

Durand football prize money doubled

The prize money for the 119th Durand Cup football beginning here Monday has been doubled to Rs.2 million, it was announced Wednesday.

Twenty teams will fight it out in the qualifying round from Nov 6 to 15. The top two teams from this round will join the four seeded teams - Mohammedan Sporting, Air India, JCT Phagwara and Tata Football Academy - in the pre-quarterfinals beginning Nov 16 at the Ambedkar Stadium here.

From the two pre-quarterfinal groups, one team each will progress to join the six others that have been further divided into two pools.

The six teams that have been seeded directly into the quarter-final league are defending champions Army XI, Mohun Bagan, Mahindra United - winners of the National Football League and Federation Cup winners - Sporting Clube de Goa, East Bengal and Dempo Sports Club.

The two top teams from each of the two groups of the quarter-final league will advance to the semi-finals, which will be followed by the final Nov 27.

Five new awards - Best Player of the Tournament, Golden Boot for the Highest Goal Scorer, Best Player of the Final Match, Best Coach and the Best Goalkeeper - will be presented after the final.

The semi-final and final matches will be televised live on ESPN-STAR Sports, while the quarter-finals will be telecast live on Doordarshan Sports.

Durand Football Tournament Society (DFTS), which organises the world's second oldest tournament, has joined hands with archive and auction house Osian's Connoisseurs of Art Pvt. Ltd and sports management company Infinity Optimal Solutions (IOS) for this year's edition.

There is no entry fee at the stadium.

Fixtures:

Nov 6-15: Knock-out

qualifying round: 20 teams, with two teams go advance to pre-quarterfinals

Nov 16-18: Pre-quarterfinal league. Group A: Mohammedan Sporting, Air India, Qualifier from Group I. Group B: JCT Phagwara, Tata Football Academy, Qualifier from Group II

Nov 19-24: Quarter-final league: Group I: Mohun Bagan, Mahindra United, Sporting Clube de Goa, pre-quarters Group A . Group II: East Bengal, Dempo Sports Club, Army XI, pre-quarters Group B

Nov 25: Semi Finals: Group I winner vs Group II runner-up; Group II winner vs Group I runner-up

Nov 27: Final

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