stakeholders—our commercial partners, the media, and our devoted fans and volunteers—whose collective energy transformed this tournament into a definitive celebration of women's football.

As I conclude, I offer my sincere appreciation to the AFC Women's Football, Technical, and Referees Committees. Your visionary leadership and tireless efforts provide us with the confidence to build an even brighter and bolder future for the women's game in Asia.

By working hand-in-hand with our MAs and all our valued partners, I am confident that we will continue to bring the AFC's Vision and Mission to life—providing top-level competitions for our players to shine and building an enduring legacy that will inspire the next generation of women footballers.



Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa
AFC President

AFC WOMEN'S CHAMPIONS LEAGUE 2025/26™



The second edition of the AFC Women's Champions League™ replicated the format employed during the inaugural season. But only three of the teams who reached the Quarter-finals in 2024/25 made it back into the top eight in 2025/26. This meant that the competition is offering international exposure to a broader spectrum of players and coaches. The season kicked off in August 2025 with a Preliminary Stage played as mini-tournaments at single venues. Nineteen clubs were involved – six more than in the previous season – and included two teams who went on to reach the last eight: PFC Nasaf (Uzbekistan) and the eventual champions Naegohyang Women's FC, who became the first women's club from DPR Korea to reach the Final of an AFC competition. The five group winners and the best runner-up progressed to the Group Stage, where they joined the six teams who had qualified automatically on the basis of AFC Club Competition Rankings.

For the Group Stage contested in November 2025, the teams played three matches in one week at centralised venues in Ho Chi Minh (Vietnam), Wuhan (China PR) and Yangon (Myanmar), the latter being the home of debutants ISPE WFC. The top two in each group and the two best third-placed teams progressed to the Quarter-finals – once again the only non-centralised round of the competition. The three group winners and the best runner-up (Melbourne City FC, Tokyo Verdy Beleza, defending champions Wuhan Jiangda Women's FC and Naegohyang) were granted home advantage, although the latter's fixture against Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC was played in Laos. The four Quarter-finals played at the end of March involved teams from Australia, China PR, DPR Korea, Japan, Korea Republic, Philippines, Uzbekistan and Vietnam – a list which reiterated the dominance of clubs based in the Eastern sectors of the AFC. The head coaches of the top eight clubs were male.

The Finals event was staged at the Suwon Sports Complex in the Korea Republic under rainy conditions in late May. Naegohyang, whose only defeat of the season had been a 4-0 loss to Tokyo Verdy Beleza in the Group Stage, overwhelmed the Japanese side in the Final to lift the trophy for the first time and earn a place at the FIFA Women's Champions Cup to be played in 2027.

This review of the season focuses on the 25 matches played during the Group and Knockout Stages, allied with the impressions of the AFC's Technical Observer Team at the final tournament led by the AFC's Head of Women's Football, Bai Lili, accompanied by Rae Dower (Australia) and Asako Takakura (Japan).



COMPETITION OVERVIEW

COMPETITION OVERVIEW

The Preliminary Round of the AFC Women's Champions League 2025/26™ was held from August 25 to 31, 2025, while the Group Stage was played between November 9 and 23, 2025.



PRELIMINARY STAGE

The 19 teams were divided into five groups with matches played in centralised venues.

Group A, which was contested in Yangon, saw ISPE WFC of Myanmar finishing top with a perfect record of three wins.

PFC Nasaf were the standout team in Group B, with the Uzbekistan side also winning all three of their matches.

Singapore's Lion City Sailors FC were unmatched in Group C, taking maximum points from their three matches.

DPR Korea's Naegohyang Women's FC, making their Continental debut, also won their three matches in Group D with 23 goals scored and none conceded.

India's East Bengal FC registered a win and a draw in the three-team Group E to advance to the Group Stage.

Philippines side Stallion Laguna FC qualified for the Group Stage as the best second-placed team across the five groups.







COMPETITION OVERVIEW







GROUP STAGE

The top two teams from each of the three groups and two best third-placed sides advanced to the Quarter-finals.

Australia's Melbourne City FC topped Group A, with last season's runners-up winning all three of their matches, scoring 15 goals and conceding none.

Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC advanced as the runners-up, with the Vietnam side having accumulated six points.

Defending champions Wuhan Jiangda Women's FC of China PR booked their Quarter-final ticket after topping Group B with seven points.

Joining them in the last eight from the group were Uzbekistan's PFC Nasaf, who finished as runners-up with four points.

Tokyo Verdy Beleza were the standout team in Group C, with the Japanese side finishing top with seven points.

DPR Korea's Naegohyang Women's FC emerged as the runners-up after notching six points.

Advancing on the best third-placed tickets were Philippines' Stallion Laguna FC (Group A) and Suwon FC Women (Group C) of Korea Republic.



QUARTER-FINALS

TOKYO VERDY BELEZA (JPN) 5-0 STALLION LAGUNA FC (PHI)

Tokyo Verdy Beleza seized control of the single-leg tie from the start but had to wait till the 41st minute for the opening goal, courtesy of Moka Hiwatari.

Nanami Kitamura doubled the advantage three minutes into the second half with further strikes from Hikaru Naomoto (71st), Miyu Matsunaga (82nd) and Rihona Ujihara (85th), completing the comfortable win against Philippines side Stallion Laguna FC.





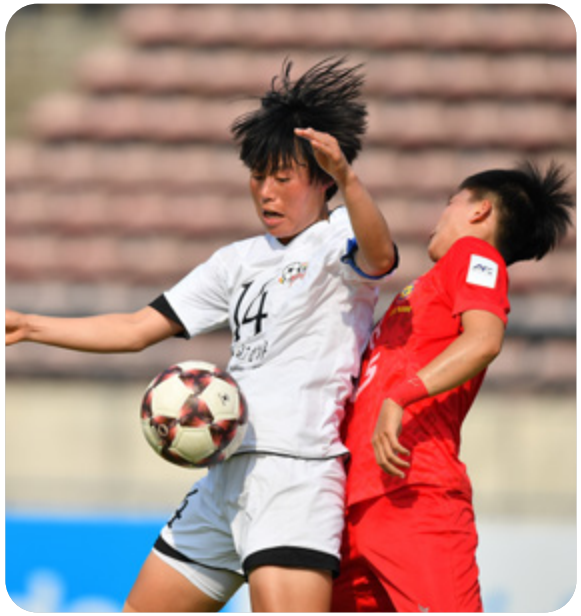


NAEGOHYANG WOMEN'S FC (PRK) 3-0 HO CHI MINH CITY WOMEN'S FC (VIE)

Naegohyang Women's FC took the lead in the 40th minute through Kim Hye Yong and didn't look back from there.

Jong Kum netted the second in the 66th minute and Kim Kyong Yong's 85th-minute strike sealed progress past Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC.





QUARTER-FINALS

MELBOURNE CITY FC (AUS) 2-1 PFC NASAF (UZB)

Melbourne City FC were made to work hard by PFC Nasaf, with the Australian side confirming victory late in the game.

Holly McNamara put last season's runners-up ahead in the 38th minute but Uzbekistan side Nasaf were quick to respond, with Zarina Mamatkarimova equalising four minutes later.

Chinaza Uchendu, however, came off the bench to score the winner in the 89th minute for Melbourne City.







WUHAN JIANGDA WOMEN'S FC (CHN) 0-4 SUWON FC WOMEN (KOR)

A wonderful performance from Suwon FC Women ended the reign of Wuhan Jiangda Women's FC as the Korea Republic side sealed a 4-0 win.

Veteran Ji So-yun opened the scoring in the 11th minute and Haruhi Suzuki's 35th-minute strike gave Suwon a healthy lead at half-time.

Kim Hye-ri struck their third just three minutes into the second half, and Jeon Min-ji put the icing on the cake with her stoppage-time goal as China PR's Wuhan Jiangda relinquished the title.









MELBOURNE CITY FC (AUS) 1-3 TOKYO VERDY BELEZA (JPN)

Tokyo Verdy Beleza turned on the power to end Melbourne City FC's title dreams with a 3-1 win in their Semi-final.

Two goals from Yuzuho Shiokoshi–taking her tally to an all-time leading seven–and one from Miharu Shinjo earned the Japanese side their spot in the Final.

Tokyo Verdy adapted quicker to the wet conditions at the Suwon Sports Complex, taking the lead in the fourth minute when Shinjo's cross from the right found Shino Matsuda, who squared for Shiokoshi to steer the ball home from close range.

They doubled their advantage in the 10th minute from yet another cross from the right, Shiokoshi guiding Momoka Honda's delivery onto the post with Shinjo the quickest to react as she tapped in the rebound.

Aideen Keane had a couple of forceful runs on the left as Melbourne City overcame the early shock and began to find their rhythm, and the improvement saw them reduce the deficit in the 36th minute.

Leticia McKenna's corner delivery reached Rebekah Stott at the back post, and the captain speculatively fired the ball into the middle of the area, with Keane perfectly placed to flick home as Melbourne City pulled themselves back into the tie.

The Australian side's inability to put away their chances cost them dearly in the 78th minute when Tamami Aso's long-range attempt bounced off the surface with goalkeeper Malena Garcia's parry landing directly at the feet of Shiokoshi, who accepted the invitation to slot home the ball to send the East Asian side to the Final.





NAEGOHYANG WOMEN'S FC (PRK) 2-1 SUWON FC WOMEN (KOR)

Naegohyang Women's FC came from behind to edge Suwon FC Women 2-1 in their Semi-final.

The game got off to a cautious start with limited openings, though Naegohyang did have the ball in the net in the fifth minute through Kim Kyong Yong's hit that was eventually chalked off for offside.

Korea Republic's Suwon had to wait till the 21st minute for their first sight at goal, with Yun Su-jeong delivering a sumptuous cross from the right for Haruhi Suzuki, who escaped the attention of Jo Kuk Hwa but the post came to the rescue of Naegohyang.

The frame again denied Suwon on the half-hour mark when Suzuki nodded down Ji So-yun's clipped free-kick for Mileninha, who smacked her effort against the woodwork from close range.

Suwon's pressure kept increasing and Naegohyang's teenage goalkeeper Pak Ju Gyong needed to produce a fantastic reflex save in the 38th minute to clear Yun's header off Ayaka Nishikawa's cross from the left.

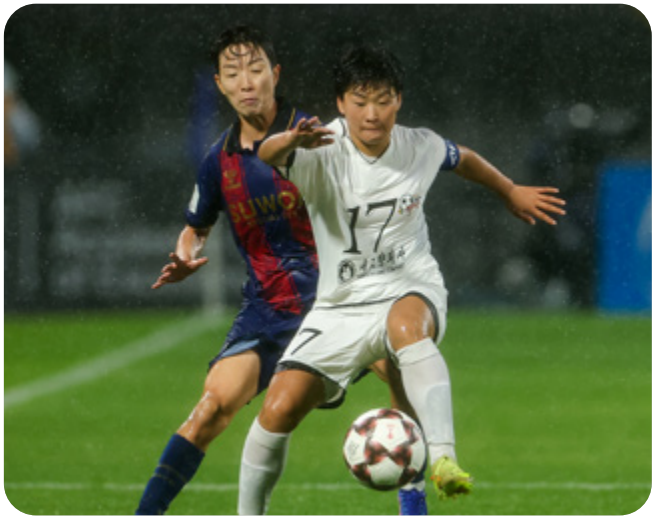
Suwon started the second half just as they had finished the first and finally got the breakthrough their play deserved in the 49th minute.

Choe Yon A's clearance hit Nishikawa and looped high into Naegohyang's box, with Suzuki ghosting in behind An Pok Yong to strike home from close range.

However, Naegohyang weren't behind for long as Choe Kum Ok rose highest to glance the ball past Kim Kyeong-hee from Ri Yu Jong's curling free-kick in the 55th minute.







The DPR Korea outfit turned the game on its head in the 67th minute when Mileninha skewed her attempt to clear Ri Kum Hyang's cross, allowing Kyong Yong the chance to nod past a rooted Kyeong-hee.



Suwon had a great chance to draw level with 11 minutes of regulation time remaining after a VAR review penalised Pak Ye Gyong for fouling Jeon Min-ji, but Ji sent her spot-kick wide despite goalkeeper Ju Gyong having dived the other way as Naegohyang booked their spot in the Final.

TOKYO VERDY BELEZA (JPN) 0-1 NAEGOHYANG WOMEN'S FC (PRK)

Naegohyang Women's FC created history after defeating Japan's Tokyo Verdy Beleza 1-0 to win the AFC Women's Champions League 2025/26™ title.

Captain Kim Kyong Yong struck in the 44th minute as Ri Yu Il's side–the first women's club from DPR Korea to compete at the continental level–booked their ticket to the FIFA Women's Champions Cup 2027.

There were limited openings for either side in a cagey start to the match, with the first chance coming in the 16th minute through Yuzuho Shiokoshi's dipping shot from distance that was spilled by goalkeeper Pak Yu Gyong, but the Naegohyang defence was quick to clear the danger.

Naegohyang grew into the game as the first half progressed, Jong Kum making a forceful run in the 37th minute but despite Tomoko Muramatsu backing off, she sliced her shot well wide of the goalmouth.

The deadlock was broken in the 44th minute when Jong beat Yuna Aoki to control a long pass from defence and raced into the penalty box before squaring for Kim to slot home to give Naegohyang the advantage at the break.

Naegohyang had a chance to double their lead three minutes into the second half through yet another powerful run from Jong as she drove to the byline before crossing for Kim to thump a header that Tokyo Verdy custodian Shu Ohba collected at the second attempt.

The DPR Korea side found another opening in the 64th minute, but Jong's half-volley from the edge of the box did not have enough power to trouble Ohba.





The DPR Korea side had further chances with a Ri Myong Gum header sailing over following a quick break before Ohba stood firm to deny long-range strikes from Kim and Jong.

Such was Naegohyang's dominance in the second period that Tokyo Verdy did not have a single shot on target as the DPR Korea side held on to claim the trophy.

Captain Kim was named the tournament's Most Valuable Player, while Melbourne City FC's Holly McNamara took the Top Goalscorer award.









WINNING COACH

WINNING COACH

KEEP LEARNING AND BELIEVE IN YOUR DREAMS



Ri Yu Il is no stranger to tournament football. He was in Thailand as head coach of the DPR Korea men's team at the AFC U23 Asian Cup™ in 2020. And he led the senior women's national team to silver medals at the 2022 Asian Games. Prior to that, he had been teaching at the International Football School in Pyongyang and, further enriched by coach education courses in Europe, he made his mark at club level by leading Naegohyang Women's FC to a first-ever league title in 2022. In Suwon, he sat down with the AFC Technical Observer Team – and these are some extracts from their conversation.

Looking back over the history-making campaign in the AFC Women's Champions League™, he highlighted the 4-0 defeat by Tokyo Verdy Beleza during the Group Stage. "It was a heavy defeat. After the match, both the players and I, as coach, reflected deeply on our performance and asked ourselves what went wrong, what our weaknesses were. We also focused on what we needed to improve moving forward. That match became a major turning point for our team, and I believe we learned a lot through that reflection process."

Having made adjustments to a squad that contains five senior national team players, two from the U20s and one from the U17s, he arrived in Suwon to take on the host team on a rain-drenched pitch.

"We were playing in our opponent's stadium and under difficult conditions," he recalled. "In terms of technical and tactical quality, Suwon FC Women were very well prepared and had many experienced players. They also brought in four or five highly experienced new players, which made them even stronger than last year. Because of that, we needed more from ourselves — more determination, more motivation to pursue our dream, and greater consistency. Most importantly, we needed a stronger mentality and spirit mentality and spirit. Once we had that foundation, then we could focus on the technical and tactical aspects. There were still many issues to address in both attack and defence, and the heavy rain also made things very challenging."

WINNING COACH



Asked whether mental preparation had played a major role, he responded: "Yes, because I'm a coach educator. When I've been in Europe for a coaching course, they never want me to talk about things like discipline or mentality. They would say something like 'it's football, let's talk about technique and tactics'. But in our culture, mentality is much more important."

"As a coach, my playing philosophy is based on possession football," he added. "I believe this is the direction of modern football development and how the game is played. At the same time, I want my players to play with greater intensity and speed, especially in transition moments. I want the team to combine control of possession with quick, dynamic play. And defending is very important if you want to win a trophy."

Having been impressed by Naegohyang's sustained fitness levels, the observers enquired about Ri's conditioning programmes.



"I understand that there are many different football conditioning methods and approaches," he replied. "But not every method is suitable for every country's players. For me, I always try to combine modern football conditioning methods with some of our traditional approaches. For example, sometimes we include running without the ball in our training. In football, players actually spend a lot of time running without the ball during a game, so we believe this type of training is also important. It is part of our culture and something our players are physically familiar with; it's built into their body system. As a coach educator, I usually teach coaches that conditioning training should ideally be integrated with the ball. However, as a coach myself, I also believe that running without the ball is necessary to help players adapt and develop physically in a way that suits their system and needs."

Asked whether he and his players had learned from encounters with different cultures and playing styles, he acknowledged: "Yes, looking back at the Group Stage, we learned a lot from our opponents. Even though we won matches, there were still many lessons. Some teams may have been physically weaker, but they were very strong technically, especially with their short combinations and link-up play. At times, we struggled against their quick movements, dribbling ability, and creative attacking actions. And the match against the Japanese team, who were very strong technically and tactically, taught us many things. So, afterwards, we made some adjustments to our system."

WINNING COACH



"Japanese teams are very strong in both attack and defence," he added, looking back to the Final against Tokyo Verdy. "We had suspected that they could be our opponent in the Final and we knew they would be well-organised, very disciplined, and difficult to play against. However, in my opinion, our team has strengths of its own and I believed we were stronger in terms of mentality and resilience. We are also very organised, particularly in our defensive structure. That is one of our main weapons, along with quick transitions and some specific set-piece variations and strategies.

"In football, winning and losing are both parts of the game — nobody can predict the result. So the most important thing is to always give your best, to continue learning, and to keep believing in your dreams. If you work hard and stay committed, one day you may have the opportunity to go further, develop yourself, play in big matches like finals and perhaps even lift a trophy. After the Final, I wanted to thank everyone for their support, especially the young children who were watching and dreaming of their own future in football."



TECHNICAL TOPICS

TECHNICAL TOPICS



RELENTLESS AND PRAGMATIC

One of the most noticeable tactical features during the second edition of the AFC Women's Champions League™ was the increasing versatility amongst playing styles and tactical structures. Teams showed a clear ability to adapt their game models through the different stages of the competition according to the opponent, the match context and specific tactical demands – rather than relying on a single fixed identity. Teams were less rigid in their approach, modifying structures, pressing behaviour and attacking strategies in response to different situations with greater ability to recognise when tactical adjustments were required.

The Technical Observers felt that this evolution reflected the steadily-growing professionalisation of women's club football, with players now spending greater time in high-performance environments where there is increased exposure to aspects such as position-specific learning, data-backed performance reviews and more extensive use of video analysis and scouting of opponents.

They cited Tokyo Verdy Beleza as an example of versatility. In the Quarter-finals, they had primarily operated with a back line of three structure, switching to a back-four set-up in the Semi-final against Melbourne City FC and the Final against Naegohyang Women's FC. "The changes were not merely structural," the observers remarked, "but were adjustments made to address specific opponent characteristics and tactical requirements."

The top teams exhibited increased ability to alternate between proactive high pressing and compact defending in a low block – and showed better criteria when selecting one or the other. Champions Naegohyang set benchmarks in their rapid switches between attacking and defensive modes, often organising themselves defensively in a 1-5-3-2 structure, creating compactness and defensive stability. Upon regaining possession, their wing-backs would immediately push forward to support attacks as key elements in transition play, transforming the structure and creating overloads and greater attacking width.

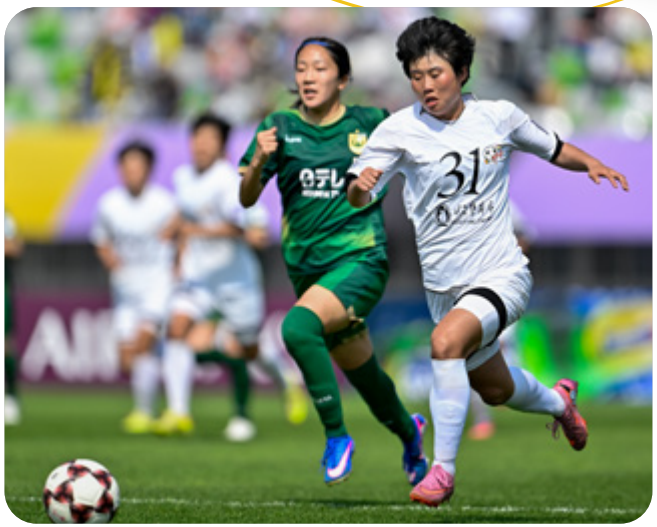
PUTTING THE BALL TO GOOD USE

Winning the ball is one thing. What you do with it is another.

"Broadly, three approaches emerged during the competition," the Observers commented. "There were possession-based build-up teams seeking controlled progression through structured phases of play, building through the thirds with positional rotations, combinations, and patient circulation to create overloads and exploit spaces. Then there were more direct teams who prioritised vertical progression with earlier forward passes into advanced areas, followed by forceful competition for the second ball. And there were counterattacking teams defending in compact structures, often in lower defensive blocks, before transitioning forward upon regaining possession with speed, directness and minimal passes."

TOKYO VERDY BELEZA POSSESSION GAME

Of the four teams who reached the Semi-finals, three set out to play through the thirds. Melbourne City FC, who had favoured this style throughout the tournament, needed to modify their approach in the Semi-final where Tokyo Verdy Beleza had the edge in ball-possession, prompting Michael Matricciani's side to switch to a more direct counterattacking style.



The contrast was provided by Naegohyang Women's FC's more pragmatic and direct attacking approach, which earned them victories against Suwon FC Women and Tokyo Verdy. Their style prioritised early forward progression into advanced areas, often with long passing into space behind the opponent's back line, fierce competition for first and second balls, rapid support movement in the vicinity of the target player, all allied with high-quality crossing and efficient finishing. This proved particularly effective against teams defending with higher lines and/or seeking to dominate possession. Ri Yu Il's side had 43 per cent of the ball against Suwon and only 35 per cent in the Final. In both games, they made significantly fewer passes than their opponents (308 in the Final as opposed to Tokyo Verdy's 579), and, in both games, the opposition doubled Naegohyang's tally of passes in the final third, while also having the upper hand in terms of passing accuracy in the final third. The champions' completion rate in the Final was 47 per cent compared to their opponents' 57 per cent and, in the Semi-final, their 42 per cent fell short of Suwon's 51 per cent.

MELBOURNE CITY FC STRUCTURED BUILD-UP BALL POSSESSION

TECHNICAL TOPICS

There was further statistical evidence to illustrate the champions' pragmatic approach. In the Semi-final and Final, they accumulated 101 entries into the final third, as opposed to 173 by their opponents. Naegohyang provided a compelling example of purposeful possession. During their Quarter-final against Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC, by the way, they had enjoyed 65 per cent of the ball and, in that single game, made 507 passes – 85 more than their joint total against Suwon and Tokyo Verdy. In other words, whether they had more of the ball or not, they knew what they wanted to do with it.



PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

"We were happy with how we performed from a technical aspect," said the Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC head coach Nguyen Hong Pham after the 3-0 defeat in the Quarter-final, "but Naegohyang were stronger physically than us. During the first 40 minutes when we were still physically strong, we played a good game. Then we conceded the first goal and in the second half, we suffered physically and we were not able to compete."

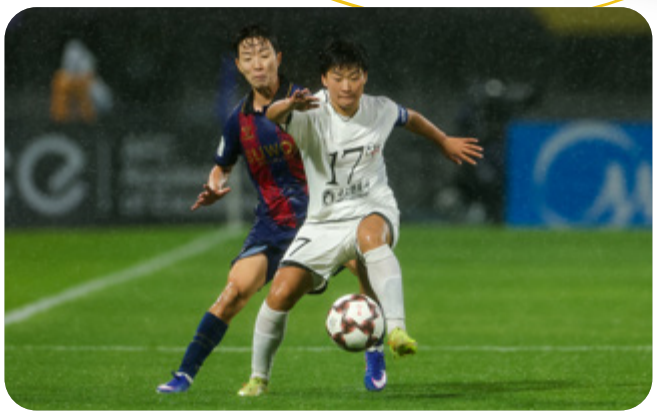
NAEGOHYANG WOMEN'S FC PRAGMATIC APPROACH

The Technical Observer's notebook at Melbourne City FC's 2-1 Quarter-final win against PFC Nasaf mentioned that the Uzbek team "tried to play more positively after conceding the first goal, pressing more aggressively and playing forward more. And they always had enough players in the box, so that they didn't concede many goals. They really made a lot of effort in defence, but, with only two substitutions made, they didn't have enough energy to run and cover spaces in the last 20 minutes."

Similarly, the notes on Stallion Laguna FC's 5-0 defeat by Tokyo Verdy Beleza at the same stage of the competition mentioned "going in at half-time was a very good achievement in itself, but it caused a lot of fatigue and, as they tired, spaces in their defensive territory became greater and their opponents were able to play through at will."

Like ISPE WFC from Myanmar, Lion City Sailors FC from Singapore bowed out of the competition without scoring a goal. And the scene was set when, on a heavy pitch in Vietnam, they found it difficult to cope with Melbourne City's physicality and managed two goal attempts during a 5-0 defeat. In a squad strengthened by the presence of seven foreign players, there were no reasons to question tactical or technical ability. The questions were about coping with the physical and mental demands when teams step out of relatively small leagues and encounter the levels of intensity displayed by opponents from stronger leagues – a topic which is also addressed in the Talking Points section of this review.

Even at the top end of the AFC Women's Champions League™, discrepancies in fitness levels, physicality and intensity were visible – and the search for benchmarks clearly led to the four semi-finalists. The comments by Ri Yu Il (in the Winning Coach section of this review) on physical conditioning work make for thought-provoking reading.



DEMANDS AND SUPPLIES

The diversity of physical conditioning inevitably affected performance levels in terms of coping with the demands of high pressing. Against PFC Nasaf, Melbourne City FC were always ready to press the ball as soon as possession was lost in their attacking third and, if the opposition played through the front line of their press, were quick to retreat into a compact midfield block. They made a less energetic start to the Semi-final but, after the interval, their high press was effective against Tokyo Verdy Beleza's build-up play, allowing them to make dangerous regains in the attacking third. Naegohyang Women's FC pressed relentlessly in well-structured, coordinated fashion, although Suwon FC Women often out-manoeuvred their high press and created situations which, on numerous occasions, obliged the eventual champions to resort to desperate measures. Tokyo Verdy applied immediate aggressive counter-pressing on the ball-carrier, looking for high regains or, at least, to pre-empt or disturb the opponent's attempts to counterattack. Suwon were arguably a tad more conservative. Although they would set up a high block against restarts by the opposing goalkeeper and try to force ball-carriers outside, the emphasis was on the rapid assembly of a well-coordinated block in midfield.

TECHNICAL TOPICS

The top four teams displayed good reading of the game in terms of when to trigger a coordinated high press – and all four were physically equipped to sustain performance levels over the full 90 minutes.

NAEGOHYANG WOMEN'S FC HIGH INTENSITY

BREAKING THROUGH

It's coming up to half-time. Naegohyang Women's FC play a long ball from the back out to the left flank, where Jong Kum out-muscles her marker, runs clear and cuts the ball back for Kim Kyong Yong to take a touch and clinically dispatch a low shot into the corner of the Tokyo Verdy Beleza net. It was the definitive breakthrough – the solitary goal that won the title.

COUNTER ATTACK - FINAL NAE V TVB

It was also one of the nine successful counterattacks that added up to 15 per cent of the tournament's open-play goals. And it was almost a replica of Naegohyang's second goal in the 3-0 Group C victory over Suwon FC Women. The names were changed but the script was the same, with Choe Kum Ok making the breakthrough on the left and Ri Su Jong applying the final touch.

The successes were evenly divided between the classic back-to-front breaks, collective counters from midfield areas and advanced counterattacks following high regains – an example of the latter being the long-range strike by East Bengal FC's Resty Nanziri against Bam Khatoon FC. Marziyeh Jafari's side also used the classic fast break to defeat Nasaf – a through pass by Fatemeh Geraeli leaving Sara Didar in a 1v1 against the goalkeeper as she scored the only goal of the game.

COUNTER ATTACK GS PFC NASAF V BAM KHATOON FC

In the Knockout Stage, an advanced counter after a high regain earned the penalty that put Tokyo Verdy 3-0 ahead against Stallion Laguna FC. Otherwise, teams were better equipped to counter the counter, and the competition seemed set for a repeat of the previous season when all the successful breaks had been confined to the Group Stage – until Naegohyang stepped up to underscore the potential value of fine-tuning counterattacking mechanisms.

SAFE KEEPING?

Melbourne City FC had a male Italian goalkeeping coach. The person in the equivalent role at PFC Nasaf was female. Footballing trivia, maybe – but it was inevitable to think that, a few years back, those details would have been improbable – not to say unthinkable – in women's club football. The Technical Observers in Suwon highlighted performances by the goalkeepers of the four semi-finalists (who were challenged to perform under torrential rainfall) but also pointed to creditable displays by other goalkeepers.





"A stable performance," they said of Nasaf's guardian Maftuna Jonimqulova. "She made good saves, was good in 1-on-1 and started some counterattacks." Ho Chi Minh City Women FC's Tran Thi Kim Thanh "produced a good performance, safely catching a lot of crosses and making some important saves." Stallion Laguna FC's Olivia McDaniel, the Philippines goalkeeper at the AFC Women's Asian Cup Australia 2026™, was "a good, experienced keeper who made a number of crucial saves and organised the defenders around her." They felt that, in general, work by goalkeeper coaches in recent years is paying notable dividends.

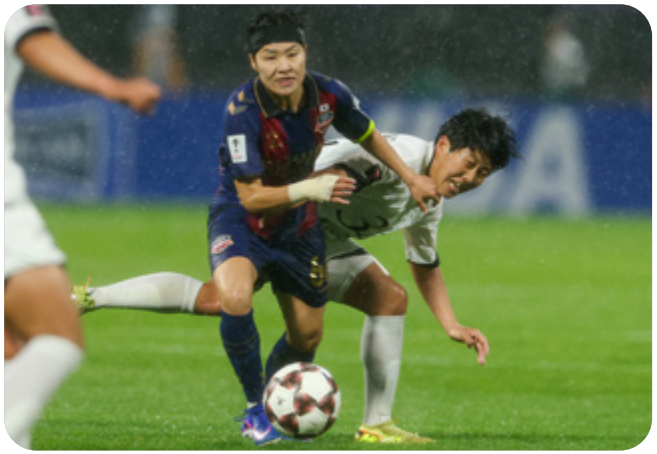
There were, however, errors with a price tag: a goalkeeper stepping forward only for the ball to bounce over her head; misjudged sorties for crosses and set plays; and tap-in goals when shots were parried, rather than caught or turned behind for a corner. Improvement was visible, but hinted that there is still work for goalkeeping coaches ...

TECHNICAL TOPICS

THE TEAM LEADERS

How important is it to count on players with leadership qualities? The Technical Observers reflected on the key components in the top sides, looking for the team leaders and examining the roles they played. Two of the names they mentioned were centre-backs. Melbourne City FC's Rebekah Stott, they commented, transmitted great fighting spirit and consistently inspired the team. Tomoko Muramatsu played a composed leading role at the heart of the Tokyo Verdy Beleza defence, constantly communicating with her fellow defenders.

But they also highlighted the influence exerted by players in more advanced positions on the field of play. Amid Naegohyang Women's FC's maelstrom of collective energy, they picked out Kim Kyong Yong, one of the champions' two strikers. "As captain," they said, "she led the attack on and off the ball". Similarly, they described Suwon attacker Ji So-yun as the tactical leader thanks to her footballing intelligence, her creative talent and her high work rate in a role where she had freedom of movement. How important is it to have a tactical/team leader? And where do you want her in the team structure?







APPLAUDING THE CHAMPION

The parting words are from Naoki Kusunose after his team had been defeated in the Final.

"We didn't play well and in the end, we were overwhelmed by the power of the Naegohyang Women's FC team. We wanted to play the Beleza way but we couldn't. Naegohyang played like champions. They had the mentality. Although we made adjustments and tried many different ways, we couldn't achieve our objectives. Nobody did anything wrong but we just couldn't find the level that got us to the Final. I tried to put more energy into our midfield but it didn't go well because of the opponents' pressure. The mentality was important. We made mistakes we don't usually make. We showed our weaknesses and soft points to the opponents, and they targeted them."



GOALSCORING ANALYSIS

GOALSCORING ANALYSIS

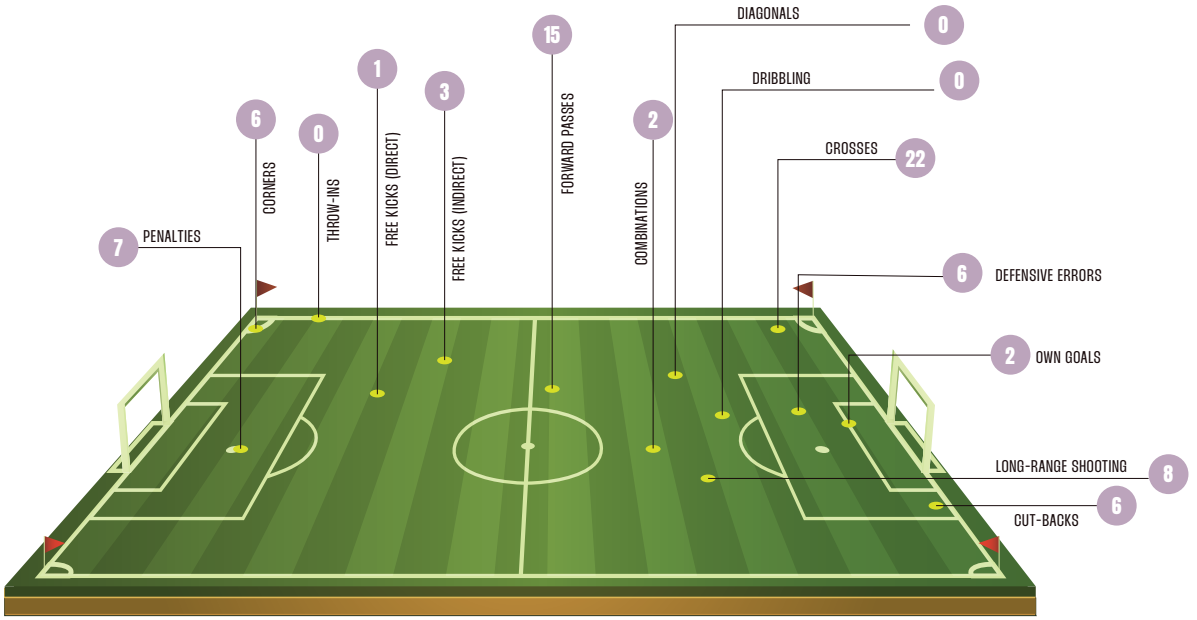
NOUGHTS AND CROSSES

A 17-0 scoreline had seriously distorted the goalscoring statistics in the inaugural season of the AFC Women's Champions League™, and, to a degree, falsified comparisons with the second edition of the competition in its current format. But if the striking result from 2024/25 is discounted, the 2025/26 season showed an increase from 3.00 to 3.12 goals per match. Maybe unexpectedly, the Group Stage generated a lower striking rate of 55 goals in 18 fixtures at 3.06 per match, while the 23 goals in seven Knockout Stage ties (compared with 18 in the previous season) averaged 3.29. More predictably, 10 of the 27 games in a Preliminary Stage that exhibited the multi-tier structure of women's football in the Confederation produced a winning margin of five goals or more – and this review of goalscoring focuses exclusively on the 25 fixtures played in the competition proper.

The season's 78 goals came from 594 attempts at a success rate of 1:7.62. If penalties are excluded, a rate of 1:8.25 is marginally better than the 1:8.39 at the AFC Women's Asian Cup™ played earlier in the year. The same applies to the ratio of accurate finishing: one in 2.48 attempts was on target compared with one in 2.6 at the national team competition. Of the on-target finishes, one in three (3.08 to be precise) hit the net.

Melbourne City FC, top scorers with 18, struck all but three of their goals during the Group Stage. The Australian champions were followed by the two finalists, Tokyo Verdy Beleza with 13; Naegohyang Women's FC with 12. The other semi-finalist, Suwon FC Women, totalled 10, having played out the season's only goalless draw with Tokyo Verdy when they met in Group C. The goals were shared among 51 scorers and led by two strikers with four apiece: Melbourne City's Holly McNamara and Naegohyang's Kim Kyong Yong.

The goalscoring graphic breaks down the 78 goals into 14 set-play and open-play categories.



GOALS FROM SET PLAY

ACTION	GUIDELINES	GOALS
Corners	Directly / indirectly from a corner	6
Free kicks (direct)	Directly from a free kick	1
Free kicks (indirect)	Indirectly from a free kick	3
Penalties	Spot kicks, including rebounds	7
Throw-ins	Following a throw-in	0

TOTAL GOALS SCORED : 78

GOALS FROM OPEN PLAY

ACTION	GUIDELINES	GOALS
Combinations	Combination moves involving 2/3/4 players	2
Crosses	Crosses from the wing	22
Cut-backs	Backward passes from the bye-line	6
Diagonals	Diagonal passes into the penalty box	0
Dribbling	Dribbling and finishing or providing an assist	0
Long-range shooting	Shots from outside the penalty box including rebounds	8
Forward passes	Through pass or pass over the defence	15
Defensive errors	Bad back-pass / mistake by the goalkeeper	6
Own goals	Players scoring against their own team	2

GOALSCORING ANALYSIS

OPEN PLAY

The eye-catching feature in the open-play statistics was the presence of two noughts. The goals created by running with the ball or diagonals into the box from deeper wide areas totalled zero. What's more, combination play through central areas generated only two goals – both on the opening matchday of Group C on November 9, 2025. Tokyo Verdy Beleza's third goal against Naegohyang Women's FC came when Hikaru Naomoto set up Moka Hiwatari at the end of a neat move, while the third of Suwon FC Women's five goals against ISPE WFC was finished by Song Ji-yoon. After that, a blank sheet.

The upshot was that, while the Technical Topics section mentions tactical versatility, there was very little variety in the manner of goalscoring – as illustrated by the champions. In addition to the three categories mentioned above, Naegohyang had a zero return on through passing. Their goalscoring was about crosses, cut-backs, set plays and the exploitation of defensive errors. Even the success from long range (in the Group C match against Suwon) was a second-phase strike after an inswinging corner from the left had been partially cleared.



Long-range shooting, incidentally, was equally productive as it had been in the previous season. And there were some spectacular successes, such as the strike by Alexia Apostolakis that put Melbourne City FC 3-0 ahead against Lion City Sailors FC. Or the right-footer from a distance of some 30m by East Bengal FC's Resty Nanziri that clinched the 3-1 win against Bam Khatoon FC. Both of these made it into the competition's top five open-play goals. And another serious contender was the left-footed strike from a similar distance by Stallion Laguna FC's Tayla Christensen that supplied their fourth goal against, unluckily for the team from Singapore, Lion City Sailors again.



All of this meant that no less than 70.5 per cent of open-play goals corresponded to two broad categories: through passes, and the combined total of crosses and cut-backs derived from wing play. Tokyo Verdy (five) and Melbourne City (three) accounted for a majority of the successes stemming from the through pass, while six of the top eight teams all but monopolised the total of 22 goals from crosses (36 per cent of the season's open-play goals). It has to be said that a fair percentage of the goals derived from crosses was quite untidy, in the sense that they involved rebounds, goalmouth scrambles or defensive muddles.

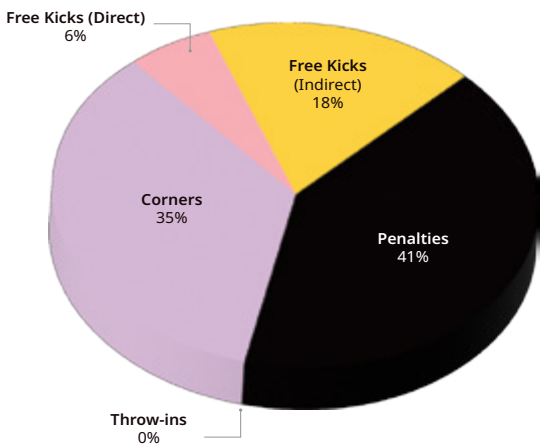


In general, low crosses were more productive than lofted deliveries in terms of creating goals. Examples included the brace of crucial early goals by Tokyo Verdy in the Semi-final that, in the words of Melbourne City's head coach Michael Matricciani, left the previous season's silver-medallists "a mountain to climb". Clear examples of the classic lofted cross + header were more difficult to pinpoint. Maybe the delivery by Rebekah Stott and the header by Leah Davidson that put Melbourne City 2-0 up against Stallion Laguna. Or the unopposed header by Deng Mengye that gave Wuhan Jiangda Women's FC a 3-0 lead against Bam Khatoon FC – albeit aided by the goalkeeper misjudging a cross from the left.

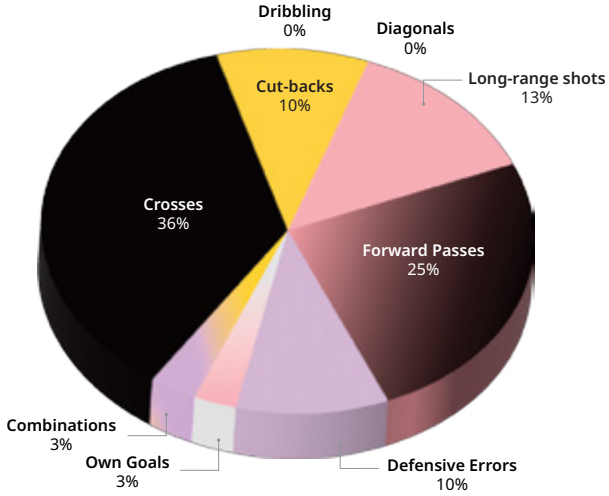
Having said that, Naegohyang's first two goals in the Quarter-final against Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC were headed into the net following long deliveries from wide areas. "They utilised good wing play," the Technical Observers noted, "with 1-on-1 skills or combination play creating a lot of good crosses towards players who were very strong in the air." The champions delivered 68 crosses in their three Knockout ties while their opponents in the Final, Tokyo Verdy, totalled 71. In other words, both averaged more than 20 crosses per game.

GOALSCORING ANALYSIS

HOW THE GOALS WERE SCORED (SET PLAYS)



HOW THE GOALS WERE SCORED (OPEN PLAYS)



SET PLAYS

The season yielded a modest dividend of 17 goals from dead-ball situations. Seven of them (41 per cent) were from the penalty spot – three of them converted by Melbourne City FC. The set-play total amounted to 21 per cent of the goalscoring, compared with 28 per cent in the previous season but aligned approximately with the 22 per cent at the AFC Women's Asian Cup™.

The most notable variation in comparison with the previous season was a sharp decline in the number of successes from corner kicks – almost halving the 2024/25 total. Two examples stand out. Firstly, the right-footed delivery from the left which allowed Halle Johnson to head in Stallion Laguna FC's opening goal against Lion City Sailors FC. And, in the Quarter-finals, another inswinging delivery from the left that gave Suwon FC Women a 3-0 advantage in their away game against defending champions Wuhan Jiangda Women's FC, with Kim Hye-ri cleverly peeling away from her marker to head in unopposed at the far post. Others were less clear-cut. Melbourne City's goal in the Semi-final against Tokyo Verdy Beleza (another right-footed delivery from the left) ended with a back-post finish that was diverted into the net. Or Wuhan Jiangda's fourth goal against Bam Khatoon FC – a short corner leading to a cross and a rebound off the crossbar.





However, six goals from 203 corners gave a success ratio of 1:34 – a figure vastly inferior to the 1:19 posted in the previous season, and one that provokes questions about the amount of time dedicated to set-play rehearsals and, on the other side of the coin, the extent of conscientious video analysis by opposing teams.

In the 25 matches, only one free kick was hit directly into the net and the strike by Huynh Nhu proved to be decisive when Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC defeated Stallion Laguna 1-0 in their Group A encounter. Three goals from indirect free kicks halved the previous season's total. Suwon Mileninha opened the scoring against ISPE WFC after a free kick had produced a volley and a rebound. Naegohyang Women's FC crucially equalised against Suwon in the Semi-final when Ri Yu Jong lofted the ball into the box for Choe Kum Ok to head home. And Wuhan Jiangda's first against Bam Khatoon was an inswinging delivery from the right, headed into the net by Mavis Owusu.

The bottom line is that, excluding penalties, dead-ball scenarios produced only 12.8 per cent of the competition's goals.



OPEN PLAY

Ranking	Player	No.	Country	Match	Time	Type
1	Kim Kyong Yong	17	DPR Korea	Tokyo Verdy Beleza (JPN) v Naegohyang Women's FC (PRK)	44'	Cut back and finish
2	Alexia Apostolakis	8	Australia	Melbourne City FC (AUS) v Lion City Sailors FC (SGP)	55'	Long-range shot
3	Moka Hiwatari	11	Japan	Tokyo Verdy Beleza (JPN) v Naegohyang Women's FC (PRK)	65'	Combination play
4	Resty Nanziri	16	India	Bam Khatoon FC (IRN) v East Bengal FC (IND)	87'	Long-range shot
5	Jong Kum	31	DPR Korea	Naegohyang Women's FC (PRK) v Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC (VIE)	66'	Cross and finish



SET PLAY

Ranking	Player	No.	Country	Match	Time	Type
1	Huynh Nhu	9	Vietnam	Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC (VIE) v Stallion Laguna FC (PHI)	58'	Free Kick (Direct)
2	Choe Kum Ok	14	DPR Korea	Naegohyang Women's FC (PRK) v Suwon FC Women (KOR)	55'	Free Kick (Indirect)
3	Kim Hye-ri	90	Korea Republic	Suwon FC Women (KOR) v Wuhan Jiangda Women's FC (CHN)	48'	Corner Kick
4	Mileninha	10	Brazil	Suwon FC Women (KOR) v ISPE WFC (MYA)	45+5'	Free Kick (Indirect)
5	Halleran Johnson	3	Philippines	Stallion Laguna FC (PHI) v Lion City Sailors FC (SGP)	22'	Corner Kick



TALKING POINTS

TALKING POINTS



LEAGUE LEADERS?

"We have a very small league but we have the biggest heart," Stallion Laguna FC's head coach Ernest Nierras commented after the club from the Philippines had made history by reaching the Quarter-finals. "It is very inspiring because it shows us that we have to keep improving our league and hopefully, we can come back and produce better performances."

Michael Matricciani, head coach of the Melbourne City FC side that had already secured Premiership and Championship successes in Australia, commented after the Semi-final against Tokyo Verdy Beleza, "We're really proud of our campaign here as well as what we have achieved domestically. We're excited that we've qualified again for next year."

The two remarks illustrate the differences within the AFC countries between the top echelon of MAs, such as Japan, Korea Republic or Australia, where there are strong national leagues and, on a different plane, other territories where domestic competitions cannot match those standards of competitivity – which then becomes a handicap when teams step up on to the international stage in the AFC Women's Champions League™.

Matricciani's comment about being excited to have qualified again throws light on one aspect. Clubs are increasingly recognising that winning the league can provide access to greater sporting, financial and developmental opportunities. Will this provide an incentive for clubs to enhance competitive levels in domestic competitions?

And the fact that many national teams are ahead of club football in terms of quality raises strategic questions about whether to focus on developing down from the top or building up from the bottom. In your neck of the woods which approach is more appropriate? Is it better – or feasible – to search for a balance between both?





SKETCHING A PROFILE?

Interlocking with the previous topic, the presence of Tokyo Verdy Beleza in the Final provoked reflections on club profiles within women's football. Japan's leading title-winner was founded 45 years ago and, with sponsorship deals playing a major role, has developed into an independent women's club with a 10,000-capacity stadium. At the final tournament in Suwon, the attention to aspects such as nutrition, recovery strategies and player well-being, counting on a backroom staff of 20, illustrated the club's high-performance culture and professionalisation.

Although equally professional, Urawa Red Diamonds Ladies, the Japanese champions of the final edition of the AFC Women's Club Championship™ in 2023, present a different profile. The women's team lives under the umbrella of the three-time winners of the men's AFC Champions League™. Similarly, Melbourne City FC, semi-finalists in Suwon and runners-up in the previous season, thrive on the thoroughly professional backing of the City Football Group, sharing it with the club's successful men's team.

This is the model that has accelerated the explosive growth of women's club football in Europe, where the same names appear on rolls of honour in men's and women's club competitions. Adding female teams to top professional clubs like Manchester United, FC Barcelona, Bayern Munich and a long list of other household names, has given the women's teams immediate access to branding, merchandising, sponsorship, investment, a rich history, professional expertise, a huge fan base and top-class facilities for matches and training. Barcelona, for example, had attendances in excess of 60,000 for their games at the Camp Nou against Real Madrid and Bayern Munich in the Quarter-finals and Semi-finals of the 2025/26 UEFA Women's Champions League – which they went on to win.







At the moment, women's club football within the AFC countries presents a mix of the two models. Which profile is better suited to the development and prosperity of women's club football in your territory?



AWARDS



MOST VALUABLE PLAYER
KIM KYONG YONG (NAEGOHYANG WOMEN'S FC)

TOP GOAL SCORER
HOLLY MCNAMARA (MELBOURNE CITY FC)

FAIR PLAY AWARD: HO CHI MINH CITY WOMEN'S FC (VIE)


ALL-STAR
SQUAD

FORWARDS



19 | **Yuzuho Shiokoshi**
(Tokyo Verdy Beleza)



9 | **Holly McNamara**
(Melbourne City FC)



17 | **Kim Kyong Yong**
(Naegohyang Women's FC)



39 | **Haruhi Suzuki**
(Suwon FC Women)

MIDFIELDERS



8 | **Hikaru Naomoto**
(Tokyo Verdy Beleza)



12 | **Shelby McMahon**
(Melbourne City FC)



66 | **Ji So-yun**
(Suwon FC Women)



6 | **Leticia McKenna**
(Melbourne City FC)



34 | **Pak Ye Gyong**
(Naegohyang Women's FC)



6 | **Rin Sumida**
(Tokyo Verdy Beleza)

DEFENDERS



90 | **Kim Hye-ri**
(Suwon FC Women)



13 | **Rebekah Stott**
(Melbourne City FC)



3 | **Tomoko Muramatsu**
(Tokyo Verdy Beleza)



16 | **Yuna Aoki**
(Tokyo Verdy Beleza)



16 | **Ri Yu Jong**
(Naegohyang Women's FC)



5 | **Wu Haiyan**
(Wuhan Jiangda Women's FC)

GOALKEEPERS



31 | **Shu Ohba**
(Tokyo Verdy Beleza)



16 | **Kim Kyeong-hee**
(Suwon FC Women)



40 | **Pak Ju Gyong**
(Naegohyang Women's FC)



TEAM PROFILES

MELBOURNE CITY FC (AUS)

SQUAD		DATE OF BIRTH
GOALKEEPERS		
23	MELISSA BARBIERI	20-01-1980
24	MALENA MIERES	29-03-2000
25	AYANA AOYAGI	16-06-2000
DEFENDERS		
2	ELOISE WILSON	11-05-1997
3	DANIELLE TURNER	10-09-1991
5	TAYLOR OTTO	23-10-1997
8	ALEXIA APOSTOLAKIS	16-05-2006
13	REBEKAH STOTT	17-06-1993
16	KARLY ROESTBAKKEN	17-01-2001
19	KEIRA SARRIS	24-09-2009
MIDFIELDERS		
6	LETICIA McKENNA	07-08-2002
10	IZABELLA RAKO	26-06-2009
12	SHELBY McMAHON	13-05-2008
17	KAYA JUGOVIC	23-01-2009
18	LEAH DAVIDSON	28-03-2001
FORWARDS		
7	DANELLA BUTRUS	13-02-2007
9	HOLLY McNAMARA	23-01-2003
11	DEVEN ROSE JACKSON	22-04-1998
14	LAURA HUGHES	06-06-2001
15	CHINAZA UCHENDU	03-12-1997
20	CAITLIN KARIC	20-06-2005
21	AIDEEN KEANE	09-02-2002
22	BRYLEEH HENRY	05-05-2003



FORMATION: 1-4-3-3



COACH Michael Matricciani (AUS)



A former player with Adelaide United and India's Chirag United, Michael Matricciani coached Adelaide City in the National Premier League until the end of the 2020 season.

Prior to that, the 40-year-old Adelaide native spent three years as head coach of Football SA NTC Girls and was named the Women's National Premier League's Coach of the Year in 2018. Matricciani also served as Technical Director at Campbelltown City SC from 2013 to 2016 and was their head coach from 2022 to 2024 before taking over at Melbourne City.

KEY FEATURES

- Liked to play a possession dominant game utilising quick passing combinations, speed and power when counterattack opportunities prevailed
- Tactical flexibility in their approach and formation
- Preferred structured build up from the back from the goalkeeper through the thirds and creative combination play to break down opponents' defensive structures
- Utilised speed, running with the ball and technical 1v1 skills to create goal-scoring opportunities
- Physical and aggressive in duels, especially aerially
- Set up in a compact mid-block forcing opponents outside, and backed their speed to cover space in behind, with the goalkeeper also keeping a high defensive line
- Looked to counterattack when opportune, using pace and skills in running with the ball
- Looked to apply aggressive pressing in the front third to win the ball back as soon as possible while remaining players moved behind the ball

KEY PLAYERS

9	Holly McNamara	Fast, skilful striker with high work rate and good finishing.
13	Rebekah Stott	Captain and leader as a strong defender with calm presence.
12	Shelby McMahon	Young, skilful midfielder with high work rate, good striking of ball and passing range.

ABOUT THE TEAM

Founded in 2015, Melbourne City FC quickly established themselves as a powerhouse in Australia, boasting an impressive record comprising five W-League/A-League Women Premiership titles, including consecutive wins from the 2023/24 to 2025/26 seasons. On the Continental front, they finished as runners-up in the inaugural season of the AFC Women's Champions League™.

The 2025/26 season saw Michael Matricciani's side cruise through Group A as winners after notching three convincing wins against Lion City Sailors FC (5-0), Stallion Laguna FC (7-0), and Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC (3-0).

Entering the Knockout Stage without conceding a single goal, Melbourne City edged Uzbekistan outfit PFC Nasaf 2-1, before falling to Japan's Tokyo Verdy Beleza 3-1 in the Semi-finals.

NAEGOHYANG WOMEN'S FC (PRK)

SQUAD		DATE OF BIRTH
GOALKEEPERS		
1	KIM KYONG RIM	21-10-2004
40	PAK JU GYONG	07-11-2007
DEFENDERS		
3	RI KUM HYANG	22-04-2001
4	RI MYONG GUM	01-01-2003
5	RI SIN OK	26-05-2003
16	RI YU JONG	30-09-2003
27	JO KUK HWA	15-01-2002
33	KIM UN JU	20-12-2001
39	RI KUK HYANG	07-10-2007
MIDFIELDERS		
7	PAK HYON JONG	12-06-2000
8	KIM SONG OK	11-12-2004
19	RI SU JONG	05-07-2002
34	PAK YE GYONG	25-06-2002
35	AN POK YONG	10-01-2002
FORWARDS		
9	PAK SON A	13-01-2004
11	KIM HYE YONG	11-03-2003
13	CHOE YON A	01-01-2007
14	CHOE KUM OK	23-02-2002
17	KIM KYONG YONG	02-01-2002
22	PAK HYO SON	05-04-2004
25	MIN KYONG JIN	23-01-2005
31	JONG KUM	01-06-2004
32	RI YONG GYONG	17-09-2003



FORMATION: 1-5-3-2



COACH Ri Yu Il (PRK)



A former head coach of DPR Korea's men's U23 national team, Ri Yu Il went on to helm the senior women's side from 2023 to 2024 as they narrowly missed out on qualification for the 2024 Olympics. Appointed head coach in 2025, Ri fell short of retaining the league title as Naegohyang finished second in the 2024/25 season but more than made up for it by guiding them to a stunning AFC Women's Champions League 2025/26™ triumph, which also sealed their place in the second edition of the FIFA Women's Champions Cup scheduled for January 2027.

KEY FEATURES

- High intensity play in both attack and defence with a preference to play pragmatic and direct football, relying heavily on their superior fitness, strong mentality and counterattack weaponry
- Direct with long passing in behind defensive lines and preference to attack via wide areas with dangerous crosses; dominant aerially in the duels
- Looked to counterattack at every opportunity and back their physicality in 1v1 duels
- Dangerous in set piece attacks
- Very aggressive, high intensity pressing from the front with the rest of the team dropping into their compact defensive structures
- Resolute defensive structures portraying desperate defensive qualities
- Preference for counterattack opportunities behind defensive lines
- Immediate, aggressive pressure on the ball carrier to win the ball back quickly

KEY PLAYERS

13	Kim Kyong Yong	Resilient captain and skilful striker who was clinical with her finishing.
14	Choe Kum Ok	Busy midfielder who linked defence to the attack very well.
34	Pak Ye Gyong	High energy at both ends of the field and set up many attacking forays.

ABOUT THE TEAM

Founded 14 years ago, Naegohyang Women's FC powered to the Finals of the AFC Women's Champions League 2025/26™ after clinching their second league title in 2023/24 to qualify for the Preliminary Stage, where they scored a whopping 23 goals while conceding none.

Although their campaign in Group C began with a 4-0 defeat against Tokyo Verdy Beleza, the Pyongyang-based side quickly recovered to secure back-to-back 3-0 wins against Suwon FC Women and ISPE WFC to finish second before notching another 3-0 win in the last eight against Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC.

A 2-1 win against Suwon saw Naegohyang through to the Final, where they avenged their earlier defeat to Tokyo Verdy by edging them 1-0 to become the first-ever club from DPR Korea - men's and women's - to win an AFC competition.

TOKYO VERDY BELEZA (JPN)

SQUAD		DATE OF BIRTH
GOALKEEPERS		
1	NINA NODA	05-09-2003
21	MIKU SHIMIZU	27-08-2002
31	SHU OHBA	11-07-2002
DEFENDERS		
3	TOMOKO MURAMATSU	23-10-1994
4	MAYO DOKO	03-05-1996
5	SHINO MATSUDA	27-03-2001
15	SEINA IKEGAMI	03-06-2005
16	YUNA AOKI	07-07-2008
22	YUKINA SAKABE	17-09-2003
26	MOMOKA HONDA	12-06-2007
30	RUMI UTSUGI	05-12-1988
33	AZUSA IWASHIMIZU	14-10-1986
34	TAMAMI ASO	26-10-2007
MIDFIELDERS		
6	RIN SUMIDA	12-01-1996
7	NANAMI KITAMURA	25-11-1999
8	HIKARU NAOMOTO	03-03-1994
10	OTO KANNO	30-10-2000
14	MIHARU SHINJO	05-02-2007
18	MIYU MATSUNAGA	08-06-2006
19	YUZUHO SHIOKOSHI	01-11-1997
FORWARDS		
11	MOKA HIWATARI	09-10-2005
13	RIHONA UJIHARA	08-07-2004
20	RIKAKO KOBAYASHI	21-07-1997
25	DANELLE TAN LI ERN	25-10-2004
38	NIKO SHIKIDA	19-12-2008



FORMATION: 1-4-2-3-1



COACH Naoki Kusunose (JPN)



Born in Tokyo, Kusunose started his playing career in 1987 with hometown side Yomiuri FC—now known as Tokyo Verdy—and won the Emperor's Cup that same year. The defender moved to Honda FC in 1990, where he hung up his boots five years later.

Kusunose's transition into coaching began in the youth teams of universities as well as Tokyo Verdy, before serving as caretaker head coach of FC Machida Zelvia in 2012 and again in 2013. Appointed head coach of Japan's U17 women's national team in 2015, he guided them to the AFC U-16 Women's Championship Final in the same year to qualify for the 2016 FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup.

At the end of 2018, Kusunose left the national team set-up and took the reins of top-flight women's side Nittaidai SMG Yokohama a few months later, though they ended the 2019 season bottom and were relegated. Leaving the club thereafter, he worked with the youth team of Urawa Red Diamonds Ladies for a year before moving up to the head coach role in 2021 ahead of the WE League's inaugural season that September. A fruitful four-year spell brought back-to-back league crowns (2022/23, 2023/24), two Empress Cups (2021, 2024), one League Cup (2022/23) and the AFC Women's Club Championship (2023).

He joined Tokyo Verdy in May 2025 and led their charge to the AFC Women's Champions League 2025/26™ Final, where they ultimately fell just short of glory.

KEY FEATURES

- Combined creativity with discipline, playing in a collective style both in attack and defence; maximising mobility and movement of player and ball
- Controlled the tempo with a possession-based style
- Fluidly shifted positions while breaking into the opponent's block to seek opportunities to break through the lines with short passing and vertical passing lines
- Effective use of full-backs overlapping and creating overloads wide to create opportunities with dangerous crossing
- Disciplined, well-organised defensive structures staying compact
- Constantly looked for opportunities to press and apply high-intensity pressure to win the ball back as soon as possible
- Looked to play forward quickly if the counterattack was on, otherwise recycled and retained possession until the opportunity presented itself to play forward
- Immediately pressed the ball upon losing, trying to recover possession; in the meantime, all remaining players got behind the ball to deny opponents

KEY PLAYERS

19	Yuzuho Shiokoshi	Tall striker and scorer able to hold up the ball for support players and also run in behind. Scorer of crucial goals throughout the tournament.
3	Tomoko Muramatsu	Spiritual team leader, always very calm on the ball, providing a lot of communication in marshalling her defenders.
8	Hikaru Naomoto	High work rate, very technical and good ability to beat defenders 1v1. Was influential in creating overloads on the right and providing dangerous crosses from wide areas.

ABOUT THE TEAM

Winners of the 2019 edition of the AFC Women's Club Championship, Tokyo Verdy Beleza returned to the Continental stage after claiming the WE League title in the 2024/25 season.

Back in Asia's premier women's club competition after six years, the Japanese side made their presence felt immediately when they opened their Group Stage campaign with a 4-0 win over Naegohyang Women's FC, followed by a 1-0 victory over ISPE WFC and a goalless draw against Suwon FC Women that saw them finish as Group C winners.

In the Quarter-finals, Tokyo Verdy dismantled Stallion Laguna FC with a 5-0 win before beating Melbourne City FC 3-1 in the last four to make the Final. However, they failed to replicate their sensational Group Stage result against Naegohyang and had to settle for the runners-up position following a 1-0 defeat.

SUWON FC WOMEN (KOR)

SQUAD		DATE OF BIRTH
GOALKEEPERS		
1	PARK HYUN-JIN	26-02-2004
16	KIM KYEONG-HEE	17-03-2003
33	JEONG YUN-JEONG	20-03-2002
DEFENDERS		
5	LEE SU-IN	30-04-2002
17	HAN DA-IN	09-02-2002
20	LEE YU-JIN	15-05-2000
22	SEO JIN-JU	31-07-1998
23	GWON HUI-SEON	22-05-1999
25	SEO YEA-JIN	25-01-1996
90	KIM HYE-RI	25-06-1990
MIDFIELDERS		
7	KWON EUN-SOM	13-11-1990
8	AYAKA NISHIKAWA	02-04-1996
14	KIM GA-YEON	02-05-2003
18	JEON MIN-JI	12-07-2002
26	YUN SU-JEONG	20-06-2002
27	LEE JIN-JOO	05-12-2003
66	JI SO-YUN	21-02-1991
FORWARDS		
2	CHOE YU-RI	16-09-1994
10	MILENA BARRETO DE OLIVEIRA	18-03-2003
11	SONG JI-YOON	16-06-1997
28	LEE JEONG-MIN	11-11-2000
39	HARUHI SUZUKI	03-09-1999



FORMATION: 1-4-4-2



COACH Park Kil-young (KOR)



As a forward, Park Kil-young turned out for Korea Republic at U17 level and joined top-flight outfit FC Pohang Steelers after graduating from university in 2001 only for his career to be cut short by injury a year later. Turning his hand to coaching, Park led the football teams of his alma maters Cheongju Daesung High School and Soongsil University, followed by a stint at the Yongin City FC.

Joining Suwon in 2015 as a coach, Park was elevated to interim head coach in 2017 before taking the reins permanently in 2018. He led them to the end-of-season playoffs for six consecutive seasons, where they were beaten finalists in 2019 and 2023 before finally emerging victorious in 2024. The 46-year-old then steered Suwon to the last four of the AFC Women's Champions League™ on their Continental debut in 2025/26.

KEY FEATURES

- Possession-based team who like to build up with combination play, high control of tempo and use overlapping full-backs to overload wide areas and attack with crossing and finishing with Ji So-yun (no.66) having free rein to play anywhere
- Looked to build from the back, with full-backs pushing high, especially on the right, with Kim Hye-ri (no. 90) and overloading wide areas, contributing very dangerous crosses with great wide combination play
- Equally comfortable playing in central areas with rotating midfielders, a target striker Haruhi Suzuki (no. 39) and looked to play vertical passes when breaking lines
- Defended in a compact mid-block, applying pressure on the ball while organising defensive structure
- Aggressive in duels, showing opponents outside, backing themselves in 1v1
- Preferred to build with structured play, rather than counterattack. If they did counter, they did so in a patient manner and not too quickly
- Immediate aggressive, collective, organised pressure on the ball in context with remaining players retreating into own half, applying pressure at the same time

KEY PLAYERS

66	Ji So-yun	Spiritual leader of the team; technically strong, with high football intelligence.
90	Kim Hye-ri	Huge work rate, providing good quality crosses from the right and excellent set piece deliveries.

ABOUT THE TEAM

After finishing as runners-up in 2019 and 2023, Suwon FC Women emerged as winners of the 2024 WK League, thereby ending a 15-year trophy drought to claim their second crown and clinch a Group Stage spot in the AFC Women's Champions League 2025/26™.

The Korean side had a fantastic start to the tournament with an emphatic 5-0 win over ISPE WFC but lost their second game to Naegohyang Women's FC. A draw against Tokyo Verdy Beleza in their final Group C tie secured a place in the last eight as one of the two best third-placed teams, where they stunned defending champions Wuhan Jiangda Women's FC with a 4-0 win. Their campaign ended in the Semi-finals, with an agonising home defeat to Naegohyang.

WUHAN JIANGDA WOMEN'S FC (CHN)

SQUAD		DATE OF BIRTH
GOALKEEPERS		
1	YU SIJIN	14-04-2003
16	PENG SHIMENG	12-05-1998
29	DING XUAN	11-02-1989
31	ZHANG HAO	16-11-1997
DEFENDERS		
5	WU HAIYAN	26-02-1993
13	XU QIANQIAN	03-10-2000
15	LIU YANQIU	31-12-1995
17	YAN QI	04-10-1999
35	CAO RUNZHI	17-01-2003
46	HUANG BAOYING	23-06-2005
MIDFIELDERS		
10	YAO WEI	01-09-1997
23	QIN MANMAN	11-03-1997
FORWARDS		
12	TANG HAN	03-01-2001
26	JIANG CHENJING	23-01-2004
36	ZHAO JINGYI	03-03-2002
47	DU JIANQUN	01-10-2005
6	LYU YUEYUN	13-11-1995
7	WANG SHUANG	23-01-1995
9	NAMUTE CHILESHE BWALYA	06-06-2007
27	DENG MENGYE	25-12-2001
30	WANG QIANQIAN	22-01-2003
37	SONG DUAN	02-08-1995



ABOUT THE TEAM

Wuhan Jiangda Women's FC entered the 2025/26 edition of the AFC Women's Champions League™ as the reigning champions, having represented Asia in the FIFA Women's Champions Cup 2026, where they reached Round 2 after defeating New Zealand's Auckland FC in Round 1.

The China PR outfit had a shaky start when they were held 1-1 by PFC Nasaf, but Chang Weiwei's side recovered lost ground with a 2-0 win over East Bengal FC, followed by a 4-0 win over Bam Khatoon FC to take top spot in Group B. However, their title defence came to an end in the Quarter-finals, where Korea Republic's Suwon FC Women stunned them 4-0.

COACH Liu Lin (CHN)



A product of the historic Jianlibao youth programme that trained in Brazil, Liu Lin boasts an impressive career, having orchestrated the rise of Wuhan Jiangda from a second division side to consecutive Chinese Women's Super League titles in 2020 and 2021.

After a stint with the national team coaching staff, he returned to the helm of Wuhan Jiangda in January 2026 ahead of the Knockout Stage of the AFC Women's Champions League 2025/26™, where the defending champions were eliminated by Suwon FC.

COACH Chang Weiwei (CHN)



A former midfielder with Chengdu Wuniu, Chongqing Lifan and Hubei Wuhan FC, Chang Weiwei began his coaching career as assistant coach with Hubei Wuhan before accepting the same role with China PR's women's national team in 2013 and helping them reach the Quarter-finals of the FIFA Women's World Cup 2015.

The 51-year-old became assistant coach with Guangzhou Evergrande the same year before moving to Wuhan Jiangda as their head coach six years later, leading them to back-to-back league and cup doubles in 2022 and 2023, before clinching the historic AFC Women's Champions League title™ in 2025.

EAST BENGAL (IND)

SQUAD		DATE OF BIRTH
GOALKEEPERS		
1	ELANGBAM PANTHOI CHANU	01-02-1996
4	ASHALATA DEVI LOITONGBAM	03-07-1993
31	SIKHA SAREN	06-09-2000
DEFENDERS		
2	SWEETY DEVI NGANBAM	01-12-1999
5	ASTAM ORAON	05-02-2005
6	SARITA YUMNAM	04-02-2002
15	SUSHMITA LEPCHA	19-03-1996
17	SATHI DEBNATH	12-10-2003
21	ABENA ANOMA OPOKU	10-01-2004
33	MAUREEN TOVIA OKPALA	20-12-1998
34	BANDANA ROY	03-08-2004
MIDFIELDERS		
16	RESTY NANZIRI	29-08-1997
18	THANDAMONI BASKEY	09-03-2010
19	SHILKY DEVI HEMAM	23-11-2005
20	AMNAH NABABI	12-08-1998
FORWARDS		
7	SOUMYA GUGULOTH	18-07-2001
10	FAZILA IKWAPUT	15-09-1995
13	SANDHIYA RANGANATHAN	20-05-1998
14	SANDHYA MAITY	16-08-2000
22	SULANJANA RAUL	04-06-2007
25	SHRABANI MURMU	24-04-2007
26	ANTASIA ORAON	17-11-2003
32	RUBINA KHATUN	20-01-2003
99	JYOTI CHOUHAN	06-07-1999



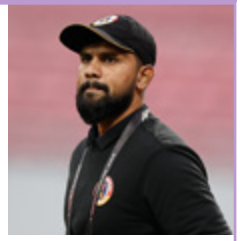
ABOUT THE TEAM

India's East Bengal FC sealed their maiden spot in the AFC Women's Champions League 2025/26™ Group Stage after clinching the domestic crown in India and backing it up by emerging as winners of Group E in the Preliminary Stage on their Continental debut.

Despite starting out strong in Group B with a 3-1 win against Bam Khatoon FC, the Moshal Girls failed to keep the momentum going and fell 2-1 to Wuhan Jiangda Women's FC and 3-0 to PFC Nasaf in their remaining matches, thereby finishing third and exiting the competition.

COACH

Anthony Andrews (IND)



Beginning his coaching career across youth academies in India since 2012, Anthony Andrews joined Gokulam Kerala as head coach in 2021 following stints as assistant coach at clubs such as ARA and Rebels FC.

During his time at Gokulam, the Malabarians won two domestic titles and also participated in three consecutive editions of the AFC Women's Club Championship. Taking the reins of East Bengal in 2024, the 30-year-old led the Kolkata-based side to their first-ever Indian Women's League title and subsequently to the Group Stage of the AFC Women's Champions League 2025/26™.

BAM KHATOON FC (IRN)

SQUAD		DATE OF BIRTH
GOALKEEPERS		
1	MAHDIYEH MOLAEI	29-01-1991
12	RAHA YAZDANI	01-07-1987
71	AREFEH KAZEMI	26-02-1998
DEFENDERS		
3	SOHA KARAMSHAHI	04-02-2008
4	MELIKA MOTEVALLI	06-05-1998
5	SOMAYEH ASADIAN	21-09-1989
8	SARSHIN KAMANGAR	13-02-1995
10	ATEFEH RAMEZANIZADEH	21-04-1992
13	FATEMEH AMINEH	03-06-1997
17	SHAHNAZ JAFARIZADEH	16-03-1994
MIDFIELDERS		
6	ROUJIN TAMRIAN	29-12-2005
7	FATEMEH GERAELI	30-01-1999
9	FATEMEH PASANDIDEH	08-04-2004
11	SAMANEH CHAHKANDI	28-03-1989
70	SARA DIDAR	27-11-2004
82	MANSOOREH TAHERIYANYAZDI	26-06-2003
FORWARDS		
23	MONA HAMOUDI	11-11-1993
24	TAHEREH PIROUZI	31-03-2004
99	MARYAM DINI	12-03-2007



ABOUT THE TEAM

Founded in 1980, Bam Khatoon FC have a rich history in women's football, having participated in the AFC Women's Club Championship™ in 2022 and 2023 as well as the inaugural edition of the AFC Women's Champions League™ last year, marking their fourth participation in AFC competition in 2025/26 – the most of any women's club in Asia.

The Iranian side suffered defeat against India's East Bengal FC in their opening Group B match but notched a narrow 1-0 win against PFC Nasaf before being bested by Wuhan Jiangda Women's FC in their final match of the round, thereby finishing at the bottom of their group on goal difference.

COACH

Marziyeh Jafari (IRN)



A trailblazer in every sense of the term, Marziyeh Jafari created history in 2025 as the first winner of the AFC Coach of the Year (Women) from the Islamic Republic of Iran and has been in charge of Bam Khatoon since 2010, leading them to 11 domestic league titles.

On the continental stage, Jafari guided Bam Khatoon to a runners-up finish at the AFC Women's Club Championship™ in 2022, and in the 2024/25 season, led them to the Quarter-finals of the AFC Women's Champions League™. Besides being a central pillar of the Bam-based club, the 43-year-old is also in charge of the IR Iran women's national team and successfully helped them qualify for the AFC Women's Asian Cup™ earlier this year.

ISPE WFC (MYA)

SQUAD		DATE OF BIRTH
GOALKEEPERS		
1	ZU LATT NADI	22-12-2000
12	MYO MYA MYA NYEIN	22-08-1999
20	MAY OO KHIN	26-05-2005
DEFENDERS		
3	MOE MA MA SOE	24-05-2001
4	PHYU PHWE	09-05-2005
21	THINZAR CHO	26-11-1999
22	LIN LAE OO	06-09-2002
27	HNIN PWINT AYE	26-01-2004
34	KHIN HTAY KYING	23-04-2005
42	ZUNE YU YA OO	12-02-2001
MIDFIELDERS		
5	PHYU PHYU WIN	01-12-2004
6	THAN THAN NWE	05-08-2001
10	KHIN MARLAR TUN	21-05-1988
11	YOON WADI HLAING	09-09-2005
17	LIN MYINT MO	09-06-2002
23	YIN LOON EAIN	21-03-2006
35	NAW HTET HTET WAI	30-07-2000
38	SANDAR LIN	17-06-2006
39	KHIN MO MO TUN	03-06-1999
43	HAY MANN SOE	21-05-2005
FORWARDS		
23	MONA HAMOUDI	11-11-1993
24	TAHEREH PIROUZI	31-03-2004
99	MARYAM DINI	12-03-2007



ABOUT THE TEAM

Semi-finalists in the 2022 edition of the AFC Women's Club Championship, Myanmar's ISPE WFC won their third league title to qualify for the AFC Women's Champions League 2025/26™ Preliminary Stage and then topped Group A to become the first-ever Burmese side to feature at the Finals.

However, the Mandalay-based club's tenure was short-lived after suffering three consecutive defeats at the hands of Suwon FC Women, Tokyo Verdy Beleza and Naegohyang Women's FC to finish bottom of Group C.

COACH — San San Thein (MYA)



An accomplished defender during her playing days, San San Thein featured in every qualifying match as Myanmar reached the AFC Women's Asian Cup™ in 2006 and 2010, turning out in every game at both Finals as well. The Kyangin native also converted her effort in the penalty shootout of the 2007 AFF Women's Championship as Myanmar lifted their second title.

The 44-year-old swiftly established herself as a coach after calling an end to her playing days, helming the Under-13, Under-16 and Under-20 women's national teams over the years while serving as both assistant and interim head coach of the senior women's side at various points. Now a key figure in her country's coaching scene and women's football development, and on track to become Myanmar's first-ever AFC Pro Licence coach, San San Thein further burnished her reputation by guiding ISPE through the Preliminary Stage with a perfect record to the Finals, where they acquitted themselves well on home soil against tough opposition.

STALLION LAGUNA FC (PHI)

SQUAD		DATE OF BIRTH
GOALKEEPERS		
1	OLIVIA McDANIEL	14-10-1997
18	REGINE RASONABLE	29-03-2001
DEFENDERS		
4	PHYU PHWE	09-05-2005
10	McKENNA DAVIDSON	05-10-1994
21	VALERIA RIOS	24-02-1999
27	ANALOU AMITA	09-05-1993
30	MIAMOUR JUANA MESA	07-10-2000
MIDFIELDERS		
2	KAYA HAWKINSON	17-04-2000
9	AMANDA SMITH	17-04-2000
12	MARIA LOURDES MANEBO LAYACAN	12-12-2000
14	ISABELLA PASION	14-07-2006
16	CHARISA LEMORAN	21-09-1998
29	PAULINE SAN BUENAVENTURA	29-06-1999
77	LOVELY FERNANDEZ	04-10-2002
78	ANGELICA TEVES	06-08-1999
FORWARDS		
5	CLAIRE LUBETANIA	29-03-1999
8	CHANDLER McDANIEL	04-02-1998
11	YANZIE YALONG	29-09-1997
13	ALYSSA UBE	05-08-1998
49	SAN THAW THAW	09-01-2001



ABOUT THE TEAM

Philippines' Stallion Laguna FC clinched their place in the AFC Women's Champions League 2025/26™ Finals after finishing as the best runners-up from the Preliminary Stage.

Despite suffering two consecutive defeats in Group A against Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC and Melbourne City FC, the 2024 PFF Women's Cup champions bounced back with an emphatic 5-0 triumph over Lion City Sailors FC to secure a place in the last eight as one of the best third-placed teams.

In their Quarter-final clash, the Stallions faced eventual runners-up Tokyo Verdy Beleza, who handed them a 5-0 defeat, thereby marking the end of their maiden Continental adventure.

COACH

Ernest Nierras (PHI)



A co-owner of the club, Ernest Nierras is an experienced figure in Philippines football who served as team manager of the women's national team in 2005 before eventually taking the reins as head coach from 2011 to 2013. The 61-year-old, who also coaches the men's side, took charge of Stallion Laguna in their AFC Women's Champions League™ debut and steered them through the Preliminary Stage to the final eight in a commendable campaign.

LION CITY SAILORS FC (SGP)

SQUAD		DATE OF BIRTH
GOALKEEPERS		
1	NUR IZAIRIDA SHAKIRA	02-06-2007
22	BEATRICE TAN	29-06-1992
51	HAZEL LIM	03-03-2002
99	NUR ALYSHA NASRINA	23-10-2007
DEFENDERS		
2	ZHANG QIAOLING	30-01-2004
3	WANG JIAXIN	11-08-2003
4	NUR UMAIRAH HAMDAN	11-03-2002
8	NUR SYAZWANI RUZI	20-12-2001
13	MIRA RUZANA SEHERZAN	06-01-2001
14	HIKARU SHIBUSAWA	03-03-2000
17	KHAIRUNNISA ANWAR	21-02-2003
80	SITI NURERWADAH ERWAN	26-06-2004
MIDFIELDERS		
5	IRSALINA IRWAN	01-01-2007
7	RIVKA RAMJI	29-10-2006
15	QARISSA PUTRI	24-09-2008
16	HO HUI XIN	23-04-1992
18	REMI OGAWA	11-07-2010
23	SARAH ZU'RISQHA	24-07-2006
24	NURHIDAYU NASZRI	16-03-2004
32	NUR AIN SALLEH	07-01-2010
77	DHANIYAH QASIMAH	07-07-2004
FORWARDS		
6	ERI KITAGAWA	13-03-2001
9	RAEKA EE	16-09-2003
10	FARAH NURZAHIRAH	13-01-2004
11	AMI TAKEUCHI	16-12-2005
20	DORCAS CHU	29-07-2002
26	NICOLE LIM	10-04-2002
33	AMELIA NG	16-08-2010
90	WAN NASHIRAH SYAH	04-08-2005



ABOUT THE TEAM

Having fallen at the Preliminary Stage in the inaugural season, Lion City Sailors FC enjoyed a memorable return to the AFC Women's Champions League™ by emerging victorious in all three fixtures at the same stage to make history as the first Singaporean side to reach the Finals.

The Sailors found the going tough in the Group Stage, going down 5-0 to 2024/25 runners-up Melbourne City FC before falling to two further defeats against Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC (2-0) and Stallion Laguna FC (5-0) as they exited the competition.

COACH

Yeong Sheau Shyan (SGP).



A former mathematics and physical education teacher, Yeong Sheau Shyan's burgeoning interest in coaching saw her establish a football academy and women's football side in 2008. A year later, Yeong left her teaching role to focus on coaching, leading a secondary school girls' side as well as the Singapore women's Under-14, Under-16 and Under-19 national teams.

The former Singapore international defender, who also had a two-and-a-half year stint as assistant of the senior women's national team, led the Lion City Sailors to the league title on their competition debut in 2022 with an unbeaten season. The 47-year-old, who currently serves as a council member of the Football Association of Singapore, helped the Sailors bounce back from Preliminary Stage elimination in 2024/25 to a successful campaign in this edition.

PFC NASAF (UZB)

SQUAD		DATE OF BIRTH
GOALKEEPERS		
12	SEVARA NURULLAEVA	04-04-2002
16	MAFTUNA JONIMQULOVA	26-07-1999
32	ZARINA SAIDOVA	19-09-2001
DEFENDERS		
2	MADINA KHIKMATOVA	09-08-2001
5	SITORA NABIEVA	27-08-2009
17	SHODIYA TOSHEVA	14-05-1997
22	SOLIKHA KHUSNIDDINOVA	22-01-1998
97	LAYLO TILOVOVA	08-03-1997
MIDFIELDERS		
8	ILVINA ABLYAKIMOVA	27-04-1995
9	MAFTUNA SHOYIMOVA	01-01-1999
11	GULZODA AMIROVA	13-10-1999
15	UMIDA ZOIROVA	22-04-1998
18	SHAKHRIZODA KHAYRULLAEVA	09-08-2009
19	ZARINA MAMATKARIMOVA	04-03-2004
FORWARDS		
7	LYUDMILA KARACHIK	08-12-1994
10	MEHRIBON EGAMBERDIEVA	09-10-2007
20	ZARINA NORBOEVA	16-01-2006
29	DIYORAKHON KHABIBULLAEVA	15-09-1999
77	NILUFAR KUDRATOVA	05-06-1997



ABOUT THE TEAM

PFC Nasaf made it to the Finals of the AFC Women's Champions League™ for the first time with an unbeaten showing in the Preliminary Stage, after falling at the same stage in the previous edition. Winners of a fourth straight league title and record 17th overall in 2025, PFC Nasaf impressed in their Group Stage opener where they held reigning champions Wuhan Jiangda Women's FC to a 1-1 draw.

Despite losing narrowly to Bam Khatoon FC in their next match, the Uzbek side bounced back against East Bengal FC, winning their final game 3-0 to seal their Quarter-final berth. There, their campaign came to an end following a 2-1 defeat at the hands of Melbourne City FC.

COACH Botir Qodirqulov (UZB)



After spending approximately 11 years as a striker with clubs such as FC Shurtan, FC Nasaf and FC Mash'al in Uzbekistan, Botir Qodirqulov turned his attention to the managerial side of football in 2014.

After years honing his expertise in various aspects of the game, including physical fitness coaching and futsal, he joined the backroom staff of PFC Nasaf under the mentorship of Vladislav Khan. Following years of working alongside one another, Qodirqulov took charge of the Central Asian side in the Quarter-finals of the AFC Women's Champions League 2025/26™, where they were narrowly edged by Melbourne City FC.

COACH Vladislav Khan (UZB)



Recognised as Uzbekistan's best coach of 2025, Vladislav Khan is a long-standing figure in the Central Asian country's footballing landscape. One of the women's national team's earliest head coaches, Khan was in charge from 2004-2006 as he helped to establish their foundations. The 60-year-old also served as head coach of Uzbekistan's U19 women's national team and returned for stints as the senior head coach in 2011 for the 2012 Olympic qualifiers and 2013 for the AFC Women's Asian Cup™ 2014 Qualifiers.

Khan has been in charge for Nasaf's last four title-winning seasons as well as all their Continental campaigns, including the AFC Women's Club Championship 2023 and the AFC Women's Champions League 2024/25™ Preliminary Stage.

HO CHI MINH CITY WOMEN'S FC (VIE)

SQUAD		DATE OF BIRTH
GOALKEEPERS		
1	DOAN THI NGOC PHUONG	01-02-1998
14	TRAN THI KIM THANH	18-09-1993
30	QUACH THU EM	15-08-1995
DEFENDERS		
2	DO THI THUY KIEU	08-05-1997
4	RIELLY MARIE CHESNA	15-01-2004
15	PHAM THUY AN	30-07-2000
21	CHAU NGOC BICH	09-09-2002
22	TRAN THI THU XUAN	21-12-2002
MIDFIELDERS		
5	LE HOAI LUONG	21-05-1996
7	NGUYEN THI TUYET NGAN	10-02-2000
8	CU THI HUYNH NHU	07-08-2000
10	PHAN THI TRANG	20-10-1995
11	K'THUA	13-08-2003
17	TRAN THI THU THAO	15-01-1993
72	TRAN NGUYEN BAO CHAU	24-03-1991
77	JOELMA ALVES GABRIEL	05-03-1995
88	TRAN THI THUY TRANG	08-08-1988
FORWARDS		
6	NGO THI HONG NHUNG	06-09-2000
9	HUYNH NHU	28-11-1991
18	SAMIA OUNI	30-05-1992
70	ISRAELA ALICIA GROVES	07-06-1999



ABOUT THE TEAM

Founded in 1998, Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC are Vietnam's most successful women's team. Having won their first Vietnamese Women's National League title in 2002, the 2025 season saw Ho Chi Minh City win the title for a record-extending 14th occasion, which also marked their seventh consecutive crown.

The club, who are also four-time champions of the Vietnamese Women's National Cup, took second spot in Group A of the AFC Women's Champions League 2025/26™ with two wins and one defeat, but were dealt a difficult hand in the Quarter-finals where they were ousted by eventual champions Naegohyang Women's FC in a 3-0 loss to conclude their second campaign.

COACH

Nguyen Hong Pham (VIE)



A former goalkeeper, Nguyen Hong Pham is a familiar figure in the Vietnamese football landscape, having plied his trade for clubs such as Saigon FC and donned the national team jersey for the Golden Star Warriors in competitions including the SEA Games.

With a managerial career spanning more than 30 years, the 64-year-old guided Ho Chi Minh City Women's Club to the Semi-finals of the AFC Women's Champions League 2024/25™ and, in the current season, led them to the Quarter-finals, where they were defeated by Naegohyang Women's FC.



RESULTS

GROUP A

Date	Time	Team A	Score	Team B
25 Aug,25	16:00	ISPE WFC (MYA)	9-0 (7-0)	STRYKERS FC (GUM)
25 Aug,25	19:00	STALLION LAGUNA FC (PHI)	6-1 (4-0)	KHOVD WESTERN FC (MNG)
28 Aug,25	16:00	KHOVD WESTERN FC (MNG)	0-8 (0-4)	ISPE WFC (MYA)
28 Aug,25	19:00	STRYKERS FC (GUM)	0-13 (0-6)	STALLION LAGUNA FC (PHI)
31 Aug,25	16:00	STALLION LAGUNA FC (PHI)	1-3 (1-0)	ISPE WFC (MYA)
31 Aug,25	19:00	STRYKERS FC (GUM)	2-5 (0-4)	KHOVD WESTERN FC (MNG)

GROUP B

Date	Time	Team A	Score	Team B
25 Aug,25	17:30	COLLEGE OF ASIAN SCHOLARS (THA)	2-0 (1-0)	AL NASSR CLUB (KSA)
25 Aug,25	20:30	PFC NASAF (UZB)	3-0 (3-0)	APF FC (NEP)
28 Aug,25	17:30	APF FC (NEP)	0-4 (0-2)	COLLEGE OF ASIAN SCHOLARS (THA)
28 Aug,25	20:30	AL NASSR CLUB (KSA)	0-1 (0-0)	PFC NASAF (UZB)
31 Aug,25	17:30	APF FC (NEP)	1-6 (0-2)	AL NASSR CLUB (KSA)
31 Aug,25	20:30	COLLEGE OF ASIAN SCHOLARS (THA)	1-2 (0-1)	PFC NASAF (UZB)

GROUP C

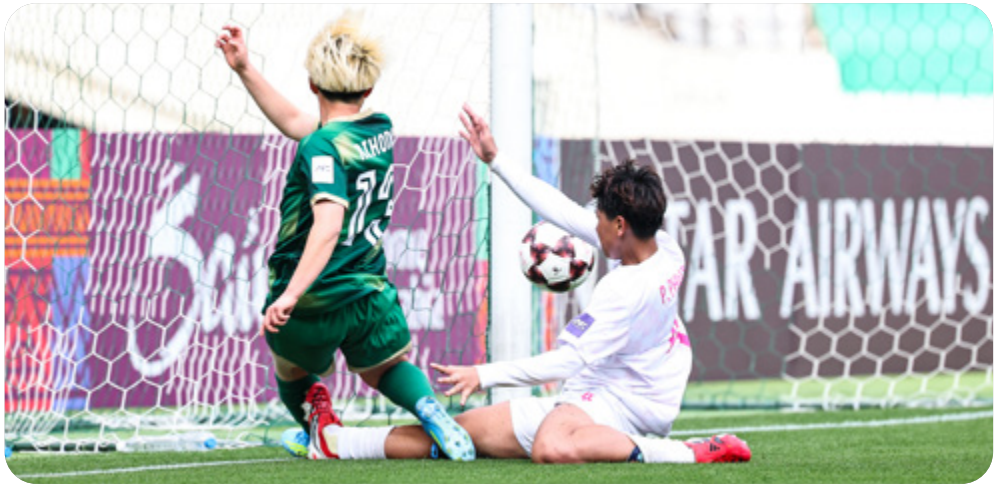
Date	Time	Team A	Score	Team B
25 Aug,25	16:45	ETIHAD CLUB (JOR)	0-2 (0-2)	LION CITY SAILORS FC (SGP)
25 Aug,25	20:45	KELANA UNITED FC (MAS)	0-0 (0-0)	SDYUSHOR SI - ASIAGOAL (KGZ)
28 Aug,25	16:45	SDYUSHOR SI - ASIAGOAL (KGZ)	1-3 (0-0)	ETIHAD CLUB (JOR)
28 Aug,25	20:45	LION CITY SAILORS FC (SGP)	3-1 (1-0)	KELANA UNITED FC (MAS)
31 Aug,25	16:45	LION CITY SAILORS FC (SGP)	3-0 (2-0)	SDYUSHOR SI - ASIAGOAL (KGZ)
31 Aug,25	20:45	KELANA UNITED FC (MAS)	0-4 (0-2)	ETIHAD CLUB (JOR)

GROUP D

Date	Time	Team A	Score	Team B
25 Aug,25	16:00	KAOHSIUNG ATTACKERS FC (TPE)	2-0 (1-0)	RTC FC (BHU)
25 Aug,25	19:30	NAEGOHYANG WOMEN'S FC (PRK)	11-0 (6-0)	MASTER FC (LAO)
28 Aug,25	16:00	RTC FC (BHU)	0-7 (0-4)	NAEGOHYANG WOMEN'S FC (PRK)
28 Aug,25	19:30	MASTER FC (LAO)	0-5 (0-2)	KAOHSIUNG ATTACKERS FC (TPE)
31 Aug,25	16:00	KAOHSIUNG ATTACKERS FC (TPE)	0-5 (0-4)	NAEGOHYANG WOMEN'S FC (PRK)
31 Aug,25	19:30	MASTER FC (LAO)	0-5 (0-2)	RTC FC (BHU)

GROUP E

Date	Time	Team A	Score	Team B
25 Aug,25	19:00	PHNOM PENH CROWN FC (CAM)	0-1 (0-0)	EAST BENGAL FC (IND)
28 Aug,25	19:00	KITCHEE SC (HKG)	3-3 (2-1)	PHNOM PENH CROWN FC (CAM)
31 Aug,25	19:00	EAST BENGAL FC (IND)	1-1 (1-0)	KITCHEE SC (HKG)



GROUP A

Date	Time	Team A	Score	Team B
13 Nov,25	15:00	MELBOURNE CITY FC (AUS)	5-0 (2-0)	LION CITY SAILORS FC (SGP)
13 Nov,25	19:00	HO CHI MINH CITY WOMEN'S FC (VIE)	1-0 (0-0)	STALLION LAGUNA FC (PHI)
16 Nov,25	15:00	STALLION LAGUNA FC (PHI)	0-7 (0-4)	MELBOURNE CITY FC (AUS)
16 Nov,25	19:00	LION CITY SAILORS FC (SGP)	0-2 (0-0)	HO CHI MINH CITY WOMEN'S FC (VIE)
19 Nov,25	15:00	STALLION LAGUNA FC (PHI)	5-0 (2-0)	LION CITY SAILORS FC (SGP)
19 Nov,25	19:00	MELBOURNE CITY FC (AUS)	3-0 (3-0)	HO CHI MINH CITY WOMEN'S FC (VIE)

GROUP B

Date	Time	Team A	Score	Team B
17 Nov,25	15:00	BAM KHATOON FC (IRN)	1-3 (1-2)	EAST BENGAL FC (IND)
17 Nov,25	19:00	WUHAN JIANGDA WOMEN'S FC (CHN)	1-1 (1-1)	PFC NASAF (UZB)
20 Nov,25	15:00	EAST BENGAL FC (IND)	0-2 (0-2)	WUHAN JIANGDA WOMEN'S FC (CHN)
20 Nov,25	19:00	PFC NASAF (UZB)	0-1 (0-1)	BAM KHATOON FC (IRN)
23 Nov,25	15:00	EAST BENGAL FC (IND)	0-3 (0-1)	PFC NASAF (UZB)
23 Nov,25	19:00	WUHAN JIANGDA WOMEN'S FC (CHN)	4-0 (1-0)	BAM KHATOON FC (IRN)

GROUP C

Date	Time	Team A	Score	Team B
09 Nov,25	15:00	TOKYO VERDY BELEZA (JPN)	4-0 (1-0)	NAEGOHYANG WOMEN'S FC (PRK)
09 Nov,25	19:00	SUWON FC WOMEN (KOR)	5-0 (1-0)	ISPE WFC (MYA)
12 Nov,25	15:00	ISPE WFC (MYA)	0-1 (0-1)	TOKYO VERDY BELEZA (JPN)
12 Nov,25	19:00	NAEGOHYANG WOMEN'S FC (PRK)	3-0 (0-0)	SUWON FC WOMEN (KOR)
15 Nov,25	15:00	SUWON FC WOMEN (KOR)	0-0 (0-0)	TOKYO VERDY BELEZA (JPN)
15 Nov,25	19:00	NAEGOHYANG WOMEN'S FC (PRK)	3-0 (1-0)	ISPE WFC (MYA)



KNOCKOUT STAGE

QUARTER-FINALS

Date	Time	Team A	Score	Team B
28 Mar,26	14:00	TOKYO VERDY BELEZA (JPN)	5-0 (1-0)	STALLION LAGUNA FC (PHI)
28 Mar,26	15:00	NAEGOHYANG WOMEN'S FC (PRK)	3-0 (1-0)	HO CHI MINH CITY WOMEN'S FC (VIE)
29 Mar,26	15:00	MELBOURNE CITY FC (AUS)	2-1 (1-1)	PFC NASAF (UZB)
29 Mar,26	19:00	WUHAN JIANGDA WOMEN'S FC (CHN)	0-4 (0-2)	SUWON FC WOMEN (KOR)

SEMI-FINALS

Date	Time	Team A	Score	Team B
20 May,26	14:00	MELBOURNE CITY FC (AUS)	1-3 (1-2)	TOKYO VERDY BELEZA (JPN)
20 May,26	19:00	NAEGOHYANG WOMEN'S FC (PRK)	2-1 (0-0)	SUWON FC WOMEN (KOR)

FINAL

Date	Time	Team A	Score	Team B
23 May,26	14:00	TOKYO VERDY BELEZA (JPN)	0-1 (0-1)	NAEGOHYANG WOMEN'S FC (PRK)





REFEREEING

AFC WOMEN'S CHAMPIONS LEAGUE 2025/26™

1. SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of the refereeing operations for the AFC Women's Champions League (AWCL) 2025/26™ across all competition stages: the Preliminary Stage, Group Stage, Quarter-finals, Semi-finals, and the Final. It includes the appointment of match officials and highlights the implementation of Football Video Support (FVS) during the Group Stage, as well as the introduction of the Video Assistant Referee (VAR) system in the Semi-finals and the Final.

The Preliminary Stage (25–31 August 2025) consisted of five groups (A–E) hosted by Myanmar, Uzbekistan, Malaysia, Laos, and Cambodia, with the winners of each group advancing to the Group Stage. The Group Stage (9–23 November 2025), hosted by Vietnam, China PR, and Myanmar, marked the competition's first use of FVS. The Quarter-finals were played on 28–29 March 2026, followed by the Semi-Finals and the Final (20-23 May 2026), where VAR was implemented for the first time in the competition.

Throughout the season, a total of 28 referees, 27 assistant referees and four Video Match Officials (VMOs) were appointed to officiate the AFC Women's Champions League 2025/26™.

Referees	MA
Lara Christie Lee	AUS
Casey Lisa Reibelt	AUS
Plong Pich Akara	CAM
Tian Jin	CHN
Mu Mingxin	CHN
Dong Fangyu	CHN
Fatemeh Nasiri Looshani	IRN
Mahnaz Zokaee	IRN
Ranjita Devi Tekcham	IND
Esra'a Mahmoud Mohammad Almbaidin	JOR
Azusa Sugino	JPN
Haruna Kanematsu	JPN
Yoshimi Yamashita	JPN
Asaka Koizumi	JPN
Jon Sol Mi	PRK
Kim Yu-jeong	KOR
Oh Hyeon-jeong	KOR
Veronika Bernatskaia	KGZ
Doumouh Ibrahim Albakkar	LBN
Nurul Ain Izatty Zainal	MAS
Khin Nyein Chan	MYA
Alesarl Baddour	SYR
Sunita Thongthawin	THA
Supiree Testhomya	THA
Pansa Chaisanit	THA
Yang Shu-Ting	TPE
Le Thi Ly	VIE
Bui Thi Thu Trang	VIE

Referees	MA
Emma Kocbek	AUS
Madelaine Allum	AUS
Xie Lijun	CHN
Wu Qiaoli	CHN
Bao Mengxiao	CHN
Atena Lashani	IRN
Bahareh Seifinahavandi	IRN
Riiohlang Dhar	IND
Sabreen Awwad Abed Ala'badi	JOR
Chihiro Ikki	JPN
Makoto Bozono	JPN
Miu Sone	JPN
Yoon Eun-hee	KOR
Lee Soo-bin	KOR
Hyon Un Mi	PRK
Ramina Tsoi	KGZ
Jana Haydar	LBN
Phutsavan Chanthavong	LAO
Nur Akmal Binti Anuar	MAS
Munirah Binti Ha Ali	MAS
Battsetseg Unurjargal	MNG
May Thet Phyu	MYA
Heba Saadieh	PLE
Supawan Hinthong	THA
Nuannid Donjangreed	THA
Suwida Wongkraisorn	THA
Ha Thi Phuong	VIE

Referees	MA
Mohammed Khled S Al Hoish	KSA
Muhammad Taqi Aljaafari Bin Jahari	SGP
Pansa Chaisanit	THA
Edita Mirabidova	UZB

2. FOOTBALL VIDEO SUPPORT

FVS was implemented for the first time in the competition during the Group Stage, using dedicated 16-metre camera coverage (left and right) at each venue in addition to the host broadcast feed, with a Replay Operator supporting the referee team through an on-site check process.

FVS REVIEWS (Group Stage & Quarter-final)	TOTAL
TOTAL REVIEWS	28
Review By Team/Referee	28
Penalty area incidents reviewed	21
Goals reviewed	4
Encroachment by GK in PK reviewed	0
Potential red card incidents reviewed	3
Mistaken identity situations reviewed	0
Total Successful Review Request	7
Decision Changed after FVS Review	7
Average Reviews per match	1.27



AFC WOMEN'S CHAMPIONS LEAGUE FINALS 2026™

1. SUMMARY

The Finals were held from 20 to 23 May 2026, comprising three matches. A total of four referees, six assistant referees, and four VMOs were appointed.

1.1 AFC MATCH OFFICIALS

Referees	MA
Tian Jin	CHN
Nurul Ain Izatty Zainal	MAS
Supiree Testhomya	THA
Le Thi Ly	VIE
Assistant Referees	**MA**
Bao Mengxiao	CHN
Wu Qiaoli	CHN
Heba Saadieh	PLE
Battsetseg Unurjargal	MNG
Munirah Binti Ha Ali	MAS
Supawan Hinthong	THA
Nuannid Donjangreed	THA
Ha Thi Phuong	VIE
Video Match Officials	**MA**
Mohammed Khled S Al Hoish	KSA
Muhammad Taqi Aljaafari Bin Jahari	SGP
Pansa Chaisanit	THA
Edita Mirabidova	UZB



1.2 SUPPORT TEAM

Referees' Liaison Officers: A dedicated team of Liaison Officers supported the coordination of all logistical arrangements.

Players Team: Local teams participated in practical training sessions for referees.

2. PREPARATORY COURSE

The referees and assistant referees participated in a two-day preparatory course from 18 to 19 May 2026, consisting of theoretical sessions and practical training sessions.

2.1 PRACTICAL SESSIONS

Two teams, along with a coach, supported the simulation of match incidents in accordance with the instructors' training plan. Fitness training was conducted to ensure that match officials were adequately prepared for their upcoming appointments.

2.2 THEORETICAL SESSIONS

The theoretical sessions were aimed at strengthening the match officials' technical knowledge and improving consistency in the application of the Laws of the Game. Match incident videos—particularly from the four single-leg Quarter-final matches—were reviewed and discussed to encourage active participation, analysis, and alignment among the officials. To complete the preparations, key information related to fitness and administrative matters was also provided.

3. DURING COMPETITION

3.1 MATCH DEBRIEFING SESSIONS

The match debriefings for the appointed officials served as an essential learning platform, with analyses of key incidents from previous matches to better prepare them for upcoming challenges. By examining specific situations and reinforcing officiating standards, the instructors identified areas for improvement and provided guidance to promote consistency and uniformity in foul recognition and the application of the Laws of the Game.

4. VIDEO ASSISTANT REFEREE

For the Semi-finals and the Final, the VAR set-up was consistent with the standard applied at the final stages of AFC competitions, including a dedicated Video Operations Room at the venue and a Referee Review Area with monitor for on-field reviews.

4.1 TECHNICAL SETUP

A decentralised system was implemented for the competition; in other words, there was a VOR located at the venue from where the VMOs operated. The VOR was situated in a room within the stadium, near the broadcast compound to allow for easy provision of camera feeds to the VAR System.

- Technology Provider
  - Hawk-Eye Innovations Ltd (Video & Audio)
- Video Operation Room
  - Located at stadium
  - Reception of all camera feeds from the Host Broadcaster
- Referee Review Area (RRA)
  - Pyramid Monitor
  - Located next to or behind the fourth official's bench at each venue
  - Displays VAR output screen for Referees to review incidents in the case of an On-field Review

VAR REVIEW	TOTAL	DECISION CHANGED	DECISION CONFIRMED
TOTAL REVIEWS	1	1	1
On Field Reviews	1	1	1
Only VAR Reviews	0	0	0
Penalty area incidents reviewed	1	1	1
Goals reviewed	0	0	0
Encroachment by GK in PK reviewed	0	0	0
Potential red card incidents reviewed	0	0	0
Mistaken identity situations reviewed	0	0	0
Average reviews per match	0.33		
1 Review every # matches	1.17		

5. TECHNICAL SUMMARY

5.1 GENERAL PERFORMANCE

Based on their match reports and close monitoring, the referee assessors and instructors evaluated the overall performance of match officials positively. The combination of daily training sessions, match debriefings, and other developmental activities and resources played a significant role in enhancing decision-making as the tournament progressed.



5.2 GENERAL MANAGEMENT

Disciplinary sanctions (inclusive of Preliminary Stage)

Disciplinary Metric	Value
Total sanctions recorded	67
Cautions (yellow cards)	66
Dismissals (2nd caution)	0
Direct red cards	1
Average yellow cards / match	1.27
Average red cards / match	0.02



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

EXPECTED GOALS

Club	Expected Goals	Goals	"Differential (Goals - Expected Goals)"
Melbourne City FC	12.12	18	5.88
Tokyo Verdy Beleza	11.6	13	1.4
Wuhan Jiangda Women's FC	9.15	7	-2.15
Suwon FC Women	8.66	10	1.34
Naegohyang Women's FC	8.16	12	3.84
PFC Nasaf	5.54	5	-0.54
Stallion Laguna FC	4.61	5	0.39
East Bengal FC	2.91	3	0.09
Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC	2.9	3	0.1
Bam Khatoon FC	1.64	2	0.36
ISPE WFC	0.38	0	-0.38
Lion City Sailors FC	0.26	0	-0.26

DISCIPLINARY RECORD

Club	Fouls Conceded	Yellow Cards	2nd Yellow Cards	Straight Red Cards	Disciplinary Points
Naegohyang Women's FC	63	6	0	0	47
Suwon FC Women	47	4	0	0	42
PFC Nasaf	41	4	0	0	41
Bam Khatoon FC	39	6	0	0	38
Melbourne City FC	39	2	0	0	28
Stallion Laguna FC	36	2	0	0	25
East Bengal FC	25	4	0	0	22
Wuhan Jiangda Women's FC	25	3	0	0	22
Tokyo Verdy Beleza	23	3	0	0	18
Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC	23	1	0	0	17
ISPE WFC	22	1	0	0	16
Lion City Sailors FC	18	1	0	0	16

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

Club	Possession (%)
Tokyo Verdy Beleza	67.46
Melbourne City FC	62.59
PFC Nasaf	60.23
Wuhan Jiangda Women's FC	57.15
Naegohyang Women's FC	52.05
Suwon FC Women	49.22
Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC	45.64
East Bengal FC	43.83
Stallion Laguna FC	39.36
Lion City Sailors FC	33.69
Bam Khatoon FC	29.94
ISPE WFC	21.81

Club	Average Shots per match
Tokyo Verdy Beleza	16.83
Naegohyang Women's FC	12.83
Suwon FC Women	15.00
Melbourne City FC	13.60
Wuhan Jiangda Women's FC	15.00
Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC	13.75
PFC Nasaf	13.50
Stallion Laguna FC	9.25
East Bengal FC	10.00
Bam Khatoon FC	7.33
Lion City Sailors FC	2.67
ISPE WFC	2.00

Club	Passing Accuracy (%)
Tokyo Verdy Beleza	83.3
Melbourne City FC	80.56
PFC Nasaf	78.84
Wuhan Jiangda Women's FC	79.67
Naegohyang Women's FC	74.38
Suwon FC Women	72.88
Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC	67.34
East Bengal FC	64.24
Stallion Laguna FC	61.29
Lion City Sailors FC	56
Bam Khatoon FC	56.62
ISPE WFC	55.66

Club	Average Shots on Target per match
Tokyo Verdy Beleza	6.50
Suwon FC Women	6.60
Wuhan Jiangda Women's FC	7.50
Naegohyang Women's FC	5.00
Melbourne City FC	5.80
PFC Nasaf	6.25
Stallion Laguna FC	3.75
Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC	3.25
Bam Khatoon FC	3.33
East Bengal FC	3.00
Lion City Sailors FC	1.33
ISPE WFC	1.33

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

Club	Passing Accuracy in Final Third (%)
Tokyo Verdy Beleza	74.85
Wuhan Jiangda Women's FC	66.8
PFC Nasaf	64.82
Melbourne City FC	63.85
Naegohyang Women's FC	62.17
Suwon FC Women	59.61
Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC	53.02
Bam Khatoon FC	48.37
East Bengal FC	46.94
Stallion Laguna FC	44.48
Lion City Sailors FC	37.42
ISPE WFC	30.3

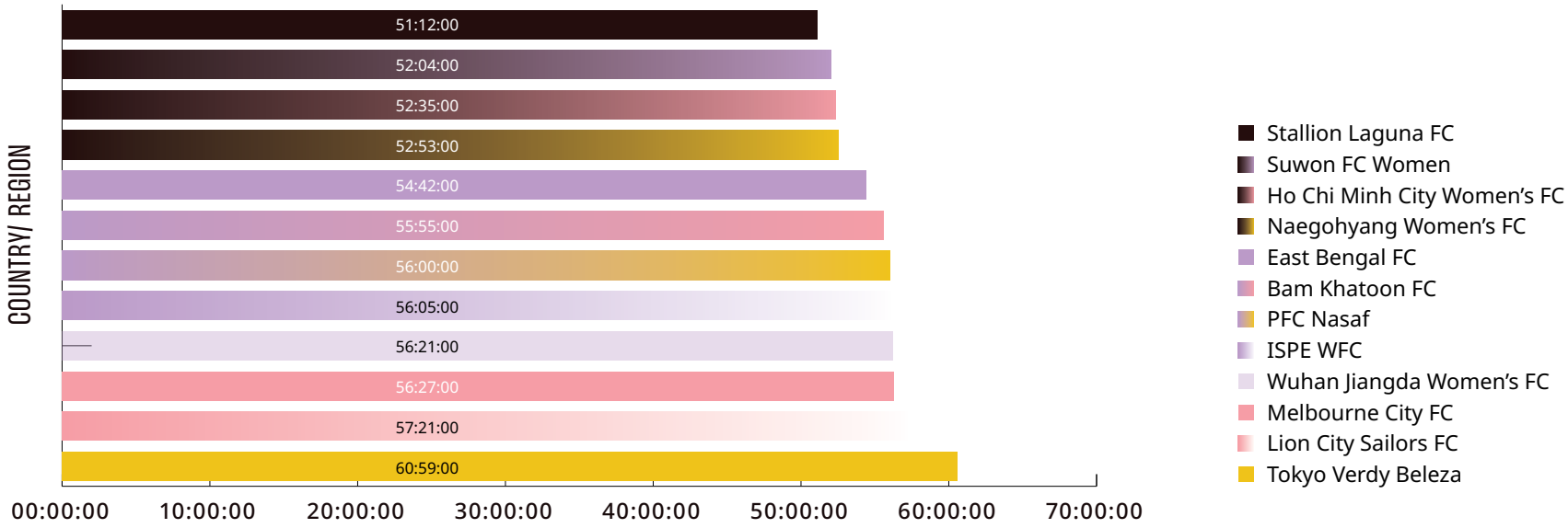
Club	Average Crosses (inc. Corners) per match
Naegohyang Women's FC	25.17
Tokyo Verdy Beleza	23.50
Wuhan Jiangda Women's FC	24.75
PFC Nasaf	23.50
Melbourne City FC	18.40
Suwon FC Women	18.00
Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC	16.50
East Bengal FC	14.00
Stallion Laguna FC	10.00
Bam Khatoon FC	5.33
Lion City Sailors FC	3.33
ISPE WFC	2.67

Club	Duel Success (%)
Naegohyang Women's FC	54.21
Wuhan Jiangda Women's FC	54.19
Melbourne City FC	52.82
PFC Nasaf	52.12
East Bengal FC	50.52
Suwon FC Women	49.46
Stallion Laguna FC	49.07
ISPE WFC	47.79
Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC	47.56
Lion City Sailors FC	47.37
Tokyo Verdy Beleza	47.17
Bam Khatoon FC	43.17

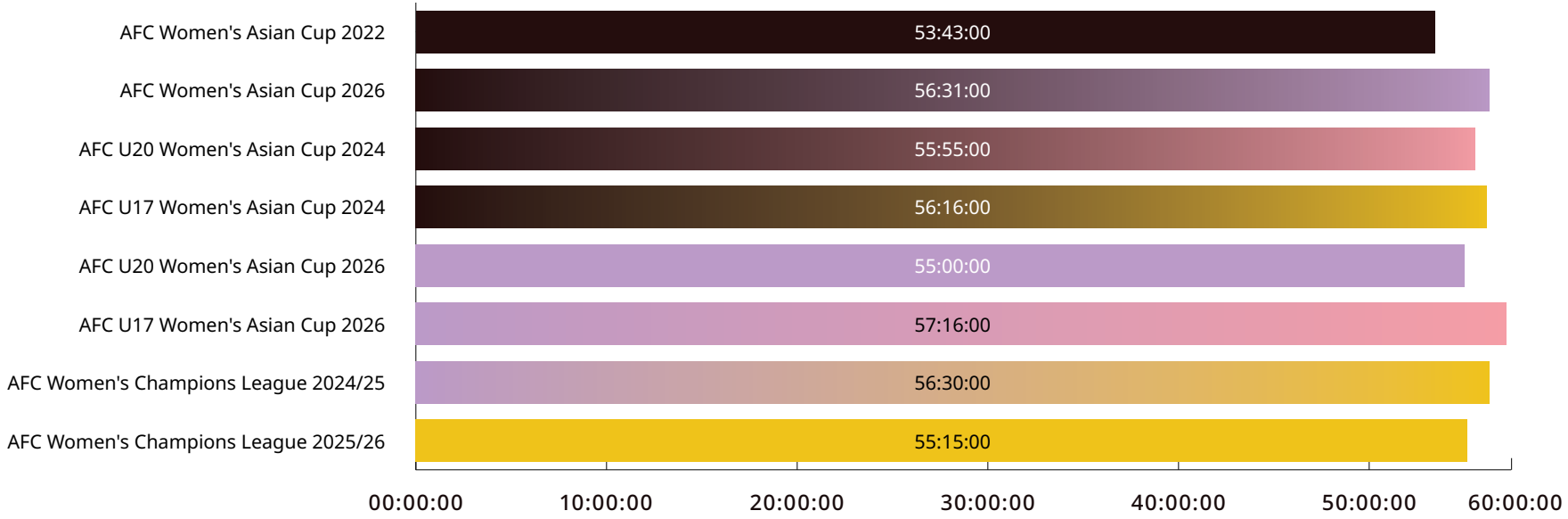
Club	Aerial Duel Success (%)
Naegohyang Women's FC	58.95
Melbourne City FC	58.33
Wuhan Jiangda Women's FC	52
Bam Khatoon FC	50.98
Lion City Sailors FC	50
PFC Nasaf	49.21
Stallion Laguna FC	49.06
Tokyo Verdy Beleza	48.18
Suwon FC Women	45.45
East Bengal FC	42.86
Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC	38.36
ISPE WFC	37.21

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

AWCL 2025/26 AVERAGE IN-PLAY TIME (BY CLUB)



AVERAGE IN-PLAY TIME (BY TOURNAMENT)



DATA HIGHLIGHTS



SOCIAL MEDIA

Impressions: 83,502,910

Video views: 28,552,601

THE-AFC.COM

Users: 111,909

Page views: 249,657


AFC
COMMITTEES

AFC COMMITTEES

COMPETITIONS COMMITTEE

NAME	POSITION	MEMBER ASSOCIATION
DR. TRAN QUOC TUAN	CHAIRPERSON	VFF
MR. DASTANBEK KONOKBAEV	DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON	KFU
MR. GARY MORETTI	Member	Football Australia
MR. KAZI MD. SALAHUDDIN	Member	BFF
MR. YANG XU	Member	CFA
MR. IWAN BOEDIANTO	Member	PSSI
MR. TSUNEYASU MIYAMOTO	Member	JFA
MR. CHUN HANJIN	Member	KFA
MR. OSAMA HUSAIN SULTAN	Member	KFA
MR. SEMAAN DOUAIHY	Member	LFA
DATUK WIRA MOHD YUSOFF BIN MAHADI	Member	FAM
MR. TUN TUN AUNG	Member	MFF
DR. AHMED KHELLIL ABBASSI	Member	QFA
MR. NAEIM ALBAKR	Member	SAFF
MR. DAVLATMAND ISLOMOV	Member	TFF
MR. PAIRIT TANPAIREE	Member	FA Thailand
MR. MOHAMMED ABDULLA HAZZAM ALDHAHERI	Member	UAE FA

WOMEN'S FOOTBALL COMMITTEE

NAME	POSITION	MEMBER ASSOCIATION
MS. KANYA KEOMANY	CHAIRPERSON	LFF
MS. SUSAN SHALABI MOLANO	DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON	PFA
MS. MIJGONA MAHMADALIEVA	Member	TFF
MS. SARAH WALSH	Member	Football Australia
MS. SUN WEN	Member	CFA
MS. VIVIN CAHYANI	Member	PSSI
MS. JUNKO IMAI	Member	JFA
MS. STEPHANIE AL NABER	Member	JFA
MS. EUN AH HONG	Member	KFA
MRS. HANAN ALHARDAN	Member	KFA
DATO' SURAYA YAACOB	Member	FAM
MRS. MONGOLJINGOO SODGEREL	Member	MFF
MS. SARILA MALEKU SHRESTHA	Member	ANFA
MS. LOVELY GLADYS MAE P. TABABA	Member	PFF
MS. LAMIA BAHAIAN	Member	SAFF
MS. PISUTTHA NUNTHAVORAWECH	Member	FA Thailand
MS. YULIYA PANINA	Member	UFA
MRS. NGUYEN THANH HA	Member	VFF

AFC COMMITTEES

REFEREES COMMITTEE

NAME	POSITION	MEMBER ASSOCIATION
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