



GoodSport NEWS

S R I L A N K A O L Y M P I C W E E K L Y N E W S B U L L E T I N

18TH NOA COMPLETED SUCCESSFULLY



The National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka added another feather in their cap when they initiated the 18th version of the National Olympic Academy.

The programme was originated by the immediate past president of the National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka, Mr. Hemasiri Fernando along with Academic Director, Mr. B. L. H. Perera, under the theme, "Olympism Towards Prospering the National Character".

The 18th National Olympic Academy was held from the 01st – 04th December 2022 at the National Holiday Resort in Bandarawela.

This educational programme is conducted annually.

Unfortunately due to the Covid-19 pandemic, was - not held in 2020 and restarted last year virtually.

The programme's target group was slightly different from the previous 17 NOAs, which was Primary Teachers.

Therefore, the major objective was to promote the Olympic Values by inculcating these in student from the primary stages itself.

Maintaining gender equality, 15 male and 15 female participants, with a total of 30 attended the event, including regional participants from Nepal, Pakistan and Maldives.

The Orientation programme and the Opening Ceremony were held on the 01st day of the programme, where -

Prof. Udaya Ratnayake, Vice Chancellor of the Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka, attended as the Chief Guest of the Opening Ceremony.

Day 02 contained multiple academic sessions under the following topics.

1. Olympism and Heritage by Prof. BLH Perera
2. Olympic Values for Self and Society by Ms. Eranga C. Fernando
- 3.1. "Joy of Effort" By Prof. BLH Perera and Group Leaders
- 3.2. "Fair Play" By Major General Lanka Amarapala

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3.3. Tea & Value: “Respect for Self & Others” By a Japanese Volunteer Scholar

3.4. “Pursuit of Excellence” By Prof. BLH Perera and Group Leaders

3.5. “Balance between Body, Will, and Mind” By Prof. BLH Perera and a Young Musician

Day 03 saw a line of practical workshops where the participants were split into 5 groups and assigned to group leaders.

Each group had to discuss on the same set of and come up with practical ways to inculcate these qualities in their primary students.

1. Embrace Yourself & Others
2. Explore Yourself for Others
3. Doing Your Best for Self & Others
4. Connect with PEACE

The final day held a field trip to all the participants. The group was taken to visit the Nine Arches Bridge where Mr. Denzil Darling explained about the railway systems in Sri Lanka as well.



WHO WILL BE THE BEST YOUNG PLAYER AT THE WORLD CUP 2022?

*Gavi, Vinicius Jr, Tchouameni, Jude Bellingham, Musiala, Alphonso Davies;
here are some young players to watch at FIFA World Cup 2022*



Gavi



Jude

An unknown 17-year-old named Pele in 1958, Michael Owen in 1998, Ronaldinho in 2002, Mario Götze in 2014 - every football World Cup sees young stars explode into the popular consciousness and Qatar 2022 is no different.

There simply isn't enough space to talk about all the rising stars here, take a look at France's squad alone with the likes of Aurelien Tchouameni (22), Eduardo Camavinga (19), Kylian Mbappe (23), William Saliba (21), Jules Kounde (23).

Then there's Spain's dazzling duo of Gavi and Pedri or Brazil's attacking treasure chest including Vinicius Jr (22), Antony (22), Rodrygo (21), Matheus Cunha (23), all potentially playing alongside a certain Olympic champ called Neymar.

Sadly we won't see certain superstars on football's greatest stage like Haaland, Dybala, and Odegaard, but the most of the world's next-gen are in Qatar.

Here are nine young players worth watching at FIFA World Cup 2022, many of whom were born after January 1, 2001 and could therefore win the official FIFA Young Player Award in Qatar.

9. Takefusa Kubo - Japan

Born: 2001

Club: Real Sociedad

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It feels like **Take** has been around far too long to still only be 21, but 21 he is and he's in Qatar with a point to prove.

Hailed as the 'Japanese Messi' when he was coming through **Barcelona's** famed 'La Masia' academy as a teen prodigy, Kubo ended up signing for Real Madrid in 2019, but failed to force his way into the team. After loan spells at Mallorca, Villarreal, Getafe, and Mallorca again, he finally went on a permanent move to Real Sociedad in 2022. With sackloads of skills, searing pace, and dribbling ability that does remind you of a young Messi, Kubo has the talent to both decide games and delight fans.

He scored Japan's first goal against South Africa at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and went on to net in their first three games but was disappointed not to win a medal at home as they lost their semi-final to Spain after a Marco Asensio extra-time screamer and then the bronze medal match to Mexico.

At Qatar 2022, Kubo started the game that produced a shock result when **Japan beat four-time winners Germany 2-1** in the first match of Group E. Substituted at half time, Kubo was then one of five players dropped by manager **Hajime Moriyasu's** rotation system for the next match against Costa Rica. The Central Americans won the game with a last-gasp goal, to leave the group wide open.

Should Japan make it through the group stage, which also includes 2010 winners Spain, Kubo would have more chances to make this World Cup his own and take on South Korea's **Son Heung-min** as the biggest Asian name in the game.

8. Alphonso Davies (Canada)

Born: 2000

Club: Bayern Munich



Alphonso Davies' incredible story started in war-torn Liberia from where his parents fled to Canada as refugees in 2005.

Football, or soccer as they call it in Canada, was his first love and at just 14 years of age he joined the MLS' Vancouver Whitecaps FC Residency. That was in 2015, and by 2018 he was a **Bayern Munich** player and blew everyone away with his 2019-20 UEFA Champions League performances against Barcelona (In the famed 8-2 semi-final) and PSG in the final.

Davies became the first Canadian men's national team player to win the Champions League, inspiring a generation of young Canadian football fans, and subsequently helping take his nation to their first World Cup finals in 36 years.

The definition of a **modern-day wing-back**, Davies is a joy to watch in full flight and has the kind of attacking ability and defensive nous to control a game.

He missed a penalty in Canada's opener as Belgium went on to win 1-0, but took just two minutes to get off the mark against Croatia in their second match and become the first Canadian to score at a men's FIFA World Cup. However, the 2018 World Cup runners-up roared back to win 4-1 and leave Canada on the brink of elimination ahead of their final group game against two more chances against fellow Group F teams, Croatia and Morocco, to help his team progress to the knockout stages.

7. Pape Matar Sarr – Senegal

Born: 2002

Club: Tottenham Hotspur



Senegal has given the world a host of quality football players of the dimension of **El Hadji Diouf** and **Papa Bouba Diop**, with global names like **Sadio Mane** and **Kalidou Koulibali** currently ruling at Bayern and Chelsea. And **Pape Matar Sarr** is a name growing in resonance after an impressive 2020-21 season for Ligue 1 side Metz earned him a move to Antonio Conte's **Tottenham**.

Loaned back to Metz to help him continue his development, the 19-year-old impressed once more despite playing for a side that suffered relegation. Now fighting to get into the Spurs team, Sarr has not had much game-time but could find his feet at the World Cup with the Lions of Teranga in Qatar.

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His first outing proved successful, coming on in the 77th minute of Senegal's second game in Group A, to help his side claim a 3-1 win against the hosts. Having already featured in Senegal's Africa Cup of Nations victory in 2022, experience on the field of play at a World Cup can only enhance Sarr's game.

6. Aurelien Tchouameni - France

Born: 2000

Club: Real Madrid



What? Sell Casemiro? The world gasped as Real Madrid's iconic midfield trinity of Kroos-Casemiro-Modric was broken up with the Brazilian's big-noise move to Manchester United. But **Carlo Ancelotti** remained unflustered as he knew who was stepping up behind him, the supremely calm **Aurelien Tchouameni**.

A defensive midfielder who learned his trade at Bordeaux and then Monaco, it looks like Real Madrid's defensive midfield duties could be in safe hands for another decade with Tchouameni. Tactical awareness, technical brilliance, a natural instinct for positioning and an eye for goal, Tchouameni has helped Real Madrid to the top of La Liga and of their Champions League group with the kind of quietly confident football that you need from a world-class DM.

Tchouameni has shone so far in Qatar with France winning their first two matches at the start of their World Cup title defence. Controlling the middle of the park, nipping any imminent attacks in the bud, and almost scoring against Denmark, the 22-year-old is showing a maturity beyond his years in the early stages of the World Cup. He'll be hoping his form continues all the way to the final.

5. Jamal Musiala - Germany

Born: 2003

Club: Bayern Munich



Forever candidates to lift the World Cup, the four-time winners Germany always have a young ace in the pack ready to step up at the biggest tournament.

Born in Germany but raised in England, **Jamal Musiala** spent eight years in the Chelsea academy after a brief spell at Southampton before joining **Bayern Munich** aged 16.

Now 19, he had a hand in 15 goals - nine goals, six assists - in Bayern's first 14 Bundesliga matches this season to raise expectation to fever pitch.

The youngest player to represent Germany at a World Cup, Musiala was welcomed to the unpredictability of the showcase tournament when Japan produced a stunning upset in their opening game.

And a 1-1 draw with Spain in their second match, with the youngster providing flashes of inspiration in the second half, means Musiala could see his tournament come to an end in the group stages unless they score a convincing win over Costa Rica.

4. Antony - Brazil

Born: 2000

Club: Manchester United



After a record-breaking move to Manchester United, Brazilian star **Antony** could get his chance on the biggest stage of all. Three goals in four games was not a bad start for the Brazilian at United, particularly when one of them was a beauty on debut in a 3-1 victory over Arsenal.

Playing as an inverted winger at Old Trafford, he cuts in onto his favoured left foot from a right-wing position, but is versatile enough to play anywhere across the front line.

Antony came off the bench to make his World Cup debut in a 2-0 win over Serbia, but illness has seen the 22-year-old miss training ahead of his side's second group game against Switzerland.

The winger will want to recover quickly as Neymar's absence through injury leaves an opportunity for someone to make their mark. Antony will be hoping it's him.

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3. Vinicius Jr - Brazil

Born: 2000

Club: Real Madrid



Competition for Antony includes **Vini Jr**, the man who scored the winning goal at the most recent Champions League final.

His 22-goal haul for Los Blancos last season was second only to Karim Benzema, and he was named **UEFA Champions League Young Player of the Season**.

Not bad for a 22-year-old, and Vini doesn't look like slowing down anytime soon either with 10 goals and three assists in 20 games this season across La Liga and the Champions League.

While he hasn't been quite as prolific with Brazil - just one goal in his last eight matches - Vini Jr is part of a Brazilian setup that hasn't tasted defeat in three years.

While it's difficult to call Vini a 'breakout star' with everything he's achieved, this could be his World Cup.

It certainly started well, as Vinicius Jr and **Richarlison** combined to deadly effect in the opening 2-0 win over Serbia with both goals scored by the latter. Two more matches against Switzerland and Cameroon should enable the duo to cement the partnership ready for the knockout stages. Or so they hope.

2. Jude Bellingham - England

Born: 2003

Club: Borussia Dortmund



With four goals in five Champions League matches so far this season for Dortmund, **Jude Bellingham** is definitely in the conversation as a potential breakout star in Qatar.

He already has several records to his name:

- youngest-ever first-team player at Birmingham City at 16,
- youngest Borussia Dortmund goalscorer in history at the time at 17 years and two months,
- youngest Englishman (17 years and 113 days) to start a Champions League match, and
- the second youngest (17 years and 281 days) to score in the competition.

The midfield dynamo is now also the second youngest scorer for England at a World Cup, claiming his first senior international goal against Iran in a 6-2 win at Qatar 2022.

This is a man in a rush to the top.

"We don't even know how good he is. We're trying to figure out where his limit is going to be," says his current club coach **Edin Terzic**.

1. Gavi - Spain

Born: 2004

Club: Barcelona



One of Xavi's prodigies rebuilding Barca right now, there is so much expected of this exciting young talent. Already receiving recognition for his work, **Gavi** was awarded the Kopa trophy for the best young player in the world at the Ballon d'Or gala in October 2022. At 18, he's already a fixture in the *Blaugrana* midfield and his coach **Xavi** - a World Cup winning midfield general - is not surprised in the slightest.

After a Gavi-inspired 3-0 win over Sevilla in September, Xavi said: "I see him train every day. It's down to hard work, discipline and heart. He was the best player in the game because of his intensity, fight, passing, high pressing - he has heart in his legs."

Gavi won't be the only young Spanish star vying for the young player award, his teammate and fellow teenager **Pedri** could light it up too. Pedri is already an Olympic silver medallist, unable in the end to match Messi and Guardiola, but could he and Gavi inspire a next-gen World Cup victory for Spain? It's certainly started well. The pair played their part in Spain's opening 7-0 demolition of Costa Rica with Gavi scoring Spain's fifth goal. Both will be hoping for plenty more opportunities to come as the competition progresses.

Olympics.com

NEW VENUES AND CLOSING CEREMONY FOR GEELONG IN 2026

Geelong is set to take centre stage as the host of a brand-new athletes' village, nine sports, and the Closing Ceremony for the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games.

The Andrews Labor Government is investing up to \$292 million in purpose-built sporting infrastructure in Waurin Ponds and Armstrong Creek, that will be converted into community infrastructure for these growing communities after the final medals are won.

The aquatics centre in Armstrong Creek will host swimmers, para swimmers and divers while the Commonwealth's best gymnasts, weightlifters and Para powerlifters will aim for gold in Waurin Ponds.

After the Games, the aquatics centre will become a community pool facility, with multi-purpose courts and green open space preserved. The artistic gymnastics and weightlifting venue in Waurin Ponds will become seven multi-sport courts, a dance studio, and a regional-level gymnastics centre.

"Aquatics and gymnastics are highlights at any Commonwealth Games and these new facilities at Waurin Ponds and Armstrong Creek will be terrific for hosting the Commonwealth's best athletes," said Craig Phillips AM, Commonwealth Games Australia CEO.

Two Commonwealth Games-first sports will be hosted in the region with Golf teeing off on the Bellarine Peninsula and Coastal Rowing making its debut in Torquay, the gateway to the iconic Great Ocean Road.

The Games village location is now also confirmed, with the Waurin Ponds Station Precinct to become a home-away-from-home for about 2,500 athletes and officials in March 2026.



The village will be designed in consultation with the local community and Traditional Owners, celebrating the rich culture of the Wadawurrung people and showcasing the lifestyle of Geelong, the Bellarine and the Surf Coast.

"Tens of thousands of people will come to Geelong for Victoria 2026, and we're investing in the world-class housing and sporting infrastructure that will benefit not only Games delivery but the community for years to come," said The Hon Jacinta Allan MP, Minister for -

Commonwealth Games Delivery. "What a win for Torquay to see a new Commonwealth sport get underway at one of the world's finest beaches, as a centrepiece of our regional Games."

Kardinia Park will host the Closing Ceremony, welcoming 40,000 spectators and a potential global audience of more than one billion. It will be a fitting send-off to Victoria 2026, bringing athletes, volunteers and fans together for a night of celebration that highlights the best of our regions and our people.

The final for the T20 Cricket will also be held at Kardinia Park, so tens of thousands of fans can see the Southern Stars defend their Gold medal won at Birmingham 2022.

During Victoria 2026, Geelong will also be home to a program of live sites including music, performance and art, showcasing some of its iconic locations such as Geelong's spectacular waterfront and the Arts Precinct.

Geelong will be home to nine sports for the 2026 Commonwealth Games: Aquatics (swimming and diving) and Para Swimming, Triathlon and Para Triathlon, Weightlifting and Para Powerlifting, Beach Volleyball, Coastal Rowing, Cricket T20, Golf, Artistic Gymnastics and Hockey.

Victorian Government