



TECHNICAL REPORT



MESSAGE FROM THE

Dear friends and colleagues,

It gives me great pleasure to draw your attention to the Technical Report and Statistics of the AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2023[™], which has firmly cemented its place as the greatest-ever edition in Asian football history.

Those of us who were privileged to be amongst the 86,492 capacity crowd at the iconic Lusail Stadium on February 10, 2024, witnessed a stunning Final befitting the Continent's most prestigious showpiece and we must applaud Qatar on successfully defending their Asian crown.

Of course, our heartfelt congratulations also go to Jordan on reaching their maiden Final and for their dynamic displays throughout the tournament which once again reinforced the rising standards of our Asian teams.

Emphasising this trend, four teams – Indonesia, Palestine, Syria and Tajikistan – reached the Knockout Stage for the first time – the highest number since the tournament transitioned from its roundrobin format in 1972, further showcasing the impressive strides that we have taken as one collective Asian football family to bring to life the AFC's Vision and Mission. So, I would like to reiterate our deep gratitude to all our Participating Member Associations because without their commitment to strengthen their pathways to success, the Asian game would not be progressing as hearteningly as it has, and this report will reflect some of the technical innovations.

The AFC's determination to uphold the highest refereeing standards was also underlined with the Semi-Automated Offside Technology and Video Assistant Referee systems marking their full debuts and I thank our Referees Department for their dedication as well as their detailed report, which is included in this publication.

The 132 goals scored across the 51 matches was the most ever in AFC Asian Cup[™] history and this report not only chronicles the tenacity and quality of the teams who brought their flair and passion, but also the latest technical trends, highlighting the areas in which football in Asia continues to improve.

I must applaud the contributions of the Qatar Football Association, the AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2023[™] Local Organising Committee and the Qatari Authorities as well as the Organising Committee of AFC Asian Cup, the AFC Competitions and the AFC Referees Committees, and all the staff and volunteers for their invaluable support.

Our sincere appreciation also extends to the AFC's commercial partners, broadcasters and members of the media and of course, our passionate fans – all of whom were instrumental in ensuring we set inspiring new records in spectatorship, TV viewership and digital engagement.

Finally, a big thank you to the AFC Technical Committee, AFC Technical Director Andy Roxburgh and his Technical Study Group for the hours they have spent studying the matches, analysing the replays and identifying the emerging trends.

This is truly a valuable record of Asia's crowning moment.

Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa AFC President



The AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2023[™] was held from 12 January to 10 February 2024 with matches contested in nine stadiums, seven of which were FIFA World Cup venues.

The cast of 24 teams included seven former champions while Indonesia, Malaysia and Hong Kong, China were making a return after long absences. Tajikistan were the only debutant side in the 18th edition of the AFC Asian Cup[™].

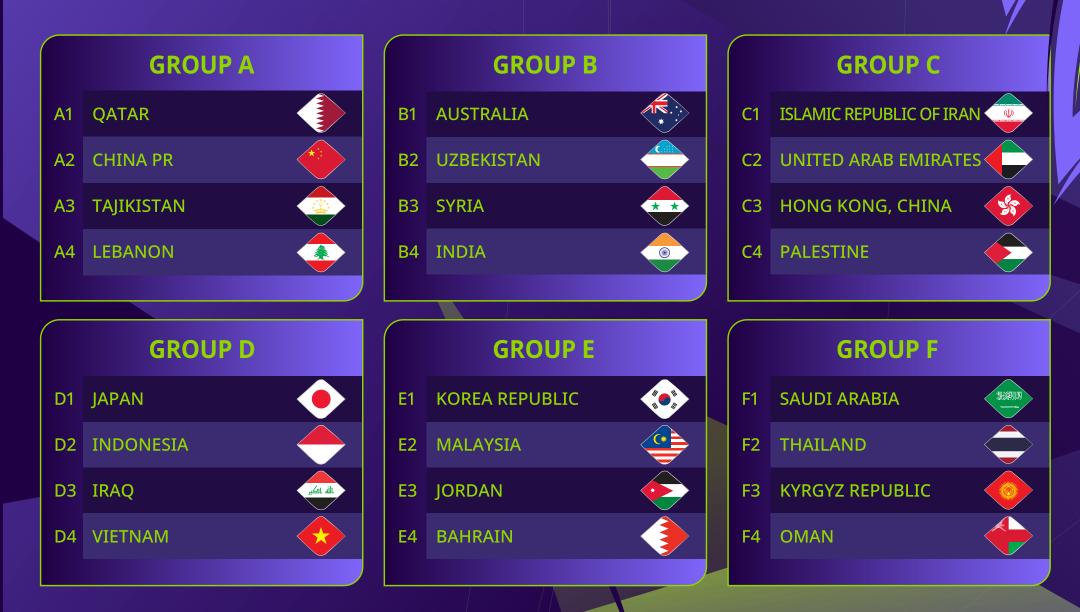
Qatar emerged as champions for the second consecutive edition after a 3-1 win over Jordan in the Final, joining Korea Republic, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Saudi Arabia and Japan as the only teams to have won back-to-back AFC Asian Cup[™] titles.











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GROUP STAGE

GROUP A

The grandest ever edition of Asia's flagship men's competition got underway in spectacular fashion with a record total of 82,490 fans witnessing Qatar's 3-0 victory over Lebanon at the iconic Lusail Stadium.

Marquez Lopez's side didn't let up in their remaining games, defeating Tajikistan and China PR by 1-0 score lines to complete the Group Stage with a perfect record for the second successive edition of the Continental showpiece.

There was joy for debutants Tajikistan as they joined Qatar in the Round of 16 with an exciting 2-1 win over Lebanon on Matchday Three.

The Central Asian side had kicked off their campaign with a hard-fought 0-0 draw with China PR before narrowly losing to Qatar, but were at their best to edge Lebanon to finish second in Group A.



Two-time runners-up China PR finished with two points as they missed out on the Knockout Stage.

Lebanon collected one point from their 0-0 draw with China PR, with the West Asian side yet to advance to the Knockout Stage in three appearances at the AFC Asian Cup™.

GROUP B

Australia took a firm grip on Group B from Matchday One, with the 2015 champions defeating India 2-0. Graham Arnold's side then confirmed their Round of 16 spot with a match to spare after a 1-0 win over Syria, with the Socceroos playing to a 1-1 draw with Uzbekistan in their final group tie.

Uzbekistan finished second on five points after an opening day goalless draw with Syria was followed by an emphatic 3-0 win over India. The draw with Australia on Matchday Three confirmed their sixth consecutive appearance in the Knockout Stage.

Syria, meanwhile, created history by advancing as one of the four best third-placed teams, their 1-0 win over India and draw with Uzbekistan taking them through to the Knockout Stage for the first time in seven attempts.



GROUP C

The Islamic Republic of Iran were the standout team in Group C, with the three-time champions registering three impressive wins to finish top.

They kicked off their campaign with a 4-1 victory over Palestine and confirmed their Round of 16 spot with a 1-0 defeat of Hong Kong, China on Matchday Two.



They concluded their Group Stage campaign with a 2-1 win over United Arab Emirates.

The United Arab Emirates advanced as Group C runners-up, having defeated Hong Kong, China 3-1 in their opening clash and playing to a 1-1 draw with Palestine.

Palestine, meanwhile, shrugged off their opening day defeat to IR Iran by holding the United Arab Emirates 1-1 before going on to create history by defeating Hong Kong, China 3-0.

It was not only the West Asian side's first ever victory at the AFC Asian Cup[™] but also confirmed a historic place in the Knockout Stage, having failed to advance in their previous two participations.

Hong Kong, China, appearing in the tournament for the first time since 1968, ended their campaign with three defeats.

GROUP D

Iraq were the outstanding team in Group D, finishing top with three wins - including a victory against fourtime champions Japan.

Iraq, the 2007 AFC Asian Cup[™] winners, started with a 3-1 defeat of Indonesia but even better was to follow from the West Asian side as they shocked Japan 2-1 on Matchday Two.

The win confirmed their Round of 16 spot but Iraq showed tremendous resilience to end their group campaign with a perfect record as they came from behind to defeat Vietnam 3-2 on Matchday Three.

Japan's defeat to Iraq did not prove costly as the East Asian side, having beaten Vietnam 4-2 on Matchday



One, defeated Indonesia 3-1 in their final match to advance as runners-up.

There was joy for Indonesia - appearing in the Continental showpiece for the first time since 2007 - as their 1-0 win over regional rivals Vietnam on Matchday Two ultimately proved enough to earn them a place in the Knockout Stage for the first time in history.

GROUP E

Bahrain emerged as the Group E winners but only after a thrilling campaign which could have seen any one of three teams finishing top at the end of Matchday Three.

Two-time champions Korea Republic started as the favourites and they kicked off their campaign in style by defeating Bahrain 3-1.

That, however, was followed by a last-gasp 2-2 draw with Jordan, with the East Asian side salvaging a point following an own goal by Yazan Al Arab in added time.

Their Matchday Three tie against Malaysia was equally exciting, with Jurgen Klinsmann's side coming from

behind to lead 3-2 only to have to settle for a 3-3 draw after conceding in the 15th minute of added time.

Bahrain, meanwhile, rebounded from their opening day defeat against Korea Republic to beat Malaysia 1-0, with the winner coming in second half injury time.

Bahrain then edged Jordan 1-0 on Matchday Three, which meant finishing as the Group E winners on six points, one ahead of Korea Republic.

Jordan, who had defeated Malaysia 4-0 before their 2-2 draw with Korea Republic, finished third but advanced to the Knockout Stage as one of the four best third-placed teams.





GROUP F

Saudi Arabia took charge of Group F from the first kick of the ball, with the three-time champions opening their campaign with an exciting 2-1 win over Oman.

A 2-0 victory over Kyrgyz Republic on Matchday Two meant confirming their Round of 16 spot with a game to spare, with the relaxed West Asian side playing to a goalless draw with Thailand in their final tie to confirm top spot.

Thailand advanced as runners-up, having defeated Kyrgyz Republic 2-0 in their opening match before playing to goalless draws with Oman and Saudi Arabia.

Oman and Kyrgyz Republic - two teams who had advanced to the Knockout Stage for the first time in 2019 - suffered early exits after battling to a 1-1 draw in their Matchday Three tie.

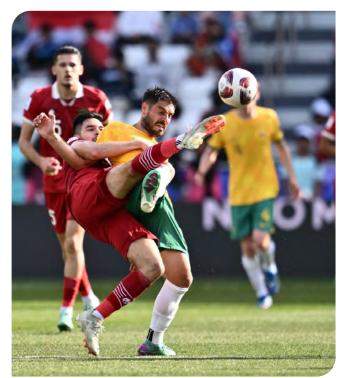
Oman finished on two points, with Kyrgyz Republic one behind.

ROUND OF 16

AUSTRALIA 4-0 INDONESIA

Australia moved through to the Quarter-finals as an own goal by Elkan Baggott and a diving header from Martin Boyle in the first half sent the Socceroos on their way to a 4-0 win over Indonesia.

With Indonesia struggling to create chances, Craig Goodwin added the third in the 89th minute with a well-struck volley and, a little more than two minutes later, Harry Souttar headed in the 2015 champions' fourth as Australia advanced to the Quarter-finals for the fifth consecutive time.





TAJIKISTAN 1 (5-3) 1 UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Tajikistan advanced to the Quarter-finals after a hardfought 5-3 penalty shootout win over United Arab Emirates.

The match was forced into an additional 30 minutes after UAE's Khalifa Al Hammadi scored in the fifth minute of second half added time to cancel out Vahdat Hanonov's opener.

Goalkeeper Rustam Yatimov was Tajikistan's hero, judging correctly to deny Caio Canedo's penalty when the shootout was tied 1-1 as the Central Asian side extended their debut campaign to the Quarter-finals.

IRAQ 2-3 JORDAN

Jordan showed amazing resilience to come from behind to defeat Iraq 3-2 in their Round of 16 tie. Down 2-1 after having taken the lead, second half stoppage time goals from Yazan Al Arab and Nizar Al Rashdan pushed Jordan over the finishing line in a hugely exciting tie that had seen Iraq reduced to 10 players when Aymen Hussein was sent off after scoring their second goal.

Yazan Al Naimat had given Jordan the lead in first half stoppage time, with Suad Natiq scoring in the 68th minute to draw Iraq level.

Hussein put Iraq ahead in the 75th minute before picking up a second yellow card with Al Arab and Al Rashdan scoring in quick succession to send Jordan through.



QATAR 2-1 PALESTINE

Defending champions Qatar survived a scare to book their place in the Quarter-finals with a 2-1 comeback win over Palestine.

Knockout Stage debutants Palestine silenced the partisan fans at the Al Bayt Stadium by taking the lead through Oday Dabbagh in the 38th minute.

Qatar were quick to respond, with skipper Hassan Al Haydos drawing them level just before the half-time break.

A foul by Mohammed Saleh on Almoez Ali saw Qatar awarded a penalty with Akram Afif easily slotting home the winner in the 49th minute.





UZBEKISTAN 2-1 THAILAND

Uzbekistan booked a spot in the Quarter-finals after a thrilling 2-1 win over Thailand.

Azizbek Turgunboev gave Uzbekistan the lead in the 37th minute, only for second half substitute Supachok Sarachat to draw Thailand level in the 58th minute.

The parity, however, only lasted seven minutes as Jaloliddin Masharipov teed up Abbosbek Fayzullaev, with the latter turning his marker before producing a stunning goal from 25 yards out as Uzbekistan advanced to the Quarter-finals for the fifth time in six editions.



SAUDI ARABIA 1 (2-4) 1 KOREA REPUBLIC

Goalkeeper Jo Hyeon-woo was the hero as Korea Republic progressed to the Quarter-finals with a 4-2 penalty shootout win over Saudi Arabia after the teams shared a 1-1 draw at the end of extra-time.

Jo saved attempts from Sami Al Naji and Abdulrahman Ghareeb in the third and fourth rounds of spot-kicks to leave Hwang Hee-chan to smash the winning penalty into the top corner.

The game went to penalties after Abdullah Radif had given the Saudis the lead less than a minute into the second half but Cho Gue-sung levelled nine minutes into injury time with a header to take proceedings into extra time.

With an additional 30 minutes unable to separate the teams, Hwang hit the decisive penalty after Jo's pair of saves to take Korea Republic into the Quarter-finals.

BAHRAIN 1-3 JAPAN

Four-time champions Japan moved into the Quarterfinals as goals from Ritsu Doan, Takefusa Kubo and Ayase Ueda earned the Samurai Blue a 3-1 win over Bahrain.

Doan put the Japanese in front in the 32nd minute and Kubo doubled the lead four minutes into the second half.

A 63rd-minute mix-up between Ueda and goalkeeper Zion Suzuki allowed Bahrain to halve the deficit but Ueda struck nine minutes later to restore the twogoal cushion and confirm Japan's Quarter-final spot.





IR IRAN 1 (5-3) SYRIA 1

Islamic Republic of Iran advanced to the Quarter-finals after overcoming a spirited Syria 5-3 on penalties following a 1-1 draw at the end of extra time.

Mehdi Taremi put IR Iran ahead from the penalty spot in the 34th minute but Omar Khrbin equalised for Syria with his spot-kick in the 64th minute.

IR Iran suffered a setback in second half injury time when Taremi was sent off for a second yellow card.

The three-time champions, however, produced a resilient performance in extra time with goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand's save from Fahd Youssef proving the decisive moment in the penalty shoot-out.



QUARTER-FINALS

TAJIKISTAN 0-1 JORDAN

A Vahdat Hanonov own goal was enough to send Jordan into the AFC Asian Cup[™] Semi-finals for the first time in their history, following a 1-0 victory over Tajikistan.

The West Asian nation had reached the Quarter-finals twice, losing to Japan in 2004 and to Uzbekistan in 2011, while Tajikistan's maiden Continental adventure ended at the last eight stage after a series of heroic performances.

After a tight first half, the deadlock was finally broken midway through the second period when defender Abdullah Nasib rose highest to head Ehsan Haddad's delivery from a corner, with his effort bouncing off Hanonov before settling in the back of the net for Jordan's winning goal.





AUSTRALIA 1-2 KOREA REPUBLIC

Son Heung-min powered Korea Republic into the Semifinals, winning an injury time penalty and scoring a stunning extra-time free-kick to earn his nation a 2-1 come-from-behind victory over Australia.

The Tottenham Hotspur forward hauled the Taegeuk Warriors back into the game after Craig Goodwin had given the Australians a 42nd minute lead with a closerange volley.

The 31-year-old was brought down deep into injury time by Lewis Miller to allow Hwang Hee-chan to slot his spot-kick past Maty Ryan before Son bent a trademark free-kick over the wall 13 minutes into extra time to take Korea Republic through.



IR IRAN 2-1 JAPAN

A late Alireza Jahanbakhsh penalty was the difference as Islamic Republic of Iran came from behind to defeat Japan 2-1 and book their place in the Semi-finals.

The two teams had also met in the Knockout Stage of the previous edition, with Japan emerging 3-0 winners and they looked on course to repeat the victory when they took the lead before the halfhour mark, but second-half goals from Mohammad Mohebi and Jahanbakhsh turned things around for the Iranians.

Hidemasa Morita put Japan ahead in the 28th minute, the central midfielder embarking on a solo run to beat three Iranian defenders before drilling an effort that made its way into the back of the net despite goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand's best efforts to make the save.

Ten minutes after the restart, Team Melli were able to restore parity after a long pass from goalkeeper Zion Suzuki was intercepted with the ball falling to Sardar Azmoun who supplied a through pass to Mohebi. The forward was left with just the goalkeeper to beat and coolly slotted into the bottom corner.

Deep into added time, IR Iran received a golden chance to win the game when Ko Itakura brought Hussein Kanaani down inside the box with Jahanbakhsh emphatically sending his spot-kick into the top corner to take his team into the Semi-finals.

QATAR 1 (3-2) 1 UZBEKISTAN

Goalkeeper Meshaal Barsham was the hero, saving spot-kicks from Rustamjon Ashurmatov, Zafarmurod Abdirakhmatov and Jaloliddin Masharipov as Qatar defeated Uzbekistan 3-2 on penalties to advance to the Semi-finals.

The shoot-out win came after the defending champions had taken the lead in the 27th minute when captain Hassan Al Haydos shot from a tight angle with Utkir Yusupov deflecting the ball over his own goal line but Odiljon Hamrobekov levelled for Uzbekistan in the 59th minute with a low strike.

Both sides couldn't find the winner despite an additional 30 minutes, with Barsham stepping up to keep Qatar's title defence on track.



SEMI-FINALS

JORDAN 2-0 KOREA REPUBLIC

Goals from Yazan Al Naimat and Mousa Al Tamari secured Jordan a sensational 2-0 win over Korea Republic as the West Asian side advanced to the AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2023[™] Final.

A dominant performance from start to finish saw Jordan upstage a Korea Republic side who simply couldn't match the pace and determination of their opponents, who booked a spot in the AFC Asian CupTM Final for the first time in history.

Despite being ranked 64 places below Korea Republic, Jordan didn't waste time in taking the game to their opponents, with their fast start almost catching the East Asian side by surprise, Al Naimat's low strike in the fourth minute from just inside the area forcing goalkeeper Jo Hyeon-woo into a diving save.



The West Asians looked dangerous every time they transitioned into attack with Al Tamari waltzing his way past three defenders before setting up Noor Al Rawabdeh, who brought the best out of Jo.

Korea Republic slowly grew into the match, with Son Heung-min's effort in the 19th minute ruled out for offside while Lee Kang-in failed to find the target from inside the box in the 24th minute.

Jordan, however, always looked the most likely to score and their adventurous approach paid off in the 53rd minute when Al Tamari pounced on a poor back pass from Jung Seung-hyun to send a well-timed assist to Al Naimat, who lobbed the ball over the advancing Jo for the opening goal.

Their place in the Final was sealed in the 67th minute when Al Tamari brilliantly cut inside from just above the area before unleashing a low drive into the net.

IR IRAN 2-3 QATAR

Qatar advanced to the AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2023[™] Final after edging the Islamic Republic of Iran 3-2 in a Semi-final that saw both sides exchanging leads.

Heading into the last four tie on the back of a six-game losing run against IR Iran, Qatar suffered a fourthminute setback as Sardar Azmoun capitalised on the defending champions' inability to deal with a throw-in to hook an acrobatic effort past a stranded goalkeeper Meshaal Barsham.

Qatar, however, did not trail for long, drawing level 13 minutes later with Akram Afif's cutback setting up Jassem Gaber for a shot that took a deflection off



Saeid Ezatohali, looped over IR Iran custodian Alireza Beiranvand and settled in the back of the net.

With Afif dictating terms, Qatar took charge and went ahead in the 43rd minute, the Al Sadd striker netting his fifth goal of the tournament with a scorching effort.

IR Iran, however, refused to give up and drew level six minutes into the second half with Alireza Jahanbakhsh calmly slotting home from the penalty spot after a VAR review determined Ahmed Fathy had handled Ezatohali's shot.

Both sides then increased their efforts to find the winning goal, with Almoez Ali, the AFC Asian Cup UAE 2019[™] Most Valuable Player and top scorer, capitalising on a poor clearance by IR Iran to slot home the winner for Qatar.

FINAL JORDAN 1-3 QATAR

Akram Afif scored a hat-trick of penalties as Qatar emerged as AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2023[™] champions, lifting the coveted trophy for the second successive edition.

Though Yazan Al Naimat's equaliser gave first-time finalists Jordan a flicker of hope, Afif's coolness and Qatar's overall superiority took them over the finishing line comfortably.

Afif's hat-trick, the first in an AFC Asian Cup[™] Final, took his tally to eight as he was named the Most Valuable Player and won the Yili Top Scorer Award while teammate Meshaal Barsham took the Best Goalkeeper honour.

With the majority of the 86,492 fans in the Lusail Stadium urging them on, Qatar were quick to settle with Jordan goalkeeper Yazeed Abulaila having to rush off his line to deny Afif in the fifth minute.

Afif had another crack at goal two minutes later when Lucas Mendes sent a cross into the six-yard-box but the Al Sadd forward fired his low drive straight into the arms of Abulaila.

Qatar continued to pressure the Jordanian defence with Hassan Al Haydos threading a delightful through ball to Almoez Ali, who was stopped in his tracks by an alert Mahmoud Al Mardi.

Limited to just counter-attacks, Jordan's Nizar Al Rashdan whipped a long ball for Ali Olwan, with the forward setting up Yazan Al Naimat, who forced goalkeeper Barsham to parry his powerful drive from above the box.



Jordan struggled to match Qatar's intensity and paid the price in the 22nd minute following Abdallah Nasib's clumsy challenge on Afif, who coolly slotted home the ensuing penalty to take his tournament tally to six goals.

The goal forced Jordan into action and after coming close several times, they drew level in the 67th minute when an unmarked Al Naimat showed excellent ball control inside the six-yard-box before riffling his effort into the bottom corner. Jordan, however, were on level terms for just six minutes as Afif restored Qatar's lead from the penalty spot after Al Mardi's foul on Ismaeel Mohammad.

There was no respite for Jordan as they conceded their third penalty after goalkeeper Abulaila was judged to have brought down Afif after a VAR review, with the forward stepping up once more to convert from the spot to complete his hat-trick in the fifth minute of added time and hand Qatar their second AFC Asian Cup[™] title.



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The winning coach will recognise the Spanish expression llegar y besar el santo. But, like everybody else, he will struggle to translate it into English. The literal conversion into arrive and kiss the saint doesn't help at all. Some attempted translations mention beginner's luck. But, in this case, the element of good fortune isn't a nice fit. In athletics, the expression could be used for a high-jumper or pole-vaulter who clears the bar at the first attempt. It describes instant success. But success based on competence rather than luck. And that definitely applies to Bartolomé Márquez, nicknamed Tintín during his playing days at RCD Espanyol in home-town Barcelona. When Qatar kicked off the tournament against Lebanon five days after his 62nd birthday, the Spaniard had been head coach of the national team for five weeks.

As a player, Márquez was an elegant attacking midfielder with silky solo skills, an eye for the creative pass and some powerful finishing. After hanging up his boots, he returned to Espanyol to initiate a coaching career with the youth teams and then stepped up to the first team as assistant to the likes of Ernesto Valverde, the current head coach of Athletic Bilbao. After a first taste of life as a No. 1 at seconddivision Castellón, he headed for Belgium, coaching KAS Eupen and Sint Truiden before landing in Qatar in 2018 as the first Spaniard to take charge of Al Wakrah, in the second division at that juncture. He led them to promotion in his first season and, when he was seconded to the national team, his side occupied second place in the Qatar Stars League.

In other words, he was an outsider, but familiar with the national culture - and the players. Events demonstrated that his appointment was a wise choice. Another wise move was his decision to recruit an assistant coach, Luis García, who had started the season as head coach at Espanyol and had previously worked with Márquez at Eupen. The duo began work with the players on December 24, barely three weeks before kick-off. "We designed an intensive preparation programme and it was not an easy task with the limited time available," he said. "I knew the players well, so it was easy to work with them. They were well aware of my approach as head coach and our aim was made clear to them since the day I took over the role. The 2019 title provided us with an advantage, something positive to strive for – lifting the trophy once again."

His priority was based on playing to the team's strengths and working on its weaknesses. "My philosophy revolves around an attacking style," he said, "which is what I have set out to develop at Al Wakrah. "I told the players that we needed to be bold and create chances while maintaining that essential balance." His trump card in attack was evidently the long-standing partnership between Akram Afif and Almoez Ali, so pre-tournament work focused on supplying them with enough of the ball while maintaining a defensive shape and honing risk management. Despite the lack of time, he prepared the team to operate with four at the back or with three centre-backs. Defending was not always impeccable and Meshaal Barsham was required to



do enough to win the AFC's Best Goalkeeper Award. But the final balance showed five goals conceded in seven games.

"The players effectively implemented our ideas on the pitch," he acknowledged. "And I think one of the other key elements during the whole tournament was that the players were aware of all the pressures and managed to cope with them. They showed great mental strength and ambition." So did he. Even though results on home soil at the FIFA World Cup may have tempered expectations, coaching the host nation is a high-pressure challenge that Márquez accepted with aplomb. "Working under pressure is something I've grown accustomed to over the years and it doesn't faze me much," he said – an attitude reflected by his generally calm demeanour in the technical area, his clinical eye when it came to making substitutions and his energetic but composed delivery of tactical instructions.

And when it came to celebrating Qatar's successful defence of the trophy won for the first time in 2019, he maintained a characteristically low profile as the team left the Lusail Stadium for a victory parade on an open-top bus. "I have my own philosophy," he modestly commented, "But I will never say that this was my success alone, I'm just someone who tried to implement my methods with the players to achieve the best result. At the final, the tension was high, but I felt proud of my players and what they achieved." After kissing the saint during seven weeks' work with the national team, he simply said "I must get back to my job at Al Wakrah..."

TECHNICAL TOPICS

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One of the dictionary definitions of 'context' succinctly tells us that it provides meaning and clarity. The technical aspects of the final tournament certainly need to be put into context, as the on-pitch activity in Qatar was surrounded by circumstances that influenced the event. Plan A had been to stage it in China PR in June 2023. Then pandemic-induced obstacles required a Plan B solution. So, the final tournament was moved to Qatar and re-scheduled to kick off in January 2024. It signified a transition from the Chinese summer to the winter in West Asia – the region which, as it happened, provided the two finalists.

It meant that the climate was ideal for football. So were the venues for the 51 matches: state-of-the-art stadiums fresh from the outstanding success of the FIFA World Cup, played in Qatar just over a year earlier. Inside the stadiums, the branding was world-class and the pitches, meticulously watered before kickoff and during half-time, played as true as billiard tables. And an average of around 30,000 spectators per game helped to create a perfect environment in which to play the game of football. On the other hand, the implementation of Plan B meant that the event was sandwiched between rounds of FIFA World Cup qualifiers and was played during a mid-season period of club football in Europe, where an increasing number of Asian footballers are making their mark.

Despite this, the tournament produced phenomenal goals, outstanding individual performances, high drama and matches marked by competitivity and pragmatism. As champion coach Bartolomé Márquez commented after the Final, "maybe it was not beautiful football, but everyone remembers the winner".

GLOBAL EVOLUTION

One of the topics debated by the technical observers was whether the final tournament matched up to



benchmarks in terms of the innovations that have appeared on the global stage in recent times. For example, high-intensity counter-pressing; centrebacks prepared to support attacking play; or the use of a false No. 9. These elements were visible in Qatar but tended to be in short supply, along with features like the inverted full-back, as illustrated by Australia leftback Aziz Behich who, in addition to supporting wing play, would move into an inside channel, sometimes interchanging with attacking midfielder Jackson Irvine, who had cleared spaces for him to occupy – and to afford added protection against opposition counterattacks should the move break down.

Some of these issues are addressed elsewhere in this article or in the Goalscoring Analysis where, because there was a clear lack of an end product, the subject of striking the dead ball at set plays takes prominence – not least the delivery of direct free-kicks. David Beckham, who was an on-site observer at the Semi-finals in Qatar, would testify to the importance of training-ground practice (with an artificial wall) of an art that is not so much an innate talent as a product of hours dedicated to the refinement of technique at youth development and senior levels.

ORCHESTRAS AND SOLOISTS

In a tournament largely dominated by collective virtues, individual talents often made the difference. And lit up the competition. Qatar's Akram Afif provided the supreme example. The tournament's Most Valuable Player was involved in 10 of the champions' 14 goals. He converted four penalties; delivered the two corners spectacularly netted by Hassan Al Haydos; finished a combination move; chipped a through pass into the net; supplied a cross for Almoez Ali to head home; and struck a superb long-range shot to equalise against IR Iran. The technical observers commented

"he positioned himself well to create overloads in midfield, rotating into pockets on either side of the opposition's defensive midfielders. He used individual skills to create spaces, control the tempo and pose problems to the opponent's defence".

Trevor Morgan added "it was interesting to see how many of the top eight teams didn't rely on a single individual, but rather had partnerships – two men who played well off each other". Qatar relied heavily on the understanding between Afif and Ali which dates back to youth development teams. Jordan played to the combined strengths of Mousa Al Tamari and Yazan Al Naimat.

However, the topic is not so much about listing the individuals and duos that made the difference as about reviewing where they played. Al Tamari and, on occasions, Afif were mobile roaming wingers who, rather than making vertical runs, liked to cut inside on to their favourite foot. So was Korea Republic's playmaking Lee Kang-in while, in the opinion of the technical observers, Son Heung-min was at his most influential when deployed in a wider position on the left. IR Iran's Alireza Jahanbakhsh generated danger on the right side of the final third. Uzbekistan's attacking catalyst Abbosbek Fayzullayev also operated from a leftside position. Australia's Jackson Irvine played a slightly more central role but, like the others, darted into gaps and generated quick combination moves, cutting in from pockets near the touchlines. In Qatar, the players responsible for making things happen tended to be middle-to-front players often starting in wide areas. The traditional midfield schemer was rarely visible.

THE EMPTY CENTRE-CIRCLE

In other words, it was a tournament where the 'midfield general' was conspicuous by his absence. Instead, the central areas were frequently territories



occupied by hard-working 'soldiers', as one technical observer liked to call them. The 'empty centre-circle' scenario was illustrated by the technical analysis of one game where "it could often be seen that there was a back line of five protected by two holding midfielders, leaving the attacking midfielder and two forwards separate and disconnected". This scenario was conducive to the use of direct back-to-front supply with second-ball support. Direct attacking which bypassed the midfield emerged as one of the standout features of the tournament. Hong Kong, China offered the clearest example, attempting to loft the ball behind the opponents' back line on 50% of the occasions when they had controlled possession. Of the top teams, Jordan made the most frequent use of the ball over the top whereas, at the other end of the scale, Japan, Korea Republic, and Saudi Arabia consolidated their reputations for non-aerial attacking and showed themselves to be the most adept at progressing beyond their opponents' back line without resorting to the more direct approach. They were not alone. Statistics confirmed that Thailand and Uzbekistan, for example, were technically equipped to advance with the ball on the ground, even when subjected to intense pressure.

While on the subject of aerial play, one in six (17%) of the tournament's goals were headers: 13 in open play and nine from dead-ball situations. If we exclude penalties and direct free kicks and include the three own goals derived from aerial play, the slice is enlarged to 23%. Five of Iraq's 10 goals were headers, with six other teams converting two apiece.

Use of the long ball (or the long pass if received by a team-mate) varied considerably from team to team and from game to game. No less than 36% of the passes by Hong Kong, China were long; almost one-quarter (23% to be exact) of Lebanon's passing exceeded 30 metres, while, at the other end of the scale, Saudi Arabia posted 7%; Japan 8% and Korea Republic 9%. Among the top teams, only 7% of Jordan's passing was long in the game against Bahrain (which they lost), but the average in the silver-medallists' other six fixtures was 20%. This discrepancy was echoed by other teams - not least the champions. Whereas Qatar's long passing in previous games had been very much in line with the tournament average, usage shot up to 32% in the Semi-final against IR Iran and 29% in the Final. Defending a slender lead contributed to figures of 61 recoveries and 57 clearances in the Semifinal; 37 and 32 respectively against Jordan. The overall statistics for the tournament, however, suggested that many coaches tailored use of the long ball according to analysis of opponents and individual game plans.

BUILDING MATERIALS

Extensive use of the long ball may have been the outcome. But it was not always the intention. A number of teams set out to build from the back – sometimes playing themselves into trouble – but were deterred by aggressive high pressure by opponents. One of the recurrent images of the tournament was the goalkeeper preparing to initiate construction work with two team-mates close to him in the box and then, seeing opponents ready to pounce, waving them forward and opting for a safety-first long delivery. One of the other frequently-seen scenarios was a brief exchange of passes at the back followed by a long fast-forward solution.

A WINNING COMBINATION?

Japan's head coach Hajime Moriyasu maintains that his country's ability to excel at combination play "stems from our culture, as we strongly believe in cooperation and because we practise this type of play from our teenage teams upwards". In Qatar, Japan and Korea Republic were the only two among the 24 teams to dominate possession in all the games they played. IR Iran and Iraq did so - except when they met Japan. Ditto Saudi Arabia and Australia, except when they played Korea Republic. Qatar had 42% of the ball in the Semi-final and the Final. Jordan only had the lion's share of possession against Bahrain and Qatar - the two games they lost. The debating point is whether, allied with the tendency to bypass midfield, results spelled bad news for possessionbased combination play. The technical observers at the first Semi-final, noting that Korea Republic had 70% of the ball against Jordan but no shots on target, evoked the comment by the late and lamented Gérard Houllier that 'some teams keep the ball; some teams keep the result'. "Korea Republic possessed the ball," Takeshi Ono wrote in his notebook, "but were so often forced to play it square by their opponents' clever ball-



orientated defence and were repeatedly threatened by counter-attacks. It would appear that Jordan, with this in mind, aimed to give possession to their opponents."

As mentioned in the Goalscoring Analysis section of this report, combination play did, nonetheless, generate more goals than in 2019, when the technical report commented "only 6% of open-play goals stemmed from combination play and only three of the 24 teams enjoyed success in this department of the game. The facts are disturbing, not to say alarming, as they tally with observations made at other AFC competitions". In Qatar, the figures improved but remained modest: 12 goals as opposed to five. Unsurprisingly, Japan, Korea Republic, and Saudi Arabia headed the field in terms of attacking moves with the ball on the ground. No less than 30% of Japan's offensives attempted to play through defensive blocks while 40% tried to go around them. Only Vietnam equalled Moriyasu's side in terms of central penetrations of opposing defences. Korea Republic (27% through the middle) and Saudi Arabia (28%) focused more on wing play which, in both cases, accounted for 46% of their attacking moves - more than doubling, incidentally, Vietnam's 22%. Despite the limited successes, the ability to play quick combinations in the final third was one of the common denominators among the top teams. Japan, Australia, IR Iran, and Qatar executed crisp exchanges between their front men, as did Jordan, who mixed dangerous solo runs with fast interchanges between the front three, while Thailand deserved credit for their combination play in the final third - as illustrated by the move culminated by Supachok Sarachat against Uzbekistan which earned a place high in the tournament's top ten open-play goals.

BREAKING AND MAKING

The low return on elaborated combination moves was accompanied by a sharp rise in successful counterattacks when compared to the previous tournament in the UAE, where 16% of open-play goals could be attributed to rapid responses to ballwinning. In Qatar, that figure increased to 25%. In the last full season of the AFC Champions League[™], counterattacks provided 15% of the competition's open-play goals and only 9% in the season before that.

"India preferred to counterattack from a retreated compact defence" the technical observer commented after watching their game against Australia. Igor Stimac's team was one of the Group Stage fallers who liked to use the fast break as an attacking weapon, alongside the likes of Vietnam, Kyrgyz Republic, Malaysia, Oman and Hong Kong, China – the latter even looking to counter when defending corners by leaving three players up to sow seeds of hesitancy



among opponents. Likewise, Bahrain frequently relied on "fast collective offensive transitions with not too many touches and the four front players sprinting at every opportunity". A rapid counter allowed Juan Antonio Pizzi's team to defeat silver-medallists Jordan and take top spot in Group E.

It was one of five successful classic counters – from the edge of their own box to the opposition's net. Collective counterattacks launched after ball-winning in a mid-block supplied the largest slice of the cake with nine successes. Only four goals were derived from immediate attacking after regains in advanced areas. And the other five resulted from solo actions after regains – a surprising statistic bearing in mind that none were scored in this way at the previous final tournament in 2019.

GLOVES AND BOOTS

The ability to launch counterattacks featured prominently among the growing demands on goalkeepers to be constructive - an area which has evolved rapidly since the 2019 technical report raised questions about "the readiness of defenders to bring their goalkeeper into play" and suggested that, at youth development levels, "goalkeepers need to be encouraged to use their feet". The technical observers put question marks against the trend towards punching the ball rather than catching it the former option often keeping the opponents' attack alive whereas the latter would put an end to it. Apart from good standards in shot-stopping, they also saw a 'mixed bag' when it came to using (both) feet to build from the back. It has to be said that, in addition to the trio selected for the All-Star Squad, there was praise from technical observers for keepers who had gone home earlier in the tournament, among them Syria's Aiham Ousou who "contributed to the team with courageous play and a series of excellent saves";



Tajikistan's Rustam Yatimov who was "very secure in his actions, always focused, was excellent on high balls, had great reflexes and communicated well with his defenders", or India's Gurpreet Singh, praised for positioning, concentration, leadership qualities and, like Yatimov, his handling of crosses – no fewer than 66 during India's three group games.

CROSS-CHECKING

Crosses were the source of 28% of the tournament's open-play goals. And it was another event where wing play was an essential weapon against compact, often narrow, defensive blocks. After watching Tajikistan against Jordan, for instance, the technical observer noted "width well exploited; wingers cutting in; fullbacks forward; good supply of crosses". The notes on Korea Republic's performance against Australia highlighted "frequent attacks on flanks, triggered by long diagonals or forward passes. When the ball was played wide, they were quicker to overload than their opponents and supplied a variety of crosses, such as driven or chipped deliveries".

The use of roaming wingers ready to cut inside and create space for overlapping full-backs or wingbacks was, in Qatar, supplemented by the presence of inverted full-backs prepared to move inside to create midfield overloads (and occupy key positions in defence against counterattacks). Although wing play produced goals, there were reservations about the quality and effectiveness of the end product. Korea Republic, for example, delivered 130 crosses during their six games and were rewarded with two goals, including their first of the tournament against Bahrain (a low cross from the right) was especially impressive. By contrast, crossing did not feature prominently in the repertoire of the two finalists. Qatar's average of 9.6 per game was inflated by extratime against Uzbekistan, while Jordan's 18 crosses in the Final upped their average from 8 to 9.3. One of the tournament's eye-catching statistics was Palestine's total of 54 crosses against UAE - one of which was headed into his own net by a defender. All in all, the 51 games produced 1,271 crosses, 26 of which were converted by team-mates. Questions debated by the technical observers included the number of crosses which failed to clear the first defender or the predictability factor of attacks through the wide areas finalised with a cross that posed few problems to alert centre-backs.

DIAGONALLY OPPOSED

A seemingly contradictory feature emerged from the final tournament: a tendency for teams to make diagonal deliveries into the box from attacking midfield positions. The surprising statistic was that the greater frequency of diagonals led to fewer goals: the total of six in 2019 slipped down to two – both, coincidentally, scored on the same day in Round of 16 fixtures. The better example of the two was delivered from the left by Uzbekistan midfielder Diyor Holmatov for Azizbek Turg'unboyev to control with his chest and volley the opening goal of the 2-1 victory over Thailand. The other success was a left-footed delivery from the right by Korea Republic wing-back Kim Taehwan that was headed back across goal for striker Cho Gue-sung to nod in the 90+9 equaliser that took the match against Saudi Arabia to extra-time.

FLEXIBLE STRUCTURES

When the technical observers held their final meeting, Fahad Al Zarraa reckoned that more of the teams in Qatar had started with three centre-backs compared with the FIFA World Cup. His assertion provoked discussion about the level of tactical flexibility during the tournament which had made it difficult to pinpoint a single default setting for many of the teams. Jordan certainly stuck to a stable 1-3-4-3 throughout the tournament; IR Iran to their 1-4-2-3-1; Australia to their 1-4-3-3. The rest of the field shuffled through a pack of five different shapes, either from game to game or within individual matches. Eight teams predominantly operated with three centre-backs (three of them in a 1-3-5-2 structure; five in 1-3-4-3). Six usually set themselves up in a 1-4-3-3 shape; five in the 1-4-2-3-1 variant; and another group of five (China PR, Kyrgyz Republic, Palestine, Syria, and Tajikistan) preferred a classic 1-4-4-2 formation.

Many coaches adapted their team structure to the characteristics of individual opponents. Uzbekistan, for instance, usually played 1-3-4-3 but adopted a 1-4-3-3 formation against India. UAE switched from four at the back to a more cautious 1-5-2-3 structure against IR Iran. Palestine switched from 1-4-4-2 to 1-4-3-3 when UAE had a player dismissed. Likewise, Saudi Arabia evolved from 1-3-4-3 to 1-4-4-2 and, finally, 1-4-3-3 when Kyrgyz Republic suffered two dismissals. Korea Republic were also required to



react in situations where they were chasing results - basically changing to a single screening midfielder instead of two and sending on a target striker. Looking at the other side of the coin, structures were changed when teams set out to defend a lead - a prime example being Australia's switch to a back line of five when leading Korea Republic 1-0 in the Quarter-final. Qatar had tactical flexibility in their repertoire, switching fluently between three and four at the back with, in the latter formation, Lucas Mendes pushing forward as a left-back to deliver crosses or playing a more conservative (but equally effective and valuable) role as a left-side centre-back. Bartolomé Márquez earned praise from the technical observer when Qatar came back to beat Palestine 2-1. "He changed his formation and personnel at half-time and the coaching was decisive."

STICKING TOGETHER

Fast transitions into midfield or low defensive blocks provided another of the tournament's common denominators, emphasising the wisdom of Italian coaching maestro Arrigo Sacchi's statement that "with the ball, you dictate the play; without the ball, you control the space". Compactness emerged as a key issue – and some teams were prepared to hold a high defensive line in order to keep the 10 outfielders in a compact formation. This was the platform for successful counterpressing, as illustrated by Japan, who were one of five teams, alongside Korea Republic, Iraq, IR Iran, and Saudi Arabia, to regain possession within, on average, nine seconds of losing it.

Australia were another example of a team wellorganised collectively to stay in close formation whether defending in a low block or via advanced pressing with a high back line and goalkeeper Mat Ryan ready to come way out of the box to sweep the uncovered area. Jordan were similarly competent



in mid/low defending or high pressing, as they demonstrated during the Semi-final against Korea Republic when they started with aggressive high pressing and later withdrew into defend-and-counter mode. Elsewhere in the top eight, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan adopted traditional defensive methods based on compactness, simplicity and aggressive pressing, while one of Qatar's key features was to set up a substantial defensive block with the ability to break out and connect with their decisive front two. "The climate offered no excuses," said technical observer Trevor Morgan, "so there was no reason not to press." The use of collective high pressing at the final tournament was, however, intermittent.

Within compact units, the ability to create overloads was also a key factor. Some teams effectively overloaded small areas at dead-ball situations – notably the throw-in. But in the general flow of play, many encountered more difficulties on and off the ball. In out-of-possession play, teams were quite commonly able to overload areas of the pitch to stifle their opponents' breathing space. When in possession, teams clearly attempted to create overloads, but the technical observers felt that this was sporadic rather than constant.

INTENSE ACTIVITY

One of the issues debated by the technical observers was whether the final tournament in Qatar matched up to global standards of intensity. Their views were coloured by definitions of the word. They linked high intensity with structured collective high pressing which entails explosive sprinting, speed endurance and quick transitions or, when the team has the ball, to get numbers ahead of it and attack with high-tempo running and ball circulation. Whereas teams like Australia and Saudi Arabia provided examples of controlled, structured intensity, the general trend was towards spontaneous pressure on the ball - more individual than collective and more frenetic than intense. In-possession play was often similarly marked by a frenzied pace which tested the limits of technical abilities.

GIVING AND TAKING

There are two sides to every coin. In Qatar, several teams showed themselves to be capable of inflicting pressure on their opponents. Not quite as many demonstrated that they could cope with it when opponents subjected them to the same treatment. Anti-pressing is an art which requires high levels of technical ability in tight spaces and a great deal of composure. The technical observers noted that the teams who had raised Asian banners at the FIFA World Cup a year earlier appeared to be more comfortable in playing their way out of tight areas than those with less exposure to global opposition.

Japan provided benchmark composure in creating crowded areas and confidently finding ways out of them with neat combination moves. Saudi Arabia were particularly competent, with Australia, IR Iran, and Korea Republic also accomplished in this important facet of the modern game, while other teams often struggled to hold their own against intensive pressure and resorted to bypassing it with hopeful forward passing.

THE EMOTIONAL FACTOR

Amid all the references to intensity, endurance, transition speed and tempo, it would be remiss to overlook the importance of states of emotion and mental resilience. "Emotion played a significant role in the game's outcome", Takeshi Ono commented after watching Jordan's dramatic added-time victory over ten-man Iraq in the Round of 16 when the emotional euphoria of scoring a goal had led to a second yellow card and a dismissal. But, apart from specific incidents, the tournament provided



some graphic illustrations of how emotional states can exercise a strong influence on concentration, confidence and even technical quality.

The two Semi-finals were cases in point. IR Iran initially displayed their usual assertive, vigorous approach against the hosts but became caught up in the emotions fuelled by the atmosphere of a huge crowd and a Qatar team that, arguably enriched by their experience as hosts of the FIFA World Cup, played with confidence and self-belief which shone through in their most difficult moments. In the other match, Jordan took the game to the Korea Republic with composure, mental fortitude and a sense of adventure often displayed by so-called underdogs. Jürgen Klinsmann's side, able to make tactical adjustments in search of solutions and outstanding for its mental strength in multiple scenarios of impending elimination, showed symptoms of collective frustration and, on that occasion, palpably lost belief in a comeback.

On the other hand, excessive equanimity can also have an impact – as Japan defender Takehiro Tomiyasu said after his team had allowed IR Iran to dictate play during the second half of the Quarterfinal. "We needed to shout out when things weren't going well," he said. "If we were defending, we needed to win the ball more aggressively or, if we were attacking, we needed to force a breakthrough to change the atmosphere. The tournament ended with Japan in a bad situation, so we need to work on that – including myself."

That was one of only six games to be won by sides who conceded the first goal. Yet many teams and individuals showed commendable emotional responses in adverse situations. As Ono remarked, "Emotions sometimes surpass factors such as technique, tactics or physical strength and can determine the game".



AND THE FATIGUE FACTOR

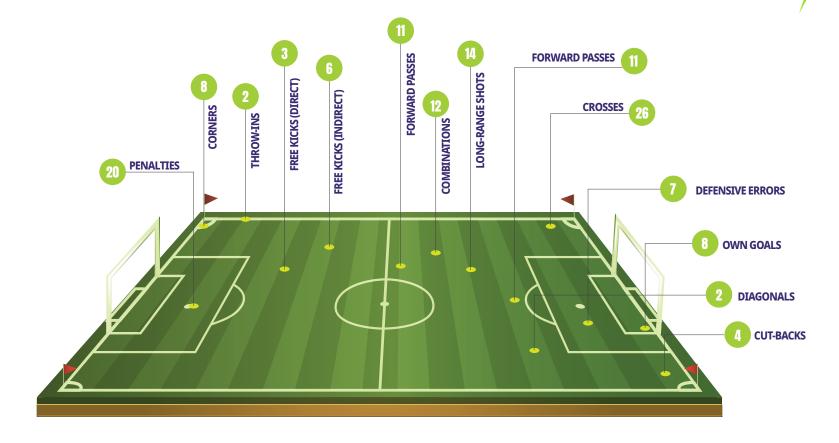
This unstructured intensity generated high energy demands illustrated by the number of occasions when players needed assistance from team-mates and/or physios for attacks of cramp. And the fatigue factor was often reflected by losses of compactness and lapses of concentration - a viewpoint which could be statistically supported by the fact that, in spite of the five substitutions which offered opportunities to send on fresh legs, 20 of the tournament's 132 goals hit the net during the periods of added-time at the end of the 90 minutes, with 11 of them having a major impact on the outcome. A further nine were scored during added-time at the end of the first half, meaning that not far short of one-quarter (22% to be precise) of goal times had a + sign in them. It was a reflection of a final tournament which had been physically demanding and, as the champion coach commented, games had not always been won by beautiful football.

Read and ABEMI .Janet

REQUIEM FOR THE DEAD BALL

A tally of 132 goals at an average of 2.59 per match represented a slender increase on the total at the previous edition in the UAE, where the ball hit the net 130 times. Impressions of continuity were also strengthened by champions Qatar who not only retained the trophy, but also topped the scoring chart again, albeit with 14 goals as opposed to their 19 in 2019. However, whereas the Group Stage in the UAE had been more prolific than the Knockout Stage, this statistic was reversed in Qatar where, after the Group Stage yielded all five of the tournament's goalless draws and averaged 2.42 goals per game, the Knockout Stage generated 45 goals at three goals per fixture to produce an overall average of 2.59. Moreover, the 2023 figures were not distorted by a sprinkling of high-scoring games, as often happens at final tournaments. In Qatar, no team scored more than four; 14 games were drawn; 20 of the other 37 were decided by a one-goal margin; and one third of the Knockout fixtures went to extra time, with four of them requiring a penalty shoot-out to decree the winner - statistics which strongly suggest that the second 24-team event was hearteningly competitive.

The goalscoring chart logs the technical and tactical actions which generated the 132 goals. As usual, there is a subjective element attached to the categorisation of a handful of the goals, but the chart is a reliable guide to the tournament's goalscoring patterns.



GOALS FROM SET PLAY

ACTION	GUIDELINES	GOALS
Corners	Direct from / following a corner	8
Free kicks (direct)	Direct from a free kick	3
Free kicks (indirect)	Following a free kick	6
Penalties	Spot kick (or follow-up from a penalty)	20
Throw-ins	Following a throw-in	2

TOTAL GOALS SCORED: 132

GOALS FROM OPEN PLAY

ACTION	GUIDELINES	GOALS
Combinations	Wall pass / combination move	12
Crosses	Cross from the wing	26
Cut-backs	Pass back from the byline	4
Diagonals	Diagonal pass into the penalty box	2
Solo actions	Dribble and close-range shot / dribble and pass	9
Long-range shots	Direct shot / shot and rebound	14
Forward passes	Through pass or pass over the defence	11
Defensive errors	Bad back-pass / mistake by the goalkeeper	7
Own goals	Goal by the opponent	8

SET PLAYS

Dead-ball situations produced 31% of the goals scored at the final tournament. On the face of it, a par-forthe-course figure. But appearances can be strikingly deceptive. A closer look at the set play section of the goalscoring chart reveals why. Penalty kicks – many awarded after VAR reviews – accounted for just over one half. To be precise, Qatar's three penalties in the Final brought the tally to 20 spot kicks within a total of 39 set play goals. In 2019, penalties had provided 37%. In the 2023 tournament, the trend concealed by the overall statistics was therefore a significantly lower return on corners and free kicks.

But let's start in the credit column, where the long throw-in, making a comeback as an attacking weapon, generated dangerous situations in the box and a couple of goals – one of which made its way into the set play top ten. A long throw, a header and a rebound preceded the spectacular scissor-kick by Sardar Azmoun which gave IR Iran a fourth-minute lead in the Semi-final against Qatar. The other was Indonesia's added-time consolation goal against Japan, when a defender re-directed a long throw from the left, setting up a back-post finish by Sandy Walsh.

While the long throw was enjoying something of a renaissance, the direct free kick was in decline: only three successes in 51 matches – two of them for Korea Republic, with the strikes by Son Heung-min and Lee Kang-in both featuring in the top five set play goals. The other was the left-footed delivery from the right which brought Tajikistan back to 1-1 in the group game against Lebanon. The other 22 teams had no successes.

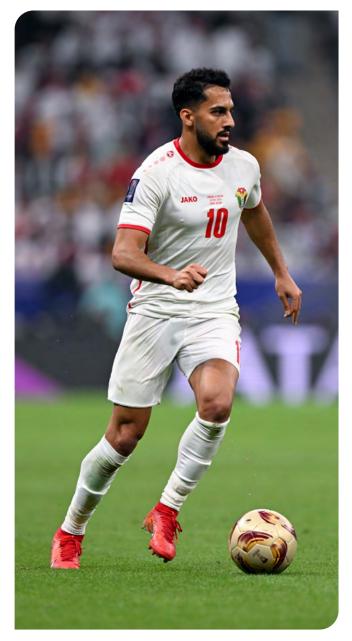
This emerged as one of the tournament's significant trends. Hong Kong, China, China PR, Lebanon, India, Thailand, Kyrgyz Republic, Bahrain, Indonesia and Uzbekistan went home with no rewards from set play routines. Malaysia, Syria and silver-medallists Jordan converted one dead-ball goal from the penalty spot. Palestine registered one of the nine goals from an indirect free kick. And Saudi Arabia were among only seven teams who exploited corner kicks to find the net. Qatar's brace – both spectacularly converted by Hassan Al Haydos – provided two of the top three in the Best Goals chart, while Japan, Iraq, Vietnam, Korea Republic and Oman, like Saudi Arabia, scored once.

That added up to the eyebrow-raising fact that the tournament's 488 corners paid attacking teams a dividend of eight goals at a startling ratio of one success per 61 deliveries. This represents a substantial downturn compared with the previous final tournament's 1:40 and practically doubled the 1:31 posted in the last edition of the AFC Champions League[™].

The low return on set play goals raises a number of questions. Was it due to especially competent defending? Was it about conscientious scouting of



opponents? Was training ground time focused on not conceding from set plays rather than scoring from them? And, when it comes to direct free kicks, is there a shortfall in the development of specialists? The bottom line in these debating points refers back to the top line. Requiem for the dead ball has been, without apologies, copied and pasted from the technical report on the AFC U17 Asian Cup[™] played in Thailand six months before the senior event in Qatar. Does this suggest that work on the attacking aspects of set plays is an issue at all development levels?



OPEN PLAY

Just over one third (34% to be precise) of the tournament's 93 open play goals were derived from wing play – crosses, cut-backs and diagonals into the box. Although the wide areas were, once again, the most trodden pathways to the net, the slice was significantly slimmer than the 40% posted in 2019. And there were no "cross and finish" goals among the tournament's top ten. The codicil is that Almoez Ali's second goal for Qatar against Lebanon and the low cross headed into the Indonesia net by Australia's Martin Boyle were both serious contenders.

The number of goals stemming from through passes also declined significantly in relation to 2019 – almost halved in fact – despite the extensive use of the central ball over the top of the back line and some excellent forward passes, such as Mousa Al Tamari's delivery which allowed Yazan Al Naimat to put Jordan 2-0 ahead in the Semi-final against Korea Republic. Or the neat, clipped pass by Ali that allowed Akram Afif to hit the only goal of the group game between Qatar and Tajikistan. Through passes, the second-best category behind crosses in the 2019 goalscoring analysis, dropped to fourth place and hinted at greater alertness by goalkeepers to the challenge of covering the space behind back lines.

The value of long-range shooting was underlined by 14 goals – four of which were spectacular enough to fill the last four berths in the tournament's top ten. Readiness to shoot from distance also generated deflections, rebounds, scenes of chaos and invited defenders to step out of deep defensive blocks.

The AFC technical report in 2019 had mentioned "the most significant trend to emerge from the tournament's scoring patterns was the paucity of goals derived from combination play – a feature which had also emerged from recent AFC age-group competitions". In Qatar, combination moves in central areas of the final third could not be described as plentiful, but the success rate more than doubled to a tally of 12 goals – among them the brilliant passing move and run across the face of the defence by Thailand that allowed Supachok Sarachat to score against Uzbekistan.

While through passes, cut-backs and diagonals yielded poorer harvests than they had done in 2019, the deficit was covered by a sharp increase in the categories of defensive errors and own goals, where the joint total more than doubled. The talking point here is: to what extent can this be related to increased pressure on the ball in high areas? This, along with other topics related to goalscoring patterns, are also addressed in the Technical Topics section of this report.

BEST GOALS

Jordan's two goals in the Semi-final against Korea Republic are high in the ranking, with the second by Mousa Al Tamari taking pride of place as one of three individual actions in the top five, while long-range shooting dominates the lower half of the table. The scarcity of combination successes was illustrated by the presence of only one example, although the Vietnam move roundedoff by Nguyen Quang Hai in added time against Iraq was also rated highly by the AFC Technical Observers.

In the set play category, Qatar's Hassan Al Haydos takes gold and bronze with two conversions from corners – the breathtaking volley from Akram Afif's delivery taking top spot ahead of the direct freekick beautifully executed by Son Heung-min which clinched Korea Republic's 2-1 Quarter-final victory over Australia.



OPEN PLAY						
RANKING	NO.	SCORER	Match	TIME	Туре	
1	10	Mousa Al Tamari	Jordan v Korea Republic	66'	Solo Action	
2	7	Supachok Sarachat	Uzbekistan v Thailand	58′	Combination Play	
3	11	Akram Afif	IR Iran v Qatar	43′	Solo Action	
4	11	Yazan Al Naimat	Jordan v Korea Republic	53′	Through Pass	
5	18	Abdulrahman Ghareeb	Saudi Arabia v Oman	78′	Solo Action	
6	11	Akram Afif	Tajikistan v Qatar	17′	Through Pass	
7	13	Mahmoud Al Mardi	Malaysia v Jordan	12′	Long-Range Shot	
8	18	Lee Kang-in	Korea Republic v Bahrain	56′	Long-Range Shot	
9	13	Keito Nakamura	Japan v Vietnam	45+4′	Long-Range Shot	
10	22	Bassel Jradi	Tajikistan v Lebanon	47	Long-Range Shot	

SET PLAYS

RANKING	NO.	SCORER	Match	TIME	Туре
1	10	Hassan Al Haydos	Qatar v China PR	66'	Corner
2	7	Son Heung-min	Australia v Korea Republic	104′	Direct Free Kick
3	10	Hassan Al Haydos	Qatar v Palestine	45+6	Corner
4	4	Shoja Khalilzadeh	IR Iran v Palestine	12′	Indirect Free Kick
5	18	Lee Kang-in	Korea Republic v Malaysia	83′	Direct Free Kick
6	6	Wataru Endo	Iraq v Japan	90+3′	Corner
7	12	Khalifa Al Hammadi	Tajikistan v UAE	90+5′	Indirect Free Kick
8	20	Bui Hoang Viet Anh	Iraq v Vietnam	42′	Indirect Free Kick
9	15	Nguyen Dinh Bac	Japan v Vietnam	15′	Corner
10	20	Sardar Azmoun	IR Iran v Qatar	4′	Throw-In

(The player's team is in **bold** letters)

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TALKING POINTS TALKING POINTS TALKING POINTS

BENCH BEDLAM

The TV pictures tell the story. They focus on play near the left-hand nearside touchline. But the touchline is barely visible. The view obstruction consists of a group of four or five players wearing bibs to identify them as substitutes. There is not even a pretence of warming up. They are watching play, gesticulating and shouting comments that – mercifully, maybe – the TV microphones don't pick up. At times, viewers might easily surmise that their behaviour is intimidating or even threatening. The players are sometimes in the way at throw-ins and, if their team should score, it is the cue for an instant pitch invasion. To describe the scenario in a single word, it is bedlam. Or, as one dictionary defines it, "a scene of uproar and confusion".

Coaches will undoubtedly have been regularly reminded by match officials that only one person at a time should leave the bench to issue instructions from the technical area. But what about these groups of substitutes? Who is responsible for maintaining or restoring a degree of order? The referee? The fourth official? The coaching staff? The team manager/ administrator?

In Qatar, the TV cameras did show instances where substitutes were asked to remain seated. But, within seconds, they would reappear on the touchline. In this scenario, what should the deterrent or punishment be? Is a reprimand enough? Should the yellow card be brandished? If so, at whom?

IDENTITY PARADE?

How many AFC national teams have a recognisable identity? It's a good question to fuel debate when coaches get together around a coffee table. And one statistic to throw on the table is that, at the final tournament in Qatar, only three teams were being led by coaches working in their native country: Graham Arnold in Australia, Hajime Moriyasu in Japan and Amir Ghalenoei at the helm of the Islamic Republic of Iran. All three featured in the top eight. Among the other 21 teams, three (Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand) had head coaches from other AFC nations – two from Korea Republic and one from Japan.

Making comparisons, these statistics contrast sharply with those at the FIFA World Cup in Qatar in 2022, when 23 of the 32 participants were led by homegrown coaches. Or, looking at other Confederations, the fact that 20 of the 24 teams at UEFA EURO 2020 in England were led by technicians working in their native country.

Is this contrast good, bad or irrelevant? Why is Asia so different? How important is it to create a national team with an identity and a recognisable playing philosophy? Can this easily be imported? Is it easier for



home-grown coaches to connect with the players in a national team? Do the decision-makers take these questions into account when they appoint technicians? Should they?

DRIVING THE SECOND BUS

At the last edition of the AFC Elite Coaches Forum, Ange Postecoglou, the champion coach when Australia lifted the AFC Asian Cup[™] in 2015, was asked to comment on the expansion of the teambehind-the-team – to the extent that a second bus is required to accommodate the support personnel. "That's not a joke any more," was his response. "It's the reality. And you've got to manage both buses because they're equally important."

Many of the delegation lists in Qatar reflected this trend with the addition of specialised coaching staff and analysts. FIFA offered a helping hand by, as a major innovation, providing the participating teams with in-depth individual player analysis within hours of the final whistle. One of the questions head coaches need to answer is who deals with the extensive amount of data that is now available. The national team coach, faced with limited time-spans with his players and/or an intensive match schedule at a final tournament, may find it difficult to deal with the additional workload. As guest speaker David Moyes also commented at that Forum, "We try to make use of as many data as we can. But there's a lot of it and that can make it difficult for the coach." The next debating points are about how much information needs to be passed on to the players and the impact on team talks. As Postecoglou said, "Sometimes it's better to use it for yourself or your coaching staff to help you design training sessions. You don't need to pass everything on to the players because some of them will certainly find it overwhelming."

TALKING POINTS TALKING POINTS TALKING POINTS

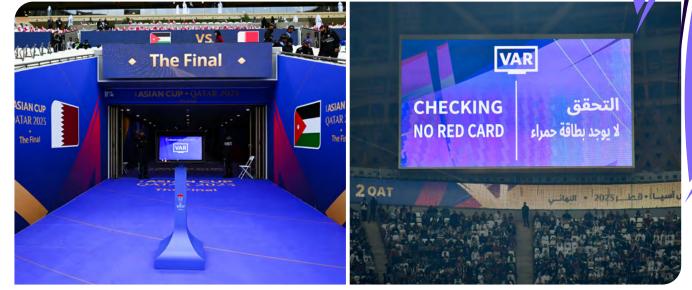
This evolution in the role of the head coach also raises broader questions. At a final tournament, rest-andrecovery procedures for players are an important issue. Given the need to drive two buses and cope with increasing workloads, how does the head coach cope with demands, fatigue and his own rest-andrecovery mechanisms?

STRETCHED GAMES AND STRETCHED LEGS

The second 24-team final tournament was the first to feature VAR at each of the 51 matches – and reviews undeniably contributed many minutes to the duration of a large number of the fixtures in Qatar. The first talking point is to ask whether a time-limit should be imposed on VAR reviews and whether the on-pitch referee's decision should be respected if no decision can be reached within that time?

The following question is about what other elements underlie the amounts of additional time. The AFC's technical observers in Qatar mentioned injuries, the feigning of injuries, deliberate time-wasting by teams holding a narrow lead and the time spent by referees in choreographing set plays – notably the routine lectures delivered during man-marking scenarios in the penalty area. What can be done to minimise interruptions and keep the game flowing?

An interlocking feature was the number of players falling to the ground with cramp - even a goalkeeper. In one match, three players were simultaneously on their backs with team-mates or opponents stretching an upraised leg to ease the muscle spasms. Is the modern game, with its increasing demands for intensity, allied with extended periods of added-time, moving the goalposts in terms of fitness requirements? Is there a need for physical preparation to be adjusted to cope with, for example, a second half that can easily last a full hour?



TIME WILL TELL?

Having said that, the post-tournament statistics rather surprisingly indicate that physical demands were not always particularly daunting. The subject of actual playing time has become a perennial talking point in AFC club and national team competitions – the latter all the way from the U17s to senior level. Referees certainly deserve credit for being unafraid to signal significant chunks of added time, especially at the end of the 90 minutes.

But the talking point has not gone away. In Qatar, the overall duration of games may have been extended. Yet, this was not always reflected by real playing times. Curiously, the Final between Jordan and Qatar provided the most striking example. The referee indicated a six-minute supplement to the first half and, at the end of the second period, signalled 13 minutes of added time which were then supplemented by additional stoppages in that period, including the VAR review which led to the game's third penalty and the subsequent celebrations. So the match had a duration of around 114 minutes. The post-match surprise was to see that the ball had actually been in play for 42 minutes and 12 seconds. It doesn't require a calculator to work out that for just over 70 minutes the clock had been running but the ball hadn't.

The overall tournament statistics reveal that in 9 matches, the real playing time was less than 50 minutes while, at the other end of the scale, eight registered more than 60. Pride of place went to the six-goal spectacle between Japan and Vietnam when the actual playing time was 69'10. The other 34 fixtures posted figures between 50 and 60 minutes to produce a tournament average of 54'40. The debating point is whether this is sufficient when it comes to competing on the world stage where tempo, intensity and real playing times can be expected to be higher?

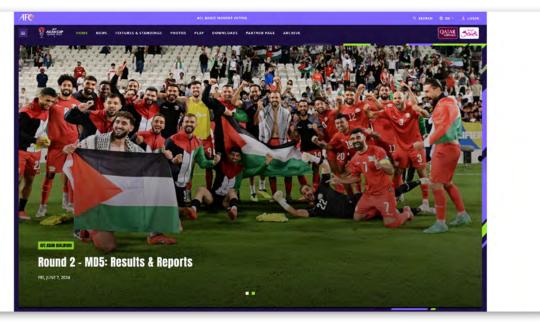


FIFA COLLABORATION FIFA COLLABORATION

The AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2023[™] heralded a unique, ground-breaking collaboration between the AFC and FIFA, with the latter organisation's large team of performance analysts providing additional information and data via the FIFA Training Centre platform to the participating teams and to the AFC's specialist group of Technical Observers on site in Qatar. Within 24 hours of the final whistle, a wealth of detailed individual and collective data was made available to each team's performance analysts – including, for example, inpossession and out-of-possession metrics or statistics specifically related to goalkeeping.

In the meantime, detailed match information was made available for public consumption on the AFC's official website the-AFC.com. Visitors to the site were given access via the section dedicated to the event in Qatar and the Downloads button which then opened pathways to statistics from individual matches.

The collaboration at the final tournament formed part of a project undertaken by the FIFA Global Football Development unit, based on collecting



data from men's national team competitions within all six Confederations and then reviewing the findings and setting them alongside data derived from the most recent FIFA World Cup staged in Qatar at the end of 2022.

This was a welcome add-on for the teams at the final tournament, as explained by Daisuke Terakado, head of Japan's technical team in Qatar. "Data on plays are used to evaluate the players and the team in discussions with the coaching staff after the game. And, as for physical data, many of the players in our national team play in Europe, so we use data to check condition factors such as travel, time differences, fatigue and so on.

"After matches, we look back at items such as how much potential was displayed, how much the performance declined over time, or whether it was maintained and so on.

"FIFA's analysis was so detailed and varied in terms of in-possession and out-of-possession, so we tried to find out if there was anything in it that supported our analysis, especially what we might need to improve. When we had filtered the content, then we passed details on to our coaches. We always try to align data with our principles of play and identify aspects that can move parts of our game forward - and we use this as feedback in meetings. There was an extensive range of data available, but the most important thing is that the staff working with the data should be familiar with the coaches and players, as it is essential to understand the coaching staff and the direction in which the team is going, and then carefully select the most appropriate data from the huge amount available, and then communicate it to the coaches and players for use."



GOALS

LOST

GOALS

CONCEDED

GOAL

DIFFERENCE

AUSTRALIA

SQUADDATE OF BIRTHGOALKEEPER12LAWRENCE THOMAS12LAWRENCE THOMAS1304-07-2000DEFENDER2THOMAS DENG2THOMAS DENG227-03-19973NATHANIELA ATKINSON13-06-19984KYE ROVILES224-06-19985JORDAN BOS29-10-200216AZIZ BEHICH1616-12-199820LEWIS MILLER24-08-200021CAMERON BURGESS21-10-199525GETHIN JONES21CAMERON BURGESS21-10-199523AIDEN O'NEILL4NUE WORGREE20-11-19982404-07-199825GETHIN JONES3104-07-19982404-07-199825GETHIN JONES21CAMERON BURGESS21-11-19953AIDEN O'NEILL4NTE O'DEFENDER22JACKSON IRVINE23AIDEN O'NEILL4NTONOR METCALFE9ANATIN BOYLE24PATINCK YAZBEK25GETHIN JOYLE25SEDAL26MARTIN BOYLE27SAMUEL SILVERA2525-04-199326AITIN BOYLE27SAMUEL SILVERA2525-102-200026AITIN BOYLE27SAMUEL SILVERA2525-04-19932625-04-199	second	
NIDFIELDER 05-11-1999 3 AIDEN O'NEILL 04-07-1998 4 RILEY MCGREE 02-11-1998 7 KEANU BACCUS 07-06-1998 2 JACKSON IRVINE 07-03-1993 4 PATRICK YAZBEK 05-04-2002 ORWARD 25-04-1993 SAMUEL STIVERA 25-04-1993 SAMUEL STIVERA 25-04-1993	e Round le of the ustralia 19, but able to d at the RAMAN ARNOLD	AFC Asian Cup [™] as one of the icians after leading Australia in both 2007 and 2019, but head coach was unable to a record as they exited at the iccumbing to a 2-1 extra-time
MARTIN BOYLE 25-04-1993 SAMUEL STUCERA 25-10-2000		ons to 1-4-4-2 defence with aggressiv
BRUND FORNAROLI 07-09-1987 0 KUSINI YENGI 1 MARCO TILIO 23-08-2001 5 MITCHELL DUKE 18-01-1991 13 CRAIG GOODWIN 16-12-1991 (v KOREA REP Q-Final) 16 JOHN IREDALE	per; midfielders grouping fo back four led by Souttar (No ing ball to assure build-up	sses from goalkeeper; midfielders play, aerial power in back four led b unters; mostly retaining ball to assur

AVERAGE

GOALS/GAME

AVERAGE

GOALS

CONCEDED/

GAME

CRAIG GOODWIN, JACKSON IRVINE, MARTIN BOYLE NUMBER OF GOALS

CLEAN

SHEETS

2

PLAYED

WON

DRAWN

TEAM PROFILES TEAM PROFILES TEAM PROFILES

BAHRAIN •

SQUAD	DATE OF BIRTH		HEAD COACH JUAN ANTONIO PIZZI
GOALKEEPER			JOAN ANTONIO FILLI
GOALKEEPER1ABDULKARIM FARDAN21SAYED JAAFAR22EBRAHIM LUTFALLADEFENDER2AMINE BENADDI3WALEED ALHAYAM4SAYED BAQER17SALEM HUSAIN SALEM18MOHAMED ADEL19HAZZA ALI23ABDULLA ALKHALASI	25-04-1992 25-08-1985 24-09-1992 09-05-1993 03-02-1991 14-04-1994 13-02-2001 20-09-1996 09-06-1995 02-09-2003		Taking charge only five months ahead of the AFC Asian Cup™, the 2023 edition marked a second appearance for Juan Antonio Pizzi in the competition, having led Saudi Arabia in 2019, where they were eliminated by eventual runnersup Japan in the Round of 16. The former FC Barcelona striker helped Bahrain finish the Group Stage in pole position before being ousted in the Round of 16 once again by Japan and stepped down from his role soon after.
26 HUSAIN ALEKER MIDFIELDER	30-09-2001	FORMATION:	
 MOHAMED ABDULWAHAB MOHAMED ALHARDAN ALI MADAN MOHAMED MARHOON KOMAIL ALASWAD EBRAHIM ALKHATAL ALI HASAN MOSES ATEDE JASIM ALSHAIKH MOHAMMED A.QAYOOM MAHDI HUMAIDAN JASIM KHLAIF IBRAHIM ALWALI 	13-11-1989 06-10-1997 30-11-1995 12-02-1998 08-04-1994 11-05-2000 17-08-1996 17-12-1997 01-02-1996 04-06-2001 19-05-1993 22-02-1998 12-06-1997		 KEY FEATURES Generally 1-4-2-3-1 with retreat into 1-4-4-2 or 1-4-1-4-1 defence after ball loss Direct attacking through wide areas or vertical / diagonal supply to target striker Wide midfielders cutting in to receive in pockets, create central overloads Compact, disciplined, energetic defending in mid/low block; pressure on ball Al Hardan (No. 6) in key role, shielding back four, proactive in building from back Goalkeeper with ability to bypass press via accurate long passing with
9 ABDULLA YUSUF 14 ABDULLA ALHASHASH STATISTICS	12-06-1993 17-08-1992	(v JAPAN R16)	either foot • Committed, disciplined team play based on work ethic, collective spirit TOP SCORER
4 2 0	1 4	6 -2 1.0 1.5	2

U Ζ 4 -2 0 AVERAGE WON DRAWN LOST GOALS GOALS GOAL AVERAGE CONCEDED DIFFERENCE GOALS/GAME GOALS CONCEDED/ GAME



PLAYED

CLEAN

SHEETS

TEAM PROFILES TEAM PROFILES TEAM PROFILES

CHINA PR

squ	JAD	DATE OF BIRTH		HEAD COACH	ALEKSANDAR JANKOVIC
GOA	LKEEPER				ALLINGAINDAR JAINKOVIC
1	YAN JUNLING	28-01-1991		Aleksandar Jankovic's first coachi	ng assignment
12	JIAN TAO	01-06-2001		came in 2007 when he was appoint	
14	WANG DALEI	10-01-1989		Star Belgrade. He would go on to c	bach the Serbia
25	LIU DIANZUO	26-06-1990		U21 side from 2010 to 2013 and	
	NDER			such as Lokeren, Mechelen and Sta	
2	JIANG GUANGTAI	27-05-1994		Belgium before landing a job in Ch	
3	ZHU CHENJIE	23-08-2000		He took charge of their U19 B team	in 2018 before
4	LI LEI	30-05-1992		being elevated to the senior tea	
5	ZHANG LINPENG	09-05-1989		2023, but draws with Tajikistan	
13	XU HAOFENG	27-01-1999		and defeat to hosts Qatar led to h	is departure as
19	LIU YANG	17-06-1995	FORMATION:	China PR exited at the Group Sta	ge for the first
22	WU SHAOCONG	20-03-2000		time since 2011.	
23	LIN LIANGMING	04-06-1997	P P P P P P P P P P P P P P P P P P P		
24	JIANG SHENGLONG	24-12-2000			
	FIELDER			KEY FEATURES	
6	WANG SHANGYUAN	02-06-1993			
8	XU XIN	19-04-1994		• 1-3-5-2 or 1-5-4-1 attacking: one of	r two strikers, support from full-backs
10	XIE PENGFEI	29-06-1993		• Set up to build through thirds: h	ut long-ball response to high press by
15	WU XI	19-02-1989		opponents	at long bail response to high press by
16	GAO TIANYI	01-07-1998		 Flat back four initially (v TJK); then 	switch to compact 1-5-4-1 defence
17	CHEN PU	15-01-1997			· .
18	DAI WEIJUN	25-07-1999			e on ball, rapid retreat into midfield block
20	WEI SHIHAO	08-04-1995			preading length and width; individuals
21	LIU BINBIN	16-06-1993		with pace	
26	WANG QIUMING	09-01-1993			s pivotal midfielder supporting defence
	WARD	40.44.6004		and attack	
7	WU LEI ZHANG YUNING	19-11-1991		 Compact unit with speed, strength 	, motivation; lacking only a cutting edge
9		05-01-1997	(v TAJIKISTAN Group A)		
11	TAN LONG	01-04-1988	(,		
ST	ATISTICS				
	2 0	2 1 0		2 7	

STATIS	TICS								
3	0	2	1	0	1	-1	0.0	0.33	2
PLAYED	WON	DRAWN	LOST	GOALS	GOALS CONCEDED	GOAL DIFFERENCE	AVERAGE GOALS/GAME	AVERAGE GOALS CONCEDED/ GAME	CLEAN SHEETS

🍪 HONG KONG, CHINA

squ	JAD	DATE OF BIRTH
GOA	LKEEPER	
1	YAPP HUNG FAI	21-03-1990
18	NG WAI HIM	30-06-2002
19	TSE KA WING	04-09-1999
DEFE	NDER	
2	SEAN TSE KA KEUNG	03-05-1992
3	OLIVER BENJAMIN GERBIG	12-12-1998
4	DAS LILLEY NUNEZ	22-11-1995
5	HELIO GONCALVES	31-01-1986
13	LI NGAI HOI	15-10-1994
17	SHINICHI CHAN	05-09-2002
21	YUE TZE NAM	12-05-1998
MID	FIELDER	
6	WU CHUN MING	21-11-1997
8	TAN CHUN LOK	15-01-1996
10	WONG WAI	17-09-1992
12	LAM HIN TING	09-12-1999
15	CHANG HEI YIN	06-04-2000
16	PHILIP CHAN SIU KWAN	01-08-1992
22	JESSE YU JOY YIN	08-10-2001
24	JU YINGZHI	24-07-1987
FOR	WARD	
7	LAW TSZ CHUN	02-03-1997
9	MATT ORR	01-01-1997
11	EVERTON CAMARGO	25-05-1991
14	POON PUI HIN	03-10-2000
20	MICHAEL UDEBULUZOR	01-04-2004
23	SUN MING HIM	19-06-2000
25	STEFAN FIGUEIREDO PEREIRA	16-04-1988
26	WALTER SOARES JUNIOR	11-12-1990



FORMATION:



HEAD COACH

JØRN ANDERSEN

#HavvaAs

Six months into his role, Jørn Andersen masterminded a return to Asia's crown jewel for Hong Kong, China by achieving gualification in June 2022. The Norwegian had arrived at this juncture after head coaching spells with clubs in Germany, Greece, Austria and Korea Republic, along with a two-year spell in charge of DPR Korea.

Andersen - who, in 1990, was the first foreign top scorer of the Bundesliga - could only get his side to find the back of the net once at their first AFC Asian Cup[™] in 56 years, which ended with three defeats in the Group Stage.

KEY FEATURES

- Generally 1-4-2-1-3 in attack with fast switch to high 1-4-3-3 defending
- Emphasis on direct attacking with long deliveries behind opponents' back line
- · Good use of second ball, switching play to wings and delivering crosses
- Aggressive counter-pressing with midfielders overloading on ball side
- Long-range shooting, early crosses, long throws with six players in box
- Dangerous inswinging set plays, counters launched to three frontrunners
- Fully-committed, well-organised unit with great mobility and team ethic

1



TOP SCORER

💿 INDIA

FASIAN CUP FASIAN CUP FASIAN CUP FASIAN CUP FASIAN CUP

SQU	IAD	DATE OF BIRTH	
GOAI	LKEEPER		
1	GURPREET SINGH SANDHU	03-02-1992	train the second s
13	VISHAL KAITH	22-07-1996	
23	AMRINDER SINGH	27-05-1993	
DEFE	NDER		17 - 17 - 1 - 1 - 1
2	RAHUL BHEKE	06-12-1990	
3	SUBHASISH BOSE	18-08-1995	
4	LALCHUNGNUNGA	25-12-2000	
5	SANDESH JHINGAN	21-07-1993	
5	AKASH MISHRA	27-11-2001	
20	PRITAM KOTAL	08-09-1993	
21	NIKHIL CHANDRASHEKHAR POOJARY	03-09-1995	FORMATION:
22	MEHTAB SINGH	05-06-1998	FORMATION.
MIDF	FIELDER		
7	ANIRUDH THAPA	15-01-1998	
3	SURESH SINGH WANGJAM	07-08-2000	
10	BRANDON FERNANDES	20-09-1994	
12	LISTON COLACO	12-11-1998	
14	MAHESH SINGH NAOREM	03-03-1999	
15	UDANTA SINGH KUMAM	14-06-1996	
16	RAHUL KANNOLY PRAVEEN	16-03-2000	
17	LALLIANZUALA CHHANGTE	08-06-1997	
18	SAHAL ABDUL SAMAD	01-04-1997	
19	LALENGMAWIA APUIA	17-10-2000	
25	DEEPAK TANGRI	01-02-1999	
ORV	WARD		
9	MANVIR SINGH	06-11-1995	
11	SUNIL CHHETRI	03-08-1984	
24	VIKRAM PARTAP	16-01-2002	
	ISHAN PANDITA	26-05-1998	(v AUSTRALIA Group B)

HEAD COACH

IGOR STIMAC

Igor Stimac was an integral part of the Croatian national team that finished third at the 1998 FIFA World Cup and enjoyed similar success as coach in 2013 when Croatia climbed to fourth in the FIFA World Ranking.

He managed clubs in Croatia, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Qatar before taking over from Stephen Constantine who stepped down as India's head coach after their AFC Asian Cup UAE 2019™ campaign, but the former West Ham central defender was unable to turn their fortunes around in Qatar as the Blue Tigers exited the Group Stage.



KEY FEATURES

- Variations on 1-4-3-3 with one or two holding midfielders; 1-4-4-2 defending
- Counterattacking style based on direct supply to the front or solo runs through midfield
- Set out to build from the back, switching to long-ball strategy when under pressure
- After losses of possession, individual press on ball, rapid retreat into deep defence
- Compact defence led by Jhingan (No. 5); goalkeeper dealing efficiently with crosses
- Attacks seeking to exploit the aerial abilities of experienced striker Chhetri (No. 11)
- Skilful, mobile team preferring short-passing combinations to build through thirds

STATIS	TICS								
3 PLAYED	O WON	O DRAWN	3 LOST	GOALS	GOALS CONCEDED	-6 GOAL DIFFERENCE	O.O AVERAGE GOALS/GAME	2.0 AVERAGE GOALS CONCEDED/ GAME	CLEAN SHEETS

👆 INDONESIA

squ	JAD	DATE OF BIRT
GOA	LKEEPER	
1	MUHAMAD RIYANDI	03-01-2000
21	ERNANDO ARI SUTARYADI	27-02-2002
26	NADEO ARGA WINATA	09-03-1997
DEFE	NDER	
3	ELKAN BAGGOTT	23-10-2002
4	JORDI AMAT	21-03-1992
5	RIZKY RIDHO RAMADHANI	21-11-2001
6	SANDY WALSH	14-03-1995
12	PRATAMA ARHAN ALIF	21-12-2001
13	MOH EDO FEBRIANSAH	25-07-1997
14	ASNAWI MANGKUALAM BAHAR	04-10-1999
19	WAHYU PRASETYO	21-03-1998
20	SHAYNE PATTYNAMA	11-08-1998
MID	FIELDER	
7	MARSELINO FERDINAN	09-09-2004
15	RICKY KAMBUAYA	05-05-1996
23	MARC ANTHONY KLOK	20-04-1993
24	IVAR JENNER	10-01-2004
FOR	WARD	
2	YAKOB SAYURI	22-09-1997
8	WITAN SULAEMAN	08-10-2001
9	MUHAMAD DIMAS DRAJAD	30-03-1997
10	EGY MAULANA VIKRI	07-07-2000
11	RAFAEL WILLIAM STRUICK	27-03-2003
16	HOKKY CARAKA BRILLIANT	21-08-2004
17	ADAM ALIS SETYANO	19-12-1993
18	RAMADHAN SANANTA	27-11-2002
22	DENDY SULISTYAWAN	12-10-1996
25	JUSTIN HUBNER	14-09-2003



FORMATION:



HEAD COACH

SHIN TAE-YONG

Helming one of the youngest squads in the tournament, the Garuda took the game to their more illustrious opponents under Shin Tae-yong and was rewarded with a maiden qualification to the Knockout Stage.

Having spent his entire coaching career in his homeland, the Korean took charge of Indonesia in December 2019 and secured their first AFC Asian Cup[™] appearance since 2007. Shin, who also coached Indonesia's U20 and U23 sides to qualification for their respective AFC Asian Cup[™] Finals, can remain optimistic about the talented senior team's future despite a Round of 16 exit.



KEY FEATURES

- Variations on 1-3-4-3 with transitions to 1-5-4-1 midfield defensive block
- Fast vertical attacks with six players; forwards sprinting into space behind defence
- Dynamic relationships between wingers and overlapping wing-backs
- Compact, well-organised structure at all restarts in attack and defence
- Intense pressure on ball after loss of possession; sporadic collective high press
- Tight marking by back five, pushing out to control pockets between lines
- Mobile, athletic team with high levels of tempo, work ethic, spirit

STATISTICS 8 PLAYED WON DRAWN LOST GOALS GOALS GOAL AVERAGE AVERAGE GOALS/GAME GOALS CONCEDED DIFFERENCE CONCEDED/ GAME

TOP SCORER



CLEAN

SHEETS

SQUAD DATE OF BIRTH **GOALKEEPER** FAHAD TALIB RAHEEM 21-10-1994 1 IALAL HASSAN 18-05-1991 12 AHMED BASIL FADHILI 19-08-1996 22 DEFENDER 2 **REBIN GHAREEB ADHAMAT** 12-04-1992 3 HUSSEIN HAYDAR ALI 01-03-2002 4 SUAD NATIQ NAJI 19-03-1994 5 FRANS DHIA HADDAD 14-07-1993 6 ALI ADNAN AL-TAMEEMI 19-12-1993 AKAM HASHIM RAHMAN 16-08-1998 14 15 ALLAN KAWA OMEER 11-11-1993 23 MERCHAS GHAZI SALIH 07-12-1999 29-01-2001 24 ZAID TAHSEEN HANTOOSH **MIDFIELDER** 7 YOUSSEF WALI AMYN 21-08-2003 **IBRAHIM BAYESH AL-KAABAWI** 01-05-2000 8 ZIDANE AAMAR IQBAL 27-04-2003 11 13 **BASHAR RESAN BONYAN** 22-12-1996 16 AMIR FOUAD 27-07-1997 17 ALI JASIM ELAIBI 20-01-2004 DANILO BURKAN AL-SAED 24-02-1999 19



FORMATION:



🚪 HEAD COACH

JESÚS CASAS

Hired in December 2022, former Spain assistant Jesús Casas built an Iraq side that captivated everyone after winning all three group matches for the first time in their tournament history including a stunning victory against Japan.

Born in Madrid, Casas started coaching at 29 and worked his way to assistant coach at Premier League side Watford in 2018. He spent four years in the Spain setup before taking his first head coaching position outside of Europe with Iraq and despite elimination in the Round of 16, Casas has been trusted to continue in his role.



KEY FEATURES

- 1-4-2-3-1; transitions to 1-4-4-2 defence with wide midfielders quickly back
- High-tempo passing game; efficient out-of-possession play in win v Japan
- Emphasis on wing play with full-backs up; delivery of crosses to target striker
- Aggressive pressure on ball; compact, narrow defence often with high line
- Strong centre-backs with aerial power shielded by well-balanced midfield screen
- Good diagonal passes, switches of play, notably for penetration on left flank

6

Well-organised unit with physicality, work ethic and team spirit

STATIS	STATISTICS									ТО
4 PLAYED	3 won	O DRAWN	1 LOST	10 goals	GOALS CONCEDED	B GOAL DIFFERENCE	2.5 average goals/game	1.8 AVERAGE GOALS CONCEDED/ GAME	CLEAN SHEETS	AYMI

17-01-1992

29-04-1996

01-07-1995

24-04-2005

01-03-2002

20-06-2000

22-03-1996

TOP SCORER

EN HUSSEIN

IBER OF GOALS



20

21

25

26

9

10

18

FOR

WARD

OSAMAH JABBAR RASHID

AHMED YAHYA AL-HAJJAJ

ALI IBRAHIM ALZUBAIDI

MOHANAD ALI KADHIM

AHMED ADIL ABAS

MONTADER MADJED

AYMEN HUSSEIN

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

SQL	JAD	DATE OF BIRT
GOA	LKEEPER	
1	ALI REZA SAFARBEIRANVAND	21-09-1992
12	PAYAM NIAZMAND	06-04-1995
22	SEYED HOSSEIN HOSSEINI	30-06-1992
DEF	ENDER	
2	SADEGH MOHARRAMI	01-03-1996
4	SHOJAE KHALILZADEH	14-05-1989
5	MILAD MOHAMMADIKESHMARZI	29-09-1993
13		23-03-1994
19	MAJID HOSSEINI	20-06-1996
25	SAMAN FALLAH	12-05-2001
	FIELDER	
3	EHSAN HAJI SAFI	25-02-1990
6	SAEID EZATOLAHI	01-10-1996
7	ALIREZA JAHAN BAKHSH	11-08-1993
8	OMID EBRAHIMI	16-09-1987
15	ROOZBEH CHESHMI	24-07-1993
17		10-03-1996
	RAMIN REZAEIAN	21-03-1990
24		22-04-2002
POR 9	WARD MEHDI TAREMI	18-07-1992
9 10	KARIM ANSARI FARD	03-04-1990
10	REZA ASADI	17-01-1996
14	SAMAN GHODDOS	06-09-1993
14	MAHDI TORABI	10-09-1993
18	MEHDI GHAYEDI	05-12-1998
20	SARDAR AZMOUN	01-01-1995
20	MOHAMMAD MOHEBBI	20-12-1998
26	SHAHRIYAR MOGHANLOO	21-12-1994
20		22 .354



FORMATION:



HEAD COACH

AMIR GHALENOEI

Sixteen years after leaving Team Melli following their 2007 AFC Asian Cup™ Quarter-final exit, Amir Ghalenoei was handed the opportunity to end their 48-year title drought after succeeding Carlos Queiroz in March 2023. Having established himself as the most successful head coach in domestic league history with five titles, the former international steered IR Iran to the last four in his second stint.



Amid heightened expectations and off the back of an 18-game unbeaten streak, they fell to eventual champions Qatar, although Ghalenoei has since received a contract extension until the end of the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

KEY FEATURES

- Mostly 1-4-2-3-1 with fast transitions to compact 1-4-4-2 defensive block
- Frequent long passing to target striker Azmoun (No. 20) with secondball support
- High-tempo wing play; wide attackers combining with adventurous fullbacks
- Combinations through middle with Ghoddos (No. 14) in key linking role
- Strong, compact defending with immediate intense high pressure on the ball
- Dangerous, well-delivered set plays including long throws from both flanks
- Solid power-play with clear roles, collective spirit, work ethic, physicality

3

STAT	ISTICS									TOP SCORE
6 PLAYE	b won	0 DRAWN	1 LOST	12 goals	GOALS CONCEDED	5 GOAL DIFFERENCE	2.0 AVERAGE GOALS/GAME	1.2 AVERAGE GOALS CONCEDED/ GAME	CLEAN SHEETS	MEHDI TAREMI NUMBER OF GOALS

SCORER



JAPAN

<u> </u>		
SQUAD	DATE OF BIRTH 🥻	HEAD COACH HAJIME MORIYASU
GOALKEEPER 1 DAIYA MAEKAWA 12 TAISHI BRANDON NOZAWA 23 ZION SUZUKI DEFENDER	08-09-1994 25-12-2002 21-08-2002	A key member of the Japan side that lifted the AFC Asian Cup™ for the first time in 1992, Hajime Moriyasu had high hopes of becoming the first man to win it as both a player and coach. The
 YUKINARI SUGAWARA SHOGO TANIGUCHI KOU ITAKURA KOKI MACHIDA SEIYA MAIKUMA YUTA NAKAYAMA HIROKI ITO TAKEHIRO TOMIYASU TSUYOSHI WATANABE 	28-06-2000 15-07-1991 27-01-1997 25-08-1997 16-10-1997 16-02-1997 12-05-1999 05-11-1998 05-02-1997	FORMATION:
MIDFIELDER 5 HIDEMASA MORITA 6 WATARU ENDO 7 KAORU MITOMA 8 TAKUMI MINAMINO 10 RITSU DOAN 13 KEITO NAKAMURA 14 JUNYA ITO 17 REO HATATE 20 TAKEFUSA KUBO 26 KAISHU SANO FORWARD 9 AYASE UEDA 11 MAO HOSOYA	10-05-1995 09-02-1993 20-05-1997 16-01-1995 16-06-1998 28-07-2000 09-03-1993 21-11-1997 04-06-2001 30-12-2000 28-08-1998 07-09-2001	 Mostly 1-4-3-3 with very fast transitions to 1-4-4-2 or 1-5-4-1 defence Dynamic possession game based on skilful high-tempo combination Wingers mostly staying wide; full-backs supporting often wunderlapping runs Collective high pressing; front three attacking ball-carrier at high spectrum Well-balanced midfield; creative distribution, incisive forward runs we ball High defence line shielded by single holding midfielder; keeper cover behind Athletic squad with strength in depth, exceptional technical ability
18 TAKUMA ASANO 25 DAIZEN MAEDA STATISTICS 5 2	10-11-1994 20-10-1997 2	(v IR IRAN Q-Final) TOP SCORER

PLAYED

WON

DRAWN

LOST

GOALS

GOALS

CONCEDED

GOAL

DIFFERENCE

AVERAGE

GOALS/GAME

CLEAN

SHEETS

1

NUMBER OF GOALS

AYASE UEDA

AVERAGE

GOALS

CONCEDED/

GAME

4

🤹 JORDAN

-								
SQUAD		DATE OF	BIRTH	8 8 m. 8		HEAD COACH	HUSSEIN	ΑΜΜΟυτΑ
OALKEEPER			Second Second				HOSSEIN	#Asiancupeve-
	Abulaila Ah Alfakhori Uaidi	08-01- 22-01- 09-04-	-2000	2 5 17 23 5 10 10 10 10 10		Morocco's Hussein Ammouta the Jordanian side with the ho their best finishes of reaching th in 2004 and 2011. Prior to tha	ope of bettering he Quarter-finals	
MOHAM ABDALLA BARA MA YAZAN A 6 FERAS SH 7 SALEM A 9 ANAS BA 3 EHSAN H MIDFIELDER	LARAB HILBAYA LL AJALIN NNI-YASEEN HADDAD	25-02- 13-04- 31-01- 27-11- 18-02- 29-11- 05-02-	1994 1994 1996 1993 1988 1988 1994	FORMATIO	N:	in 2004 and 2011. Prior to tha guided his home country to glo Cup of Nations in 2020. The former Al Saad player and o cement his place in AFC Asian Cu engineered Jordan's fairy-tale r beating teams such as Iraq and k the way, before being handed a Qatar in the Final.	ry at the African coach went on to up [™] history as he un to the Final, corea Republic on	
MOHAM NOOR AI MOUSA MAHMO A RAJA'EI A B SALEH RA I NIZAR AI NIZAR AI YOUSEF ANAS HA G FADI AW. ORWARD ALI OLW. 1 YAZAN A	I SADEH ATIB LRASHDAN ABU JALBOUSH IMMAD AD	02-02- 30-12- 10-06- 06-10- 25-07- 27-04- 18-12- 23-03- 15-06- 29-05- 26-03- 04-06- 12-05-	1997 1997 1997 1997 1993 1993 22000 1994 1999 1998 1998 1998 1993	(v QATAR Final		 KEY FEATURES 1-3-4-3 with swift transitions to block Dynamic attacking with rapid s Al Naimat (No. 11) a striker with from front Combinations with creative so side attacker Committed back line of five let (No. 5) Two controlling midfielders tire attack Well-organised disciplined unit 	witches of play, sup h speed, technique loist Tamari (No. 10 ed by commanding elessly maintaining	oply to front-runners e, readiness to defend 0), a left-footed right- g centre-back Al Arab balance, linking with
STATIST	ICS			- 4		TOP SCOR	ER	
PLAYED	4 1 won drav	VN LOST	13 8 GOALS GOALS CONCEDED		erage Average Goals	CLEAN SHEETS		

CONCEDED/

GAME

YAZAN ALNAIMAT

NUMBER OF GOALS

4

KOREA REPUBLIC

SQUAD			DATE	OF BIRTH		ALL I	-	the second second	HEAD C	ОАСН		LINSMANN
12 SONG 21 JO HYE DEFENDER 2 2 LEE KI 3 KIM JII 4 KIM M 15 JUNG S 19 KIM YO 22 SEOL Y 23 KIM JU 24 KIM JU 25 KIM JI	EUNG-GYU BUM-KEUN EON-WOO -JE N-SU IIN-JAE SEUNG-HYUN OUNG-GWON YOUNG-WOO AE-HWAN J-SUNG -SOO		15 25 09 13 15 03 27 05 24 12	-09-1990 -10-1997 -09-1991 -06-1992 -11-1996 -04-1994 -02-1990 -12-1998 -07-1989 -12-2000 -12-2004		FORMA	ATION:		Former wo Klinsmann ambition to 64 years. One of th Continental previously l CONCACAF to a Semi-fi 2-0 by eve	orld and European replaced Paulo o end Korea Republi ne most decorated l showpiece, the helped the United S Gold Cup title, led th inal finish where the entual runners-up i9-year-old parted w	champion Jurgen Bento with the c's title drought of d names at the e German, who States lift the 2013 ne Taeguk Warriors ey were outplayed Jordan, following	
6 HWAN 7 SON H 8 HONG 10 LEE JAI 11 HWAN 13 LEE SO 14 MOON 15 PARK J 17 JEONG 18 LEE KA 26 YANG 9 CHOG	YONG-WOO IG IN-BEOM IEUNG-MIN IEUNG-MIN IEUNG-MIN IG HEE-CHAN OON-MIN V SEON-MIN IN-SEOB 5 WOO-YEONG NG-IN HYUN-JUN GUE-SUNG YEONG-YU		20 08 16 10 26 22 09 23 20 19 25 25	-09-1993 -09-1996 -07-1992 -06-1999 -08-1992 -01-1996 -05-1994 -06-1992 -10-1995 -09-1999 -02-2001 -05-2002 -01-1998 -04-2001			N S-Final)		game Varied att Son (No. withdraw Mix of pa three Mainly 1- wide Occasion Min-jae (N	-4-2-3-1 with strong tacking with or witho . 7) the dominant n role atient build-up com -4-4-2 compact midf al use of inverted fu	out target striker; go attacking presence pinations and swift ield pressing aimed Il-backs in defence le	ession-based passing ood variety of crossing in central, wide or counters to fast front at forcing opponents ed by centre-back Kim le, mental resilience
STATIS 6 PLAYED	STICS 3 WON	2 drawn	1 LOST	11 GOALS	10 GOALS CONCEDED	GOAL DIFFERENCE	1.8 AVERAGE GOALS/GAME	1.7 AVERAGE GOALS CONCEDED/ GAME	O CLEAN SHEETS	TOP SCOI	N HEUNG-MIN	3

TEAM PROFILES TEAM PROFILES TEAM PROFILES

CONCEDED

DIFFERENCE

KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

SQUAD		DATE OF BIRTH			HEAD COACH	STEFAN TA	
GOALKEEPER			The second se			STEFAR II	
1 ERZHAI	N TOKOTAEV	17-07-2000			Knynya Dopublick compaign	at the competition	•
13 SULTAN	N CHOMOEV	20-01-2003			Krygyz Republic's campaign marked Stefan Tarkovic's firs	t brush with Asian	
16 MARSE	EL ISLAMKULOV	18-04-1994		12 15	football. The former Slovakia		
DEFENDER			24 1 18		into the shoes of Aleksandr		to the later
2 KHRIST	TIIAN BRAUZMAN	15-08-2003		ALL MELET	in charge when the Central As		<u> </u>
3 TAMIRI	LAN KOZUBAEV	01-07-1994		AN THE DAY	AFC Asian Cup™ debut in 2019		KONA
5 AIZAR	AKMATOV	24-08-1998					
6 AMANT	TUR SHAMURZAEV	25-01-2000			However, under Tarkovic's wat	tch, the Kyrgyz side	
11 BEKZH	AN SAGYNBAEV	11-09-1994	- <u>24 </u>		failed to match their Round o previous edition and finished		
14 ALEKSA	ANDR MISHCHENKO	30-07-1997			in Group F, earning only a sing		3 = 1
17 SUIUN	TBEK MAMYRALIEV	07-01-1998	EODM	ATION:	draw against Oman.	gie point nonna 1-1	
18 KAIRAT	T ZHYRGALBEK UULU	13-06-1993	FURIVIA	AITON.	araw against offian.		
20 BAKTY	IAR DUISHOBEKOV	03-06-1995					
MIDFIELDER							
4 ADIL K	ADYRZHANOV	14-07-2000		3 20	KEY FEATURES		
3 AZIM A	ZAROV	20-09-1996			RETTERIORES		
10 GULZH	IIGIT ALYKULOV	25-11-2000		21 17	Flexible structure switching be	two op 1 4 4 2 and 1 2 4	1 2 with back line of five
12 ODILZH	HON ABDURAKHMANO	V 18-03-1996			_		
15 KAI ME	RK	28-08-1998			 Set out to build from goalkee centre-backs 	per via pivotal midflei	ders dropping close to
19 BEKNA	Z ALMAZBEKOV	23-06-2005			Attacking based on supply to a	fact chilful control stril	or No7 Koia L cacand
21 FARKH	AT MUSABEKOV	03-01-1994			ball support	idst, skillul tehti di strik	kei NO7 Kojo + secona-
22 ALIMAI	RDON SHUKUROV	28-09-1999			Immediate pressure on ball	after losses of nosses	ssion: fast retreat into
	DOLOT STALBEKOV	13-09-2001			deep defence		
24 KIMI M	IERK	06-07-2004			Full-backs supporting wing	nlav: crosses aime	d at skilful attacker
26 ATAI DZ	ZHUMASHEV	15-09-1998	6 / /		Batyrkanov (No. 9)	play, crosses anne	
FORWARD					Central midfielders focused or	n neat combinations, s	witches of play to wide
7 JOEL KO	0 0	21-08-1998			areas		
9 ERNIST	F BATYRKANOV	21-02-1998			Resolute defending, often wi	th back line of six pro	otected by two central
25 DASTAI	NBEK TOKTOSUNOV	02-09-2002	(v OMAN	l Group F)	midfielders		,
STATIS	TICS				TOP SCO	RER	
						9	
2		7 1	5 .				
						T	
PLAYED	WON DRAWI	N LOST GOALS	GOALS GOAL	AVERAGE AVER			
PLATED		IN LUSI GUALS	GUALS GUAL				

GOALS/GAME

GOALS

CONCEDED/

GAME

SHEETS

JOEL KOJO NUMBER OF GOALS

1

01-03-1994

30-03-1995

10-06-1996

02-02-2001

16-07-1992

06-07-1993

23-08-1998 18-12-2001

24-11-1994

03-01-1994

EBANON

MEHDI KHALIL

MAHER SABRA

NOUR MANSOUR

NASSAR NASSAR

ALI SABEH

MOSTAFA MATAR

SQUAD

1

21

23

3

4

5

6

12

13

18

26

2

7

8

10

14

15

16

17

20

22

24

25

9

11

19

GOALKEEPER

DEFENDER

DATE OF BIRTH **HEAD COACH** 19-09-1991 Miodrag Radulovic enjoyed managerial spells in 10-09-1995 Portugal, Russia, Uzbekistan and Kuwait and was 24-06-1994 an assistant coach when Serbia & Montenegro were runners-up at the 2004 UEFA Under-21 14-01-1992 Championship. 22-10-1989 Radulovic, who was head coach of Lebanon 01-01-1992 between 2015 and 2019, reprised the role in 27-01-1995 December 2023 but the Montenegro native was 14-11-1992 unable to steer the Cedars into the Knockout 12-01-1995 Stage after falling to debutants Tajikistan in their 02-12-1990 **FORMATION:** final Group A encounter. 16-06-1991 24-09-1998 **KEY FEATURES** 10-08-1987 17-08-1992 08-11-1989



- Frequent use of direct supply to strong, pacy target striker, Bugiel (No. 11)
- Good second-ball support, combinations with mobile interchanging forwards
- Fast transitions with dangerous counterattacks via attacking trio
- Front three also first line of defence; once breached, retreat to deep block
- Solid back line led by Melki (No. 12), a strong defender with good anticipation skills
- Deep goalkeeping focused on shot-stopping, launching counters to front men

1

STATIS	TICS									TOP SCORER
3 PLAYED	O WON	1 DRAWN	2 LOST	GOALS	5 GOALS CONCEDED	-4 GOAL DIFFERENCE	O.3 AVERAGE GOALS/GAME	1.7 AVERAGE GOALS CONCEDED/ GAME	CLEAN SHEETS	BASSEL JRADI NUMBER OF GOALS

HUSSEIN ZEIN ROBERT ALEXANDER MELKI KHALIL KHAMIS **KASSEM EL ZEIN** HASSAN CHAITOU MIC FIELDER YAHYA EL HINDI HASSAN MAATOUK HASSAN SAAD MOHAMAD HAIDAR MOUHAMMED ALI DHAINI IIHAD AYOUB WALID SHOUR ALI AL HAJ ALI TNEICH BASSEL IRADI GABRIEL BITAR HASAN SROUR FORWARD HILAL ALHELWE OMAR BUGIEL DANIEL KURI

22-01-1999

(v QATAR Group A)





💁 MALAYSIA

squ	IAD	DATE OF BIRTH	
GOA	LKEEPER		
1	AZRI GHANI	30-04-1999	
16	AHMAD SYIHAN HAZMI	22-02-1996	
23	SIKH IZHAN NAZREL	23-03-2002	
DEFE	NDER		10 10 10
2	MATTHEW DAVIES	07-02-1995	
3	SHAHRUL SAAD	08-07-1993	
4	DANIEL TING	01-12-1992	
5	SYAHMI SAFARI	05-02-1998	
6	DOMINIC TAN	12-03-1997	
15	JUNIOR ELDSTAL	16-09-1991	
21	DION COOLS	04-06-1996	FORMATION
22	CORBIN ONG	22-04-1991	
25	AHMAD KHUZAIMI PIEE	09-11-1993	P
MID	FIELDER		
8	STUART WILKIN	12-03-1998	
10	ENDRICK DOS SANTOS	07-03-1995	
14	SYAMER KUTTY ABBA	01-10-1997	
18	BRENDAN GAN	03-06-1988	
20	AFIQ FAZAIL	29-09-1994	
24	NATXO INSA	09-06-1986	
FORV	WARD		
7	FAISAL HALIM	07-01-1998	
9	DARREN LOK	14-12-1990	
11	SAFAWI RASID	05-03-1997	
12	ARIF AIMAN HANAPI	04-05-2002	
13	MOHAMADOU SUMAREH	20-09-1994	
17	PAULO JOSUE	13-03-1989	
19	AKHYAR RASHID	01-05-1999	(
26	ROMEL MORALES	23-08-1997	(v JORDAN Group E)

HEAD COACH

KIM PAN-GON

A former winger for Korea Republic, Kim Pan-gon left his position as Technical Director at the Korea Football Association to take over as Malaysia's head coach in January 2022 and helped Malaysia qualify for the AFC Asian Cup[™] on merit for the first time in 43 years.

While qualification to the Knockout Stage eluded the Harimau Malaya, the Southeast Asian side finished their campaign with a thrilling 3-3 draw against powerhouses Korea Republic.



KEY FEATURES

- 1-3-4-3 with fast transitions to mid or low block with back line of five
- Varied attacking, reaching final third with short or long passes, switches of play
- Fluid middle-to-front movement; wingmen in, opening space for overlapping wing-backs
- Immediate counter-press after ball-loss; aggressive individual pressure on ball-carrier
- Man-to-man pursuit of opponents sometimes risking loss of defensive shape
- Deep defending with wing-backs guickly into back five; all outfielders in own half
- Positive contribution by goalkeeper to high-tempo game played with fighting spirit

TOP SCORER



STATI	STICS								
3 PLAYED	O won	1 DRAWN	2 LOST	3 GOALS	GOALS CONCEDED	-5 GOAL DIFFERENCE	1.0 AVERAGE GOALS/GAME	2.7 AVERAGE GOALS CONCEDED/ GAME	CLEA SHEE

ETS

OMAN

PLAYED

SQL	JAD	DATE OF BIRTH	10.12
GOA	LKEEPER		11 / Q
1	IBRAHIM AL-MUKHAINI	20-06-1997	-
18	FAIYZ ISSA AL RUSHEIDI	19-07-1988	
22	AHMED FARAJ AL RAWAHI	05-05-1994	MAR INC
DEFE	INDER		
2		04-08-1998	
	JUMA MARHOON AL-HABSI	28-01-1996	
6	AHMED AL-KHAMISI	26-11-1991	
	AHMED AL KAABI	15-09-1996	
16	KHALID NASSER AL BRAIKI	03-07-1993	
17	ALI SULAIMAN AL-BUSAIDI	21-01-1991	
21	ABDUL AZIZ AL-GHEILANI	14-05-1995	
	FIELDER		
-	FAHMI SAID BAIT DURBIN	10-10-1993	
	ARSHAD SAID AL-ALAWI	12-04-2000	
	OMER MOHAMMED AL MALKI	04-01-1994	
	JAMEEL AL YAHMADI	27-07-1996	
	ABDULLAH FAWAZ	03-10-1996	
		28-05-1996	
	MUSAAB HAMED AL-MAMARI	22-01-2000	
	MAHMOOD MABROOK AL MUSHAIFRI	14-01-1993	
	SALAAH SAID AL YAHYAEI	17-08-1998	
	HARIB AL SAADI	01-02-1990	
	TAMEEM HAITHAM AL BALUSHI	03-11-1999	/ /
	WARD		/ /
7		01-05-1997	Ь
	ZAHIR SULAIMAN AL AGHBARI	28-05-1999	
	MUHSEN SALEH AL GHASSANI	27-03-1997	
	ABDALLAH SALIM	17-11-2001	
26	ABDUL RAHMAN AL MUSHAIFRI	16-08-1998	

LOST



FORMATION:



GOALS/GAME

GOALS

CONCEDED/

GAME

HEAD COACH

BRANKO IVANKOVIC

With managerial spells across Asia spanning over 20 years, Branko Ivankovic had previously led the Islamic Republic of Iran to a third-place finish at the AFC Asian Cup[™] in 2004. Since then, he has enjoyed coaching stints in clubs such as Al Ettifaq, Persepolis FC and Shandong Luneng.

Ivankovic replaced Dutchman Erwin Koeman as Oman head coach in 2020 but the Croatian parted ways with the national team following a disappointing Group Stage exit without a single win.



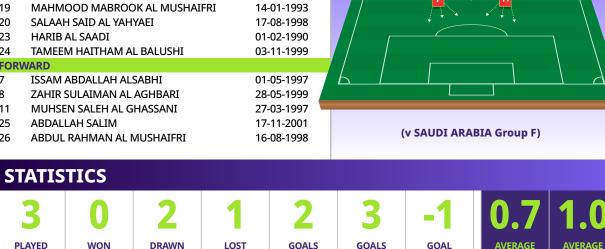
KEY FEATURES

- Tactically flexible using 1-3-5-2 or variations on 1-4-4-2 with midfield diamond
- Patient build-up play, seeking routes to two strikers, three attacking midfielders
- Full-backs supporting rather than overlapping especially in midfield diamond format
- Good use of width: diagonals to wingers, solo skills, crosses, infield running
- Dangerous counters with four players ready for solo runs from pockets between lines
- Back line shielded by Al Saadi (No. 23); ball-winning, key linking role in build-up play
- Mid or deep narrow defensive block organised by team-leader Al Khamisi (No. 6)

TOP SCORER



MUHSEN SALEH AL GHASSANI. SALAAH AL YAHYEI NUMBER OF GOALS



GOALS

CONCEDED

DIFFERENCE

1

CLEAN

SHEETS

PALESTINE

SQU	IAD	DATE OF BIRTH	-
GOA	LKEEPER		
1	AMR KADDURA	01-07-1994	1
16	NAIM ABUAKER	20-01-1995	22 📢
22	RAMI HAMADA	24-03-1994	
26	BARAA KHAROUB	22-12-1997	R 12
DEFE	NDER		22 1
2	MOHAMMED KHALIL	05-04-1998	
-	YASER HAMED	09-12-1997	
5	MOHAMMED SALEH	18-07-1993	
7	MUSAB BATTAT	12-11-1993	
12	CAMILIO SALDANA	13-07-1999	
15	MICHAEL TERMANINI	08-05-1998	
	MOUSA FARAWI	22-03-1998	
	AMEED MAHAJNEH	11-10-1996	
24	ALMAHDI ISSA	03-11-1998	
25	SAMER JONDI	27-09-1996	
MID	FIELDER		
3	MOHAMMED RASHID	03-07-1995	
6	ODAY KHAROUB	05-02-1993	
-	TAMER SEYAM	25-11-1992	
10	MAHMOUD ABUWARDA	31-05-1995	
14	SAMER ZUBAIDA	26-04-2001	
21	ISLAM BATRAN	01-10-1994	
23	ATTAA JABER	03-10-1994	
FOR\	WARD		/ /
8	ALAAEDDIN HASAN	31-01-2000	6L
	ODAY DABBAGH	03-12-1998	
13	-	10-08-1997	
19	MAHMOUD WADI	19-12-1994	
20	ZEID QUNBAR	04-09-2002	



FORMATION:



HEAD COACH

MAKRAM DABOUB

Tunisian tactician Makram Daboub managed to fire up his charges and pulled off a breakthrough campaign. Involved in the Palestine set-up since 2010, Daboub's experience and tactical nous came to the fore after stepping up to the main role in 2021.

At their third AFC Asian Cup[™], Palestine claimed a first ever victory in their final group match to seal an unprecedented Knockout Stage berth. They would eventually fall to a narrow defeat to eventual winners Qatar, but Daboub and his side would exit with their heads held high.



KEY FEATURES

- Generally 1-4-4-2 in attack and defence with two tall target strikers
- Wide attackers slightly narrow, encouraging full-backs to push forward
- Midfielders in supporting / covering roles, rarely see ahead of the ball
- Mix of direct counters, patient build with good diagonal switches of play
- Goalkeeper sweeping behind back line; launching direct passes to strikers
- Emphasis on retreat to midfield block; intermittent use of high press
- Uninhibited high-energy approach; team unity, discipline, mental strength

STATIS	TICS									TOP SCORER
4 PLAYED	1 won	1 DRAWN	2 LOST	6 goals	GOALS CONCEDED	GOAL DIFFERENCE	1.5 AVERAGE GOALS/GAME	AVERAGE GOALS CONCEDED/ GAME	CLEAN SHEETS	ODAY DABBAGH NUMBER OF GOALS

QATAR

SQU	AD	DATE OF BIRTH		HEAD COACH MA
GOA	LKEEPER			
1	SAAD AL SHEEB	19-02-1990	1	Marquez Lopez took the reins of the host
21	SALAH ZAKARIA	24-04-1999		on an interim basis from Qatar Stars L
22	MESHAAL BARSHAM	14-02-1998	2 10 - 10 - 10 - 10 - 10 - 10 - 10 - 10	club Al-Wakrah in late December, followi
DEFE	NDER			departure of Carlos Queiroz. Despite
2	PEDRO CORREIA	06-08-1990		limited time with the squad, Lopez coaxed t
3	ALMAHDI ALI MUKHTAR	02-03-1992		out of his players as Qatar remained unbea
5	TAREK SALMAN	05-12-1997		route to lifting the AFC Asian Cup™ trophy
12	LUCAS MENDES	03-07-1990		second consecutive time. In light of his su
14	HOMAM AHMED	25-08-1999	- A MARINE 155 1444 6.30 M	the former Espanyol coach was handed a co extension on a full-time basis until 2026.
15	BASSAM HUSHAM ALRAWI	16-12-1997		
16	BOUALEM KHOUKHI	09-07-1990	FORMATION:	
18	SULTAN AL-BRAKE	07-04-1996	FORWATION.	
24	JASSEM GABER ABDULSALLAM	20-02-2002		
MID	IELDER			
4	MOHAMMED WAAD ALBAYATI	18-09-1999		KEY FEATURES
6	ABDEL AZIZ HATIM	01-01-1990		
8	ALI ASAD	19-01-1993		• 1-5-3-2 or 1-4-4-2 setting out to domina
10	HASSAN AL HAYDOS	11-12-1990		of play
17	ISMAIL MOHAMAD	05-04-1990		Full use of attacking partnership between
20	AHMED FATHY ABDOULLA	25-01-1993		and free spirit Afif (No. 11)
23	MOUSTAFA TAREK MASHAL	28-03-2001		1 (,
26	KHALED MOHAMMED M SALEH	07-06-2000		Midfield with good understanding of over
FOR\	VARD			 Aggressive pressing from centre-circle, training
7	AHMED ALAADIN	31-01-1993		side
9	YUSUF ABDURISAG	06-08-1999		 Mendes (12), a key distributor as attackin
11	AKRAM AFIF	18-11-1996		 Well-rehearsed set plays based on excelled
13	KHALID MAZEED	24-02-1998		 Well-structured athletic team with tactica
19	ALMOEZ ALI	19-08-1996		strength
25	AHMED ALGANEHI	22-09-2000	(v JORDAN Final)	-

RQUEZ LOPEZ

nation eague ng the naving ne best ten en for the iccess, ntract



- e possession, control tempo
- en striker, Almoez Ali (No. 19)
- loads, backing Afif's free role
- ing to lock opponents on one
- wing-back or as centre-back
- nt deliveries by Afif
- versatility, self-belief, mental

8

STATIS	TICS								
7	7	0	0	14	5	9	2.0	0.7	3
PLAYED	WON	DRAWN	LOST	GOALS	GOALS CONCEDED	GOAL DIFFERENCE	AVERAGE GOALS/GAME	AVERAGE GOALS CONCEDED/ GAME	CLEAN SHEETS

TOP SCORER

11 **AKRAM AFIF**

NUMBER OF GOALS



SAUDI ARABIA BARMAN

OF BRRH Mathematical Control Mathematical Control Control 08-1997 09-1996 10-1997
12-2001 10-1997
 08-1996 02-1997 09-1994 12-1998 08-2001 05-2000 08-1991 11-1993 09-2007 03-1997 01-2003 (v KOREA REP R16)
0 0 0 1 0 0



ABDULLAH RADIF. ABDULRAHMAN GHAREEB. ALI AL BULAYHI 1 FAISAL AL GHAMDI, MOHAMMED KANNO | NUMBER OF GOALS

🗢 SYRIA

4

PLAYED

SQUAD	DATE OF BIRTH		HEAD COACH HECTOR CUPER
GOALKEEPER			#Hayy
IBRAHIM ALMA	18-10-1991	2 13 2 25 21 21 21	In two seasons at Valencia, Hector Cuper led the
2 AHMAD MADANIEH	01-01-1990		La Liga club to the 2000 and 2001 UEFA Champions
3 TAHA MOUSA	30-05-1987	26 L-1° a 22 N & 3° St - 5° S	League Finals. Subsequently, he coached the
5 MAKSIM SARRAF	15-03-2005		national teams of Georgia (2008-2009) and Egypt
EFENDER			(2015-2018), taking the latter to the 2017 Africa
AIHAM HANZ OUSOU	09-01-2000		Cup of Nations Final where they lost to Cameroon.
MOUAIAD ALAJAAN	01-01-1993		Lie was in shares of Linkskistan at the last AFC Asian
AMR ALMIDANI	26-01-1994		He was in charge of Uzbekistan at the last AFC Asian Cup™ and the vastly-experienced Argentinian
AMRO JENIAT	15-01-1993		guided Syria to their first-ever appearance in the
THAER KROUMA	02-02-1990		Knockout Stage before bowing out to the Islamic
KHALED KOURDOGHLI	01-01-1997	FORMATION:	Republic of Iran on penalties in the Round of 16.
MOAIAD ALKHOULI	01-01-1993		
AMPNTOUL RACHMAN OUES	14-06-1998	P P P P P P P P P P P P P P P P P P P	
IDFIELDER			
EZEQUIEL HAM	10-03-1994		KEY FEATURES
KAMEL HMEISHEH	01-01-1998		
MOHAMMAD ALMARMOUR	04-01-1995		• Mostly 1-4-4-2 in attack and defence with fast transitions in both direction
AMAR RAMADAN	05-01-2001		-
MOHAMMAD ANEZ	14-05-1995		 Frequent long supply to aerially strong strikers; second-ball support from midfield
ELMAR ABRAHAM	01-03-1999		
FAHAD YOUSSEF	15-05-1987		 Also equipped for combinations in wide areas with full-backs pushing forward
JALIL ELIAS	25-04-1996		
IBRAHIM HESAR	15-03-1993		 Individual pressure after ball-loss with rapid retreat into midfield defensive block
DRWARD			
OMAR KHRBIN	15-01-1994	\overline{b}	All outfielders active in compact resolute defending with zonal back fou
ALAA ALDIN YASIN DALI	01-01-1997		 Morale-boosting shot-stopping, passing by goalkeeper Madanieh (No. 22
PABLO SABBAG	11-06-1997		• Well-organised, disciplined unit: strong work ethic, motivation, collectiv
) ANTONIO YAKOUB	12-06-2002		spirit
5 MAHMOOD ALASWAD	18-01-2003	(v IR IRAN R16)	
STATISTICS			TOP SCORER





2

CLEAN

SHEETS

TEAM PROFILES TEAM PROFILES TEAM PROFILES

squ	JAD	DATE OF BIRTH		HEAD COACH	PETAR SEGRT
GOA	LKEEPER				T EIAR SEGRI
1	RUSTAM YATIMOV	13-07-1998		Petar Segrt, who assumed the	nost in March 2022
16	DALERJON BAROTOV	29-01-1999		took Tajikistan to historic higi	
23	MUHRIDDIN HASANOV	23-09-2002		the AFC Asian Cup™ for the firs	
DEFI	ENDER			into the top 100 of the FIFA Wo	orld Ranking.
2	ZOIR DZHURABOEV	16-09-1998			
3	TABREZ ISLOMOV	06-06-1998		Under the charismatic Segrt,	Tajikistan lifted the
4	KHOLMUROD NAZAROV	04-02-1994		2022 King's Cup in Thailand and	
5	MANUCHEHR SAFAROV	31-05-2001		Cup in Malaysia. The Centra their historic run in Qatar by	
6	VAHDAT HANONOV	25-07-2000		Quarter-finals before losing t	
12	SODIQJON QURBONOV	19-01-2003		Jordan but despite their su	
19	AKHTAM NAZAROV	29-09-1992	FORMATION:	Afghanistan and Maldives he	
MID	FIELDER			shortly after the tournament.	
7	PARVIZDZHON UMARBAEV	01-11-1994	P		
8	KOMRON TURSUNOV	24-04-1996			
10	ALISHER DZHALILOV	29-08-1993		KEY FEATURES	
11	MUHAMMADJON RAHIMOV	15-10-1998			
13	AMADONI KAMOLOV	16-01-2003		 1-4-4-2 in attack and defence: 	mix of elaborate build, direct supply to front
14	ALISHER SHUKUROV	30-03-2002			cutting in to attack goal; full-backs pushing
15	SHERVONI MABATSHOEV	04-12-2000		forward	
17	EHSON PANSHANBE	12-05-1999			word crosses readings to shoet from long
18	RUSLAN KHAILOEV	29-10-2003		 Abundant supply of well-deliver range 	vered crosses; readiness to shoot from long
20	BURIZOD ALIJONI	06-08-2004		5	
21	VAYSIDDIN SAFAROV	15-04-1996			vering well, distributing play to wide areas
24	DALER IMOMNAZAROV	31-05-1995			loss; retreat into mid block led by Hanonov
FOR	WARD			(No. 6)	
9	RUSTAM SOIROV	12-09-2002		 Secure, focused keeper Yatime 	ov (No. 1), excellent on high balls, reflex saves
22	SHAHROM SAMIEV	08-02-2001		 Neat combinations by discipl 	ined team with strong work ethic, collective
25	NURIDDIN KHAMROKULOV	19-04-1999		spirit	-
26	MUHAMMADALI AZIZBOEV	04-01-2003	(v JORDAN Q-Final)		



TOP SCORER



THAILAND

SQUAD DATE OF BIRTH **GOALKEEPER** SIWARAK TEDSUNGNOEN 20-04-1984 1 SARANON ANUIN 24-03-1994 20 PATIWAT KHAMMAI 24-12-1994 23 DEFENDER 2 SANTIPHARP CHANNGOM 23-09-1996 3 THEERATHON BUNMATHAN 06-02-1990 4 ELIAS DOLAH 24-04-1993 12 24-07-1999 NICHOLAS MICKELSON 16 JAKKAPAN PRAISUWAN 16-08-1994 PANSA HEMVIBOON 08-07-1990 17 21 SUPHANAN BUREERAT 10-12-1993 26-08-1994 26 SUPHAN THONGSONG MID FIELDER 5 **KRITSADA KAMAN** 18-03-1999 6 SARACH YOOYEN 30-05-1992 7 22-05-1998 SUPACHOK SARACHAT 8 PICHA AUTRA 07-01-1996 **BORDIN PHALA** 18-12-1994 11 13 18-05-1997 IAROENSAK WONGGORN 14 RUNGRAT PHUMICHANTUK 05-01-1992 19-09-1996 18 WEERATHEP POMPHUN 19 PATHOMPON CHAROENRATTANAPIROM 21-04-1994

CHANNARONG PROMSRIKAEW

WORACHIT KANITSRIBUMPHEN

PEERADOL CHAMRASAMEE

SUPACHAI CHAIDED

SUPHANAT MUEANTA

TEERASAK POEIPHIMAI



FORMATION:



HEAD COACH

MASATADA ISHII

Japan's Masatada Ishii replaced Alexander Polking as Thailand head coach only two months before the AFC Asian Cup[™] commenced.

Ishii's many achievements include leading Kashima Antlers to win the J.League Cup in 2015 and the J1 League in 2016, which earned him the J.League Manager of the Year award that year.



Having also managed Thai clubs such as Samut Prakan City and Buriram United, his wealth of experience with Thai football served him well as he steered the War Elephants to the Knockout Stage for the second consecutive edition where they were defeated 2-1 by Uzbekistan.

KEY FEATURES

- Variations on 1-4-4-2 with two controlling midfielders initiating build-up play
- Fast counterattacking game with slick combinations, good spread to wide areas
- Attackers adept at creating spaces, wingers supported by adventurous full-backs
- Rapid transitions to midfield defensive block; quick movements to ballside
- Defensive midfielders ready to drop deep into back line of six

2

- Excellent reaction saves, decision-making by the two goalkeepers used
- High-energy game by players with technical ability, pace and team spirit

STATISTICS									TOP SCORER	
4 PLAYED	1 won	2 DRAWN	1 LOST	3 goals	2 GOALS CONCEDED	GOAL DIFFERENCE	O.8 AVERAGE GOALS/GAME	O.5 AVERAGE GOALS CONCEDED/ GAME	3 CLEAN SHEETS	SUPACHAI CHAIDED NUMBER OF GOALS

17-04-2001

24-08-1997

15-09-1992

01-12-1998

02-08-2002

21-09-2002

22

24

25

9

10

15

FORWARD

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

squ	IAD	DATE OF BIRTH		HEAD COACH	PAULO BENTO
GOA	LKEEPER	2			TAGEO DEITIO
l	ALI KHASEIF ALHOSANI	09-06-1987		Hoping to build on a Semi-final fin	ish from 2019
17	KHALID EISA ALMESMARI	15-09-1989 🏼 🧧		along with securing a berth at the 2	
22	HASSAN HAMZA ALMAAZMI	10-11-1994	1 ⁻¹⁸ 11° 26° 8 15	Cup, the UAE appointed Paulo Bent	
DEFE	NDER			The former Portugal boss, who wor	n plaudits for a 📃 💽 🐻 🐂
	ZAYED SULTAN ALZAABI	11-04-2001		four-year spell with Korea Republic	
	KHALID AL HASHMI	18-03-1997		them to the Knockout Stage for the	
2	KHALIFA MUBARAK ALHAMMADI	07-11-1998		years at the 2022 FIFA World Cup, w internationals to get off to a good s	
3	MOHAMAD OMAR ALATTAS	05-08-1997		internationals to get on to a good s	start.
9	KHALED EBRAHEIM ALDHANHANI	17-01-1997		However, the UAE scraped throu	ah the Group
4	AHMAD JAMIL	16-01-1999		Stage at Qatar 2023 and the Portu	
5	ABDELRAHMAN SALEH KHAMIS	03-06-1999	FORMATION:	team upset by debutants Tajikistar	
6	BADER NASSER MOHAMMAD	16-09-2001		of 16.	
/ID	FIELDER		P P P P P P P P P P P P P P P P P P P		
	ALI HASSAN SALMIN	04-02-1995			
	MAJID RASHID ALMEHRZI	16-05-2000		KEY FEATURES	
	TAHNOON HAMDAN ALZAABI	10-04-1999			
4	ABDULLA HAMAD ALMENHALI	18-09-2001		 Tactically flexible: variations on 1- 	4-3-3 with switch to five-man defend
5	YAHIA NADER	11-09-1998		v IR Iran	
6	MOHAMMED ABBAS ALBLOOSHI	30-09-2002		Fluent approach work with accurate	ate passing, diagonal switches of pla
8	ABDALLA RAMADAN BEKHEET	07-03-1998			to create overloads in wide areas
OR	WARD				
	ABDULLA IDREES ALHAMMADI	16-08-1999			l/low defending with zonal back four
	ALI AHMED MABKHOUT	05-10-1990			asis on retaining possession, patier
	ALI SALEH AMRO	22-01-2000		build	
0	FABIO VIRGINIO DE LIMA	30-06-1993) a key element; forward passing, u
1	CAIO CANEDO CORREA	09-08-1990		field runs	
0	YAHYA ALI ALGHASSANI	18-04-1998) working hard to link middle-to-from
21	HARIB ABDALLA ALMUSHARRKH	26-11-2002	(v TAJIKISTAN R16)	play	
3	SULTAN ADIL ALAMEERI	04-05-2004			
SI	ATISTICS			TOP SCORE	R
					AND THE REAL PROPERTY AND THE READ THE READ THE REAL PROPERTY AND





SULTAN ADIL ALAMEERI, YAHYA ALI ALGHASSANI NUMBER OF GOALS

U

CLEAN

SHEETS

2

TEAM PROFILES TEAM PROFILES TEAM PROFILES

UZBEKISTAN

CONCEDED/

GAME

2

ABBOSBEK FAYZULLAEV, AZIZBEK TURGUNBOEV

NUMBER OF GOALS

VIETNAM

squ	AD	DATE OF BIRTH	HEAD COACH PHILI	PPE TROUSSIER
GOAI	_KEEPER			
	NGUYEN FILIP	14-09-1992	Famed for his 2000 title-winning exploits	QATAR 2025
21	NGUYEN DINH TRIEU	04-11-1991	Japan, which saw him named AFC Coach of	
23	NGUYEN VAN VIET	12-07-2002	Year, Philippe Troussier returned to internati	
DEFE	NDER		management in March 2023 with Vietnam.	and the
2	DO DUY MANH	29-09-1996		(YII) A THE
3	VO MINH TRONG	24-10-2001	The Frenchman kicked off an extensive coac	
l I	HO TAN TAI	06-11-1997	career in 1983 in the French lower leagues, be	
5	GIAP TUAN DUONG	07-09-2002	managing Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Burkina Faso South Africa. Troussier spent time at Qatar, Mars	
5	NGUYEN THANH BINH	02-11-2000	Morocco and clubs in China PR prior to venturin	
7	PHAM XUAN MANH	09-02-1996	Southeast Asia for the first time with Vietnam.	
2	PHAN TUAN TAI	07-01-2001	FORMATION:	
7	VU VAN THANH	14-04-1996	But he presided over a disappointing campaig	n, as Vietnam exited in tł
20	BUI HOANG VIET ANH	01-01-1999	Group Stage for the first time in their AFC Asia	an Cup™ history.
26	LE NGOC BAO	29-03-1998		
VIDF	IELDER			
3	DO HUNG DUNG	08-09-1993		
1	NGUYEN TUAN ANH	16-05-1995	• 1-3-4-3 the default setting with fast transitions	to mid/low 1-5-4-1 defensi
3	TRUONG TIEN ANH	25-04-1999	block	
4	NGUYEN VAN TRUONG	10-09-2003	• Emphasis on passing game through thirds us	ing technical ability in tig
6	NGUYEN THAI SON	13-07-2003	spaces	sing teeninear ability in tig
8	NGUYEN HAI LONG	27-08-2000	Passing interchanges in own half to draw oppo	nents forward open space
9	NGUYEN QUANG HAI	12-04-1997	for long ball	inents for ward, open spac
25	LE PHAM THANH LONG	05-06-1996	Wing-backs pushing forward; wingers cutting in	rups from midfield into h
ORV	VARD			
)	NGUYEN VAN TOAN	12-04-1996	Speed of attackers exploited via minimal-touc Speed of attackers exploited via minimal-touc Speed of attackers exploited via minimal-touc	h counters lasting less th
0	PHAM TUAN HAI	19-05-1998		
5	NGUYEN DINH BAC	19-08-2004	Well-organised defending based on pressing	the ball + rapid retreat ir
22	KHUAT VAN KHANG	11-05-2003	compact block	
24	NGUYEN VAN TUNG	02-06-2001	(v INDONESIA Group D) • Dangerous corners, free-kicks: good deliveries	, well-rehearsed moveme
ST	ATISTICS		TOP SCORER	
1				

BUI HOANG VIET ANH, NGUYEN DINH BAC, NGUYEN QUANG HAI, PHAM TUAN HAI | NUMBER OF GOALS ____

CLEAN

SHEETS

1

PLAYED

WON

DRAWN

LOST

GOALS

GOALS

CONCEDED

GOAL

DIFFERENCE

AVERAGE

GOALS/GAME

AVERAGE

GOALS

CONCEDED/

GAME



TOURNAMENT RESULTS TOURNAMENT RESULTS

GROUP A

	Р	W	D	L	F	Α	GD	PTS
QATAR	3	3	0	0	5	0	5	9
TAJIKISTAN	3	1	1	1	2	2	0	4
CHINA PR	3	0	2	1	0	1	-1	2
LEBANON	3	0	1	2	1	5	-4	1

Date	Team A	Score	Team B
12 Jan,24	QATAR	3-0 (1-0)	LEBANON
13 Jan,24	CHINA PR	0-0 (0-0)	TAJIKISTAN
17 Jan,24	LEBANON	0-0 (0-0)	CHINA PR
17 Jan,24	TAJIKISTAN	0-1 (0-1)	QATAR
22 Jan,24	QATAR	1-0 (0-0)	CHINA PR
22 Jan,24	TAJIKISTAN	2-1 (0-0)	LEBANON

GROUP C

							/	
	Р	W	D	L	F	Α	GD	PTS
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN	3	3	0	0	7	2	5	9
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	3	1	1	1	5	4	1	4
PALESTINE	3	1	1	1	5	5	0	4
HONG KONG, CHINA	3	0	0	3	1	7	-6	0

Date	Team A	Score	Team B
14 Jan,24	UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	3-1 (1-0)	HONG KONG, CHINA
14 Jan,24	ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN	4-1 (3-1)	PALESTINE
18 Jan,24	PALESTINE	1-1 (0-1)	UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
19 Jan,24	HONG KONG, CHINA	0-1 (0-1)	ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN
23 Jan,24	ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN	2-1 (1-0)	UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
23 Jan,24	HONG KONG, CHINA	0-3 (0-1)	PALESTINE

GROUP B

	Р	w	D	L	F	Α	GD	PTS
AUSTRALIA	3	2	1	0	4	1	3	7
UZBEKISTAN	3	1	2	0	4	1	3	5
SYRIA	3	1	1	1	1	1	0	4
INDIA	3	0	0	3	0	6	-6	0

Date	Team A	Score	Team B
13 Jan,24	AUSTRALIA	2-0 (0-0)	INDIA
13 Jan,24	UZBEKISTAN	0-0 (0-0)	SYRIA
18 Jan,24	SYRIA	0-1 (0-0)	AUSTRALIA
18 Jan,24	INDIA	0-3 (0-3)	UZBEKISTAN
23 Jan,24	AUSTRALIA	1-1 (1-0)	UZBEKISTAN
23 Jan,24	SYRIA	1-0 (0-0)	INDIA

GROUP D

	Р	w	D	L	F	Α	GD	PTS
IRAQ	3	3	0	0	8	4	4	9
JAPAN	3	2	0	1	8	5	3	6
INDONESIA	3	1	0	2	3	6	-3	3
VIETNAM	3	0	0	3	4	8	-4	0

Date	Team A	Score	Team B
14 Jan,24	JAPAN	4-2 (3-2)	VIETNAM
15 Jan,24	INDONESIA	1-3 (1-2)	IRAQ
19 Jan,24	IRAQ	2-1 (2-0)	JAPAN
19 Jan,24	VIETNAM	0-1 (0-1)	INDONESIA
24 Jan,24	JAPAN	3-1 (1-0)	INDONESIA
24 Jan,24	IRAQ	3-2 (0-1)	VIETNAM

TOURNAMENT RESULTS TOURNAMENT RESULTS

GROUP E

	Р	W	D	L	F	Α	GD	PTS
BAHRAIN	3	2	0	1	3	3	0	6
KOREA REPUBLIC	3	1	2	0	8	6	2	5
JORDAN	3	1	1	1	6	3	3	4
MALAYSIA	3	0	1	2	3	8	-5	1

Date	Team A	Score	Team B
15 Jan,24	KOREA REPUBLIC	3-1 (1-0)	BAHRAIN
15 Jan,24	MALAYSIA	0-4 (0-3)	JORDAN
20 Jan,24	JORDAN	2-2 (2-1)	KOREA REPUBLIC
20 Jan,24	BAHRAIN	1-0 (0-0)	MALAYSIA
25 Jan,24	KOREA REPUBLIC	3-3 (1-0)	MALAYSIA
25 Jan,24	JORDAN	0-1 (0-1)	BAHRAIN

GROUP F

	Р	W	D	L	F	А	GD	PTS
SAUDI ARABIA	3	2	1	0	4	1	3	7
THAILAND	3	1	2	0	2	0	2	5
OMAN	3	0	2	1	2	3	-1	2
KYRGYZ REPUBLIC	3	0	1	2	1	5	-4	1

Date	Team A	Score	Team B
16 Jan,24	THAILAND	2-0 (1-0)	KYRGYZ REPUBLIC
16 Jan,24	SAUDI ARABIA	2-1 (0-1)	OMAN
21 Jan,24	OMAN	0-0 (0-0)	THAILAND
21 Jan,24	KYRGYZ REPUBLIC	0-2 (0-1)	SAUDI ARABIA
25 Jan,24	SAUDI ARABIA	0-0 (0-0)	THAILAND
25 Jan,24	KYRGYZ REPUBLIC	1-1 (0-1)	OMAN

ROUND OF 16

			/
Date	Team A	Score	Team B
28 Jan,24	AUSTRALIA	4-0 (2-0)	INDONESIA
28 Jan,24	TAJIKISTAN	1-1 a.e.t. (1-1,1-0) 5-3 PSO	UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
29 Jan,24	IRAQ	2-3 (0-1)	JORDAN
29 Jan,24	QATAR	2-1 (1-1)	PALESTINE
30 Jan,24	UZBEKISTAN	2-1 (1-0)	THAILAND
30 Jan,24	SAUDI ARABIA	1-1 a.e.t. (1-1,0-0) 2-4 PSO	KOREA REPUBLIC
31 Jan,24	BAHRAIN	1-3 (0-1)	JAPAN
31 Jan,24	ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN	1-1 a.e.t. (1-1,1-0) 5-3 PSO	SYRIA

QUARTER FINALS

Date	Team A	Score	Team B
02 Feb,24	TAJIKISTAN	0-1 (0-0)	JORDAN
02 Feb,24	AUSTRALIA	1-2 a.e.t. (1-1,1-0)	KOREA REPUBLIC
03 Feb,24	ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN	2-1 (0-1)	JAPAN
03 Feb,24	QATAR	1-1 a.e.t. (1-1,1-0) 3-2 PSO	UZBEKISTAN

SEMI FI	NALS		
Date	Team A	Score	Team B
06 Feb,24	JORDAN	2-0 (0-0)	KOREA REPUBLIC
07 Feb,24	ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN	2-3 (1-2)	QATAR

FINAL			
Date	Team A	Score	Team B
10 Feb,24	JORDAN	1-3 (0-1)	QATAR



AWARDS AWARDS AWARDS AWARDS AWARDS

BEST GUALLKEEP ER MESHAAL BARSHAM (QAT, 22)

TOP GOAL SCORER

AKRAM AFIF (QAT, 11) - 8 GOALS 🖪

AFC FAIR PLAY AWARD

E PLAYER

AKRAM AFIF (QAT, 11)



STAR SELECTION STAR SELECTION STAR SELECTION

THE ALL-STAR SQUAD

GOALKEEPERS

The team of AFC Technical Observers in Qatar took on the challenge of selecting an All-Star Squad of 26 from a long list of 70 players who had caught their eyes in individual matches. To help them narrow down the field, the basic criteria were set to highlight performers who had made a significant contribution to the final tournament and to also exclusively select players from the eight teams that reached the Quarter-final stage and had therefore been more exposed to assessment than those eliminated earlier in the event. Even so, the final selection required a great deal of discussion – and, inevitably, some very good performers went unrewarded.

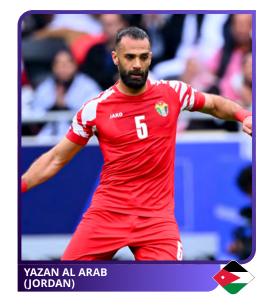






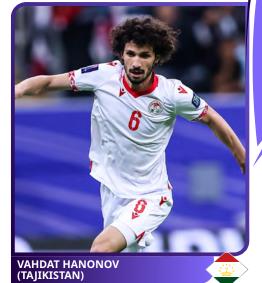
STAR SELECTION STAR SELECTION STAR SELECTION

DEFENDERS



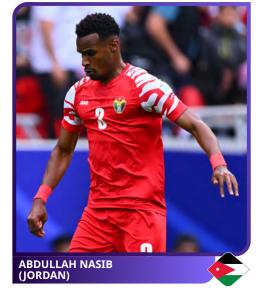






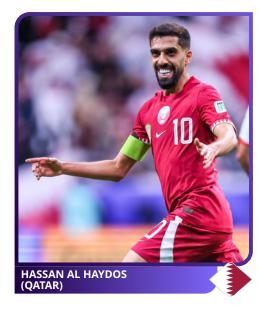






STAR SELECTION STAR SELECTION STAR SELECTION

MIDFIELDERS



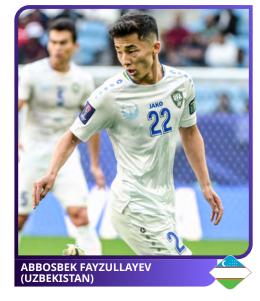












STAR SELECTION STAR SELECTION STAR SELECTION

ATTACKERS





1. SUMMARY

A record 74 match officials, comprising 35 referees and 39 assistant referees, including two Standby Referees and Standby Assistant Referees each, were appointed to the AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2023[™]. The largest ever contingent saw a diverse range of nationalities, with 18 Member Associations represented across the five AFC zones.

1.1. AFC MATCH OFFICIALS

REFEREES

NAME	MA
Shaun Robert Evans	AUS
Ms Katherine Margaret Jacewicz	AUS
Fu Ming	CHN
Ma Ning	CHN
Alireza Faghani	IRN
Mooud Bonyadifard	IRN
Mohanad Qasim Eesee Sarray	IRQ
dham Mohammad Tumah Makhadmeh	JOR
Yusuke Araki	JPN
Jumpei Iida	JPN
Hiroyuki Kimura	JPN
Ms Yoshimi Yamashita	JPN
Kim Hee-gon	KOR
Kim Jong-hyeok	KOR
Ko Hyung-jin	KOR



NAME	MA
Khalid Saleh H Alturais	KSA
Mohammed Khled S Al Hoish	KSA
Abdullah M M H M H Jamali	KUW
Ahmad Kh Y Y A Alali	KUW
Muhammad Nazmi Bin Nasaruddin	MAS
Ahmed Abu Bakar Said Al Kaf	OMA
Abdulla Ali A A Al-Marri	QAT
Abdulrahman Ibrahim Y J Al-Jassim	QAT
Khamis Mohammed S A Al-Marri	QAT

NAME	MA
Salman Ahmad Falahi	QAT
Muhammad Taqi Aljaafari Bin Jahari	SGP
Hanna Hattab	SYR
Sivakorn Pu-Udom	THA
Sadullo Gulmurodi	TJK
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Mohammed Abdulla Hassan Mohamed	UAE
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	Zhou Fei	CHN
	Saeid Ghasemi	IRN
	Alireza Ildorom	IRN
,	Watheq Mdallal Obaid Al-Swaiedi	IRQ
/	Ahmed Sabah Qasim Al-Baghdadi	IRQ

NAME	MA
Ahmad Moannes Nadi Alroalle	JOR
Mohammad Mustafa Hassan Alkalaf	JOR
Ms Makoto Bozono	JPN
Jun Mihara	JPN
Takumi Takagi	JPN
Ms Naomi Teshirogi	JPN
Yoon Jae-yeol	KOR
Park Sang-jun	KOR



NAME	MA
Ms Kim Kyoung-min	KOR
Alshammari Khalaf Zaid M	KSA
Yasir Abdullah S Alsultan	KSA
Abdulhadi M O A B Alanezi	KUW
Ahmad S H M Abbas	KUW
Mohamad Zairul Bin Khalil Tan	MAS
Mohd Arif Shamil Bin Abd Rasid	MAS
Al-Amri Abu Bakar Salim Mahad	OMA
Rashid Hamed Ali Al Ghaithi	OMA
Saoud Ahmed S A Almaqaleh	QAT
Taleb Salem H A Al-Marri	QAT
Abdul Hannan Bin Abdul Hasim	SGP
Ronnie Koh Min Kiat (Ronnie Gu Minjie)	SGP
Ali Ahmad	SYR
Mohamad Kazzaz	SYR
Rawut Nakarit	THA
Tanate Chuchuen	THA
Hasan Mohamed Hasan Abdulla Almahri	UAE
Mohamed Ahmed Yousef Abdulla Alhammadi	UAE
Timur Gaynullin	UZB
Andrey Tsapenko	UZB

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Cao Yi	CHN

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Abdulrahman Mohammed A M Hussain	QAT
Chia Eng Wah John	SGP
Farkhad Abdullaev	UZB
Narayanan Nair Sivaji	SGP

FITNESS INSTRUCTORS

NAME	MA
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Banjar Mohammed B J Al-Dosari	QAT
Ganesan S/O Maniam	SGP
Rustam Abdulloev	ТЈК

1.2. SUPPORT TEAM

Referees' Liaison Officers by the Local Organising Committee: A team of Liaison Officers (LOs) supported the coordination of all logistic requirements.

Players' Team: Local teams took part in the referees' practical training sessions.

Medical Team: Aspetar supplied medical personnel for the Referees' delegation. A medical doctor was stationed at the Referees' hotel throughout the competition, while a team of physiotherapists and masseurs ensured the referees' physical conditioning was taken care of. Additionally, an ambulance and paramedics were stationed at the training venue daily to provide emergency and first aid treatment as needed.

2. PRE-COMPETITION

2.1. MATCH OFFICIALS' SELECTION PROCESS

The Continent's best referees and assistant referees were selected for the tournament based on the following criteria:

- 1. Be a member of the AFC Elite Panel and possess officiating experience in top AFC competitions
- 2. Hold a REF (VAR) or VAR licence
- 3. Has displayed a high level of refereeing performance and competency with regards to:
 - a. Consistent application and interpretation of the Laws of the Game
 - b. Football understanding
 - c. Management skills
 - d. Communication skills
 - e. Physical fitness

2.2. MATCH OFFICIALS' PREPARATION

A five-day seminar was organised in Kuala Lumpur from 16 to 20 October 2023, with the primary objective of preparing the selected referees for officiating at the AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2023[™].

3. PREPARATORY COURSE

The referees and assistant referees participated in a seven-day preparatory course from 5 to 11 January 2024 that consisted of theoretical sessions, VAR simulator sessions, fitness checks and practical training sessions with the Mobile VAR (MVAR) set-up.

3.1. FITNESS CHECK

All match officials were declared physically qualified to cope with the match demands upon the successful completion of:

- Yo-Yo Intermittent Test for referees (target: 18-8)
- Assistant Referee Intermittent Endurance Test (ARIET) for assistant referees (target: 15-5.3)

3.2. PRACTICAL SESSIONS

Preparatory practical sessions took place daily at the Qatar Sports Club. Two teams and a coach assisted to simulate match incidents based on the instructors' training plan. Fitness training was conducted alongside MVAR and Instant Feedback sessions to ensure Match Officials were suitably prepared for their upcoming appointments.

3.3. THEORETICAL SESSIONS

The theoretical sessions were designed to further enhance the technical knowledge of the match officials and optimise the level of consistency in their application of the Laws of the Game. Numerous match incident videos were reviewed and discussed in order to facilitate the match officials' participation, analysis and consensus. To round off the preparations, relevant information on fitness and administration was also shared.



3.4. PREPARATION IN NON-REFEREEING TECHNICAL TOPICS

A few non-refereeing topics were covered in the preparatory course, including the Prevention of Match Fixing, Understanding Severe Injuries and Competition Operations at the Stadiums. These sessions aimed to enhance referees' awareness of the crucial roles and discipline required both on and off the pitch during the competition.

4. COMPETITION

4.1. TEAM ARRIVAL MEETINGS

Referee technical instructors attended every Team Arrival Meeting to ensure that all 24 teams gained the optimum level of awareness on the standard of refereeing that would be applied throughout the competition.

4.2. PRACTICAL SESSIONS

Daily practical training sessions were conducted, with an emphasis on fitness conditioning and maintenance. Referees and assistant referees appointed for matches performed customised exercises planned for matchday minus 2 (MD –2) and minus 1 (MD –1). Gymnasium and pool recovery sessions were also delivered as part of their postmatch programme.

4.3. MATCH ASSESSMENT

All match footages were analysed "live" by a video referee assessor at the Remote Monitoring Room located in the Referees' Hotel. The video referee assessor tracked the match situations and compiled all relevant details, such as the time and nature of incidents, decisions and sanctions, officials involved and other inputs for discussion. Referee assessors were also assigned to observe the match officials' in-game performances at the venues. The referee assessors closely monitored the team's officiating capabilities and decisions made throughout the match, and provided first-hand feedback.

4.4. MATCH DEBRIEFING SESSIONS

The group match debriefings gathered all the referees and assistant referees, excluding those away on match assignments. Significant incidents from the previous day's matches were analysed to prepare the officials for upcoming challenges.

Through dialogue, the instructors highlighted areas for improvement and provided advice to ensure

consistency and uniformity in foul recognition and Laws of the Game interpretation.

4.5. MATCH PREPARATION SESSIONS

A dedicated coach analyst, P N Sivaji (SGP), was appointed to the competition for the first time. Specific information on team tactics was shared to the appointed match officials prior to each match.

5. VIDEO ASSISTANT REFEREE (VAR) SYSTEM

Having been implemented from the Quarter-final stage onwards at the competition's previous edition



in the UAE in 2019, the VAR system made its full debut as it was implemented for all 51 matches.

5.1. MATCH OFFICIALS' PREPARATION

A five-day seminar was organised in Kuala Lumpur from 16 to 20 October 2023, for shortlisted Match Officials in order to improve and refresh their knowledge and understanding of the VAR system, as well as evaluate their abilities. The seminar involved VAR Simulator as well as Mobile VAR Training sessions, allowing the participants to gain sufficient practice with VAR procedures and protocols.

The appointed Match Officials also took part in VARspecific training during the preparatory course from 5 to 11 January 2024. Furthermore, such training continued throughout the duration of the competition to ensure that all Match Officials were well prepared and ready to perform to the highest standard.

5.2. TECHNICAL SETUP

A decentralised system was implemented for the competition, which featured a Video Operations Room (VOR) located at each venue from where the VMOs operated. Each VOR was situated in a cabin next to the broadcast compound to allow camera feeds to be easily provided to the VAR System.

Technology Provider

■ Hawk-Eye Innovations Ltd was chosen as the technology provider for the AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2023[™], having also been appointed for the last edition of the competition in 2019.

Video Operation Room (VOR)

- Located at each stadium
- Broadcaster (HB)
- Personnel setup:
 - □ VAR, AVAR
 - One Replay Operator (RO)
 - One Assistant Replay Operator (ARO)
 - One Quality Control Manager (QCM)
 - One Football Technology Officer (FTO)

Referee Review Area (RRA)

- Pyramid Monitor
- Located next to or behind the fourth official's bench. at each venue
- VAR output screen displayed for Referees to review incidents in the case of an On-field Review (OFR)

5.3. COMMUNICATION PROCESS

Communication channels were put in place to facilitate the smooth operation of the VAR system.

In each VOR, a Quality Control Manager (QCM) operated a tablet to send the relevant VAR information to both the broadcast and infotainment teams. The relevant graphics were then displayed on the giant screen and on the TV broadcast feed during VAR checks or reviews in order to relay the information to the spectators.

Reception of all camera feeds from the Host 5.4. VAR IMPLEMENTATION STATISTICS

VAR REVIEWS	TOTAL	DECISIONS CHANGED	DECISIONS CONFIRMED
TOTAL REVIEWS	44	41	3
On Field Reviews	35	32	3
Only VAR Reviews	9	9	/
Penalty area incidents reviewed	23	22	1
Goals reviewed	13	12	1
Encroachment by GK in PK reviewed	0	0	/
Potential red card incidents reviewed	8	7	1
Mistaken identity situations reviewed	0	0	/
Average reviews per match	0.86		
1 Review every # matches	1.16		

6. TECHNICAL SUMMARY

6.1. GENERAL PERFORMANCE

The team of referee assessors and instructors, through their match reports and close monitoring, rated the match officials' performance as "good". The daily training, match debriefings and other activities and resources that were organised to raise the refereeing standards contributed significantly to decision-making as the tournament progressed.

6.2. GENERAL MANAGEMENT

A total of 185 disciplinary sanctions were issued at the AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2023[™], of which 173 were cautions (yellow cards). Five sending-offs took place after a second caution and seven (7) direct red cards were shown. There was a match average of 3.49 yellow cards and 0.14 red cards.

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EXTRA-TIME

SASIAN CUP QATAR 2023 • The Final NEOM QATAR Saudi (PM)

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED



IMPRESSIONS



ENGAGEMENTS

15,384 TOTAL POSTS

MILLION

LINK CLICKS

LANGUAGES

SOURCE: SPROUT SOCIAL, YOUTUBE, WEIBO, DOUYIN

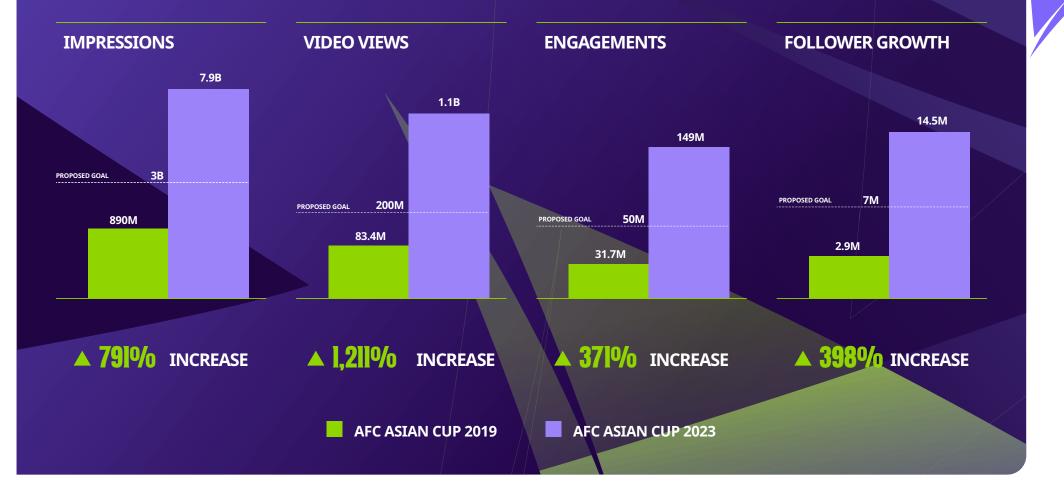
COMPARISON: 2019 v 2023

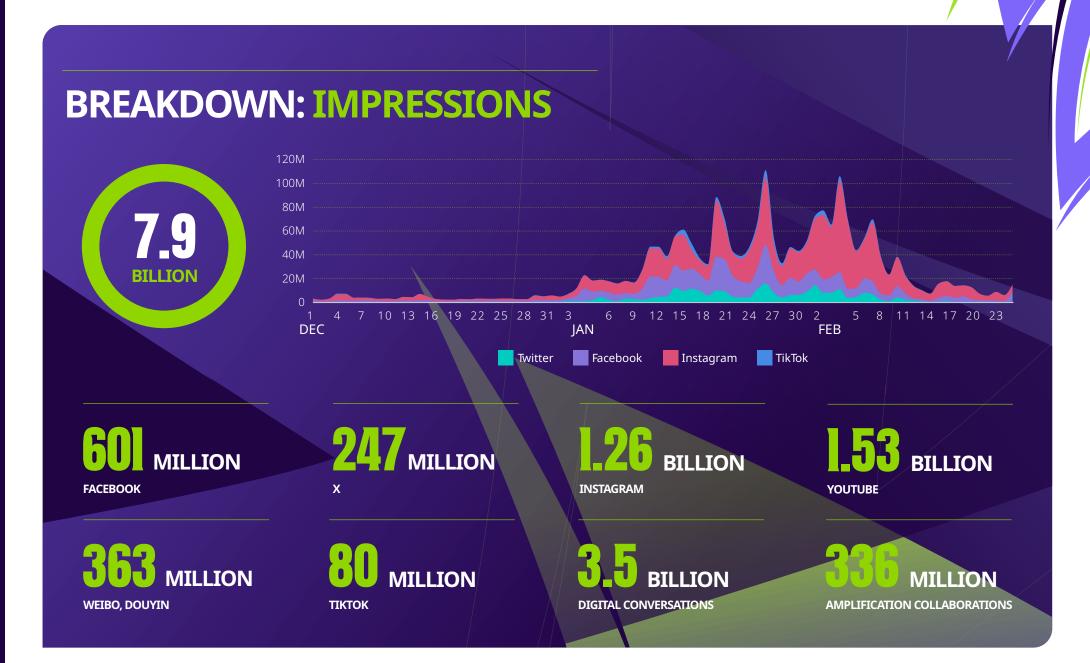


BREAKDOWN: FOLLOWER GROWTH

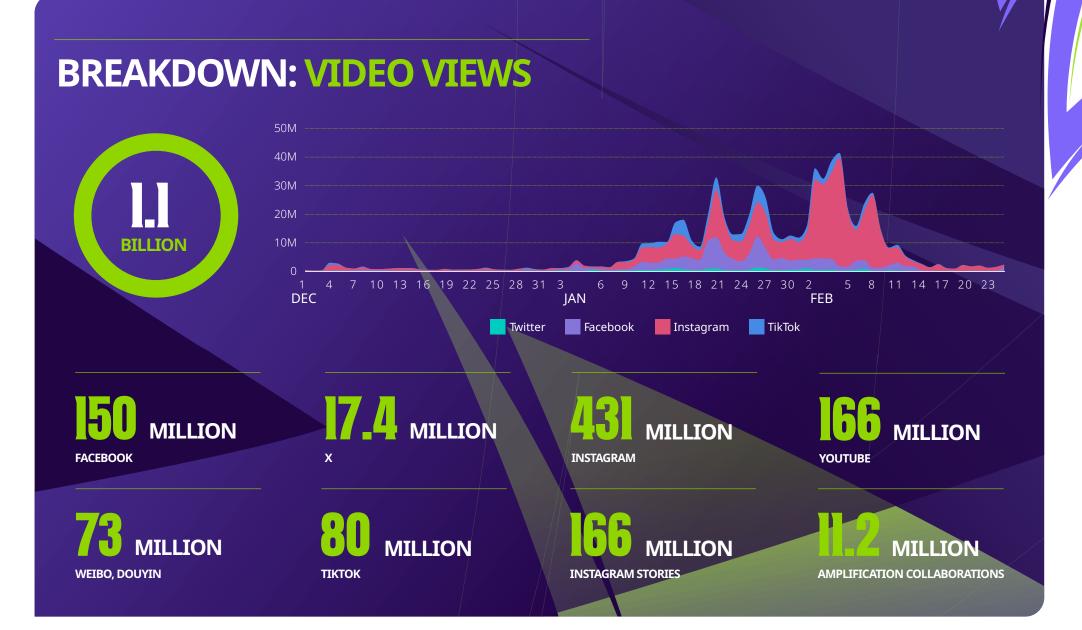
PLATFORM	2019	2023	% INCREASE
FACEBOOK	753,107	2,186,107	↑ 190% INCREASE
X (EN, JP, AR)	201,477	499,644	↑ 148% INCREASE
INSTAGRAM	204,427	1,195,957	↑ 485% INCREASE
INSTAGRAM FARSI	54,750	4,055,840	↑ 7,307% INCREASE
YOUTUBE	190,007	1,483,541	↑ 681% INCREASE
ТІКТОК	N/A	544,888	-
WEIBO	1,477,326	4,198,484	↑ 184% INCREASE
DOUYIN	N/A	204,472	-
DONQIUDI	43,285	144,110	↑ 233% INCREASE
ΤΟυτιαο	N/A	36,926	



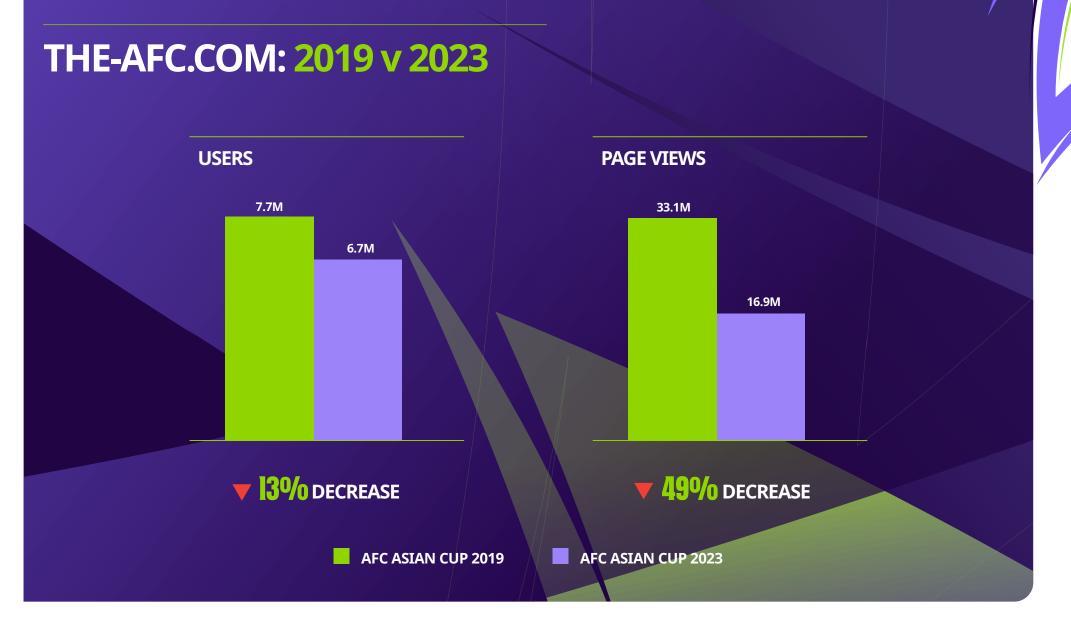








AFC LIVE APP AFC ASIAN CUP QATAR 2023 The Final 3,236,814 120,000 VIEWS DOWNLOADS 840,064 SESSIONS





COMMITTEES COMMITTEES COMMITTEES COMMITTEES

AFC COMPETITIONS COMMITTEE

NAME	POSITION	MEMBER ASSOCIATION
Dr. Tran Quoc Tuan	Chairperson	VFF
Mr. Dastanbek Konokbaev	Deputy Chairperson	KFU
Mr. James Johnson	Member	Football Australia
Mr. Kazi Md. Salahuddin	Member	BFF
Mr. Tsuneyasu Miyamoto	Member	JFA
Mr. Chun Hanjin	Member	Korea FA
Mr. Salah Eissa Al Qenaei	Member	Kuwait FA
Mr. Semaan Douaihy	Member	LFA
Datuk Stuart Ramalingam	Member	FAM
Mr. Ko Ko Thein	Member	MFF
Dr. Ahmed Khellil Abbassi	Member	QFA
Mr. Ibrahim S. Alkassim	Member	SAFF
Mr. Davlatmand Islomov	Member	TFF
Mr. Patit Suphaphongs	Member	FA Thailand
Mr. Mohammed Abdulla Hazzam Aldhaheri	Member	UAE FA

ORGANISING COMMITTEE FOR AFC ASIAN CUP

NAME	POSITION	MEMBER ASSOCIATION
Mr. Mariano V. Araneta Jr.	Chairperson	PFF
Mr. Chris Nikou	Member	Football Australia
Dasho Ugen Tsechup	Member	BFF
Mr. Kohzo Tashima	Member	JFA
Datuk Haji Hamidin Bin Haji Mohd Amin	Member	FAM
Mr. Ganbaatar Amgalanbaatar	Member	MFF
Dr. Tran Quoc Tuan	Member	VFF
Mr. Hany Taleb B S Al-Raeesi	Co-opted Member	QFA

COMMITTEES COMMITTEES COMMITTEES COMMITTEES

AFC TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

NAME	POSITION	MEMBER ASSOCIATION
Mr. Kohzo Tashima	Chairperson	JFA
Mr. Adnan Darjal Motar	Deputy Chairperson	IFA
Mr. Mohammad Yosuf Kargar	Member	AFF
Ms. Heather Garriock	Member	Football Australia
Mr. Cheng Xu	Member	CFA
Dr. Seyed Mirshad Majedi	Member	FFIRI
Mr. Lee Lim Saeng	Member	KFA
Mr. Tin Myint Aung	Member	MFF
Mr. Fahad Abdulla Al Zarraa	Member	QFA
Mr. Mohammed Ameed Haidar	Member	SAFF
Mr. Muhannad Al Fakeer	Member	SFA
Mr. Bakhtiyor Dadamatov	Member	UFA

AFC REFEREES COMMITTEE

POSITION	MEMBER ASSOCIATION
Chairperson	QFA
Deputy Chairperson	UFA
Member	CFA
Member	JFA
Member	KFA
Member	KFU
Member	SAFF
Member	UAE FA
	Chairperson Deputy Chairperson Member Member Member Member

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