Eight Qatari riders qualify for FEI regional finals

THE PENINSULA


President of the Qatar Olympic Committee and Chairman of Al Shaqab H E Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani congratulated the riders on their qualification.

DOHA: Eight Qatari riders qualified for the International Equestrian Federation (FEI) Group VII (MENA) regional finals with excellent performances on the third and final day of the 2nd Al Shaqab Showjumping League at the Longines Indoor Arena of Al Shaqab yesterday.

President of the Qatar Olympic Committee and Chairman of Al Shaqab H E Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani, who witnessed the final day's action, congratulated the riders on their qualification. The International Equestrian Federation (FEI) Group VII MENA finals will be held at Al Shaqab later this year in November.

Qualifying from the CSIJ-B Junior Champions - FEI Group VII Qualifier 2025 category were Tamim bin Joaan HK Al-Thani, Ibrahim Khalid Al-Kuwari, Suhaim Hamad Al-Yafei and Amer Hamad Al-Mansoori.

In the Table A, One round against the clock with jump off (1.20m) event was won by Bahrain's Sultan Abdulaziz Mayoof Al-Romaihi, who with mare Haneen clocked 34.55secs. Tamim Joaan HK Al Thani was second on gelding Carport, followed by Ibrahim Khalid Al Kuwari in third on Flexy Bel Z.

Suhaim Hamad Al-Yafei came fourth with stallion Gamin Raye (64.98secs), while Amer Hamad Al-Mansoori, riding mare Honolulu Brl, ended up in fifth but also qualified.

In the CSICh-B Future Champions - FEI Group VII Qualifier 2025 class, Noora Abdulaziz Al-Rumaihi, Yousuf Abdulrahaman Al-Muftah, and Khalid Nasser Al-Khater made the grade.

Table A, One round against the clock with jump off (1.10m) event was clinched by Saudi Arabia's Fawaz Alhokair, who rode mare Cool Cassina and clocked 34.30secs. Noora was second astride gelding Nobile Della Genesiana (39.43secs). Sultan Jaasim MA al-Suwaidi was third with mare Proud (28.52secs and 4 penalties), and Khalid Nasser Al-Khater, riding mare Baccarat d/Azur was fourth.

CSIY-B Youth Champions - FEI Group VII Qualifier 2025 - Table A, One round against the clock with jump off (1.30m) class was won by UAE's Eisa Omran Al-Owais, who with mare Miss Cooper clocked the best 75.51secs. Qatar's Saif Mohammed Al-Naimi was second with gelding Hero (76.42secs), Yaqoub Nasser Al-Mass, riding gelding Lexus, third (83.64secs), and Saif Mohammed Al-Kaabi, astride mare Higgs, fourth (76.52secs).

Winning the marquee CSI1* Al Shaqab Champions final event was Qatar's seasoned rider Ghanim Nasser Al-Qadi, who rode grey mare Isis for a flawless routine in 39.23secs. Following him was Saudi Arabian Khaled Abdulaziz Al-Eid on bay stallion Q Sahel (40.57secs) while Qatar's Hussain Said AM Haidan, riding chestnut gelding Viahipi d'Auzay, was third in 38.07secs (4 penalties).

Earlier, the Intro 2 Optimum Time class was won by USA's Mohammed Talal Talal, who rode Cascade Sammy to finish the routine in 48.98secs. The Amateur (100cm) class was won by Qatar's Abdulla Faisal Al-Mana, riding Brooq and finishing in 20.84secs to edge Qatar's Abdulaziz Hamad Al-Kaabi, who also finished in the same time on Vahine de Curaine.


Tournament Director Khalid Sanad Al Nuaimi crowned the podium winners of the 140cm Al Shaqab Champions category, with Qatar's Ghanem Nasser Al Qadi taking first place. Saudi Arabia's Khaled Abdulaziz Al Eid finished second, while fellow Qatari rider Hussein Saeed Haidan claimed third.

Al Sadd seek to turn domestic dominance into Asian success in Kawasaki quarter-final

FAWAD HUSSAIN
THE PENINSULA






Al Sadd's Cristo Gonzalez (left) and Guilherme Torres during a training session yesterday.

DOHA: Qatar giants Al Sadd are in the midst of a dream domestic campaign – crowned Qatar Stars League champions, finalists in the Qatar Cup, and strong contenders to defend their Amir Cup title. But today, Felix Sanchez's side will step onto a different stage as they face Japan's Kawasaki Frontale in the AFC Champions League Elite quarter-finals in Jeddah.

The Wolves have delivered outstanding performances on the domestic front, overtaking long-time leaders Al Duhail to clinch the QSL crown before thumping Al Ahli 3-0 in the semi-finals to book a place in the Qatar Cup final. They are also favourites to reach the Amir Cup final on May 24 as they face Second Division side Al Kharaitiyat in the Round of 16 next week.

Al Sadd captain Hassan Al Haydos said the team is brimming with confidence, with all players eager to maintain their form on the continental stage.

"Winning the league title recently has been a motivation for us. We've been improving and qualified for the Qatar Cup final," said the two-time Asian Cup-winning former Qatar skipper, who was quick to acknowledge the challenge posed by Kawasaki.

"It is a different competition and facing Kawasaki in the quarter-finals will be tough. But we are fully focused and determined to achieve a positive result. We need to stay focused against them," Al Haydos said on the eve of the clash at Prince Abdullah Al Faisal Stadium. The match will kick off at 7pm.

> *We'll approach the Kawasaki match as if it were a final. After that, we'll look to the next game. We have to take things step by step and stay focused only on tomorrow's match.*
> ***Felix Sanchez***
> ***Al Sadd coach***

Seeking their first Asian crown since 2011, Al Sadd defeated Al Wasl in the Round of 16, while Kawasaki advanced after overcoming Shanghai Shenhua.

Al Sadd coach Sanchez expressed his satisfaction at reaching the quarter-finals, stating that his team is aiming for further success on the continental stage.

"We're among the top eight clubs in Asia. We know it will be a tough match, but the players are ready. We've been following Kawasaki in the Japanese league – they have strong individual players and good solutions. But we'll focus on ourselves and if we give our best, we can compete with any team," he said.

"We'll approach the Kawasaki match as if it were a final. After that, we'll look to the next game. We have to take things step by step and stay focused only on tomorrow's match."

> *Al Sadd are a very strong team with an experienced coach and players. We have to keep our attacking football and show that. And we cannot concede goals easily.*
> ***Shigetoshi Hasebe***
> ***Kawasaki head coach***

Kawasaki head coach Shigetoshi Hasebe, meanwhile, anticipated a tough match against Al Sadd.

"Al Sadd are a very strong team with an experienced coach and players. We have to keep our attacking football and show that. And we cannot concede goals easily," he said.

"Our target is of course to win the three games and the title, but the most important thing now is to focus on the first one and win that."

The semi-finals will be played on Tuesday and Wednesday, with the title clash scheduled for May 3 at King Abdullah Sports City Stadium. The final will not only determine the champion but also offer a record prize pool of at least $12m.

Mahrez and Firmino propel Al Ahli into semi-finals

RIYADH: Riyad Mahrez and Roberto Firmino helped fire Al Ahli into an all-Saudi Arabian AFC Champions League Elite semi-final after the Jeddah club beat Thailand's Buriram United 3-0 yesterday.

Effectively playing as hosts since the quarter-finals to final are staged in Jeddah, Al Ahli needed only four minutes to take the lead at King Abdullah Sports City.

Captain Firmino slid the ball through to Mahrez, who rifled his right-footed shot past Neil Etheridge in the Buriram goal. It took the Algerian, a treble winner with Manchester City, to nine goals in this season's competition, making him the joint-top scorer alongside Al Hilal's Salem Al-Dawsari and Gwangju's Jasir Asani. Mahrez also leads the assist charts, with seven.

Within two minutes, defender Roger Ibanez's expert pass sent fellow Brazilian Galeno through and the winter-signing from Porto fired through Etheridge's legs to double the hosts' advantage. On 16 minutes, Firmino missed a golden opportunity to make it 3-0, the former Liverpool forward somehow glancing wide with the goal at his mercy.

On the half hour, Firmino atoned for his earlier miss, tapping home Medih Demiral's flick from a Mahrez corner.

Matthias Jaissle's side will now meet Al Hilal, another Saudi club, in the semi-finals on Tuesday. — *AFP*

Al Rayyan beat Al Wakrah to continue winning run at Amir Cup


Al Rayya's Tyler James Lee Harris (left) attempts to dribble past an Al Wakrah player.

CHINTHANA WASALA
THE PENINSULA

DOHA: Al Rayyan kept their Amir Cup Basketball Championship title run on track with another win in Group B, defeating Al Wakrah 93-79 at Al Gharafa Sports Club Hall yesterday.

Al Rayyan raced to a 26-16 lead in the first quarter and followed up with a 27-15 second quarter to gain a comfortable 53-31 lead into the interval.

Al Wakrah rallied after the break, winning the third period 22-17 and the fourth 25-23, but the early damage proved too much as Al Rayyan raced to their second win of the tournament.

The star of the day for Al Rayyan was Demarqus D'Angelo Bost who fired a brilliant triple-double, scoring 15 points, 10 rebounds and 14 assists.

Tyler James Lee Harris powered Al Rayyan with 27 points and eight rebounds, while Justin Jamel Wright-Foreman finished with 23 points and six boards. Shooting guard Abdulla Yassin Mousa scored 13 points to lift the team's score.

For Al Wakrah, Sindou Ismael Diallo matched Harris' score with 27 points while making five rebounds. Omar Saad added 17 points and made four boards and four assists while Aaron Randolph Mitchell scored 16 points, 13 rebounds and nine assists.

While Al Rayyan are on the verge of securing a semi-finals berth after topping Group B with four points, Al Wakrah are second with three points.

Earlier, in the same group, Al Shamal secured a crucial 69-62 win over Al Khor.

Leading the way for Al Shamal was Emmanuel Ezenwa who recorded a double-double with 21 points and 12 rebounds, while Jeffery Newberry II also scored 21 points, while adding seven rebounds and three assists.

Christian Casas also impressed with five points, nine rebounds and seven assists, while Faris Avdic made 13 points and nine rebounds to help Al Shamal collect their first win of the tournament.

For Al Khor, Shawki Abdelhamid posted a game-high 23 points along with five rebounds and three assists. Christos Bratsiakos added 17 points and six rebounds, while Youssef A Y Yagoub made a double-double of 10 points and 10 assists.

Kimnkate powers to dramatic Al Ghariyah Cup win

THE PENINSULA

DOHA: Kimnkate staged a dramatic late charge to clinch victory in the Al Ghariyah Cup – the highlight of the day's racing card – a 1200m sprint for Thoroughbred Fillies and Mares held at Al Rayyan Racecourse yesterday.

The five-year-old mare, owned by Al Hajaj Stud and trained by Hamad Al-Jehani, was expertly guided by jockey Szczepan Mazur, timing her finish to perfection to snatch the win in the final strides.

Deputy Director of the Qatar Racing and Equestrian Club (QREC) Registration & Studbook Department Saad Ali Al Kubaisi presented the trophy to the winning connections.

Earlier in the seven-race meet, trainer Jassim Ghazali and Marco Casamento notched up a double when Ghanem stormed to victory in the Purebred Arabian Handicap 70-90 (Class 3).



Szczepan Mazur celebrates aboard Kimnkate alongside the winning connections. BELOW Kimnkate charges to victory. PICS: Juhaim. QREC

The pair secured their first victory of the day when Liable claimed the Thoroughbred Maiden Plate (Class 6) in thrilling fashion, edging out Salah Al Deen by a nose in a dramatic photo finish. Alhoby finished third, just a neck behind, in what was a nail-biting conclusion to the 1700m contest.

Meanwhile, trainer Mohammed Ghazali and jockey Pierre Charles Boudot enjoyed a rapid double, with Due To Dance taking the Thoroughbred Handicap 50–70 (Class 5) and Thayir claiming victory in the Purebred Arabian Novice Plate (Class 5) in back-to-back races.

In the Local Thoroughbred Maiden Plate (Class 6), Pranil Arvind Kharat steered Al Hattan to an impressive win, while Abdulla Rashid Al-Hajri piloted Jaazmina Du Soleil to Purebred Arabian Maiden Plate victory.



44th Al Rayyan Race Meeting
Al Ghariyah Cup
Winners (Horse, Trainer, Jockey)

Al Ghariyah Cup - Thoroughbred Fillies And Mares (Class 2)
Kimnkate, Hamad Al-Jehani, Szczepan Mazur
Purebred Arabian H. 70-90 (Class 3)
Ghanem, Jassim Ghazali, Marco Casamento
Thoroughbred Handicap 50-70 (Class 5)
Due To Dance, Mohammed Ghazali, Pierre Charles Boudot
Purebred Arabian Novice Plate (Class 5)
Thayir, Mohammed Ghazali, Pierre Charles Boudot
Local Thoroughbred M. Plate (Class 6)
Al Hattan, Khalifa Hamed Nasser Al Sawai, Pranil Arvind Kharat
Thoroughbred Maiden Plate (Class 6)
Liable, Jassim Ghazali, Marco Casamento
Purebred Arabian Maiden Plate (Fillies and Mares) (Class 6)
Jaazmina Du Soleil, Mohd Ahmed Mohd Hasan Al-Sulaiti, Abdulla Rashid Al-Hajri

Premier League: Ipswich relegated as Newcastle, Chelsea boost top five bids

LONDON: Ipswich were relegated from the Premier League after slumping to a 3-0 defeat against Newcastle, while Chelsea kept alive their hopes of a top five finish with a 1-0 win over Everton yesterday.

Emblematic of the self-inflicted wounds that hampered Ipswich this season, Kieran McKenna's side had Ben Johnson sent off in the 37th minute for two bookings in quick succession at St James' Park.

Newcastle's Alexander Isak converted a penalty after Jacob Murphy was fouled by Julio Enciso in first half stoppage-time.

Dan Burn's 56th-minute header doubled Newcastle's lead and William Osula's 80th-minute goal left Ipswich with no chance of beating the drop.

Third-bottom Ipswich are 15 points behind fourth-bottom West Ham with four games left, ensuring their first season in the top-flight for 22 years will end with an immediate return to the Championship.

Out of their depth among the Premier League elite, Ipswich have won just four of their 34 league games.

Their relegation alongside Southampton and Leicester, who were both already condemned to the drop, means all three promoted sides will be back in the second tier next season.



Newcastle United's Dan Burn (top right) heads the ball to score the team's second goal yesterday.

Ipswich's fairytale rise to the Premier League had captured the hearts of football romantics after their successive promotions from League One and the Championship.

McKenna, 38, had earned plaudits for Ipswich's attacking style during their surge up the divisions after his appointment in 2021.

But the former Manchester United assistant coach was unable to preserve Ipswich's top-flight status.

Newcastle climb to third place as the League Cup winners eye Champions League qualification.

Enzo Maresca saluted Chelsea's "nasty" performance after a gritty success that kept them in the hunt for a Champions League berth.

Nicolas Jackson struck for the first time since December to seal a vital victory at Stamford Bridge.

The Senegal striker's first-half blast from 20 yards moved Chelsea into fifth place with four games left.

Chelsea's third win in their last five league matches eased the pressure on Blues boss Maresca, who has come under fire for his team's cautious tactics during their slump in the second half of the season.

"First half we controlled the game, we dominated, created chances and didn't concede nothing. Then second half we dropped a little bit," he said.

"We were strong, nasty enough when we needed to be like that. Overall I think we deserved to win and we are happy."

Ryan Sessegnon struck in stoppage-time as Fulham won 2-1 at Southampton to stop the hosts moving past the record-low Premier League points total set by Derby.

Jack Stephens' 14th-minute opener had Southampton on course for a first home league victory since November, but Emile Smith Rowe levelled for Fulham after 72 minutes.

A draw would have helped Southampton move onto 12 points and avoid Derby's unwanted lowest-ever Premier League points total of 11 from the 2007-08 season, only for Sessegnon to net in the final seconds.

Brighton reignited their European push by piling more misery on former manager Graham Potter with a dramatic 3-2 victory over West Ham at the Amex Stadium.

Potter, who left Albion to join Chelsea in 2022, saw Mohammed Kudus and Tomas Soucek put the Hammers ahead after Yasin Ayari's opener for Brighton.

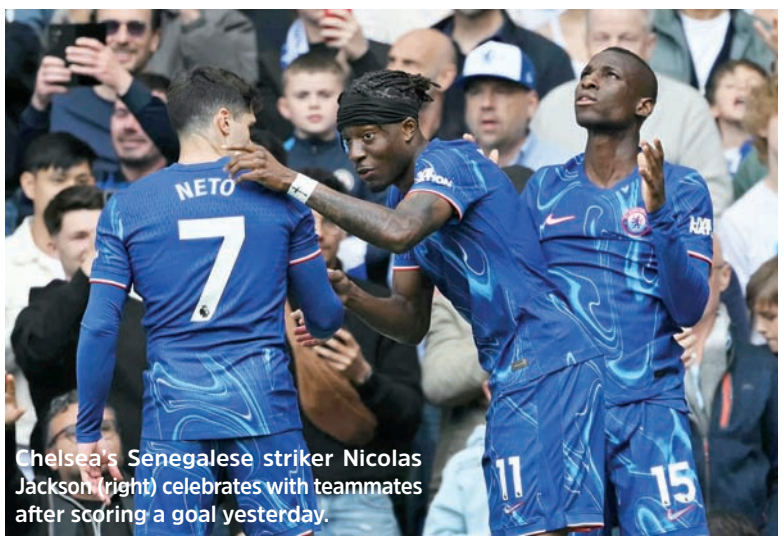
But Kaoru Mitoma headed the Seagulls level in the 89th minute before Carlos Baleba sensationally curled home from distance in stoppage-time.

Brighton ended a five-match winless run, while West Ham's dismal streak extended to a seventh game without victory.

Potter has taken just 13 points from 14 games since replacing the sacked Julen Lopetegui in January.

Wolves claimed a club record-equalling sixth successive top-flight win as they put relegated Leicester to the sword with a 3-0 victory at Molineux.

Matheus Cunha, Jorgen Strand Larsen and Rodrigo Gomes scored for Wolves, who last won six in a row in the top-flight in 1970, while second-bottom Leicester's winless run stretched to 11 matches. — ***AFP***



Chelsea's Senegalese striker Nicolas Jackson (right) celebrates with teammates after scoring a goal yesterday.



Belgium's Remco Evenepoel of Soudal Quick-Step rides during a training and track reconnaissance session on Friday.

Pogacar faces defiant Remco Evenepoel at Liege-Bastogne-Liege

LIEGE: Remco Evenepoel has vowed to tame defending champion Tadej Pogacar at cycling's undulating Ardennes forest odyssey, Liege-Bastogne-Liege, today.

Between them the pair have won the past four editions of the 252km Monument first raced in 1892.

A passionate and daring racing style has made the 26-year-old Slovenian Pogacar cycling's most exciting asset, never faltering when accepting new challenges.

In the 111th edition of today's slog through winding forest lanes, Pogacar faces a huge challenge against double Olympic champion and local hero Evenepoel, recently returned from injuries sustained when a postal van opened a door on him.

"I should be able to beat him, that's what my team pay me for," said the 25-year-old Belgian this week. Pogacar managed to drop Evenepoel at La Fleche Wallonne on Wednesday on the steepest part of the final climb. Evenepoel said he had taken off a rain jacket too soon and was cold.

"It was a good team result and we expect something similar at Liege," said the affable Team UAE rider Pogacar at the finish.

They head a field stacked with potential winners including Skjelmose and diminutive Englishman Tom Pidcock.

Ben Healy can become the third Irishman to win Liege after Sean Kelly and Dan Martin and has impressed in the classics this spring. Absent are three heavyweights in Mathieu van der Poel, Wout Van Aert and Primoz Roglic. — ***AFP***

Rugby: Toulouse thrash Castres but Kinghorn injured

PARIS: Scotland full-back Blair Kinghorn sustained a knee injury as Toulouse consolidated their grip on the Top 14 with a 52-6 thrashing of local rivals Castres yesterday.

Kinghorn, who has emerged as the frontrunner for the number 15 shirt for the British and Irish Lions' summer tour of Australia, departed the field in the ninth minute.

The fullback seemingly jarred his knee after gathering a high ball. He attempted to play on after some treatment, but to no avail.

Toulouse, who play Bordeaux-Begles in the Champions Cup semi-finals next week, scored seven tries against Castres in an emphatic display.

Castres' sole contribution was two penalties by Georgian fly-half Luka Matkava in his debut for the club. — ***AFP***

Leverkusen win to delay Bayern's title party

Bayern Munich can collect their 34th league title with a win next week at RB Leipzig.

MUNICH: Bayern Munich and Harry Kane's title celebrations will need to wait after Bayer Leverkusen's 2-0 win over Augsburg cancelled out the Bavarians' 3-0 home victory over Mainz yesterday in the Bundesliga.

Bayern needed to win and hope Leverkusen dropped points to lift the title. First-half goals from Leroy Sane and Michael Olise and a late Eric Dier strike put Bayern on course, but Xabi Alonso's defending champions were not willing to cede their title so easily.

Bayern can collect their 34th league title with a win next week at RB Leipzig but will need to do so without star Kane.

The England captain, who has famously never lifted a team title with club or country in his career, will miss the match with a yellow card suspension.

Serge Gnabry created Bayern's opener for Sane, dribbling through a crowded penalty area and cutting back for the former Manchester City winger to score.

Olise doubled up with 40 minutes played, drifting in off the right and wrongfooting the goalkeeper with a low shot at the near post.

With 10 minutes remaining, Bayern veteran Thomas Mueller, who will leave the club at season's end, came off the bench for his 500th Bundesliga appearance.

Dier, also yet to win a team trophy in his career, headed in from a corner with six minutes remaining.

Mueller told Sky the "win was very important" and that he would "bet on" the team lifting the title in Leipzig next week.

In Leverkusen, Florian Wirtz helped create the hosts' opener, threading the ball to Nathan Tella on the counter.

Tella found Patrik Schick whose shot took a wicked deflection and looped over the goalkeeper for his 19th league goal of the season.

Emi Buendia curled in from the edge of the box just before half-time, giving the hosts, who have dropped more points than any other side from a winning position this season, some welcome breathing space.



Bayer Leverkusen's Emi Buendia (left) celebrates after scoring his team's second goal.

Leverkusen midfielder Robert Andrich praised his side's "very focused performance", adding "we've postponed their championship celebrations for another week".

Elsewhere, Waldemar Anton scored in stoppage time to snatch a 3-2 win for Borussia Dortmund at Hoffenheim, boosting their top four hopes.

Dortmund emerged victorious at the end of a match in which they led twice but kept letting their opponents back in.

Serhou Guirassy put the visitors in front after 20 minutes but missed a penalty later in the half.

Hoffenheim's Adam Hlozek struck back after 61 minutes. Julian Brandt put Dortmund back in front with a beautiful volley on the 74th-minute mark but Hoffenheim equalised again through Pavel Kaderabek in the final minute.

Anton's strike in the fifth minute of injury time moved Dortmund up to sixth, three points off fourth spot.

Freiburg won 1-0 at a 10-man Wolfsburg to climb past RB Leipzig into fourth, with Max Rosenfelder scoring the only goal of the match just after half-time.

Leipzig can return to fourth spot with a win when they play at Eintracht Frankfurt later on Saturday.

Holstein Kiel kept their slim hopes of beating the drop alive with a 4-3 win at home against Borussia Moenchengladbach, with Japan forward Shuto Machino scoring the winner in stoppage time. — ***AFP***

Leader Marc Marquez claims Spanish MotoGP sprint victory

JEREZ DE LA FRONTERA: Marc Marquez secured his fifth consecutive sprint victory at the Spanish Grand Prix in Jerez yesterday to expand his lead at the top of the MotoGP standings.

The six-time premier class world champion took 12 points on his factory Ducati to reach 135 in total, ahead of his brother Alex Marquez, who came in second, 1.001sec behind, and is also second overall, 20 points behind the leader.

Francesco Bagnaia, third overall, also finished third in the sprint to reach 104 points.

French rider Fabio Quartararo started in pole position after setting a Jerez course record on his Yamaha earlier in qualifying but he fell on turn six of the second lap, allowing Marc Marquez to claim the lead, which he held on to.

"Today it wasn't easy because of these very high temperatures," said Marc Marquez under the sizzling Andalucian sun.

"I struggled a bit at the end but I was controlling (it)." Marc Marquez, is undefeated in the sprint races this season after winning just one last season, the former Honda rider looking ever more comfortable on his factory Ducati.

He opened up a 1.4 second gap on Alex Marquez, in second at the halfway point, with the top six all riding Ducatis in the sprint -- Maverick Vinales came in seventh on his KTM.

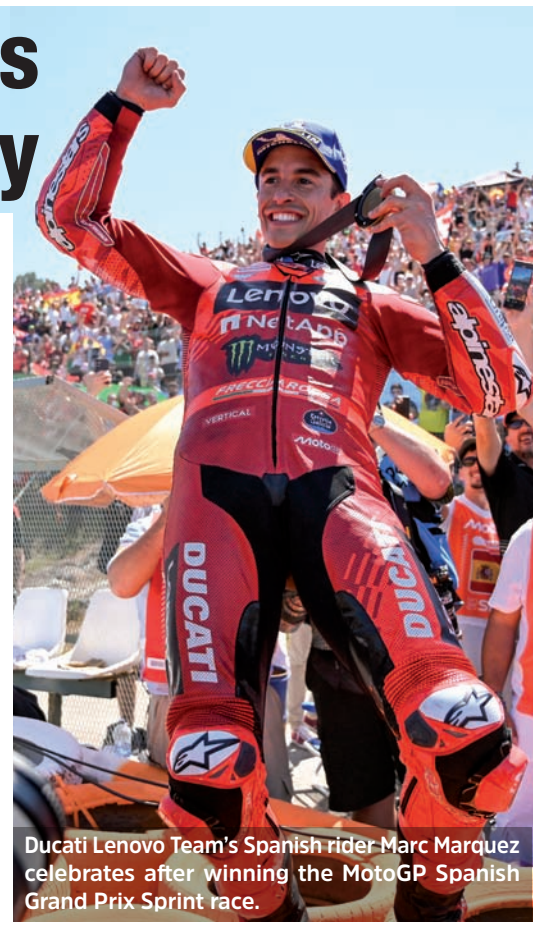
Alex Marquez started the race fourth, but was able to edge ahead of Bagnaia right at the start and moved up to second when Quartararo lost the front and crashed out.

Quartararo held off Marc Marquez at the start of the sprint and despite his early exit was pleased with his day's work.

"It was very good for me on a mental level, and after that I was pushing the limit a lot... when Marc came alongside me, my bike moved a lot and I could not stop it," said the Frenchman.

"It would have been better to finish differently -- but we can be happy."

Reigning MotoGP world champion Jorge Martin was not involved as he recovers from various injuries after a brutal crash in the previous race in Qatar, and he stands virtually no chance of defending his title. — *AFP*


Ducati Lenovo Team's Spanish rider Marc Marquez celebrates after winning the MotoGP Spanish Grand Prix Sprint race.

Kane slams yellow card decision as title-match ban looms

MUNICH: Harry Kane has slammed the decision to hand him a yellow card yesterday which looks set to rule him out of Bayern Munich's title-clinching match at RB Leipzig.

Kane was shown a yellow card late in the first half of Saturday's 3-0 home win over Mainz, which brought Bayern one step closer to the Bundesliga title.

The card is Kane's fifth of the league season, ruling him out of next week's trip to Leipzig, where Bayern will clinch the Bundesliga title with victory.

Kane, who has famously never tasted team success in his career, will now be forced to watch from the sidelines.

Speaking with reporters after the match, the 31-year-old hit out at the "crazy" decision.

"It's a crazy, crazy decision. It's never ever a yellow card. Unfortunately, sometimes people come to the Allianz and try and make a name for themselves," Kane said, referring to referee Bastian Dankert.

Kane critiqued the Bundesliga rule which counts yellow cards across an entire season.

"They should have a reset like the Premier League, where halfway through the season it resets. I'm missing a big game because I got a yellow card in the first game of the season.

"It hurts, it stings. There are big games ahead and I don't want to miss them." Asked if he was frustrated that the card took away his chance of celebrating a first team trophy on the pitch, Kane said "well it doesn't mean I don't win a title, does it?" "But I'll be there, supporting the boys as always. I'll be celebrating as much as anyone else."

Kane left boyhood club Tottenham for Germany in 2023 citing a desire to win team trophies, but Bayern finished the season empty handed for the first time in 11 seasons. — *AFP*

Celtic win fourth successive Scottish Premiership title

GLASGOW: Celtic clinched their fourth successive Scottish Premiership title in fitting style with a 5-0 demolition of Dundee United yesterday.

Nicolas Kuhn and Adam Idah both scored twice after Ryan Strain's own-goal set Celtic on course to wrap up their 13th Scottish crown in the last 14 seasons.

With four matches left for Celtic, the champions sit 18 points clear of second-placed Rangers, who have five games remaining.

The Glasgow club have claimed 21 of the last 26 domestic trophies as Brendan Rodgers' men reign supreme in Scotland.

Celtic had only needed a point at Tannadice to start their title party, but their goal spree ensured the celebrations went with a swing.

It was a familiar feeling for Celtic after a 5-0 win at Kilmarnock last term earned Rodgers the title in his first season back at Parkhead.

Rodgers' latest triumph moved the former Liverpool manager on to 11 major trophies as Celtic manager.

The title success keeps Celtic on course for their sixth treble in nine seasons, and Rodgers' third, when they face Aberdeen in the Scottish Cup final in May.

Celtic substitute James Forrest also wrote himself into the club record books with his 26th winners' medal, one more than Bobby Lennox, who played for the team's famous 1967 European champions.

There was a brief interruption to Celtic's title clincher when visiting fans threw dozens of tangerines -- in reference to Dundee United's nickname -- on the pitch in protest at the home club's ticket prices after they were charged up to £42 ($56).

Despite that hold-up, Celtic's title has been in little doubt since early in the season, with Rangers falling behind early on and Aberdeen collapsing in spectacular fashion after matching the champions' 31 points from the opening 11 games.

The Hoops didn't suffer their first league defeat until January 2 at Rangers, but were still 13 points ahead and a collapse was always out of the question. Rodgers had criticised his players for being too comfortable after a defeat against bottom club St Johnstone earlier this month.

They have responded in emphatic fashion by hitting five goals in each of their following three matches.

Having also reached the Champions League knockout round play-offs, where they lost narrowly to Bayern Munich, Rodgers will now set his sights on strengthening Celtic for more domestic glory and European drama next season. — *AFP*

Djokovic crashes to Arnaldi in Madrid

MADRID: Novak Djokovic's bid for a 100th career title was spoiled by Italian Matteo Arnaldi, who beat the Serb 6-3, 6-4 in the Madrid Open second round yesterday.

The fourth-seeded Djokovic suffered a second consecutive opening defeat, he also exited in his opener against Alejandro Tabilo in Monte Carlo two weeks ago.

Arnaldi, ranked 44th in the world, recorded just the second top-five win of his career and scribbled 'OMG' on the camera lens after his landmark victory.

The athletic Arnaldi squandered a 2-0 lead early in the contest but pounced again in the eighth game, breaking the Djokovic serve. The Italian wrapped up the opening set in 48 minutes.

Djokovic, a three-time champion in Madrid, fired 20 unforced errors in the first frame and finished the contest with a total of 32.

"He's my idol, he's always been. I was just glad that I could play him because I never played him, I just practised once with him. So playing him on a stage like this was already a victory for me," said Arnaldi, who showcased an entertaining brand of all-court tennis.

"But, you know, he is not at his best right now, so I came on court to try to play my best tennis and win. It happened. So right now, I don't even know what to say." Elsewhere, Lorenzo Musetti, playing his first match since reaching the biggest final of his career in Monte Carlo, moved past Argentina's Tomas Etcheverry 7-6 (7/3), 6-2 to book a third-round meeting with Stefanos Tsitsipas.


Italy's Matteo Arnaldi returns the ball to Serbia's Novak Djokovic.

The talented Italian is on the cusp of making his top-10 debut, having entered the tournament at a career-high number 11.

Reigning Australian Open champion Madison Keys was broken while serving for her third-round victory at 5-4 in the second set against Anna Kalinskaya, but recovered to complete a 7-5, 7-6 (7/3) in one hour and 48 minutes.

The fifth-seeded Keys lost to Kalinskaya earlier this month in Charleston.

A semi-finalist in Madrid 12 months ago, Keys awaits her compatriot Emma Navarro or Croatia's Donna Vekic in the round of 16.

American fourth seed Coco Gauff eased past compatriot Ann Li 6-2, 6-3 to set up a last-16 clash with Swiss Olympic gold medallist Belinda Bencic.

Seventh-seeded teenager Mirra Andreeva continued her impressive form at WTA 1000 tournaments this season by storming into the fourth round with a 7-5, 6-3 performance against Polish 27th-seed Magdalena Frech.

The 17-year-old Russian, who won back-to-back titles in Dubai and Indian Wells, will take on Ukrainian qualifier Yulia Starodubtseva for a shot at reaching a second consecutive Madrid quarter-final. — *AFP*

Kolkata-Punjab match called off due to rain

Groundsmen cover the pitch as rain interrupts play during the Indian Premier League T20 match between Kolkata Knight Riders and Punjab Kings yesterday. Defending champions Kolkata and Punjab shared a point each after rain forced the season's first no result at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata. (AFP)





Qatar beat Saudi Arabia at ACC U16 West Zone Cup

Qatar U-16 team players celebrate a wicket during their ACC Men's U16 West Zone Cup 2025 match against Saudi Arabia at the University of Doha for Science and Technology yesterday. Qatar beat Saudi Arabia by six wickets to secure their first win in the tournament. Batting first, Saudi Arabia posted 171 runs in 42.3 overs with Muhammad Shoaib and Sami Ahsun taking two wickets each for the home side. In response, Qatar lost early wickets but found stability through Sri Induvadan Reddy's patient 45 (93) and Joel Silas' unbeaten 55 (77). Chirag played a useful knock of 29 not out, as the duo guided Qatar safely home in 41.3 overs. The tournament features six teams including hosts Qatar, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, UAE and Bahrain. Qatar will next face Oman tomorrow, UAE on May 1 and Kuwait on May 3 at West End International Stadium.

Warholm sets hurdles world record at Diamond League, Holloway shocked

XIAMEN: Karsten Warholm broke the men's 300m hurdles world record yesterday at the opening Diamond League meeting of the season in Xiamen, but Olympic 110m hurdles champion Grant Holloway suffered a shock defeat.

The 29-year-old Norwegian 400m hurdles world record holder crossed the finish line in a blistering 33.05 seconds, taking 0.21 seconds off his own mark set four years ago in the little-run event.

"I thought it was a very good race and a little bit surprised over how easy my legs were feeling out the last bend," said Warholm, who won gold in the 400m hurdles at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and silver in Paris last year.


Norway's Karsten Warholm competes in the men's 300m hurdles event during the Xiamen IAAF Diamond League meeting.



Norway's Karsten Warholm poses after he broke the men's 300m hurdles world record.

"This is a very good test for speed and hurdles so it is a very good first race for me," he said.

"I am looking to win as much as I can." US sprint hurdles star Holloway finished last after leading for much of his race but losing momentum disastrously after the eighth hurdle.

The three-time world champion trailed across the line in 13.72sec, way behind fellow American Cordell Tinch, who won in 13.06.

Faith Kipyegon came within 0.23sec of breaking a decades-old world record in the women's 1000m, finishing in 2min 29.21sec.

"It went how I wanted just to start my season in a good way," said the Kenyan. "I wanted to do my personal best which was very close to the world record."

Swedish superstar Armand "Mondo" Duplantis won the pole vault comfortably with a jump of 5.92m, but failed with three attempts at 6.01 in a performance that never threatened his world record of 6.27 set in February.

"It was not the easiest day out there", said Duplantis. "We had a little bit of trouble with the wind." Duplantis said he had "work to do" before next weekend's meeting in Keqiao, China.

Yaroslava Mahuchikh from Ukraine won the high jump after clearing 1.97m on her first attempt.

"I am so happy that I opened my season with a win," said the Olympic and world champion, who has been battling back from a heel injury.

Zhang Mingkun had the home fans cheering as he took China's only victory of the night in the men's long jump, but he left it late with his leap of 8.18m on his fifth attempt that proved just enough to beat Australia's Liam Adcock (8.15).

Kenya's Beatrice Chebet edged world record holder Gudaf Tsegay of Ethiopia to win the women's 5000m, finishing in 14:27.12. — *AFP*