



## Al Shorta's Greatest Moments - Number 27:

### **Al Shorta win all but one of the 'classic' matches in one season (2013-14)**



Traditionally, the 'classic' matches in Iraq are all matches played between Al Shorta, Al Quwa Al Jawiya, Al Zawraa and Al Talaba, the four traditional giants of Iraqi football. However, since 2003, Northern clubs Duhok and Erbil had both become giants of Iraqi football themselves and together they won four of the six league titles between 2006-07 and 2011-12. So, the traditional 'classic' matches now included games that involved those two teams as well.

Al Shorta's first classic game of the 2013-14 season was the opening game of the season against Al Zawraa, and Al Shorta won the game 1-0 through Mustafa Kareem's well-taken goal. Their next classic was three games later against Duhok, and Al Shorta ran out 5-0 winners with a brace from Mustafa Kareem significantly contributing to the rout.

Al Shorta then faced Erbil in their eighth game and defeated them 2-1 thanks to goals from Mahdi Kareem (penalty) and Cristiano da Silva Santos, and two games later Al Shorta played against Al Talaba and won that game 2-1 at Al Shaab Stadium thanks to Ahmed Ayad's amazing goal and Amjad Kalaf's penalty.

Two matches later, Al Shorta were up against Al Quwa Al Jawiya in their fifth classic game of the season and youngster Sherko Kareem scored an impressive goal to give Al Shorta a 1-0 victory. Al Shorta's next game was another match against Al Talaba and Al Shorta defeated them again, this time by one goal to nil with Amjad Kalaf scoring that goal early on.

Al Shorta were winning classic after classic but unfortunately their astounding run of wins in the classic games came to a halt when they were held to a 2-2 draw away to Duhok in their fifteenth game, with Mustafa Kareem's fantastic header earning a point for Al Shorta. Although their next game against Amanat Baghdad wasn't considered to be a 'classic' game, it was still a huge game as Amanat Baghdad were challenging for the title and eventually finished in third place; Al Shorta won that game 2-1 and many fans considered that to be one of the classic games too.

Eventually, the Iraqi Football Association had to end the 2013-14 Iraqi Premier League at round 23 out of 30 due to the war situation in the country, and they decided to consider the standings on 18 June 2014 (the date that the IFA ended the league) as the final league table for the season, meaning Al Shorta had won a richly-deserved tenth league title. Lorival Santos, Al Shorta's manager, received a Certificate of Merit for winning all of the first five classic games, and overall this wonderful achievement is something that will forever live on in the history of this great club.





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