



## THE 2023 WMF MINIFOOTBALL WORLD CUP RAS AL KHAIMAH COUNTDOWN BEGINS, WITH GROUPS ANNOUNCED AT THE OFFICIAL LIVE DRAW



Images can be downloaded through this [link](#)

*Home for everyday legends, 2023 WMF Minifootball World Cup to cement the Emirate's reputation as a leading sports and athleticism destination.*

*UAE to face Kazakhstan, Ghana, and India in first ever Middle East edition of biannual tournament, marking the first time a national team has played in the prestigious international event*

**Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates, 22 June 2023:** Sports fans are ready; the countdown to the region's first ever WMF Minifootball World Cup has begun following the official draw held last night at the Movenpick Resort Al Marjan Island in Ras Al Khaimah .

In the presence of Sheikh Ahmed bin Saud Al Qasimi, Chairman of Ras Al Khaimah Public Services Department, the official draw set the stage for an exciting tournament that will bring together talented teams, football enthusiasts, and sports aficionados from around the world. Officiated by Raki Phillips, CEO of Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority (RAKTDA) and World Minifootball Federation (WMF) President, Filip Juda, the prestigious event was also attended by Government officials, ambassadors of participating countries, presidents and coaches of WMF-affiliated organizations and other distinguished guests.

Unveiling intriguing matchups that will captivate fans around the world and set the stage for thrilling rivalries throughout the competition, the event saw 32 participating national teams drawn in eight groups of four teams each. The host UAE will face off against Kazakhstan, Ghana and India in Group A,



while defending champions Mexico are in Group B with Guatemala, Georgia, and Ireland. Favorites Brazil headline Group E that also includes Bulgaria, Montenegro and Japan. The USA, hosts and winners of the inaugural Minifootball World Cup in 2015, are in Group D and will battle for the round of 16 against Romania, Spain and Lebanon. The teams compete in a round-robin format in the group stages, with the top two teams from each group advancing to the knockout stage, which includes the round of 16, quarterfinals, semi-finals, and the highly anticipated final.

**Raki Phillips, Chief Executive Officer of Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority**, said: “We are thrilled to have kicked off the countdown to the 2023 Minifootball World Cup Ras Al Khaimah with an exciting draw viewed live by thousands of people from across the globe. This tournament cements our reputation as one of the most exciting and fastest growing destinations in the region. We can’t wait to welcome nations from all around the world to discover our proud sporting legacy, renowned Emirati hospitality, and exciting adventure, culture and nature-based experiences beyond the stadium.”

**Filip Juda, President of the World Minifootball Federation**, added: “I am excited to return to Ras Al Khaimah for the official 2023 WMF Minifootball World Cup draw - it truly is a remarkable destination, and is ideal for our growing sport. The enthusiastic support we have received from the Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority and the people of the Emirate validates the original decision to select Ras Al Khaimah as our host. Congratulations to all the teams and we look forward to an exciting tournament. We are also eager to see what lies beyond – we are confident the World Cup’s legacy will continue to grow and attract more fans to this unique sport and encourage wholesome athletic pursuits among the UAE and wider region’s population.”

Taking place from October 26<sup>th</sup> to November 4<sup>th</sup>, the 2023 edition in Ras Al Khaimah promises to be an unforgettable celebration of the sport. Under the banner “Home For Everyday Legends”, the 2023 World Cup will showcase the skills and passion for minifootball from around the world, merging them with Ras Al Khaimah landmarks and cultural aspects to excite players and fans alike for this year’s tournament. It also highlights how relatable the game is to amateur players and enthusiasts, while magnifying the importance and capabilities of the talented players and giving them the legendary status they deserve. The goal is to inspire viewers to appreciate the sport beyond the professional level and recognize the skills and talent that exists within minifootball communities.



Ras Al Khaimah was named host nation of the 2023 tournament last year, beating strong contenders such as Manila and Budapest. Expected to bring thousands of spectators to Ras Al Khaimah, the competition cements the destination's reputation for staging international sporting events. The Emirate already plays host to a growing number of high-profile events, including the RAK Half Marathon, the world's fastest half marathon, road cycling competition UAE Tour as well as renowned international golf championship, the DP World Tour. In addition to the significant tourism development and economic benefits that hosting the 2023 Minifootball World Cup will deliver, the Authority believes the tournament will act as a springboard for the promotion of minifootball in the UAE and beyond, encouraging more residents and visitors to play the sport, in line with the Emirate's objectives to foster liveability as well as engaging with local schools and sports clubs.

Featured in Time magazine's World's Greatest Places of 2022 and CNN Travel's Best Destinations to Visit in 2023, Ras Al Khaimah is the ideal location for minifootball fans and spectators, with a whole host of things to do in between games. Outdoor enthusiasts can go hiking, rock climbing, kayaking, and even take on the world's longest zipline. There is also 64km of stunning coastline, perfect for swimming, snorkeling, or simply relaxing on the white sandy beach. Additionally, visitors can delve into the region's history and culture by exploring its forts, museums, and the much-loved Suwaidi Pearl Farm, or discover the Emirate's diverse range of shopping and dining options. Located a few short hours by flight from various key European and Asia hubs, the Emirate is also easily accessible and served by four international airports across the UAE, including Dubai International Airport - just a 45-minute drive away - and Ras Al Khaimah International Airport.

The term 'minifootball' means small-sided football. Open to amateur players, the sport is characterized by its dynamism, passion, and intensity, ensuring an exciting experience for both players and spectators. The Minifootball World Cup is a biennial tournament and the sport's premier event, attracting national teams from around the world to compete for the title of Minifootball World Champions.

For more information about the Minifootball World Cup and updates on the tournament, visit the official WMF website at [www.minifootball.com](http://www.minifootball.com) or [www.wmfworldcup.com](http://www.wmfworldcup.com). Alternatively, check out [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [Facebook](#). Official Hashtags: #WMFWorldCup #WMFWC. In the meantime, check out the match schedule here:



- Group Stage: 26 to 31 October, 2023
- Knockout stages:
  - 1/8 Final – 1 November, 2023
  - 1/4 Final – 2 November, 2023
  - 1/2 Final - 3 November, 2023
  - Third place - 4 November, 2023
- The final: 4 November

### **The 2023 WMF Minifootball World Cup Draw Results**

**Group A** - UAE, Kazakhstan, Ghana, India

**Group B** - Mexico, Guatemala, Georgia, Ireland

**Group C** - Czech Republic, Ukraine, Israel, Thailand

**Group D** - Romania, USA, Spain, Lebanon

**Group E** - Brazil, Bulgaria, Montenegro, Japan

**Group F** - Slovakia, France, England, Albania

**Group G** - Azerbaijan, Tunisia, Egypt, Iraq

**Group H** - Hungary, Serbia, Libya, Portugal

**Draw broadcast and results video available here:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pRDaDJXV40o>

**-ENDS-**



**Notes to Editors:**

**[About Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority \(RAKTDA\)](#)**

The Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority (RAKTDA) was established in May 2011 under the government of Ras Al Khaimah. RAKTDA aims to develop the Emirate's tourism infrastructure and establish Ras Al Khaimah as a world-class destination for leisure and business travel, creating sustainable investment opportunities and enhancing the quality of life for its residents. In order to achieve its goals, the Authority has a government mandate to license, regulate and monitor the Emirate's tourism and hospitality industry.

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