

Dempo SC struggle to hold fort, lose 1-2 to Delhi FC

Team Herald

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MAHILPUR: Dempo Sports Club's struggles continued as they fell 1-2 to Delhi FC in the I-League 2024-25 match played at the Mahilpur Football Stadium, here, on Sunday, securing the hosts' first victory in 10 matches.

Dempo SC paid the price for a shaky first half, conceding twice in the first 20 minutes. Cameroonian forward Samir Binong put Delhi FC ahead inside four minutes, capitalising on a defensive lapse, before Zimbabwean defender Victor Kamhuka doubled the lead from a corner.

Marcus Joseph, the Trinidadian forward, pulled one back with a sublime free-kick in the 35th minute. However, despite a stronger second-half display, Dempo SC failed to capitalise on their momentum. With their second consecutive defeat, Dempo SC stay in ninth place with 19 points from 17 matches.

Delhi FC wasted no time and broke the deadlock within the first five minutes. A half-cleared corner fell to Hridaya Jain on the right. His whipped cross into the six-yard box found Binong, who slid in to finish after Dempo SC's Mohamed Ali misjudged the flight of the ball.

Dempo SC's fragile defence struggled under constant pressure. In the eighth minute, Binong nearly doubled his tally, weaving



Dempo Sports Club and Delhi FC players an aerial battle at the Mahilpur Football Stadium, Mahilpur, on Sunday

past two defenders before forcing a sharp save from Ashish Sibi at his near post. However, Delhi FC's relentless pressing paid off in the 20th minute. Jain's corner found Kamhuka, who rose unchallenged and nodded home to make it 2-0.

Delhi FC almost sealed the game minutes later when Binong curled a shot toward the top corner, but Sibi produced a brilliant diving save to keep Dempo SC alive.

With Dempo SC on the verge of collapse, Marcus produced a moment of brilliance. In the 35th minute, the Trinidadian forward

curled a free kick around the wall and into the top corner, halving the deficit and injecting life into Dempo SC's attack.

The goal lifted the visitors and they came out in the second half with renewed intent. They frequently broke through Delhi FC's midfield, but a lack of precision in the final third cost them dearly. Their best chance came in the 55th minute when a long-range effort seemed destined for the bottom corner, only for Delhi FC keeper Debnath Mondal to produce a crucial save, diving low to his left.

As the match progressed, Dempo SC pressed hard for an equaliser, but Delhi FC sat deep and defended resolutely, frustrating the visitors. Despite dominating possession in the closing stages, Dempo SC struggled to carve out clear-cut chances, allowing Delhi FC to hold firm and claim a crucial victory. For Dempo SC, the defeat deepens their struggles, as they search for solutions with the season entering a crucial phase. Dempo SC will now face SC Bengaluru at home on March 8, at the Nehru Stadium, Fatorada, 4.30 pm.

RESULT

Delhi FC 2 (Samir Binong 4', Victor Kamhuka 20') Dempo Sports Club 1 (Marcus Joseph 35')

Chhetri's late equaliser ends E Bengal play-offs charge

AGENCIES, KOLKATA: East Bengal FC drew 1-1 against Bengaluru FC in the Indian Super League match played at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan Stadium, here, on Sunday.

The Blues held an overwhelming 67.9 per cent of the possession, but needed the added time of the second half to grab a point from the fixture, ending East Bengal FC's playoff charge.

The Red and Gold Brigade, placed eighth, have 28 points from 23 games now, and could get to a maximum of 31 with one game remaining, which would still fall short of the currently sixth-placed NorthEast United FC (32).

East Bengal FC made a statement start with some telling moves that sparked a livewire inside the Bengaluru FC defensive third.

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They particularly found openings on the right side of the Blues' backline, with Naorem Mahesh Singh embarking on an industrious run inside the 18-yard area before squaring the ball for Dimitrios Diamantakos.

The moment came through Saul Crespo, who was determined to find his footing within the penalty area. Saul momentarily lost balance though, but laid a short pass for Raphael Messi Bouli still. Messi Bouli cut in from the right, and shot from the centre of the box into the bottom left corner in the 11th minute, as Sandhu could not get his hands to the end of the shot.

The home side were however reduced to 10 men at the brink of the half-time whistle as Diamantakos was shown a red card following a feisty challenge. The Blues began optimising this one-man advantage by stretching the East Bengal FC defence through their quick sprints on the flank.

Momentum finally swayed in Bengaluru FC's favour at the 90th minute mark as Nishu Kumar ended up handling the ball while marking Sunil Chhetri inside the 18-yard zone. Chhetri assumed spot-kick duties, dispatching the ball into the bottom right corner with thorough composure, earning the draw for the visitors.

RESULT

East Bengal FC 1 (Raphael Messi Bouli 11') Bengaluru FC 1 (Sunil Chhetri 90+1')

ISL FIXTURE

Chennaiyin FC vs NorthEast United FC at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, Chennai, at 7.30 pm



A J De Almeida High School, Ponda, emerged champions in the U-14 Girls District Level Volleyball tournament organised by the Directorate of Sports and Youth Affairs recently

Baida Boys clinch Seraulim Cricket Cup

INACIO NORONHA



The winners along with chief guest Adv Nitesh Sakaram Parab, guest of honour Ruban D'Costa, Pio Vales President Poli Cruz, Sports Secretary Steven Fernandes and other dignitaries at the Seraulim panchayat ground, recently

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RAIA: Baida Boys, Nuvem, emerged champions in the 2nd All Goa Inter-Village Cricket Tournament organised by United Sports Club of Seraulim, at the Seraulim panchayat ground, recently.

In the final, Baida Boys comfortably defeated United Club of Verna by 20 runs. Mario Colaco top-scored for Baida Boys, scoring 30 runs in 12 balls with 4 sixes. Their bowlers Milind and Ayush Velekar bowled

INDIVIDUAL HONOURS

Man of the final: Mario Colaco (Baida Boys)
Best bowler: Saurabh Dessai (UC Verna)
Best batsman: Damodar Redkar (Baida Boys)
Best disciplined team: Damodar Cricketers, Murdim-Cansaulim
Best catch: Abay Naik (UC, Verna)
Best fielder: Jesusly Rodrigues (Baida Boys)
Best player: Ayush Velekar (Baida Boys)
Best catch: Abay Naik (UC Verna)
Best fielder: Jesusly Rodrigues (Baida Boys)

well giving away just 2 and 4 runs respectively to restrict United Club Verna reach the target of 55 runs in 4 overs set by Baida Boys.

On the other hand, United Club Verna managed to score only 35 runs, their main contributor being Abay Naik, scoring 13 runs with two sixes. Johnson bowled well for United Club Verna giving away just 5 runs and took a wicket.

Madgaon Royals face CD Margao Mega Strikers in final

MARGAO: Madgaon Royals secured a commanding victory over Priority Titans, winning by 106 runs in Eliminator 2 to book their place in the final of the Alcon GSB Unity Cup T20 cricket tournament organised by Goa GSB Sports and Charitable Trust in association with Goa Saraswat Samaj, at the MCC ground, Margao, on Sunday.

ALCON GSB UNITY CUP

Winning the toss, Priority Titans opted to bowl first, but Madgaon Royals put up a massive total of 244/8 in 20 overs, with standout performances from Granthik Buyao (40), Damodar Pai Patnekar (38), Aditya Dalal (37), and Arsh Sardesai (35). In response, Priority Titans struggled and were bowled out for 138 runs in 15 overs, falling short by a huge margin.

With this win, Madgaon Royals will now face CD Margao Mega Strikers in

the much-anticipated final on March 8 under the floodlights. Samprabh Phaladesai from Madgaon Royals was named the man-of-the-match for his brilliant bowling performance. Brief scores: Madgaon Royals – 244/8 in 20 overs (Granthik Buyao 40, Damodar Pai Patnekar 38, Aditya Dalal 37, Arsh Sardesai 35, Vikram Gaitonde 31; Siddharth Ghanekar 1/43, Manish Kakode 1/60, Smitesh Divekar 1/29, Pranav Biche 1/31).

Priority Titans – 138 all out in 15 overs (Anish Mahambre 35, Gaurish Prabhudesai 21; Samprabh Phaladesai 3/36, Shaunit Sawardekar 2/13, Arsh Sardesai 1/3, Sanat Prabhudesai 1/4, Kartik Hattangadi 1/24).

With just one match remaining, all eyes are now on the grand final showdown on March 8, where Madgaon Royals will take on CD Margao Mega Strikers for the coveted Alcon GSB Unity Cup T20 title.

Stoppage-time equaliser denies Sporting Clube first away win

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MANJERI: A stoppage-time equaliser denied Sporting Clube de Goa their first away victory as they were held to a 1-1 draw by Sports Academy Tirur in an I-League 2 clash at Payyanad Stadium, here, on Sunday.

I-LEAGUE 2

Despite taking an early lead through Kunal Kundaikar and controlling large phases of the game, Sporting Clube had to settle for a point after conceding in the dying moments.

Coming into the game with momentum after their recent win, Sporting Clube were eager to break their away-day blues.

The team started strongly, displaying composure in possession and pressing high up the pitch. Their efforts paid off in the 42nd minute when Samuel Costa's precise pass found Kunal Kundaikar, who controlled the ball expertly before firing home to give the visitors the lead.

Sporting Clube's defensive unit, comprising Kunal Kundaikar, Saiurath Kima, Joyner Lourenco and Myron Fernandes, held firm as

goalkeeper Abhimanyu Singh marshaled the backline with confidence.

The midfield trio of Samuel Costa, Naocha Singh, and Sushil Meitei worked tirelessly to disrupt the opposition's play while Dattaraj Gaonkar provided additional support in attack. Up front, Doyal Alves and Ronaldo Oliveira constantly tested the Sports Academy Tirur defense, seeking to extend Sporting Clube's advantage.

As the match progressed, Sporting Clube continued to dictate the tempo, holding their defensive shape and frustrating the hosts. However, the home side found a life-

line deep into stoppage time. A late corner kick saw Abdullah rise above the defense to meet the ball with a powerful header, which deflected off Joyner Lourenco and rolled past Abhimanyu Singh, leveling the score at the death.

The draw sees both teams move to 11 points, keeping the competition tight in the standings.

Sporting Clube will now turn their focus to their next challenge – a crucial home fixture against FC Bengaluru United at Bambolim Stadium on March 7. The team will be eager to capitalise on their home advantage and return to winning ways.

Vasco Rebels win Badminton Pro League



The champions along with chief guest Rajesh Dessai, managing director of Ritz Classic; Dr Mahendra Kudchadkar, prominent Orthopaedic Surgeon; Manoj Patil, GBA President; Praveen Shenoy, GBA Secretary; Referee Aman Raut Dessai and organising members Navneet Nasnodkar, Dr Mihir Desai, Naveen Palekar, Samir Sangodkar, Rakesh Mallia, Vishal Shirodkar and Gaurang Bhanghi among others at the Indoor Stadium, Campal, here, recently

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PANJIM: Vasco Rebels emerged champions in the inaugural Badminton Pro League 2025 outplaying Mapusa Gladiators 120-111 in an exhilarating final at the Indoor Stadium, Campal, here, recently.

In the third-place play-off, Panjim Priority Titans edged out Siolim High-Flyers 120-114 in another nail-biting contest. The league, organised by Panjim Boys under the aegis of Goa Badminton Association, brought together Goa's top shuttlers in a first-of-its-kind city-based badminton showdown. Each match comprised of 8 doubles events played in relay format, featuring men's doubles, women's doubles, mixed doubles and veteran doubles.

Vasco Rebels team, owned by Praveen Shenoy, was captained by Kamlesh Kan-

ji, while Mapusa Gladiators, owned by Nilesh Dhargalkar, was captained by Ayaan Shaikh.

The third place team, Panjim Priority Titans owned by Swapneel Nacholkar and Dinesh Pai, was captained by Manish Pankhania.

The competition saw intense battles from the league stage, where Mapusa Gladiators, Siolim High-Flyers, and Margao Panthers ended with four points each in Group A, with Mapusa securing a final berth on superior score difference. Vasco Rebels dominated Group B, winning all three of their league matches, while Panjim Priority Titans finished second. The league also featured St Cruz Racket Warriors, Ponda Raqueteers, and Porvorim Ace Attackers, adding to the high-energy competition.

The winners, runners-up and third-place teams were awarded Rs 40,000,

Rs 30,000, and Rs 20,000, respectively, along with the trophies. Sanand Nair and Shaurya Naik were named Impact Players of the Finals, while Manav Shetgaonkar and Avdhut Saptoji received the honour for the third-place play-off.

The prestigious Most Valuable Player (MVP) awards went to Vansh Khedkar (Men's MVP) and Emilia Silveira (Women's MVP).

The closing function was graced by chief guest Rajesh Dessai, managing director of Ritz Classic; Dr Mahendra Kudchadkar, prominent Orthopaedic Surgeon; Manoj Patil, GBA President; Praveen Shenoy, GBA Secretary; Referee Aman Raut Dessai and organising members Navneet Nasnodkar, Dr Mihir Desai, Naveen Palekar, Samir Sangodkar, Rakesh Mallia, Vishal Shirodkar and Gaurang Bhanghi among others.

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