



Lahore beat Islamabad by 8 runs in PSL thriller

I just tried to enjoy the final over as asked by Shaheen Shah Afridi and before I knew I had bowled the whole over enjoying myself. I was guided throughout the over by Shaheen who told me what ball to bowl and when and that helped me immensely.

Player of the match Zaman Khan

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QNB STARS LEAGUE: YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Al Wakrah bt **Al Sailiya** 2-1, **Al Sadd** bt **Al Gharafa** 5-1, **Al Duhail** bt **Al Rayyan** 4-0

The Wolves set new record of 42 unbeaten games at QSL

Ten-man Al Sadd crush Al Gharafa 5-1

THE PENINSULA – DOHA

Reigning champions Al Sadd yesterday trounced Al Gharafa 5-1 to stay unbeaten in 42 games – 37 victories and five draws – a new record at the QNB Stars League (QSL).

The Wolves, who were reduced to 10 men in 13th minute of the match, were in amazing form in their Round 17 tie on their home turf as they scored two goals in the first half, adding another three in the second to surpass Al Duhail's unbeaten record of 41 matches during the 23.2.2017 - 11.12.2018 period.

Al Sadd went ahead soon after the kick off through a second minute goal by seasoned Abdelkarim Hassan before experienced Rodrigo Tabata doubled the lead in 25th minute. Spaniard Santi Cazorla extended the lead by scoring in the 74th minute.

Substitute Andre Ayew, who scored two stoppage time goals (90+4 penalty and 90+5 minutes), wrapped up the big victory after Gabriel Perez

pulled one back for Al Gharafa with a strike in the 76th minute.

After another emphatic win this season, Al Sadd raised their points tally to 43 points at the top of standings with two postponed matches, against Qatar SC and Al Rayyan, in hand. Al Gharafa stood on 26 points following their seventh defeat.

The only big thing that went against Al Sadd on their record-breaking day was a red card to star Akram Afif, who was sent off for fouling Al Gharafa defender Saeed Al Hajj.

However, even the send-off for Afif, who is also a Qatar national team star, did not derail their path and The Wolves stayed all focused in the race to clinch the coveted league shield.

Hassan started it as early as the second minute and Ayew, who came off the bench later on, finished off the scoring process late into the game, as Al Gharafa goalkeeper Yousef Hassan had a harrowing time.

Meanwhile, later at the Al Sadd Stadium, Michael Olunga's



brace helped dominant Al Duhail overpower Al Rayyan 4-0 in their Round 17 clash.

The win strengthened Al Duhail's second position with 36 points as they went five points clear of third-placed Al Wakrah.

After Nam Tae-hee opened the scoring for The Red Knights

in 21st minute, Olunga fired goals in 41st and 53rd minute before Mohammed Musa sealed the victory with a strike in 78th minute.

Laurent Blanc-coached Al Rayyan's miseries continue as they slipped to ninth position with just 17 points.

In other match yesterday,

ten-man Al Wakrah edged Al Sailiya 2-1 at the Al Ahli Stadium.

Gelson Dala gave Al Wakrah lead in 33rd minute, with Mohamed Benyettou doubling the advantage two minutes later.

Al Wakrah suffered setback when Mohammed Emad was

sent off two minutes before half-time. Al Sailiya immediately took the advantage pulling one back through a penalty strike by Driss Fettouhi in 45+2 minutes.

However, they failed to find the equaliser in the second session. Al Wakrah are now five points ahead of Al Gharafa.

Qatar's Al Attiyah to feature in Extreme E series, joins team ABT Cupra XE

THE PENINSULA – DOHA

Qatar's four-time Dakar Rally champion Nasser Saleh Al Attiyah will make his foray into Extreme E series after joining Spanish team ABT Cupra XE for the 2022 season.

Extreme E is an FIA-sanctioned international off-road racing series that uses spec silhouette electric SUVs to race in remote parts of the world, such as the Saudi Arabian desert, Italy, Chile and Uruguay.

Extreme E series is into second season with the races held over two days, featuring qualifying rounds, semi-finals and final. Teams will field one male and one female driver to promote gender equality.

Al Attiyah, who won this year's Dakar event with Toyota, has replaced Mattias Ekström at ABT for XE's second season while 2011 winner Jutta Kleinschmidt is retained.

Kleinschmidt, who partnered Ekstrom for four events during Extreme E's inaugural campaign last term for ABT Cupra XE, will be looking to build on the team's fifth place in the Championship standings in Season 1 alongside new team-mate Al Attiyah.

"I'm already a bit excited and believe that this will be a



great experience for me. Extreme E is an exciting series with the ambition to contribute to a better future," said Al Attiyah.

"I am proud to be a part of the team now. Expectations are high, with the experience of ABT Cupra XE and Jutta (Kleinschmidt) by my side, we are determined to race for victories. I can't wait to sit in the car and have fun."

It will be a new challenge for Al Attiyah but the trail-blazing Qatari has dominated whichever series he has been part of. Al Attiyah has seen great success during his time competing, becoming the 2006 Production World Rally Champion, WRC-2 Champion in 2014 and 2015, a 16-time Middle East Rally Champion, four times winner of the FIA World Cup for Cross-County Rallies, and a

quadruple 2011, 2015, 2019, and 2022 Dakar Rally winner. His four victories in the Dakar Rally make him the only Middle Easterner to have won it more than once and the 51-year-old will prove an exciting addition to the Extreme E grid.

After extending her contract for a second season, Kleinschmidt is targeting some regular silverware in 2022.

"Last year we created a solid

basis and fought for front positions," she said.

"This year the challenge is to be even more consistent in taking wins and trophies, and we are ready for that.

"Being able to share my passion for off-road racing with such a great team and now a Dakar star like Nasser (Al Attiyah) is fantastic motivation. I just want to start the season."

Kleinschmidt made her first appearance at the Dakar Rally in the bike category in 1988, but by 1994 she had switched to four wheels. Three years later she became the first woman to record a stage win and 1999 yielded a third place overall. In 2001, she wrote her name into the history books as the first female Dakar Rally winner. A further two podiums in 2002 and 2005 cemented her place as the most successful female driver in the category to date.

As well as confirming their 2022 driver lineup, ABT has also announced that its new Cupra Tavascan XE car will feature some unique aesthetic features. The 2022 car will feature 'striking LED lights' in a bid to resemble the design specification of Cupra's all-electric Tavascan production car that is due to be launched in 2024.

Al Ahly advance to Club World Cup semis

REUTERS – ABU DHABI

A wonder goal from Mohamed Hany allowed Al Ahly to beat Monterrey 1-0 in the second round of the Club World Cup at the Al Nahyan Stadium in Abu Dhabi yesterday to advance to the semi-finals.

A depleted Al Ahly have several players unavailable for the tournament after Egypt qualified for today's Africa Cup of Nations final and it was evident when the Mexican side dominated possession and had several attempts on goal in the first half.

However, that did not stop Al Ahly from taking the lead in spectacular fashion through wing back Hany in the 53rd minute.

The 26-year-old was the first to pounce on a parry from goalkeeper Esteban Andrada and he fired a fierce shot from the edge of the box that split the Monterrey defence and found the back of the net as the stadium erupted.

Al Ahly will play Brazilian side Palmeiras in the semi-final at the same venue on Tuesday.

China kick off Games in style with mixed team relay gold

REUTERS – BEIJING

China kicked off their home Winter Olympics in style when they claimed the short track speed skating mixed-team relay title in dramatic fashion yesterday.

Ren Ziwei, Wu Dajing, Fan Kexin and Qu Chunyu clocked two minutes 37.348 seconds over 2,000 metres in the final to beat Italy and Hungary, second and third respectively, at the Capital Indoor Stadium. Wu, who won China's only gold medal at the 2018 Games in Pyeongchang, beat Italy's Pietro Sighel to the finish line by 0.016 seconds, or half a skate blade, while Hungary took bronze. China won five titles at the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver and three in

Sochi in 2014. Having won two of the four World Cup events this season, China were the favourites, especially after the Netherlands, among their closest rivals, were knocked out in the first semi-final.

But they finished their semi-final in third place behind Hungary and the United States, which would have barred them from entering the final, only for the race to come under review for possible infringements. All eyes were on the referee as he reviewed the action.

After five minutes, the Russian Olympic Committee (ROC) ended up being disqualified for obstruction, along with the US who were penalised for blocking. The final was also a nail biter,

with the race coming under review again after a tight finish.

Although the race result had been shown on the stadium's screen, the Italians -- Arianna Fontana, Martina Valcepina, Andrea Cassinelli and Sighel -- draped themselves in a national flag, just like the Chinese.

The only announcement that came after the investigation, however, was a penalty for fourth-placed Canada, and the few hundred spectators raised the volume at an otherwise quiet stadium.

Italy, however, had another achievement to celebrate as Fontana became the only short track speed skater, male or female, to earn nine Olympic medals.



Queiroz to miss potential crowning moment after red card

Egypt coach Carlos Queiroz

REUTERS – YAOUNDE

Egypt coach Carlos Queiroz has had a long and distinguished career but he will be missing from the dugout for potentially the crowning moment of his quarter-century of coaching around the world.

A red card in the semi-final win for Egypt over hosts Cameroon means a two-match ban for the 68-year-old coach and banishment to the stands for Sunday's Africa Cup of Nations final against Senegal in Yaounde, where he will have to run matters remotely.

Queiroz, born in Mozambique

when it was still a Portuguese colony, has been in charge of the Egyptian side only since September but made a quick mark as the team overcame a slow start to the tournament in Cameroon to reach the final.

They eliminated Cameroon on post-match penalties at the end of a tough physical tussle on Thursday but Queiroz was red-carded for persistent bickering from the touchline, looking to be in an agitated state from the start of the game.

He said afterwards that the referee, Bakary Gassama, had intimidated his side from even before the start of the match but the Gambian official has since been commended by the Confederation of African Football (CAF) for his handling of the game.

“CAF does not respect Egypt, from the schedules to the quality of the pitches -- we had the worst pitches. We are Egypt,” Queiroz said after the game.

Queiroz, whose assistant had already been banned after the previous game, would have been expected to behave better, given his considerable experience at major tournaments, including three successive World Cups and coaching at the Asian Cup, Copa America and Africa's championship.

Queiroz, who was Alex Ferguson's assistant at Manchester United and also the coach at Real Madrid, took charge of Portugal at the 2010 World Cup finals and Iran in 2014 and again in 2018.

This is his second Cup of Nations finals, having got to the

quarter-finals with South Africa in Mali 20 years ago.

He lost in the Asian Cup semi-finals with Iran in 2019 -- his last game in charge of them after an eight-year stint -- and the same year was at Copa America with Colombia, where they were eliminated on post-match penalties in the quarter-finals.

Progress to Sunday's final comes after shrugging off a volley of criticism from Egypt when they were beaten in their opening game at the tournament by Nigeria.

It has since been confirmed that he will be staying in the job for the World Cup qualifying playoffs next month, when he has a chance to ensure a return to a fourth successive World Cup.

Lampard enjoys winning start at Everton

Everton's Mason Holgate in action with Brentford's Sergi Canos as manager Frank Lampard looks on.

REUTERS – LIVERPOOL

Everton thrashed fellow Premier League side Brentford 4-1 in the FA Cup fourth round yesterday as Frank Lampard got off to a strong start in his first game as manager.

Yerry Mina headed Everton in front in the 31st minute from a corner after coming on as a substitute for the injured Ben Godfrey and the Colombian defender went straight across to embrace Lampard, named as Rafa Benitez's successor last week.

Brazil international Richarlison doubled Everton's advantage three minutes into the second half before Brentford got back into the game thanks to a penalty from forward Ivan Toney.

Toney could have snatched an

equaliser but narrowly missed the target and Everton quickly punished the west Londoners, Mason Holgate striking to restore the Merseysiders' two-goal advantage.

Andros Townsend rounded off a fine debut in the Everton dugout for Lampard by hitting a fourth goal for the hosts in added time.

Meanwhile, Manchester City overcame an early wobble as Riyad Mahrez struck twice to help them ease past second-tier Fulham 4-1 at the Etihad Stadium.

A frenetic opening saw the Championship side grab a surprise lead through Fabio Carvalho in the fourth minute before Ilkay Gundogan levelled for the Premier League leaders, firing home from close range after being played in by Mahrez.

Fulham's early spark was completely extinguished 13 minutes in when centre back John Stones rose highest to turn in a Kevin De Bruyne corner for his second goal of the season.

A full-strength City ran Fulham ragged after the break as they created chances at will and secured the win through a quickfire double from Mahrez, the first coming from the penalty spot in the 53rd minute after a foul on Jack Grealish.

Elsewhere, in London, Chelsea suffered an FA Cup fourth-round scare when they had to come from behind and needed extra time and a penalty save to beat League One Plymouth Argyle 2-1 with goals from Spaniards Cesar Azpilicueta and Marcos Alonso.



Kishan, Shahrukh added to India squad for West Indies ODI

REUTERS – NEW DELHI

Batsmen Ishan Kishan and Shahrukh Khan have been added to the Indian squad for the first one-day international against the West Indies, the Indian cricket board (BCCI) said yesterday.

Four India players -- opener Shikhar Dhawan, fellow batsmen Ruturaj Gaikwad and Shreyas Iyer, and standby bowler Navdeep Saini -- tested positive for COVID-19 this week, as well as three members of the support staff.

New captain Rohit Sharma said Kishan would open as he is the with Mayank Agarwal still in quarantine as he was a late addition to the squad. West Indies' tour of India gets underway today with the first of the three ODIs in Ahmedabad followed by three Twenty20 internationals in Kolkata.

Langer resigns as Australia coach

REUTERS – MELBOURNE

Justin Langer has resigned as head coach of the Australia cricket team, his management company said yesterday, ending weeks of speculation over whether he would be offered a new contract.

Langer's departure followed media reports that he had reacted angrily during a recent meeting with Cricket Australia over his contract and had been asked to reapply for the role.

After another meeting on Friday, Cricket Australia said the two parties were involved in significant contract discussions.

Langer's representatives, Dynamic Sports & Entertainment Group (DSEG), said he has resigned with immediate effect.

“DSEG confirms that our client Justin Langer has this morning tendered his resignation as coach of the Australian men's cricket team,” the company tweeted.

“The resignation follows a meeting with Cricket Australia last evening. The resignation is effective immediately.”

Langer's tenure culminated in a 4-0 thrashing of England in the Ashes series, and he leaves with one of the best overall records since Australia first appointed a full-time coach in 1985.

However, there has been frequent speculation he did not enjoy the full support of the dressing room.

Senior players and Cricket Australia managers met last year amid reports Langer's intense coaching style had rubbed players the wrong way.

Australia Test captain Pat Cummins recently praised Langer for doing a “fantastic” job but said it was only fair for Cricket Australia to conduct an evaluation process before making a decision on renewing his contract.

Langer, 51, leaves less than a month before Australia tour Pakistan, their first visit to the country in 24 years.

He took over as coach in the wake of the ball-tampering scandal in South Africa in 2018 and his contract was due to expire in June.



Hewitt leaves Australian Open winner Kyrgios out of Davis Cup

REUTERS – LONDON

Nick Kyrgios has been left out of Australia's Davis Cup team to face Hungary next month despite his recent doubles victory at the Australian Open, although partner Thanasi Kokkinakis has been selected by captain Lleyton Hewitt.

Hewitt handed Luke Saville his debut while Australia number one Alex de Minaur, world number 12 doubles player John Peers and Alexei Popyrin will also join Kokkinakis for the match, which will be played in Sydney on March 4-5.

“Alex has had most of his recent success in Sydney, winning the Sydney international a few years back but also some of his best results last month, including quality wins against (Matteo) Berrettini and (Ugo) Humbert,” Hewitt said.

“Thanasi had a fantastic Australian summer. He really cemented himself as a top-100 player again, winning his first title at home in Adelaide and beating quality players.

“And then to go on to win the Australian Open doubles, this is going to give him a lot of confidence heading into this tie.”

Kyrgios paired up with Kokkinakis to win the first Grand Slam title of his career in a run to the Australian Open final that saw the duo criticised by opponents for inciting rowdy behaviour from the Melbourne Park crowd.

Kokkinakis has been called up for the first time since 2015 and will be making his fifth appearance in the Davis Cup.

“It's a pretty cool feeling putting on those colours and playing for Australia,” he said.

“That atmosphere is unmatched. It's a great reward for the summer I've had, for me and my team, and all the hard work I've put in.”

Alex has had most of his recent success in Sydney, winning the Sydney international a few years back but also some of his best results last month, including quality wins against (Matteo) Berrettini and (Ugo) Humbert: Lleyton Hewitt



Lahore captain Shaheen Shah Afridi celebrates with Fakhar Zaman after taking a wicket.

Lahore beat Islamabad by 8 runs in PSL thriller

AP – KARACHI

Young fast bowler Zaman Khan held his nerve in the final over and snatched a dramatic eight-run win for Lahore Qalandars over two-time champions Islamabad United in the Pakistan Super League (PSL) yesterday.

Defending 12 in the last over, the 20-year-old Zaman gave away just three runs off the first four balls before hard-hitting batter Asif Ali holed out at long off for 15 off the fifth delivery as Islamabad finished at 166-5.

Zaman finished with 1-29 but his last-over heroics upstaged Shadab Khan's brilliant all-round performance to win player of the match award. Earlier, leg-spinner Shadab (4-20) and fast bowler Waqas Ahmed (4-35) both pulled back Lahore's total to 174-9 through some superb bowling in the middle and death overs.

Colin Munro was lucky to score 60 off 45 balls and Shadab (52) made his second half-century this season as Islamabad cruised to 136-2 in 15 overs.

Lahore could have got the wicket of Munro before he had scored, but Lahore captain Shaheen Shah Afridi didn't go for leg before wicket review against the New Zealand left-hander.

Rashid Khan broke the century stand when Shadab played an expansive shot against the

googly of Afghanistan leg-spinner and was caught at deep mid-wicket.

Asif, famous for his big shots in T20s, smashed Haris Rauf for a six in the 19th over to bring down the target to 12, but Zaman intelligently varied his pace in the final over to deny Islamabad victory. Lahore earlier were derailed by the spin of Shadab in the middle overs despite getting a blazing start of 83 runs from Abdullah Shafique (44) and Fakhar Zaman (38).

Shadab grabbed four of the five wickets as Lahore slumped to 98-5 in space of 23 balls. Harry Brook made 37 and David Wiese scored 20 but Ahmed picked up four wickets including three in the last over to peg back Lahore's total.

Later, Multan Sultans steam-rolled past Peshawar Zalmi as they registered their fifth consecutive victory in the competition. Multan extended their lead at the top of the PSL points table and look set to become the first team to qualify for PSL 7 play-offs.

BRIEF SCORES
Lahore Qalandars 174 for 9 (Shafique 44, Brook 37, Shadab 4-20, Maqsood 4-35) beat **Islamabad United** 166 for 5 (Munro 60, Shadab 52, Rauf 2-41) by eight runs
Multan Sultans 222 for 3 (Rizwan 82, David 51, Malik 1-17) beat **Peshawar Zalmi** 165 for 8 (Cutting 52*, Zazai 43, Tahir 3-25, Dahani 3-41) by 57 runs