

Football

U22 team to represent Vietnam at French tournament

By Hoang Nguyen, Lam Thoa October 5, 2020 | 02:25 pm GMT+7

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The Vietnam U22 team train in August 2020. Photo by VnExpress/Lam Thoa.



The Vietnam U22s will compete at Toulon Tournament in France to prepare for SEA Games 31.

"Vietnam Football Federation (VFF) has decided the U22 team would attend the event at the invitation of France Football Federation," said VFF General Secretary Le Hoai Anh on Monday.

The tournament will take place from December 23 to January 7, 2021. This will be Vietnam's first appearance at Toulon. Confirmed teams include Japan, DR Congo, Ivory Coast, Morocco, Mexico, England, and hosts France.

"The U22 coaching team has yet to be confirmed. Coach Park Hang-seo may well directly coach the squad or leave it to his assistant," Anh added.

By the time the U22s gather for training, the coach will get to select the best players for France since V. League and National U21 Championship would have concluded around November and early December. The team is set to train for two weeks in Hanoi before flying to France. According to VFF, the 30 players selected for the competition would also form the core squad for SEA Games 31.

Park can either coach the team in France or let assistant Kim Han-yeon go instead and call up the national team for training. The second option would give Park more time to focus on AFF Cup and World Cup 2022 qualifiers scheduled from March to June.

Earlier this year, VFF planned to send the U19 team, managed by coach Philippe Troussier to participate in the tournament, originally scheduled for June, but postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

If the U19 team competes in Toulon Tournament from December to January, there is a high chance of conflict with the AFC U19 Championship schedule, which might resume in January after postponement in 2020.

VFF supports the idea of sending the U22s to the tournament in order to prepare for SEA Games 31 hosted in Vietnam next year. Since the U22 team did not play any tournament or friendly in 2020, Toulon Tournament is considered a quality warm-up ahead of defending the SEA Games gold medal they won in 2019.

Toulon Tournament, fully known as Festival International "Espoirs" – Tournoi Maurice Revello, features international U17 to U23 teams. It is named after the late Maurice Revello, who started the event in 1967.

Many world football superstars, such as Cristiano Ronaldo, Rui Costa, and Alan Shearer, have previously played and made their names at the event.

The tournament includes host France and 11 other teams from different continents. At the event, 12 teams will be drawn into three groups of four, with group stage matches played on a round-robin basis. All teams will be ranked according to points. Group leaders and the best runners-up would qualify for the semi-finals.

In the knockout stage, if a game is tied at the end of regulation time, there will be no extra time allowed, with the winner determined in a penalty shootout.

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