

Al Dhail, Al Gharafa and Al Sadd gear up for AFC Champions League Elite clashes

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THE PENINSULA

DOHA: Qatari clubs Al Dhail, Al Gharafa and Al Sadd are gearing up for their upcoming AFC Champions League Elite matches, aiming to collect crucial points after an unsteady start to the season.

Al Dhail will take on UAE's Al Wahda FC tomorrow while Al Gharafa will face defending champions Al Ahli Saudi FC the same day in Jeddah. Al Sadd are set for another tough challenge on Tuesday when they meet Al Hilal SFC in Riyadh.

Djamel Belmadi's Al Dhail departed for Abu Dhabi last night after intensive preparations.

They are still in search of their first win of the season and are looking to climb the standings. After a 2-1 loss to Al Hilal in their opener and a 2-2 draw with defending champions Al Ahli Saudi FC in their second game, Al Dhail are

currently in ninth place in the West group.

The team had previously recorded back-to-back victories over Al Wahda FC during their 2018 AFC Champions League games.

However, Al Wahda have made a solid start this time around, sitting on four points and holding fourth place, just behind second-placed Al Ahli Saudi FC and third-placed Sharjah on goal difference.

Meanwhile, Al Gharafa, currently the best-performing Qatari team in the group with three points and placed sixth, are eyeing another win following their 2-0 success over Al Shorta in their last outing.

Coach Pedro Martins faces a tougher test as his team prepares to face Al Ahli Saudi FC, who are looking to return to the top of the group after dropping to second following their draw with Al Dhail.

Qatar Stars League champions Al Sadd will play under



Al Dhail players attend a training session to prepare for their match against Al Wahda FC.

coach Sergio Alegre, who was promoted after the departure of Spaniard Felix Sanchez, dismissed due to the team's poor start to the season.

Currently placed seventh, Al Sadd are also chasing their first win, having drawn 1-1 with both Al Shorta and Sharjah in their opening two fixtures.

The team will need a sharp and focused performance against current table-toppers Al Hilal to secure the desired result.

Forest sack Postecoglou after 40 days as manager

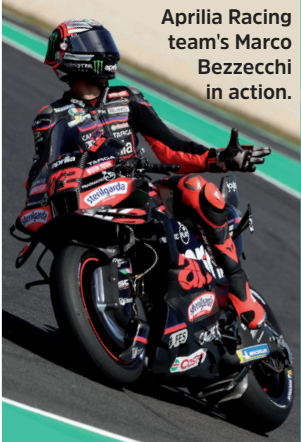
NOTTINGHAM: Ange Postecoglou was sacked as Nottingham Forest manager yesterday after his side crashed to a 3-0 defeat by Chelsea -- a brutal end to a reign that lasted just 40 days.

It is the shortest managerial reign of any permanent Premier League manager to leave a club during the season.

Postecoglou was only appointed on September 9 but has failed to win a single match in his eight games in charge in all competitions.

Forest collected just one point from his five Premier League matches at the helm, leaving the side one point above the relegation zone in 17th spot.

The club are now on the hunt for a third manager this season after Nuno Espirito Santo was dismissed last month. — **AFP**



Bezzecchi wins Australian MotoGP sprint

PHILLIP ISLAND: Marco Bezzecchi hit a seagull but still won a white-knuckle Australian MotoGP sprint race yesterday, while Alex Marquez's sixth-place inched him closer to sealing second in the world championship.

France's Fabio Quartararo threw down the gauntlet in qualifying when he shattered Bezzecchi's Phillip Island lap record set a day earlier to bank his fifth pole of the season.

But the laser-focused Italian, starting from second, simply had too much power in his Aprilia to clinch his third sprint win in the last four races.

He did so despite colliding with a bird at the start, which left feathers hanging from his bike.

Gresini's Marquez stormed from sixth to first at the opening corner, but by the end of lap one it was fellow Aprilia rider Raul Fernandez closely followed by Bezzecchi with Quartararo down to sixth.

They opened a gap to Marquez before Fernandez seemingly took control when Bezzecchi went wide on lap seven, losing a second.

But Bezzecchi regrouped and came surging back, passing the Spaniard on lap 10 and cruising home ahead of him by 3.149secs.

Pedro Acosta filled the podium in third, with Jack Miller fourth and Fabio Di Giannantonio fifth in chilly conditions. Quartararo came seventh. Bezzecchi's exploits came in the absence of newly-crowned world champion Marc Marquez, who needed shoulder surgery after the Italian slammed into him in Indonesia a fortnight ago.

Bezzecchi must serve a double long lap penalty -- essentially five-to-six seconds -- on Sunday for causing the incident, making his chances winning that race much harder. Alex Marquez, Marc's younger brother, stretched his lead over two-time world champion Francesco Bagnaia in the battle to clinch second in the standings to 92 points. — **AFP**

QSL Cup: Al Waab snatch draw against Al Rayyan with stoppage-time goal

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DOHA: Al Waab denied Al Rayyan a fourth straight win in the QSL Cup in dramatic fashion yesterday, snatching a 2-2 draw with Mohammad Ismail's stoppage-time equaliser at Thani Bin Jassim Stadium.

Al Waab made a flying start, with Abdulrahman Sher Khan opening the scoring in the 5th minute as Al Rayyan struggled to find an equaliser in the first half. Al Rayyan finally found the leveler in the 54th minute through Brazilian winger Wesley Ribeiro, who struck again five minutes later to earn his side the lead and put them on course for a victory.

However, Al Waab refused to give up and snatched a late equaliser when Ismail struck in the third minute of the stoppage time, frustrating Al Rayyan and earning his team a valuable point.

Speaking after the thrilling match, Al Waab's Baha Faisal Seif said: "A draw against a big team



like Al Rayyan feels almost like a win. We showed a good image today and we want to reflect the same level in the league. Hopefully, things will continue in our favour."

Al Rayyan's Qatar international Abdulaziz Hatem was

disappointed of the outcome of the match.

"When you play poorly, you can't expect a good result. We were bad in the first half. In the second half, we reacted well, equalised and even took the lead, but a goalkeeper mistake cost us

QSL CUP ROUND 5 FIXTURES RESULTS

Mesaimeer 1-1 Lusail
Al Shahania 3-2 Al Khor
Al Rayyan 2-2 Al Waab
Al Shamal 5-0 Al Markhiya
TODAY
Al Sadd vs Umm Salal
Al Shamal SC (17:30)
Al Ahli vs Qatar SC
Al Khor Stadium (17:30)
Al Dhail vs Al Arabi
Grand Hamad Stadium (19:30)

the win. Regardless of that, both halves were below our standard," Hatem said.

The result meant Al Rayyan missed the chance to go top of the table, while Al Waab remained in the eighth spot. Al Kharaitiyat, who were held to a 1-1 draw by Al Wakrah on Friday, continue to remain at the top thanks to their superior goal difference.

Earlier yesterday, Al Shahania clinched a thrilling 3-2 win over Al Khor in another Round 5 clash. At the Abdullah Bin Khalifa Stadium, Ali Al Muhannadi

scored the winner for Al Shahania in the 77th minute after both sides were locked 2-2 at halftime. Al Shahania had opened the scoring in the 19th minute through Jawad El Jemili, while Pelle van Amersfoort put the side 2-0 ahead, scoring off a penalty kick in the 27th minute.

Al Khor hit back through Abdulrahman Al Harazi in the 42nd minute, and a minute later (43rd minute) Sofiane Hanni got the equalizer.

Elsewhere, Mesaimeer and Lusail shared points following a 1-1 draw at the Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium. Mesaimeer's Abdulkader Zoukh scored in the 12th minute, while Tamim Al Jabri secured the equaliser for Lusail in the 72nd minute.

Also yesterday, Al Shamal thumped Al Markhiya 5-0 at the Hamad Bin Khalifa Stadium. Naim Sliti, Younes El Hannach, Alex Collado and Mohamad Omar were on target for Al Shamal, while an own goal from Al Markhiya's Ahmad Ismail added to Al Shamal's scoreline.

Saudi Arabia and Kuwait secure victories as battle to advance in Asia Padel Cup continues

THE PENINSULA

DOHA: Kuwait, Pakistan, Jordan, Kazakhstan and Lebanon won their respective group matches in the men's section while Thailand, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and UAE did likewise in the women's side to keep their hopes alive for qualifying for the next stage of the FIP Asia Padel Cup in Doha yesterday.

Organized by the International Padel Federation (FIP) together with the Qatar Tennis Federation (QTF) and Padel Asia, the tournament sees teams from 17 nations in action at the Khalifa International Tennis and Squash Complex.

In the men's section, Kuwait and Bahrain match was a keenly contested one with Kuwait winning it 2-1 to open

their campaign on an emphatic note.

Bahrain which had won the first match against Indonesia have lost one and won one, while Indonesia the third team in the group have lost the only match they have played so far.

Today, Kuwait take on Indonesia which will decide which of the team will make it to the last eight stage by virtue of being the group leader.

In Group B, Pakistan got the better of China 2-1 and will face Thailand in their second match, which will also decide the group qualifier.

In Group C, Jordan defeated Saudi Arabia 2-1 to start their campaign on a winning note and will face South Korea, who had earlier lost to Saudi Arabia. Jordan has one win from

one match, while Saudi Arabia has lost one and won another, while South Korea has lost the lone match they have played so far.

The group leader will be decided today.

In Group D, the Lebanon and Kazakhstan clash will decide the group leader, both the teams have won two of their matches in the group while Japan and Philippines have lost both their matches.

The four group winners will join the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Australia, and Iran in the Final 8, scheduled from October 20 to 24.

In the women's section in Group A, Thailand were given a tight fight by the hosts Qatar but managed to overcome the spirited challenge 2-1.

In Group B, Indonesia registered their second successive win to remain on top of the group with an all-win record.

In the Group C matches, Saudi Arabia defeated Pakistan 3-0 while UAE edged past China 2-1. UAE also won their second match of the group and the group leader will be decided after the match between Saudi Arabia and UAE.

The two clash today, while China meet Pakistan in the other match of the group.

The four group qualifiers from the three groups will be joined by Japan, Australia, the Philippines and Iran have already qualified for the last-eight stage by virtue of their FIP Rankings.



Qatar Rapid Chess Teams Championship concludes

The inaugural Qatar Rapid Chess Teams Championship 2025 concluded successfully with the team comprising Grandmaster Viktor Bologan, former world champion Zhu Chen, Khalid Al Jumaat, and Mohammed Jerbi claiming the title with a score of six points. The team of Hicham Hamdouchi, Maria Sergeeva, Adam Hamdouchi, and Reola Rollinson secured second place with five points. Third place was claimed by the team of Narayanan Ashwath, Krishnakumar Mithran, Amina Natasha, and Sahil Prashnat, who finished with four points. QCA President Mohammed Al Mudahka presented the trophies and medals to the triumphant teams. The championship, hosted by the Qatar Chess Association (QCA) at its training center, featured 96 players competing as 24 teams.

Lambre shines in Diamond Tour as fourth Hathab round ends

THE PENINSULA

DOHA: The fourth round of the Longines Hathab – Qatar Equestrian Tour concluded yesterday with thrilling performances across the Diamond, Silver and Future Riders rounds held at the Qatar Equestrian Federation's outdoor arena.

In the highlight of the event, Brazil's Santiago Lambre delivered an exceptional ride to win the Diamond class, clocking 35.71 seconds aboard Db Gi Citsun. His powerful and precise performance outpaced a competitive field.

Mohammed Saeed Haidan secured second place with 40.61 seconds on Quick Nick, while Khaled Mohammed Al Emadi claimed third aboard Thor Ter Wilgen Z in 42.4 seconds.

The Silver Round also brought intense competition, with Hussain Saeed Haidan emerging victorious after a swift and clean round of 53.56 seconds on Fayahibi. Khaled Al Hadi followed closely in second place with 56.33 seconds on



The podium winners of Diamond Tour were crowned by Manager of Qatar Equestrian Team Fahad Rashid Al Amri.



QEF Board Member Ali bin Youssef Al Rumaihi honoured the podium winners of Silver Tour.

Cartelon, and Rondoux Jean Francois secured third with 56.34 seconds aboard Lucky Wally, just a fraction behind.

In the Future Riders Round, held at a height of 90cm, young

talents showcased their potential.

Sultan Jassim Al Suwaidi took first place with an impressive time of 16.26 seconds riding Violet Van Het Koetshuis.

He was closely followed by Khalifa bin Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani, who recorded 16.32 seconds on Zion II Vdk and Al Qaqaa bin Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, who completed his

round in 18.03 seconds on Bon Suela, securing third.

Tournament Director Abdullah Al Marri praised the high level of competition seen over the first four rounds of the Longines Hathab Championship. He noted that the technical quality and consistency in both showjumping and dressage

reflect the riders' strong preparation for international competitions. He emphasised that the development witnessed this season signals a positive trajectory for Qatari equestrian sport, as local riders continue to show readiness to represent the country on regional and global stages.



Tournament Director Abdullah Al Marri crowned the top finishers in Future Riders class.

Kane strikes again as Bayern beat Dortmund

MUNICH: Harry Kane scored for the seventh straight game as Bayern Munich beat Borussia Dortmund 2-1 at home yesterday, their 11th win from 11 games in all competitions this season.

The win kept Bayern five points clear atop the Bundesliga table as they maintained their perfect record with 21 points from seven outings this term.

Dortmund sit fourth, seven points adrift of their opponents.

For Kane, his 104th goal for Bayern, was his 400th at club level in his career. He has 19 goals in 11 games in all competitions this season for Bayern, including 12 in the league.

The England captain then nodded Bayern in front with a typical poacher's goal from a corner on 21 minutes.

After one-way traffic in the opening period, Dortmund were better in the second half and should have drawn level when Serhou Guirassy pounced on a Bayern error and laid on Karim Adeyemi, who



Harry Kane (right) celebrates his goal.

slipped while trying to shoot.

Jobe Bellingham came off the bench late and hesitated in possession in the box, allowing Olise to slide in and score with 11 minutes left. Dortmund pulled one back through Julian Brandt, who got a boot to a dangerous Julian Ryerson cross in the 84th minute, but the visitors could not make their late pressure count. — AFP

Barca claim La Liga lead after Araujo's late winner

BARCELONA: Barcelona moved top of La Liga yesterday after Ronald Araujo struck deep in stoppage time to snatch the champions a 2-1 win over Girona.

The defender, sent on as an emergency forward, netted in the 93rd minute to give Barca a one-point lead on Real Madrid, who visit Getafe today.

Following two consecutive defeats Hansi Flick's

Barca were only just able to edge Girona, 19th, thanks to Araujo's late goal.

Pedri Gonzalez slotted Barcelona ahead early on but Axel Witsel equalised with a superb overhead kick for a Girona side who came close to securing a deserved point.

Elsewhere, Antony struck twice for Real Betis, fourth, to secure them a 2-2 comeback draw at third-place Villarreal. — AFP

Premier League: Trossard sinks Fulham as leaders Arsenal go three points clear

LONDON: Arsenal moved three points clear at the top of the Premier League as Leandro Trossard sealed a 1-0 win against Fulham yesterday.

Belgian forward Trossard bagged his first league goal this season in the second half at Craven Cottage.

That was enough to clinch Arsenal's fifth successive victory in all competitions and extend their unbeaten run to eight games.

Arsenal were installed as the bookmakers' favourites to win the Premier League after Liverpool's two successive defeats knocked the champions out of pole position.

Manchester City's 2-0 win against Everton earlier yesterday had taken them briefly above Mikel Arteta's side into first place.

But the north Londoners regained top spot with an efficient if unspectacular performance by the banks of the River Thames.

Arsenal have won six of their eight league matches this season as they chase a first English title since 2004.

Fulham threatened an early opener when Harry Wilson's reverse pass reached Raul Jimenez, but the Mexican's effort was pushed away by Arsenal goalkeeper David Raya.

Pouncing on a misplaced pass by Gabriel Magalhaes, Wilson went close with a curler that flashed just past the far post.

Riccardo Calafiori thought he had given Arsenal the lead against the run of play, but the defender's sweet strike was disallowed for offside after a VAR check.

Wilson almost squeezed a low drive past Raya from the



Arsenal's Leandro Trossard (left) celebrates with teammates after scoring a goal.

Premier League Results

Nottingham Forest 0 Chelsea 3 (Acheampong 49, Neto 52, James 84)
Sunderland 2 (Mukiele 16, Krejci 90+2-og) Wolves 0
Brighton 2 (Welbeck 41, 84) Newcastle 1 (Woltemade 76)
Burnley 2 (Ugochukwu 18, Tchaouna 68) Leeds 0
Crystal Palace 3 (Mateta 64, 69, 90+7-pen) Bournemouth 3 (Kroupi 7, 38, Christie 89)
Manchester City 2 (Haaland 58, 63) Everton 0
Fulham 0 Arsenal 1 (Trossard 58)
Today
Tottenham v Aston Villa (1300),
Liverpool v Manchester United (1530)
Tomorrow
West Ham v Brentford (1900)

edge of the area before Josh King's cross forced the keeper to tip the ball over his bar.

Running onto Bukayo Saka's pass, Viktor Gyokeres was denied by a good save from

Fulham keeper Bernd Leno as the Arsenal striker's goal drought reached seven games.

Calafiori volleyed over from 18 yards and Declan Rice drilled wide on the stroke of half-time.

Trossard's wayward shot from close-range was followed by a goal-line clearance from Timothy Castagne moments later as Arsenal's frustration mounted.

Arteta's men nearly paid for those misses when Wilson lashed a fierce volley narrowly over.

But Rolling Stones singer Mick Jagger, a noted Arsenal fan, was watching from the stands and the Gunners finally got some satisfaction in the 58th minute.

Arsenal's set-piece prowess proved decisive as Gabriel flicked on Saka's corner and Trossard converted from close-range.

Arsenal have now scored 37 goals from corners in the Premier League since the start of the 2023-24 campaign.

The momentum was with the Gunners and Saka slalomed through the Fulham defence for a shot that forced Leno into a smart stop.

Arsenal were denied a penalty when Kevin's challenge on Saka was initially ruled a foul before referee Anthony Taylor had to overturn his decision after VAR showed the Brazilian's tackle made contact with the ball.

Gyokeres scored 97 times in 102 matches for Sporting Lisbon, but the Swede has just three goals for his new club.

His travails showed no signs of ending as he smashed over with the goal at his mercy, then fired straight at Leno, but Arsenal had already done enough to boost their title charge. — AFP

First New Zealand vs England T20 washed out

CHRISTCHURCH: The first Twenty20 international between New Zealand and England was abandoned yesterday after rain prevented the tourists from defending their score of 153-6.

Rain arrived at Hagley Oval just after an unbeaten 49 from Sam Curran had lifted England to a competitive score off 20 overs on an unpredictable pitch.

New Zealand's batsmen never got a chance to chase, leaving just two matches to decide the series.

England's batsmen struggled for fluency after being sent in, reduced to 81-5 in the 12th over when veteran opener Jos Buttler was caught in the deep for 29. Curran injected some momentum through a flurry of boundaries over the closing stages, with 19 runs coming from the final over bowled by seamer Jacob Duffy.

England's innings was interrupted by rain, with players forced off for 30 minutes after 16.2 overs with the score at 110-5. — AFP

Verstappen wins dramatic US Grand Prix sprint

AUSTIN: Max Verstappen made the most of a first-corner collision between the two McLaren drivers to win yesterday's sprint race at the United States Grand Prix and reduce Oscar Piastri's lead over him by eight points.

The four-time world champion turned his third consecutive sprint pole at the Circuit of the Americas into a third straight sprint win, reducing the gap between him and Piastri to 55 points.

Lando Norris remained second, 22 points behind Piastri who had crashed into him after being hit by Nico Hulkenberg's Sauber as the German driver attempted to sweep inside the McLarens at Turn One.

Verstappen went on to win after 19 laps, ahead of Mercedes' George Russell, Williams' Carlos Sainz and the two Ferraris, with Lewis Hamilton finishing fourth after a slick overtake of Charles Leclerc.

"The start was good," said Verstappen. "But then, of course, there was the safety... It took a few laps to have good pace so we need to work out what happened there."

"We need to be better in race trim tomorrow to fight the McLarens. We'll take a look. We have some ideas so hopefully it will work better."

The McLarens are without a race win since Australian Piastri's victory at the Dutch Grand Prix in August.

"We both went pretty deep into Turn One," said Piastri. "I tried to cut back but I got a hit... Not a great way to start the day -- I need to take another look."

Norris said: "There's not a lot I could do. I was taken out and that was it."

On a hot day in Austin, Verstappen made a perfect start to lead away up the hill into Turn One.

The accident behind him was caused by Hulkenberg tagging Piastri who was lifted



Max Verstappen celebrates his win in the sprint.

airborne into Norris's car.

For McLaren and their duelling title-chasers, it was a disastrous start and gifted Verstappen an opportunity to make a substantial cut into Piastri's championship lead.

Hulkenberg lost his front wing as he progressed, leaving debris across the track, with Fernando Alonso also retiring his Aston Martin due to a puncture.

The contest resumed after

five controlled laps behind the safety car, of the 19 in total, with Verstappen surging away, chased by Russell.

Sainz continued to hang on in third for Williams with the two Ferraris breathing down his neck. On lap eight, Russell made a dive down the inside at Turn 12 in an attempt to pass Verstappen, but succeeded only in ensuring both slid off before rejoining.

Behind them, a lap later, Hamilton executed a perfect move to pass Leclerc for fourth and then resist his fightback.

Verstappen stayed in control, but complained that his car was imperfect. He held on to a 2.4-second lead while Sainz battled to resist Hamilton's pace before a second safety car intervention.

That came when Lance Stroll speared his Aston Martin into Esteban Ocon's Haas inside Turn One, prompting the flags that curtailed the final laps. — AFP