

# AFC Champions League 2017

## Group Stage Draw

Kuala Lumpur

Tuesday, 13 December 2016



### Contents

- |                                 |                                              |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 1 – Introduction                | 4 – Profiles of participating teams          |
| 2 – List of participating teams | 5 – Roll of Honour                           |
| 3 – Competition dates           | 6 – Asian Football Confederation information |

### Introduction

A total of 47 teams from 19 countries are in the Official Draw for the 2017 edition of the AFC Champions League, which takes place in Kuala Lumpur on 13 December.

The Official Draw will determine the placement of teams for the tournament's group stage which kicks-off on February 20.

Of the 32 slots in the group stage, 24 have already been filled while the remaining eight will be decided after the preliminary stage and playoff stage, which take place early next year and involves 23 teams.

There are a number of former winners among the 24 teams that have sealed their places in the Group Stage including defending champions Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors of Korea Republic, Guangzhou Evergrande of China, Urawa Red Diamonds of Japan and Al Ain of the United Arab Emirates.

Former champions Al Sadd of Qatar are also in the draw but they will have to get through the playoffs in order to qualify for the group stage.

The eight groups are divided geographically with four in the West region and four in the East region. The group stage games will be played on a double round-robin basis with the top two sides in each of the sections advancing to the round of 16, which takes place in late May.

The round of 16, quarter-finals and semi-finals will be played on a zonal basis which will ensure an East vs West clash in the final next November.

The winners of the tournament will qualify for the FIFA Club World Cup in December 2017.



OFFICIAL SPONSORS



OFFICIAL SUPPORTER



# AFC Champions League 2017

## Group Stage Draw

Kuala Lumpur

Tuesday, 13 December 2016

### List of participating teams

#### WEST ZONE

##### **BAHRAIN**

\* Al Hidd Club League champions

##### **INDIA**

\* JSW Bengaluru FC League champions

##### **IRAN**

Esteghlal Khuzestan FC League champions

Zobahan FC Hazfi Cup winners

Persepolis FC League runners-up

\* Esteghlal FC League 3rd place

##### **JORDAN**

\* Al Wehdat League champions

##### **QATAR**

Al Rayyan SC League champions

Lekhwiya SC Emir Cup winners

\* El Jaish SC League runners-up

\* Al Sadd SC League 3rd place

##### **SAUDI ARABIA**

Al Ahli Saudi FC League champions and King's Cup winners

Al Hilal SFC League runners-up

Al Taawoun FC League 4th place

\* Al Fateh FC League 5th place

##### **UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**

Al Ahli FC League champions

Al Jazira President's Cup winners

Al Ain FC League runners-up

\* Al Wahda League 3rd place

##### **UZBEKISTAN**

PFC Lokomotiv League champions and Uzbek Cup winners

\* FC Bunyodkor League runners-up

\* FC Nasaf League 3rd place

\* denotes playoff teams

# AFC Champions League 2017

## Group Stage Draw

Kuala Lumpur

Tuesday, 13 December 2016

### EAST ZONE

#### **AUSTRALIA**

Adelaide United

Western Sydney Wanderers

\* Brisbane Roar

League champions and Grand Final winners

League runners-up

League 3rd place

#### **CHINA**

Guangzhou Evergrande FC

Jiangsu FC

\* Shanghai SIPG FC

\* Shanghai Shenhua FC

League champions and Chinese FA Cup winners

League runners-up

League 3rd place

League 4th place

#### **HONG KONG**

Eastern SC

\* Kitchee

League champions

League runners-up

#### **JAPAN**

Kashima Antlers

Urawa Red Diamonds

+ Kawasaki Frontale

+ TBC

League champions

League runners-up

League 3rd place

Emperor's Cup winners or League 4th place

#### **KOREA REPUBLIC**

FC Seoul

Suwon Samsung Bluewings

Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors FC

\* Jeju United FC

League champions

Korean FA Cup winners

League runners-up

League 3rd place

#### **MALAYSIA**

\* Johor Darul Ta'zim

League champions

#### **MYANMAR**

\* Yadanarbon FC

League champions

#### **PHILIPPINES**

\* Global FC

League champions

#### **SINGAPORE**

\* Tampines Rovers FC

League runners-up

#### **THAILAND**

Muangthong United

\* Sukhothai FC

\* Bangkok United

League champions

Thai FA Cup winners

League runners-up

#### **VIETNAM**

\* Ha Noi T&T

League champions

\* denotes playoff teams

+ Kawasaki Frontale have qualified for the AFC Champions League but it has yet to be determined whether they have qualified directly for the group stage or will compete in the playoff stage.



Emirates

Nikon

QNB

TOYOTA

青島啤酒

OFFICIAL SUPPORTER

SEIKO

# AFC Champions League 2017

## Group Stage Draw

Kuala Lumpur

Tuesday, 13 December 2016

### Competition dates

#### PRELIMINARY STAGE AND PLAYOFF STAGE

24 January (Tuesday)	Preliminary stage 1
31 January (Tuesday)	Preliminary stage 2
07 February (Tuesday)	Playoff stage

#### GROUP STAGE

20-22 February (Monday-Wednesday)	Matchday 1
27 February-1 March (Monday-Wednesday)	Matchday 2
13-15 March (Monday-Wednesday)	Matchday 3
10-12 April (Monday-Wednesday)	Matchday 4
24-26 April (Monday-Wednesday)	Matchday 5
08-10 May (Monday-Wednesday)	Matchday 6

#### KNOCKOUT STAGE

22-24 May (Monday-Wednesday)	Round of 16, 1st leg
29-31 May (Monday-Wednesday)	Round of 16, 2nd leg
21-23 September (Monday-Wednesday)	Quarter-finals, 1st leg
11-13 September (Monday-Wednesday)	Quarter-finals, 2nd leg
25-27 October (Tuesday-Wednesday)	Semi-finals, 1st leg
16-18 October (Tuesday-Wednesday)	Semi-finals, 2nd leg
18 November (Saturday)	Final, 1st leg
25 November (Saturday)	Final, 2nd leg

*Match dates are subject to changes.*

# AFC Champions League 2017

## Group Stage Draw

Kuala Lumpur

Tuesday, 13 December 2016

### Participating team information

#### AUSTRALIA

##### Adelaide United

Adelaide United will appear in the group stage for the first time since 2012 after they topped the A-League Premiership table in the 2015-16 season and claimed their first league title with a 3-1 win over Western Sydney Wanderers in the Grand Final. The South Australian side reached the AFC Champions League final in 2008 and finished runners-up to Japan's Gamba Osaka but were eliminated by Shandong Luneng of China in the playoffs in 2016.

**How they qualified:** A-League Premiership winners and Grand Final winners

**Past ACLs:** 2007 – Group stage; 2008 – Runners-up; 2010 – Round of 16; 2012 – Quarter-final; 2016 – Playoffs

##### Western Sydney Wanderers

Western Sydney Wanderers made history in 2014 when they beat Al Hilal of Saudi Arabia 1-0 on aggregate in the final to become the first Australian side to win the AFC Champions League. They won the A-League Premiership in their inaugural campaign in 2012-13 but have been league runners-up three times after losing in the Grand Final in 2013, 2014 and 2016.

**How they qualified:** A-League Premiership runners-up

**Past ACLs:** 2014 – Champions; 2015 – Group stage

##### Brisbane Roar

Brisbane Roar narrowly missed out on a third A-League Premiership title in 2015-16 and an automatic slot in the AFC Champions League group stage after a draw in their final regular season game saw them overtaken by eventual champions Adelaide United. They have appeared twice previously in the group stage but failed to advance on both occasions.

**How they qualified:** A-League Premiership 3rd place

**Past ACLs:** 2012 – Group stage; 2013 – Playoffs; 2015 – Group stage

#### BAHRAIN

##### Al Hidd Club

Having bowed out to Qatari side Lekhwiya in the playoffs in 2014, Al Hidd Club will make a second attempt to qualify for the AFC Champions League group stage in 2017 after winning the Bahrain Premier League for the first time in 2015-16. They have played in the AFC Cup in the past three years, reaching the quarter-finals in 2014 but going out at the group stage in the last two seasons.

**How they qualified:** Bahrain Premier League champions

**Past ACLs:** 2014 – Playoffs



Emirates

Nikon

QNB

TOYOTA

青島啤酒

OFFICIAL SUPPORTER

SEIKO

# AFC Champions League 2017

## Group Stage Draw

Kuala Lumpur

Tuesday, 13 December 2016

### CHINA

#### Guangzhou Evergrande FC

Two-time Asian club champions Guangzhou Evergrande will make their sixth consecutive appearance in the AFC Champions League after winning the double in 2016 as they clinched a sixth straight Chinese Super League title before beating Jiangsu FC on away goals in the Chinese FA Cup final. They won continental titles in 2013 and 2015 but were surprisingly eliminated in the group stage this year.

**How they qualified:** Chinese Super League champions and Chinese FA Cup winners

**Past ACLs:** 2012 – Quarter-finals; 2013 – Champions; 2014 – Quarter-finals; 2015 – Champions; 2016 – Group stage

#### Jiangsu FC

After finishing runners-up to Guangzhou Evergrande in the Chinese Super League in 2016, Jiangsu FC missed out on a second straight Chinese FA Cup title when they lost on away goals to Evergrande in the final. The Nanjing-based side were eliminated in the group stage in both of their previous appearances in the AFC Champions League.

**How they qualified:** Chinese Super League runners-up

**Past ACLs:** 2013 – Group stage; 2016 – Group stage

#### Shanghai SIPG FC

Shanghai SIPG made a fine debut in the AFC Champions League in 2016 as they reached the quarter-finals before going out to eventual winners Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors. Runners-up in the Chinese Super League in 2015, two points behind champions Guangzhou Evergrande, they fell off a bit last season as they finished in third place, 12 points behind the champions.

**How they qualified:** Chinese Super League 3rd place

**Past ACLs:** 2016 – Quarter-finals

#### Shanghai Shenhua FC

Shanghai Shenhua have a chance to qualify for the AFC Champions League group stage for the first time since 2011 and seventh time overall after they finished fourth in the Chinese Super League in 2016. They were beaten in the quarter-finals by eventual champions Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors in 2006 but have gone out at the group stage in their other five appearances in the tournament.

**How they qualified:** Chinese Super League 4th place

**Past ACLs:** 2003 – Group stage; 2004 – Group stage; 2006 – Quarter-finals; 2007 – Group stage; 2009 – Group stage; 2011 – Group stage



Emirates

Nikon

QNB

TOYOTA

青島啤酒

OFFICIAL SPONSORS

OFFICIAL SUPPORTER

SEIKO

# AFC Champions League 2017

## Group Stage Draw

Kuala Lumpur

Tuesday, 13 December 2016

### HONG KONG

#### Eastern SC

Eastern Sports Club coach Chan Yuen-ting made headlines this year when she led the club to their first Hong Kong league title in 20 years and became the first woman to lead a men's team to a top-tier football championship. The 28-year-old is set to make more history in 2017 when she becomes the first female head coach to take charge of a club in the AFC Champions League as Eastern make their first-ever appearance in the competition.

**How they qualified:** Hong Kong Premier League champions

**No previous AFC Champions League appearances**

#### Kitchee

Runners-up in the Hong Kong Premier League in 2015-16, Kitchee will make a third attempt to qualify for the AFC Champions League in 2017 after going out in the playoffs in the past two seasons. The seven-time Hong Kong league champions have made six previous appearances in the AFC Cup, reaching the semi-finals in 2014.

**How they qualified:** Hong Kong Premier League runners-up

**Past ACLs:** 2015 – Playoffs; 2016 – Playoffs

### INDIA

#### JSW Bengaluru FC

Formed in 2013, JSW Bengaluru FC enjoyed immediate success as they won the I-League in their inaugural season in 2013-14 before lifting the title again last season. They were eliminated in the AFC Champions League playoffs in 2015 but made a strong run in the AFC Cup this year as they became the first Indian side to reach a continental club final.

**How they qualified:** I-League champions

**Past ACLs:** 2015 – Playoffs

### IRAN

#### Esteghlal Khuzestan FC

Established in 2011, Esteghlal Khuzestan won promotion to the Persian Gulf Pro League in 2013 and after struggling in their first two seasons in Iran's top flight, they produced a stunning run to their first-ever league championship in 2015/16 as they beat Zobahan 2-0 in their final game of the season to pip Persepolis to the title on goal difference.

**How they qualified:** Persian Gulf Pro League champions

**No previous AFC Champions League appearances**

# AFC Champions League 2017

## Group Stage Draw

Kuala Lumpur

Tuesday, 13 December 2016

### Zobahan FC

Runners-up in the AFC Champions League in 2010, Zobahan returned to the competition last year for the first time since 2012 and reached the round of 16 where they were eliminated by eventual runners-up Al Ain. The Esfahan club finished a disappointing sixth in the Iranian league last year but lifted the Hazfi Cup for a second year in a row after beating Esteghlal on penalties in the final.

**How they qualified:** Hazfi Cup winners

**Past ACLs:** 2004 – Group stage; 2010 – Runners-up; 2011 – Quarter-finals; 2012 – Playoffs; 2016 – Round of 16

### Persepolis FC

Iranian league winners on a record nine occasions, Persepolis narrowly missed out on a 10th title last season when they finished behind champions Esteghlal Khuzestan on goal difference. The Tehran club lifted the Asian Cup Winners' Cup in 1991 but they have failed to sparkle in their previous AFC Champions League appearances with the best performances coming in 2009, 2012 and 2015 when they reached the last 16.

**How they qualified:** Persian Gulf Pro League runners-up

**Past ACLs:** 2003 – Group stage; 2009 – Round of 16; 2011 – Group stage; 2012 – Round of 16; 2015 – Round of 16

### Esteghlal FC

Two-time Asian Club Championship winners Esteghlal missed out on an automatic spot in the 2017 AFC Champions League after losing on penalties to Zobahan in the Hazfi Cup final but they can qualify through the playoffs after finishing third in the Persian Gulf Pro League. The Tehran side have made seven previous appearances in the AFC Champions League and reached the semi-finals in 2013 when they were beaten by FC Seoul.

**How they qualified:** Persian Gulf Pro League 3<sup>rd</sup> place

**Past ACLs:** 2003 – Group stage; 2009 – Group stage; 2010 – Round of 16; 2011 – Group stage; 2012 – Round of 16; 2013 – Semi-finals; 2014 – Group stage

## JAPAN

### Kashima Antlers

Kashima Antlers were crowned J.League champions for a record eighth time in 2016 after they came back from a two-goal deficit to beat Urawa Red Diamonds on away goals in the championship final. While Kashima are Japan's most successful club, they have yet to shine in the AFC Champions League, reaching the quarter-finals in 2008 and going out in the round of 16 on three occasions.

**How they qualified:** J1 League champions

**Past ACLs:** 2003 – Group stage; 2008 – Quarter-finals; 2009 – Round of 16; 2010 – Round of 16; 2011 – Round of 16; 2015 – Group stage



Emirates

Nikon

QNB

TOYOTA

青島啤酒

OFFICIAL SPONSORS

OFFICIAL SUPPORTER

SEIKO



# AFC Champions League 2017

## Group Stage Draw

Kuala Lumpur

Tuesday, 13 December 2016

### Urawa Red Diamonds

Despite topping the overall J1 League table during the regular season in 2016, Urawa Red Diamonds missed out on a second league title when they blew a two-goal advantage against Kashima Antlers in the championship final and lost on away goals. The Saitama-based club were the first Japanese winners of the AFC Champions League in 2007 when they beat Sepahan of Iran 3-1 on aggregate in the final.

**How they qualified:** J1 League runners-up

**Past ACLs:** 2007 – Champions; 2008 – Semi-finals; 2013 – Group stage; 2015 – Group stage; 2016 – Round of 16

### Kawasaki Frontale

Kawasaki Frontale had the second-best overall record in the J1 League in 2016 but failed to reach the championship final after they were beaten 1-0 at home by Kashima Antlers in the semi-finals. They have appeared in the AFC Champions League on four previous occasions, reaching the quarter-finals in 2007 and 2009.

**How they qualified:** J1 League 3rd place

**Past ACLs:** 2007 – Quarter-finals; 2009 – Quarter-finals; 2010 – Group stage; 2014 – Round of 16

### Emperor's Cup winners / J.League 4th place – TBC

The fourth Japanese slot in the 2016 AFC Champions League will go to the 4th-placed team in the J1 League, Gamba Osaka, or the winners of the Emperor's Cup, which is now at the quarter-final stage. Gamba Osaka will qualify for the AFC Champions League group stage if they win the Emperor's Cup, or will go into the playoffs if Kashima Antlers or Kawasaki Frontale win the competition. If Omiya Ardija, Sanfrecce Hiroshima, Shonan Bellmare, FC Tokyo or Yokohama F. Marinos win the tournament, they will go into the group stage and Kawasaki Frontale will compete in the playoffs.

## JORDAN

### Al Wehdat

Al Wehdat won the first-ever AFC Champions League match in August 2002 when they beat Al Nejme of Lebanon 3-2 in the qualifying round. The 14-time Jordanian champions have taken part in the playoffs in the past two seasons but were eliminated by Kuwait's Qadsia SC in 2015 and Saudi Arabia's Al Ittihad this year.

**How they qualified:** Jordan Premier League champions

**Past ACLs:** 2003 – Qualifying round; 2015 – Playoffs; 2016 – Playoffs

# AFC Champions League 2017

## Group Stage Draw

Kuala Lumpur

Tuesday, 13 December 2016

### KOREA REPUBLIC

#### FC Seoul

FC Seoul were eliminated in last year's AFC Champions League semi-finals by Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors but exacted revenge by beating their rivals 1-0 in their final game of the season to win the K League Classic championship. They will appear in the continental tournament for the fifth consecutive year in 2017, looking to improve on their runner-up performance in 2013 and semi-final appearances in 2014 and 2016.

**How they qualified:** K League Classic champions

**Past ACLs:** 2009 – Quarter-finals; 2011 – Quarter-finals; 2013 – Runners-up; 2014 – Semi-finals; 2015 – Round of 16; 2016 – Semi-finals

#### Suwon Samsung Bluewings

Suwon Samsung Bluewings rescued a disappointing K League season, in which they finished in the bottom half of the table, by winning the Korean FA Cup for the fourth time in 2016, beating rivals FC Seoul in an epic penalty shootout which went 10 rounds. Winners of the last two editions of the Asian Club Championship in 2001 and 2002, they reached the semi-finals of the AFC Champions League in 2011 but crashed out at the group stage this year.

**How they qualified:** Korean FA Cup winners

**Past ACLs:** 2005 – Group stage; 2009 – Round of 16; 2010 – Quarter-finals; 2011 – Semi-finals; 2013 – Group stage; 2015 – Round of 16; 2016 – Group stage

#### Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors FC

Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors were crowned AFC Champions League winners for the second time this year after they overcame Al Ain of the United Arab Emirate 3-2 on aggregate in a hard-fought final. Their continental success made up for the disappointment of missing out on a third consecutive K League Classic title as they were overtaken by FC Seoul after a 1-0 loss to their rivals on the final day of the season.

**How they qualified:** K League Classic runners-up

**Past ACLs:** 2004 – Semi-finals; 2006 – Champions; 2007 – Quarter-finals; 2010 – Quarter-finals; 2011 – Runners-up; 2012 – Group stage; 2013 – Round of 16; 2014 – Round of 16; 2015 – Quarter-finals; 2016 – Champions

#### Jeju United FC

Jeju United have the opportunity to qualify for the AFC Champions League group stage for the second time after they finished third in the K League Classic in 2016, their best performance since they were runners-up in 2010. They made their only previous AFC Champions League appearance in 2011 when they went out at the group stage.

**How they qualified:** K League Classic 3rd place

**Past ACLs:** 2011 – Group stage

# AFC Champions League 2017

## Group Stage Draw

Kuala Lumpur

Tuesday, 13 December 2016

### MALAYSIA

#### Johor Darul Ta'zim

Johor Darul Ta'zim were the first Malaysian club to win an Asian continental title when they beat Istiklol 1-0 to lift the AFC Cup in 2015. The Malaysian league champions have taken part in the ACL playoffs in the past two seasons but have yet to get past the preliminary rounds.

**How they qualified:** Malaysia Super League champions

**Past ACLs:** 2015 – Playoffs; 2016 – Playoffs

### MYANMAR

#### Yadanarbon FC

Yadanarbon secured a spot in the AFC Champions League playoffs by winning the Myanmar National League for the fourth time in 2016. They won the AFC President's Cup in 2010 but were eliminated on penalties by Singapore's Warriors FC in the ACL playoffs in 2015.

**How they qualified:** Myanmar National League champions

**Past ACLs:** 2015 – Playoffs

### PHILIPPINES

#### Global FC

Global FC are the first Filipino side to earn a spot in the AFC Champions League playoffs after they claimed their third United Football League title in five seasons in 2016. They competed in the AFC Cup in 2015 but failed to get past the group stage.

**How they qualified:** United Football League champions

**No previous AFC Champions League appearances**

### QATAR

#### Al Rayyan SC

After being relegated in 2014, Al Rayyan topped the second division the following season before winning the Qatar Stars League in decisive fashion in 2016-17 as they finished 14 points clear of runners-up El Jaish. They will look to improve in the AFC Champions League in 2017 after going out at the group stage in all six of their previous appearances.

**How they qualified:** Qatar Stars League champions

**Past ACLs:** 2005 – Group stage; 2007 – Group stage; 2011 – Group stage; 2012 – Group stage; 2013 – Group stage; 2014 – Group stage

#### Lekhwiya SC

Lekhwiya finished fourth in the Qatar Stars League in 2015-16 but qualified for the AFC Champions League for a sixth consecutive season after coming from two goals down to beat Al Sadd on penalties in the Emir Cup final. They reached the ACL quarter-finals in 2013 and 2015 but went out to Qatari rivals El Jaish in the round of 16 this year.

**How they qualified:** Qatar Emir Cup winners

**Past ACLs:** 2012 – Group stage; 2013 – Quarter-finals; 2014 – Group stage; 2015 – Quarter-finals; 2016 – Round of 16



Emirates

Nikon

OFFICIAL SPONSORS

QNB

TOYOTA

青島啤酒

OFFICIAL SUPPORTER

SEIKO

# AFC Champions League 2017

## Group Stage Draw

Kuala Lumpur

Tuesday, 13 December 2016

### El Jaish SC

El Jaish will compete in the AFC Champions League playoffs for a third straight year in 2017 after finishing runners-up to Al Rayyan in the Qatar Stars League in the 2015-16 season. They were eliminated in the 2015 ACL playoffs by Naft Tehran but beat the Iranian side this year on their run to the semi-finals where they were eliminated 5-3 on aggregate by Al Ain.

**How they qualified:** Qatar Stars League runners-up

**Past ACLs:** 2013 – Round of 16; 2014 – Group stage; 2015 – Playoffs; 2016 – Semi-finals

### Al Sadd SC

Winners of the AFC Champions League in 2011, Al Sadd qualified for the 2017 playoffs after finishing third in the Qatar Stars League in 2015-16. They were crowned Asian champions four years ago after beating Jeonbuk Motors on penalties in the final but failed to qualify for the group stage last year after losing a penalty shootout to UAE side AL Jazira in the playoffs.

**How they qualified:** Qatar Stars League 3rd place

**Past ACLs:** 2003 – Group stage; 2004 – Group stage; 2005 – Quarter-finals; 2006 – Group stage; 2007 – Group stage; 2008 – Group stage; 2010 – Group stage; 2011 – Champions; 2014 – Quarter-finals; 2015 – Round of 16; 2016 – Playoffs

## SAUDI ARABIA

### Al Ahli Saudi FC

Jeddah-based Al Ahli enjoyed a memorable domestic season in 2015-16 as they claimed their first Saudi league title since 1984 before clinching the double with a 2-1 win over Al Nassr in the King's Cup final. However, the 2012 AFC Champions League runners-up did not fare so well on the continental stage this year as they were eliminated in the group stage.

**How they qualified:** Saudi Pro League champions and King's Cup winners

**Past ACLs:** 2003 – Qualifying rd; 2005 – Quarter-finals; 2008 – Group stage; 2010 – Group stage; 2012 – Runners-up; 2013 – Quarter-finals; 2015 – Round of 16; 2016 – Group stage

### Al Hilal SFC

Two-time Asian Club Championship winners Al Hilal have qualified for the AFC Champions League for a ninth straight time. They won the Crown Prince Cup for a record 13th time in 2016 and but endured much disappointment as they finished runners-up in the league, went out in the King's Cup semi-finals and crashed out in the last 16 of the AFC Champions League to Uzbek side Lokomotiv.

**How they qualified:** Saudi Pro League runners-up

**Past ACLs:** 2003 – Group stage; 2004 – Group stage; 2006 – Group stage; 2007 – Quarter-finals; 2009 – Round of 16; 2010 – Semi-finals; 2011 – Round of 16; 2012 – Quarter-finals; 2013 – Round of 16; 2014 – Runners-up; 2015 – Semi-finals; 2016 – Round of 16

# AFC Champions League 2017

## Group Stage Draw

Kuala Lumpur

Tuesday, 13 December 2016

### Al Taawoun FC

With Al Ittihad failing to meet the AFC Club Licensing Criteria after finishing third in the Saudi Pro League in 2015-16, fourth-placed Al Taawoun have secured a slot in the AFC Champions League group stage for 2017. The club from Buraidah will compete in the continental tournament for the first time after securing their highest-ever league finish last season.

**How they qualified:** Saudi Pro League 4th place

**No previous AFC Champions League appearances**

### Al Fateh FC

Al Ittihad's exclusion from the 2017 AFC Champions League means that Al Fateh will compete in the playoffs despite finishing fifth in the Saudi league in 2015-16. The team from Al Hassa will look to give a better account of themselves this time after they went winless and finished bottom of their group on their ACL debut in 2014.

**How they qualified:** Saudi Pro League 5th place

**Past ACLs:** 2014 – Group stage

## SINGAPORE

### Tampines Rovers FC

Tampines Rovers will take part in the AFC Champions League playoffs for the third time after finishing runners-up to Albirex Niigata (S) in the S-League in 2016. They were eliminated in the ACL playoffs in 2014 and 2016 but reached the AFC Cup quarter-finals this year.

**How they qualified:** S-League runners-up

**Past ACLs:** 2014 – Playoffs; 2016 - Playoffs

## THAILAND

### Muangthong United

Muangthong United were declared Thai Premier League champions for the fourth time this year as they held a four-point lead with three games left when the remaining matches were cancelled in October following the death of King Bhumibol Adulyadej. They appeared in the AFC Champions League group stage in 2013 but went out in the playoffs on four occasions.

**How they qualified:** Thai Premier League champions

**Past ACLs:** 2010–Playoffs; 2011–Playoffs; 2013–Group stage; 2014–Playoffs; 2016–Playoffs

### Sukhothai FC

Formed in 2007 and promoted to the Thai Premier League in 2015, Sukhothai were a respectable seventh in their maiden top flight campaign when the league was cancelled in October. Having reached the Thai FA Cup semi-finals, they were declared a co-winner of the tournament and won a draw among the four teams to gain a berth in the ACL playoffs.

**How they qualified:** Thai FA Cup co-winners

**No previous AFC Champions League appearances**

# AFC Champions League 2017

## Group Stage Draw

Kuala Lumpur

Tuesday, 13 December 2016

### Bangkok United

Known as Bangkok University when they competed in the AFC Champions League in 2008 as the Thai league champions, Bangkok United suffered relegation in 2010 but returned to the top flight two years later and finished third in 2012 and runners-up last season.

**How they qualified:** Thai Premier League runners-up

**Past ACLs:** 2008 – Group stage

### UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

#### Al Ahli FC

After missing out on the AFC Champions League this year, Al Ahli secured their return to the continental tournament by winning the Arabian Gulf League title in 2015-16, finishing nine points clear at the top of the table. They finished runners-up in their last ACL appearance in 2015, suffering a narrow 1-0 aggregate loss to Guangzhou Evergrande in the final.

**How they qualified:** Arabian Gulf League champions

**Past ACLs:** 2003 – Qualifying Rd; 2005 – Group Stage; 2009 – Group Stage; 2010 – Group Stage; 2014 – Group Stage; 2015 – Runners-up

#### Al Jazira

Al Jazira finished seventh in the UAE league in 2015-16 but earned a spot in the AFC Champions League play-offs by beating Al Ain on penalties to lift the President's Cup. They qualified for the group stage for the seventh time in eight seasons this year but finished bottom of their group after picking up only a single point from six games.

**How they qualified:** UAE President's Cup winners

**Past ACLs:** 2009 – Group stage; 2010 – Group stage; 2011 – Group stage; 2012 – Round of 16; 2013 – Group stage; 2014 – Round of 16; 2015 – Playoffs; 2016 – Group stage

#### Al Ain FC

Winners of the inaugural AFC Champions League in 2003, Al Ain finished runners-up for the second time this year after losing 3-2 on aggregate to Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors in the final. It was one of three near misses for them in 2016 as they also finished second to Al Ahli in the Arabian Gulf League and lost on penalties to Al Jazira in the President's Cup final.

**How they qualified:** Arabian Gulf League runners-up

**Past ACLs:** 2003 – Champions; 2004 – Quarter-finals; 2005 – Runners-up; 2006 – Quarter-finals; 2007 – Group stage; 2010 – Group stage; 2011 – Group stage; 2013 – Group stage; 2014 – Semi-finals; 2015 – Round of 16; 2016 – Runners-up

#### Al Wahda FC

Continental semi-finalists in 2007, Al Wahda will vie for a seventh appearance in the AFC Champions League group stage after finishing seventh in the Arabian Gulf League last season. They were beaten by Qatar's Al Sadd on penalties in the 2015 playoffs.

**How they qualified:** Arabian Gulf League 3rd place

**Past ACLs:** 2004 – Quarter-finals; 2006 – Group stage; 2007 – Semi-finals; 2008 – Group stage; 2010 – Group stage; 2011 – Group stage; 2015 – Playoffs



Emirates

Nikon

QNB

TOYOTA

青島啤酒

OFFICIAL SUPPORTER

SEIKO

# AFC Champions League 2017

## Group Stage Draw

Kuala Lumpur

Tuesday, 13 December 2016

### UZBEKISTAN

#### PFC Lokomotiv

After narrowly missing out in 2015, Lokomotiv captured their first-ever Uzbek league title in 2016, finishing the season 11 points ahead of Bunyodkor and Nasaf, before completing the double with a 1-0 win over Nasaf in the Uzbek Cup final. They also reached the AFC Champions League quarter-finals this year before going out 1-0 on aggregate to Al Ain.

**How they qualified:** Uzbekistan League champions and Uzbek Cup winners

**Past ACLs:** 2013 – Playoffs; 2014 – Playoffs; 2015 – Group stage; 2016 – Quarter-finals

#### FC Bunyodkor

Bunyodkor reached the knockout rounds on their first seven AFC Champions League appearances from 2008 to 2014, making it to the semi-finals in 2008 and 2012, but they have gone out at the group stage in the past two years. They earned a spot in the AFC Champions League playoffs by finishing runners-up in the Uzbek league in 2016.

**How they qualified:** Uzbekistan League runners-up

**Past ACLs:** 2008 – Semi-finals; 2009 – Quarter-finals; 2010 – Round of 16; 2011 – Round of 16; 2012 – Semi-finals; 2013 – Round of 16; 2014 – Round of 16; 2015 – Group stage; 2016 – Group stage

#### FC Nasaf

Nasaf became the first Uzbek club to win an Asian club title in 2011 when they lifted the AFC Cup but the Karshi club, who finished third in the Uzbek league and lost in the Uzbek Cup final this year, have yet to shine in the AFC Champions League, bowing out at the group stage in 2012, 2015 and 2016 and failing to get through the playoffs in 2014.

**How they qualified:** Uzbekistan League 3rd place

**Past ACLs:** 2012 – Group stage; 2014 – Playoffs; 2015 – Group stage; 2016 – Group stage

### VIETNAM

#### Hanoi T&T

Hanoi T&T will take part in the AFC Champions League playoffs for the fourth year in a row after they narrowly won the V.League 1 title in 2016. They beat Hong Kong's Kitchee in preliminary round 2 this year but bowed out of the competition after losing 3-0 to Pohang Steelers in the playoff round.

**How they qualified:** V.League 1 champions

**Past ACLs:** 2014 – Playoffs; 2015 – Playoffs; 2016 – Playoffs



# AFC Champions League 2017

## Group Stage Draw

Kuala Lumpur

Tuesday, 13 December 2016

### Roll of Honour

#### AFC Champions League

Year	Winners	Runners-Up	Score
2016	Jeonbuk Hyundai Motor (KOR)	Al Ain (UAE)	3-2 (agg)
2015	Guangzhou Evergrande (CHN)	Al Ahli (UAE)	1-0 (agg)
2014	Western Sydney Wanderers (AUS)	Al Hilal (KSA)	1-0 (agg)
2013	Guangzhou Evergrande (CHN)	FC Seoul (KOR)	3-3 (agg)*
2012	Ulsan Hyundai (KOR)	Al Ahli (KSA)	3-0
2011	Al Sadd (QAT)	Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors (KOR)	2-2 **
2010	Seongnam Ilhwa Chunma (KOR)	Zobahan (IRN)	3-1
2009	Pohang Steelers (KOR)	Al Ittihad (KSA)	2-1
2008	Gamba Osaka (JPN)	Adelaide United (AUS)	5-0 (agg)
2007	Urawa Reds (JPN)	Sepahan (IRN)	3-1 (agg)
2006	Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors (KOR)	Al Karama (SYR)	3-2 (agg)
2005	Al Ittihad (KSA)	Al Ain (UAE)	5-3 (agg)
2004	Al Ittihad (KSA)	Seongnam Ilhwa Chunma (KOR)	6-3 (agg)
2002-03	Al Ain (UAE)	BEC Tero Sasana (THA)	2-1 (agg)

\* Guangzhou Evergrande won on away goals

\*\* Al Sadd won 4-2 on penalties

### Asian Football Confederation information

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) is the governing body of the football in Asia, including Australia with a total of 47 members. The organisation was founded on 8 May 1954 in Manila, Philippines and is one of FIFA's six continental confederations. The headquarters is at AFC House in Bukit Jalil in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and the President is Shaikh Salman Bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa of Bahrain.

The AFC organised the first continental championship – the Asian Cup – in 1956, and introduced the first continental club competition – the Asian Club Championship in 1967. In 1990, they introduced another competition – the Asian Cup Winners' Cup, and in 1995, the winners of the Asian Club Championship and Asian Cup Winners' Cup began to meet annually in the Asian Super Cup.

In 2002, all three club competitions were merged into the AFC Champions League, which featured domestic league and cup winners from throughout Asia. More than 40 teams took part in the inaugural tournament but the competition format was streamlined in 2004, which featured the defending champions and 28 other teams from 14 countries.

The competition was revamped again in 2009 with 32 teams competing in eight groups. A round of 16 was introduced and the final was changed from a two-legged affair to a one-game championship match. The tournament format was tweaked again in 2013 with the final reverting to a two-leg format along with the round of 16, which had been played as single elimination games from the time of their introduction in 2009.



Emirates

Nikon

QNB

TOYOTA

青島啤酒

OFFICIAL SUPPORTER

SEIKO