



AFC
**CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™**

CHAMPIONS

AFC Champions League Final 2021



TECHNICAL REPORT & STATISTICS 2021



AFC
CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™

AFC CHAMPIONS LEAGUE 2021

GROUP A



Al Hilal SFC
(KSA)



Shabab Al Ahli
Dubai (UAE)



FC Istiklol
(TJK)



AGMK FC
(UZB)

GROUP B



Sharjah FC
(UAE)



Tractor FC
(IRN)



Pakhtakor
(UZB)



Air Force Club
(IRQ)

GROUP C



Al Duhail SC
(QAT)



Al Ahli Saudi FC
(KSA)



Esteghlal FC
(IRN)



Al Shorta
(IRQ)



Al Sadd SC
(QAT)



Al Nassr
(KSA)



Al Wehdat
(JOR)



Foolad
Khouzeestan FC
(IRN)

GROUP D

GROUP E



Persepolis FC
(IRN)



Al Rayyan SC
(QAT)



FC Goa
(IND)



Al Wahda FSC
(UAE)

GROUP F

GROUP G



BG Pathum
United FC (THA)



Ulsan Hyundai
FC (KOR)



Viettel FC
(VIE)



Kaya FC Iloilo
(PHI)



FC Pohang
Steelers (KOR)



Nagoya
Grampus (JPN)



Johor Darul
Ta'zim (MAS)



Ratchaburi FC
(THA)

GROUP H

GROUP I



Jeonbuk
Hyundai Motors
FC (KOR)



Gamba Osaka
(JPN)



Tampines
Rovers FC (SIN)



Chiangrai
United (THA)



Kawasaki
Frontale (JPN)



Beijing FC
(CHN)



United City FC
(PHI)



Daegu FC
(KOR)

GROUP J



Guangzhou FC
(CHN)



Port FC
(THA)



Kitchee SC
(HKG)



Cerezo Osaka
(JPN)

CONTENTS

COMPETITION OVERVIEW	9
Preliminary, Playoff and Group Stages	10
East Region: Knockout Stage	12
West Region: Knockout Stage	14
Final	16
TECHNICAL TOPICS	19
Team Shapes	26
GOALSCORING ANALYSIS	29
Safety in numbers?	30
TALKING POINTS	35
Home-grown or imported?	36
Home is a long way away?	37
WINNING COACH	39
Attitude and commitment	40
TEAM PROFILES	43
Group A	
Al Hilal SFC (KSA)	46
Shabab Al Ahli Dubai (UAE)	47
FC Istiklol (TJK)	48
AGMK FC (UZB)	49
Group B	
Sharjah FC (UAE)	52
Tractor FC (IRN)	53
Pakhtakor (UZB)	55
Air Force Club (IRQ)	57
Group C	
Al Duhail SC (QAT)	58
Al Ahli Saudi FC (KSA)	59
Esteghlal FC (IRN)	60
Al Shorta (IRQ)	61
Group D	
Al Sadd SC (QAT)	64
Al Nassr (KSA)	65
Al Wehdat (JOR)	66
Foolad Khuzestan FC (IRN)	67
Group E	
Persepolis FC (IRN)	70
Al Rayyan SC (QAT)	71
FC Goa (IND)	72
Al Wahda FSCC (UAE)	73
Group F	
BG Pathum United FC (THA)	76
Ulsan Hyundai FC (KOR)	77
Viettel FC (VIE)	78
Kaya FC Iloilo (PHI)	79

Group G	
FC Pohang Steelers (KOR)	80
Nagoya Grampus (JPN)	83
Johor Darul Ta'zim (MAS)	84
Ratchaburi FC (THA)	85
Group H	
Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors FC (KOR)	88
Gamba Osaka (JPN)	89
Tampines Rovers FC (SIN)	90
Chiangrai United (THA)	91
Group I	
Kawasaki Frontale (JPN)	94
Beijing FC (CHN)	95
United City FC (PHI)	96
Daegu FC (KOR)	97
Group J	
Guangzhou FC (CHN)	100
Port FC (THA)	101
Kitchee SC (HKG)	102
Cerezo Osaka (JPN)	103
STAR SELECTION	105
Goalkeepers	106
Defenders	107
Midfielders	108
Attackers	109
BEST GOALS	111
Open Plays	112
Set Plays	113
TOURNAMENT RESULTS	115
Playoff & Group Stage	116
Round of 16 & Quarter Finals	120
Semi Finals & Final	121
REFEREES	123
Referees	124
Assistant Referees	125
General Management	126
Video Assistant Referee (VAR)	127
EXTRA TIME	129
Social Media Statistics	130
AFC Competitions, Referees & Technical Committee	131
PREVIOUS WINNERS	133
Results 2020, 2019 & 2018	134
Results 2017, 2016 & 2015	135
Results 2014, 2013 & 2012	136
Results 2011, 2010, 2009 & 2008	137
Results 2007, 2006 & 2005	138
Results 2004 & 2003	140
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	141



AFC
CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™



FOREWORD BY THE AFC PRESIDENT



Dear friends and colleagues,

I am delighted to be able to invite you to examine one of the most eagerly anticipated annual publications of the AFC's competitions calendar – the Technical Report and Statistics of the AFC Champions League 2021.

Once again, the 2021 edition tested the strength of the Asian football family as the COVID-19 pandemic continued to rage not only across the Continent, but also throughout the footballing world and beyond.

But similar to 2020, in the face of great adversity and uncertainty, the Asian football family stood tall together, with incredible determination and solidarity to successfully and safely complete the pinnacle of Asian club football.

Together with our Member Associations and Participating Clubs, we demonstrated the steadfast resolve that is well admired across the world as we reformatted the competition and staged our matches in centralised venues for only the second time in Asian football history.

It was a necessary and decisive step that underlined once again the AFC's commitment to protect

and safeguard the health and wellbeing of our stakeholders above all else.

And together, we reaped the rewards of our great unity as more than 50,000 passionate fans witnessed Al Hilal SFC's historic triumph after the AFC had earlier approved full spectator attendance, in line with strict health and safety protocols, at the King Fahd International Stadium where the Riyadh giants became the first side to clinch the coveted Continental club crown for a record fourth time.

Indeed, Al Hilal SFC deserve all the accolades for cementing their position as one of the most successful Asian club sides, but the Asian football family were the true winners of the thrilling night.

So, we must extend our heartfelt thanks again to all host Member Associations for their hospitality and the Participating Clubs for their determination.

With the centralised and single-leg Knockout Stage matches increasing in intensity, the need to examine the latest trends and developments is ever more essential, and I am sure you will agree that the AFC Technical Department has captured the key talking points of the competition in this publication.

Also included in this report is the overview of match officials from a technical perspective and we are grateful to them for their commitment in yet another challenging season.

Finally, I would like to thank our commercial and broadcast partners, the media, and the hundreds of millions of fans who follow this competition – either by attending the matches, viewing on television, or joining our digital community.

I am sure you will all enjoy this excellent Technical Report.



SHAIKH SALMAN BIN EBRAHIM AL KHALIFA
President, Asian Football Confederation





AFC
CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™

COMPETITION OVERVIEW

PRELIMINARY, PLAYOFF AND GROUP STAGES

More teams meant more drama as the AFC Champions League entered a new era in 2021, with the competition growing in size and stature as it overcame the challenging circumstances of the ongoing global pandemic to create history once again.

Forty-five teams entered the competition, with newcomers and veterans facing off in the Playoff rounds to make up the 40 clubs – increased from 32 last year – who would eventually participate in the Group Stage of the 2021 edition.



Familiar faces such as Al Wahda from the United Arab Emirates and Foolad Khuzestan FC from the Islamic Republic of Iran mixed with newcomers' Filipino outfit Kaya FC-Iloilo, who advanced from the Playoffs to the expanded Group Stage, completed another stellar line-up.

Pandemic restrictions in force throughout the Continent saw the set-up of the competition altered for the 2021 edition, with Group Stage matches held in a bio-medical bubble at centralised venues to limit the potential of exposure to COVID-19.

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and India hosted groups in the West Region while Thailand and Uzbekistan were the venues used for clubs participating in the East Region as the teams were spread across 10 groups of four clubs.

With the expanded format, only group winners were certain to advance to the Round of 16 while those who claimed the runners-up berths were left to sweat on outcomes from elsewhere. As a result, there could be no easing off.





AFC Champions League newcomers Istiklol from Tajikistan created waves in the opening phase, defeating three-time champions Al Hilal SFC to top Group A after handing the Riyadh-based club a 4-1 defeat in their second meeting. Al Hilal SFC, runners-up in the group with the same points as Istiklol, had to wait to see if they advanced.

United Arab Emirates champions Sharjah topped Group B while Iranians Tractor FC took second. Tehran giants Esteghlal won Group C in Jeddah ahead of an Al Duhail side powered by the goals of Michael Olunga.

Al Nassr, semi-finalists in 2020, booked their place in the last 16 from Group D ahead of Xavi Hernandez's Al Sadd in Riyadh, and Group E was claimed by beaten 2020 finalists Persepolis, with Al Wahda finishing in second.

With the completion of the programme, the Round of 16 berths were confirmed for Al Hilal, Tractor and Al Wahda, meaning heartbreak for Qatari duo Al Duhail and Al Sadd.

In the East Region, clubs from Japan and Korea Republic – including defending champions Ulsan Hyundai – came to the fore.

Ulsan, under new coach Hong Myung-bo, finished first in Group F ahead of Thailand's BG Pathum United while Nagoya Grampus and Pohang Steelers took first and second places respectively in Group G.

Two-time champions Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors continued their fine run in the competition to win Group H ahead of Japan's Gamba Osaka, while J1 League champions Kawasaki Frontale finished top of Group I ahead of Daegu FC.

Group J was won by Cerezo Osaka with Hong Kong's Kitchee SC impressing to take second place and holding out hope for a possible runners-up berth in the next round.

Those dreams were ended, however, by the narrowest of margins as Pohang advanced by virtue of a better goal difference alongside Daegu and BG Pathum United.

EAST REGION: KNOCKOUT STAGE



The drama continued into the Knockout rounds in the East Region as some of the biggest names in Asian club football clashed. Defending Champions Ulsan Hyundai faced off against J1 League champions Kawasaki Frontale and Hong Myung-bo's side eventually prevailed in a penalty shoot-out.

Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors also needed penalties to see off BG Pathum United after the teams shared a 1-1 draw while Pohang Steelers squeezed past Cerezo Osaka, with Lee Seung-mo's goal ensuring three clubs from Korea Republic advanced to the Quarter-finals.



Daegu FC were denied the opportunity to make it a K League clean sweep when a hat-trick by new signing Jakub Swierczok earned Nagoya Grampus a 4-2 win in their Round of 16 meeting.

Nagoya's run was to end in the next round as Pohang Steelers handed the Japanese side a 3-0 defeat, with Lim Sang-hyub netting twice and Lee Seung-mo scoring again as the three-time Asian champions advanced to the Semi-finals.

There they would meet compatriots and reigning champions Ulsan Hyundai, who emerged triumphant from their clash with great rivals Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors FC after Hong's team notched up a 3-2 win thanks to Lee Dong-gyeong's extra-time winner.

That set up another all-Korean clash for Ulsan Hyundai, as Pohang Steelers stood between them and a place in a second successive final.

Yet again there was little to separate the teams. Alex Grant's 89th minute header cancelled out Yun Il-lok's opener for Ulsan Hyundai to take the game into extra-time and Pohang Steelers emerged victorious as Dave Bulthuis' miss in the opening round of penalties proved decisive.

QUARTER-FINALS



2

VS
(AET)

3



Jeonbuk
Hyundai Motors
FC (KOR)

Ulsan Hyundai
FC (KOR)



3

VS

0



FC Pohang
Steelers (KOR)

Nagoya
Grampus (JPN)

SEMI-FINALS



1

VS
(AET)

1

(4 - 5 PSO)

Ulsan Hyundai
FC (KOR)



FC Pohang
Steelers (KOR)

WEST REGION: KNOCKOUT STAGE



The home advantage counted for little in the Knockout Stage as six of the seven games in the West Region ended with the home side crashing out of the competition. Al Nassr's 1-0 win over Tractor FC in the Round of 16 was the exception to the rule.

The group winners found things difficult in the Knockout Stage too, with four of them losing in the Round of 16, and only Group E leaders Persepolis FC advanced to the next round at the expense of Group A winners FC Istiklol.

Two tightly contested affairs got the West Region's Knockout Stage underway on September 14, and caution was the order of the day as the first half ended goalless in Dushanbe and Sharjah.

FC Istiklol's dream debut campaign came to an end despite a spirited performance against two-time runners-up Persepolis FC, who were made to wait until the last minute of the game before a moment of individual brilliance from Mehdi Torabi saw him lob the Tajik goalkeeper to send the IR Iran side into the Quarter-finals for the fourth time in five years.

The only penalty shootout of the West Region Knockout Stage settled the all-UAE encounter between Sharjah and Al Wahda. Omar Khribin and Bernard exchanged second-half-goals before goalkeeper Mohammed Al Shamsi saved the decisive penalty to send Al Wahda into the Quarter-finals for the first time since 2007.



Saudi Arabian rivals Al Hilal and Al Nassr progressed to the next stage after overcoming Iranian opponents Esteghlal and Tractor 2-0 and 1-0 respectively in the second day of Round of 16 action. While the Round of 16 ties were all closely contested, the Quarter-finals saw two dominant displays by Al Hilal and Al Nassr, who set up a thrilling derby in the Semi-finals after the 2019 champions brushed aside Persepolis FC 3-0 and Al Nassr stormed to a 5-1 win against Al Wahda.

A tense Semi-final between the Riyadh rivals saw Al Nassr exit at the same stage for the second year in a row, while Al Hilal reached their third final in five years as they waited eagerly to learn their opponents from the East Region Semi-final between Korea Republic rivals Ulsan Hyundai and Pohang Steelers the next day.

QUARTER-FINALS



0 VS 3



Persepolis FC
(IRN)

Al Hilal SFC
(KSA)



1 VS 5



Al Wahda FSCC
(UAE)

Al Nassr
(KSA)

SEMI-FINALS



1 VS 2



Al Nassr
(KSA)

Al Hilal SFC
(KSA)

FINAL

AL HILAL SFC
[KSA]

The 40th edition of Asia's top club competition and the first to feature 40 clubs in the Group Stage came to a memorable conclusion in the Saudi capital of Riyadh on November 23 with the Continent's two most successful clubs – Al Hilal and Pohang Steelers – locking horns for a fourth club Continental title.

Over 50,000 fans, a record for the AFC Champions League 2021, which was played mostly behind closed doors, erupted with joy at the King Fahd International Stadium as Al Hilal defeated Pohang Steelers 2-0 to lift the trophy for the second time

in three years, while Pohang Steelers' return to the final for the first time since 2009 ended in heart-break.

The importance of a strong start and squad depth were both perfectly demonstrated by the hosts as youngster Nasser Al Dawsari, filling in at left-back for the injured Yasser Al Shahrani, pushed on to take possession of a loose ball in midfield and fired a powerful strike from 35 yards into the back of the net after only 16 seconds, recording the fastest goal ever scored in the history of the AFC Champions League final.



POHANG STEELERS (KOR)

Pohang Steelers thought they were back in the game when Shin Jin-ho beat goalkeeper Abdullah Al Maiouf with a half-volleyed effort from the edge of the area, only for the midfielder to see his hopes of winning the AFC Champions League in two consecutive years vanish as the ball bounced off the crossbar.

In a similar fashion to his goal in the Semi-finals against Al Nassr, Moussa Marega moved in space behind the opposition's left-back and was fed by Bafetimbi Gomis, before outmuscling his opponent and slotting in the second goal of the night to mark his debut season at Al Hilal with the club Continental title.

Al Shahrani came on with five minutes to go, to join AFC Champions League 2021 MVP Salem Al Dawsari and club captain Salman Al Faraj as the only three active players to have competed in four AFC Champions League finals (2014, 2017, 2019 and 2021).

The feat was previously achieved by their retired teammates Mohammed Al Shalhoub (1999-2000 Asian Club Championship, 2014, 2017 and 2019) and Saud Kariri (2004, 2005 and 2009 with Al Ittihad and 2014 with Al Hilal).



AFC
CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE
FINAL 2021



AFC
**CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™**

**TECHNICAL
TOPICS**

TECHNICAL TOPICS

Bringing a 135-game competition to a spectacular conclusion in Riyadh was little short of a miracle – especially bearing in mind that it was not a question of preserving a status quo but expanding the AFC Champions League to 40 teams and allowing clubs from eight AFC territories to take part for the first time. Apart from giving the AFC’s stakeholders a pat on the back, applause was due to the clubs, the stadium owners, the sponsors, the broadcast partners and the organisational teams who had battled against the pandemic-driven headwinds and brought the project safely to port.

From a coaching perspective, however, making sense of the season was problematical. A group phase in centralised venues; Knockout ties played as single games; Australian teams forced to withdraw; Multiple factors added up to an atypical season which could not bear comparisons with previous years and made the search for trends an unreliable exercise. Yet the season did provoke a series of observations and reflections on a variety of technical topics.

Starting at the back

Video highlights

<https://youtu.be/qhr-VGpS1p0>



The Knockout Stage of the competition underlined the relevance of adding good feet to the goalkeeper’s traditional ‘safe pair of hands’. With many teams ready to hold a high defensive line, the keeper is increasingly required to play the ball outside the box and, when inside it, to initiate possession moves by building rationally from the back.

In the Final against Pohang Steelers, Abdullah Al Maiouf provided a valid illustration. Even when

the Steelers pushed forward to press, the Al Hilal keeper showed composure and patience in his short passing, allied with intelligent use of lofted middle-distance passes to the flanks to bypass the first line of the opposition’s defensive set-up. In the Quarter-final against Persepolis, he showed his ability to spot and deliver a longer pass when he hit, with pinpoint accuracy, a long ball to the left wing, deep in Persepolis territory, launching an attack that culminated in a shot which was turned on to the post. In the Final, he emphasised the value of diversity early in the second half when, with the Steelers expecting him to stick to his short-passing construction from the back, Al Maiouf abruptly switched to a long ball which was nodded on to Bafetimbi Gomis and played through for Marega to clinch Al Hilal’s 2-0 victory.

High pressure

Video highlights

https://youtu.be/7E_zB77REYA



It was, however, at the other end of the pitch where Al Hilal caught the eye when winning the title in 2019. The 2021 side, without matching that team for intensity, still applied the high press with efficiency – a facet which can be demonstrated by three short clips from the opening 10 minutes of the Final against Pohang Steelers.

Firstly, when two advanced players press the right-back, forcing him to play the ball back to the keeper. At this point, Gomis puts the keeper under pressure, while the other moves wider to his right to cover a possible pass to the other flank, with four supporting players pushing forward to cut off other short or medium passing options. The keeper ultimately passes to the left-

back who is immediately hurried into a long clearance which allows Al Hilal to regain possession. Within a minute, the Steelers try to play out after winning the ball in their own box, but are pressurised into making a backward pass and, again, playing a long ball which Al Hilal control. Thirdly, the Steelers have the ball on the edge of their own box but, again, are pressurised into playing the ball back. Six Al Hilal players push forward – not exclusively to win the ball but to restrict passing options and to encourage the long upfield ball which allows them to regain possession. A fourth example, late in the match, was triggered when the Steelers’ keeper played a short pass to one of his centre-backs. Four Al Hilal players, in diamond formation, immediately press the forward pass; win the ball; and launch an immediate attack with the Steelers defence in disarray – ending when a Gomis shot is blocked.

The fact that only one of the four examples involved a ball-winning tackle underlined the differences with, for instance, the ferocious high pressing which helped Italy to win the European Championship, with players swarming around the opposition ball-carrier as soon as possession was lost. In the AFC Champions League, high pressing tended to be of the positional variety aimed at pre-empting an opposition counterattack or, at least, applying the brakes by forcing opponents to turn back or, as Al Hilal’s well-drilled pressing did, force an error or a long clearance which would allow possession to be regained in midfield areas.

Press us if you can

Video highlights

<https://youtu.be/XOnZwXofHUo>



There are two sides to every coin. It is a rarity in AFC Champions League football to see the intense collective high press as practised by, for example, Liverpool or the national teams of Italy or Spain.

Some teams push forward but do little more than apply a positional press whose bark is worse than its bite. Even so, the ability to play out of a high press is an essential element in the tool kit. As the use of advanced pressing gathers momentum, anti-pressing strategies gain greater relevance.

To redress the balance after highlighting Al Hilal’s successful pressing in the Final, it is only fair to signal that Pohang Steelers were often adept at finding escape routes when pressed in their own defensive third. The opening minutes of the Final produced one such situation when, with Al Hilal players swarming forward, the Steelers found enough composure and passing options to play their way out and deliver a threatening through ball which the alert Al Maiouf did well to intercept – as he did again later in the first half, racing out of his box to clear into touch after a similar press-breaking counterattack by the Steelers.

Both sides of the coin could be seen in the 20th minute of their Semi-final against Ulsan Hyundai – when the Steelers played more comfortably through opponents who ran towards the ball-carrier but, with team-mates not cutting off short-passing options or forcing errors, no impact was made and the Steelers’ build-up play was not disrupted.

Fast forward

Video highlights

https://youtu.be/OUJK_RwIRss



Even though counterattacks led to only 9% of the season’s open-play goals, rapid defence-to-attack transition play was a well-oiled weapon in the top teams’ armouries, with players prepared to launch vertical attacks with high-speed runs as an immediate response to ball-winning. Nagoya Grampus provided an example, in the 33rd minute of their Quarter-final against Pohang Steelers

when four players sprinted forward in a counterattack which, somehow, failed to produce a goal. In another Quarter-final, Al Nassr punished sloppy passing in midfield by Al Wahda to immediately break forward; play a through pass; and put 4-0 on the scoreboard. Against Persepolis, Al Hilal made a similar interception in midfield and swarmed forward – only to have their shot at goal blocked by a defender. In the 80th minute of their Semi-final against Al Nassr, another interception triggered a high-speed four-man break which culminated in a shot against the crossbar. And the 89th minute of the same game provided a double sample, when a three-man Al Hilal counterattack was blocked, allowing Al Nassr (trailing 2-1 at the time) to launch an end-to-end response which ended with a spectacular overhead shot at goal.

Piercing the defence

Video highlights

<https://youtu.be/M7SA3tdF4ic>



Over the entire season, the through pass accounted for 20% of the season's open-play goals. But, at the top end of the competition, penetrating well-organised defensive blocks became more challenging. There were, nonetheless, some outstanding examples, such as the defence-splitting pass from Kim Bo-kyong which allowed Han Kyo-won to score Jeonbuk Motors' opening goal against Ulsan Hyundai. Such a pass also created the only goal of the Round of 16 match between Al Nassr and Tractor. Talisca provided the slide-rule defence-splitting pass which was little short of a work of art. Al Nassr's Cameroonian striker Vincent Aboubakar calmly completed the move with a neat chip over the keeper. Al Hilal also produced a gem to go 2-0 ahead in the Quarter-final against Persepolis – Salman Al Faraj cleverly putting Matheus Pereira through between right-back and centre-back for him to set up the goal for Gomis.

The talking point, however, was the dearth of goals derived from penetrating solo runs – only 5% of the season's total. There were some creditable examples, with individual dribbling runs and finishes producing five goals during the Knock-out rounds. Al Hilal's Salem Al-Dawsari was the author of two of them – the opening goal in the Quarter-final against Persepolis and the winner in the Semi-final against Al Nassr. Valeri Qazaishvili also conjured individual magic to put Ulsan Hyundai 1-0 ahead against Jeonbuk Motors. Lim Sang-hyub rounded off Pohang Steelers' 3-0 win with a slalom through the Nagoya Grampus defence. And Nagoya Grampus' Polish import Jakub Swierczok completed his hat-trick in the Round of 16 tie against Daegu with another special individual effort.

But the overall scarcity of examples tallies with a barely credible statistic to emerge from the 2020/21 UEFA Champions League, where analysts attributed only five of the season's 386 goals to solo actions. The debating point is whether, at youth development levels, there is an over-emphasis on collective virtues and a lack of encouragement for players to give free rein to individual dribbling skills.

Passing comments

Video highlights

<https://youtu.be/eaDGMqBqEB8>



On the other hand, the low number of goals scored from combination play has also been a perennial talking point, with the figure from the 2021 season still a long way adrift of the parameters in Europe's equivalent competition. As mentioned in the goalscoring section of this report, two examples of combination play feature among the season's best goals – and the lengthy combination move put together by Pohang Steelers in the 12th minute of the Final was also worthy of mention.

Statistics also reveal that none of the sides involved in the Knockout rounds could be legitimately categorised as 'possession teams'. Indeed, the only statistic of note was that the defending champions, Ulsan Hyundai, had less than 50% of the ball in their three Knockout matches – and only 37% against Pohang Steelers (whose possession figures ranged from 63% in that game to only 39% against Cerezo Osaka). Champions Al Hilal marginally topped 50% in their three games en route to the Final but then, having taken an early lead, had only 47% against the Steelers.

Statistics related to the use of long passing reveal a significant discrepancy in comparison with Europe. In the Knockout rounds of the AFC Champions League, an average of 15% of Al Hilal's passes were long, while Pohang Steelers registered the same average. Semi-finalists Al Nassr and Ulsan Hyundai posted 12% and 17% respectively. In Europe, champions Chelsea averaged 8%; silver medallists Manchester City 5%. Among the top 16 teams in the UEFA Champions League, only seven reached double figures.

Pass completion rates (the percentage of passes received by team-mates) also provide food for thought. The fact that rates tended to drop sharply in the opponents' half of the pitch could be put down to poor combination play or good defending. Al Hilal offered evidence for the latter argument. Against the champions, Esteghlal's pass completion rate dropped from 80% overall to 68% in Al Hilal territory. Persepolis from 75% to 57%. Al Nassr from 73% to 59% and, in the Final, Pohang Steelers from 79% to 62%.

Showing appreciation

Video highlights

<https://youtu.be/EwNRWo98b5c>



Who makes the team tick? As a rapid response, readers in Europe might easily mention Jorginho, a double title-winner for club and country with Chelsea and Italy. Looking back over the AFC Champions League season, the prime example is Al Hilal's No. 7 Salman Al Faraj. Like Jorginho, he excels at game appreciation – reading situations, finding rational solutions, staying at the hub of the action and, without great flamboyance, keeping the team machinery in motion. All of which is illustrated by the video clips linked to this section, in which he tirelessly makes himself available to receive the ball and then, mostly with his cultured left foot, distributes it with intelligence, vision and accuracy. And, like Jorginho, he makes it all look simple.

Generating sparks

Video highlights

https://youtu.be/ecHn6Z2_wyA



The top teams showcased the importance of players who make the difference with creative touches in middle-to-front play. Again, the champions provided prime examples with Salem Al-Dawsari – the player of the competition – and Matheus Pereira, an attacking catalyst with quick feet, deft touches, great awareness and the ability to deliver the killer pass – often with a single touch. The season illustrated the value of players such as Al Nassr's Talisca, the Persepolis No. 72 Isa Alekasir, Al Hilal's Marega or Pohang Steelers' Lim Sang-hyub and Sin Jin-ho – attacking players able to generate the creative sparks that win games.

Backs to the future

The season also underlined the ongoing evolution of the full-back role. The initial instinct was to refer to full-backs and wing-backs but, as it happened, the top teams of 2021 offered few sightings of three-centre-back formations. The

season did, however, provide ample opportunities to see wide defenders adding dimensions to the traditional 'overlapping full-back' concept with so-called underlapping variations through the inside channels and incisive runs towards goal or into areas of the penalty box conducive to the delivery of cut-backs. To illustrate that the contributions of the modern full-back are no longer tied to the touchline, we need look no further than the 16-second goal which had a huge impact on the Final. Left-back Nasser Al-Dawsari, who had already shown his penchant for incisive underlapping runs during the Semi-final against Al Nassr, burst through an infield channel to steal possession with his head and then powered forward to unleash a shot which gave the Steelers' keeper no chance and demonstrate that the modern full-back is no longer restricted to the role of provider but also has a licence to deliver the killer blow. This was one of the salient features to emerge from the recent European Championship, when full-backs or wing-backs scored 16 goals – compared with just one at the previous tournament. The AFC Champions League hinted that Asian football is heading in a similar direction.

Variety is the spice

Video highlights

<https://youtu.be/oHhOWNt0vNq>



Having said that, the pandemic makes comparisons with previous seasons unreliable; a striking statistic is that, compared with 2019 (when a similar number of games were played) the number of goals derived from crosses declined from 76 to 62. However, there were more goals from diagonals and cut-backs. So the total originating in deliveries from wide areas was relatively consistent at 115 to 112. The figures demonstrate that, while wing play remains equally important, the diversity of the end product has increased.

The percentage of success from traditional crosses was not overly encouraging. Among the top eight teams in the AFC Champions League, one cross in four was received by a team-mate. And defences will not be unduly perturbed if the end product of their opponents' wing play is always a high cross that centre-backs are equipped to deal with. Hence the trend towards a diversity which is reflected by the wide range of crosses, diagonals and cut-backs in the video attached to this section of the report – images which emphasise the value of a good delivery.

Delivery is everything

Video highlights

<https://youtu.be/bibyGNQ6pbo>



Sir Alex Ferguson, when talking about set plays, always insisted "the delivery is everything". Well-delivered set plays had a major impact on key games in the Knockout rounds – not least the Semi-final between Pohang Steelers and Ulsan Hyundai. The defending champions were 1-0 ahead in the 89th minute when the Steelers were awarded a free-kick midway into their opponents' half. Ulsan held a high defensive line but, with two defenders facing their own goal, a great delivery was met by a looping header by Alex Grant. Ultimately, it earned the Steelers their place in the Final.

During the grand finale, they narrowly failed to produce an equaliser from a first-half free-kick wide on the right. Al Hilal pulled everybody back into a high line just inside their box – where 13 players jostled for position. An excellent delivery into the space between the line and keeper ended, with defenders back-tracking, in a free header which Al Maiouf did well to save.

Al Hilal also ran into trouble defending a corner when they were 1-0 ahead in the Semi-final against

Al Nassr. With all 11 players deep in the box against four attackers, the left-footed delivery from the right was headed in by Talisca, whose leap was shielded by team-mate Abdullah Madu.

As mentioned in the goalscoring section of this report, direct free-kicks created only nine goals during the season, raising questions again about the time dedicated to the development of this specialised skill ably showcased by Al Sadd midfielder Santi Cazorla in the Group D match against Al Nassr. The latter put five in the wall and the keeper, possibly anticipating that Cazorla would try to bend the ball over it, was beaten by a fierce strike into the other corner.

Overall, dead-ball situations generated just under a quarter of the season's goals. And no fewer than four of the Knockout ties were decided by shoot-outs from the penalty spot.

A long shot

Video highlights

<https://youtu.be/uqmh8veYdCM>



Nasser Al-Dawsari nods the ball away from an opponent and surges forward. His team-mate Salem Al-Dawsari makes an intelligent run towards the left flank to take a defender out of the firing line. The stunning long-range shot by the former not only puts Al Hilal ahead after 16 seconds of the Final – it also delivers a huge psychological blow to the visitors. That crucial opening goal (Salem Al-Dawsari, by the way, had also scored Al Hilal's opener against Persepolis by cutting in from the left and striking a spectacular right-footed shot into the net) underlined the relevance of accurate long-range shooting – an aspect of the game that is sometimes undervalued.

Statistics and heat maps might have something to do with it. A huge majority of goals, they tell

us, are scored from inside the penalty area. So, coaches could be forgiven for encouraging players to get into the box before attempting a shot at goal. Question-marks, for example, about Pohang Steelers' readiness to strike from long range were answered by statistics which indicated that 15 of their 51 goal attempts during the Knockout rounds of the AFC Champions League were delivered from outside the box. The stats also tell us that 36 goals were scored from long range during the 2021 competition – five of them sufficiently spectacular to earn places among the season's top 10 open-play goals. In other words, shooting from distance yielded greater dividends than cut-backs, counterattacks or running with the ball.

The value, however, is not expressed exclusively in goals. Deep, compact defensive blocks can be effective if attacks are directed with a degree of predictability towards the key goalscoring areas that appear on heat maps. Against teams who demonstrate readiness to fire shots from areas adjacent to the edge of the box, doubts about the depth of defending can creep into minds; long-range shots can take deflections; ricochets and rebounds can momentarily create scenes of chaos in well-organised defences. The debating point is to what extent players should be encouraged to try their luck from long range. And some stats might be thrown on to the debating table. During their 1-1 draw with Pathum United, when Jeonbuk Motors had 69% of the ball and played 804 passes, should more than nine of their 39 goal attempts have been from outside the box? On the other hand, was Ulsan Hyundai's tally of 25 long-range shots in a total of 44 goal attempts in their three Knockout matches an excessive percentage? Al Hilal, who reaped huge benefits from long-range shooting, struck 20 of their 48 goal attempts from outside the box. Is this something like a reasonable percentage?



TEAM SHAPES

**Al Hilal SFC
(KSA)**



**FC Pohang Steelers
(KOR)**



**Al Nassr
(KSA)**



**Ulsan Hyundai FC
(KOR)**



Al Wahda FSCC (UAE)



Persepolis FC (IRN)



Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors FC (KOR)



Nagoya Grampus (JPN)







AFC
CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™

GOALSCORING ANALYSIS

SAFETY IN NUMBERS?

A new format. A greater number of teams. Group matches and Knockout rounds played at neutral venues... Another pandemic-affected year again raised questions about how safe it is to search for trends by comparing numbers with previous seasons.

In terms of quantity, the 2020 season, when only 93 games were played, had yielded 236 goals at an average of 2.54 per game and provoked debate about a 10% decline in the scoring rate. But, as last season's technical report commented, "given the oddness of the format, it would be rash to make too much of the downward trend. Time will tell..." A year later, the numbers for 2021 suggested that 2020 provided a temporary blip, with goalscoring rebounding to previous levels. And, as chance would have it, the rebound replicated the 2019 season with uncanny precision. In that year, 126 matches yielded 354 goals; in 2021, 379 were scored in 135. The average was an identical 2.81 per game. Despite all the circumstances, there is, statistically at least, a basis, albeit tenuous, for comparisons with the past.

In previous years, incidentally, the AFC Champions League had consistently lagged behind its European equivalent in terms of goalscoring. But the 2021 figures move closer to the average of 2.9 in Europe during their 2020/21 season.

During the AFC Champions League Group Stage, teams from the East – for the second successive season – outscored their counterparts from the West by 190 goals to 150. This equates to a 27% difference. However, this divergence was eliminated during the Knockout rounds where goalscoring was pretty much on parity. Overall, five of the six most prolific clubs hailed from the East, led by Kawasaki Frontale, the season's top scorers with 27 – all in the group phase. Behind them came Jeonbuk Motors (25) and Daegu (24) with the champions Al Hilal (playing the maximum number of games) claiming fourth place with 20. Silver-medallists Pohang Steelers, despite going all the way to the Final, were 10th with a modest haul of 14 goals.

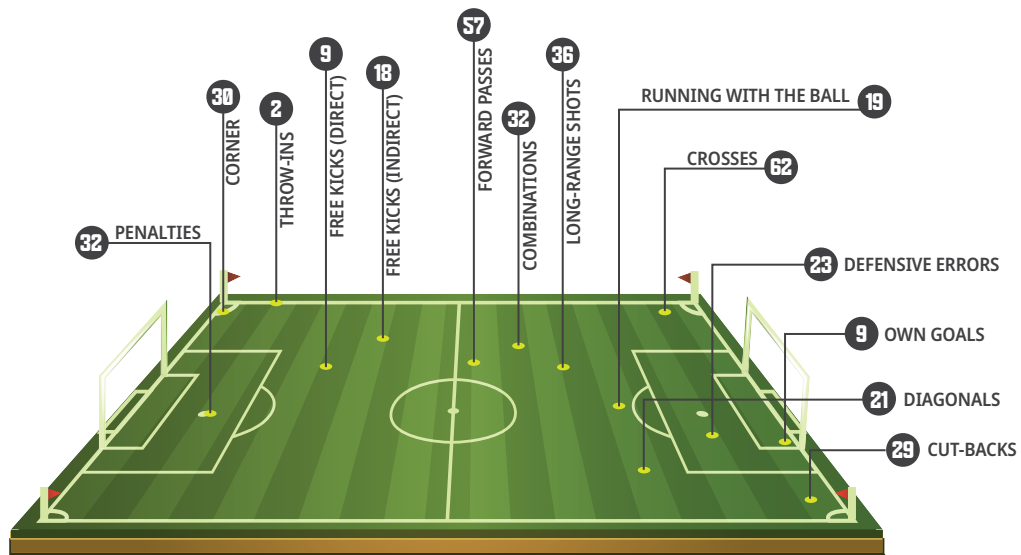
As there was no improvement on the previous season's statistics, goalscoring efficiency emerged yet



again as a talking point. Of the 3,235 goal attempts, 1,109 were on target at an accuracy percentage of 34.3% identical to 2020. Jeonbuk Motors, for instance, paid a high price for inconclusive finishing in their two Knockout matches (both of which went to extra-time), when 15 of 56 shots were on target. Two hours of goalless football between defending champions Ulsan Hyundai and Kawasaki Frontale produced 28 goal attempts, of which four were on target. Persepolis, against Istiklol, totalled three accurate finishes from 16 attempts. As a rough overall summary, one in three attempts were on target and, of those, one in three (1 per 2.93 was the exact ratio) ended up in the back of the net.



The goalscoring chart breaks down the season's 379 goals into categories.



GOALS FROM SET PLAY

ACTION	GUIDELINES	GOALS
Corners	Direct from / following a corner	30
Free kicks (direct)	Direct from a free kick	9
Free kicks (indirect)	Following a free kick	18
Penalties	Spot kick (or follow-up from a penalty)	32
Throw-ins	Following a throw-in	2

TOTAL GOALS SCORED : 379

GOALS FROM OPEN PLAY

ACTION	GUIDELINES	GOALS
Combinations	Wall pass / combination move	32
Crosses	Cross from the wing	62
Cut-backs	Pass back from the bye-line	29
Diagonals	Diagonal pass into the penalty box	21
Running with the ball	Dribble and close-range shot / dribble and pass	19
Long-range shots	Direct shot / shot and rebound	36
Forward passes	Through pass or pass over the defence	57
Defensive errors	Bad back-pass / mistake by the goalkeeper	23
Own goals	Goal by the opponent	9

Set Plays

Interestingly, champions Al Hilal were one of seven teams who did not score any goals from dead-ball situations – a stark contrast with their predecessors Ulsan Hyundai who included nine set-play successes among the 23 goals scored en route to the 2020 title. While the 2021 tally of 91 goals derived from set plays is at first glance a healthy statistic, it represents 24% of the season's goals – the lowest percentage recorded since AFC introduced

technical reports on the competition. What's more, 35% of the set-play goals were penalties, with the 2021 total of 32 successful spot kicks in 135 games signifying an upsurge compared with 25 in 126 during the 2019 season.

Hard on the heels of penalty kicks, corners led to 30 goals – one-third of the set-play total. This represented a middle-of-the-road figure between the 28% registered in 2020 and the eyebrow-raising

statistic from 2019 when corners accounted for 40% of the season's dead-ball goals. But ratios have remained stable. During the 2021 season, the success rate from corners was 1:40, echoing the statistic from the AFC Asian Cup UAE 2019™. During the abbreviated 2020 AFC Champions League, the ratio was stretched to 1:45 – a figure more in line with European parameters. Three goals from corners featured among the season's Top 10 set-play goals, among them the well-rehearsed short corner by Cerezo Osaka that allowed them to take the lead against Port FC in Group J, with Hiroshi Kirotake then crossing the ball for Yusuke Maruhashi to hit a left-footer from beyond the back post. None of the three, however, proved to be a match-winning goal.

There is a codicil attached to the stats, as it could be argued that playing so many fixtures at a single venue makes it considerably easier to study the finer points of opponents' dead-ball strategies. But the perennial question for coaches is to assess the value of training-ground time dedicated to rehearsing attacking aspects of corner-kicks when the dividends in match-play are slim.

Free kicks accounted for 30% of the season's set-play goals, even though the number of direct free kicks which hit the net suffered a decline in relation to previous years. There were nine successes in 135 games, four of which were executed with sufficient expertise to earn places among the Top 10 set-play goals – led by Santi Cazorla's superb left-foot free

kick (which he had won) in Al Sadd's Group D game against Al Nassr. The compensating factor, however, was an increase in the number of goals resulting from indirect free kicks, including Alex Grant's 89th-minute header which brought Pohang Steelers level with Ulsan Hyundai in the Semi-final and, ultimately, clinched the club's place in the Final.

If spot-kicks are included, infractions committed by teams in their defensive third led to 65% of set-play goals and 16% of the overall total. Comparison with 2020, when almost one-fifth of the goals were conceded in this fashion, suggests that teams were becoming increasingly conscious of the need to minimise fouls in the critical areas.

Open Play

The season registered a 23% increase in the number of goals derived from combination play in comparison with 2019, when a similar number of games were played. This signified, nevertheless, that only 11% of the season's 288 open-play goals came from successful passing moves. The upward rebound from 9% represented no more than a partial recovery, bearing in mind that combination play had provided 18% of the AFC Champions League goals as recently as the 2016 season. And the total in 2021 of 32 in 135 matches still lagged behind Europe's equivalent competition where, despite a trend towards more direct attacking, combination play created 53 goals in 125 games.



Two examples of combination play earned places in the season's Top Ten open-play goals: Mousa Marega's opener for Al Hilal in the Semi-final against Al Nassr, with striker Bafetimbi Gomis providing the assist; and the neat move that culminated in Abderrazak Hamedallah opening the scoring for Al Nassr in the Quarter-final against Al Wahda.

However, crosses and through passes were once again the main generators of goalscoring, accounting for 41% of the season's open-play goals. The cross + finish formula proved to be – by a narrow margin – the most trodden route to the net. But the statistics were sufficiently thought-provoking for the subject of crossing to feature among the Technical Topics discussed elsewhere in this report.

The forward pass through or over the defence provided just under 20% of the season's goals and consolidated a steady trend towards more vertical attacking, compared with the 16% slice resulting from a similar number of games in the 2019 season.

One of the salient features of the 2020 season was the success rate from long-range shooting. And, in 2021, this again emerged as a significant element in goalscoring patterns and one which is addressed in the Technical Topics section of this report. A prime example was the spectacular left-footed strike by Al Hilal's Nasser Al-Dawsari after 16 seconds which made an enormous impact on Pohang Steelers' game plan in the Final.

Compact defensive blocks offer a plausible explanation for the ongoing scarcity of goals derived from solo runs with the ball – even though the 2021 season registered a 58% increase in solo successes



in comparison with 2019, when a similar number of games were played. But, as the goalscoring chart indicates, individual running with the ball accounted for the slimmest slice of the goalscoring cake apart from own goals. Even defensive errors led to more goals than solo runs with the ball.

Champions Al Hilal provided something of an exception to the rule with two solo-run successes among their tally of 20 goals – two more than their tally when they lifted the trophy in 2019 and two more than Ulsan Hyundai, their predecessors in 2020. The 2021 champions scored five from through passes and seven from wide-area deliveries (four crosses, two-cut-backs and one diagonal pass). Combination play and long-range shooting were rewarded by two goals apiece, while the total was rounded-off by an own goal and a goal which could be clearly attributed to a defensive error.



The 2021 season also underlined the teams' ability to counter the counter. At one stage, rapid counterattacks accounted for almost 30% of the goals scored in the UEFA Champions League. But the statistical review of the 2020/21 season in Europe revealed an eyebrow-raising drop to 9.4% of open-play goals. And the AFC Champions League endorsed this trend. In the 2021 competition, 13 goals resulted from collective counterattacks; eight from classic counters from deeper areas; and six from counters launched after ball-winning in the advanced areas. The total of 27 represented 9% of the season's open-play goals, illustrating that the top teams are increasingly well-equipped to react efficiently to losses of possession.





**AFC
CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™**

**TALKING
POINTS**

HOME-GROWN OR IMPORTED?

The season produced some thought-provoking facts. The list of leading scorers, for example. At the top, with nine goals, Al Duhail's Kenyan striker Michael Olunga. One behind him, Jeonbuk Motors' Gustavo Sousa from Brazil. Then a group of five players with six goals apiece, followed by another cluster on five. A closer look reveals that, of the top 10 scorers, five are from Brazil; four are from Africa; and the other is Al Hilal's French international striker Bafetimbi Gomis. No one from AFC territories.

A voice from one side of the debating table might enquire if that is a problem. Football, after all, is a global sport. And scoring charts in other Confederations also feature players recruited from all across the footballing world. To strengthen his argument, he might wave the list of the top 10 goals in the UEFA Champions League and point out that only one was scored by a player performing in his country of birth: French striker Kylian Mbappé. From the other side of the table, the response might be that four of the leading 14 scorers in Europe's equivalent were playing in their native countries and that, in any case, no fewer than 10 of them were European.

The first talking point is simple: what more can be done at youth development levels to nurture the art of goalscoring? Does academy work focus excessively on box-to-box play and understate the importance of applying the final touch? The two



questions become even more pertinent during these troubled times when the pause button has been pressed on the AFC's age-group competitions, depriving a wave of young talents the chance to experience international football.

But the debate extends beyond the specific area of goalscoring. One of the questions frequently raised at the annual AFC Elite Club Coaches Forum is whether the AFC is contemplating changes to the number of imported players allowed to appear on AFC Champions League teamsheets.

Some coaches find it troublesome to manage discrepancies between national and international regulations which sometimes oblige them to exclude foreign players from their squads. Currently, three imported players can feature on AFC Champions League teamsheets – and a fourth may be added provided the player is from another AFC Member Association. The debating point is whether it is fair that players who perform regularly in domestic leagues should be prevented from performing on the international stage. Should coaches – and clubs – be given greater freedom to field their best possible team in Asia's premier club competition? The AFC's Standing Committees are currently discussing the situation and considering the options.

The next question is, if the competition regulations are made more expansive, what is the ideal solution? Is it enough to stipulate that there should be more AFC players on the pitch than imports from outside the AFC's territories? Should it be possible to field, for example, five Brazilians and six players from the AFC MAs? Would this favour clubs with financial resources to fund the recruitment of foreign players? Would this be undesirable? Or is it simply a global fact of life in the modern world of football?

A secondary consideration leads us back to the scoring charts. Is there a risk of creating teams with AFC players (goalkeepers included) at the back while foreign imports dominate the middle-to-front positions? Are local talents in danger of finding pathways into first-team football blocked by players imported to fill the attacking positions? And, if those paths are blocked, what is the potential impact on national team football in Asia?

HOME IS A LONG WAY AWAY?

Looking back on 2021, staging a 135-match, 40-team international competition and successfully bringing it to a spectacular climax could be regarded as little short of a miracle. But, amid all the ‘emergency solutions’, the odd thought-provoking aspect emerged. For example, staging a 120-match group phase in seven cities blurred traditional concepts of ‘home’ and ‘away’. Teams frequently contested the home and away legs of group encounters on the same pitch. Most clubs went through the AFC Champions League campaign without playing on their home ground. On the other hand, fate decreed that the eventual champions, Al Hilal, played all but one of their 10 fixtures – away matches included – on home turf in Riyadh.

The blurred concept added momentum to a train of thought. Has the time come to echo the European decision to scrap the away-goal rule in all competitions? This is also a topic which the AFC’s Standing Committees are discussing. In the short term, the talking point is largely academic due to the pandemic-provoked circumstances. But is it a cue to closely monitor the impact in Europe? What effect would this have on coaches’ approach to home-and-away ties in AFC competitions? Would it help to remove coaches’ anxieties about conceding goals in home legs? Would it be beneficial to abolish a rule which can turn a return match

into a formality after, for example, a 1-4 scoreline in the first leg? Or would a farewell to the away-goal rule tempt visiting coaches to replicate the ultra-cautious attitudes which provoked its introduction?

Then the Knockout rounds in the run-up to the Final in Riyadh were played as single matches. And, again, so was the Final. In other words, that crucial segment of the AFC Champions League had been (momentarily?) transformed into a sudden-death cup competition and, as an illustration of the vicissitudes that can prove decisive in the single-match format, Ulsan Hyundai’s defence of the title suffered a blow when their captain, Won Du-jae was red-carded in the 68th minute of the Semi-final. The 10 men conceded an equaliser in the 89th minute and, after playing 52 minutes in numerical inferiority, were defeated in a penalty shoot-out.

In fact, five of those 14 matches en route to the Final went into extra-time; and all but one needed to be decided by shoot-outs. In other words, there was plenty of drama. Enough to warrant a more permanent switch to the single-match formula? And, for the coaches involved, the question was how best to adjust game-plans to the cup format. What impact did it make on their approach to the crucial phase of the competition?







AFC
CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™

WINNING
COACH

ATTITUDE AND COMMITMENT

A year previously, Kim Do-hoon had signalled that “the attitude and mentality of the players” had been the key to Ulsan Hyundai’s success. After Saudi Arabia’s Al Hilal had succeeded the club from the Korea Republic as winners of the AFC Champions League, Leonardo Jardim echoed his sentiments by paying tribute to his players’ “attitude and commitment” – emphasising that the ability to promote those qualities in a dressing-room is an essential element in the coach’s repertoire.

In Riyadh, Jardim became the first Portuguese coach to lift the AFC Champions League trophy. But he’s not the sort to be overly interested in that item of footballing trivia. He has always insisted that “what excites me in football is what happens on the pitch”. And it was this excitement which prompted him to make his debut as coach of a youth team at the age of 22 and to start his coach education courses two years later. Like his compatriot José Mourinho, he went into coaching without the backing of a playing career. But he doesn’t relish comparisons. “I’m not the Special One,” he once said. “Nor the Special Two. Nor the Special Three.” Like colleagues such as Jürgen Klopp or Ole Gunnar Solskjær, he prefers to define himself as The Normal One.

Starting at such a tender age means that Jardim (born, incidentally, in the Venezuelan city of Barce-

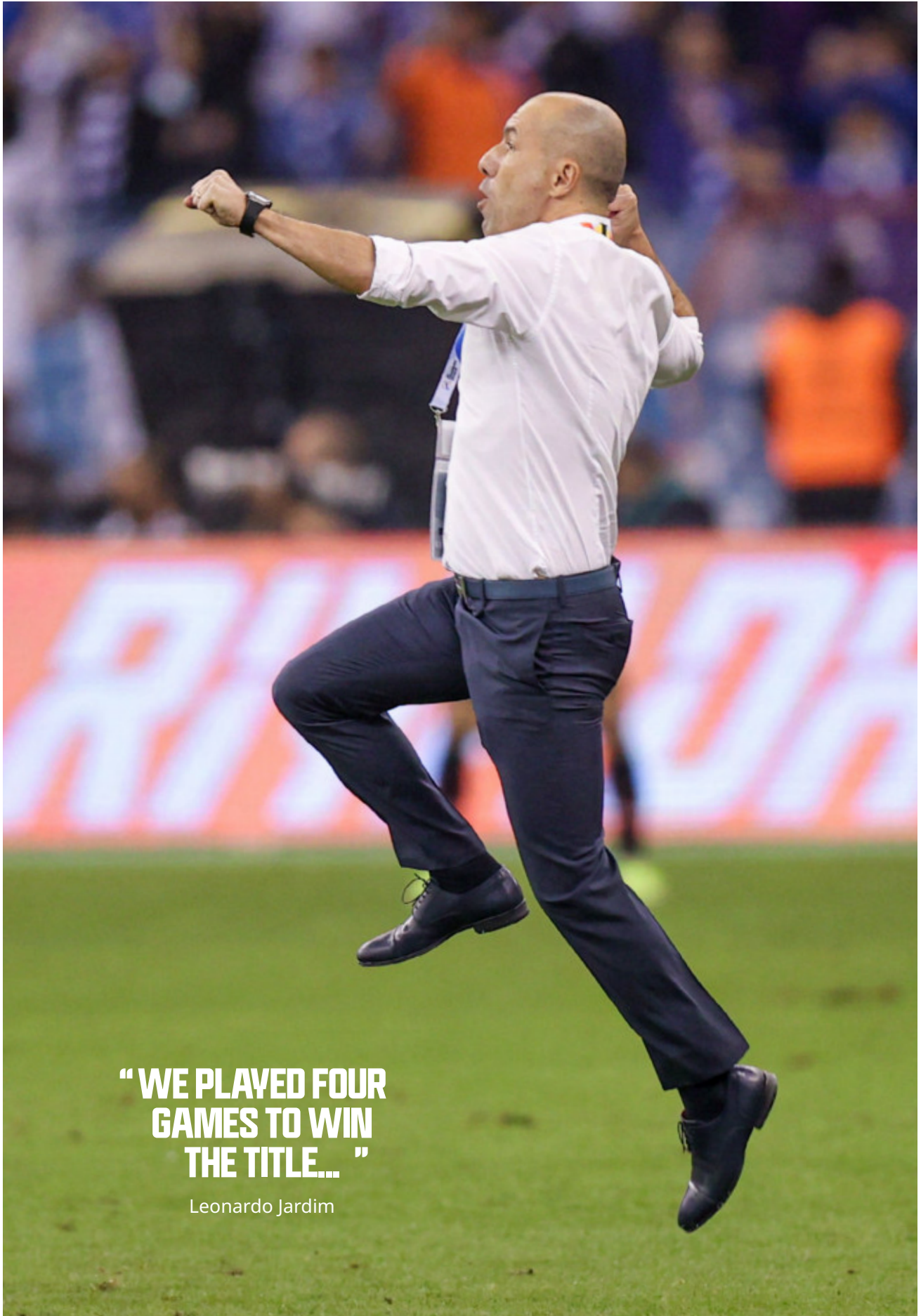
lona to Portuguese parents from the island of Madeira) has, for a 47-year-old coach, an uncommonly extensive track record during which he has experienced the vicissitudes and fickle fortunes of the coaching profession. Such as being ushered to the exit by Olympiakos when his team was 10 points clear at the top of the Greek league and, with him at the helm, had accumulated 20 wins and three draws in 26 matches. Or being reinstated as head coach of AS Monaco barely 15 weeks after being relieved of his duties by the same club.

But it was in Monaco that, after earning respect and reputation with Portuguese clubs, he emerged as an impressive performer on the international stage, ending the club’s 17-year wait for a French league title in 2017; reaching the semi-finals of the UEFA Champions League; and helping to develop outstanding talents such as Kylian Mbappé and Bernardo Silva.

At Al Hilal, Jardim had to hit the ground running. He arrived at the Saudi club in June 2021 as the fourth head coach in just over a year with Razvan Lucescu leaving shortly after the team had lifted the AFC Champions League trophy in 2019, to be succeeded by Rogério Micale, who had shepherded the team through the 2021 Group Stage in April before handing over, briefly, to José Morais. The immediate challenge for Jardim was to beat Esteghlal in the Round of 16 stage in Dubai, followed by further tough opposition from IR Iran’s, Persepolis FC – silver medallists in the previous season. Although Jardim, earlier in his career, had favoured a 1-4-4-2 structure, he opted to maintain the team’s 1-4-2-3-1 formation where the most notable change was the introduction of the speedy Moussa Marega to occupy the position on the right formerly filled by Peru international André Carrillo.

“We played four games to win the title,” he commented after victory over Pohang Steelers in the final, “and in those games we scored nine goals and conceded only one. I think that demonstrates that we were a solid, dominant force in the competition. In the final, the key factor was that we fought as a unit from start to finish and kept our opponents under pressure throughout the game.” A second title in three seasons and a fourth overall certainly consolidates Al Hilal as a dominant force in AFC club football.





**“WE PLAYED FOUR
GAMES TO WIN
THE TITLE...”**

Leonardo Jardim



MAREGA

17

NASSER D.

16

MUSTEB. MAAR

MAAR

1



**AFC
CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™**

**TEAM
PROFILES**



AFC
**CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™**

GROUP A

GROUP A



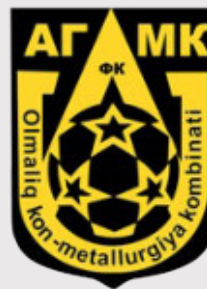
Al Hilal SFC
(KSA)



Shabab Al Ahli
Dubai (UAE)



FC Istiklol
(TJK)



AGMK FC
(UZB)



AL HILAL SFC (KSA)



CLUB PROFILE

AFC Champions League winners in 2019 and 2021, Al Hilal SFC are one of the Continent's most successful clubs, having already won the Asian Club Championship in 1991 and 2000.

In 2021, they qualified for the AFC Champions League for an impressive 13th consecutive season after clinching the Saudi Pro League and King's Cup in 2020.

As one of the Continent's most consistent contenders, the Riyadh-based club have been semi-finalists twice as well as runners-up in two of the last seven editions, apart from their win in 2019. Additionally, since 2006, they have made it to the Knockout Stage of the competition almost every year with the rare exceptions of 2018 and 2020.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	ABDULLAH IBRAHIM ALMUAIOUF	23-01-1987	ALMUAIOUF	Goalkeeper
2	MOHAMMED IBRAHIM ALBURAYK	15-09-1992	ALBURAYK	Defender
5	ALI HADI AL BULAYHI	21-11-1989	AL BULAYHI	Defender
8	ABDULLAH IBRAHIM OTAYF	03-08-1992	OTAYF	Midfielder
10	LUCIANO VIETTO	05-12-1993	VIETTO	Midfielder
11	SALEH KHALID ALSHEHRI	01-11-1993	S. SHEHRI	Forward
12	YASIR GHARSAN ALSHAHRANI	25-05-1992	Y. SHAHRANI	Defender
14	ABDULLAH ALHAMDDAN	13-09-1999	A. HAMDDAN	Forward
16	NASSER ESSA ALDAWSARI	19-12-1998	NASSER D.	Midfielder
18	BAFETIMBI GOMIS	06-08-1985	GOMIS	Forward
19	ANDRE CARRILLO DIAZ	14-06-1991	CARRILLO D.	Midfielder
20	JANG HYUN-SOO	28-09-1991	JANG	Defender
22	AMIR FAHAD KURDY	11-09-1991	AMIR	Defender
23	MADALLAH ALOLAYAN	25-08-1994	ALOLAYAN	Defender
26	FAWAZ ALTERAIS	24-04-2000	FAWAZ	Midfielder
27	HATAN BAHBRI	16-07-1992	HATAN	Midfielder
28	MOHAMMED KANNO	22-09-1994	KANNO	Midfielder
29	SALEM ALDAWSARI	19-08-1991	SALEM	Midfielder
31	HABIB YASEEN ALWATYAN	08-08-1996	HABIB	Goalkeeper
32	MUTEB ALMUFARRIJ	18-08-1996	MUTEB .M	Defender
33	ABDULLAH ALJADANI	06-10-1991	ALJADANI	Goalkeeper
34	TURKI ALMUTAIRI	31-05-2001	ALMUTAIRI	Forward
39	NAWAF ALMEFRIJ	26-04-2001	NAWAF M.	Defender
43	MUSAB ALJUWAYR	20-06-2003	MUSAB	Midfielder
44	SAAD ALNASSER	08-01-2001	SAAD	Midfielder
49	ABDULLAH HADI RADIF	20-01-2003	RADIF	Forward
55	HAMAD ALABDAN	26-05-2000	ALABDAN	Midfielder
60	AHMED AL JUBAYA	26-10-2001	A. JUBAYA	Goalkeeper
66	MOHAMMED ALKHAIBARI	18-04-2002	M. KHAIBARI	Defender
70	MOHAMMED JAHFALI	24-10-1990	JAHFALI	Defender

HEAD COACH:

Leonardo Jardim (POR)

Leonardo Jardim's early managerial career began in Portugal with Camacha and Chaves, before winning promotion to the Primeira Liga with Beira-Mar in 2010. He went on to coach several clubs including Braga, Olympiacos FC and Sporting Lisbon before landing a coaching role in French Ligue 1 with AS Monaco in 2014.



Jardim's success at Monaco finally came in the 2016-17 season when he guided the French club to their first league title in 17 years. Taking over the reins from Rogerio Micale, Leonardo Jardim maintained a flawless record to guide Al Hilal to the 2021 AFC Champions League crown.

FORMER HEAD COACH:

Rogério Micale (BRA)

Rogerio Micale was a goalkeeper for Londrina, Apucarana and Operário Ferroviário before retiring at the age of just 23. He started his managerial journey in 1999 with Portuguesa and spent the vast majority of his career in charge of youth sides, notably Figueirense and Atletico Mineiro. Micale's highlights as a manager came in 2015 when he guided Brazil's U20 side to the bronze medal at the Pan American Games before going on to clinch the gold at the 2016 Rio Olympics. Micale, who took over as the Al Hilal head coach from Răzvan Lucescu, notched three wins, one draw and two losses in the AFC Champions League 2021 Group Stage.





SHABAB AL AHLI DUBAI (UAE)



CLUB PROFILE

After missing out on the AFC Champions League qualification in 2019, Shabab Al Ahli FC secured their return to the Continental tournament in 2020, when they reached the Round of 16, by finishing as runners-up in the 2018-19 UAE Pro League and winning the 2019 UAE President's Cup.

With their domestic season cancelled due to the pandemic, those achievements ensured qualification for this season's AFC Champions League.

The Dubai-based club had previously qualified for the AFC Champions League eight times, with their best performance coming in 2015 when they lost 1-0 on aggregate to China PR's Guangzhou Evergrande FC in the Final.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	JAMAL ISMAIL ALHOSANI	22-06-1995	J.ISMAIL	Goalkeeper
2	SALMIN KHAMIS	09-10-1991	SALMIN	Defender
3	CARLOS EDUARDO	17-10-1989	EDUARDO	Midfielder
4	MOHAMMED MARZOOQ ALMATROUSHI	23-01-1989	M.MARZOOQ	Defender
5	WALID ABBAS ALBALOOSHI	11-06-1985	WALID.A	Defender
7	JALOLIDDIN MASHARIPOV	01-09-1993	MASHARIPOV	Midfielder
9	ABDULAZIZ HUSSAIN HAIKAL	10-09-1990	HAIKAL	Defender
10	FEDERICO CARTABIA	20-01-1993	CARTABIA	Midfielder
15	ABDALLA ALNAQBI	28-04-1993	A.ALNAQBI	Midfielder
16	SAEED AHMAD	17-01-1994	SAEED.A	Midfielder
17	HASSAN HAMZA	10-11-1994	HASSAN.H	Goalkeeper
19	MARWAN FAHAD ALWATANI	16-08-1999	M.ALWATANI	Defender
20	YOUSEF JABER	25-02-1985	Y.JABER	Defender
21	MOHAMED JABER	28-01-1989	M.JABER	Defender
22	YAHYA ALI ALGHASSANI	18-04-1998	YAHYA.A	Midfielder
30	MOHAMMAD JUMA EID	28-01-1997	M.JUMA	Forward
34	HARIB ABDALLA ALMAAZMI	26-11-2002	HARIB.A	Midfielder
35	HAMDAN HUMAID ALBESHR	06-11-2002	HAMDAN.H	Midfielder
36	HAMDAN ISMAEEL ALKAMALI	02-05-1989	AL KAMALI	Defender
37	AHMAD ABDULLA SUROOR	16-01-1999	A.JAMIL	Defender
55	MAJED NASER	01-04-1984	M.NASER	Goalkeeper
62	ABDELAZIZ SANQOUR	07-05-1989	A.SANQOUR	Defender
66	SAUD ABDELRAZAQ	23-01-1998	S.ABDULRAZAQ	Midfielder
70	ABDALLA ABDELRAHMAN ALNAQBI	25-01-2000	ALNAQBI	Forward
77	AHMED MOHAMED ALHASHMI	28-09-1995	AL HASHMI	Forward
78	EID KHAMIS ALNUAIMI	20-05-1999	EID KHAMIS	Defender
87	ABDELAZIZ ALBLOOSHI	03-03-2002	AZIZ	Midfielder
88	MAJED HASSAN ALAHMADI	01-08-1992	MAJED.H	Midfielder
95	RASHID ABDALLA	31-08-2000	RASHID.A	Goalkeeper
99	IGOR JESUS	25-02-2001	IGOR.S	Forward

HEAD COACH: Mahdi Ali (UAE)



Mahdi Ali was a one-club player at Al Ahli, where he made 190 appearances. His international career, however, was punctuated by injuries, one of which cruelly ruled him out of the UAE's campaign at the 1990 FIFA World Cup.

Turning to coaching, he returned from the AFC U19 Championship in Saudi Arabia in 2008 with a gold medal in his pocket; took the squad to the FIFA U20 World Cup a year later; came back from the 2010 Asian Games in China PR with a bronze medal; led the U23s to the 2012 Olympics in London; and, with the UAE's senior team, won the Gulf Cup in Bahrain in 2013 before earning a bronze at the AFC Asian Cup Australia 2015.

Turning to club management, he is currently extending his list of honours at Shabab Al Ahli, clinching a hat-trick of Super Cup, Gulf Cup and President's Cup titles in the 2020/21 season.



FC ISTIKLOL (TJK)



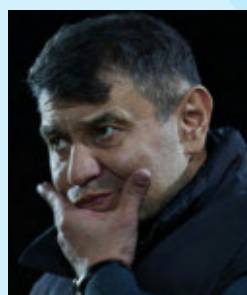
CLUB PROFILE

Dushanbe-based FC Istiklol qualified for what was their third appearance in the AFC Champions League by winning the 2020 Tajikistan Higher League.

Since its establishment in 2007, FC Istiklol have won a record nine domestic league titles, as well as eight Tajik Cups and nine Tajik Super Cups. At the Continental level, they won the AFC President's Cup in 2012 and finished runners-up twice in the AFC Cup in 2015 and 2017.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	RUSTAM YATIMOV	13-07-1998	YATIMOV	Goalkeeper
3	ANDRII MISHCHENKO	07-04-1991	MISHCHENKO	Defender
4	VAHDAT HANONOV	25-07-2000	HANONOV	Defender
5	ISKANDAR DZHALILOV	01-06-1992	DZHALILOV I.	Defender
6	ZOIR DZHURABOEV	16-09-1998	JURABOEV Z.	Defender
7	HUSEYIN DOGAN	22-01-1994	DOGAN	Forward
8	NURIDDIN DAVRONOV	16-01-1991	DAVRONOV	Midfielder
9	RUSTAM SOIROV	12-09-2002	SOIROV	Forward
10	ALISHER DZHALILOV	29-08-1993	DZHALILOV A.	Midfielder
11	MUHAMMADJON RAHIMOV	15-10-1998	MUHAMMADJON	Midfielder
14	SHARIFBEK RAHMATOV	01-09-2002	RAKHMATOV	Midfielder
16	SAFARMAD GHAFOROV	14-04-2004	GHAFOROV	Goalkeeper
19	AKHTAM NAZAROV	29-09-1992	NAZAROV	Defender
21	OLEKSII LARIN	04-06-1994	LARIN	Defender
27	ROMISH DZHALILOV	21-11-1995	ROMISH	Defender
28	SALAM ASHURMAMADOV	18-03-2003	ASHURMAMADOV	Forward
55	MANUCHER SAFAROV	31-05-2001	SAFAROV	Defender
63	MANUCHEHR DZHALILOV	27-09-1990	DZHALILOV M.	Forward
70	SHAHROM SULEYMANOV	27-06-1997	SULEYMANOV	Midfielder
77	KHURSHED JURAEV	21-09-1997	JURAEV	Midfielder
99	MUKHRIDDIN KHASANOV	23-09-2002	KHASANOV	Goalkeeper

HEAD COACH: Mubin Ergashev (TJK)



No-one is more familiar with FC Istiklol than Mubin Ergashev. The Dushanbe native began his career with FC Khujand in 2013 before moving on for his first stint with FC Istiklol for two seasons. Ergashev went on to win two Tajikistan League titles, two Tajikistan Cup and three Tajikistan Super Cups between 2014 and 2016. Following spells with the Tajikistan national team and Barkchi Hisor, Ergashev returned as interim head coach during the 2020 season before taking charge of Istiklol's AFC Champions League 2021 campaign.



AGMK FC (UZB)



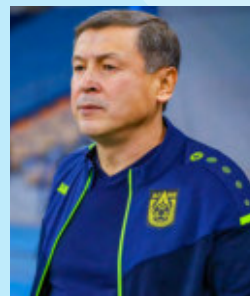
CLUB PROFILE

Formed in 2004, the Almalyk-based club created history by making it to the Group Stage of the AFC Champions League for the first time by beating Qatari outfit Al Gharafa 1-0 in extra-time in the Playoff Stage.

They earned their place in the 2021 playoffs after finishing third in the 2020 Uzbekistan Super League. 'The Miners' are managed by former national team head coach Mirjalol Qosimov, who has brought about a swing in their fortunes since taking over the reins in 2019.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	BOTIRALI ERGASHEV	23-06-1995	ERGASHEV	Goalkeeper
2	AKRAMJON KOMILOV	14-03-1996	KOMILOV	Defender
4	MIRJAMOL KOSIMOV	24-09-1995	KOSIMOV	Midfielder
5	DILSHOD JURAEV	21-04-1992	JURAEV	Midfielder
7	SARDOR RAKHMANOV	09-07-1994	RAKHMANOV	Defender
8	BOBURBEK YULDASHOV	08-04-1993	YULDASHOV	Defender
9	ZAFAR POLVONOV	19-02-1985	POLVONOV	Forward
10	HUSNIDDIN GAFUROV	29-07-1994	GAFUROV	Midfielder
11	MURODJON TOSHMATOV	21-06-1991	TOSHMATOV	Midfielder
15	ABBOSJON OTAKHONOV	25-08-1995	OTAKHONOV	Defender
17	SANJAR TURSUNOV	29-12-1986	TURSUNOV	Midfielder
18	ALEKSANDR KASYAN	27-01-1989	KASYAN	Forward
19	SHEROZ DJALOLOV	19-09-1999	DJALOLOV	Defender
20	MIRGIYOZ SULEYMANOV	02-01-1991	SULEYMANOV	Defender
21	SANJAR JUMABOEV	17-06-2002	JUMABOEV	Forward
22	SANJAR SHAAKHMEDOV	23-09-1990	SHAAKHMEDOV	Midfielder
23	JOVAN DOKIC	13-08-1992	DJOKIC	Midfielder
27	BUNYOD TURGUNBOEV	02-11-2001	TURGUNBOEV	Midfielder
28	SHOHRUH GADOEV	31-12-1991	GADOEV	Defender
29	VLADIMIR KOZAK	12-06-1993	KOZAK	Midfielder
30	JASURBEK UMAROV	29-03-1998	UMAROV	Midfielder
32	SUKHROBJON SULTANOV	26-03-1990	SULTANOV	Goalkeeper
35	VALIJON RAHIMOV	16-02-1995	RAKHIMOV	Goalkeeper
37	NODIRKHON NEMATKHONOV	14-06-2001	NEMATKHONOV	Defender
42	NODIRBEK ABDURAZZOKOV	27-05-2004	ABDURAZZOKOV	Midfielder
43	DILSHOD YOKUBOV	25-12-2001	YOKUBOV	Goalkeeper
55	SARVAR ABLAEV	07-11-2001	ABLAEV	Midfielder
77	DILSHODBEK AKHMADALIEV	02-11-1994	AKHMADALIEV	Defender
94	ALVIN FORTES	25-05-1994	FORTES	Midfielder

HEAD COACH: Mirjalol Qosimov (UZB)



Mirjalol Qosimov enjoyed a stellar career as a player in the Central Asian country. Picking up where he left off as a player, Qosimov turned to management in 2007 and coached some mercurially talented players during his time with FC Bunyodkor and the Uzbekistan national team, winning the Uzbekistan Super League and Uzbek Cup on three occasions. He reached the AFC Champions League Semi-finals twice with Bunyodkor in 2008 and 2012 before joining AGMK in 2019.



AFC
**CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™**

GROUP B

GROUP B



Sharjah FC
(UAE)



Tractor FC
(IRN)



Pakhtakor
(UZB)



Air Force Club
(IRQ)



SHARJAH FC (UAE)



CLUB PROFILE

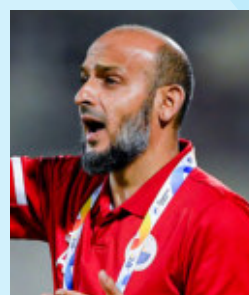
Sharjah FC enjoyed a stellar 2019 – winning the UAE Pro League and the UAE Super Cup. With the 2019-20 edition cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, those performances ensured their safe passage into the AFC Champions League 2021.

Based out of the emirate of Sharjah, the team has a rich football heritage – they were the first official UAE League champions when it was launched in 1974 and before going on to win six Pro League titles, eight President’s Cups and two Super Cups.

Making their fourth appearance in the competition’s history, the squad were hoping to emulate their best finish in 2004 when they reached the Quarter-finals.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
3	ALHASAN SALEH ALHENAWI	25-06-1991	ALHASAN	Defender
4	SHAHEEN ABDALLA ALMAAZMI	16-11-1992	SHAHEEN	Defender
5	HAMAD JASIM	22-06-1996	HAMAD	Defender
7	CAIO	19-04-1994	CAIO	Midfielder
8	MOHAMMAD ABDULBASIT	19-10-1995	M.ABDULBASIT	Midfielder
10	IGOR CORONADO	18-08-1992	CORONADO	Midfielder
11	SAIF RASHID ALSHEMEILI	25-11-1994	SAIF	Midfielder
12	HUMOOD MOHAMMAD MUBARAK	06-09-1998	HUMOOD.M	Goalkeeper
13	SALEM SULTAN	09-05-1993	SALEM.S	Defender
14	KHALID BAWAZIR	08-05-1995	KHALID	Midfielder
15	ABDELAZIZ SALIM ALKAABI	12-08-1998	ALKAABI	Defender
17	ALI MOHAMED ALDHANHANI	01-06-1991	ALI.M	Defender
18	ABDALLA GHANIM ALALAWI	21-05-1995	ABDALLA	Defender
19	KHALED EBRAHEIM ALDHANHANI	17-01-1997	KHALED.E	Defender
23	SALEM SALEH	14-05-1991	SALEM	Forward
25	SAEED ALKAABI	25-11-1999	S.ALKAABI	Midfielder
26	DARWISH BIN HABIB	07-06-1995	DARWISH	Goalkeeper
27	LUAN PEREIRA	21-04-2000	LUAN PEREIRA	Midfielder
29	OTABEK SHUKUROV	22-06-1996	SHUKUROV	Midfielder
31	KHALIFA SEUMBAJ	06-03-2002	KHALIFA.S	Midfielder
38	MOHAMED KHALFAN ALMESMARI	29-12-1992	M.KHALFAN	Midfielder
40	ADEL MOHAMED ALHOSANI	23-08-1989	A.ALHOSANI	Goalkeeper
45	ABDALLA IBRAHIM ALSUWAIDI	08-05-1999	ABDALLA.I	Forward
49	MAYED MUHSIN FAIROUZ	19-08-1996	M.MUHSIN	Goalkeeper
66	AHMED HASAN ALHAMMADI	14-04-2001	AHMED.H	Goalkeeper
79	ABDELRAHMAN JUMA RABEEH	02-12-2000	A.JUMA	Midfielder
80	DHARI FAHAD ALMAAZMI	23-12-2003	DHARI	Defender
87	ABDALLA MOHAMED ALAJMANI	29-10-2000	A.ALAJMANI	Defender
88	AHMED IBRAHIM SUROUR	07-07-1999	A.SUROUR	Midfielder
90	ALI ABDALLA ALHAMMADI	28-12-2000	ALLA	Midfielder

HEAD COACH: Abdulaziz Al Anbari (UAE)



A member of the last Sharjah side to land the league crown in 1996, Abdulaziz Al Anbari enjoyed a 16-year playing spell with the Emirati side before retiring in 2010. Al Anbari returned to Sharjah as head coach in 2017. Two years later, the 42-year-old, who also represented the United Arab Emirates as a player, became the first Emirati to guide Sharjah to the UAE Pro League title and the UAE Super League. He was later named as the league’s Coach of the Year.

TRACTOR FC (IRN)



CLUB PROFILE

Tractor FC qualified for the AFC Champions League 2021 after winning the 2019-20 Hazfi Cup.

As one of the most consistent Iranian sides, this was their sixth appearance in the Continental showpiece.

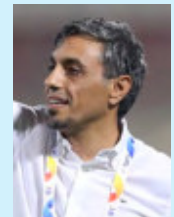
Founded in 1970 by the Iran Tractor Manufacturing Company, the club has played its home matches at the 66,833-seater Sahand Stadium since the beginning of the 1996-97 season.

Similar to their fellow Iranian clubs, Tractor's home matches often attract a passionate fanbase and the club currently holds the attendance record for a promoted side in Iranian football when they achieved an estimated average attendance of approximately 57,000 fans during the 2009-10 season.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	MOHAMMADREZA AKHBARI	15-02-1993	AKHBARI	Goalkeeper
3	MOHAMMAD REZA KHANZADEH	11-05-1991	MOHAMMAD REZA	Defender
4	HADI MOHAMMADI	09-03-1991	H.MOHAMMADI	Defender
6	AKBAR IMANI	21-03-1992	AKBAR	Midfielder
7	MASOUD SHOJAEI	09-06-1984	MASOUD	Midfielder
8	HAMID BOUHAMDAN	23-07-1989	BOUHAMDAN	Midfielder
9	PEYMAN BABAEI	14-12-1994	P. BABAEI	Forward
10	SAMAN NARIMANJAHAN	18-04-1991	SAMAN	Forward
11	MEHDI TIKDARI	12-07-1996	M.TIKDARI	Defender
14	MEISAM TEYMOURI	06-07-1992	M.TEYMOURI	Defender
15	ABOLFAZL RAZZAGHPUR	17-09-1997	RAZZAGHPUR	Defender
18	ALI FATHI MOLOUD	17-05-2000	ALI	Midfielder
21	ASHKAN DEJAGAH	05-07-1986	DEJAGAH	Midfielder
22	MAHDI HAGHIGHAT	06-06-2000	HAGHIGHAT	Goalkeeper
23	HABIB FAR ABBASI	04-09-1997	H. FAR ABBASI	Goalkeeper
30	SAEID VASEI	19-12-1994	VASEI	Midfielder
33	MOHAMMAD ABBASZADEH	09-05-1990	M.ABBASZADEH	Forward
34	MILAD FAKHREDDINI	26-05-1990	MILAD	Defender
38	ABOLFAZL POURSHEIKH	25-02-1999	ABOLFAZL	Midfielder
44	ERFAN SEYYEDI	06-02-1998	ERFAN	Defender
48	SEYED MOHAMMAD KHORAM	07-04-1997	SEYED	Midfielder
55	PEYMAN KESHAVARZI	06-03-1995	KESHAVARZI	Defender
67	SAYAD KOKABI ASL	15-09-1992	SAYAD	Midfielder
69	REZA SEIFAHMADI	28-03-1999	REZA	Goalkeeper
70	AMIN ASADI	14-09-1993	A.ASADI	Forward
77	MOHAMMAD MOSLEMIPOUR	25-05-1997	M.MOSLEMIPOUR	Defender
90	SAEID KARIMAZAR	28-05-2002	KARIMAZAR	Midfielder
97	BEHZAD SALAMI BABAYLOU	23-03-2002	SALAMI	Defender
99	MOHAMMAD GHADERI	27-02-2000	GHADERI	Midfielder

HEAD COACH: Rasoul Khatibi (IRN)

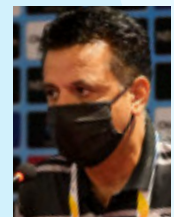
Rasoul Khatibi began his professional career with Tractor FC in 1996, following in the footsteps of his brother Hossein Khatibi, before moving to Pas Tehran a year later. Khatibi then signed for German Bundesliga outfit Hamburger SV in 1999 along with compatriots Mehdi Mahdavia and Vahid Hashemian.



Following stints with Esteghlal and Sepahan, where he scored a career-high 32 goals, Khatibi spent three years in the UAE playing for Emirates Club and Al Dhafra before returning to IR Iran for the remainder of his playing career. Khatibi ventured into management as player-manager for Machine Sazi in 2011 and coached several clubs including Tractor and Aluminium Arak.

FORMER HEAD COACH: Hossein Khatibi (IRN)

Like his brother Rasoul, Hossein Khatibi began his career with Tractor in 1989, spending three seasons before moving to Shahrdari Tabriz FC where he was the Azadegan League top scorer with 16 goals. Hossein coached several clubs in IR Iran including Gostaresh Foulad FC, Machine Sazi and Tose'e Kish FC. Following Rasoul's departure after the group stage, Hossein took charge of Tractor's AFC Champions League 2021 Round of 16 tie against Saudi Arabia's Al Nassr.





PAKHTAKOR (UZB)



CLUB PROFILE

Having emerged as winners in both the 2020 Uzbekistan League and the 2020 Uzbekistan Cup, Pakhtakor have earned their place as one of the Continent's mainstays in the AFC Champions League, marking their 17th campaign in Asia's pinnacle club competition in 2021.

Their best showing at the premier club showpiece came in 2002-03 and 2004 when they reached the Semi-finals – and the Quarter-finals in 2009 as well as in 2020, which was the first time since 2010 when they successfully progressed beyond the Group Stage.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
3	KHOJIAKBAR ALIJONOV	19-04-1997	ALIJONOV	Defender
5	ANZUR ISMAILOV	21-04-1985	ISMAILOV	Defender
6	IBROKHIMKHALIL YULDOSHEV	14-02-2001	YULDOSHEV	Defender
7	SARDOR RASHIDOV	14-06-1991	RASHIDOV	Forward
8	AZIZBEK TURGUNBOEV	01-10-1994	TURGUNBOEV	Midfielder
9	EREN DERDIYOK	12-06-1988	DERDIYOK	Forward
10	DRAGAN CERAN	06-10-1987	CERAN	Midfielder
14	KHUMOYUNMIRZO IMINOV	15-01-2000	IMINOV	Forward
15	EGOR KRIMETS	27-01-1992	KRIMETS	Defender
16	MARLEN CHOBANOV	10-10-2000	CHOBANOV	Defender
17	SHERZOD TEMIROV	27-10-1998	TEMIROV	Midfielder
18	HOJIMAT ERKINOV	29-05-2001	ERKINOV	Midfielder
19	SHAROF MUKHITDINOV	14-07-1997	MUKHITDINOV	Midfielder
21	ABRORBEBK ISMOILOV	08-01-1998	ISMOILOV	Midfielder
23	SHERZOD AZAMOV	14-01-1990	AZAMOV	Defender
25	ELDORBEBK SUYUNOV	12-04-1991	SUYUNOV	Goalkeeper
27	SARDOR SABIRKHODJAEV	06-11-1994	SABIRKHODJAEV	Forward
28	DIYOR KHOLMATOV	22-07-2002	KHOLMATOV	Midfielder
34	FARRUKH SAYFIEV	17-01-1991	SAYFIEV	Defender
35	SANJAR KUVVATOV	08-01-1990	KUVVATOV	Goalkeeper
42	ABBOSBEK FAYZULLAEV	03-10-2003	FAYZULLAEV	Midfielder
44	ISAKOV AZIZKHON	23-12-2000	ISAKOV	Goalkeeper
45	ABROR SARIMSOKOV	24-11-2002	SARIMSOKOV	Midfielder
51	OTABEK BOYMURODOV	05-06-2003	BOYMURODOV	Forward
88	SHAKHZOD AZMIDDINOV	07-06-2000	AZMIDDINOV	Defender
99	PULATKHUJA KHOLDORKHONOV	06-07-2003	KHOLDORKHONOV	Forward

HEAD COACH: Pieter Huistra (NED)



After featuring for Dutch sides Jong Groningen, SC Veendam and FC Twente, Pieter Huistra played for Scottish Premier Division club Rangers for five seasons in the 1990s, netting 22 goals before joining J.League outfit Sanfrecce Hiroshima.

He was head coach at Jong Groningen for four years before being named assistant coach of Aad de Mos at Vitesse. He then became an assistant coach with AFC Ajax and was named their head coach in April 2009.

Huistra was then the head coach of FC Groningen for the 2010–11 season before signing with Eerste Divisie club De Graafschap. He was also appointed as the Technical Director of the Indonesian national football team in 2014. Huistra served as Shota Arveladze's assistant for three seasons before taking over coaching duties for the 2021 season.



AIR FORCE CLUB (IRQ)



CLUB PROFILE

Iraq's Air Force Club are the only team to have clinched three consecutive AFC Cup titles and, in doing so, earned their place as one of the most successful teams in the competition's history after equalling Kuwait SC's (2009, 2012, 2013) record.

Nicknamed the Falcons, they are one of Iraq's most successful clubs, having won six Iraqi Premier League titles, in addition to four Iraq FA Cups as well as a joint-record three Iraqi Elite Cups. They are also the first of only two clubs to win the domestic quadruple (League, FA Cup, Elite Cup and Super Cup) in the same season (1996-97).

They have participated in the AFC Champions League four times since its launch in 2002 but failed to advance past the Group Stage. As runners-up in the Iraqi Premier League, they qualified for the Playoff Stage where they defeated Saudi Arabia's Al Wehda 3-2 on penalties to earn their place in Group B.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	FAHAD TALIB	21-10-1994	FAHAD	Goalkeeper
2	AHMED IBRAHIM KHALAF	25-02-1992	AHMED	Defender
3	ALI BAHJAT	03-03-1992	ALI B.	Defender
5	MAYTHAM JABBAR	10-11-2000	MAYTHAM	Midfielder
6	SAMEH SAEED	26-05-1992	SAMEH	Defender
7	KARRAR ALI BARI	06-12-1994	K. ALI	Midfielder
8	IBRAHIM BAYESH	01-05-2000	IBRAHIM B.	Midfielder
9	AYMEN HUSSEIN	22-03-1996	AYMEN	Forward
10	HAMMADI AHMED	01-10-1989	HAMMADI	Forward
11	HUMAM TAREQ	10-02-1996	HUMAM	Midfielder
13	EHSAN HADDAD	05-02-1994	EHSAN	Defender
16	KARAR NABEEL	16-01-1998	KARAR N.	Forward
17	SHAREEF ABDUL-KADHIM	07-06-1996	SHAREEF	Midfielder
18	LUAY AL-ANI	12-07-1997	LUAY	Midfielder
19	ALI MOHSIN	04-03-1998	A. MOHSIN	Midfielder
20	ALI KADHIM	11-02-2001	ALI K.	Forward
22	SAIF RASHID HAMEED	02-03-2000	S. RASHID	Forward
23	ABBAS ALI	28-04-2001	ABBAS	Midfielder
25	MOHAMMED ALI ABBOD	01-10-2000	M. ALI	Midfielder
28	HUSSEIN JABBAR	09-03-1998	HUSSEIN	Midfielder
29	AMJED RADHI	17-07-1990	AMJED. R	Forward
31	SAIF KAREEM	24-10-1993	SAIF K.	Goalkeeper
34	MUSTAFA MOHAMMED	15-01-1997	MUSTAFA	Defender
40	ABDULLAH FAISAL	23-01-1998	A. FAISAL	Goalkeeper
48	HASAN RAED MATROOK	23-09-2000	HASAN	Defender
50	JEFERSON COLLAZOS	01-12-1990	JEFERSON	Forward
55	MOHAMMED ZAMIL	29-11-1999	M. ZAMIL	Forward
95	MOHAMMED SALIH	12-06-1995	M. SALIH	Goalkeeper

HEAD COACH: Ayoub Odisho (IRQ)



Ayoub Odisho featured for Al Talaba in a playing career that spanned 14 years. Odisho was regarded as one of the best defenders in the Iraqi league during the 1980s, where he played alongside the likes of Hussein Saeed, Wathiq Aswad, Ali Hussein Shihab, Haris Mohammed and Adnan Dirjal. The tough tackling full-back guided Al Talaba to three league titles in 1981, 1982 and 1986. It is no surprise that he started his managerial debut with the Baghdad-based club, winning the Iraqi Premier League in the 1992-93 season. However, Odisho was destined to find more success at Air Force Club, clinching the domestic title in 1997 and 2020.



**AFC
CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™**

GROUP C

GROUP C



Al Duhail SC
(QAT)



النادي الأهلي السعودي لكرة القدم
Al-Ahli Saudi Football Club

Al Ahli Saudi FC
(KSA)



Esteghlal FC
(IRN)



Al Shorta
(IRQ)



AL DUHAIL SC (QAT)



CLUB PROFILE

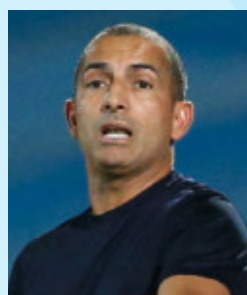
Al Duhail SC won the 2019-20 Qatar Stars League to qualify for this year's competition.

Formerly known as Lekhwiya, the Doha-based club reached the AFC Champions League Quarter-finals in both 2013 and 2015, before losing to Guangzhou Evergrande FC from China PR and Saudi Arabia's Al Hilal SFC respectively.

Last year, they bowed out in the Group Stages after battling bravely against eventual Knockout Stage qualifiers – Persepolis FC and Al Taawoun.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	MOHAMMED AHMED ALBAKRI	28-03-1997	M. ALBAKRI	Goalkeeper
2	MOHAMED MUSA	01-01-1986	M. MOUSSA	Defender
3	ALI MALOLAH	26-02-1999	ALI.M	Forward
4	MEDHI BENATIA	17-04-1987	BENATIA	Defender
5	BASSAM HISHAM ALRAWI	16-12-1997	B. HISHAM	Defender
6	AHMED YASSER	17-05-1994	A. YASSER	Defender
7	ISMAIL MOHAMAD	05-04-1990	ISMAIL. M	Forward
8	LUIZ JUNIOR	13-01-1989	LUIZ	Midfielder
10	EDMILSON JUNIOR	19-08-1994	EDMILSON JR.	Forward
12	KARIM BOUDIAF	16-09-1990	K. BOUDIAF	Midfielder
14	ABDULLAH ABDULSALAM ALAHRAQ	10-05-1997	AL-AHRAQ	Midfielder
15	MUBARK SHANAN HAMZA	20-02-2004	MUBARAK	Midfielder
16	KHALIFA ABABACAR	07-07-1989	KHALIFA	Goalkeeper
18	SULTAN AL-BRAKE	07-04-1996	AL. BRAKE	Defender
19	ALMOEZ ALI	19-08-1996	MOEZ	Forward
20	ALI AFIF	20-01-1988	AFIF	Forward
21	SALAH ZAKARIA	24-04-1999	SALAH	Goalkeeper
22	KHALED MOHAMMED	07-06-2000	KHALED. M	Midfielder
23	ASSIM MADIBO	22-10-1996	A. MADIBO	Defender
24	ALI KARIMI	11-02-1994	A.KARIMI	Midfielder
25	NASSER MOHSIN ALI	21-03-2004	NASSER	Midfielder
26	MICHAEL OLUNGA	26-03-1994	OLUNGA	Forward
27	RASHID ABDULAZIZ AL-ABDULLA	21-02-2004	RASHID	Forward
28	MESHAAL AL-TAMIMI	25-07-2004	MESHAAL	Defender
29	MOHAMMED MUNTARI	20-12-1993	MUNTARI	Forward
30	FAISAL METEB AL-MANSOORI	09-08-2003	FAISAL	Defender
32	JASSIM MOHAMMED AL-MEHAIRI	30-08-2002	AL-MEHAIRI	Forward
33	ALI MOHAMMED GHULAI	17-05-2003	ALI	Goalkeeper
34	ABDULAZIZ HASSAN AL-KUWARI	28-11-2002	ABDULAZIZ	Forward
38	IBRAHIM METEB AL-MANSOORI	09-08-2003	MANSOORI	Forward

HEAD COACH: Sabri Lamouchi (FRA)



Sabri Lamouchi started his professional career with French side Alès and then moved to Auxerre for four years. He went on to join Monaco, helping them to the Ligue 1 title in 2000, before being snapped up by Serie A side Parma - winning the Coppa Italia the following year. After helping Marseille win the 2005 UEFA Intertoto Cup, the Frenchman finished his career in Qatar with Al Rayyan and Umm Salal.

Having spent two years with the Ivory Coast national team as head coach, Lamouchi found success once again when he guided Qatar's El Jaish to the 2016 Qatar Crown Prince Cup. Lamouchi signed for Ligue 1 outfit Rennes in 2017 before moving on to EFL Championship side Nottingham Forest in 2018.



AL AHLI SAUDI FC (KSA)



CLUB PROFILE

Having finished third in the 2019-20 Saudi Professional League, Al Ahli qualified for the AFC Champions League for the 13th time.

Besides reaching the Quarter-finals on four previous occasions – the most recent when they were ousted by fellow Saudi club Al Nassr last year – Al Ahli were looking to surpass their best run in 2012 when they reached the Final, only to lose 3-0 to Korea Republic’s Ulsan Hyundai FC.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	YASSER ABDULLAH AL MOSAILEM	27-02-1984	ALMOSAILEM	Goalkeeper
3	MOHAMMED AL FATIL	04-01-1992	M.FATIL	Defender
5	MOHAMMED ABDU KHUBRANI	14-10-1993	M.KHUBRANI	Defender
8	ELVIS SARIC	21-07-1990	SARIC	Midfielder
9	OMAR ALSOMA	23-03-1990	O.SOMAH	Forward
10	SALMAN MOHAMMED MUWASHAR	05-10-1988	SALMAN.M	Forward
11	HUSSAIN AL ALMOQAHWI	24-03-1988	MOQAHWI	Midfielder
13	YZEID BAKR ALBAKR	11-11-1995	YAZED	Defender
14	MUHANNAD AHMED ABU RADIYAH	14-10-1986	M.ASIRI	Forward
16	NOUH IBRAHIM ALMOUSA	23-02-1991	NOOH	Midfielder
21	DRISS FETTOUHI	30-09-1989	FETTOUHI	Midfielder
22	ABDULRAHMAN ALSANBI	03-02-2001	ALSANBI	Goalkeeper
23	ABDULLAH HASSUN TARMIN	19-03-1997	A.HASSOUN	Defender
25	MOTAZ HASSAN HAWSAWI	17-02-1992	MOTAZ	Defender
26	MOHAMMED ABDULLAH ALMAJHAD	16-07-1998	AL MAJHAD	Midfielder
27	SULTAN AHMED MANDASH	17-10-1994	MANDASH	Midfielder
28	ALEXANDRU MITRITA	08-02-1995	MITRITA	Midfielder
29	ABDULRAHMAN ABDULLAH GHAREEB	31-03-1997	GHAREEB	Midfielder
30	ZIYAD MUBARAK ALJOHANI	11-11-2001	ZIYAD	Midfielder
31	HANI ISMAIL ALSIBYANI	21-07-1999	H.ISMAIL	Defender
32	HASSAN MOUSA ALQAYD	13-04-1998	H.ALQAYD	Forward
33	MOHAMMED KHALIL ALOWAIS	10-10-1991	ALOWAIS	Goalkeeper
35	YOUSEF SAAD ALHARBI	16-03-1997	Y.ALHARBI	Defender
37	ABDULBASIT MOHAMMED HINDI	02-02-1997	ABDULBASIT	Defender
40	ALI HASSAN ALASMARI	12-01-1997	ALASMARI	Midfielder
44	MOHAMMED FARAJ ALYAMI	14-08-1997	ALYAMI	Goalkeeper
45	HAITHAM MOHAMMED ASIRI	25-03-2001	HAITHAM	Forward
48	ABDULLAH BADER MAHBUB	06-02-2001	MAHBUB	Forward
66	AHMED HUSSAIN ALNAKHLI	15-03-2002	AL NAKHLI	Defender
70	MOHAMMAD MAIZN ALBASSAS	31-08-1998	AL BASSAS	Defender

HEAD COACH: Laurențiu Reghecampf (ROM)



The highly respected Laurențiu Reghecampf guided Saudi Arabia’s Al Hilal to the final of the AFC Champions League 2014 before seeing his side lose to Western Sydney Wanderers. The former midfielder returned to his native Romania to coach Litex Lovech and Steaua Bucharest but subsequently joined the UAE’s Al Wahda in 2017. He took charge of Al Wasl for the 2019-2020 season before moving on to Al Ahli in 2021.



ESTEGHLAL FC (IRN)

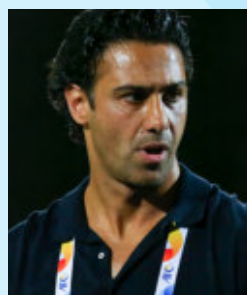


CLUB PROFILE

Two-time Asian Club Championship winners Esteghlal FC finished runners-up in the 2019-20 Iran Pro League to qualify for the AFC Champions League 2021 to ensure their 12th appearance in the event.

Esteghlal were looking to improve from their Round of 16 elimination in 2020, drawing inspiration from their best ever campaign in 2013 when they defeated the UAE's Al Shabab in the Round of 16 and Buriram United from Thailand in the Quarter-finals before losing in the Semi-finals to FC Seoul.

HEAD COACH: Farhad Majidi (IRN)



Following an illustrious playing career, Farhad Majidi took over the helm of Esteghlal FC in January 2020 after having briefly held the reins on a caretaker basis. A talented forward in his playing days, Majidi starred in four separate stints with Esteghlal, winning league titles with the Tehran giants on three occasions in a career that included 56 international caps.

Majidi's career also included stints in Austria and the United Arab Emirates, where he won the AFC Champions League title during a loan spell with Al Ain, playing a key role in their Semi-final triumph over Chinese outfit Dalian Shide in 2003.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	SEYED HOSSEIN HOSSEINI	30-06-1992	SEYED	Goalkeeper
2	MOHAMMAD NADERI	05-10-1996	M. NADERI	Defender
3	MOHAMMAD HOSSEIN MORADMAND	22-06-1993	HOSEIN	Defender
4	SIYAVASH YAZDANI	27-02-1992	SIYAVASH	Defender
5	AREF GHOLAMI	19-04-1997	AREF	Defender
6	MASOUD RIKI	22-02-1991	MASOUD	Midfielder
7	CHEICK DIABATE	25-04-1988	DIABATE	Forward
8	FARSHID ESMAEILI	23-02-1994	FARSHID	Midfielder
9	MAHDI MAHDIPOUR	18-02-1994	MEHDI	Midfielder
10	MEHDI GHAYEDI	05-12-1998	MEHDI. GH	Forward
11	DARIUSH SHOJAEIAN	07-04-1992	DARIUSH	Midfielder
12	RASHID MAZAHARI	18-05-1989	RASHID	Goalkeeper
15	SINA KHADEMPOUR	09-01-1997	SINA	Midfielder
20	AHMAD MOSAVI	04-02-1992	MOSAVI	Defender
21	VORYA GHAFOURI	20-09-1987	VORIA	Midfielder
22	BABAK MORADI	29-07-1993	BABAK	Midfielder
23	ARMAN RAMEZANI	22-06-1992	A. RAMEZANI	Forward
27	MATIN KARIMZADEH	30-06-1998	MATIN	Defender
33	HRVOJE MILIC	10-05-1989	MILIC	Defender
40	AMIR KHODAMORADI	13-09-2000	AMIRHOSSEIN	Forward
41	ARASH DAJLIRI	19-01-1999	A. DAJLIRI	Defender
55	ERFAN GOLMOHAMMADI	04-04-1999	E. GOLMOHAMMADI	Forward
63	AMIRHOSSEIN BAYAT	10-05-1998	AMIR	Goalkeeper
66	SAEID MEHRI	09-02-1998	SAEID	Midfielder
70	MOHAMMAD DANESHGAR	20-01-1994	M. DANESHGAR	Defender
72	ARSALAN MOTAHHARI	10-03-1993	ARSALAN	Forward
74	ERFAN ROHANI	31-12-2000	ERFAN. R	Midfielder
79	SOBHAN KHAGHANI	27-01-2000	SOBHAN	Midfielder
88	ARASH REZAVAND	05-10-1993	ARASH	Midfielder
90	SINA SAEEDIFAR	12-04-2001	S. SAEEDIFAR	Goalkeeper



AL SHORTA (IRQ)



CLUB PROFILE

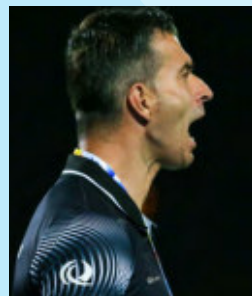
Al Shorta, who won the 2018-19 Iraqi Premier League, made their fifth appearance and their second since the 2014 Playoffs.

Last year, they also won the Iraqi Super Cup and, with the pandemic halting the domestic season in Iraq, the club gained qualification for the AFC Champions League again this year.

They are the only Iraqi side to have won the Arab Champions League trophy in 1982, and also finished runners-up in the Asian Club Championship in 1971.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	AHMED BASIL FADHILI	19-08-1996	AHMED.B	Goalkeeper
2	ODAY SHAHAB AHMED	14-06-1991	ODAY.S	Defender
3	KARRAR AMER AL-ABBASI	16-10-1994	KARRAR.A	Defender
4	SUAD NATIQ NAJI	19-03-1994	SUAD.N	Defender
5	ALI FAEZ ATIYAH	09-09-1994	ALI.F	Defender
6	FAHAD YOUSSEF	15-05-1987	FAHAD.Y	Midfield/ goalkeeper
7	AMJED ATTWAN	12-03-1997	AMJED.A	Midfielder
8	MURAD MOHAMMED SUBEH	01-04-1997	MURAD.M	Forward
9	GELMIN RIVAS	23-03-1989	RIVAS.G	Forward
10	MARWAN HUSSEIN	26-01-1992	MARWAN.H	Forward
11	AHMED JALAL ALAWADI	17-03-1998	AHMED.J	Midfielder
13	ALI HISNY FAISAL	23-05-1994	ALI.H	Midfielder
14	MAZIN FAYYADH	02-04-1997	MAZIN.F	Midfielder
15	KHUDHUR ALI AL-TAMEEMI	19-06-1998	KHUDHUR.A	Forward
16	MOHAMMED MEZHER ELAYAWI	24-03-1998	MOHAMMED.M	Defender
17	ALAA ALI MHAWI	03-06-1996	ALAA.A	Defender
19	MOHAMMED QASIM MAJID	06-12-1996	MOHAMMED.Q	Forward
20	MOHAMMED HAMEED	24-01-1993	MOHAMMED.H	Goalkeeper
22	HUSAM KADHIM	17-10-1987	HUSAM.K	Defender
25	SAAD ABDULAMEER	19-01-1992	SAAD.A	Midfielder
26	AMMAR GHALEB FALIH	13-03-2001	AMMAR.G	Midfielder
27	RAFAEL FEITAL DA SILVA	08-10-1990	RAFAEL.F	Forward
28	ALI YOUSIF HASHIM	19-01-1996	ALI.Y	Forward
29	MOHAMMED DAWOOD	22-11-2000	MOHAMMED.D	Forward
30	ALAA KHALEEL	25-04-1992	ALAA.K	Goalkeeper
31	ALI JASIM ELAIBI	20-01-2004	ALI.J	Forward
32	HASAN ASHOUR KADHIM	19-10-1998	HASAN.A	Midfielder
33	JASIM MOHAMMED OGLAH	23-01-1998	JASIM.M	Midfielder
35	ALI MAHDI	26-06-1995	ALI.M	Forward

HEAD COACH: Aleksandar Ilić (SRB)



Aleksandar Ilić had a successful playing career in Europe with his best years coming from his time spent at Greek club Paniliakos FC, Dutch side Club Brugge KV and R.S.C. Anderlecht of Belgium. Ilić has managed several teams, including Paniliakos, Serbia's Radnički Niš, Al Ahli Saudi FC as well as Iraq's Al Shorta SC, guiding them to the 2019 Iraqi Super Cup after defeating Al Zawraa SC.



AFC
**CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™**

GROUP D

GROUP D



Al Sadd SC
(QAT)



Al Nassr
(KSA)



Al Wehdat
(JOR)



Foolad
Khouzestan FC
(IRN)



AL SADD SC (QAT)



CLUB PROFILE

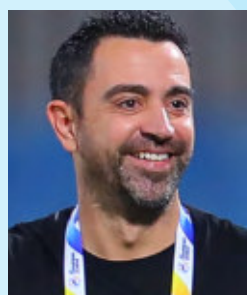
Al Sadd qualified for the 2021 edition after clinching the Emir Cup.

Having won the 2011 edition of the AFC Champions League after beating Korea Republic's Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors FC in the final, they entered this year's tournament with an enviable history.

Most recently, the club from Doha, who are managed by the legendary Xavi, have enjoyed two inspiring campaigns in the last three editions, reaching successive Semi-finals in 2018 and 2019 before bowing out in the Round of 16 last year, where they lost to eventual runners-up Persepolis FC by a narrow 1-0 margin.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	SAAD AL SHEEB	19-02-1990	SAAD	Goalkeeper
2	PEDRO CORREIA	06-08-1990	PEDRO	Defender
3	ABDEKARIM HASSAN	28-08-1993	ABDEKARIM	Defender
4	AHMED SAYYAR	06-10-1993	SAYYAR	Midfielder
6	TAREK SALMAN	05-12-1997	TAREK	Defender
7	MOHAMMED WAAD	18-09-1999	WAAD	Midfielder
8	ALI ASAD	19-01-1993	ASAD	Midfielder
9	NAM TAE-HEE	03-07-1991	TAE HEE	Forward
10	HASAN AL HAYDOS	11-12-1990	ALHAYDOS	Forward
11	BAGHDAD BOUNEDJAH	24-11-1991	BOUNEDJAH	Forward
12	RODRIGO TABATA	19-11-1980	TABATA	Forward
13	GUILHERME DOS SANTOS	05-04-1991	GUILHERME	Forward
15	BAHAA ELLETHY	18-04-1999	BAHAA	Defender
16	BOUALEM KHOUKHI	09-07-1990	B-KHOUKHI	Midfielder
17	HASSAN PALANG	02-04-1998	HASSAN	Forward
18	SAOUD AL-NASR	01-02-1998	SAOUD	Forward
19	SANTIAGO CAZORLA	13-12-1984	S.CAZORLA	Forward
20	SALEM AL-HAJRI	10-04-1996	SALEM	Midfielder
22	MESHAAL BARSHAM	14-02-1998	BARSHAM	Goalkeeper
23	HASHIM ALI	17-08-2000	HASHIM	Forward
25	ABDULLA ISMAIL AL-ALI	20-11-2001	ABDULLA	Forward
27	YUSUF ABDURISAG	06-08-1999	YUSUF	Forward
29	AKRAM AFIF	18-11-1996	AFIF	Forward
30	JEHAD HUDIB	14-10-2000	JEHAD	Goalkeeper
34	YOUSEF ABDULLAH	30-10-2002	YOUSEF	Goalkeeper
37	AHMED SUHAIL	08-02-1999	AHMED	Defender
70	MUSAAB KHIDIR MOHAMED	01-01-1993	MUSAAB	Defender
84	ABDULLA ALYAZIDI	28-03-2002	ABDULLA	Forward
85	FAISAL MOHAMMAD	13-01-2001	FAISAL	Midfielder
96	HUSAM KAMAL	25-01-1996	HUSAM	Forward

HEAD COACH: Xavi (ESP)



Considered by many as one of the greatest Spanish players, Xavi had an illustrious journey with Catalan giants Barcelona where he made 505 appearances and scored 58 goals in a 17-year career, winning eight La Liga titles and four UEFA Champions League trophies. Xavi also excelled for La Roja, winning the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa and the UEFA European Championship in 2008 and 2012.

Xavi moved to Al Sadd in 2015 to play in the Qatar Stars League. He took over as head coach four years later and helped the club reach the Semi-finals of the AFC Champions League, where they were eliminated by Al Hilal FC 6-5 on aggregate. The 40-year-old then guided the team to the 2019 and 2020 Qatari Super Cup, the 2020 and 2021 Emir Cup as well as the 2020 Qatar Stars League title.



AL NASSR (KSA)



CLUB PROFILE

Al Nassr qualified for the AFC Champions League for the sixth time after finishing runners-up in the Saudi Pro League.

A club with an illustrious history, the Riyadh-based club won both the Asian Cup Winners' Cup and Asian Super Cup in 1997-98.

In 2020, they produced their best performance to date in the AFC Champions League when they reached the Semi-finals, where they were narrowly edged by IR Iran's Persepolis on penalties after playing to a 1-1 draw in Doha.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	BRAD JONES	19-03-1982	JONES	Goalkeeper
2	SULTAN ABDULLAH ALGHANNAM	06-05-1994	ALGHANAM	Defender
3	ABDULLAH MADU	15-07-1993	ABDULLAH	Defender
5	ABDULELAH ALAMRI	15-01-1997	A.ALAMRI	Defender
6	PETROS ARAUJO	29-05-1989	PETROS	Midfielder
8	ABDULMAJEED ALSULAYHIM	15-05-1994	ALSULAYHIM	Midfielder
9	ABDERRAZAK HAMDALLAH	17-12-1990	HAMED-ALLAH	Forward
11	NOUREDDINE AMRABAT	31-03-1987	AMRABAT	Midfielder
13	ABDULRAHMAN ALOBAID	30-04-1993	ALOBAID	Defender
14	SAMI ALNAJI	07-02-1997	SAMI	Midfielder
15	ABDULAZIZ ALDAWSARI	11-10-1988	ALDAWSARI	Midfielder
17	ABDULLAH ALKHAIBARI	16-08-1996	K.ABDULLAH	Midfielder
19	ALI ALHASSAN	04-03-1997	ALHASSAN	Midfielder
21	MUKHTAR ALI	30-10-1997	M.ALI	Midfielder
24	KHALID ALGHANNAM	08-11-2000	K.ALGHANNAM	Midfielder
27	OSAMA ALKHALAF	26-12-1996	OSAMA	Defender
33	WALEED ABDULLAH ALI	19-04-1986	WALEED	Goalkeeper
39	ABDULRAHMAN ALDOSARI	25-09-1997	D.S	Midfielder
42	FERAS ALBRIKAN	14-05-2000	FERAS	Forward
44	NAWAF DHAHI ALAQIDI	10-05-2000	NAWAF .D	Goalkeeper
45	ABDULFATTAH ASIRI	26-02-1994	FATTAH	Midfielder
50	ABDULAZIZ ALALAWI	27-02-1997	A.ALALAWI	Defender
52	KHALIL IBRAHIM ALABSI	28-05-2001	KHALIL	Midfielder
54	BASIL YOUSEF ALSAYYALI	22-06-2001	BASIL	Midfielder
55	ABDULLAH ALSHANQITI	22-12-1998	A.SHANQITI	Defender
56	MOHAMMED MARRAN	15-02-2001	MARRAN	Forward
57	RAED OZAYBI	22-09-2001	OZAYBI	Goalkeeper
70	RAED ALGHAMDI	06-05-1994	RAED	Forward
78	ALI LAJAMI	24-04-1996	LAJAMI	Defender
88	YAHIA ALSHEHRI	26-06-1990	YAHIA	Midfielder

HEAD COACH: Mano Menezes (BRA)

An extremely gifted coach who crafted his trade in Brazil, Mano Menezes took over Gremio in 2005 and brought them back to the top-flight level in Brazil the very next year. Menezes won successive state titles with Gremio in 2006 and 2007 and reached the finals of the 2007 Copa Libertadores, eventually losing to Boca Juniors. Following several stints with Flamengo, Corinthians and Cruzeiro, Menezes coached China PR side Shandong Luneng briefly in 2016 and took over the helm at Al Nassr in 2021.



FORMER HEAD COACH: Pedro Emanuel (POR)

Pedro Emanuel had a successful playing career in the Portuguese Primeira Liga with Boavista and particularly with Porto FC, with whom he won five league titles, the 2003 UEFA Cup, 2004 UEFA Champions League as well as the Intercontinental Cup the same year.



Pedro began his coaching career with Porto in 2010 as an assistant coach before moving on to several European clubs. A short spell at Saudi Arabia club Al Taawoun in the 2018-2019 season led to the King's Cup triumph in 2019. His tenure at Spanish club Almeria was brief and he took over as head coach of UAE Pro League side Al Ain in January 2020.



AL WEHDAT (JOR)



CLUB PROFILE

2020 Jordanian Pro League Champions Al Wehdat made their sixth appearance in the AFC Champions League this year.

The Amman-based club have won the country's league title a record 17 times, and this is in addition to the 10 FA Cups, 10 FA Shields and 13 Super Cups that they have won since their establishment in 1956.

They are also the only team to have clinched the domestic quadruple (League, FA Cup, Super Cup, Shield), not just once but twice in 2008-2009 and 2010-2011.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	AHMAD NAWWAS	06-07-1984	A.NAWWAS	Goalkeeper
2	FERAS SHILBAYA	27-11-1993	F.SHILBAYA	Defender
3	ABDALLAH NASIB	25-02-1994	A.NASIB	Defender
4	MOHAMMAD ALDMEIRI	30-08-1987	M.ALDMEIRI	Defender
5	YAZAN ALARAB	31-01-1996	Y.ALARAB	Defender
6	MOHANNAD ABU TAHA	02-02-2003	M.ABU TAHA	Forward
7	IBRAHIM JWABRI	10-05-1991	I.JWABRI	Midfielder
8	KHALED ASSAM	08-04-1996	K.ASSAM	Midfielder
9	HASSAN SAAD	17-08-1992	H.SAAD	Forward
10	SALEH RATEB	18-12-1994	S.RATEB	Midfielder
11	AHMAD ELIAS	09-11-1990	A.ELIAS	Midfielder
14	THAER ASHRAF MOUSA	05-04-2002	TH. ASHRAF	Defender
15	ANAS AHMAD HAMMAD	29-05-1998	A.HAMMAD	Midfielder
17	RAJA'EI AYED	25-07-1993	R.AYED	Midfielder
18	TAREQ KHATTAB	06-05-1992	T.KHATTAB	Defender
19	DANIAL AHMED AFANEH	24-03-2001	D.AFANEH	Defender
21	ABDOU NDIAY	09-06-1994	A.NDIAYE	Forward
22	MURAD ALFALUJI	27-12-2003	M.ALFALUJI	Goalkeeper
23	AHMAD THA'ER HAIKAL	02-04-1997	A.HAIKL	Midfielder
25	MALEK MOHAMMAD ALLAN	13-08-2002	M.ALLAN	Midfielder
29	MOHANNAD JEHAD SEMREEN	08-01-2002	M.SEMREEN	Midfielder
30	AHMAD ZRIEK	27-10-1990	A.ZRIEK	Forward
55	AHMAD HISHAM	09-04-1993	A.HISHAM	Midfielder
66	AHMAD NAJI TANNOUS	16-07-1998	A.TANNOUS	Midfielder
70	MONTHER OMAR AMARA	24-04-1992	M.ABU AMARA	Forward
77	FADI AWAD	26-03-1993	F.AWAD	Midfielder
88	FERAS SALEM	25-12-1989	F.SALEH	Goalkeeper
90	AHMAD SAMEER	27-03-1991	A.SAMEER	Midfielder
99	ABDALLAH RA'ED ALFAKHORI	22-01-2000	A.ALFAKHRI	Goalkeeper

HEAD COACH: Abdullah Abu Zema (JOR)



Abdullah Abu Zema enjoyed considerable success with Al Wehdat as a player, winning numerous honours which included five Jordan League titles, three Jordan FA Cup titles and four Jordan Super Cups. Following several stints as assistant coach, Abu Zema took up the Al Wehdat hotseat in 2014 where he guided them to consecutive league titles during his two-year spell.

Upon returning to the club in 2019, following spells with the Jordan national team, Kuwait SC and Al Ansar, Abu Zema helped Al Wehdat clinch the 2020 Jordan Premier League as well as the Charity Shield and Jordan Super Cup the following year.



FOOLAD KHOUZESTAN FC (IRN)



CLUB PROFILE

Foolad Khuzestan FC qualified for the 2021 edition of the AFC Champions League by finishing third in the 2019-20 Iran Pro League. This was their fourth appearance in the event, and the first since 2015.

The club have won the Iran Pro League twice, including a championship in the lower division, Azadegan League. Their best result in the Iranian FA Cup came in 2005 when they finished runners-up.

Having played their home matches at the Ghadir Stadium from 2012 to 2019, the club recently moved to the newly-built 30,655-seat Foolad Arena in northern Ahvaz.

A dominant Foolad Khuzestan beat inaugural AFC Champions League winners Al Ain (UAE) 4-0 in the Playoffs to earn a place in Group D of the 2021 edition alongside Qatar's Al Sadd SC, Saudi Arabia's Al Nassr and Jordan's Al Wehdat.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	EHSAN MORADIYAN	20-09-1994	EHSAN	Goalkeeper
2	SALEH HARDANI KHERAD	26-12-1998	S.HARDANI	Defender
3	MILAD BADRAGHEH	17-08-1996	MILAD	Defender
4	AYOUB VALI	09-08-1987	AYOUB	Defender
5	MOUSSA COULIBALY	19-12-1992	MOUSA	Defender
6	ZOBEIR NIKNAFS	12-04-1993	ZOBEIR	Midfielder
7	HOSSEIN EBRAHIMI	03-08-1990	HOSSEIN	Midfielder
8	MOHAMMAD GHASEMINEJAD	05-03-1989	M.GHASEMINEJAD	Midfielder
10	FARSHAD AHMADZADEH	23-09-1992	FARSHAD	Midfielder
11	AHMAD ABDOLLAHZADEH	06-05-1993	AHMAD	Midfielder
12	AYANDA PATOSI	31-10-1992	PATOSI	Midfielder
13	MOHAMMAD ABSHAK	27-01-1987	ABSHAK	Midfielder
15	MEHRAN MOUSAVI	20-04-1991	MEHRAN	Defender
20	MOJTABA NAJARIAN	25-01-1998	MOJTABA	Defender
21	AREF AGHASI	02-01-1997	A. AGHASI	Defender
22	ALI GHOLAMZADEH	13-02-2000	A.GHOLAMZADEH	Goalkeeper
23	EBRAHIM SALJOUGHJI	13-11-1992	E. SALJOUGHJI	Defender
24	MEHRAN DERAKHSHAN MEHR	10-08-1998	M.DERAKHSHAN	Defender
29	SHIMBA	15-10-1983	SHIMBA	Forward
30	SASAN ANSARI	04-05-1991	SASAN	Forward
32	SABER HARDANI	27-10-1996	SABER	Midfielder
34	SINA SHAHABBASI	11-08-1999	SINA	Defender
35	AAREF GHOLAMPOUR	23-05-1999	A.GHOLAMPOUR	Midfielder
50	VAHID HEYDARIEH	03-01-1993	VAHID	Defender
68	MOHSEN FOROOZAN	04-05-1988	FOROOZAN	Goalkeeper
77	MOHMMADREZA ABBASI	27-07-1996	M.ABBASI	Midfielder
78	YOUSEF KEY SHAMS	06-01-1999	YOUSEF	Forward
80	AHMAD JALALI	14-08-2001	A.JALALI	Defender
91	MOHAMMAD MIRI	05-03-1990	M.MIRI	Midfielder
99	SHERVIN BOZORG	16-04-1992	SHERVIN	Forward

HEAD COACH: Jesus Javier Noble



Foolad Khuzestan made a successful return to the AFC Champions League in 2021 after a five-year absence, with Jesus Javier Noble at the helm. The Spaniard successfully navigated Foolad through to the Playoffs, defeating Al Ain 4-0 before qualifying for the Group Stage. Despite not progressing to the Round of 16, Noble steered Foolad to their first Hazfi Cup after defeating Esteghlal 4-2 on penalties.



AFC
**CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™**

GROUP E

GROUP E



Persepolis FC
(IRN)



Al Rayyan SC
(QAT)



FC Goa
(IND)



Al Wahda FSCC
(UAE)



PERSEPOLIS FC (IRN)



CLUB PROFILE

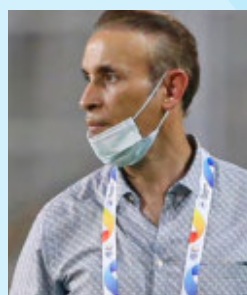
Persepolis FC qualified for the AFC Champions League 2021 by winning the 2019-20 Iran Pro League.

As finalists of the 2018 edition, the Iranian giants equalled their best AFC Champions League campaign in 2020 but were left to rue another missed opportunity after losing narrowly to Korea Republic's Ulsan Hyundai.

Persepolis were present in the Knockout Stage in three of the past five editions of the AFC Champions League, but prior to that run, their most successful era in Asian football dated to the 1990s when they excelled at the Asian Cup Winners Cup, winning the 1990-91 title and finishing runners-up the following year.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	BOZIDAR RADOSEVIC	04-04-1989	RADOSEVIC	Goalkeeper
2	OMID ALISHAH	10-01-1992	OMID.A	Forward
3	FARSHAD FARAJI	07-04-1994	F. FARAJI	Defender
4	SEYED JALAL HOSSEINI	03-02-1982	S.J.HOSSEINI	Defender
6	HOSSEIN KANANI	23-03-1994	M.H.KANANI	Defender
8	AHMAD NOOROLLAHI	01-02-1993	AHMAD	Midfielder
9	MAHDI TORABI	10-09-1994	M. TORABI	Midfielder
10	MILAD SARLAK	26-03-1995	M. SARLAK	Midfielder
11	KAMAL KAMYABINIA	18-01-1989	KAMAL	Midfielder
14	EHSAN PAHLAVAN	25-07-1993	E. PAHLAVAN	Midfielder
16	MEHDI ABDI	30-11-1998	M. ABDI	Forward
17	MEHDI SHIRI	31-01-1991	M.SHIRI	Defender
18	MOHAMMAD SHARIFI	21-03-2000	M. SHARIFI	Midfielder
19	VAHID AMIRI	02-04-1988	V. AMIRI	Forward
23	ALI SHOJAEI	27-01-1997	A. SHOJAEI	Midfielder
27	ALIREZA KHODAEI	02-03-2001	A.KHODAEI	Midfielder
34	AMIR MOHAMMAD YOUSEFI	24-02-2000	A.M. YOUSEFI	Goalkeeper
51	AMIR MOHAMMAD KHARKESH	18-02-2001	A.M.KHARKESH	Defender
70	SHAHRIYAR MOGHANLOO	21-12-1994	SHAHRIYAR	Forward
72	ISA ALKASIR	07-02-1990	I. ALKASIR	Forward
77	SAEID AGHAEI	09-02-1995	SAEID. A	Defender
80	MOHAMMAD OMARI	11-03-2000	M.OMARI	Midfielder
81	HAMED LAK	24-11-1990	H.LAK	Goalkeeper
88	SIAMAK NEMATI	17-04-1994	SIAMAK	Midfielder
97	MEHDI MEHDIKHANI	28-07-1997	M. MEHDIKHANI	Forward

HEAD COACH: Yahya Golmohammadi (IRN)



Yahya Golmohammadi spent most of his club career at Persepolis, winning three Iran Pro League titles and the Hazfi Cup before finding further success with Saba, who clinched the 2005 Iranian Super Cup. As a head coach, Golmohammadi managed several top clubs including Persepolis, Naft Tehran, Tractor Sazi and Shahr Khodro, finding the most success with Zobahan, where he won the Hazfi Cup in 2015 and 2016 as well as the Iranian Super Cup in the same year. Golmohammadi returned to Persepolis as head coach in January 2020, replacing Argentine Gabriel Calderon.



AL RAYYAN SC (QAT)



CLUB PROFILE

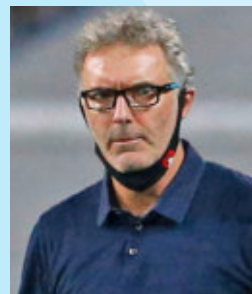
Eight-time domestic champions Al Rayyan qualified for the AFC Champions League 2021 by finishing runners-up in the 2019-20 Qatar Stars League.

This was the Doha-based club's 11th appearance in the Continental showpiece.

The club plays its home matches at the newly inaugurated 44,000-seater Ahmed Bin Ali Stadium – which was launched as one of the venues for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 and was the stage for the FIFA Club World Cup 2020.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	FAHAD YOUNIS	30-07-1994	F.YOUNIS	Goalkeeper
2	MOHAMED ALAAELDIN	24-01-1994	ALAA	Defender
3	SHOJAE KHALILZADEH	14-05-1989	SHOJA	Defender
4	FRANCK KOM	18-09-1991	F.KOM	Midfielder
5	DAME TRAORE	15-05-1986	DAME	Defender
6	ABDULRAHMAN ALKORBI	18-08-1994	A.AL-KORBI	Midfielder
7	KHALED MUFTAH	02-07-1992	K.MUFTAH	Defender
8	YACINE BRAHIMI	08-02-1990	BRAHIMI	Forward
11	ABDEL AZIZ HATIM	01-01-1990	A.AZIZ	Midfielder
13	SOUD ALHAJRI	19-07-1986	AL-HAJRI	Goalkeeper
14	SULTAN ALKUWARI	03-08-1995	AL-KUWARI	Forward
15	MOUFAK AWAD	11-05-1997	MOUFAK	Defender
16	ABDULRAHMAN ALHARAZI	01-01-1994	A.AL-HARAZI	Forward
17	ABDULAZIZ ALHASIA	31-08-1999	A.HAZAA	Forward
18	MEKKI TOMBARI	15-02-2001	M.TOMBARI	Forward
19	IBRAHIM MASOUD	25-11-1997	I.MASOUD	Midfielder
20	NAIF ALHADHRAMI	18-07-2001	NAIF	Midfielder
21	MOHAMMED JUMA	24-03-1986	M.JUMA	Defender
22	YOHAN BOLI	17-11-1993	BOLI	Forward
23	AHMED MOHAMED ELSAYED	23-03-1990	MAQSOU	Midfielder
24	YOUSIF UMAR	23-08-1999	YOUSIF	Defender
27	MUBARAK AL-NASSER	01-02-1999	MUBARAK	Defender
29	ALI ALYAZIDI	28-08-2000	ALI - YAZEDY	Midfielder
33	ALI FARYDOON	10-10-1992	FARYDOON	Forward
42	MOHAMMED AL-MARRI	05-04-2002	M.ALMARI	Forward
45	ABDALLA ELRADY	24-06-1998	RADY	Goalkeeper
70	KHALED ALI	05-10-2001	KHALID	Forward
74	TAMEEM MANSOUR	05-10-2002	T.MANSOUR	Forward
77	HADI ALI	14-09-2001	HADI	Forward
88	MOHAMMED AFIFA	20-11-2001	M.AFIFA	Forward

HEAD COACH: Laurent Blanc (FRA)



Laurent Blanc is one of the most recognisable managers in the modern era. Known for his vision and leadership qualities, Blanc was a defender who played for clubs such as Montpellier, Napoli, Barcelona, Marseille, Inter Milan and Manchester United. For France, Blanc was at his best in the 1998 FIFA World Cup and scored the first ever Golden Goal in the history of the tournament against Paraguay. France lifted the title, and it was the best moment of his career. The defender then went on to win the Euro 2000 and was a part of the team of the tournament.

Blanc scored 16 goals for France in 97 appearances before managing several clubs, most notably Bordeaux, the France national team and Paris St Germain. He would go on to win four titles with Bordeaux and 11 with PSG, including two national quadruples, and left a significant mark on the great history of the club.



FC GOA (IND)



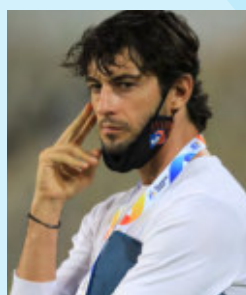
CLUB PROFILE

While they eventually lost to Bengaluru FC in the domestic Finals, FC Goa's consistency in the league stages was enough to inspire the world's second most populous nation and ensure India marked their debut with a serious challenge in the Continental showpiece.

The club, which was established on August 26, 2014, are nicknamed 'The Gaurs' and play their home matches at the Fatorda Stadium in Margao.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	DHEERAJ SINGH MOIRANGTHEM	04-07-2000	DHEERAJ	Goalkeeper
2	SANSON PEREIRA	02-10-1997	SANSON	Defender
4	IVAN GONZALEZ	02-02-1990	IVÃ N GONZALEZ	Defender
6	LEANDER D'CUNHA	25-10-1997	LEANDER	Defender
8	JAMES DONACHIE	14-05-1993	DONACHIE	Defender
9	JORGE ORTIZ MENDOZA	25-04-1992	ORTIZ	Midfielder
10	BRANDON FERNANDES	20-09-1994	BRANDON	Midfielder
11	PRINCETON REBELLO	05-03-1999	PRINCETON	Midfielder
13	MOHAMMAD NAWAZ	21-01-2000	NAWAZ	Goalkeeper
14	ALEXANDER ROMARIO JESURAJ	26-07-1996	ROMARIO	Midfielder
15	AMARJIT SINGH KIYAM	06-01-2001	AMARJIT	Midfielder
16	PHRANGKI BUAM	16-12-2000	P BUAM	Midfielder
18	ROMEO FERNANDES	06-07-1992	ROMEO	Midfielder
19	MAKAN CHOTHE	19-01-2000	CHOTHE	Midfielder
20	SERITON FERNANDES	26-10-1992	SERITON	Defender
21	SAVIOUR GAMA	10-05-1997	SAVIOUR	Defender
22	REDEEM TLANG	22-02-1995	REDEEM	Midfielder
23	EDUARDO PELAEZ	23-03-1989	EDU BEDIA	Midfielder
25	GLAN MARTINS	01-07-1994	GLAN	Midfielder
26	ISHAN PANDITA	26-05-1998	PANDITA	Forward
27	AIBANBHA DOHLING	23-03-1996	AIBAN	Defender
29	DEVENDRA MURGAOKAR	02-11-1998	DEVENDRA	Forward
31	SHUBHAM DHAS	07-10-1998	SHUBHAM	Goalkeeper
32	NAVEEN KUMAR	10-08-1989	NAVEEN	Goalkeeper
37	MOHAMED ALI	13-07-1992	ALI	Defender
42	SARINEO FERNANDES	09-02-1999	SARINEO	Defender
43	AAREN DSILVA	12-12-1997	AAREN	Forward
50	ADIL KHAN	07-07-1988	ADIL	Defender

HEAD COACH: Juan Ferrando Fenoll (SPA)



After several injuries as a footballer, Juan Ferrando Fenoll started his managerial career at age 18. He graduated from the school of RCD Espanyol, where he was the campus and methodological coordinator (fitness, tactical and technical football), and had his 'Pràcticum' at FC Barcelona B. He then spent consecutive seasons managing CE Premià, Terrassa, Hospitalet and Malaga.

Ferrando made his debut as a head coach in 2013 with Moldavan club FC Sheriff Tiraspol, with whom he won the Moldovan Super Cup. Ferrando would find success at Volos FC, winning promotion twice for the Greek side. He joined FC Goa in 2020 and clinched the Durand Cup the following season.



AL WAHDA FSCC (UAE)



CLUB PROFILE

Al Wahda FSCC finished third in the 2018-19 UAE Pro League and earned a slot in the Group Stage of the AFC Champions League 2021 after beating Al Zawraa of Iraq 2-1 in the Playoff. This was their 11th appearance in Asia's premier club competition.

After reaching the Quarter-finals in 2004, the club's best performance to date came in 2007 when they reached the last four before narrowly losing 2-1 on aggregate to Foolad Mobarakeh Sepahan from the Islamic Republic of Iran.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	MOHAMED HASAN ALSHAMSI	04-01-1997	ALSHAMSI	Goalkeeper
2	MOHAMED SALEH ALMENHALI	27-10-1990	ALMENHALI	Defender
3	LUCAS PIMENTA	17-07-2000	PIMENTA	Defender
7	KHALIL IBRAHIM ALHAMMADI	04-05-1993	KHALIL	Midfielder
8	TAHNOON HAMDAN ALZAABI	10-04-1999	TAHNOON	Midfielder
9	TIM MATAVZ	13-01-1989	TIM MATAVZ	Forward
10	ISMAEIL MATAR	07-04-1983	I.MATAR	Forward
13	KHAMIS ESMAEEL	16-08-1989	KHAMIS	Midfielder
15	MANSOR ALHARBI	14-07-1999	M.ALHARBI	Midfielder
17	AHMED AMER	09-07-2001	AHMED.A	Midfielder
21	ABDULLA ALKARBI	26-08-1998	ABDULLA.F	Defender
29	LEE MYUNG-JOO	24-04-1990	LEE	Midfielder
35	MOHAMED ADEL	20-07-1999	MOHAMED.A	Defender
37	AHMED RASHID	19-01-1997	AHMED	Defender
38	NAHYAN ADEL	15-01-2000	NAHYAN.A	Defender
39	MANEA AYED AL RUWAIS	16-10-2000	MAAYED.A	Defender
44	FARES JUMA	30-12-1988	FARES	Defender
45	ABDULLA ANWAR	02-06-1999	A. ANWAR	Forward
50	RASHED ALI	02-12-1989	RASHED.A	Goalkeeper
51	ZAYED ALHARTHI	28-09-2000	Z.ALHARTHI	Defender
61	ABDULLA HAMAD ALMENHALI	18-09-2001	ABDULLA.H	Midfielder
62	MOHAMED MESARRI	01-01-2001	MOHAMED.M	Defender
66	HAZAA AMMAR	26-09-1999	HAZAA	Goalkeeper
68	MOHAMED ALOBAIDI	24-01-2001	M.ALI	Defender
70	OMAR KHRBIN	15-01-1994	OMAR.K	Forward
71	MANSOOR SAEED ALMENHALI	29-09-2003	M.ALMENHALI	Forward
76	ABDULLA AHMED	13-06-2004	ABDULLA.A	Midfielder
77	AWADH MOHAMED ALKATHEERI	06-07-2004	AWADH.M	Forward
78	MANSOUR SALEH ALMENHALI	12-11-2004	MANSOUR.S	Defender
82	SAEED AHMED ALAMERI	05-01-2003	S.ALAMERI	Goalkeeper

HEAD COACH: Henk ten Cate (NED)



Dutchman Henk ten Cate is no stranger to Asia, having overseen UAE side Al Ahli, Qatar's Umm Salal and China PR's Shandong Luneng between 2010 and 2013. He began his coaching career in the Netherlands with Go Ahead Eagles, before managing Vitesse Arnhem and Ajax and serving as an assistant at both Barcelona and Chelsea. He joined Al Wahda from Emirati outfit Al Jazira in late 2018.



AFC
**CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™**

GROUP F

GROUP F



BG Pathum
United FC (THA)



Ulsan Hyundai
FC (KOR)



Viettel FC
(VIE)



Kaya FC Iloilo
(PHI)



BG PATHUM UNITED FC (THA)



CLUB PROFILE

On account of finishing first in the Thai League after the first half of the 2020-21 season, BG Pathum sealed their spot in the Group Stage of the AFC Champions League 2021.

This was their second appearance in the club showpiece after 2015 when they defeated Malaysia's Johor Darul Ta'zim in the Preliminary Stage, only to bow out against China PR's Beijing FC in the Playoffs.

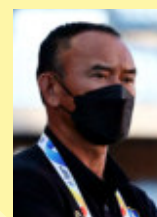
NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	CHATCHAI BOOTPROM	04-02-1987	CHATCHAI	Goalkeeper
3	THOSSAPOL CHOMCHON	09-12-1989	THOSSAPOL	Defender
4	CHAWAT VEERACHART	23-06-1996	CHAWAT	Midfielder
6	SARACH YOOYEN	30-05-1992	SARACH	Midfielder
8	THITIPHAN PUANGJAN	01-09-1993	THITIPHAN	Midfielder
9	SURACHAT SAREEPIM	24-05-1986	SURACHAT	Forward
10	TEERASIL DANGDA	06-06-1988	TEERASIL	Forward
11	SUMANYA PURISAY	05-12-1986	SUMANYA	Midfielder
13	ERNESTO PHUMIPHA	16-04-1990	ERNESTO	Defender
15	APISIT SORADA	28-02-1997	APISIT	Defender
18	PATHOMPON CHAROENRATTANAPIROM	21-04-1994	PATHOMPON	Midfielder
19	CHENROP SAMPHAODI	02-06-1995	CHENROP	Forward
24	CHATMONGKOL TONGKIRI	05-05-1997	CHATMONGKOL	Midfielder
25	FAHAS BILANGLD	23-03-1999	FAHAS	Goalkeeper
26	SAHARAT POSRI	19-06-1997	SAHARAT	Midfielder
27	KEVIN INGRESO	10-02-1993	INGRESO	Midfielder
29	CHATREE CHIMTALE	14-12-1983	CHATREE	Defender
33	PIYACHANOK DARIT	05-11-1992	PIYACHANOK	Defender
34	SARAWUT KOEDSRI	29-04-1989	SARAWUT	Defender
35	SIROD CHATTHONG	08-12-1992	SIROD	Forward
39	YODRAK NAMUEANGRAK	19-09-1989	YODRAK	Defender

HEAD COACH:

Surachai

Jaturapattarapong (THA)

Surachai Jaturapattarapong, who replaced Aurelio Vidmar in the Round of 16, boasts an extensive career in the Southeast Asia region, securing titles at both the national and club level as a player as well as a manager with Bangkok Glass.



FORMER HEAD COACH:

Aurelio Vidmar (AUS)

Aurelio Vidmar is no stranger to the AFC Champions League, having led Adelaide United's campaigns in 2007, 2008 and 2010 before taking charge of the Olyroos and Young Socceroos until 2016.



The former Australian international took charge of Bangkok Glass, now known as BG Pathum United in 2016, before coaching Singapore's Lion City Sailors.



ULSAN HYUNDAI FC (KOR)



CLUB PROFILE

Defending champions Ulsan Hyundai could have qualified for this year's AFC Champions League as reigning title-holders but reached Asia's pinnacle club stage on merit in what was their ninth appearance after finishing as runners-up in the 2020 K League.

They also won Asia's premier club competition in 2012 and play their home matches at the FIFA 2002 World Cup Venue – the Ulsan Munsu Stadium.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	JO SUHUK	18-03-1987	SUHUK	Goalkeeper
4	DAVY BULTHUIS	28-06-1990	BULTHUIS	Defender
6	PARK YONGWOO	10-09-1993	YONGWOO	Midfielder
7	KIM INSUNG	09-09-1989	INSUNG	Midfielder
8	VALERI QAZAISHVILI	29-01-1993	VAKO	Midfielder
9	KIM JIHYUN	22-07-1996	JIHYUN	Forward
10	YOON BITGARAM	07-05-1990	BITGARAM	Midfielder
13	KIM MINJUN	12-02-2000	MINJUN	Midfielder
15	KIM TAEHYEON	17-09-2000	TAEHYEON	Defender
18	KIM SUNG JOON	08-04-1988	SUNGJOON	Midfielder
19	OH SEHUN	15-01-1999	SEHUN	Forward
20	SHIN HYUNGMIN	18-07-1986	HYUNGMIN	Midfielder
21	JO HYEONWOO	25-09-1991	HYEONWOO	Goalkeeper
22	KOH MYONGJIN	09-01-1988	MYONGJIN	Midfielder
23	KIM TAE HWAN	24-07-1989	TAEHWAN	Defender
24	LUKAS HINTERSEER	28-03-1991	HINTERSEER	Forward
27	LEE MYUNG JAE	04-11-1993	MYUNGJAE	Defender
33	HONG CHUL	17-09-1990	CHUL	Defender
36	LIM JONGEUN	18-06-1990	JONGEUN	Defender
44	KIM KEEHEE	13-07-1989	KEEHEE	Defender
72	LEE CHUNGYONG	02-07-1988	CHUNGYONG	Midfielder

HEAD COACH: Hong Myong-bo (KOR)



Hong Myong-bo is regarded as one of the greatest footballers in Korea Republic, having played in the top-tier leagues in Korea Republic, Japan and the United States. After hanging up his boots in 2005, Hong turned to coaching, with his first assignment as an assistant coach for Dick Advocaat's squad in the 2006 FIFA World Cup.

The former Korea Republic international was appointed as the U-20 national team head coach, before taking the reins of the U-23 team, where he made history by securing a first-ever bronze medal in the 2012 Olympics.

Hong subsequently served as the head coach for the national team for one year, and then moved to China PR to manage Hangzhou Greentown, before replacing AFC Champions League 2020 winning coach Kim Do-hoon at the helm of Ulsan Hyundai.



VIETTEL FC (VIE)



CLUB PROFILE

2020 V League 1 Champions Viettel FC made their AFC Champions League debut in 2021. Their only previous appearance at an elite Continental competition was in 1999-2000, when they lost to Suwon Samsung Bluewings in the second round of the Asian Club Championship.

One of the most successful clubs in Vietnam with 19 V-League titles, Viettel was founded in 1954 as an army sports club and have since remained an integral part of Vietnam's footballing ecosystem.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	NGO XUAN SON	17-01-1997	N.XUAN SON	Goalkeeper
3	QUE NGOC HAI	15-05-1993	Q.NGOC HAI	Defender
4	B T DUNG	02-10-1995	B.TIEN DUNG	Defender
5	TRUONG VAN THIET	07-06-1995	T.VAN THIET	Defender
7	CAIQUE LEMES	12-07-1993	CAIQUE	Forward
8	NGUYEN TRONG HOANG	14-04-1989	N. TRONG HOANG	Midfielder
9	TRAN NGOC SON	29-10-1996	T. NGOC SON	Midfielder
10	PEDRO PAULO REIS	10-02-1994	PEDRO	Forward
11	JAHONGIR ABDUMUMINOV	09-02-1993	JA HA	Midfielder
14	BUI QUANG KHAI	19-05-1993	B.QUANG KHAI	Midfielder
20	NHAM MANH DUNG	12-04-2000	N.MANH DUNG	Forward
22	NGUYEN HUU THANG	19-05-2000	N. HUU THANG	Midfielder
25	QUANG THE TAI	10-09-1996	Q.THE TAI	Goalkeeper
28	NGUYEN HOANG DUC	11-01-1998	N.HOANG DUC	Forward
29	TRUONG TIEN ANH	25-04-1999	T.TIEN ANH	Midfielder
33	DUONG VAN HAO	15-02-1997	D.VAN HAO	Forward
68	NGUYEN VIET PHONG	23-03-1993	N.VIET PHONG	Forward
77	NGUYEN TRONG DAI	07-04-1997	N.TRONG DAI	Midfielder
88	BUI DUY THUONG	05-04-1996	B.DUY THUONG	Defender
92	NGUYEN DUC HOANG MINH	20-02-1998	N.D.HOANG MINH	Midfielder
93	NGUYEN THANH BINH	02-11-2000	N.THANH BINH	Defender

HEAD COACH: Heinz-Jurgen Gede (GER)



Heinz-Jurgen Gede has amassed a wealth of experience as a manager in Germany and Asia that includes clubs like Islamic Republic of Iran's Persepolis, Al Ahli of Bahrain and Malaysia's Kuala Lumpur FC.

The former midfielder also coached various national teams, including the IR Iran U-23 squad and the Uzbekistan senior team, before settling for a technical director role in Vietnam.



KAYA FC ILOILO (PHI)



CLUB PROFILE

2020 Philippines Football League runners-up, Kaya FC Iloilo made their maiden AFC Champions League appearance in 2021.

An illustrious club at the domestic level, Kaya FC have won the UFL Cup and the UFL Super Cup in 2015 and 2014 respectively, apart from winning the Copa Paulino Alcantara in 2018. They have also featured in the AFC Cup thrice but were unable to progress past the Group Stage.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	ZACH BANZON	08-10-1996	BANZON	Goalkeeper
4	MASANARI OMURA	14-07-1984	MASANARI	Defender
5	CAMELO TACUSALME	05-08-1989	TACUSALME	Defender
7	JOVIN BEDIC	08-06-1990	BEDIC	Forward
8	MARWIN ANGELES	09-01-1991	ANGELES	Midfielder
9	ERIC GIGANTO	09-05-1994	GIGANTO	Forward
10	KENSHIRO DANIELS	13-01-1995	DANIELS	Forward
13	JESUS MELLIZA	20-04-1992	MELLIZA	Forward
14	RYO FUJII	07-08-1996	FUJII	Midfielder
15	MARCO CASAMBRE	18-12-1998	CASAMBRE	Defender
17	ARNEL ABULOC AMITA	10-01-1995	AMITA	Midfielder
18	JAVIER GAYOSO	11-02-1997	GAYOSO	Forward
19	CARLYLE MITCHELL	08-08-1987	MITCHELL	Defender
20	DAIZO HORIKOSHI	14-09-1996	DAIZO	Forward
21	DYLAN DE BRUYCKER	05-12-1997	DE BRUYCKER	Midfielder
22	FITCH ARBOLEDA	04-01-1993	ARBOLEDA	Forward
23	SIMONE ROTA	06-11-1984	ROTA	Defender
25	LOUIE CASAS	12-03-1986	CASAS	Goalkeeper
27	SHIRMAR FELONGCO	27-04-1993	FELONGCO	Defender
44	AUDIE MENZI	11-10-1994	MENZI	Defender

HEAD COACH: Graham Harvey (ENG)



Graham Harvey began his managerial career as a youth coach in Australia with Brisbane Strikers, Whitsunday Miners and Western Pride. The 37-year-old then worked under Chan Yuen-ting in Eastern SC from 2018 as an assistant coach, and continued to assist the 2016 AFC Women Coach of the Year in China PR's AFC U-16 Women's Championship a year later.



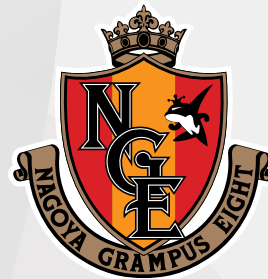
AFC
**CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™**

GROUP G

GROUP G



FC Pohang
Steelers (KOR)



Nagoya
Grampus (JPN)



Johor Darul
Ta'zim (MAS)



Ratchaburi FC
(THA)



FC POHANG STEELERS (KOR)



CLUB PROFILE

Founded in 1973, 10 years before the commencement of the K League, FC Pohang Steelers are the oldest professional football club in the Korea Republic.

An integral part of Korean football history, the club's distinctive red-and-black horizontal stripes have become the symbol of a team respected and revered not only in the country but across the Continent.

Having produced a legion of international stars for the national team, including the likes of Hong Myung-bo, Hwang Sun-hong and Lee Dong-gook, Pohang have won the K League on five occasions (1986, 1988, 1992, 2007 and 2013), the FA Cup four times (1996, 2008, 2012 and 2013), the AFC Club Championship twice (1996-97 and 1997-98), as well as the AFC Champions League in 2009.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
2	ALEX GRANT	23-01-1994	GRANT	Defender
3	LEE KWANG-JUN	08-01-1996	KWANGJUN	Defender
4	JEON MIN-GWANG	17-01-1993	MINGWANG	Defender
6	SIN JIN-HO	07-09-1988	JINHO	Midfielder
7	BORIS TASHTI	26-07-1993	TASHTI	Forward
10	KANG SANGWOO	07-10-1993	SANGWOO	Defender
13	KWON WAN-KYU	20-11-1991	WANKYU	Defender
14	OH BEOM-SEOK	29-07-1984	BEOMSEOK	Midfielder
16	LEE SEUNGMO	30-03-1998	SEUNGMO	Midfielder
17	SHIN KWANG-HOON	18-03-1987	KWANGHOON	Defender
20	LEE HO-JAE	14-10-2000	HOJAE	Forward
22	PARK JAE-WOO	06-03-1998	JAEWOO	Defender
27	LEE SEOK-GYU	14-12-1999	SEOKGYU	Midfielder
30	KIM RYUN-SEONG	04-06-2002	RYUNSEONG	Defender
31	KANG HYEONMU	13-03-1995	HYEONMU	Goalkeeper
41	CHO SUNG-HOON	21-04-1998	SUNGHOON	Goalkeeper
57	LEE SOO-BIN	07-05-2000	SOOBIN	Midfielder
77	LIM SANG-HYUB	08-07-1988	SANGHYUB	Forward
79	GOH YOUNG-JUN	09-07-2001	YOUNGJUN	Midfielder
88	KWON GIPYO	26-06-1997	GIPYO	Forward
91	NOH JI-HUN	01-04-1999	JIHUN	Goalkeeper

HEAD COACH: Kim Gi-dong (KOR)



Kim Gi-dong first made his mark in Korean football with the Yukong Elephants - now known as Jeju United - as a midfielder from 1993 to 2002, and was at his peak with Pohang Steelers to claim the AFC Champions League title in 2009 before retiring in 2011.

The former Korea Republic international took a crack as a coaching assistant with the Korea Republic U-23 team in 2013, before returning to Pohang Steelers to manage the youth team three years later, and was later appointed the head coach of the senior team in 2019.



NAGOYA GRAMPUS (JPN)



CLUB PROFILE

Nagoya Grampus sealed qualification for the 2021 edition of the AFC Champions League by finishing third in the 2020 J.League. This was their fourth appearance in the Continent's premier club stage, having previously appeared in 2012.

The team shares its home matches between the Mizuho Athletic Stadium (J.League's oldest serving stadium) and the Toyota Stadium, and are a club steeped in history, having enjoyed one of their most successful seasons in 1995 when they were managed by the legendary Arsene Wenger.

They won the Emperor's Cup and finished second in the J.League, with Dragan Stojkovic and Gary Lineker in the team. The 1995 success was eclipsed in 2010, when the club won its first J.League trophy, coincidentally under the management of Stojkovic.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
4	SHINNOSUKE NAKATANI	24-03-1996	SHINNOSUKE	Defender
5	KAZUKI NAGASAWA	16-12-1991	NAGASAWA	Midfielder
6	KAZUYA MIYAHARA	22-03-1996	KAZUYA	Defender
7	HIROYUKI ABE	05-07-1989	ABE	Midfielder
8	YOICHIRO KAKITANI	03-01-1990	YOICHIRO	Forward
9	RYOGO YAMASAKI	20-09-1992	YAMASAKI	Forward
10	GABRIEL XAVIER	15-07-1993	GABRIEL XAVIER	Forward
11	YUKI SOMA	25-02-1997	SOMA	Forward
13	HARUYA FUJII	26-12-2000	HARUYA	Defender
14	YASUKI KIMOTO	06-08-1993	KIMOTO	Defender
15	SHO INAGAKI	25-12-1991	INAGAKI	Midfielder
16	MATEUS CASTRO	11-09-1994	MATEUS	Forward
17	RYOYA MORISHITA	11-04-1997	MORISHITA	Defender
18	TSUBASA SHIBUYA	27-01-1995	TSUBASA	Goalkeeper
19	MANABU SAITO	04-04-1990	MANABU	Forward
21	YOHEI TAKEDA	30-06-1987	TAKEDA	Goalkeeper
23	YUTAKA YOSHIDA	17-02-1990	YUTAKA	Defender
24	RYOTARO ISHIDA	13-12-2001	ISHIDA	Midfielder
25	NAOKI MAEDA	17-11-1994	NAOKI	Forward
26	SHUMPEI NARUSE	17-01-2001	SHUMPEI	Defender
27	SHUNTO KODAMA	03-12-1998	KODAMA	Midfielder

HEAD COACH: Massimo Faccadenti (ITA)



Massimo Faccadenti is an Italian player turned coach, who began coaching after almost two decades as a midfielder in Serie A with Verona. Having coached clubs like Cesena and Cagliari, Massimo made his move to Asia in 2014 with FC Tokyo and Sagan Tosu in 2016, before replacing Yahiro Kazama as the Nagoya Grampus boss.



JOHOR DARUL TA'ZIM (MAS)



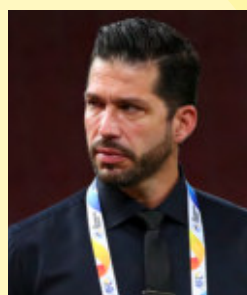
CLUB PROFILE

An undeniable powerhouse in Malaysian club football in recent seasons, Johor Darul Ta'zim made their third appearance in the AFC Champions League Group Stage after winning the Malaysian Super League in 2020 for the sixth consecutive time.

In 2015, Johor Darul Ta'zim also became the first Malaysian side to win a Continental club title when they lifted the AFC Cup, defeating FC Istiklol from Tajikistan in the Final.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	FARIZAL MARLIAS	29-06-1986	FARIZAL	Goalkeeper
2	MATTHEW DAVIES	07-02-1995	DAVIES	Defender
3	ADAM NOR AZLIN	05-01-1996	ADAM NOR	Defender
4	AFIQ FAZAIL	29-09-1994	AFIQ	Midfielder
5	SYAMER KUTTY	01-10-1997	SYAMER	Midfielder
8	SAFIQ RAHIM	05-07-1987	SAFIQ	Midfielder
9	BERGSON DA SILVA	09-02-1991	BERGSON	Midfielder
10	LEANDRO VELAZQUEZ	10-05-1989	LEANDRO	Midfielder
12	KUNANLAN SUBRAMANIAM	15-09-1986	S. KUNANLAN	Midfielder
13	MOHAMADOU SUMAREH	20-09-1994	SUMAREH	Midfielder
14	SHANE LOWRY	12-06-1989	LOWRY	Defender
17	RAMADHAN SAIFULLAH	09-12-2000	RAMADHAN	Forward
19	AKHYAR RASHID	01-05-1999	AKHYAR.R	Midfielder
20	MOHD AZRIF NASRULHAQ	27-05-1991	AZRIF	Defender
21	NAZMI FAIZ	16-08-1994	NAZMI FAIZ	Midfielder
24	IZHAM TARMIZI	24-04-1991	IZHAM	Goalkeeper
28	SYAFIQ AHMAD	28-06-1995	SYAFIQ	Midfielder
30	NATXO INSA	09-06-1986	NATXO INSA	Midfielder
33	MAURICIO NASCIMENTO	20-09-1988	MAURICIO	Defender
42	ARIF AIMAN	04-05-2002	ARIF	Midfielder
43	FIRDAUS RAMLI	10-03-2002	FIRDAUS	Defender

HEAD COACH: Benjamin Mora (MEX)



Benjamin Mora first joined Johor Darul Ta'zim after stints as an assistant coach back in Mexico, and was in charge of the reserve team from 2015 to 2017, which gave him an in-depth knowledge of the team's resources as he was later called upon as caretaker for the first team in mid-2017. Following Luciano Figueroa's departure in 2020, Mora was the clear choice for the role.



RATCHABURI FC (THA)



CLUB PROFILE

Ratchaburi FC were placed fourth after the first half of the 2020–21 Thai League 1 season to qualify for the AFC Champions League 2021.

Nicknamed the Dragons, the team has been impressive domestically, winning the Thai Division 1 title in 2012 and the FA Cup title in 2016. They were pitted against Pohang Steelers, Johor Darul Ta'zim and Nagoya Grampus in Group G of the 2021 competition.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
5	NUKOOLKIT KRUTYAI	23-09-1992	NUKOOLKIT	Defender
7	JAKKAPAN PORNSAI	28-03-1987	JAKKAPAN	Midfielder
8	PRAWEEWAT BOONYONG	13-02-1990	PRAWEEWAT	Defender
9	APIWAT PENGPRAKON	22-08-1988	APIWAT	Forward
11	STEEVEN LANGIL	04-03-1988	S.LANGIL	Forward
14	MONTREE PROMSAWAT	27-08-1995	MONTREE	Midfielder
16	KASIDECH WATTAYAWONG	21-01-1994	WATTAYAWONG	Midfielder
19	KRITSANANON SRISUWAN	16-12-1994	KRITSANANON	Midfielder
20	SEBASTIEN WUTHRICH	29-05-1990	WUTHRICH	Midfielder
21	JIRAWAT THONGSAENPHRAO	31-05-1998	JIRAWAT	Defender
23	NARAKORN NOOMCHANSAKOOL	12-04-1999	NARAKORN	Midfielder
24	SITTICHOK KANNOO	09-08-1996	SITTICHOCK	Forward
27	UKRIT WONGMEEMA	09-07-1991	UKRIT	Goalkeeper
28	EKKALARP HANPANICHKIJ	08-05-1994	EKKALARP	Midfielder
29	KIATTISAK CHIAMUDOM	19-10-1994	KIATTISAK	Defender
31	PATHOMCHAI SUEESAKUL	10-08-1988	PATHOMCHAI	Midfielder
36	THANASET SUJARIT	15-11-1994	THANASET	Defender
39	PAWEE TANTHATEMEE	22-10-1996	PAWEE	Defender
92	SANRAWAT DECHMITR	03-08-1989	DECHMITR	Midfielder
96	PHAKHIN KHAMWILAISAK	29-08-1986	PHAKHIN	Midfielder
99	KAMPON PHATOMAKKAKUL	27-07-1992	KAMPON	Goalkeeper

HEAD COACH: Sek-San Siripong (THA)



Sek-San Siripong became a licensed coach back in 2014, and was called upon to replace Serbian coach Miloš Jokić ahead of Ratchaburi FC's debut in the AFC Champions League.



AFC
**CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™**

GROUP H

GROUP H



Jeonbuk
Hyundai Motors
FC (KOR)



Gamba Osaka
(JPN)



Tampines
Rovers FC (SIN)



Chiangrai
United (THA)



JEONBUK HYUNDAI MOTORS FC (KOR)



CLUB PROFILE

Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors retained their K League 1 title to qualify for the AFC Champions League 2021. This was the seventh time they won the national title, with the first win coming in 2009.

They also won the Korean FA Cup in 2020, adding to their three previous successes in 2000, 2003 and 2005.

The Korea Republic side have an impressive track record on the Continental stage, having won the coveted title twice before - in 2006 and again in 2016, as well as a runners-up finish in 2011.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	LEE BUM YOUNG	02-04-1989	BUMYOUNG	Goalkeeper
2	LEE YONG	24-12-1986	YONG	Defender
3	CHOI HEEWON	11-05-1999	HEEWON	Defender
4	CHOI YOUNG JUN	15-12-1991	YOUNGJUN	Midfielder
5	PAIK SEUNGHO	17-03-1997	SEUNGHO	Midfielder
6	CHOI BOKYUNG	12-04-1988	BOKYUNG	Defender
7	HAN KYO WON	15-06-1990	KYOWON	Forward
9	GUSTAVO HENRIQUE SOUSA	29-03-1994	GUSTAVO	Forward
10	STANISLAV ILJUTCENKO	13-08-1990	ILJUTCENKO	Forward
11	MODOU BARROW	13-10-1992	BARROW	Forward
13	KIM BOKYUNG	06-10-1989	BOKYUNG	Midfielder
14	LEE SEUNGGI	02-06-1988	SEUNGGI	Midfielder
15	KU JARYONG	06-04-1992	JARYONG	Defender
17	TAKAHIRO KUNIMOTO	08-10-1997	KUNIMOTO	Midfielder
19	LEE JIHOON	02-03-2002	JIHOON	Forward
24	KIM SEUNGDAE	01-04-1991	SEUNGDAE	Forward
26	HONG JEONGHO	12-08-1989	JEONGHO	Defender
29	RYU JAEMOON	08-11-1993	JAEMOON	Midfielder
33	PARK JINSEONG	15-05-2001	JINSEONG	Defender
41	HWANG BYEONGGEUN	14-06-1994	BYEONGGEUN	Goalkeeper
92	KIM MINHYEOK	27-02-1992	MINHYEOK	Defender

HEAD COACH: Kim Sang-sik (KOR)



Kim Sang-sik ended his prolific centre-back career with Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors FC in 2013, and almost immediately pursued coaching with the same club as an assistant coach. The 44-year-old gained valuable insights and experience, having worked under AFC Champions League winner Choi Kang-hee and Jose Morais, before being called upon to take the reins at the end of 2020, following Morais' departure.



GAMBA OSAKA (JPN)



CLUB PROFILE

Winners of the AFC Champions League in 2008 when they beat Adelaide United of Australia 5-0 in the Final, Gamba Osaka went close to adding to the accolade in 2015 but were beaten 2-1 on aggregate in the Semi-finals by eventual champions Guangzhou Evergrande of China PR.

The Japanese outfit qualified for this year's tournament by finishing runners-up in the 2020 J.League. In the Group Stage of this edition, they were pitted against Jeonbuk Hyundai of Korea Republic, Tampines Rovers of Singapore and Sydney FC of Australia.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	MASAAKI HIGASHIGUCHI	12-05-1986	HIGASHIGUCHI	Goalkeeper
3	GEN SHOJI	11-12-1992	SHOJI	Defender
5	GENTA MIURA	01-03-1995	MIURA	Defender
8	KOSUKE ONOSE	22-04-1993	ONOSE	Midfielder
9	LEANDRO MARCOS PEREIRA	13-07-1991	LEANDRO PEREIRA	Forward
10	SHU KURATA	26-11-1988	KURATA	Midfielder
13	SHUNYA SUGANUMA	17-05-1990	SUGANUMA	Defender
14	YUYA FUKUDA	04-04-1999	FUKUDA	Midfielder
15	YOSUKE IDEGUCHI	23-08-1996	IDEGUCHI	Midfielder
16	YOTA SATO	10-09-1998	SATO	Defender
17	KOHEI OKUNO	03-04-2000	OKUNO	Midfielder
18	ANDERSON PATRIC OLIVEIRA	26-10-1987	PATRIC	Forward
19	KIM YOUNGGWON	27-02-1990	YOUNGGWON	Defender
20	KAZUNARI ICHIMI	10-11-1997	ICHIMI	Forward
21	SHINYA YAJIMA	18-01-1994	YAJIMA	Midfielder
24	KEISUKE KUROKAWA	13-04-1997	KUROKAWA	Defender
25	KEI ISHIKAWA	30-09-1992	ISHIKAWA	Goalkeeper
28	WELLINGTON DA SILVA	06-01-1993	WELLINGTON	Midfielder
29	YUKI YAMAMOTO	06-11-1997	YAMAMOTO	Midfielder
34	SHUHEI KAWASAKI	28-04-2001	KAWASAKI	Forward
39	TAKASHI USAMI	06-05-1992	USAMI	Forward

HEAD COACH:

Masanobu Matsunami (JPN)



After 13 years of playing for Gamba Osaka that ended in 2005, Masanobu Matsunami transitioned to the coaching staff of the youth team and worked closely with Akira Nishino's 2010 AFC Champions League squad to reach the Round of 16.

Masanobu then replaced José Carlos Serrão as the head coach for a short stint in 2012 and led Gamba Osaka in the 2012 AFC Champions League before resigning and coaching J3 League club Gainare Tottori from 2014 to 2015. In early 2021, Masanobu returned to lead Gamba Osaka.



TAMPINES ROVERS FC (SIN)



CLUB PROFILE

By finishing runners-up in the 2020 Singapore Premier League, Tampines Rovers qualified for the 2021 edition of the AFC Champions League.

The Eastern-based club – one of the most successful in the region – have won the domestic league title eight times (1979, 1980, 1984, 2004, 2005, 2011, 2012 and 2013), the Singapore Cup on four occasions (2002, 2004, 2006 and 2019), the Singapore Charity Shield five times (2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2020) as well as the 2005 ASEAN Club Championship.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
3	MUHAMMAD RYAAN SANIZAL	31-05-2002	RYAAN	Defender
4	HUZAIFAH ABD AZIZ	27-06-1994	HUZAIFAH	Midfielder
5	BAIHAKKI KHAIZAN	31-01-1984	BAI	Defender
6	MADHU M MOHANA	06-03-1991	MADHU	Defender
7	MUHAMMAD YASIR HANAPI	21-06-1989	YASIR	Midfielder
8	KYOGA NAKAMURA	25-04-1996	KYOGA	Midfielder
9	BORIS KOPITOVIC	27-04-1995	KOPITOVIC	Forward
10	ZEHRUDIN MEHMEDOVIC	15-03-1998	MEHMEDOVIC	Midfielder
11	ARMIN BOSNJAK	20-04-1994	BOSNJAK	Midfielder
12	MUHAMMAD AMIRUL HAIKAL	11-10-1999	AMIRUL	Midfielder
14	MARC RYAN TAN	18-01-2002	MARC RYAN	Midfielder
16	BENNETT DANIEL MARK	07-01-1978	BENNETT	Defender
17	IRWAN SHAH ARISMAIL	02-11-1988	IRWAN	Defender
18	IMAN HAKIM IBRAHIM	09-03-2002	IMAN	Midfielder
19	MOHAMED ZULFAIRUUZ RUDY	22-05-1994	ZULFAIRUUZ	Goalkeeper
23	MOHAMMAD IRFAN NAJEEB	31-07-1999	IRFAN	Defender
24	MUHAMMAD SYAZWAN BUHARI	22-09-1992	SYAZWAN	Goalkeeper
28	FAZRUL NAWAZ SHAHUL HAMEED	17-04-1985	FAZRUL N.	Forward
44	DANIAL ILIYA KHAIRUDDIN	06-02-2003	DANIAL	Goalkeeper
45	ANDREW AW	29-03-2003	ANDREW	Defender
57	ADAM REEFDY HASYIM	08-05-2004	ADAM R.	Defender

HEAD COACH: Akbar Nawas (SIN)



Akbar Nawas experienced a brief footballing career with Marine Castle United - now known as Hougang United FC - in 1998, and after completing his undergraduate, the 46-year-old dabbled in coaching and was given the opportunity to lead the Singapore U-19 squad in the 2012 AFC U-19 Championship qualifiers.

Akbar then became an assistant coach under V. Sundramoorthy at Tampines Rovers, before taking charge of the team in mid-2016 to reach the AFC Cup Knockout Stage. He later moved to the Philippines to manage Global Cebu FC in 2017, and joined Chennai City FC a year later, where he led the club to their first-ever I-League title.



CHIANGRAI UNITED (THA)



CLUB PROFILE

Last year, Chiangrai finally featured in the Group Stage of the AFC Champions League after bowing out in the Playoffs in the previous two editions. Similarly, this season they were vying to emulate their form in the Playoffs after finishing third in the Thai League 1.

Established in 2009, Chiangrai play their home matches at the Singha Stadium, and have been consistent domestically, winning the treble of the Thai League Cup, the Thai FA Cup and the Thai Champions Cup in 2018 before winning the league for the first time in 2019.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	SARANON ANUIN	24-03-1994	SARANON	Goalkeeper
2	WASAN HOMSAEN	29-09-1991	WASAN	Defender
3	TANASAK SRISAI	25-09-1989	TANASAK.S	Defender
5	BRINNER HENRIQUE SOUZA	16-07-1987	BRINNER	Defender
6	PHITIWAT SOOKJITTHAMMAKUL	01-02-1995	PHITIWAT	Midfielder
7	FELIPE AMORIM	04-01-1991	FELIPE	Midfielder
8	CHO JI HUN	29-05-1990	CHO JI HUN	Midfielder
9	ROSIMAR AMANCIO	02-07-1984	BILL	Forward
10	SIVAKORN TIATRAKUL	07-07-1994	T.SIVAKORN	Forward
14	SANUKRAN THINJOM	12-09-1993	T.SANUKRAN	Midfielder
15	NATTAWUT JAROENBUT	21-04-1991	J.NATTAWUT	Midfielder
16	AKARAWIN SAWASDEE	26-09-1990	AKARAWIN	Forward
17	SOMKID CHAMNARNSILP	07-01-1993	SOMKID	Midfielder
22	APIRAK WORAWONG	07-01-1996	APIRAK	Goalkeeper
27	GIONATA VERZURA	27-05-1992	GIONATA	Midfielder
30	SURIYA SINGMUI	07-04-1995	S.SURIYA	Defender
36	SHINNAPHAT LEEAOH	02-02-1997	SHINNAPHAT	Defender
37	EKANIT PANYA	21-10-1999	EKANIT	Midfielder
46	PHARADON PHATTHAPHON	23-09-2001	PHARADON	Defender

HEAD COACH: Alongkorn Thongaum (THA)



Alongkorn Thongaum was the assistant to Brazilian head coach Ailton Silva in 2019, when Chiangrai United were crowned Thai League champions for the first time. He continued to play a crucial role in assisting Masami Taki's team in Chiangrai United's AFC Champions League debut a year later.



AFC
**CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™**

GROUP I

GROUP I



Kawasaki
Frontale (JPN)



Beijing FC
(CHN)



United City FC
(PHI)



Daegu FC
(KOR)



KAWASAKI FRONTALE (JPN)



CLUB PROFILE

Kawasaki Frontale won the 2020 J.League as well as the 2020 Emperor's Cup to qualify once again for the AFC Champions League, having last played in the 2019 edition where they exited in the Group Stage.

Kawasaki equalled their best-ever performance in 2017 when they advanced to the Quarter-finals – as they did in 2007 and 2009 – only to lose to eventual champions and fellow J.League side Urawa Red Diamonds.

Their other outings at the Continental showpiece include losing in the Round of 16 in 2014 and two more appearances in the Group Stages in 2010 and 2018.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
5	SHOGO TANIGUCHI	15-07-1991	TANIGUCHI	Defender
7	SHINTARO KURUMAYA	05-04-1992	KURUMAYA	Defender
8	YASUTO WAKIZAKA	11-06-1995	YASUTO	Midfielder
9	LEANDRO DAMIAO SANTOS	22-07-1989	L.DAMIAO	Forward
10	RYOTA OHSHIMA	23-01-1993	OHSHIMA	Midfielder
13	MIKI YAMANE	22-12-1993	YAMANE	Defender
15	ZAIN ISSAKA	29-05-1997	ISSAKA	Defender
16	TATSUYA HASEGAWA	07-03-1994	TATSUYA	Midfielder
17	KAZUKI KOZUKA	02-08-1994	KAZUKI	Midfielder
18	KAORU MITOMA	20-05-1997	MITOMA	Midfielder
19	DAIYA TONO	14-03-1999	TONO	Forward
20	KEI CHINEN	17-03-1995	CHINEN	Forward
21	SHUNSUKE ANDO	10-08-1990	ANDO	Goalkeeper
22	KENTO TACHIBANADA	29-05-1998	TACHIBANADA	Midfielder
24	TEN MIYAGI	02-06-2001	MIYAGI	Forward
26	KAITO KAMIYA	16-06-1997	KAMIYA	Defender
27	KENTA TANNO	30-08-1986	TANNO	Goalkeeper
28	KAZUYA YAMAMURA	02-12-1989	YAMAMURA	Midfielder
30	SHUTO TANABE	05-05-2002	TANABE	Defender
41	AKIHIRO IENAGA	13-06-1986	IENAGA	Midfielder

HEAD COACH: Toru Oniki (JPN)



Toru Oniki was named head coach of Kawasaki Frontale in 2017, replacing Yahiro Kazama after six years as the coach, and ended their J1 League title drought in the same year. Kawasaki Frontale then successfully defended the title a year later, before claiming a third in 2020.



BEIJING FC (CHN)



CLUB PROFILE

Beijing FC's third place finish in the 2020 Chinese Super League ensured they qualified for the AFC Champions League 2021, which marked their 10th appearance in the competition.

The Chinese side were looking to emulate their best ever performance last year for inspiration when they reached the Quarter-finals, only to succumb to eventual champions Ulsan Hyundai of Korea Republic.

They have reached the Knockout Stage of the AFC Champions League on three occasions but were eliminated in the Round of 16 (2010, 2013 and 2015) each time.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
25	GUO QUANBO	31-08-1997	GUO Q.B.	Goalkeeper
31	LI BOXI	30-10-2000	LI B.X.	Forward
35	JIANG WENHAO	16-01-2000	JIANG W.H.	Midfielder
36	LIANG SHAOWEN	12-06-2002	LIANG SH.W.	Defender
38	RUAN QILONG	02-01-2001	RUAN Q.L.	Defender
39	XIE LONG FEI	15-07-2000	XIE L.F.	Midfielder
40	GAO JIAN	29-01-2002	GAO J.	Midfielder
61	LENG JIXUAN	30-04-2001	LENG J.X.	Forward
62	LING ZHONGYANG	02-01-2001	LING ZH.Y.	Defender
63	NAIBJIANG MOHEMAITI	10-07-2001	NABI	Midfielder
64	XU DONGDONG	07-11-2001	XU D.D.	Defender
65	HE XIAOQIANG	05-06-2002	HE X.Q.	Defender
66	HU JIAQI	13-08-2001	HU J.Q.	Midfielder
68	ZHOU WENFENG	22-01-2001	ZHOU W.F.	Midfielder
69	DUAN DEZHI	22-11-2001	DUAN D.ZH.	Midfielder
71	MA YUJUN	15-02-2003	MA Y.J.	Midfielder
76	WU XIAOPENG	25-03-2002	WU X.P.	Goalkeeper
77	LI JU	10-01-2002	LI J.	Midfielder
78	CHEN HUAIYUAN	09-03-2002	CHEN H.Y.	Midfielder
88	SHI YUCHENG	09-05-2001	SHI Y.CH.	Midfielder
99	CHEN YANPU	12-03-2001	CHEN Y.P.	Midfielder

HEAD COACH: Zoran Jankovic (SRB)



Three-time Bulgarian Cup winner Zoran Jankovic immediately transitioned to coaching FK Indija in 2011, and his past ties as a player with Dalian Shide - whom he helped secure a domestic double in 2005 - saw him move back to China PR to coach Heilongjiang Lava Spring in 2016. He then assisted Milovan Rajevac's Thailand squad a year later, and was in charge of the Thai U-23 team during the 2018 AFC U23 Championship.



UNITED CITY FC (PHI)



CLUB PROFILE

As winners of the 2020 Philippines Football League (PFL), United City FC sealed their spot in the newly expanded AFC Champions League Group Stage for the first time.

Formerly known as Ceres Negros FC, they have been a dominant force domestically, winning the PFL title in three consecutive seasons – from 2017 to 2019, as well as the 2019 Copa Paulino Alcantara. In 2019, they completed the domestic double without a single loss.

They have featured in the Preliminary and Playoff stages of the AFC Champions League on four occasions and have enjoyed an illustrious record in the AFC Cup, reaching the Inter Zone Semi-final in 2017 as well as the ASEAN Zonal Final in 2018.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	ANTHONY PINTHUS	04-04-1998	PINTHUS	Goalkeeper
3	POCHOLO BUGAS	03-12-2001	BUGAS	Midfielder
7	BIENVENIDO MARANON	15-05-1986	MARAÑ ON	Midfielder
8	KIERAN HAYES	04-01-1999	HAYES	Forward
10	OMID DAVID NAZARI	29-04-1991	O. NAZARI	Midfielder
11	JOSE MIGUEL CLARINO	01-02-1997	CLARINO	Defender
12	STEPHAN SCHROCK	21-08-1986	SCHROCK	Midfielder
14	HIKARU MINEGISHI	05-06-1991	MINEGISHI	Midfielder
15	ARNIE PASINABO JR.	04-02-1986	PASINABO	Midfielder
16	MIKEL JUSTIN BAAS	16-03-2000	BAAS	Defender
19	CURT DIZON	04-02-1994	DIZON	Midfielder
20	MARK HARTMANN	20-01-1992	HARTMANN	Forward
21	KENRY BALOBO	22-09-1998	BALOBO	Goalkeeper
22	JORDAN JARVIS	17-04-1998	J. JARVIS	Defender
24	FLORENCIO JR. BADELIC	22-05-1994	BADELIC	Goalkeeper
27	JUNG DAHWON	22-12-1987	HWON	Defender
30	ANGELO MARASIGAN	14-05-1992	MARASIGAN	Midfielder
88	WILLIAM GRIERSON	27-04-1998	GRIERSON	Defender
93	AMIN ADAM NAZARI	26-04-1993	A. NAZARI	Midfielder

HEAD COACH: Jason Withe (ENG)



Jason Withe began his coaching career in Asia with Thailand's BEC Tero Sasana in 1999 and experienced success just a year later with a domestic double. Jason's commitment to the Southeast Asian scene continued with him coaching Singapore's Home United, before returning to Thailand to lead Bangkok Bank, Songkhla United, Nakhon Pathom United, Sukhothai, Super Power Samut Prakan and Deffo over the years, and eventually taking charge of United City FC in 2021.



DAEGU FC (KOR)



CLUB PROFILE

Daegu FC advanced to the AFC Champions League Play-off Stage this year by finishing fifth in the 2020 K League 1, and in doing so, secured their second appearance in the Continent's pinnacle club competition.

After lifting the Korean FA Cup trophy in 2018, Daegu FC finished third in the Group Stage in their debut AFC Champions League 2019 season, with the club hoping to improve on their performance with the appointment of Suwon Samsung Bluewings legend Lee Byoung-keun as their new head coach.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	CHOI YOUNGEUN	26-09-1995	YOUNGEUN	Goalkeeper
3	KIM WOOSOK	04-08-1996	WOOSOK	Defender
6	HONG JEONGUN	29-11-1994	JEONGUN	Defender
7	KIM JINHYUK	03-06-1993	JINHYUK	Defender
8	PARK HANBIN	21-09-1997	HANBIN	Midfielder
9	EDGAR BRUNO DA SILVA	03-01-1987	EDGAR	Forward
11	CESAR FERNANDO MELO	29-11-1989	CESINHA	Forward
13	OH HUSEONG	25-08-1999	HUSEONG	Midfielder
14	AN YONGWOO	10-08-1991	YONGWOO	Forward
20	HWANG SOONMIN	14-09-1990	SOONMIN	Midfielder
21	PARK SEONGSU	12-05-1996	SEONGSU	Goalkeeper
22	LEE KEUNHO	11-04-1985	KEUNHO	Forward
26	LEE JINYONG	01-05-2001	JINYONG	Defender
31	LEE YUNOH	23-03-1999	YUNOH	Goalkeeper
32	JEONG CHIIN	21-08-1997	CHIIN	Forward
38	JANG SUNG WON	17-06-1997	SUNGWON	Defender
44	TSUBASA NISHI	08-04-1990	TSUBASA	Midfielder
66	JO JINWOO	17-11-1999	JINWOO	Defender
74	LEE YONGRAE	17-04-1986	YONGRAE	Midfielder

HEAD COACH: Lee Byoung-keun (KOR)



Lee Byoung-keun had big shoes to fill at the start of 2020 when he replaced Brazilian coach André, who had led Daegu FC to their first-ever domestic trophy and debut appearance in the AFC Champions League in 2019, but the former Suwon Samsung Bluewings midfielder was up to the task. Lee played a vital role in assisting Suwon to three K-League titles and back-to-back Asian Club Championship trophies. The 48-year-old also played in the AFC Champions League in 2005, before turning to coaching in 2012.



AFC
**CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™**

GROUP J

GROUP J



Guangzhou FC
(CHN)



Port FC
(THA)



Kitchee SC
(HKG)



Cerezo Osaka
(JPN)



GUANGZHOU FC (CHN)



CLUB PROFILE

Guangzhou FC qualified for the AFC Champions League 2020 after finishing as runners-up in the 2020 Chinese Super League.

In what was their 10th appearance in the tournament, the club, who play their home matches at the Tianhe Stadium (the venue for the first-ever FIFA Women's World Cup Final in 1991) were seeking to improve on their Semi-final appearance from 2019 when they went down 3-0 to eventual runners-up Urawa Red Diamonds.

Widely regarded as a powerhouse in Asian club football, they are the only Chinese side to have won the AFC Champions League twice, in 2013 and 2015. They are also the only club from the country to participate in the FIFA Club World Cup, making their first appearance in 2013.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
30	YANG DEJIANG	31-08-2004	YANG D.J.	Midfielder
31	LI XINGXIAN	24-03-2005	LI X.X.	Midfielder
40	ZHANG ZHIHAO	02-01-2001	ZHANG ZH.H.	Defender
42	LUO JUNHAN	03-05-2004	LUO J.H.	Defender
44	WU JUNHAO	11-12-2004	WU J.H.	Midfielder
62	NING HAOXU	08-01-2001	NING H.X.	Forward
64	ZHOU PINXI	23-04-2001	ZHOU P.X.	Midfielder
65	RUAN SAI	15-02-2001	RUAN S.	Midfielder
66	LI JIAHAO	22-06-2001	LI J.H.	Midfielder
67	CHEN KUN	03-10-2001	CHEN K.	Defender
68	LIAO JINTAO	24-02-2000	LIAO J.T.	Midfielder
71	ZHANG JIANZHI	28-01-2000	ZHANG J.ZH.	Goalkeeper
73	FAN HENGBO	14-07-1999	FAN H.B.	Midfielder
75	ZHANG JIHAO	28-03-2003	ZHANG J.H.	Goalkeeper
76	WANG TIANQING	01-04-2001	WANG T.Q.	Defender
78	ZHANG ZILI	23-01-2002	ZHANG Z.L.	Midfielder
81	RAO CHEN	10-02-2001	RAO CHEN	Forward
82	HUANG KAIZHOU	13-05-2002	HUANG K.ZH.	Forward
87	CHEN RIJIN	17-01-1999	CHEN R.J.	Defender
88	LYU SHIHAO	16-07-2002	LYU SH.H.	Midfielder
89	WANG WENXUAN	26-12-1999	WANG W.X.	Defender

HEAD COACH: Liu Zhiyu (CHN)



Liu Zhiyu has spent almost a decade with Guangzhou FC, where he served as a technical analyst in the club's AFC Champions League campaigns from 2014 to 2020. And when head coach Fabio Cannavaro was unable to travel due to restrictions, Liu's deep knowledge of the team made him an excellent candidate as caretaker.



PORT FC (THA)



CLUB PROFILE

Established in 1964, Port FC are one of the most successful clubs in Thai football history, having won the Kor Royal Cup eight times and the Queen's Cup on six occasions.

In 2009, they added the Thai FA Cup and, a year later, in 2010, the Thai League Cup to their list of honours.

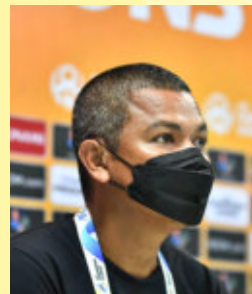
They sealed qualification for this edition of the AFC Champions League by virtue of being second in the standings at the halfway mark of the 2020-21 Thai League season.

This was the second appearance for the Thai side who also reached the Quarter-finals of the AFC Cup in 2015, after they failed to make it through the Playoffs last year.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
1	WATCHARA BUATHONG	20-04-1993	WATCHARA	Goalkeeper
2	THITAWEE AUKSORSRI	08-11-1997	THITAWEE	Defender
3	THITATHORN AUKSORSRI	08-11-1997	THITATHORN	Defender
4	ELIAS DOLAH	24-04-1993	E.DOLAH	Defender
5	SERGIO SUAREZ	06-01-1987	S.SUAREZ	Midfielder
6	CHARYL CHAPPUIS	12-01-1992	CHAPPUIS	Midfielder
8	KO SEUL-KI	21-04-1986	SEULKI	Midfielder
10	BORDIN PHALA	18-12-1994	BORDIN	Forward
11	TANASITH SIRIPALA	09-08-1995	TANASITH	Forward
13	NURUL SRIYANKEM	08-02-1992	NURUL	Forward
16	SIWAKORN CHAKKUPRASART	23-04-1992	SIWAKORN	Midfielder
18	RATTANAI SONGSANGCHAN	10-06-1995	RATTANAI	Goalkeeper
21	JATURAPAT SATTHAM	15-06-1999	JATURAPAT	Defender
22	DAVID ROCHELA	19-02-1990	ROCHELA	Defender
24	WORAWUT NAMVECH	04-07-1995	WORAWUT	Defender
26	SARAWUT KANLAYANABANDIT	27-05-1991	SARAWUT	Defender
29	MEECHOK MARHASARANU	12-12-1997	MEECHOK	Defender
33	PHILIP ROLLER	10-06-1994	ROLLER	Defender
34	NITIPONG SELANON	26-05-1993	SELANON	Defender
45	NATTAWUT SOMBATYOTHA	01-05-1996	NATTAWUT	Midfielder
91	JOHN BAGGIO	19-12-1991	BAGGIO	Forward

HEAD COACH:

Sarawut Treephan (THA)



2001 SEA Games gold medalist Sarawut Treephan's illustrious career as a player came to an end in 2009, but his passion for the game saw him return as an assistant coach the same year with Muangthong United. After three seasons with Muangthong, he was appointed head coach of Nonthaburi FC, before a series of short stints with Customs United, Thonburi City, Bangkok FC and Simork FC, led to his appointment at Port FC.



KITCHEE SC (HKG)



CLUB PROFILE

Kitchee SC qualified for the AFC Champions League 2021 on account of winning the 2019-20 Hong Kong Premier League title.

In 2018, they created history when they defeated Japan's Kashiwa Reysol and thus became the first club from Hong Kong to win a match in the AFC Champions League.

Founded in 1931, they enjoyed a resurgence during the turn of the last decade as they won more than half of the domestic trophies contested.

The club has won the Hong Kong First Division six times and the Hong Kong Premier League on four occasions. They also boast of seven Hong Kong Senior Shields while bagging another six Hong Kong FA Cups in their history.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
2	LAW TSZ CHUN	02-03-1997	T C LAW	Defender
3	DANIEL CANCELA	23-09-1981	D CANCELA	Defender
5	HELIO	31-01-1986	HELIO	Defender
6	PARK JUN-HEONG	25-01-1993	J H PARK	Defender
8	MATT ORR	01-01-1997	ORR	Forward
9	DEJAN DAMJANOVIC	27-07-1981	DEJAN	Forward
10	CLEITON	09-12-1986	CLEITON	Midfielder
14	HO CHUN TING	18-12-1998	C T HO	Midfielder
15	ROBERTO ORLANDO AFFONSO JUNIOR	28-05-1983	ROBERTO	Defender
16	NGAN CHEUK PAN	22-01-1998	C P NGAN	Midfielder
19	HUANG YANG	19-10-1983	Y HUANG	Midfielder
20	SOHGO ICHIKAWA	30-07-2004	SOHGO	Midfielder
21	TONG KIN MAN	10-01-1985	K M TONG	Defender
23	GUO JIANQIAO	20-07-1986	J Q GUO	Goalkeeper
24	JU YINGZHI	24-07-1987	Y Z JU	Midfielder
28	CHENG CHIN LUNG	07-01-1998	LUNG	Forward
37	RAUL BAENA	02-03-1989	RAUL BAENA	Midfielder
67	SEBASTIAN BUDDLE	27-07-1999	BUDDLE	Midfielder
86	PAULO CESAR	27-03-1986	PAULO	Goalkeeper
88	ALEX AKANDE	09-02-1989	ALEX	Forward
95	SHINICHI CHAN	05-09-2002	YAT	Midfielder

HEAD COACH:

Alex Chi Kwong Chu (HKG)



Alex Chi Kwong Chu started off as the head coach for Hong Kong's Fukien Athletic Club in 2001, and joined Kitchee SC five years later as an assistant to Dejan Antonic, who he later replaced as caretaker in 2008. In 2013, he was again named caretaker following Alex Gomez's departure, and led the club to an undefeated campaign to lift the Hong Kong Premier League title. Alex then officially took charge of Kitchee in 2016 as head coach and achieved a domestic treble, followed by league titles in the 2017/18 and 2019/20 seasons.



CEREZO OSAKA (JPN)



CLUB PROFILE

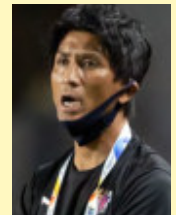
Having finished fourth in the 2020 J1 League, Cerezo Osaka qualified for the Playoff Stage of the AFC Champions League 2021 before advancing to the Group Stage.

No stranger to Asia's elite club stage, Cerezo Osaka made their fourth appearance in 2021 with their best outing coming in 2011 when they reached the Quarter-finals before bowing out bravely to Korea Republic's Jeonbuk Hyundai in a high-scoring two-legged encounter. Their next best finish in the AFC Champions League came in 2016 when they reached the Round of 16, only to fall short against China PR's Guangzhou Evergrande.

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	D.O.B	JERSEY NAME	POSITION
2	RIKU MATSUDA	24-07-1991	RIKU	Defender
4	RIKI HARAKAWA	18-08-1993	HARAKAWA	Midfielder
5	NAOYUKI FUJITA	22-06-1987	FUJITA	Midfielder
6	TIAGO PAGNUSSAT	17-06-1990	TIAGO	Defender
9	ADAM TAGGART	02-06-1993	TAGGART	Forward
10	HIROSHI KIYOTAKE	12-11-1989	KIYOTAKE	Forward
13	TOSHIYUKI TAKAGI	25-05-1991	TAKAGI	Forward
14	YUSUKE MARUHASHI	02-09-1990	MARUHASHI	Defender
15	AYUMU SEKO	07-06-2000	AYUMU	Defender
17	TATSUHIRO SAKAMOTO	22-10-1996	SAKAMOTO	Midfielder
19	HIROTAKE TAMEDA	24-08-1993	TAMEDA	Midfielder
20	YOSHITO OKUBO	09-06-1982	OKUBO	Forward
21	KIM JIN-HYEON	06-07-1987	JINHYEON	Goalkeeper
22	RIKI MATSUDA	24-07-1991	RIKI	Forward
24	KOJI TORIUMI	09-05-1995	TORIUMI	Defender
25	HIROAKI OKUNO	14-08-1989	OKUNO	Midfielder
26	YUTA KOIKE	06-11-1996	KOIKE	Defender
29	MUTSUKI KATO	06-08-1997	MUTSUKI	Forward
30	HINATA KIDA	04-07-2000	HINATA	Midfielder
33	RYUYA NISHIO	16-05-2001	NISHIO	Defender
50	KENYA MATSUI	10-09-1985	KENYA	Goalkeeper

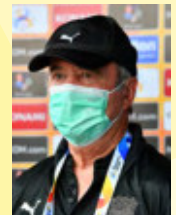
HEAD COACH: Akio Kogiku (JPN)

Akio Kogiku has held various roles while working with Cerezo Osaka, starting out as the youth team coach in 1998, and picked up valuable experiences as an assistant to Levir Culpi, Shinji Kobayashi, Sergio Soares and Yoon Jong-hwan, to name a few. And following Levir's departure in August, Akio's years of knowledge made him the best successor.



FORMER HEAD COACH: Levir Culpi (BRA)

Levir Culpi managed multiple successful clubs in Brazil before his move to Asia, but the 68-year-old spent most of his coaching career with Cerezo Osaka over five stints in 24 years, with his first appointment in 1997. He was responsible for assisting Cerezo Osaka to qualify for their first-ever AFC Champions League in 2011, where they exited in the Quarter-finals, still their best achievement to date.







AFC
CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™

STAR
SELECTION

THE ALL-STAR SQUAD

Goalkeepers



Defenders



OLEKSII LARIN (21)
FC ISTIKLOL (TKM)



RIKU MATSUDA (2)
CEREZO OSAKA (JPN)



HONG CHUL (33)
ULSAN HYUNDAI FC (KOR)



MOHAMMED IBRAHIM ALBURAYK (2)
AL HILAL SFC (KSA)



MIKI YAMANE (13)
KAWASAKI FRONTALE (JPN)



TIAGO PAGNUSSAT (6)
CEREZO OSAKA (JPN)



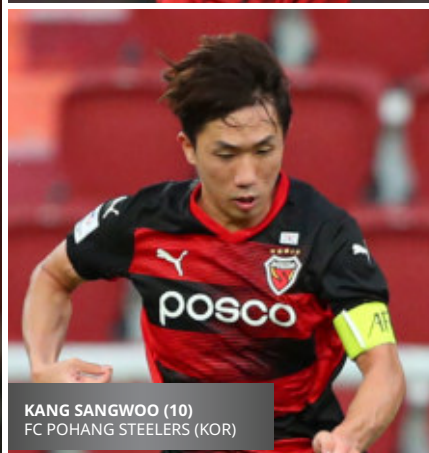
YUTAKA YOSHIDA (23)
NAGOYA GRAMPUS (JPN)



KAZUYA MIYAHARA (6)
NAGOYA GRAMPUS (JPN)



YUSUKE MARUHASHI (14)
CEREZO OSAKA (JPN)



KANG SANGWOO (10)
FC POHANG STEELERS (KOR)

Midfielders



ABDULLAH IBRAHIM OTAYF (8)
AL HILAL SFC (KSA)



VALERI QAZAISHVILI (8)
ULSAN HYUNDAI FC (KOR)



MAHDI TORABI (9)
PERSEPOLIS FC (IRN)



KENTO TACHIBANA (22)
KAWASAKI FRONTALE (JPN)



AN YONGWOO (14)
DAEGU FC (KOR)



MODOU BARROW (11)
JEONBUK HYUNDAI MOTORS FC (KOR)



YOON BITGARAM (10)
ULSAN HYUNDAI FC (KOR)



MATEUS CASTRO (16)
NAGOYA GRAMPUS (JPN)



YASUTO WAKIZAKA (8)
KAWASAKI FRONTALE (JPN)



RIKI HARAKAWA (4)
CEREZO OSAKA (JPN)

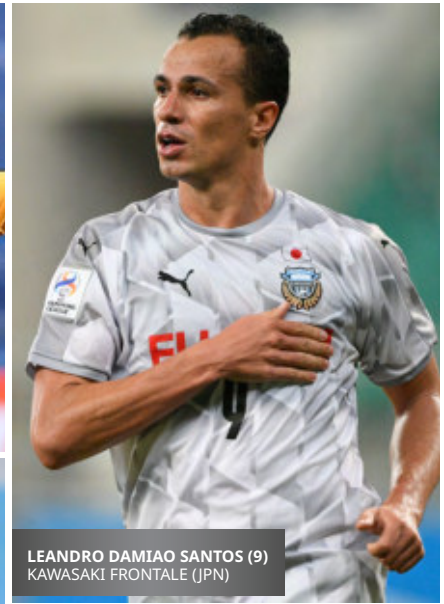
Attackers



KEI CHINEN (20)
KAWASAKI FRONTALE (JPN)



PAKORN PREMPAK (7)
PORT FC (THA)



LEANDRO DAMIAO SANTOS (9)
KAWASAKI FRONTALE (JPN)



STANISLAV ILJUTCENKO (10)
JEONBUK HYUNDAI MOTORS FC (KOR)



ANDERSON PATRIC OLIVEIRA (18)
GAMBA OSAKA (JPN)



MICHAEL OLUNGA (26)
AL DUHAIL SC (QAT)



EDGAR BRUNO DA SILVA (9)
DAEGU FC (KOR)



SHAHRIYAR MOGHANLOO (70)
PERSEPOLIS FC (IRN)



GUSTAVO HENRIQUE SOUSA (9)
JEONBUK HYUNDAI MOTORS FC (KOR)



RYOGO YAMASAKI (9)
NAGOYA GRAMPUS (JPN)





AFC
**CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™**

**BEST
GOALS**

BEST GOALS



OPEN PLAYS				
Ranking	Player	Match	Time	Type
1	Salem Al-Dawsari	Persepolis V AL-HILAL (Quarter-Final)	27'	Solo Action
2	Nasser Aldawsari	AL-HILAL V Pohang (Final)	1'	Long-Range Shot
3	Abderrazak Hamdallah	Al Wahda V AL-NASSR (Quarter-Final)	7'	Combination Play
4	Valeri Qazaishvili	Jeonbuk V ULSAN (Quarter-Final)	13'	Solo Action
5	Moussa Marega	Al-Nassr V AL-HILAL (Semi-Final)	17'	Combination Play
6	Salem Al-Dawsari	Al-Nassr V AL-HILAL (Semi-Final)	71'	Long-Range Shot
7	Jaloliddin Masharipov	Al Wahda V AL-NASSR (Quarter-Final)	52'	Long-Range Shot
8	Lee Dong-gyeong	Jeonbuk V ULSAN (Quarter-Final)	101'	Long-Range Shot
9	Edgar Bruno da Silva	Grampus V DAEGU (R of 16)	28'	Diagonal Pass
10	Pakorn Prempak	Osaka V PORT (Group J)	45+3	Long-Range Shot

(The player's club is in capital letters)

Video highlights

<https://youtu.be/PuwJgUDbjtE>





SET PLAYS				
Ranking	Player	Match	Time	Type
1	Santi Cazorla	Al Nassr V AL-SADD (Group D)	59'	Direct Free-Kick
2	Kim Jin-hyuk	DAEGU V United City (Group I)	45+3'	Indirect Free-Kick
3	Liang Shaowen	United City V BEIJING GUOAN (Group I)	73'	Direct Free-Kick
4	An Yong-woo	DAEGU V United City (Group I)	62'	Direct Free-Kick
5	Alex Grant	Ulsan V POHANG (Semi-Final)	89'	Indirect Free-Kick
6	Takahiro Kunimoto	JEONBUK V Ulsan (Quarter-Final)	48'	Throw-In
7	Gustavo	JEONBUK V Pathum (R of 16)	45+2	Corner Kick
8	Yusuke Maruhashi	Port V CEREZO OSAKA (Group J)	12'	Short Corner
9	Anderson Talisca	AL-NASSR V Al-Hilal (Semi-Final)	50'	Corner Kick
10	Caique Lemes	VIETTEL V Kaya- Iloilo (Group F)	57'	Direct Free-Kick

(The player's club is in capital letters)

Video highlights

<https://youtu.be/YIHbiMV26JU>





CHAMPIONS

FC Char... ue Final 21





AFC
CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™

**TOURNAMENT
RESULTS**

TOURNAMENT RESULTS

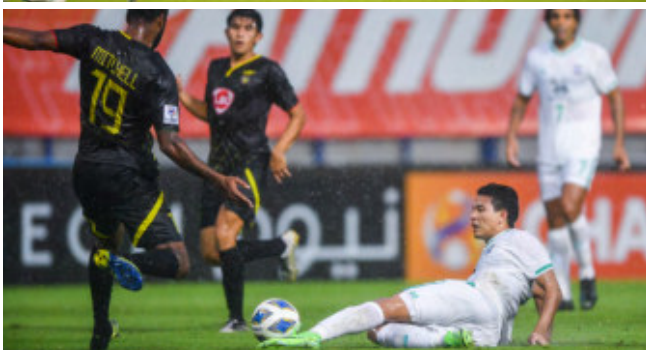
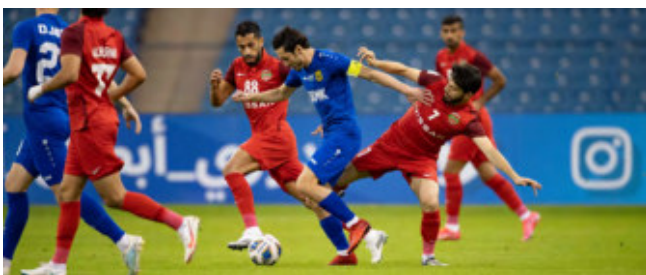
Playoff			
WEST ZONE			
07 Apr,21	AL GHARAFRA (QAT)	0-1 a.e.t. (0-0,0-0)	AGMK FC (UZB)
07 Apr,21	AL WAHDA FSCC (UAE)	2-1 (0-0)	AL ZAWRAA (IRQ)
07 Apr,21	AL WEHDA FC (KSA)	1-1 a.e.t. (1-1,1-0) 2-3 PSO	AIR FORCE CLUB (IRQ)
10 Apr,21	FOOLAD KHOUZESTAN FC (IRN)	4-0 (1-0)	AL AIN FC (UAE)
EAST ZONE			
23 Jun,21	SHANGHAI PORT FC (CHN)	0-1 (0-1)	KAYA FC-ILOILO (PHI)

Group Stage			
GROUP A			
15 Apr,21	AL HILAL SFC (KSA)	2-2 (2-1)	AGMK FC (UZB)
15 Apr,21	FC ISTIKLOL (TJK)	0-0 (0-0)	SHABAB AL AHLI DUBAI (UAE)
18 Apr,21	AGMK FC (UZB)	2-3 (0-1)	FC ISTIKLOL (TJK)
18 Apr,21	SHABAB AL AHLI DUBAI (UAE)	0-2 (0-2)	AL HILAL SFC (KSA)
21 Apr,21	AGMK FC (UZB)	2-1 (0-1)	SHABAB AL AHLI DUBAI (UAE)
21 Apr,21	AL HILAL SFC (KSA)	3-1 (1-1)	FC ISTIKLOL (TJK)
24 Apr,21	SHABAB AL AHLI DUBAI (UAE)	3-1 (3-1)	AGMK FC (UZB)
24 Apr,21	FC ISTIKLOL (TJK)	4-1 (2-1)	AL HILAL SFC (KSA)
27 Apr,21	AGMK FC (UZB)	0-3 (0-1)	AL HILAL SFC (KSA)
27 Apr,21	SHABAB AL AHLI DUBAI (UAE)	0-1 (0-0)	FC ISTIKLOL (TJK)
30 Apr,21	AL HILAL SFC (KSA)	0-2 (0-0)	SHABAB AL AHLI DUBAI (UAE)
30 Apr,21	FC ISTIKLOL (TJK)	1-2 (0-0)	AGMK FC (UZB)
GROUP B			
14 Apr,21	PAKHTAKOR (UZB)	3-3 (0-0)	TRACTOR FC (IRN)
14 Apr,21	SHARJAH (UAE)	1-0 (0-0)	AIR FORCE CLUB (IRQ)
17 Apr,21	AIR FORCE CLUB (IRQ)	0-0 (0-0)	PAKHTAKOR (UZB)
17 Apr,21	TRACTOR FC (IRN)	0-0 (0-0)	SHARJAH (UAE)
20 Apr,21	AIR FORCE CLUB (IRQ)	0-0 (0-0)	TRACTOR FC (IRN)
20 Apr,21	SHARJAH (UAE)	4-1 (2-1)	PAKHTAKOR (UZB)
23 Apr,21	TRACTOR FC (IRN)	1-0 (1-0)	AIR FORCE CLUB (IRQ)
23 Apr,21	PAKHTAKOR (UZB)	1-1 (0-0)	SHARJAH (UAE)
26 Apr,21	TRACTOR FC (IRN)	0-0 (0-0)	PAKHTAKOR (UZB)
26 Apr,21	AIR FORCE CLUB (IRQ)	2-3 (1-2)	SHARJAH (UAE)
29 Apr,21	PAKHTAKOR (UZB)	1-0 (0-0)	AIR FORCE CLUB (IRQ)
29 Apr,21	SHARJAH (UAE)	0-2 (0-1)	TRACTOR FC (IRN)

GROUP C				
15 Apr,21	AL DUHAIL SC (QAT)	2-0 (1-0)	AL SHORTA (IRQ)	
15 Apr,21	ESTEGHLAL FC (IRN)	5-2 (1-1)	AL AHLI SAUDI FC (KSA)	
18 Apr,21	AL AHLI SAUDI FC (KSA)	1-1 (0-0)	AL DUHAIL SC (QAT)	
18 Apr,21	AL SHORTA (IRQ)	0-3 (0-1)	ESTEGHLAL FC (IRN)	
21 Apr,21	AL DUHAIL SC (QAT)	4-3 (3-2)	ESTEGHLAL FC (IRN)	
21 Apr,21	AL SHORTA (IRQ)	0-3 (0-2)	AL AHLI SAUDI FC (KSA)	
24 Apr,21	AL AHLI SAUDI FC (KSA)	2-1 (1-1)	AL SHORTA (IRQ)	
24 Apr,21	ESTEGHLAL FC (IRN)	2-2 (1-1)	AL DUHAIL SC (QAT)	
27 Apr,21	AL SHORTA (IRQ)	2-1 (1-0)	AL DUHAIL SC (QAT)	
27 Apr,21	AL AHLI SAUDI FC (KSA)	0-0 (0-0)	ESTEGHLAL FC (IRN)	
30 Apr,21	ESTEGHLAL FC (IRN)	1-0 (1-0)	AL SHORTA (IRQ)	
30 Apr,21	AL DUHAIL SC (QAT)	1-1 (0-0)	AL AHLI SAUDI FC (KSA)	
GROUP D				
14 Apr,21	AL SADD SC (QAT)	1-1 (0-0)	FOOLAD KHOUZESTAN FC (IRN)	
14 Apr,21	AL WEHDAT (JOR)	0-0 (0-0)	AL NASSR (KSA)	
17 Apr,21	FOOLAD KHOUZESTAN FC (IRN)	1-0 (1-0)	AL WEHDAT (JOR)	
17 Apr,21	AL NASSR (KSA)	3-1 (1-0)	AL SADD SC (QAT)	
20 Apr,21	FOOLAD KHOUZESTAN FC (IRN)	1-1 (0-0)	AL NASSR (KSA)	
20 Apr,21	AL SADD SC (QAT)	3-1 (3-0)	AL WEHDAT (JOR)	
23 Apr,21	AL NASSR (KSA)	2-0 (0-0)	FOOLAD KHOUZESTAN FC (IRN)	
23 Apr,21	AL WEHDAT (JOR)	0-2 (0-1)	AL SADD SC (QAT)	
26 Apr,21	FOOLAD KHOUZESTAN FC (IRN)	0-1 (0-0)	AL SADD SC (QAT)	
26 Apr,21	AL NASSR (KSA)	1-2 (0-1)	AL WEHDAT (JOR)	
29 Apr,21	AL SADD SC (QAT)	1-2 (0-1)	AL NASSR (KSA)	
29 Apr,21	AL WEHDAT (JOR)	1-0 (1-0)	FOOLAD KHOUZESTAN FC (IRN)	
GROUP E				
14 Apr,21	PERSEPOLIS FC (IRN)	1-0 (1-0)	AL WAHDA FSCC (UAE)	
14 Apr,21	FC GOA (IND)	0-0 (0-0)	AL RAYYAN SC (QAT)	
17 Apr,21	AL WAHDA FSCC (UAE)	0-0 (0-0)	FC GOA (IND)	
17 Apr,21	AL RAYYAN SC (QAT)	1-3 (1-0)	PERSEPOLIS FC (IRN)	
20 Apr,21	AL WAHDA FSCC (UAE)	3-2 (0-1)	AL RAYYAN SC (QAT)	
20 Apr,21	PERSEPOLIS FC (IRN)	2-1 (2-1)	FC GOA (IND)	
23 Apr,21	AL RAYYAN SC (QAT)	0-1 (0-0)	AL WAHDA FSCC (UAE)	
23 Apr,21	FC GOA (IND)	0-4 (0-2)	PERSEPOLIS FC (IRN)	
26 Apr,21	AL WAHDA FSCC (UAE)	1-0 (1-0)	PERSEPOLIS FC (IRN)	
26 Apr,21	AL RAYYAN SC (QAT)	1-1 (0-1)	FC GOA (IND)	
29 Apr,21	PERSEPOLIS FC (IRN)	4-2 (2-0)	AL RAYYAN SC (QAT)	
29 Apr,21	FC GOA (IND)	0-2 (0-0)	AL WAHDA FSCC (UAE)	

GROUP F				
26 Jun,21	BG PATHUM UNITED (THA)	4-1 (2-0)	KAYA FC-ILOILO (PHI)	
26 Jun,21	VIETTEL FC (VIE)	0-1 (0-0)	ULSAN HYUNDAI FC (KOR)	
29 Jun,21	ULSAN HYUNDAI FC (KOR)	2-0 (2-0)	BG PATHUM UNITED (THA)	
29 Jun,21	KAYA FC-ILOILO (PHI)	0-5 (0-2)	VIETTEL FC (VIE)	
02 Jul,21	KAYA FC-ILOILO (PHI)	0-3 (0-2)	ULSAN HYUNDAI FC (KOR)	
02 Jul,21	BG PATHUM UNITED (THA)	2-0 (1-0)	VIETTEL FC (VIE)	
05 Jul,21	ULSAN HYUNDAI FC (KOR)	2-1 (1-0)	KAYA FC-ILOILO (PHI)	
05 Jul,21	VIETTEL FC (VIE)	1-3 (1-0)	BG PATHUM UNITED (THA)	
08 Jul,21	KAYA FC-ILOILO (PHI)	0-1 (0-0)	BG PATHUM UNITED (THA)	
08 Jul,21	ULSAN HYUNDAI FC (KOR)	3-0 (0-0)	VIETTEL FC (VIE)	
11 Jul,21	VIETTEL FC (VIE)	1-0 (0-0)	KAYA FC-ILOILO (PHI)	
11 Jul,21	BG PATHUM UNITED (THA)	0-2 (0-1)	ULSAN HYUNDAI FC (KOR)	
GROUP G				
22 Jun,21	FC POHANG STEELERS (KOR)	2-0 (1-0)	RATCHABURI FC (THA)	
22 Jun,21	JOHOR DARUL TA'ZIM (MAS)	0-1 (0-0)	NAGOYA GRAMPUS (JPN)	
25 Jun,21	NAGOYA GRAMPUS (JPN)	3-0 (1-0)	FC POHANG STEELERS (KOR)	
25 Jun,21	RATCHABURI FC (THA)	0-1 (0-0)	JOHOR DARUL TA'ZIM (MAS)	
28 Jun,21	RATCHABURI FC (THA)	0-4 (0-3)	NAGOYA GRAMPUS (JPN)	
28 Jun,21	FC POHANG STEELERS (KOR)	4-1 (2-1)	JOHOR DARUL TA'ZIM (MAS)	
01 Jul,21	JOHOR DARUL TA'ZIM (MAS)	0-2 (0-2)	FC POHANG STEELERS (KOR)	
01 Jul,21	NAGOYA GRAMPUS (JPN)	3-0 (0-0)	RATCHABURI FC (THA)	
04 Jul,21	RATCHABURI FC (THA)	0-0 (0-0)	FC POHANG STEELERS (KOR)	
04 Jul,21	NAGOYA GRAMPUS (JPN)	2-1 (2-1)	JOHOR DARUL TA'ZIM (MAS)	
07 Jul,21	FC POHANG STEELERS (KOR)	1-1 (0-0)	NAGOYA GRAMPUS (JPN)	
07 Jul,21	JOHOR DARUL TA'ZIM (MAS)	0-0 (0-0)	RATCHABURI FC (THA)	
GROUP H				
25 Jun,21	TAMPINES ROVERS FC (SIN)	0-2 (0-1)	GAMBA OSAKA (JPN)	
25 Jun,21	JEONBUK HYUNDAI MOTORS FC (KOR)	2-1 (1-0)	CHIANGRAI UNITED (THA)	
28 Jun,21	CHIANGRAI UNITED (THA)	1-0 (0-0)	TAMPINES ROVERS FC (SIN)	
28 Jun,21	GAMBA OSAKA (JPN)	2-2 (2-2)	JEONBUK HYUNDAI MOTORS FC (KOR)	
01 Jul,21	JEONBUK HYUNDAI MOTORS FC (KOR)	9-0 (4-0)	TAMPINES ROVERS FC (SIN)	
01 Jul,21	CHIANGRAI UNITED (THA)	1-1 (0-0)	GAMBA OSAKA (JPN)	
04 Jul,21	TAMPINES ROVERS FC (SIN)	0-4 (0-1)	JEONBUK HYUNDAI MOTORS FC (KOR)	
04 Jul,21	GAMBA OSAKA (JPN)	1-1 (0-1)	CHIANGRAI UNITED (THA)	
07 Jul,21	GAMBA OSAKA (JPN)	8-1 (3-1)	TAMPINES ROVERS FC (SIN)	
07 Jul,21	CHIANGRAI UNITED (THA)	1-3 (0-3)	JEONBUK HYUNDAI MOTORS FC (KOR)	
10 Jul,21	JEONBUK HYUNDAI MOTORS FC (KOR)	2-1 (1-0)	GAMBA OSAKA (JPN)	
10 Jul,21	TAMPINES ROVERS FC (SIN)	0-3 (0-0)	CHIANGRAI UNITED (THA)	

GROUP I				
26 Jun,21	UNITED CITY FC (PHI)	1-1 (1-0)	BEIJING FC (CHN)	
26 Jun,21	KAWASAKI FRONTALE (JPN)	3-2 (1-1)	DAEGU FC (KOR)	
29 Jun,21	DAEGU FC (KOR)	7-0 (3-0)	UNITED CITY FC (PHI)	
29 Jun,21	BEIJING FC (CHN)	0-7 (0-3)	KAWASAKI FRONTALE (JPN)	
02 Jul,21	DAEGU FC (KOR)	5-0 (2-0)	BEIJING FC (CHN)	
02 Jul,21	KAWASAKI FRONTALE (JPN)	8-0 (2-0)	UNITED CITY FC (PHI)	
05 Jul,21	BEIJING FC (CHN)	0-3 (0-1)	DAEGU FC (KOR)	
05 Jul,21	UNITED CITY FC (PHI)	0-2 (0-1)	KAWASAKI FRONTALE (JPN)	
08 Jul,21	BEIJING FC (CHN)	2-3 (2-0)	UNITED CITY FC (PHI)	
08 Jul,21	DAEGU FC (KOR)	1-3 (1-1)	KAWASAKI FRONTALE (JPN)	
11 Jul,21	KAWASAKI FRONTALE (JPN)	4-0 (2-0)	BEIJING FC (CHN)	
11 Jul,21	UNITED CITY FC (PHI)	0-4 (0-1)	DAEGU FC (KOR)	
GROUP J				
24 Jun,21	GUANGZHOU FC (CHN)	0-2 (0-1)	CEREZO OSAKA (JPN)	
24 Jun,21	KITCHEE SC (HKG)	2-0 (1-0)	PORT FC (THA)	
27 Jun,21	PORT FC (THA)	3-0 (1-0)	GUANGZHOU FC (CHN)	
27 Jun,21	CEREZO OSAKA (JPN)	2-1 (0-1)	KITCHEE SC (HKG)	
30 Jun,21	CEREZO OSAKA (JPN)	1-1 (0-1)	PORT FC (THA)	
30 Jun,21	GUANGZHOU FC (CHN)	0-1 (0-1)	KITCHEE SC (HKG)	
03 Jul,21	PORT FC (THA)	0-3 (0-2)	CEREZO OSAKA (JPN)	
03 Jul,21	KITCHEE SC (HKG)	1-0 (0-0)	GUANGZHOU FC (CHN)	
06 Jul,21	CEREZO OSAKA (JPN)	5-0 (1-0)	GUANGZHOU FC (CHN)	
06 Jul,21	PORT FC (THA)	1-1 (1-1)	KITCHEE SC (HKG)	
09 Jul,21	KITCHEE SC (HKG)	0-0 (0-0)	CEREZO OSAKA (JPN)	
09 Jul,21	GUANGZHOU FC (CHN)	1-5 (0-1)	PORT FC (THA)	



Round of 16

WEST ZONE

13 Sep,21	ESTEGHLAL FC (IRN)	0-2 (0-1)	AL HILAL SFC (KSA)
14 Sep,21	AL NASSR (KSA)	1-0 (1-0)	TRACTOR FC (IRN)
14 Sep,21	FC ISTIKLOL (TJK)	0-1 (0-0)	PERSEPOLIS FC (IRN)
14 Sep,21	SHARJAH (UAE)	1-1 a.e.t. (1-1,0-0) 4-5 PSO	AL WAHDA FSCC (UAE)

EAST ZONE

14 Sep,21	NAGOYA GRAMPUS (JPN)	4-2 (1-2)	DAEGU FC (KOR)
14 Sep,21	ULSAN HYUNDAI FC (KOR)	0-0 a.e.t. (0-0,0-0) 3-2 PSO	KAWASAKI FRONTALE (JPN)
15 Sep,21	JEONBUK HYUNDAI MOTORS FC (KOR)	1-1 a.e.t. (1-1,1-0) 4-2 PSO	BG PATHUM UNITED (THA)
15 Sep,21	CEREZO OSAKA (JPN)	0-1 (0-1)	FC POHANG STEELERS (KOR)



Quarter-Finals

WEST ZONE

16 Oct,21	AL WAHDA FSCC (UAE)	1-5 (0-1)	AL NASSR (KSA)
16 Oct,21	PERSEPOLIS FC (IRN)	0-3 (0-1)	AL HILAL SFC (KSA)

EAST ZONE

17 Oct,21	FC POHANG STEELERS (KOR)	3-0 (0-0)	NAGOYA GRAMPUS (JPN)
17 Oct,21	JEONBUK HYUNDAI MOTORS FC (KOR)	2-3 a.e.t. (2-2,1-2)	ULSAN HYUNDAI FC (KOR)



Semi-Finals

WEST ZONE

19 Oct,21

AL NASSR (KSA)

1-2 (0-1)

AL HILAL SFC (KSA)

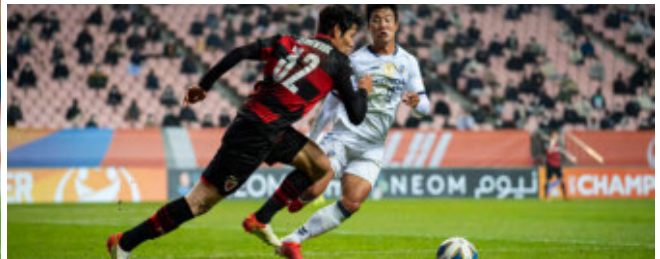
EAST ZONE

20 Oct,21

ULSAN HYUNDAI FC (KOR)

1-1 a.e.t. (1-1,0-0) 4-5 PSO

FC POHANG STEELERS (KOR)



Final

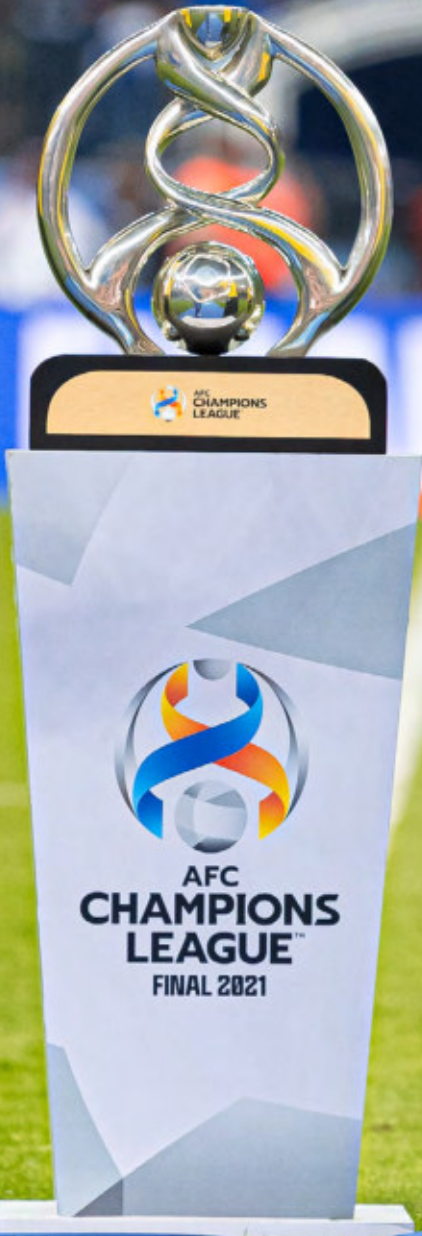
23 Nov,21

AL HILAL SFC (KSA)

2-0 (1-0)

FC POHANG STEELERS (KOR)







AFC
**CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™**

**REFEREES
REFEREES**

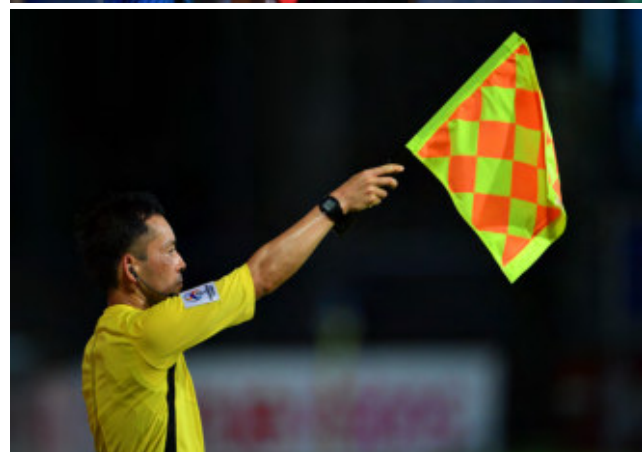
REFEREES

AFC Champions League 2021 Match Officials

REFEREES	MA
Christopher James Beath	AUS
Shaun Robert Evans	AUS
Ali Hasan Ebrahim Abdulnabi Alsamaheji	BHR
Ammar Ebrahim Hasan Mahfoodh	BHR
Nawaf Abdulla Ghayath Shukralla	BHR
Fu Ming	CHN
Ma Ning	CHN
Alireza Faghani	IRN
Hasan Akrami	IRN
Bijan Heidari	IRN
Mooud Bonyadifard	IRN
Ali Sabah Adday Al-Qaysi	IRQ
Mohanad Qasim Eesee Sarray	IRQ
Adham Mohammad Tumah Makhadmeh	JOR
Ahmad Yacoub Ibrahim Ibrahim	JOR
Ahmed Faisal Mohammad Alali	JOR
Iida Jumpei	JPN
Kimura Hiroyuki	JPN
Sato Ryuji	JPN
Kim Daeyong	KOR
Ko Hyungjin	KOR
Mohammed Khled S Al Hoish	KSA
Turki Mohammed A Alkhudhayr	KSA
Ahmad Alali	KUW
Ali M H M T Shaban	KUW
Hussein Abo Yehia	LBN
Mohd Amirul Izwan Bin Yaacob	MAS
Muhammad Nazmi Bin Nasaruddin	MAS
Ahmed Abu Bakar Said Al Kaf	OMA
Omar Mubarak Mazaroua Al Yaqoubi	OMA
Abdulrahman Ibrahim Y J Al-Jassim	QAT
Khamis Mohammed S A Al-Marri	QAT
Saoud Ali H J Al-Adba	QAT
Muhammad Taqi Aljaafari Bin Jahari	SIN
Nivon Robesh Gamini	SRI
Hettikankanamge Crishantha Dilan Perera	SRI
Hanna Hattab	SYR
Masoud Tufaylieh	SYR
Sivakorn Pu-Udom	THA
Yu Ming-Hsun	TPE
Ammar Ali Abdulla Jumaa Aljneibi	UAE
Mohammed Abdulla Hassan Mohamed	UAE
Adel Ali Ahmed Khamis Alnaqbi	UAE
Omar Mohamed Ahmed Hassan Alali	UAE
Ilgiz Tantashev	UZB



ASSISTANT REFEREES	MA
Anton Shchetinin	AUS
George Lakrindis	AUS
Abdulla Saleh Abdulla Mohsen Alrowaimi	BHR
Mohamed Jaafar Mohamed Salman	BHR
Cao Yi	CHN
Shi Xiang	CHN
Wang Dexin	CHN
Zhang Cheng	CHN
Zhou Fei	CHN
Mohammadreza Abolfazli	IRN
Ali Mirzabeigi	IRN
Alireza Ildorom	IRN
Saeid Ghasemi	IRN
Mohammad Reza Mansouri	IRN
Ameer Dawood Alwindawi	IRQ
Hayder Abdulhasan Ali Ubaydee	IRQ
Watheq Mdallal Obaid Al-Swaiedi	IRQ
Abed Al-Rohman Naji Mohamd Aqel	JOR
Ahmad Moannes Nadi Alroalle	JOR
Ayman Faisal Hamzeh Obeidat	JOR
Mahmoud Thaher Mohammad Abu-Thaher	JOR
Mohammad Mustafa Hassan Alkalaf	JOR
Mihara Jun	JPN
Nishihashi Isao	JPN
Nomura Osamu	JPN
Takagi Takumi	JPN
Yamauchi Hiroshi	JPN
Park Sangjun	KOR
Yoon Jaeyeol	KOR
Mohammed Maki A Alabakry	KSA
Khalaf Zaid M Alshammari	KSA
Badr Ali A Alshumrani	KSA
Abbas H A M A Gholoum	KUW
Abdulhadi Alanezi	KUW
Mohamad Mu Azi Bin Zainal Abidin	MAS
Mohamad Zairul Bin Khalil Tan	MAS
Mohd Yusri Bin Muhamad	MAS
Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al Jardani	OMA
Abu Bakar Salim Mahad Al-Amri	OMA
Hamed Talib Saif Al-Ghafri	OMA
Nasser Salim Abdullah Ambusaidi	OMA
Rashid Hamed Ali Al Ghaithi	OMA
Ramzan Saeed M A Al-Naemi	QAT
Saoud Ahmed S A Almaqaleh	QAT
Taleb Salem H A Al-Marri	QAT
Yousef Aref M A Al-Shamari	QAT
Abdul Hannan Bin Abdul Hasim	SIN
Ronnie Koh Min Kiat	SIN
Deniye Gedara Palitha Parakkrama Hemathunga	SRI
Loku Kasthotage Iran Udayakantha	SRI



ASSISTANT REFEREES	MA
Wellabada Hewage Don Sanjeewa Premalal	SRI
Ali Ahmad	SYR
Mazen Zazfoun	SYR
Rawut Nakarit	THA
Tanate Chuchuen	THA
Ahmed Saeed Ahmed Alasal Alrashdi	UAE
Hasan Mohamed Hasan Abdulla Almahri	UAE
Mohamed Ahmed Yousef Abdulla Alhammadi	UAE
Abdukhamidullo Rasulov	UZB
Timur Gaynullin	UZB
Andrey Tsapenko	UZB
Alisher Usmanov	UZB

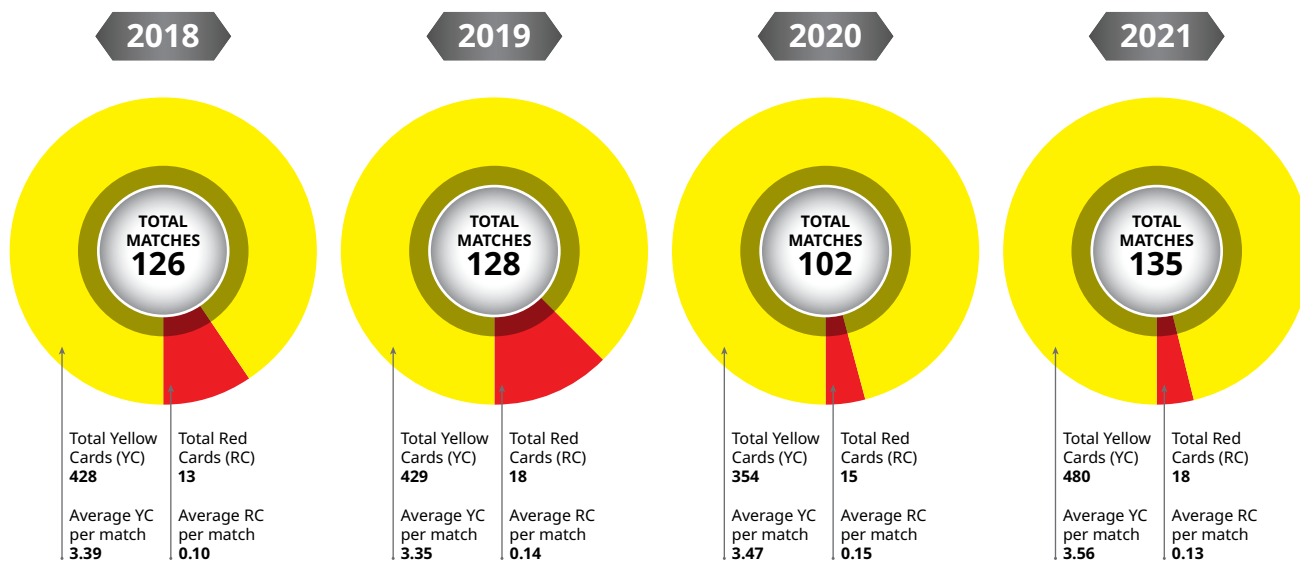
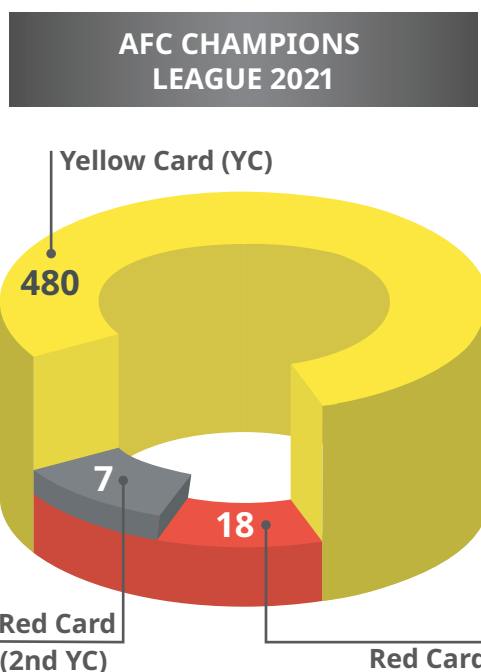
The referee assessors, through their match reports and close monitoring, rated the match officials' performances as good (above 8.0) or above 91.2% in some matches. The referees benefitted from post-match briefings and remote online coaching with the AFC's top referee assessors and instructors, where they discussed strengths and areas for improvement based on the review of specific match incidents.



General Management

A total of 498 disciplinary sanctions were issued at the AFC Champions League 2021 from the Group Stage - of which 480 were cautions (yellow cards). Seven sending-offs took place after a second caution and 11 direct red cards were shown. There was a match average of 3.6 yellow cards and 0.13 red cards.

The administration of disciplinary sanctions was increased from previous editions, but this can be explained by the expansion from 32 clubs to 40 in 2021, with the number of matches increasing to 135.



Video Assistant Referee (VAR)

The VAR system was again implemented from the Quarter-final stage and was used in seven matches across four stadiums.

All Match Officials appointed to the Knockout Stage matches were licensed to use the technology in accordance with the stringent standards and requirements overseen by FIFA. In preparation for the implementation of this year's competition, an online VAR Course was conducted by the AFC in August 2021, giving the match officials an opportunity to refresh their knowledge of the system and gain further training and guidance with the support of the AFC's Referee Instructors.

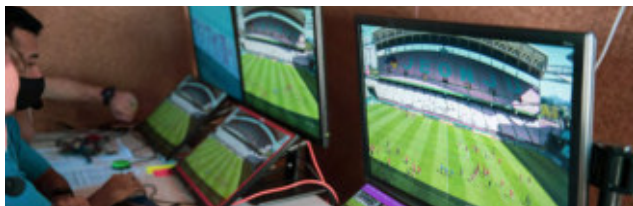


VAR Implementation Statistics

There were a total of 72 checks in seven matches, an average of 10.29 checks per match:

- 35% consisted of goal/offences leading up to a goal
- 33% consisted of penalty area incidents
- 32% consisted of challenges/tackles

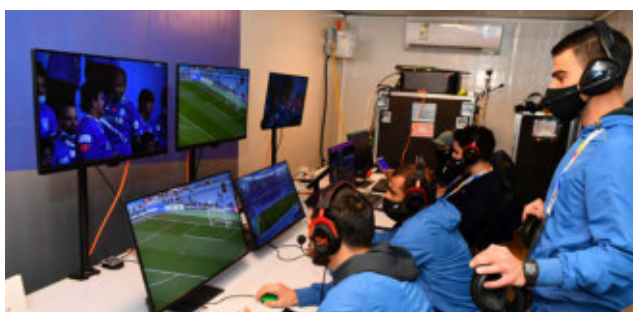
VAR CHECKS	
Total penalty area incidents checked	24
Total goals checked	25
Total challenges/tackles checked	23
Total mistaken identity situations checked	0
TOTAL CHECKS	72
Average checks per match	10.29



Out of the seven matches involving VAR, only one incident was reviewed:

- Zero on-field reviews (OFR)
- One only-VAR review (OVAR): One decision was changed

VAR REVIEWS	TOTAL	DECISIONS CHANGED	DECISIONS CONFIRMED
TOTAL REVIEWS	0	1	0
On-field Reviews (OFR)	0	0	0
Only-VAR Reviews (OVAR)	1	1	0
Penalty area incidents reviewed	0	0	0
Goals reviewed	1	0	0
Encroachment by GK in PK reviewed	0	0	0
Potential red card incidents reviewed	1	1	0
Mistaken identity situations reviewed	0	0	0
Average reviews per match	0.14		
Matches played	7		



VAR USAGE COMPARISON	ACL 2021	ACL 2020
Total Checks	72	74
Average checks per match	10.29	10.57
Total Reviews	1	8
OFR	0	7
OVAR	1	1
Decisions changed after VAR review	1	7
One review every # matches	0.14	1.1





AFC
CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™

EXTRA TIME

EXTRA TIME

Social Media Statistics



1,497,544

SUBSCRIBERS ON THE AFC HUB
YOUTUBE CHANNEL

1.17 MILLION

HOURS OF WATCH TIME ON YOUTUBE



2.68 BILLION

REACH ON AFC CHAMPIONS LEAGUE
DIGITAL PLATFORMS



240.1 MILLION

ENGAGEMENTS ACROSS ALL
AFC CHAMPIONS LEAGUE DIGITAL PLATFORMS



347.8 MILLION

VIDEO VIEWS ACROSS ALL DIGITAL PLATFORMS

AFC COMPETITIONS COMMITTEE

Name	Position	Member Association
DR. TRAN QUOC TUAN	CHAIRPERSON	VFF
MR. ABED-ALKHALIQ MASOUD AHMED	DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON	IFA
MR. MARK FALVO	Member	FOOTBALL AUSTRALIA
MR. KAZI MD. SALAHUDDIN	Member	BFF
MR. LOUIS LIU YI	Member	CFA
MR. SUNANDO DHAR	Member	AIFF
MR. ENDRI ERAWAN	Member	PSSI
MR. KIYOTAKA SUHARA	Member	JFA
MR. SIZAR SOUBAR	Member	JFA
MR. CHUNG MONG GYU	Member	KFA
MR. STUART RAMALINGAM	Member	FAM
MR. BIGYAN RAJ SHARMA	Member	ANFA
MR. AHMED KHELLIL ABBASSI	Member	QFA
MR. IBRAHIM S. ALKASSIM	Member	SAFF
BRIGADIER GENERAL HATEM AL GHAEEB	Member	SFA
MR. DAVLATMAND ISLOMOV	Member	TFF
MR. ABDULLAH NASER AL-JUNAIBI	Member	UAE FA
MR. ALEKSANDR DAVIDENKO	Member	UFA

AFC REFEREES COMMITTEE

Name	Position	Member Association
HE DU ZHAOCAI	CHAIRPERSON	CFA
MR. HANY TALEB B S AL-RAEESI	DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON	QFA
MR. ABDULRAHMAN ALDELAWAR	Member	BFA
MR. CHARLES CHEUNG YIM YAU	Member	HKFA
MR. RAVISHANKAR JAYARAMAN	Member	AIFF
MR. HEDAYAT MOMBINI	Member	FFIRI
MR. YOSHIMI OGAWA	Member	JFA
MS. EUN AH HONG	Member	KFA
MR. SAAD AL FADHLI	Member	KFA
MR. MAHMOUD EL RABAAH	Member	LFA
MR. MARAI ALAWAJI	Member	SAFF
MR. JOHN CHIA	Member	FAS
MR. ALI HAMAD AL BEDWAWI	Member	UAE FA
MR. RAVSHAN IRMATOV	Member	UFA
GENERAL FAROUK BOUZO	ADVISOR	SYRIA

AFC TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Name	Position	Member Association
MR. KOHZO TASHIMA	CHAIRPERSON	JFA
MR. MOHAMMAD YOSUF KARGAR	Member	AFF
MR. TREVOR MORGAN	Member	FOOTBALL AUSTRALIA
MR. ZHANG CHAO	Member	CFA
MR. ABHISHEK YADAV	Member	AIFF
MR. INDRA SYAFRI	Member	PSSI
MR. MORTEZA MOHASES	Member	FFIRI
MR. KIM PAN GON	Member	KFA
MR. HAROON AL BARTAMANI	Member	OFA
MR. FAHAD ABDULLA AL ZARRAA	Member	QFA
MR. OMAR ABDULLA BAKHASHWEIN	Member	SAFF
MR. MUHANNAD AL FAKEER	Member	SFA
MR. WITHAYA LAOHAKUL	Member	FAT
MR. ABDULLA HASAN ABDULLA	Member	UAE FA



AFC
CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE
FINAL 2020



AFC
CHAMPIONS LEAGUE FINAL 2020 DOHA
HYUNDAI
SD 4 Million
CHAMPIONS
the-afc.com



AFC
**CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™**

**PREVIOUS
WINNERS**

PREVIOUS WINNERS

2020 AFC Champions League

Ulsan Hyundai FC (KOR)

Final			
19/12/20	Persepolis FC (IRN) (Mehdi Abdighara 45')	1-2 (1-1)	Ulsan Hyundai FC (KOR) (Gleidionor Figueiredo Pinto Junior 45+4', 55' pk)
Al Janoub Stadium, Doha			

2019 AFC Champions League

Al Hilal SFC (KSA)

Final			
First Leg			
9/11/19	Al Hilal SFC (KSA) (Andre Carrillo 60')	1-0 (0-0)	Urawa Red Diamonds (JPN)
King Saud University Stadium, Riyadh			
Second Leg			
24/11/19	Urawa Red Diamonds (JPN)	0-2 (0-0)	Al Hilal SFC (KSA) (Salem Al Dawsari 74', Bafétimbi Gomis 90+3')
Saitama Stadium 2002, Saitama			

Al-Hilal SFC (KSA) won 3-0 on aggregate

2018 AFC Champions League

Kashima Antlers (JPN)

Final			
First Leg			
3/11/18	Kashima Antlers (JPN) (Léo Silva 58', Serginho 70')	2-0	Persepolis (IRN)
Kashima Soccer Stadium, Kashima			
Second Leg			
10/11/18	Persepolis (IRN)	0-0	Kashima Antlers (JPN)
Azadi Stadium, Tehran			

Kashima Antlers won 2-0 on aggregate.

2017 AFC Champions League

Urawa Red Diamonds (JPN)

Final			
First Leg			
18/11/17	Al Hilal (KSA) (Khribin 37')	1-1	Urawa Red Diamonds (JPN) (Rafael Silva 7')
King Fahd International Stadium, Riyadh			
Second Leg			
25/11/17	Urawa Red Diamonds (JPN) (Rafael Silva 88')	1-0	Al Hilal (KSA)
Saitama Stadium 2002, Saitama			

Urawa Red Diamonds win 2-1 on aggregate

2016 AFC Champions League

Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors (KOR)

Final			
First Leg			
19/11/16	Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors (KOR) (Leonardo 70', 77')	2-1	Al Ain (UAE) (Asprilla 63')
Jeonju World Cup Stadium, Jeonju			
Second Leg			
26/11/16	Al Ain (UAE) (Lee Myung-joo 34')	1-1	Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors (KOR) (Han Kyo-won 30')
Hazza Bin Zayed Stadium, Al Ain			

Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors win 3-2 on aggregate

2015 AFC Champions League

Guangzhou Evergrande (CHN)

Final			
First Leg			
07/11/15	Al Ahli (UAE)	0-0	Guangzhou Evergrande (CHN)
Al Rashid Stadium, Dubai			
Second Leg			
21/11/15	Guangzhou Evergrande (CHN) (Elkeson 64')	1-0	Al Ahli (UAE)
Tianhe Stadium, Guangzhou			

Guangzhou Evergrande win 1-0 on aggregate

2014 AFC Champions League

Western Sydney Wanderers (AUS)

Final			
First Leg			
25/10/14	Western Sydney Wanderers (AUS) (Tomi Juric 64')	1-0	Al Hilal (KSA)
Parramatta Stadium, Sydney			
Second Leg			
01/11/14	Al Hilal (KSA)	0-0	Western Sydney Wanderers (AUS)
King Fahad International Stadium, Riyadh			

Western Sydney Wanderers win 1-0 on aggregate

2013 AFC Champions League

Guangzhou Evergrande (CHN)

Final			
First Leg			
26/10/13	FC Seoul (KOR) (Sergio Escudero 11', Dejan Damjanovic 83')	2-2	Guangzhou Evergrande (CHN) (Elkeson 30', Gao Lin 58')
Seoul World Cup Stadium, Seoul			
Second Leg			
09/11/13	Guangzhou Evergrande (CHN) (Elkeson 58')	1-1	FC Seoul (KOR) (Dejan Damjanovic 63')
Guangzhou Tianhe Stadium, Guangzhou			

Aggregate score 3-3. Guangzhou Evergrande win on away goals

2012 AFC Champions League

Ulsan Hyundai (KOR)

Final			
10/11/12	Ulsan Hyundai (KOR) (Kwak Tae-hwi 13', Rafinha 68', Kim Seung-yong 75')	3-0	Al Ahli (KSA)
Ulsan Munsu Football Stadium, Ulsan			

2011 AFC Champions League

Al Sadd (QAT)

Final			
04/11/11	Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors (KOR) (Eninho 19', Lee Sung-hyun 90+2')	2-2	Al Sadd (QAT) (Sim Woo-yeon 30' og, Abdul Kader Keita 61')
Jeonju World Cup Stadium, Jeonju			

After extra-time. Al Sadd win 4-2 on penalties

2010 AFC Champions League

Seongnam Ilhwa Chunma (KOR)

Final			
13/11/10	Seongnam Ilhwa Chunma (KOR) (Sasa Ognenovski 29', Cho Byung-kuk 53', Kim Cheol-ho 83')	3-1	Zobahan (IRN) (Mohammadreza Khalatbari 67')
National Stadium, Tokyo			

2009 AFC Champions League

Pohang Steelers (KOR)

Final			
07/11/09	Al Ittihad (KSA) (Mohammed Noor 74')	1-2	Pohang Steelers (KOR) (No Byung-jun 57', Kim Hyung-il 66')
National Stadium, Tokyo			

2008 AFC Champions League

Gamba Osaka (JPN)

Final			
First Leg			
05/11/08	Gamba Osaka (JPN) (Lucas 37', Yasuhito Endo 43', Michihiro Yasuda 68')	3-0	Adelaide United (AUS)
Expo '70 Commemorative Stadium, Osaka			
Second Leg			
12/11/08	Adelaide United (AUS)	0-2	Gamba Osaka (JPN) (Lucas 4', 14')
Hindmarsh Stadium, Adelaide			

Gamba Osaka win 5-0 on aggregate

2007 AFC Champions League

Urawa Reds (JPN)

Final			
First Leg			
07/11/07	Sepahan (IRN) (Mahmoud Karimi 47')	1-1	Urawa Reds (JPN) (Robson Ponte 45')
Foolad Shahr Stadium, Esfahan			
Second Leg			
14/11/07	Urawa Reds (JPN) (Yuichiro Nagai 22', Yuki Abe 71')	2-0	Sepahan (IRN)
Saitama World Cup Stadium, Saitama			

Urawa Reds win 3-1 on aggregate

2006 AFC Champions League

Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors (KOR)

Final			
First Leg			
01/11/06	Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors (KOR) (Yeom Ki-hun 59', Botti 90+1')	2-0	Al Karama (SYR)
Jeonju World Cup Stadium, Jeonju			
Second Leg			
08/11/06	Al Karama (SYR) (Iyad Mando 54', Mohamad Ibrahim 60')	2-1	Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors (KOR) (Ze Carlo 88')
Khaled bin Al Walid Stadium, Homs			

Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors win 3-2 on aggregate

2005 AFC Champions League

Al Ittihad (KSA)

Final			
First Leg			
26/10/05	Al Ain (UAE) (Ali Msarri 50')	1-1	Al Ittihad (KSA) (Mohamed Kallon 85')
Tahnou Bin Mohammed Stadium, Al Ain			
Second Leg			
05/11/05	Al Ittihad (KSA) (Mohamed Kallon 2', Mohammed Noor 33', Joseph-Desire Job 57', Ahmed Dokhi 69')	4-2	Al Ain (UAE) (Shehab Ahmed 55' pk, Luis Tejada 90')
Prince Abdullah Al Faisal Stadium, Jeddah			

Al Ittihad win 5-3 on aggregate

2004 AFC Champions League

Al Ittihad (KSA)

Final			
First Leg			
24/11/04	Al Ittihad (KSA) (Redha Tukar 28')	1-3	Seongnam Ilhwa Chunma (KOR) (Denis Laktionov 27', Kim Do-hoon 81', Jang Hak-young 90')
Prince Abdullah Al Faisal Stadium, Jeddah			
Second Leg			
01/12/04	Seongnam Ilhwa Chunma (KOR)	0-5	Al Ittihad (KSA) (Redha Tukar 27', Hamzah Idris 45', Mohammed Noor 55', 78', Manaf Abushgeer 90')
Seongnam Sports Complex, Seongnam			

Al Ittihad win 6-3 on aggregate

2003 AFC Champions League

Al Ain (UAE)

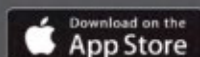
Final			
First Leg			
03/10/03	Al Ain (UAE) (Salam Jawhar 40', Mohammed Omar 75')	2-0	BEC Tero Sasana (THA)
Tahnun bin Mohammed Stadium, Al Ain			
Second Leg			
11/10/03	BEC Tero Sasana (THA) (Thersak Chaiman 60' pk)	1-0	Al Ain (UAE)
Rajamangala Stadium, Bangkok			

Al Ain win 2-1 on aggregate



REPORT ANY MATCH FIXING ACTIVITIES WITH THE AFC INTEGRITY APP

Download it now from Apple App Store or Google Play



INFORMATION RECEIVED WILL BE TREATED CONFIDENTIALLY



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Editorial Group

Andy Roxburgh
Graham Turner

Technical Analysts

Mushabbab Omar M Alhakeem (Saudi Arabia)
Mohamed Abed M Abduljawad (Saudi Arabia)
Choi Seung Bum (Korea Republic)
Takeshi Ono (Japan)
Takahiro Sato (Japan)

Production

Vijesh Rai
Vinashal Pillai
Rhys Lee
Abdul Hafiz Idris
Tom Engelhardt

Design

Raja Amy
Esther Low

Technical Administration

Jose Carpio
Khalid Idris
Nur Syafiah Woo

Photography

Asian Football Confederation
AFP
Adam Aidil Padali

Latest AFC Technical Reports can be viewed at:

<https://www.the-afc.com/en/more/downloads.html>



ASIAN FOOTBALL CONFEDERATION

AFC House, Jalan 1/155B, Bukit Jalil, 57000 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
T: +603 8994 3388 | F: +603 8994 2689

the-AFC.com

