



## **Al Shorta's Greatest Moments - Number 18:** **Al Shorta win first regional trophy (1976)**



Al Shorta competed in the first ever Arab Police Championship in 1976 and won the tournament. The tournament consisted of four teams: Al Shorta of Egypt, Al Shorta of Syria, Al Shorta of Sudan and, of course, Al Shorta of Iraq. The four teams would compete in a group, with each team playing each other once and the winner of the group winning the whole tournament.

Baghdad hosted the tournament, giving Al Shorta (Iraq) a slight advantage over everybody else. Al Shorta (Iraq), managed by Abdul-Kadir Zeinal, played their first game against Al Shorta (Egypt) who were favourites to win the tournament. Al Shorta (Iraq) ended up losing the game 1-0 after a poor performance.

Al Shorta (Iraq) went up against Al Shorta (Syria) in their second game and played a lot better than they did against Al Shorta (Egypt), winning the game comfortably 2-0 after two goals from Ali Hussein Mahmoud. It was an outstanding performance and a sign of things to come.

Al Shorta (Iraq)'s last game was of course against Al Shorta (Sudan). Al Shorta (Egypt) had won both of their games and Al Shorta (Iraq) had to defeat Al Shorta (Sudan) and hope that Al Shorta (Egypt) slipped up against Al Shorta (Syria) because this would mean that they would win the tournament. It was unlikely, but not impossible.

Al Shorta (Iraq) did what they had to do which was defeat Al Shorta (Sudan). They won the game 3-0 with goals from Sabah Hatem, Hussein Laibi and Jabar Hameed sealing the victory. This brought Al Shorta (Iraq)'s goal difference up significantly and Al Shorta (Egypt) had to lose against Al Shorta (Syria) for Al Shorta (Iraq) to win the tournament. A draw would see Al Shorta (Egypt) win the title.

But Al Shorta (Syria) pulled off the biggest surprise of the tournament, defeating Al Shorta (Egypt). This meant that Al Shorta (Iraq) had won the tournament on goal difference with Al Shorta (Egypt) coming second, Al Shorta (Syria) coming third and Al Shorta (Sudan) finishing in 4th place. It would be the first of five times that they would win the tournament, and it was their first non-domestic tournament win in their history.

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