



## Singapore Lions Launch ASEAN Hyundai Cup 2026 Campaign With Okinawa Training Camp

### Description

The Singapore Lions have launched their preparations for the ASEAN Hyundai Cup 2026, with the Football Association of Singapore confirming a 24-man centralised training squad and a summer schedule that includes an overseas camp in Okinawa, Japan. The Singapore Lions ASEAN Hyundai Cup 2026 campaign begins in earnest today, Tuesday 23 June, as coach Gavin Lee convenes his players at Jalan Besar for what will be the most intensive pre-tournament build-up of his tenure. With the regional championship kicking off on 24 July, the Lions have just over a month to sharpen their preparations for a group stage that will test them against some of Southeast Asia's most competitive sides.

## Singapore Lions ASEAN Hyundai Cup 2026: The Squad And The Schedule

The Football Association of Singapore named a 24-man squad for the ASEAN Hyundai Cup 2026, bringing together a blend of experience and emerging talent under Gavin Lee's direction. The centralised training camp commences at the national football training facilities today, with players reporting for the start of a structured build-up programme that spans the next month.

The centrepiece of Singapore's pre-tournament preparations is an overseas training camp in Okinawa, Japan, scheduled to run from 6 to 17 July. The camp is designed to replicate the kind of intensive, distraction-free environment that international coaches prize in the weeks before a major tournament - a focused block of training and tactical work, conducted away from the pressures and routines of domestic football.



Photo: AFF / Football Association of Singapore (FAS)

While in Okinawa, the Lions are expected to play a series of friendly matches against Japanese club sides based in the region, with FC Ryukyu, Okinawa SV, and Albirex Niigata confirmed as opponents. The inclusion of Albirex Niigata on the list will be of particular interest to Singapore football supporters as the Japanese club maintains a Singapore Premier League franchise, Albirex Niigata Singapore FC, and several Lions players will be familiar with Albirex's playing style from their SPL encounters. These friendlies will give Gavin Lee the opportunity to test his preferred combinations, assess fringe players, and fine-tune the tactical system he intends to deploy at the ASEAN Hyundai Cup.

## Group A: Lions Face Vietnam, Indonesia, Cambodia And Timor-Leste

Singapore have been placed in Group A of the ASEAN Hyundai Cup 2026, a group that presents both significant tests and genuinely winnable fixtures. Vietnam are the Lions' most formidable group opponents - a side that has been on a sustained upward trajectory in Southeast Asian football and has frequently pushed Singapore hard at both club and international level in recent years. Indonesia, similarly, have been investing heavily in their footballing infrastructure and represent a serious challenge in the group phase.

Cambodia and Timor-Leste complete the group, and the Lions will be expected to take maximum points against both. Singapore's performances against Vietnam and Indonesia are likely to determine whether they advance to the knockout rounds of the 12-team tournament.

The ASEAN Hyundai Cup 2026 is a rebranded and restructured version of the AFF Championship, a competition that Singapore last won in 2012. The Lions are four-time champions of the regional tournament – no other nation has lifted the title more often – but have been unable to reclaim the crown since their victory fourteen years ago despite several final appearances. For Gavin Lee and his squad, this tournament represents an opportunity to restore Singapore to the summit of Southeast Asian football.

## Gavin Lee’s Vision

Gavin Lee, who took charge of the national team earlier in 2026, has spoken consistently about building a compact, disciplined, and tactically coherent unit capable of competing at the highest regional level. The Okinawa training camp is central to that philosophy – a structured window of intensive preparation, conducted against quality opposition, that will allow the coach to identify his strongest XI and embed the patterns and principles he wishes to deploy at the tournament itself.

The friendly matches against the Japanese clubs will test specific aspects of the Lions’ game: the defensive structure under pressure, the effectiveness of the counter-attack, and the fitness levels required to maintain high-intensity performances across multiple knockout-round matches in quick succession.

With the tournament starting on 24 July and Singapore’s Group A schedule confirmed, supporters will be tracking every update from the training camp with considerable interest. The ASEAN Hyundai Cup 2026 is shaping up to be one of the most competitive editions of the regional championship in years, and the Singapore Lions – backed by a home fanbase that has remained passionate and loyal – will be aiming to ensure that the nation’s most successful football tournament finds its way home to Singapore once more.

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