



PHOTOS: ENLIGHTEN EVENTS

An Enthusiast's Guide to Organising Football Tournaments

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With the steep rise of football hype in Bangladesh, voluntarily organising football tournaments has become a trend among the youth passionate about football. If you and your friends are aspiring organisers, let these steps guide you through.

1. Deciding on a date and place

Deciding the date and venue for your tournament is the initial and also the defining phase of your management. Dates should preferably be set on weekends. Holidays and semester breaks are the best times to organise a tourney. Times of political unrests are a big no-no since transportation is a big risk.

In terms of venue selection, first check whether your selected venue is already hosting any other tournaments or training. Confirm with the right authority. Advance fees are usually needed, often times non-refundable. It's a risky investment but also a great incentive. Bargain as much as you can.

2. Managing teams

This is when your social skills will be put to test. Start with your peers and their mutual friends. They can link you up with various teams. Look for other organisers and their events on social media. There are many semi-pro teams who frequently play underground tourneys. Invite them and their participation will encourage more teams. Going virtual is somewhat necessary, easier to communicate. Open an event page, make it public and add the team captains and managers. Get their contact info. Confirm their participation personally.

3. Financing

Awards and other management maintenance can cost a lot, making financing

compulsory. Entry fees are the obvious way to go. Charge according to the number of teams and vice versa. Call a captains' meeting to gather the entry fee. Mobile banking is a convenient way to go if some teams can't show up.

Gathering sponsors can enhance your tourney. Although sponsorships are rare, big companies are beginning to recognise the rising popularity of football tournaments. Search for potential companies looking for publicity. Meet them personally, send in a proposal letter consisting of your plans, budget and scopes. Contact with as many companies as possible and don't let rejection dishearten you.



4. Setting up fixtures

Creating a fixture can be a real hassle if you don't get the right number of teams (8, 16 or 32). Asif Imtiaz from Economics, DU, who himself organised three tourneys, suggests, "You have to tread smartly. Make sure that you're close to the magic numbers, you can postpone or add teams later on if so. The number of days your tournament will occupy is proportional to the number of teams. And of course, consult with the teams before allocating their time slots. Remember though, you can't make everyone happy."

5. Last minute moderations

It's normal and all too frequent that mishaps like teams exiting or complaining

about the fixture or the weather getting hostile may occur during the last days. Ask all the teams, gather their opinions, find out if a majority number of teams are backing out and also whether it hampers you financially. Take decisions quick and with confidence. Do not show doubt for that can discourage the rest of the teams. And always be mentally ready to postpone or even cancel the tourney if things go out of hand.

6. On-spot management

The auspicious day has finally arrived. Hectic as it can get, the key is to stay calm. Be punctual if fixtures are cramped.



Disqualifying teams for delay may sound harsh but you cannot put your event at jeopardy, and also the impression of a strict organiser can help in the future.

Be very cautious and strict as a referee or assign someone who is. Many a time feuds are caused due to silly errors or doubt from the referee. And of course, know every single rule and detail about the game.

In case of disputes (which are bound to happen), prevent it from going physical and nasty. Keep your friends (manpower) close by, you can never be too careful. Be attentive to the game at all times and judge righteously.

Provide beverages for the teams, if the budget permits. Also provide intervals

during prayer times. Basically keep the teams and volunteers happy. Their praise is your promotion.

Covering the whole tourney has become quite obvious. It's easy to get photographers. Probably all your friends have DSLRs, choose the one who knows what aperture and ISO are and has previous experience in covering events. Not only will you be promoting your tourney, you'll also be publicising the teams, which is a sure-fire way of getting their interest and full support.

7. Finishing up

It's recommended to give the awards right



after the finals. If delaying can't be avoided, set a date ASAP, hand it over personally and post it on social media. Individual medals or crests are a good way to gain credibility. Also, handle criticism on social media with tact. Don't piss people off. Post the tourney photos promptly and make it public. A well-handled tournament with adequate publicity will rightly commend your hard work and enthusiasm.

Fatiul Huq Sujoy is a tired soul (mostly because of his frail body) who's patiently waiting for Hagrid to appear and tell him, "Ye're a saiyan, lord commander." Suggest him places to travel and food-ventures to take at fb.com/SyedSujoy