

Asian World Cup Qualifying

The winners of Asia's 10 groups will be divided into two groups of five. The two winners advance to the 2002 World Cup finals; the winner of a playoff between the two runners-up will meet one of Europe's nine runners-up in a second playoff. The winner of that series advances to the 2002 World Cup.

GROUP 1. Teams: Oman, Syria, Laos, Philippines. **Format:** Home-and-home series. **Dates:** April 21-May 26. **Favorite:** Oman.

GROUP 2. Winner: Iran. **Eliminated:** Tadjikistan, Guam. **Withdrew:** Myanmar.

GROUP 3. Teams: Qatar, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Palestine. **Format:** Round-robin series in Hong Kong and Qatar. **Dates:** March 4-11, March 20-25. **Favorite:** Qatar.

GROUP 4. Teams: Kuwait, Singapore, Bahrain, Kyrgyzstan. **Format:** Round-robin series in Singapore and Kuwait. **Dates:** Feb. 3-9 and Feb. 21-27. **Favorite:** Kuwait.

GROUP 5. Teams: Thailand, Lebanon, Sri Lanka, Pakistan. **Format:** Round-robin series in Lebanon and Thailand. **Dates:** May 13-17 and May 26-30. **Favorite:** Thailand.

GROUP 6. Teams: Iraq, Kazakhstan, Nepal, Macao. **Format:** Single round-robin series in Kazakhstan. **Dates:** March 25-29. **Favorite:** Iraq or Kazakhstan.

GROUP 7. Teams: Uzbekistan, Jordan, Turkmenistan, Taiwan. **Format:** Round-robin series in Uzbekistan and Jordan. **Dates:** April 23-27 and May 3-7. **Favorite:** Uzbekistan.

GROUP 8. Teams: UAE, India, Yemen, Brunei. **Format:** Home-and-home series. **Dates:** March 2-April 7. **Favorite:** UAE.

GROUP 9. Teams: China, Indonesia, Maldives, Cambodia. **Format:** Home-and-home series. **Dates:** April 1-May 27. **Favorite:** China.

GROUP 10. Teams: Saudi Arabia, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Mongolia. **Format:** Double round-robin series in Saudi Arabia. **Dates:** Feb. 8-19. **Favorite:** Saudi Arabia.