



Press Release

Portugal Icons and GBA Flying Dragon Put on a Show as Fans Treated to Dazzling Football Spectacle Presented by SJM

(Macao, 19 May 2024) Football passion reached fever pitch in Macau as over 4,000 roaring spectators saw a glamorous Portugal Icons side beat the GBA Flying Dragon 11 - 4 in the late afternoon on 19 May in the “In Celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Macau SAR: SJM Five-a-side Football Friendly: Portugal Icons vs. GBA Flying Dragon,” a marquee match presented by SJM Resorts, S.A. in collaboration with the Sports Bureau of the Macau SAR Government, supported by Macao Government Tourism Office and technically supported by the Macau Football Association. This friendly match marks the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the SAR and showcases SJM’s dedication to hosting top-tier international football stars, offering diverse sports tourism experiences for residents and visitors in the city.

With the Portugal Icons side featuring legendary players including Luis Figo, Tiago, Bosingwa, Maniche, Nuno Gomes, Pauleta, Hélder Postiga, and others, and a select GBA Flying Dragon team comprising players from the Greater Bay Area and the Hong Kong Star Football Team, fans were treated to a five-a-side sporting spectacle at 4:00 p.m., at the Macao East Asian Games Dome.

Nail-biting Twists and Turns during the Match

Within the first two minutes of the game, Luis Figo netted the opening goal, followed by two goals each from his teammates Pauleta and Maniche. Wong Chin Hung then scored the first goal for the GBA Flying Dragon with a powerful shot, bringing the half-time score to 5 – 1 amidst loud cheering from the entire stadium. In the second half, the GBA Flying Dragon swiftly closed the gap, as Hu Zhijun demonstrated exceptional shooting prowess by scoring twice within a span of just 30 seconds. Portugal Icons captain Figo executed a skillful twist in front of the goal, passing the ball to teammate Hélder Postiga for a successful assist. The Portugal team’s offensive pressure persisted, while the GBA Flying Dragon stood firm, with goalkeeper Chan Tat Sun consistently thwarting their advances.

To enliven the atmosphere of the match, a team of dragon and lion dancers embodying Chinese traditions, an ensemble of young dancers from popular reality show Street Dance of China, and iconic Hong Kong rock band Tai Chi entertained the crowd before the game and during half-time with their dynamic performances.

Throughout the match, both sides wowed fans with fancy footwork, close control and individual brilliance, as well as some intricate teamwork that is a hallmark of the beautiful game. At the final whistle, the match ended 11 - 4 to the Portuguese Icons. To the delight of fans across Macau and around the world, the game was also streamed live on SJM’s Facebook and YouTube. SJM also invited over 300 underprivileged students, grassroots families, disadvantaged groups and college football team members from Macau to the game to experience the vibrant football carnival atmosphere.



The eagerly anticipated event was graced by the presence of notable guests, included Mr. Ho Iat Seng, Chief Executive of the Macau SAR Government; Ms. Ao Ieong U, Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture of the Macau SAR Government; Mr. Wan Sucheng, Director of the Department of Publicity and Culture of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Macao SAR; Mr. Gao Yuan, Counselor and Director of the Department of Information and Public Diplomacy of the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the Macao SAR; Mr. Manuel Ricardo da Silva, Chancellor of Consul General of Portugal in Macau and Hong Kong; Mr. Pun Weng Kun, President of the Sports Bureau of the Macau SAR Government; Ms. Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, Director of the Macao Government Tourism Office; Mr. Lai Pak Leng, President of the Administrative Board of Macau Football Association; and Ms. Daisy Ho, Managing Director of SJM.

Before the match, a group of distinguished guests performed the eye-dotting ceremony to kick off the event, including Ms. Daisy Ho, Managing Director of SJM; Mr. Timothy Fok, Chairman of the Board of Directors of SJM; Ms. Angela Leong, Director of SJM; Ms. Maisy Ho, Director of SJM; Mr. Eric Fok, Director of SJM; Mr. Benjamin Toh, Chief Operating Officer of SJM; and Mr. Christopher Ip, Chief Financial Officer of SJM.

Ms. Daisy Ho, Managing Director of SJM, shared her excitement right after the event, "Football is a universal language that transcends boundaries. This friendly match was a success on both sporting and cultural levels, celebrating the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Macau SAR and centuries of Sino-Portuguese ties in Macau. It is the latest in a series of events presented by SJM, who have for years been committed to supporting the Macau government's goal of diversifying its leisure and tourism portfolio by hosting major sporting events, and to leverage on the 'Sports + tourism' model which has served the SAR well in enriching its tourism landscape. We are heartened by the raucous reception of our fans which goes on to show how showpiece events can serve as a platform to reinforce Macau's burgeoning status as a 'City of Sports' for international visitors."

Luis Figo, captain of the Portugal Icons was overwhelmed by the reception of the fans. "Macau has always been a place that reminds me of home, with its deep Portuguese roots. We knew about the passion for football here, and were able to experience the electric atmosphere first-hand the moment we touched down, and with all the friendly staff and amazing fans we met in the bus tour and football clinic. We are happy to have brought joy to the fans, and would like to congratulate our wonderful opponents, the GBA Flying Dragon, who showed heart and skill in equal measure in an enjoyable game."

His teammate Hélder Postiga echoed his sentiments, "The hospitality extended to us from Macau and SJM has been impeccable - everything from hotel reception to food is easily one of the best we have experienced. I'm impressed by Macau's vibrant cityscape - it exudes an energy and aura that set it apart from other Asian cities."



Diversified Activities Enrich the Sports Tourism Experience

SJM has organised a series of extension activities and exclusive offerings surrounding the competition, enhancing the overall experience for attendees. These include a nine-day football-themed carnival at the outdoor plaza of the Ponte 16 Resort, a welcome dinner for players from both teams, a collaborative effort with Portugal Icons and the Macau Football Association to host the “Legends of Tomorrow- Football Camp,” Portugal Icons football stars taking a tour around Macau on an open-top bus, and a fan meet-and-greet session featuring legendary Portuguese football players prior to the game. Additionally, limited edition themed merchandise is available for purchase, an exhibition showcasing personal collections from the Portugal Icons is on display, and guests can opt for luxury accommodation packages, redeem tickets through specific purchases, enjoy the benefits of the “Kick off the game at SJM” scratch card, and indulge in football-themed food and cocktails. Over the years, SJM has attracted more international tourists to visit Macau through hosting major events. The diverse range of extension activities associated with this event has unfolded throughout the month of May, encompassing different districts of Macau. These initiatives have yielded significant results, laying a solid foundation for the development of Macau as a “City of Sports.”

- End -



A group of distinguished guests perform the eye-dotting ceremony to kick off the event.



Mr. Ho Iat Seng, Chief Executive of the Macao SAR Government and a group of officiating guests pose for a photo with football players from both teams.



Ms. Ao Ieong U, Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture of the Macao SAR Government and Ms. Daisy Ho, Managing Director of SJM, present the award to champion team, Portugal Icons.



Mr. Pun Weng Kun, President of the Sports Bureau of the Macau SAR Government and Ms. Daisy Ho, Managing Director of SJM, present the award to 1st runner up team, GBA Flying Dragon.



Ms. Ao Jeong U, Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture of the Macau SAR Government, Mr. Pun Weng Kun, President of the Sports Bureau of the Macau SAR Government and Ms. Daisy Ho, Managing Director of SJM, pose for a photo with football players from both teams.





The excitement of the game keeps the audience cheering non-stop.



After the game, the players interact with the audience.