

Singapore Lions Squad: Ten Sailors Named for Paraguay and Brazil Friendlies

Description

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The Singapore Lions squad for the November window is out, and the Sailors dominate it. Gavin Lee has named a final 24-man group for the Paraguay and Brazil friendlies at the National Stadium, with ten Lion City Sailors players in it, led by captain Hariss Harun.

Singapore Lions squad: the ten Sailors

The names are Hariss Harun, Ryhan Stewart, Lionel Tan, Hami Syahin, Kyoga Nakamura, Song Uiyoung, Glenn Kweh, Farhan Zulkifli, Shawal Anuar and Ilhan Fandi. Hariss captains both club and country, which gives Lee a spine of players who already know each otherâ??s movements. They arrive in form too, with the Sailors on a six-match winning run in the league, according to the club.



Ten Sailors form the nucleus of the Lions squad. Source: Lion City Sailors FC official website (lioncitysailorsfc.sg)

The one notable absentee is full-back Nur Adam Abdullah. He is recovering from surgery after an anterior cruciate ligament injury suffered in last monthâ??s Singapore Premier League win over the Young Lions, and it is a cruel blow for him and for the Sailors.

Paraguay on 13 November, Brazil on 17 November

The two matches form the inaugural Mizuho Blue Challenge, The Kallang Football Series Singapore. The Lions face Paraguay on Friday 13 November, then five-time FIFA World Cup winners Brazil four days later on Tuesday 17 November. Both are at the National Stadium. Brazil also meet Japan on 14 November in the same series, and we have already covered the Brazil squad and the stars heading to Kallang.



The Lions huddle before a recent international. Source: Lion City Sailors FC official website (lioncitysailorsfc.sg)

What to expect from Gavin Leeâ??s side

Nobody expects a result against Brazil, whose possible line-up could feature Vinicius Junior, Gabriel and Raphinha. The value for Singapore is measurement. Facing players who operate at the very top of European football shows exactly how far the gap is in pace, decision speed and pressing, and it is the kind of exposure the Lions rarely get at home.

Paraguay, in a way, is the more interesting test. South American sides tend to be compact, physical and quick to punish errors, and this is the more realistic chance for Singapore to show progress. Having ten Sailors in the group, many of whom have been playing in Asian continental competition this autumn, should help the Lions cope with intensity.

The club-country link

The Sailors have been busy on two fronts. They sit at the top of ACL Two Group F after a history-making win in Adelaide and host the Australian side at Jalan Besar, which we previewed in our Adelaide United match preview. That match rhythm is a real asset when the international window arrives, because players are arriving sharp rather than rusty.

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The Lions in action against Indonesia. Source: Lion City Sailors FC official website (lioncitysailorsfc.sg)

Why these two matches matter

Friendlies against heavyweights are easy to dismiss, but they serve a purpose that league football cannot. Squad depth gets tested, young players such as Ilhan Fandi see the speed of the elite game up close, and the coaching staff can judge who handles pressure when the ball is moving faster than they are used to. A narrow defeat, or even a spell of controlled possession against Paraguay, would be a useful marker for the national programme.

The crowd matters too. The National Stadium can be a loud, colourful home venue when Singaporeans turn up in numbers, and nights like these are how the Lions build a habit of full stands. Expect a strong red-and-white presence on both nights, with plenty of Brazil shirts in the mix as well. If the Lions can pair that energy with a disciplined, brave first half against Paraguay, the week will already count as a success for Gavin Lee and his staff.

There is a flip side to the heavy Sailors presence. Lee will need to make sure the squad does not feel like a club team in national colours, and that players outside that group, from other SPL sides, are properly integrated. Chemistry in a short camp is built in training, and two matches in five days against elite opposition will test squad management as much as tactics.

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For fans, it is a rare week of football at the National Stadium. Tickets for Brazil are the hot ticket, but Paraguay on 13 November deserves a crowd too. Keep up with the build-up, the line-ups and the reaction through more sports coverage on Little Big Red Dot.

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Author
jadeyeo