



FINAL QATAR CUP



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On behalf of myself and on behalf of the workforce, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to the final of Qatar Cup 2023, the tournament's eighth edition, and congratulate Al Sadd and Al Duhail clubs on qualifying for the final match deservingly. I also commend the distinguished participation of all teams in this edition.

This tournament has had an important role since its inception in Qatar's professional football horizon, as it enhances the spirit of competition between all clubs with the aim of effective and positive participation, and winning the prestigious cup.

The Qatar Stars League (QSL), in co-operation with its partners and stakeholders, is keen to make every effort in this tournament to achieve the desired success at various organizational and technical levels.

Last but not the least, I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to everyone who contributed with us towards organizing this edition of the tournament, sponsors, partners and stakeholders as well as various media outlets. We reiterate our desire to continue our fruitful co-operation in various events, activities and tournaments.

H.E. SHEIKH HAMAD BIN KHALIFA BIN AHMED AL THANI

President, Qatar Stars League



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QATAR CUP 2023 THE GLORIOUS CUP



The eighth edition of Qatar Cup, The Glorious Cup, saw the participation of top-four clubs in the 2021-2022 season QNB Stars League (Al Sadd, Al Duhail, Al Wakrah and Al Arabi in that order).

The Qatar Cup attracts much attention because of its unique history and intense competition between the four elite teams in each season.

Throughout its history, the competition has played a prominent role in the development of professional football in Qatar with its high technical levels. It also helps the clubs in domestic and overseas tournaments.

The Qatar Cup is a continuation of the Golden Cup and Heir Apparent's Cup, organised for the first time in the 1994-1995 season under the name Golden Cup. The name was changed to Heir Apparent's Cup in its second edition in 1995-1996.

The 2013-2014 season saw the competition being rebranded as Qatar Cup to represent the great State of Qatar and its people. The annual tournament continues to receive wide media coverage, and draws the attention of sponsors and supporting companies.

TOURNAMENT FORMAT

The top-four teams in the league championship qualify for the Qatar Cup.

A straight knockout competition features two semifinal matches between the first and fourth-placed teams and second and third-placed teams in the QNB Stars League.

The winner of each semifinal progresses to the final fixture.

The Qatar Cup offers new opportunities for clubs to mark their names in the annals of Qatar football history, which features the elite of Qatari teams, and is certainly a value addition to the QSL's events and competitions.

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The Qatar Stars League extends its thanks and appreciation to all sponsors, stakeholders and partners of Qatar Cup 2023, the tournament's eighth edition.

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AL SADD CLUB

Al Sadd are the 2021-2022 season QNB Stars League champions and regular competitors for all championships and titles.

They are one of the clubs that compete regularly in the Qatar Cup and have not missed the tournament since it was relaunched and renamed in 2014. They are participating in this edition for the eighth time in a row.

Al Sadd won the Qatar Cup three times (2017, 2020 and 2021) and are the champions in the last two editions. They are striving hard to win the championship for the third time in a row and fourth time since the tournament was rebranded in 2014.

Their participation in the tournament came by virtue of having won the league championship last season with 62 points (20 victories and two draws) and were the only team that did not lose a match, scoring 80 goals and conceding 24 goals over 22 weeks.

Al Sadd have a number of prominent professionals, be they overseas players or nationals, most notably Algerian striker Baghdad Bounedjah, Qatar international star Akram Afif, captain of Al Sadd and Qatar national team Hassan Al Haydous, strong defender Boualem Khoukhi, Spanish star Santi Cazorla and goalkeeper Saad Al Dossari.

The team is coached by Spaniard Juan Manuel Lillo 'Juanma', who took over in June, 2022, from his compatriot Javi Gracia.



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AL DUHAIL CLUB

Al Duhail, runners-up in the 2021-2022 season QNB Stars League, are strong and regular competitors in all tournaments and matches.

They regularly compete in the Qatar Cup and have not missed the tournament since it was relaunched and renamed in 2014. They are also participating in this edition for the eighth time in a row.

They won the championship twice – (2015 in the second edition and 2018 in the fifth edition) – and are considered as one of the favourites in the Qatar Cup.

Al Duhail's participation came by virtue of being the second-placed team in the league with 47 points (14 victories, five draws and three defeats). They scored 59 goals and conceded 24 over 22 weeks.

Al Duhail are noted for the presence of a number of prominent stars, be they overseas professionals or nationals, who enrich the team and help it stand out in many tournaments and matches, most notably Kenyan striker Michael Olunga, captain Almoez Ali, South Korean professional Nam Tae-Hee, Tunisian midfielder Ferjani Sassi, Ismail Mohammed and goalkeeper Salah Zakaria.

The team is coached by Argentinian Hernan Crespo, who took over the reins from Portuguese Luis Castro in March, 2022.





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AL WAKRAH CLUB

Al Wakrah qualified for the Qatar Cup 2023 having finished third in the 2021-2022 season QNB Stars League.

They collected 37 points from 11 wins, four draws and seven defeats. They scored 34 goals and conceded 30 over 22 weeks.

Al Wakrah's participation in the eighth edition of The Glorious Cup is the first since its relaunch under the new name (Qatar Cup) in 2014.

Last season, the team presented distinguished levels and was one of the strong competitors to be in the first positions, finally finishing in third place.

Al Wakrah have stars at a high level in all departments and positions, the most prominent of whom are Algerian forward and noted scorer Mohamed Benyettou, skillful player with great technical capabilities Angolan Jacinto Dala, strong Brazilian defender Lucas Mendes, team captain and midfielder Ahmed Fadel, Hazem Shehata, Khaled Munir and goalkeeper Saoud Al Khater.

Al Wakrah have stability at the technical level as Spaniard Marques Lopez has been coaching the team for several seasons. He has achieved remarkable success with the team in terms of performance and results in the recent times.





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AL ARABI CLUB

Al Arabi's participation in the eighth edition of Qatar Cup came after they finished in fourth place in the 2021-2022 season QNB Stars League.

The team bagged 36 points, winning 11 matches, drawing three and losing eight. They also scored 34 goals and conceded 31 over 22 weeks.

Al Arabi's participation in The Glorious Cup is their first since its relaunch under the new name (Qatar Cup) in 2014.

Al Arabi are considered as one of the historic clubs in Qatar football and have a large fan base. They present strong and distinguished levels in many tournaments and matches.

The team is noted for the presence of a number of players with great technical capabilities, most notably Syrian striker Omar Al Somah, who joined them this season, captain of Tunisian national team and one of the best players currently Yousef Msakni, Brazilian Rafinha Alcantara who joined the side this season from Paris Saint-Germain, strong midfielder Ahmed Fathy, right-back Hamed Ismail and goalkeeper Mahmoud Abunada.

Al Arabi have one of the best coaches in Qatari Younes Ali, who achieved great successes with the team having guided them to a top-four finish last season for the first time in 11 years.



AL SADD BEAT AL ARABI IN SEMIFINAL

Al Sadd faced Al Arabi in the semifinal on Thursday, February 9, 2023, at the Jassim bin Hamad Stadium of Al Sadd club and the former won by a 3-1 margin.

The match witnessed intense competition between the teams as they sought to reach the final of eighth edition of the tournament.

Al Sadd scored their first goal through South Korean professional Jung Woo-Young in the 41st minute and Algerian star Baghdad Bounedjah added their second goal in the first minute of first-half injury time.

At the beginning of second half, Al Arabi tried hard to score, while Al Sadd pressed home their advantage as time passed by and scored their third goal in the 79th minute through Musaab Khader.

Al Arabi's only goal was courtesy an own goal from defender Boualem Khoukhi in the 86th minute and Al Sadd qualified for the final.



AL DUHAIL DEFEAT AL WAKRAH IN SEMIFINAL

In the second semifinal played between Al Duhail and Al Wakrah on the same day and at the same venue, the competition was exciting between the teams to make it to the final.

Al Duhail managed to script a come-from-behind 2-1 victory to set up the title clash with Al Sadd.

The match started off strongly and Al Wakrah took the lead through Algerian forward Mohamed Benyettou in the 14th minute to take a 1-0 lead at half-time.

Al Duhail equalized not long after the second half started as Kenyan striker Michael Olunga scored in the 51st minute after which Al Wakrah tried to bring the score to level terms. However, Al Duhail scored their second goal in the 72nd minute through South Korean star Nam Tae-Hee.





THE SPEARHEAD BAGHDAD BOUNEDJAH

Algerian spearhead Baghdad Bounedjah has been one of the main pillars of Al Sadd in the past seasons.

He is noted for his fighting spirit, enthusiasm and strength on the field, and always poses difficulties for rival defenders with his movements, high technical capabilities, ability to find gaps and goal-scoring skills.

He has contributed towards Al Sadd's various championship triumphs over the years ever since he joined them in the 2015-2016 season. They include three Qatar Cup (2017, 2020 and 2021) triumphs since its inception under the new name in 2014.

He also won the Mansour Muftah Award for the Top Scorer twice – 2018-2019 and 2020-2021 seasons – in addition to his good displays in many tournaments, where Al Sadd compete.

Bounedjah was born on November 24, 1991, in the city of Oran. Before joining Al Sadd, he played with Tunisian club Etoile du Sahel and Algerian club Union El Harrach.



THE CAPTAIN HASSAN AL HAYDOUS



Hassan Al Haydous, the captain of Al Sadd and Qatar national team, is one of the most prominent players on the football scene in general and Al Sadd club in particular over the past many seasons.

Al Haydous is one of the main pillars on which the team relies in all tournaments and matches. He is noted for his high technical capabilities and abilities to score goals and create them, and is one of the players who can make a difference. He is one of the experienced players of Al Sadd and Qatar national team.

He has contributed towards Al Sadd's various championship triumphs, be they league, Amir Cup or Qatar Cup, and was a member of the Al Sadd team that won the AFC Champions League in 2011. He also won bronze medal at the Club World Cup in Japan in 2011.

Al Haydous also made great achievements with the Qatar national team, most notably winning the 2019 AFC Asian Cup in the UAE.





THE SCORER MICHAEL OLUNGA

Prominent Kenyan striker Michael Olunga is one of the best scorers on the football arena. One of the main players of Al Duhail, he presents strong levels in many matches and tournaments where they compete.

He is noted for his physical strength, speed, skill and high technical capabilities that made him one of the best scorers not only in the domestic football arena, but also in Asia as he had won the AFC Champions League 2021 Top Scorer award.

He also won the Mansour Muftah Award for the Top Scorer in the 2021-2022 football season by scoring 24 goals in QNB Stars League.

Olunga was born on March 26, 1994. He previously played for Kenyan club Tusker and, in 2016, moved to Swedish team Djurgardens. He also played for Spanish club Girona before joining Japanese side Kashiwa Reysol in 2018. In 2020, he won the Golden Boot and MVP award in the Japanese League and then joined Al Duhail in January, 2021.



THE TRUMP CARD

ALMOEZ ALI



Almoez Ali is one of the distinguished players on the domestic and Asian football scenes. His successes are great, be they with Al Duhail or the Qatar national team.

He is the captain of the team and one of the stars who can make a difference with his high distinguished levels. He has the ability to play in more than one position – as a striker, winger or midfielder.

Almoez is known for his fighting spirit, and technical and scoring capabilities, which made him one of the leading scorers at the local and Asian levels.

He won the awards for the best player and top scorer at the 2019 AFC Asian Cup in the UAE with nine goals as Qatar won the championship. Almoez thus etched his name in the records of Asian Cup as one of the most important stars on the continent.

He has also contributed towards Al Duhail's various championship triumphs, including the Qatar Cup 2018 in its fifth edition after its launch under the new name in 2014.



CORONATION AMBITION

JUANMA Al Sadd Coach



Spanish coach Juan Manuel Lillo (Juanma) took charge of Al Sadd replacing compatriot Javi Gracia.

He has had a number of coaching stints, be they in Spain or other countries, and his most prominent coaching assignments were with Real Sociedad and Almeria.

He also worked as an assistant coach of the Chile national team (2015-2016) and Spanish club Sevilla (2016-2017), before moving in 2020 to work as an assistant to Pep Guardiola in Manchester City.

He started his coaching career early, in 1981, and won a number of titles and championships with many clubs, where he was at the helm.

Juanma, born on November 3, 1965, has great ambitions with Al Sadd to win championships and titles, including Qatar Cup 2023.





A NEW CHALLENGE

HERNAN CRESPO
Al Duhail Coach

Argentinian Hernan Crespo took over the task of coaching Al Duhail from Portuguese Luis Castro in March, 2022.

Crespo is one of the reputed names in world football through his association with a number of clubs, most notably River Plate, Parma, Lazio, Inter Milan, Chelsea, AC Milan and Genoa.

He also represented his country's national team in many international matches and tournaments, most notably the 1998 and 2002 FIFA World Cups.

He was named among the 100 best football players by FIFA.

Moving on, Crespo coached Brazilian club Sao Paulo, after his success with Defensa Justicia. He was also at the helm of Argentinian club Banfield and Italian club Modena.

Crespo, born on July 5, 1975, in Buenos Aires, has new challenges and ambitions with Al Duhail to win titles and championships, including the Qatar Cup 2023.



QATAR CUP WINNERS

The year 2014 witnessed the relaunch of the championship under its new name (Qatar Cup).

The first tournament was held in the 1994-1995 season under the name Golden Cup and Al Rayyan were crowned winners.

Beginning from the second edition in the 1995-1996 season, the championship was held under the name Heir Apparent's Cup and Al Rayyan were again the champions.

The prestigious tournament was held every season until 2014, which saw its relaunch under the name Qatar Cup.

YEAR	TEAMS	CHAMPIONS	RUNNERS-UP
2014	AL DUHAIL, EL JAISH, AL SADD, AL SAILIYA	EL JAISH	AL DUHAIL
2015	AL DUHAIL, AL SADD, EL JAISH, QATAR SC	AL DUHAIL	EL JAISH
2016	AL RAYYAN, EL JAISH, AL SADD, AL DUHAIL	EL JAISH	AL DUHAIL
2017	AL DUHAIL, AL SADD, AL RAYYAN, EL JAISH	AL SADD	EL JAISH
2018	AL DUHAIL, AL SADD, AL RAYYAN, AL GHARAF	AL DUHAIL	AL SADD
2020	AL SADD, AL DUHAIL, AL SAILIYA, AL RAYYAN	AL SADD	AL DUHAIL
2021	AL DUHAIL, AL RAYYAN, AL SADD, AL GHARAF	AL SADD	AL DUHAIL
2023	AL SADD, AL DUHAIL, AL WAKRAH, AL ARABI	-	-

QATAR CUP DESIGN

The Qatar Cup, designed and unveiled in the 2013-2014 season, took its inspiration from the Qatari flag.

The cup's base has nine corners representing the nine white triangles which act as serrated lines in the flag. A total of 732 stones of ruby are used in its manufacturing as they are close to the colour of national flag.

The 18-carat gold base consists of three polygons pointing to allegiance to the Almighty God, loyalty to the nation and His Highness the Amir. The national anthem has been engraved on two polygons, while the third has map of the State of Qatar. The cup has a weight of 5.5kg and height of 50cm.

Since national identity was the idea behind the purpose of the tournament, the cup was designed by Qataris.

The championship's name (Qatar Cup) is dear to the heart of everyone who lives on this good land, therefore it is a matter of pride and glory for every citizen and resident of Qatar.

