

NorthEast United FC to play Chennaiyin FC on Thursday



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NorthEast United FC have a chance to open the gap at the top when they host defending champions Chennaiyin FC in an intriguing Hero Indian Super League clash at Indira [Gandhi](#) Athletic Stadium, Guwahati, on Thursday.

NorthEast United have led the [ISL](#) table since their opening day win [over](#) Kerala Blasters FC. They now have [10](#) points from five matches, and a win [against](#) the defending champions will open a clear five-point gap at the top of the table.

“I am sure that in Guwahati and other regions in the north-[east](#), people will take pride in these players and this team. We reached [10](#) points so far, which is good but we have not yet reached our target, which is to play the semi-finals,” said NorthEast manager Nelo Vingada.

NorthEast United managed a fighting 1-1 draw [against](#) Delhi Dynamos in the previous match and, according to Vingada, the team can now match the best teams in the league.

“We need more points but I’m very confident because in these five games our team has kept improving and now we can play anywhere [against](#) anyone and give a [fight](#). But of course we play to win. I’m very happy to be part of this league, this country and the atmosphere is great,” said Vingada, whose team was picked up for rich praise from Delhi Dynamos coach Gianluca Zambrotta who said NorthEast were the “best [football](#) playing team at present.”

Chennaiyin FC will have pleasant memories about last season when they won the title but they will hope to forget their visit to Guwahati in a hurry. It all ended in disaster for Marco Materazzi’s side last season when Harmanjyot Khabra was sent off, players were involved in skirmishes and they lost 0-[2](#).

Even in the first year, NorthEast stunned Chennaiyin FC, then leading the table, with a flurry of goals in the first session.

Materazzi will hope to change his away record in Guwahati and having won [against](#) FC [Goa](#), will not be short on confidence.

Chennaiyin FC registered their first win this season after putting it across FC [Goa](#) 2-0 in an early repeat of last year's final. Goals from Hans Mulder and Mehrajuddin Wadoo in the first half were enough to collect full points after a draw [against](#) Atletico de Kolkata and loss [against](#) Delhi Dynamos.

“We came in with a whole new mentality and what I told my players is that if we put the [heart](#) in, the will, the hunger, then we can win. If not then we are not the same team and we can be at the bottom of the table,” said Materazzi.

Chennaiyin FC are placed sixth at the moment with four points from three matches.

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