



Al Shorta's Greatest Moments - Number 37: Al Shorta edge Al Zawraa 3-2 in derby classic (2012)



The 2011-12 season didn't provide a whole lot of memorable matches for Al Shorta as they finished the season in seventh place, but nonetheless it did provide one of the most exciting games of the whole season when Al Shorta and Al Zawraa went head-to-head in round 29 at Al Shaab Stadium.

Radhi Shenaishil's Al Zawraa had won the reverse fixture 2-1 earlier in the season and it looked like the reigning Iraqi Premier League champions at the time were going to do it again when Hayder Sabbah curled a free-kick over the wall and into the net within 13 minutes to put Al Zawraa in front. Basem Qasem's Al Shorta almost equalised in the 27th minute of the pulsating encounter when Amjad Kalaf's cross ended up hitting the crossbar but Al Zawraa remained a goal ahead.

Man of the match Amjad did make it 1-1 twelve minutes later though. Husam Ibrahim was fouled by Al Zawraa's 'keeper and Amjad Kalaf stepped up to take the penalty; his spot-kick was saved but Amjad showed great composure to control the rebound with his chest and slot it into the net to make the scores level. The second half carried on in the same way that the first half had ended with Al Shorta dominating and Amjad Kalaf should have had a second on 57 minutes when he went through on goal but his chip was saved by the 'keeper and his

downwards header moments later was also stopped by Al Zawraa's goalie Ahmed Ali.

It only took ten more minutes before Al Shorta took a deserved lead. Ahmed Fadhel's great long range shot was acrobatically pushed out for a corner by Ahmed Ali but Amjad Kalaf got onto the end of the corner and headed it home to put Al Shorta in front. Al Zawraa responded to going a goal behind by taking control of the encounter and they won a penalty on 75 minutes when Dhurgham Ismail clumsily fouled Ali Qasim in the area; Hayder Sabbah coolly converted from 12 yards and it was 2-2.

Al Shorta, who were pushing for a top three or four finish at the time, needed to get a goal from somewhere and they won a free-kick when Dhurgham Ismail was hacked down. With 84 minutes on the clock, free-kick specialist Zaid Khalaf stepped up to take it and from 30 yards out, he curled it perfectly into the top-right corner of the net in what is one of the best goals scored in Al Shorta's and the Iraqi Premier League's recent history. Al Shorta should have gone on to score two more goals right at the end, with Amjad Kalaf hitting the crossbar again from close range in the 90th minute and Ahmed Fadhel smashing the ball onto the crossbar from a long way out in the fourth minute of injury time. Finally, after more than 95 minutes of football, the referee blew the full-time whistle to end the game at 3-2 to the Green Harps. This derby was one of the best and most thrilling Iraqi Premier League games of recent times and it certainly goes down as an 'Iraqi El Clasico' for the ages.

To see the goals of this unforgettable game, [click here](#).



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