

STEPS TO GREATNESS

A YEAR OF SPORTS EXTRAVAGANZA

Qatar’s 2025 sports calendar promises a thrilling year of action-packed events, with 84 competitions, including 15 world-class championships, set to captivate sports enthusiasts

The Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC) recently revealed its 2025 sports events calendar, featuring a robust lineup of 84 events, including 15 world-class championships. Among the most anticipated event is the ITTF World Table Tennis Championships, scheduled from May 17-27, 2025, across Lusail Multipurpose Arena, Qatar University Arena, and Qatar Sports Arena.

Additionally, Qatar will also host the FIFA U-17 World Cup from November 5-27, 2025, at the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 stadiums.

February also features the Commercial Bank Qatar Masters, hosted by the Qatar Golf Association, the Qatar ExxonMobil Open for men and Qatar TotalEnergies Open for women, organised by the Qatar Tennis, Squash, Padel and Badminton Federation. Meanwhile, the HH The Amir’s Shooting Cup and the Lusail Shotgun Championship will be conducted by the Qatar Shooting & Archery Association.

In April, the spotlight will be on the FIG Artistic

Gymnastics Apparatus World Cup, showcasing both men’s and women’s competitions.

In May, Doha will host the ITTF World Table Tennis Championships with top players competing for the ultimate prize in the sport. This prestigious event marks a triumphant return to Doha, two decades after the city hosted the successful ITTF World Championships in 2004. As the first host in the Middle East region, the 2004 event contributed significantly to the growth of the sport and inspired the next generation of table tennis enthusiasts.

The 2025 edition continues Doha’s longstanding association as one of the most established cities in global table tennis calendar.

The ITTF World Table Tennis Championships Finals 2025 promises to be an incredible spectacle, where the best players in the world will compete at the highest level. There will be a 128-player main draw in both the men’s and women’s singles events, and 64-pair main draws for the men’s, women’s, and mixed doubles events.

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June will feature the FIBA 3x3 U-23 Youth League, hosted by the Qatar Basketball Federation. Later in the year, the QTerminals Qatar Classic squash tournament will take place from September 28-October 4, 2025, organised by the Qatar Tennis, Squash, Padel and Badminton Federation.

The calendar boasts 36 international championships, including the Al Shaqab International League which is a qualifier for the FEI Group 7 Final, the WTT Star

Contender, the Qatar Fencing Grand Prix, the Qatar International Optimist Sailing Championship, HH The Amir's Sword Equestrian Festival, the Commercial Bank CHI Al Shaqab presented by Longines, the Doha Diamond League, the 5th Qatar Open Taekwondo Championship, and the 10th Qatar Weightlifting Cup.

On the Asian level, Qatar will host 14 events, such as the Asian Beach Volleyball Championship, the FIBA Asia Cup 2025 Qualifiers, the West Asia One-Day

Athletics Championship, the West Asia Badminton Championship, and the Asian Padel Championship. On the Arab level, the Qatar Football Association will organise the FIFA Arab Cup, from December 1-18 at the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 stadiums. Gulf competitions include six championships, including the GCC Men's Tennis Championship (singles and doubles), the GCC Padel Team Championship for U-14, U-18, men, and women, and the GCC Youth

and Junior Athletics Championship. In addition, the newly-released calendar includes a big number of local and community events such as: National Sport Day, QOC Half-Marathon, Qatar Volleyball Cup Final, HH The Amir Basketball Cup Final, Qatar Football Cup Final, Qatar Handball Cup Final, HH The Amir Volleyball Cup Final, closing ceremony of Olympic Schools Program, HH The Amir Football Cup Final, HH The Amir Handball Cup and World Olympic Day.

QATAR NATIONAL SPORTS DAY CHAMPIONING FITNESS, COMMUNITY, AND WELL-BEING

Qatar National Sports Day is an annual event celebrated on the second Tuesday of February, promoting sports, physical activity, and a healthy lifestyle among residents.



The Sports Day aims to increase awareness of the importance of physical health, encourage community members to engage in physical activity, and promote the concept of sport for all. It also reflects the State's commitment to raising awareness about the importance of sports in achieving comprehensive balance between the body and mind.

The State of Qatar was a pioneer in the initiative to

designate a national day for sports, in response to the Amiri decision No. 80 of 2011, stating that each Tuesday of the second week of February shall be Qatar National Sport Day, and that it shall be an official holiday.

The State of Qatar's interest in sports stems from its complete awareness and realization of its significant role in building individuals as one of the most important elements in the processes

of development. Sport actively and effectively contributes to the nation-building journey, especially since sports are a key pillar in Qatar National Vision 2030.

The designation of a national sports day in the country aims to encourage the practice of sport, elevate the ethical and humanitarian values of sport, as well as its health benefits. It also seeks to raise awareness among all segments of society about the importance of sport in daily life and encourage them to engage in it throughout the year.

Since the first edition of Qatar National Sports Day in 2012, public squares and parks in the State have witnessed a large influx of citizens and residents of various age groups to practice sports and participate in diverse events across the country. These events turn the country into a large sports field on this day.

Activities are being held every year in the State's sports facilities, in addition to the public parks, clubs, stadiums, schools, and universities, with both government institutions and private sector entities actively participating. Employees and their families are given the opportunity to participate in this special day.

On the Sport Day, the State of Qatar transforms into a vast playground that welcomes sports enthusiasts of all ages. Squares, fields, and sports facilities become small arenas where various sports, whether individual or team-based, are practiced by all age groups.

The State of Qatar is a pioneer in organizing Sports Day at the regional and global levels. Some countries have started organizing a Sports Day similar to Qatar, given its importance to the individual and society.

OPPORTUNITY FOR CLUBS TO ACHIEVE COMMUNITY GOALS



The National Sport Day (NSD), which falls on the second Tuesday of February every year, has become one of the most prominent events in Qatari clubs, contributing to enhancing sports and health awareness in society. On the NSD, which falls on February 11 this year, Qatari clubs offer a variety of sporting events that suit all ages and aim to raise awareness of the importance of exercising and encourage community members to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

These events include organising group sports such as football, volleyball and athletics games, in addition to fitness sessions that include running, cycling and aerobics, allowing everyone the opportunity to participate.

In addition to sports activities, family activities are organised to enhance the participation of all age groups in this national event, including competitions for children, training courses and awareness workshops on the importance of working out in daily life, aiming to raise awareness of the importance of

sports in improving public health and well-being.

These workshops aim to introduce the role of sports in improving public health and encouraging a healthy and sustainable lifestyle. It also enhances social ties and team spirit between members of society, as families and individuals can participate in an atmosphere of fun and collaboration.

Qatar NSD is an opportunity for clubs to promote their sports and social programmes, and reflects Qatar's commitment to supporting sports as part of the state's vision to enhance the health and well-being of society.

Qatari clubs also participate in joint events with other institutions to expand the scope of celebrations and provide diverse sporting experiences, which contributes to spreading the culture of physical activity in the community. This occasion is also an opportunity for clubs to raise awareness of the role they play in supporting local sports and raising the level of physical fitness in the country.

Some clubs and entities are keen on community participation during the NSD through organising yoga sessions, aerobic exercises and strength exercises, in addition to providing free consultations on fitness and health. Clubs always open their doors to the public for free or at symbolic prices to encourage citizens and residents to try new sports and raise awareness of the importance of sports. Indeed, different clubs provide lectures and workshops on the benefits of sports for physical and mental health, besides distributing educational materials on how to maintain an active lifestyle.

These clubs and other institutions also contribute effectively to making the NSD a distinctive national event, reflecting the culture of sports and health that Qatar seeks to promote in society. Some clubs organise open sports events, team sports, as well as organising competitions and incentive prizes for participants. Additionally, they organise events for families and children with the aim of encouraging children to participate in sports from a young age.



Sports clubs in Qatar play a major role in celebrating the NSD, as they organise many diverse sports events and activities targeting all segments of society. These events also reflect the clubs' commitment to supporting the goals of the NSD. Qatar is preparing for the NSD as an exceptional event that expresses the State's interest in establishing a culture of sports and health among citizens and residents. It is a national day celebrated annually on the second Tuesday of February each year. It was launched for the First time in 2012 at the initiative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, with the aim of encouraging citizens and residents to practice physical activity and adopt a healthy lifestyle. Qatar's NSD will fall this year on February 11, where many sporting events are organized such as running races, cycling, team sports and family entertainment activities. These events aim to encourage everyone to adopt a healthy and active lifestyle, and to enhance the sporting and social spirit.

The NSD is a great opportunity for members of the Qatari community to participate in activities that promote public health and social cohesion. It is not just a sporting event, but rather part of Qatar National Vision 2030 to build a healthy and sustainable society.

Government and private entities are keen to organize various sporting events, such as running, walking, cycling, and team sports activities for all age groups including children and the elderly.

QATAR'S ROLE IN PROMOTING SPORTS AS A PILLAR OF A HEALTHY SOCIETY PRAISED

The presidents of several Qatari sports clubs have emphasised the significance of National Sport Day in reinforcing the role of sports in the lives of both citizens and residents, viewing it as an essential part of individual life and a key element in building a healthy society. They also praised the government's clear efforts in supporting and advancing sports as a tool for enhancing national spirit and social cohesion.

National Sport Day, which takes place on the second Tuesday of February every year, receives great attention from both the leadership and the people. This special event continues to be warmly embraced by all those living in Qatar across various age groups, who eagerly participate in a unique sporting day celebrated throughout the country's regions.

In a statement to Qatar News Agency (QNA), President of Al Bidda Club Sheikh Fahad bin Mohammed bin Fahad al-Thani said that practising sports is very important for societies, especially since it has a positive impact on the lives of the residents in Qatar. He emphasised that National Sport Day serves as an occasion to highlight the importance of sports as a lifestyle, adding that individuals should continue their physical activity year-round and not limit it to a specific event or day.

He highlighted the numerous benefits of practicing sports, including its role in disease prevention, maintaining a healthy weight, and its positive psychological and social impact. He also pointed out Qatar's and the wise leadership's focus on the human element as a key pillar for community development, which is reflected in the First pillar of Qatar's National Vision 2030 related to human development, emphasising the importance of maintaining physically and mentally healthy populations.

Vice-President of Al Bidda Club Sheikh Hamad bin Mohammed bin Fahad al-Thani stressed that Sport Day reflects the state's commitment and strong interest in promoting sports as a crucial factor in preserving health, improving morals, and fostering overall well-being. He noted that it strengthens the concept of "sport for all," which supports public health and encourages the practice of sports, not only on an individual level but also within the wider community.

For his part, President of Al Kharaitiyat Club Sheikh Ahmed bin Thamer al-Thani said that National Sport Day successfully fulfils its goal each year by raising awareness in society about the importance of regular physical activity. He noted that the event serves as a vital awareness campaign, helping individuals understand the benefits of sports in maintaining health and wellbeing, and encouraging many to adopt a healthier lifestyle.

President of Al Markhiya Club Ali Hamad al-Misaifri emphasised the contribution of National Sport Day in diversifying sports activities, extending beyond competitive sports. He highlighted its role in achieving balance by encouraging a wide range of sports in which the community practices comfortably, fostering unity and solidarity.

Muaither SC President Saleh al-Ajji noted the international attention that NSD receives, including from FIFA and the International Olympic Committee, which praised Qatar's efforts in promoting sports and health. AlSaliya SC President, Mohammed Ali al-Marri, told QNA that NSD highlights the cruciality of staying healthy, investing in the human capital, and strengthening one's physical, psychological, and mental capabilities year-round, being a key component of the social development sought by all countries and organisations.

Meanwhile, Lusail SC President Nawaf al-Mudahka said that NSD is an opportunity for all community segments to practise physical activity and sports, highlighting the occasion's role in raising awareness about the importance of physical activity and its impact on health.



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Sport and Diet

Food that suits your lifestyle

Maintaining an active lifestyle requires more than just regular exercise; it demands proper nutrition to fuel the body and enhance performance. Whether you are a professional athlete, a fitness enthusiast, or someone who engages in casual sports activities, the right diet can significantly impact your energy levels, endurance, and overall well-being. Let's explore how different sports require specific dietary choices to support performance and recovery.

1. Endurance Sports (Running, Cycling, Swimming)

Endurance athletes require sustained energy over long periods. Carbohydrates are the primary fuel source for these activities, along with proteins and healthy fats to aid recovery.



- ▶ **Best Foods:** Whole grains (brown rice, quinoa, oats), fruits, vegetables, lean proteins (chicken, fish, eggs), and healthy fats (avocados, nuts, olive oil).
- ▶ **Pre-Workout:** Complex carbohydrates (bananas, oatmeal) and lean protein.
- ▶ **Post-Workout:** A combination of protein and carbs (Greek yogurt with honey, grilled chicken with sweet potatoes).

2. Strength Training (Weightlifting, Bodybuilding)

Strength athletes need a protein-rich diet to support muscle growth and recovery while maintaining a balance of healthy fats and carbohydrates.



- ▶ **Best Foods:** Lean meats, fish, eggs, dairy products, legumes, nuts, and seeds.
- ▶ **Pre-Workout:** Protein and slow-digesting carbs (chicken with brown rice, a smoothie with protein and berries).
- ▶ **Post-Workout:** High-protein meals (grilled salmon with quinoa, cottage cheese with almonds).

3. High-Intensity Sports (Football, Basketball, Tennis)

These sports demand explosive energy, agility, and endurance, requiring a mix of carbohydrates, proteins, and fats.



- ▶ **Best Foods:** Whole grain pasta, lean meats, dairy, nuts, and starchy vegetables.
- ▶ **Pre-Workout:** Balanced meal with protein and carbs (turkey sandwich on whole wheat, yogurt with granola).
- ▶ **Post-Workout:** Quick-digesting carbs and protein (protein shake, peanut butter on whole wheat toast).

4. Yoga and Low-Intensity Workouts

Yoga and low-impact exercises benefit from a lighter diet focusing on hydration, fiber, and healthy fats.



- ▶ **Best Foods:** Leafy greens, nuts, seeds, fermented foods, and herbal teas.
- ▶ **Pre-Workout:** Light and easily digestible foods (fruit smoothie, herbal tea with nuts).
- ▶ **Post-Workout:** Hydrating and nourishing foods (coconut water, quinoa salad).

5. Hydration and Supplements

Proper hydration is essential for all sports. Water should be the primary source, but electrolytes are beneficial for endurance and high-intensity workouts. Supplements such as protein powders, BCAAs, and omega-3 fatty acids can also support recovery and performance when necessary.



The power of team sports

Whether among friends, colleagues, or even strangers, the shared passion for sports has the power to unite people and create lasting relationships.

Sports have always been more than just physical activity; they serve as a powerful tool for fostering camaraderie, teamwork, and mutual respect. Engaging in team sports plays a vital role in strengthening friendly relations among individuals, communities, and even nations. Whether on the field, court, or pitch, team sports encourage collaboration, effective communication, and the development of strong interpersonal bonds.

One of the most significant aspects of team sports is the necessity of teamwork. Players must work together to achieve a common goal, whether it's scoring a goal, making a basket, or winning a match. This sense of cooperation teaches individuals to rely on one another, respect different roles, and celebrate each other's strengths. By working as a unit, participants develop trust and form strong friendships that extend beyond the game.

Team sports require constant and effective communication, both verbal and non-verbal. Players must convey strategies, warn teammates of potential threats, and provide encouragement during crucial moments. This communication builds rapport and understanding, allowing individuals to develop deeper connections with their teammates. Over time, these skills transfer into daily interactions, making participants more adept at expressing themselves and resolving conflicts amicably.

Simultaneously, engaging in team sports brings together individuals from different

backgrounds, cultures, and perspectives. In a team, differences in ethnicity, language, or social status become secondary to the shared objective of playing the game. This inclusivity fosters acceptance and appreciation of diversity, creating a sense of unity among participants. It also helps break down prejudices and stereotypes, replacing them with mutual respect and understanding.

Competitive sports can sometimes lead to disagreements, but they also teach valuable conflict resolution skills. Players learn to handle disputes maturely, respect referees' decisions, and engage in fair play. The ability to navigate conflicts within a sports setting translates to better problem-solving in real life, reinforcing friendly relations and minimizing unnecessary conflicts.

Whether in schools, workplaces, or neighborhoods, team sports create a strong sense of community. People bond over shared experiences, victories, and even defeats. These connections extend beyond the game, fostering long-lasting friendships and support systems. Sporting events also bring families, friends, and supporters together, strengthening communal ties and promoting a spirit of togetherness.

Sports are known to reduce stress, enhance mood, and boost self-esteem. When individuals participate in team sports, they experience the joy of shared achievements, encouragement from teammates, and the satisfaction of contributing to a team effort. This positive environment nurtures goodwill and strengthens emotional connections among players, further reinforcing friendships and social well-being.

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