

Greetings and welcome to July briefing.

National U18 Get-together

We managed to get U18 side at BKSP in Savar for a residency camp after trials earlier in the month and selecting an expanded squad from among players registered of the Bangladesh Premier League and Bangladesh Championship League.

The camp continued for 14 days from July 11 and we released them to their clubs for the commencement of the domestic competition. We have already confirmed another 5-day camp between August 9 and August 14 and intend to get the players together prior to the SAFF tournament.

While we hope to be working with a pool of 25-27 players, 35 U18 players will be called up for the camp in August. In the meantime, as the players go into the season we will be watching their performance very closely.

SAFF U15, U18 draw

With the age level competitions coming closer, we had the U15 and U18 draw of the SAFF competition where Bangladesh U15 is in group A along with Bhutan and Sri Lanka. India, Maldives and hosts Nepal are in Group B for the tournament starting August 18.

Meanwhile Bangladesh U18 will face their Indian and Bhutanese counterparts in group A while Nepal, Maldives and Sri Lanka will face each other in group B.

11 more U15 girls

The ongoing girls' Academy has had eleven new additions with the new U15 recruits joining them.

Selection of these 11 girls for the training programme at the BFF House takes the number of participants in the Academy to 37.

The new girls have already started their training alongside the older counterparts. The original U16 squad had several players who were from younger age groups. So this is really 11 additional players to the available pool of U15 players already in training as part of the U16 squad.

The U16 squad has been in this residency programme for the entire year in preparation for the AFC Championship in Thailand this September. The U15, however, will be training with the SAFF championship in mind, which will be in Dhaka this November.

33 U16 selected

The Bangladesh Football Federation has selected a pool of 33 U16 boys to join a training camp immediately following a local competition in Dhaka.

The new crop of U16 boys will have a residency training camp at BKSP in Savar for just about two weeks before leaving for Nepal on August 16 to take part in the SAFF competition.

This new age group team will be together for a few years as part of the BFF plan to develop age group academies.

The federation plans to focus on these age group players increasingly more to ensure there is perpetual supply of talented footballers in the pipeline.

Age group grooming has been very much part of the federation's priorities in the development plan. This is hopefully the beginning of another age group phase.

U16 tour of Korea

The Bangladesh women's U16 team came back from another foreign tour showing remarkable progress. Although a loss against the Asian giant South Korea was not surprising, the girls have shown their tenacity fighting tooth and nail and making their much superior counterparts work for their success.

These matches in different conditions, away from home and against stronger opponents only prepare the girls for the AFC Championship in September in Thailand, which also doubles as the age level World Cup qualifiers.

The Bengal girls lost one to the Korean national side, drew one and won two matches in Korea.

Referee's Refresher Course

In line with the federation's development plan, the BFF held a Referee's Refresher Course in Dhaka's Motijheel under the direction of the BFF Referee's Committee.

With 80 referees from 64 districts, the course had FIFA referees Taiub Hasan Shamsuzzaman, Azad Rahman and Sujit Kumar Bannerjee as instructors.

U23 AFC Championship

While the U23 AFC Championship campaign could have been better, it did achieve a number of objectives for Bangladesh.

The campaign has only laid bare the fact that every member of the squad needs to be in a far better physical condition than at present. This fact could not have been better illustrated than at the international stage against better opponents. The boys know now what it would take to stand a chance against these teams.

We will aim for more international exposure for our age level teams to prepare them better for the future in line with the federation's plan to develop football and take it to a higher level.

Sustainable youth development master plan centering on physical and technical development has and will be imperative for us.

BCL to kick off

Bangladesh Championship League (BCL), the second tier football league of the country, is set to kick off in August. 10 clubs are expected to fight out the season for the BCL trophy.

BFF AFC 'C' Certificate Coaching Course begin

The third AFC 'C' Certificate Coaching Course began with 24 participants from across the country at the BFF headquarters in Dhaka and will continue till August 7.

BFF Technical and Strategic Director Paul Smalley is the chief instructor.

This is the third course of the BFF AFC 'C' Certificate Coaching Course with the previous two courses being successful. In the near future, BFF will hold the AFC 'B' and 'A' Certificate Coaching Course with a view to enhancing the capability and knowledge of Bangladesh coaches.

Dhaka Mahanagari Football League starts

The 'Walton 1st Dhaka Mahanagari Football League' has also kicked off in July at Bir Sherestha Shaheed Shipahi Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Dhaka.

Grassroots Football Day

The Bangladesh Football Federation observed Grassroots Football Day with over 100 children taking part in a festival.

The pan-Asian event funded by the Asian Football Confederation is an attempt to encourage football at the grassroots.

The Asian football organisation helps and funds each member country to host such events in order to carry football forward and strengthen the base of the game across the continent.

The grassroots day was observed with 110 school children around Dhaka from U12 and U14 levels taking part in a festival.