



Al Shorta's Greatest Moments - Number 7:

Harps win sixth league title in nail-biting climax to the season (1980)



Al Shorta won the league title for the sixth time in the 1979-80 season, and it was their first Iraqi Premier League title since the league was reformed in 1974 (when it was known as the Iraqi National League). But they had to wait until the final seconds of the campaign to begin the celebrations in what was a nail-biting finish to an exciting season.

After playing 21 of their 22 scheduled games, Al Shorta, captained by legendary goalkeeper Raad Hammoudi and managed by former player Douglas Aziz, had accumulated 33 points (after victories over all three Baghdad rivals Al Zawraa (2-1), Al Talaba (3-2) and Al Quwa Al Jawiya (1-0)) but were in second place, a point behind Al Zawraa who had 34 points. Al Shorta's final league game came on 2nd May 1980 against Al Minaa with the eventual champions winning 3-1 thanks to a brace from Ali Hussein Mahmoud and a goal from Hussein Laibi and moving to the top of the league with 35 points (each

win was worth two points as opposed to three). So, Al Zawraa had to defeat Al Shabab in their final game two days later in order to win the league: an Al Zawraa draw or defeat would give the title to Al Shorta who had superior goal difference to Al Zawraa.



To everyone's surprise, Al Shabab took the lead within five minutes through Qasim Mousa but Al Zawraa soon equalised with Thamir Yousef's penalty. With 70 minutes of the game still remaining, everybody expected Al Zawraa to get the goal they needed to win the league, but as time ticked on, Al Shorta's players and fans got more and more hopeful. Al Zawraa could not find a way past Al Shabab's organised defence and the last few minutes saw Al Zawraa throw everybody forward but their efforts were in vain as the final whistle blew to signal that Al Shorta were the champions for the sixth time, winning the league on goal difference as both sides ended on 35 points. Al Shorta's Ali Hussein Mahmoud won the top scorer award with a total of 18 goals.

The dramatic end to the season, combined with the fact that it was their first Premier League title makes this triumph easily one of the greatest and most unforgettable in the club's illustrious history.



AL SHORTA'S RESULTS FROM THE 1979-80 IRAQI NATIONAL LEAGUE:

Round	Opponent	Result	Al Shorta scorers
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1	Al Zawraa	1-1 draw	Tariq Abdulameer
2	Al Talaba	0-2 loss	
3	Al Tijara	2-0 win	Faisal Aziz, Adnan Jafar
4	Al Amana (now Amanat Baghdad)	0-0 draw	
5	Al Tayaran (now Al Quwa Al Jawiya)	1-0 win	Faisal Aziz
6	Salahaddin	1-0 win	Faisal Aziz
7	Al Sinaah	4-0 win	Ali Hussein Mahmoud, Salih Radhi, Faisal Aziz, Adnan Jafar
8	Al Jaish	5-0 win	Sabah Hatem, Ali Hussein Mahmoud (2), Faisal Aziz (2)
9	Al Bahri	4-0 win	Ali Hussein Mahmoud (2), Faisal Aziz (2)
10	Al Shabab	1-1 draw	Ali Hussein Mahmoud
11	Al Minaa	2-2 draw	Ali Hussein Mahmoud (2)
12	Al Zawraa	2-1 win	Mahmoud Hussein Mahmoud, Ali Hussein Mahmoud
13	Al Talaba	3-2 win	Faisal Aziz, Mahmoud Hussein Mahmoud, Tariq Abdulameer
14	Al Tijara	2-0 win	Ali Hussein Mahmoud (2)
15	Al Amana (now Amanat Baghdad)	1-1 draw	Hussein Laibi
16	Al Tayaran (now Al Quwa Al Jawiya)	0-0 draw	
17	Salahaddin	2-0 win	Faisal Aziz, Ali Hussein Mahmoud
18	Al Sinaah	0-0 draw	
19	Al Jaish	3-2 win	Ali Hussein Mahmoud (2), Hussein Laibi
20	Al Bahri	2-1 win	Faisal Aziz (2)
21	Al Shabab	2-1 win	Ali Hussein Mahmoud (2)
22	Al Minaa	3-1 win	Ali Hussein Mahmoud (2), Hussein Laibi

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