

# Criteria to Determine the Rankings of Best-placed Teams among the Groups

In order to determine the ranking of best-placed teams within a group stage that identify the best second-placed, fourth-placed and fifth-placed teams that qualify for the next respective stages as per the competition format, the following procedure will be applied (example given here is the determination of the best second-placed team. However, the same principle applies)

# <u>Case 1: Identifying the best second-placed team if all the groups consist of the same number</u> of teams (please see Illustration 1)

- 1. Identify second-placed teams in each group.
- 2. The best second-placed team among those ranked second in the groups will be determined as follows:
  - a. Greatest number of points obtained in all group matches;
  - b. Goal difference in all group matches;
  - c. Greatest number of goals scored in all group matches;
  - d. Fewer number of points calculated according to the number of yellow and red cards received by the Team in all group matches;
  - e. Drawing of lots.

# Illustration 1:

### Group A

Team	Р	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts
Team A	3	1	1	1	8	4	4	4
Team B	3	1	1	1	4	3	1	4
Team C	3	1	0	2	7	9	-2	3
Team D	3	0	0	3	5	8	-3	0

# Group B

Team	Р	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts
Team E	3	2	1	0	14	2	12	7
Team F	3	1	1	1	8	10	-2	4
Team G	3	0	1	2	5	8	-3	1
Team H	3	0	1	3	2	9	-7	1

As teams B and F are ranked second in their groups, both teams are in the running to be selected as the best second-placed team. Both teams have four (4) points, therefore, criteria a) does not provide the solution. We then apply criteria b) and in this case, team B with a goal difference of plus one (1) is chosen as the best second-placed team since team F has a goal difference of minus two (2).



# <u>Case 2: Identifying the best second-placed team if the number of teams in each group varies</u> (please see Illustration 2)

- 1. Identify all second-placed teams in each group.
- 2. Due to the varying number of teams per group, teams in different group would have played different number of matches. Therefore, in order to ensure equality when comparing the second-placed teams of all the groups, all teams will be compared across similar number of matches. AFC will decide on the number of matches. The results of the matches between the second-placed team and the bottom-placed team in the group will be considered null and void. All points, goal scored and goals conceded in this match will not be taken into account.
- 3. As such, the best second-placed team among those ranked second in the groups will be determined as follows:
  - a. Greatest number of points obtained from group matches identified by AFC;
  - b. Goal difference in group matches identified by AFC;
  - c. Greatest number of goals scored in group matches identified by AFC;
  - d. Fewer number of points calculated according to the number of yellow and red cards received by the Team in the group matches identified by AFC;
  - e. Drawing of lots.

### Illustration 2:

### Group A

Team	Р	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts
Team A	3	1	1	1	8	4	4	4
Team B	3	1	1	1	4	3	1	4
Team C	3	1	0	2	7	9	-2	3
Team D	3	0	0	3	5	8	-3	0

# Group B

Team	Р	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts
Team E	4	3	1	0	14	2	12	10
Team F	4	2	1	1	8	10	-2	7
Team G	4	1	1	2	5	8	-3	4
Team H	4	0	1	3	2	9	-7	1
Team I	4	0	0	4	2	11	-9	0

Teams in groups A and B have played different number of matches (i.e. teams in group A have played 3 matches while teams in group B have played 4 matches). Therefore, in order to identify the best second-placed team among these groups, we need to ensure we are comparing the teams over an equal number of matches.



As the minimum number of matches played is by teams in Group A (i.e. three matches), for the sake of equal comparison, we need to reduce the number of matches played by teams in group B to three matches. As such, the matches between the second-placed team of group B (i.e. team F) and the bottom team of group B (i.e. team I) will be considered null and void. Note: assume team F beats team I: 3-0.

Once this is done, we will have a new calculation for team F (see illustration 3). Only when the number of matches played is equal can criteria a) to d) be applied.

# Illustration 3: New points for Team F:

Team	Р	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts
Team F	3	1	1	1	5	10	-5	4

Note: when deleting the matches between the second-placed team and the bottom place team to create a new table, please note that, at this stage, we are not interested in the points or ranking of all the other teams in the group. The above 'new' table is only for purposes of determining the best second-placed team among all the other groups.

Therefore, when we compare the results of the second-placed team in group A with the results of second-placed team in group B (see new points for team F), we can conclude that Team B from Group A will qualify as the best second-placed team as they have a better goal difference (+1) as opposed to Team B who has a negative goal difference.