

## Cuttack gears up for Ultimate Kho Kho Season 2

Change in points system to make the sport more interesting for the viewers; The reigning champions Odisha Juggernauts and Rajasthan Warriors will kick off India's premier Kho-Kho carnival on Sunday

Bhubaneswar, December 23, 2023: Ultimate Kho Kho is poised to captivate enthusiasts of athletic endeavours with a thrilling second season of the high-energy league. The inaugural match will commence as the reigning champions and local favourites, Odisha Juggernauts engage in spirited competition against Rajasthan Warriors at the Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium in Cuttack on Sunday.

Conceived by Amit Burman in collaboration with the Kho Kho Federation of India, Ultimate Kho Kho garnered prodigious interest among enthusiasts and corporate entities during its inaugural edition. This was largely attributable to the sport's innovative manifestation, replete with an ambitious objective of revivifying and propelling it onto the global stage. Remarkably, Ultimate Kho Kho ascended to the position of India's third-largest non-cricket league, ascertained by its extensive television viewership. Notably, it achieved the distinction of being the inaugural Indian sports league to secure Series A funding, courtesy of the UK-based BNP Group.

The impending second edition pledges an even more enriching spectacle as uniformity in points system has been introduced wherein two points will be attributed to all attacking moves to the teams. The season 2 is featuring six teams under the ownership of preeminent Indian corporate entities and sports investors. These formidable teams are poised to engage in spirited competition, vying for the esteemed title from December 24, 2023 to January 13, 2024.

Siddhartha Das, Director, Sports, Odisha Govt said, "Odisha has built significant sports infrastructure for various sports and is emerging as the leading sports hub of India. The state has been investing on the promotion and development of sports including traditional sports like Kho Kho. We are delighted to host the second season of Ultimate Kho Kho here in Odisha and I welcome and wish the very best for all the teams. I am sure that Odisha Juggernaut will give its best and defend the title in front of the home fans."

Host Odisha has occupied a preeminent position in the advocacy of sports over the past decade, and the provincial administration has forthwith disclosed its intention to inaugurate a high-performance centre dedicated to the pursuit of Kho-Kho within the region.

While addressing the media during a press conference in Bhubaneswar on Saturday, Tenzing Niyogi, the CEO and Commissioner of the Ultimate Kho Kho League, commented: "Ultimate Kho Kho's unparalleled success in the inaugural edition is the testament to the potential of this indigenous sport. It also attracted immense interest from the corporate world and fans which is quite inspiring for all those associated with the league. We plan to expand Ultimate Kho Kho in

2025 with the addition of two more teams. Considering the support and love of fans from across the country and globe, I am confident that Season 2 will surpass the success of the inaugural season. Season 2 is going to be bigger and more exciting. I wish the best luck to all teams."

The captains of the six participating teams graced the press conference with their presence, affording valuable insights into the preparatory measures undertaken by their respective contingents.

Odisha Juggernauts Captain Dipesh More said, "We have a balanced team and our combinations are really good as we aim to defend our title this season. The atmosphere inside the team is very supportive and cordial with both the young and experienced players coming together and helping out each other. Our aim is to reach the semi-finals first and then think about the trophy as all the teams are well balanced this time."

Apart from Odisha Juggernauts (owned by the Government of Odisha) and Rajasthan Warriors (owned by Capri Global Group), the other teams in the league are Chennai Quick Guns (owned by KLO Sports), Gujarat Giants (owned by Adani Sportsline), Mumbai Khiladis (owned by Punit Balan Group) and last edition runners-up Telugu Yoddhas (owned by GMR Sports).

A grand total of 145 athletes, inclusive of 33 promising youths aged between 16 and 18, hailing from diverse corners of the nation, shall engage in spirited competition over the ensuing 21 days. These exhilarating matches shall be broadcasted live on Sony Sports Network's channels and streamed on the Sony Liv app.

The inaugural iteration of Ultimate Kho Kho garnered an impressive viewership of 164 million, with 41 million viewers within India and a global audience of 64 million across television and OTT platforms.

The league phase of the competition shall witness 30 matches unfolding over an 18-day period, wherein each team shall face its counterparts twice. The top four teams emerging from this preliminary stage shall progress to the semi-finals, and the eventual champions shall be determined on January 13.

Catch the live action on Sony Sports Network channels and the Sony Liv App

## **About Ultimate Kho Kho**

India's first professional Kho Kho league aims to revitalize the traditional sport with a modern twist. This collaboration between Mr. Amit Burman and the Kho Kho Federation of India envisions elevating the game to international standards and providing a platform for young talent to shine. UKK has partnered with Sony Sports Network to bring the action live to millions of viewers. Get ready for the future of Kho Kho!

## Complete Squads for Ultimate Kho Kho Season 2

Odisha Juggernauts: Dilip Khandvi, Dipesh More, Gowtham MK, Vishal, Omkar Sonawane, Rohan Shingade, Akshay Masal, Mahesha P, Manoj Patil, Avinash Desai, Manoj Kumar, Visag S, Debendra Nath, Nikhil Kumar, Vishal Oram, Sanjay Kumar V, Deepak Kumar Sahoo, Nikhil B, MD Mirajul, Sushant Kaldhone, Sobhag V Sriganda, Niranjan Samal, Savir Ahmad, Suresh Kumar and Siddheswar Tudu.

Telugu Yoddhas: Arun Gunki, Avdhut Patil, Pratik Waikar, Adhithya Ganpule, Rahul Mandal, Nikhil Waghe, Milind Chavrekar, Akash Togare, Kiran Vasave, Dhruv, Prasad Radye, Rudra Thopate, Prem Randive, Vaibhav Nippane, Sourabh Adivkar, Vijaybhai Vegad, Anukul Sarkar, M Phani Kumar, Mahamad Ujer Harun Momin, Matlum, Lipun Mukhi, Arjun Bishukarma, Prasad Patil, Bojjam Ranjith and Rajat Malik.

Chennai Quick Guns: Amit Patil, Madan, Ramji Kashyap, Laxman Gawas, Adarsh Mohite, Sachin Bhargo, Zora Suraj, Suraj Lande, Aditya Kudale, Durvesh Salunke, Chandu Chavre, Akash Kadam, Narendra Katkate, Mustafa Bagwan, Arjun Singh, Vijay Shinde, Ashish Patel, M Mugilan, Akash Balyan, Sumon Barman, Pavan Kumar and Giri S.

Gujarat Giants: Abhinandan Patil, Akshay Bhangare, Suyash Gargate, Nilesh Jadhav, P Narasayya, Faizankha Pathan, Rajvardhan Patil, V Subramani, Deepak Madhav, Shubham Thorat, Gavara Venkatesh, Sanket Kadam, Kondhalkar Rupesh, Bharat Kumar, Pabani Sabar, Vinayak Pokarde, Ram Mohan, V Kabilan, Arnav Patankar, Alfaj H Nadaf, Vasave Ravi, Abhijit Patil, Saleem Khan, Vijesh Kumar and Harish Mohmmad.

Mumbai Khiladis: Gajanan Shengal, Sreejesh S, Mahesh Shinde, Aniket Pote, Subhasis Santra, Hrushikesh Murchavade, Rokeson Singh, P Siva Reddy, Govind Yadav, Avik Singha, Milind Kurpe, Sunil Patra, Sudheer Kumar, MD Aiman Pasha, Sagar Potdar, Rohan Kore, Komal, Pawar Sachin, Dhiraj Bhave, Debasis, Shiva, Ajay Kashyap, Pritam Chougule, Sibin M, Abhishek Pathrode and Parmar Rahul.

Rajasthan Warriors: Akshay Ganpule, Dilrajsing Sengar, Majahar Jamadar, Vijay Hajare, Jaggannath Das, Rushab Wagh, Nilesh Patil, Prajwal K H, Brahmane Vivek, Ranjan Shetty, Rejeti Surinaidu, Sourabh Gadge, Nandan D, Ganesh Borkar, Bika Chetan, Buchannagari Raju, Dhanraj P, Jagannath Murmu, Aditya Shelke, Mukesh Prajapat, Vaibhav More and Aditya KN.