

# Mohun Bagan face Bengaluru FC in ISL title clash today

ISL MEDIA

AGENCIES, KOLKATA: Mohun Bagan Super Giant will face Bengaluru FC in the final of Indian Super League 2024-25 at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan on April 12, in a blockbuster winner takes all clash befitting of a much awaited title clash, at 7.30 pm.

Speaking at the pre-match press conference ahead of the final, Mohun Bagan Super Giant Head Coach Jose Molina stressed on the importance of looking forward and not worrying about the past.

Bengaluru FC Head Coach Gerard Zaragoza was chuffed about playing the big final in Kolkata.

BFC Goalkeeper Gurpreet Singh Sandhu said, "As you know, my journey as a professional footballer started here and I was very lucky to be getting opportunities to play matches from the beginning. If you get an opportunity to play big games, big finals, in front of big crowds as a player, it's a great experience and I am lucky to be here for the match in Kolkata."

Gurpreet also reserved some special praise for the opponents, saying, "Mohun Bagan Super Giant have been the standout team this season and there is no denying that, which is why they won the League Shield."

Mohun Bagan Super Giant captain Subhasish Bose, who Molina jokingly referred to as a striker



Mohun Bagan Super Giant head coach José Molina, captain Subhasish Bose; Bengaluru FC goalkeeper Gurpreet Singh Sandhu and head coach Gerard Zaragoza pose with the Indian Super League trophy on the eve of the summit clash at the Salt Lake Stadium in Kolkata

## COACH TALK

**“ I don't care about what happened in the past. I am trying to do my best for Mohun Bagan Super Giant. We did well to win the League Shield and we are motivated to win the ISL Cup too. I don't need extra motivation from the fact that we lost the final last year. We are already motivated enough**

– Jose Molina, Mohun Bagan Super Giant head coach

**“ We are very motivated for the finals and excited for the game. Everything is fine. We are confident and Kolkata is almost like our second home, because we were here for the Durand Cup. We had a good play-off and we are looking forward to the grand finale**

– Gerard Zaragoza, Bengaluru FC head coach

in light of his goalscoring form in this edition, shed light on the significance of the venue as a local boy. "I am always thrilled to play in front of our home fans. I wish that the fans support us wholeheartedly against Bengaluru FC on Saturday."

MBSG are the League Shield Winners, whereas Bengaluru FC finished third in the standings and then

cruised past the challenges that fronted them in the eliminator and semi-final to make it to the summit clash.

It is a fourth ISL finals appearance for BFC in just 8 seasons, while MBSG have become the first team to reach this stage three successive times. This fixture is an encore of the ISL 2022-23 showdown, when both these sides had clashed in

the season finale, with the Kolkata-based team emerging triumphant via penalties in a very tight contest.

They have the chance to repeat that feat in front of a vociferous home crowd this time around, whereas Bengaluru FC will take confidence from their recent form to distort MBSG's record of staying unbeaten at home thus far in the current campaign.

## KEY PLAYERS AND MILESTONES

■ Mohun Bagan Super Giant star Manvir Singh is poised to make a record fifth ISL final appearance and already leads the charts for most ISL playoff matches played (18). The 29-year-old has netted five times and assisted on four instances in the ISL this season

■ Sunil Chhetri and Dimitrios Petratos,

with two goals each, have been the highest scorers in the ISL finals, with both of them finding the back of the net when these two teams faced in the final in 2023. Chhetri has notched 14 goals this season, whereas Petratos has netted four times

■ MBSG striker Jason Cummings is on a stretch of four straight playoff games

with a goal, and a fifth would see him join legends like Roy Krishna and David Williams in that regard

■ Bengaluru FC will count on Rahul Bheke to oversee their defensive organisation, since he has made 121 clearances in the current campaign, which is the fourth-most by a player in any season of the competition

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