



Singapore Lions ASEAN Hyundai Cup 2026: Battle-Hardened After Japan Camp

Description

The **Singapore Lions ASEAN Hyundai Cup 2026** campaign is days away and the national team has never been more prepared. As of 17 July 2026, Coach Gavin Lee’s squad completes their intensive Okinawa training camp, battle-hardened after three tough preparation matches against Japanese opposition and ready to take on Southeast Asia’s best.

Singapore Lions ASEAN Hyundai Cup 2026: The Japan Camp Is Done

Singapore’s preparations for the ASEAN Hyundai Cup 2026 were built around one central idea: tough opposition in a short space of time. Coach Gavin Lee selected Okinawa, Japan as the base for the camp from 6 to 17 July – 11 days that would test the squad physically, mentally, and tactically in a compressed format that mirrors the demands of tournament football.

Lee named a 24-man squad for the camp, retaining the core that impressed in the June international window, when Singapore demolished Mongolia 4-0 before a narrow 2-1 defeat to Asian Cup-bound China PR. Among the new faces was 18-year-old defender Luth Harith, earning his maiden senior call-up after impressing at under-19 and under-22 level.



Source: ASEAN Football Federation official website (aseanfootball.org)

Three Matches. Three Tests. One Goal.

The Lions faced three opponents in Okinawa – J3 League side FC Ryukyu, J4 League outfit Okinawa SV, and J2 League club Albirex Niigata. All three are professional outfits; none of them rolled over. Singapore beat Okinawa SV in a hard-fought 3-2 win on 13 July, then faced the stiffer test of Albirex Niigata on 16 July.

“The opposition we’ve selected is very intentional,” Lee explained ahead of the camp. “The schedule has been designed to test the team physically, mentally, and tactically, while also challenging us to recover and prepare quickly between matches. Those are the same demands we expect to face during the ASEAN Hyundai Cup.”

That mindset is exactly right. Tournament football – particularly at the ASEAN Championship – demands recovery speed and tactical flexibility. Three matches in ten days against quality opponents is not a holiday camp. It is a dress rehearsal.



Source: ASEAN Football Federation official website (aseanfootball.org)

Group A: The Challenge Ahead

Singapore are drawn in Group A alongside four serious opponents. Defending champions **Vietnam** head the group – they lifted the trophy in 2024 and will be formidable again. **Indonesia**, **Cambodia**, and **Timor-Leste** round out the group, with the top two sides advancing to the home-and-away semi-finals.

Singapore's group schedule is daunting: 24 July vs Cambodia, 27 July vs Timor-Leste, and 31 July vs Vietnam. The Vietnam match is effectively a decider for top spot. Win the group and you face a potentially softer semi-final draw. Finish second and the road gets harder.

The semi-finals are scheduled for 15 August (two legs), with the final on 22 and 26 August. Singapore have not won the ASEAN Championship since 2012 – and after four trophies in the tournament's history, the hunger to reclaim it runs deep.

Can the Lions Roar?

Under Gavin Lee, Singapore have steadily rebuilt. The 4-0 win over Mongolia in June was the kind of dominant display that builds confidence. The 2-1 loss to China PR showed there is still a gap against Asia's elite – but China PR are one of the continent's top sides. Within ASEAN, Singapore are

competitive.

The Japan camp is the final piece of the preparation puzzle. Hardened by tough matches, tactically refined, and physically primed â?? the Lions are ready. The ASEAN Hyundai Cup 2026 kicks off on 24 July. Singaporeâ??s campaign begins the same day.

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