



ASIAN FOOTBALL AWARDS

PRESS RELEASE - 16th NOVEMBER 2017

**** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ****

LIST OF ASIAN FOOTBALL AWARDS 2017 WINNERS & QUOTES

FOUNDERS PLAYER RECOGNITION AWARD (Sponsored by Inventive Sports)

Winner: Danny Batth (Captain Wolverhampton Wanderers FC)

MEDIA AWARD (Sponsored by Natco Foods)

Winner: Seema Jaswal (Premier League TV & FIFA U17 World Cup Anchor)

Also nominated: Tariq Panja (Global Sports Reporter – New York Times) & Vaishali Bhardwaj (Digital Sports Reporter – The Evening Standard)

YOUNG PLAYER AWARD (Sponsored by Knightsbridge Solicitors)

Winner: Easah Suliman (Aston Villa FC & England)

Also nominated: Simranjit Thandi (Leicester City FC), Rahis Nabi (Burnley FC) & Yan Dhanda (Liverpool FC)

COACH AWARD (Sponsored by The Shampan Group)

Winner: Taff Rahman (Coach Educator at The FA)

Also nominated: Nimesh Patel (Coach Educator at Leicestershire FA) & Riteesh Mishra (Head Coach – Charlton Athletic WFC)

WOMENS PLAYER AWARD (Sponsored by West Ham United)

Winner: Maya Vio (Spurs Ladies FC)

Also nominated: Vanisha Patel (Gillingham Ladies FC) & Neethu Haridas (QPR Ladies FC)

SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD

Winner: Chelsea FC Asian Star

NON-LEAGUE PLAYER AWARD (Sponsored by Skyex and Sunrise Radio)

Winner: Amar Purewal (West Auckland FC & Panjab FA)

Also nominated: Waqas Azam (Chorley FC) & Arjun Purewal (Consett AFC & Panjab FA)



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GRASSROOTS AWARD (Sponsored by Muslim Aid)

Winner: Kulwinder Singh Johal (GNG FC Leicester)

Also nominated: Ridhwaan Yusuf (R77 Soccer School) & Joginder Liddar (Indian Gymkhana)

BEHIND THE SCENES AWARD (Sponsored by Asian Business Chamber of Commerce)

Winner: Humayun Islam (Shapla Sports & Bangla Bantams)

Also nominated: Rashid Abba (Employability & Coach Education Manager – West Ham FC) & Nav Singh (Sports Scientist – Arsenal FC).

TEAM AWARD (Sponsored by BritAsia TV)

Winner: Panjab Football Association

Also nominated: Indian Gymkhana FC, Punjab United FC (Gravesend) & Sporting Bengal Utd FC.

FA FOR ALL AWARD (Sponsored by The Football Association)

Winner: Stanmore Jafferys Football Academy

Also nominated: Alpha United Juniors FC & Dewan Choudhury (Deaf Rhinos)

WINNER QUOTES

Behind the Scenes Award (Sponsored by Asian Business Chambers of Commerce)

Winner: Humayun Islam - Shapla Sports & Bangla Bantams

“I feel really humbled, it’s unbelievable really. I’m lost for words really, it’s such a prestigious award and I’m taking it back to Bradford and hoping I can inspire more people.”

Grassroots Award (Sponsored by Muslim Aid)

Winner: Kulwinder Singh Johal - GNG Leicester

“It’s an endorsement really of where we are as a club, where I am as a person having put 25 plus years into grassroots football. I’d like to think this is a mile stone, to show where we’ve come from and where we’re going as well, because now the next chapter starts.”

Non-league Player Award (Sponsored by Skyex & Sunrise Radio)

Winner: Amar Purewal - West Auckland FC & Panjab FA

“I didn’t expect to win, I genuinely didn’t even expect to be nominated for the award with us being up north, I thought we might not get recognised up there, but being nominated and then winning is something special and now I will try and achieve the next thing I want in football.”



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Women's Player Award (Sponsored by West Ham United)

Winner: Maya Vio - Spurs Ladies FC

"It feels incredible, I wasn't really expecting it, I was quite surprised when they called my name out, I was like oh my god that's me, it's just incredible, I'm really proud. I'd probably thank my parents a lot because they started that passion for me, football is very much ingrained into our family. They've driven me to training three times a week and matches ever since I was nine and they're still doing it now. It's really paying off and I've been at Spurs since I was nine so I owe a lot of this to them. The team environment and the coaches are just incredible. I'm going to celebrate with my family, we've got a big family event this weekend, my grandparents are going to be really excited so I can't wait to tell them and just have a big family meal and just celebrate."

Coach Award (Sponsored by The Shampan Group)

Winner: Taff Rahman - Coach & Coach Educator, The FA

"It's a fantastic recognition, but I wouldn't say I'm a winner because I'm not competing with anyone and when I look around the room I'm just seeing inspirational people that are trying to be excellent in their respective field. Really and truly it's more for our community to continue going, there's no competition, we're all just trying to get better in our respective discipline. It's to continue inspiring the next generation, I would like to see more and more Asian coaches, and not just coaches, but everyone involved in the game, getting up to that next level and that's what I'm living for."

Team Award (Sponsored by BritAsia TV)

Winner: The Panjab FA – Harpreet Singh

"It's down to the players, a massive contribution from the players. It's a combined effort from the management team, myself, my senior executive team and it's about pushing on. It's been fantastic but this is not one of our objectives because our objective is to enhance people's lives and propel not just the men's but also the women's game."

FA For All (Sponsored by The FA)

Winner: Stanmore Jafferys Football Academy

"It's amazing to be recognised at the Asian Football Awards. We only really started with this two years ago and this year we were nominated for a best of award, which was great, but to also be nominated for an award which the FA are sponsoring and win it, it's a wonderful experience."



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Young Player Award (Sponsored by Knightsbridge Solicitors)

Winner: Easah Suliman – Aston Villa & England U20

Quote via video message played on stage.

“I’m honoured to receive the Young Player of the year award. Thank you to the Asian Football Awards. Sorry I can’t be there tonight as I’m currently away with the England U20 team preparing for our game against Germany. Thank you again for the award and I hope you enjoy the rest of your night”

Special Recognition Award (Sponsored by Inventive Sports)

Recipient: Chelsea FC Asian Star

‘A huge congratulation to the coaches and everyone at the club for their unwavering support. Most importantly it is for all the participants, not just those winners that have gone on to academies and development centres but to all the 4000 young players who have taken part since we launched the Asian Star programme - their passion and love of the game is an inspiration to all of us.’

Media Award (Sponsored by Natco Foods)

Winner: Seema Jaswal - Premier League TV & FIFA U17 World Cup Anchor

“It’s just brilliant and I just wanted to actually say thank you to the organisers for putting tonight on because it’s such an inspirational evening to see just how successful how many Asians have been in the industry, to celebrate that. I feel very proud and it was just nice to be thought of in that category, let alone win it, so it’s great.”

Player Recognition Award (Sponsored by Inventive Sports)

Winner: Danny Batth – Wolves FC Captain

“It’s a brilliant achievement for hard work and determination, it’s a marker for myself but hopefully the hard work continues. The award will go on the mantelpiece at home, it’s a nice one for memories.”

Quotes from AFA Founder: Baljit Rihal

“Asian communities are some of the most likely to play football in England at grassroots and recreational level. However, these numbers are not reflected with players at the elite end or more broadly within the administration of the game.”

“These awards have been about focusing on the positive stories of role models within the Asian community. The Young Player shortlist showed us that we have a bright future if these young men are indeed afforded regular first team football. Easah Suliman has given us hope by becoming the first Asian to captain an England team - furthermore his goal to help England U19s win the Euros was a historic event for the Asians in Football movement.”



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“To see the progression of Danny Batth, from winning our Young Player Award in 2012 to where he is now. The captain of Wolves with over 200 appearances and with a strong possibility of playing Premier League football next season. And Neil Taylor, our 2015 award winner, playing for Wales who reached the Euro Semi Finals.”

“For the first time we have introduced The Women’s Player Award – Maya Vio has been outstanding for Spurs Ladies and my hope is that more Asian women follow her example and get involved in football and aspire to playing at the elite level.”

“The Chelsea Asian Star project is in its 10th year. We commend the sustained efforts of the initiative which should act as a wakeup call to other professional clubs to follow their example and engage with their local communities.”

Quotes from Jas Jassal BEM (Director Asian Football Awards)

“It’s been a fantastic evening, where we have collectively showcased the stories of individuals and organisations from across the country all under one roof. The atmosphere tonight has been electric and there is an air of positivity which I truly believe can be harnessed for Asians in Football to achieve bigger and better things.”

“These stories show progress and they shine the light on inspirational roles models who need to be celebrated to pave the way for future generations of Asians in Football.”

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For more information please contact:

Baljit Rihal – Founder Asian Football Awards
bal@inventivesports.co.uk

Web: www.asianfootballawards.com

Twitter: @AFootballAwards

Instagram: @AsianFootballAwards

Facebook: AsianFootballAwards