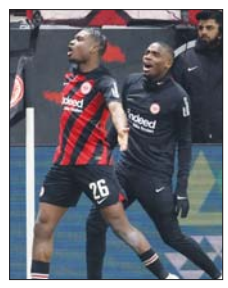
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New Zealand edge Bangladesh in low scoring second Test to level series



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Bayern thrashed by 'merciless' Frankfurt in Bundesliga

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PREMIER LEAGUE

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SPOTLIGHT

World Arabian Horse C'ship ends on a spectacular note

Final day witnesses awe-inspiring performances and the presentation of prestigious awards



D Beisan topped the Junior Fillies Section (Classes 2A, 2B) at the World Arabian Horse Championship at the Old Doha Port yesterday.



Shahalel Al Shaqab claimed gold in the Yearling Fillies Section (Classes 1A, 1B)

By Sports Reporter
Doha

The culmination of the World Arabian Horse Championship 2023 was nothing short of a mesmerising spectacle, as the night sky over Doha erupted in a dazzling array of celebratory lights. The jubilant festivities marked the triumphant conclusion of the championship, with vibrant bursts of colour painting a vivid tapestry against the darkness.

The atmosphere was charged with excitement and joy as participants, spectators, and organisers alike joined in the revelry, celebrating the achievements, grace, and beauty witnessed throughout the event. The World Arabian Horse Championship concluded on a high note at the historic Old Doha Port. The final day witnessed awe-inspiring performances and the presentation of prestigious awards, creating an unforgettable chapter in the world of Arabian horse competitions.

In a ceremonial transition symbolising the seamless passage of responsibility, Bader Mohamed al-Darwish, director of the Qatar's WAHC 2023 edition, gracefully handed over the distinguished WAHC 2023 flag to Jean Luc Poulain, the incoming organiser and president of CENECA.

During the final day competitions, Shahalel Al Shaqab seized the limelight, claiming the gold in the Yearling Fillies Section (Classes 1A, 1B). Shahbrys HVP secured, while Samirah Alymeen earned the Bronze. D Beisan captivated the audience, achieving Gold in the Junior Fillies Section (Classes 2A, 2B). Nourah Al Khalediah to silver and TM Bella finished third.

The Senior Mares Section (Classes 3A, 3B) unfolded with intense competition. D Shihanah emerged victorious. Basmah Al Bidayer was second, while Bshaier Al Nasser finished 3rd place.



A glimpse from the spectacular closing ceremony.

Sari Ajmal emerged as an undisputed luminary in the Yearling Colts Section, securing the prestigious Gold in both Classes 4A and 4B. LR Anselmo's won silver, while Sahm Sarm's claimed bronze.

In the Junior Colts Section (Classes 5A and 5B), the spotlight gleamed on D Shahhar, whose performance earned him the coveted gold. Lehon bagged silver, while D Sharar was third. The Senior Stallions Section unfolded as a majestic spectacle, witnessing Excalibur EA ascend to the pinnacle by claiming the Gold in both Classes 6A and 6B. EKS Farajj clinched silver, while Sultan Al Enaya took bronze.

Anood Al Nasser secured the prestigious "Mares Platinum Championship." Anood's allure and elegance not only elevated her to triumph but have also established a new standard of distinction, firmly placing her among the elite in the realm of Arabian horse competitions. Her triumph in this esteemed category serves as a testament to the exceptional qualities that epitomise Arabian mares of the highest pedigree.



Chairman of the tournament's hosting committee and General Manager of Katara Prof Khalid bin Ibrahim al-Sulaiti (right) presents a memento to an official.

The resounding success of the Dubai Arabian Horse Stud reverberated throughout the championship, culminating not only in triumphs but also in the coveted "Farm of the Year Award." This esteemed accolade is a recognition of the stud's unwavering commitment to the art of breeding and nurturing outstanding Arabian horses. Their relentless pursuit of excellence, evident in the superior quality of their equine companions, has propelled them to the zenith of recognition, establishing them as a guiding light in the global Arabian horse breeding community.

Individual achievements further adorned the championship, with D Beisan attaining the distinguished title of "Highest Score," a resounding testament to the horse's exceptional performance. Simultaneously, Dubai Arabian Horse Stud once again took centre stage, being bestowed with the prestigious "Best Breeder/Horse Owner" award.

The acknowledgment of FA El Rasheem as the "Best Sire" reaffirms the stud's dedication to producing top-tier Arabian horses. Notably, EKS Alihandro and Sundown K A claimed their respective titles in the "Stallions Platinum Championship" and "Stallions Platinum Reserved Championship," adding an extra layer of glory to Dubai Arabian Horse Stud's exceptional triumphs at the zenith of the equestrian world.

EXPO STARS LEAGUE

Bounedjah hat-trick helps Sadd rout Rayyan; Duhail held by Qatar SC

By Sports Reporter
Doha

Baghdad Bounedjah fired a hat-trick as leaders Al Sadd defeated a 10-man Al Rayyan 4-0 in much-awaited Qatar Clasico of the Expo Stars League, while their title rivals Al Duhail were held to a 1-1 draw by Qatar SC yesterday.

At the Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium, Bounedjah struck in the 46th, 75th and 83rd minutes, while Gonzalo Plata found the net in the 53rd minute. Al Sadd, with two matches in hand, now have 25 points for a one-point lead over second-placed Al Gharafa. Al Rayyan, meanwhile, are fourth with 19 points.

The match started on a sour note for Rayyan, with Rodrigo Moreno getting the marching orders in the ninth minute of play for a foul on Pedro Miguel. The decision, taken after a VAR review with Moreno initially awarded a yellow card, left a bad taste in the mouths of the teeming Rayyan fans as they massively registered their protest, but to no avail.

Al Sadd though had to wait till second half to open the scoring. Hassan al-Haydous, who missed a goal attempt immediately on resumption, provided a superb one-touch assist for Bounedjah's opening goal in the 46th minute.

Al Sadd only had to wait for just six more minutes to record their second goal, with Plata taking advantage of Al Rayyan goalkeeper Fahad Younes being out of position in an attempt to arrange his wall to fire home a quick free-kick to the bottom left corner in the 52nd minute.

Bounedjah got his brace, and Al Sadd's third, in the 75th minute with a well-taken low left-footed shot from the right side of the box, after some fanciful legwork, from another al-Haydos assist following a corner kick. Bounedjah completed his hat-trick in the 83rd minute, firing home a left-footed shot following a cross from Afif to further compound the woes of Al Rayyan.

At the Abdullah bin Khalifa Stadium, Al Duhail were frustrated to a draw by Qatar SC. Essa Ahmed grabbed the equaliser for Qatar SC in the 80th minute after Suhaib Gannan had given The Red Knights the lead in the 19th minute of play. With the result, Al Duhail, who also have two matches pending, are fifth with 17 points, while Qatar SC are on 12 points.

In the other match yesterday, Al Shamal drew with Al Gharafa 1-1 draw. While Yohan Boli struck Gharafa in the 43rd minute, Ricardo Gomes did so for Al Shamal from a penalty in 90+4 minute to draw parity.



Al Sadd's Baghdad Bounedjah scores against Al Rayyan yesterday.

SPORT

CRICKET

NZ edge Bangladesh in low scoring 2nd Test to level series

'It was a bit of a scrape there, nice to come out on the right side of it'

AFP
Dhaka

Glenn Phillips scored an unbeaten 40 under pressure as New Zealand beat Bangladesh by four wickets in the second Test yesterday to finish the two-match series level.

Set a chase of 137 in Dhaka, the visitors reached 139-6 an hour into the fourth day's final session with Phillips, who made 87 in the first innings, receiving able support from Mitchell Santner.

Santner capped in on a fine all-round performance with 35 not out after his 3-51 earlier with the ball. Mehidy Hasan Miraz claimed 3-52 and Taijul Islam chipped in with 2-58 before Phillips and Santner, who shared 70 in their unbroken seventh-wicket stand, denied Bangladesh their hopes of a first Test series win over the Black Caps.

"It was a bit of a scrape there, nice to come out on the right side of it," said New Zealand captain Tim Southee.

"The guys just trusted their game. On this pitch, you can still play your way," he added. "At times, Bangladesh showed it as well. It was a matter of time before one had your name on it."

Bangladesh struck early as Shoriful Islam removed Devon Conway for two before the spinners came into action.

Mehidy dismissed Henry Nichols for three and Tom Latham for 26 between Taijul's wickets of Kane Williamson (11) and Tom Blundell (two).

Mehidy's consistent bowling was rewarded when he forced an edge from Daryl Mitchell (19) at slip.

"The bowlers did a great job," Bangladesh skipper Najmul said.

"In the first match, we played really good cricket. This game we had our opportunities, but we couldn't take them."

Earlier, Ajaz Patel took 6-57 for his fourth five-wicket Test haul and Santner complemented with his left-arm spin to help New Zealand bowl out Bangladesh for 144 runs in the second innings.



Bangladesh's captain Najmul Hossain Shanto (right) and his New Zealand counterpart Tim Southee (left) pose with the trophy at the end of the second Test at Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Dhaka yesterday. *(AFP)*

Resuming on 38-2, Bangladesh began aggressively but managed just 106 runs in 27 overs during the fourth day's extended opening session.

Zakir Hasan was the only batsman to put up a fight, top-scoring with 59 before the Kiwi bowlers wrapped up the innings.

Patel brought Zakir's defiant innings to an end, forcing him to top edge at slip after Santner removed Nayeem Hasan for nine.

New Zealand had an eight-run lead in the first innings with Phillips guiding the side to 180 from a precarious 46-5, in reply to Bangladesh's 172.

"That eight runs mattered a lot," Phillips said.

"We pride ourselves on fighting for as long as possible. Our spinners bowled incredibly."

Fifteen wickets fell on the opening day before rain washed out the entire second day and the opening session of the third.

Bangladesh won the opening Test in Sylhet by 150 runs.

SCOREBOARD

Bangladesh *1st innings* 172 all out

New Zealand *1st innings 180 all out*

Bangladesh *2nd innings (overnight 38-2)*

Z. Hasan c Mitchell b Patel	59
M. Hasan c Mitchell b Patel	2
N. Hossain c Williamson b Southee	15
M. Haque lbw b Patel	10
M. Rahim c Mitchell b Santner	9
S. Hossain lbw b Santner	4
M. Hasan Miraz c Santner b Patel	3
N. Hasan lbw b Patel	0
N. Hasan c Southee b Santner	9
T. Islam not out	14
S. Islam st Blundell b Patel	8
Extras	(b10, lb1) 11
Total	(all out; 35 overs) 144

Fall of wickets: 1-3 (Mahmudul), 2-38 (Najmul), 3-71 (Mominul), 4-82 (Mushfiqur), 5-88 (Shahadat), 6-97 (Mehidy), 7-97 (Nurul), 8-112 (Nayeem), 9-128 (Zakir), 10-144 (Shoriful)

Bowling: Patel 18-1-57-6, Santner 11-0-51-3, Southee 6-1-25-1

New Zealand *second innings*

T. Latham c Najmul b Mehidy	26
D. Conway lbw b Shoriful	2
K. Williamson st Nurul b Taijul	11
H. Nicholls lbw b Mehidy	3
D. Mitchell c Najmul b Mehidy	19
T. Blundell c Nurul b Taijul	2
G. Phillips not out	40
M. Santner not out	35
Extras	(b1) 1
Total	(six wickets; 39.4 overs) 139

Fall of wickets: 1-5 (Conway), 2-24 (Williamson), 3-33 (Nicholls), 4-48 (Latham), 5-51 (Blundell), 6-69 (Mitchell)

Bowling: Shoriful 5-2-9-1, Mehidy 16.4-2-52-3, Taijul 14-2-58-2, Nayeem 3-0-15-0, Mominul 1-0-4-0

Result: New Zealand win by four wickets

Series: Two match series ends 1-1.

FOCUS

South Africa hope new players hit the ground running

Reuters
Durban

South Africa have several unfamiliar faces for the three-match Twenty20 International series with India that gets under way at Kingsmead today, but captain Aiden Markram says they will impose their attacking style ahead of next year's World Cup.

Having rested a number of leading players, the hosts have named batters Matthew Breetzke and Donovan Ferreira, and seamers Ottniel Baartman, Nandre Burger and Lizaad Williams in their squad for the series. Beuran Hendricks, who has not played for the team in over two years, was also a late inclusion on Friday after regular Lungi Ngidi pulled out with injury.

"We have played a lot against the new faces (in domestic cricket), but I suppose you'd like to know them better on a deeper level before going into a series with them," Markram told reporters yesterday.

"But we have had a few good days together getting to understand what gets them to tick.

"I suppose that is the nature of cricket nowadays, series come thick and fast and there will be stages where new guys come in and they are going to have to find their feet quickly."

The T20 World Cup will be held in the West Indies and United States from June 4-30 and there are few opportunities for South Africa in the shortest format between now and then, with most of their players involved in domestic T20 leagues in the first half of next year.

"There is a lot of cricket in between but not a lot of cricket for us as a team together," Markram said. "As long as the guys understand the way that we want to try play as a team and can keep that close to them when playing in different leagues and tournaments.

"Then hopefully by the time we meet up for the World Cup, the guys are used to that brand and how we want to operate as a team."

India's all-format tour will start with three T20 matches in Durban, Gqeberha (formerly Port Elizabeth) and Johannesburg from Sunday to Thursday.

They then switch format for three One-Day Internationals between Dec. 17-21, played in the latter two venues and Paarl.

The two-test series begins on Dec. 26 in Pretoria, with the second fixture on Jan. 3 at Newlands in Cape Town.

Tector, Campher set up T20 series-levelling Ireland victory

HARARE: A 66-run fourth-wicket partnership between Harry Tector and Curtis Campher set up Ireland for a series-levelling four-wicket Twenty20 victory over Zimbabwe in Harare yesterday. The last of three internationals is set for today, when the hosts will be handicapped by the absence for a second straight match of suspended skipper and star all-rounder Sikandar Raza. Seeking a series-clinching second win after a last-ball triumph on Thursday, Zimbabwe made 165-5 with an unbeaten 44 from wicketkeeper Clive Madande the highlight. Ireland recovered after openers Andy Balbirnie and captain Paul Stirling exited with 20 runs on the board to reach 166-6 with two balls remaining in a second tense finish within three days. "That was a special partnership by Tector and Campher – a sign of the maturity they have shown in the last couple of years," said Stirling. Tector (48) and Campher (37) came together with Ireland 54-3 and turned the match in favour of the tourists, who will also play three one-day internationals. Campher struck four fours in a 24-ball knock that ended when his attempted slog off Brian Bennett was caught at long-on by Luke Jongwe. Tector departed nine balls later having hit five fours off 38 balls. His bid to steer the ball down leg side backfired when it slipped between his bat and pad and upended the leg stump. Raza, who starred with bat and ball in the opening match, was barred for two matches after aggressively charging toward Campher and Josh Little on Thursday.

BRIEF SCORES: Zimbabwe 165-5 in 20 overs (C. Madande 44 not out, T. Kamunhukamwe 39, R. Burl 38 not out; M. Adair 2-28) v Ireland 166-6 in 19.4 overs (H. Tector 48, C. Campher 37; R. Ngarava 2-33)
Result: Ireland won by 4 wickets.

Chalmers clinches the final round of Qatar Off Road Championship





Australia's Martin Chalmers clinched the final round of the Qatar Off Road Championship season at Sealine yesterday with Emirati Mohamed al-Balooshi securing the overall title for the third time in a row. MX Ride Dubai team's al-Balooshi was dominating the proceedings until he received a two-minute penalty during the sixth and final round of the Qatar Motor and Motorcycles Federation-organised series yesterday. The BOAC Racing rider Chalmers took advantage of the situation and completed the race in 2:32:05 in his Beta 430 RR, while Rossada Team's Arkadiy Bochinin finished at +1:59 in his KTM 450. Al-Balooshi eventually finished sixth to secure eight points to his championship points tally to 169 as he completed another dominant season in Qatar. Belgian Emiel Stuckens was third overall in his Yamaha Raptor 700R, 3:13 secs behind the race leader. He was also the first in his class. Abdulla Lanjawi of the UAE came fourth overall, and second in his class as he clinched the Class 2 Championship title after extending his lead over his closest rival Abdulaziz Ahli.

Healy named new Australia captain across all formats

Star wicketkeeper-batter Alyssa Healy was yesterday appointed Australia's women's cricket captain across all three formats after the retirement of long-time skipper Meg Lanning. The 33-year-old has led Australia since June in series against England, Ireland and West Indies, and has now been handed the role full-time. Tahlia McGrath, fresh from leading the Adelaide Strikers to consecutive women's Big Bash League titles, was named vice-captain and at 28 is positioned to eventually take over from Healy. "I am honoured to accept the role of captain and am grateful for the opportunity to lead our team," said Healy, who is married to Australian men's pace spearhead Mitchell Starc. "I've really enjoyed the support of the players over the past few months and their encouragement to continue to be who I am and lead the group like I normally would from within. It's an exciting time to be involved with this team, we're seeing the emergence of incredible young talent and are challenging ourselves to continually evolve as a group," she added.

AUSTRALIAN ALL-ROUNDER SUTHERLAND TOPS PREMIER LEAGUE AUCTION

Some of the world's top women cricketers netted lucrative deals during yesterday's Women's Premier League auction in India, with Australian all-rounder Annabel Sutherland snapped up for $240,000 by Delhi Capitals. Sutherland, 22, hails from a prominent cricketing family and was the equal most-expensive player at auction alongside Indian all-rounder Kashvee Gautam, who will play for the Gujarat Giants. Nita Ambani, wife of Asia's richest man Mukesh Ambani and owner of the Mumbai Indians franchise, bid several times for Sutherland before losing out to Delhi ahead of the second WPL season next year. A total of 165 cricketers participated in yesterday's auction, with South Africa's Shabnim Ismail and Australia's Phoebe Litchfield among the most highly sought foreign players. The Indian Premier League has transformed the fortunes of cricket globally since its first season in 2008, and the five-team women's game has already proved a tidy earner for India's cricket board. Franchise rights were auctioned off in January for $572.5 million, while media rights for the first five seasons of the new league were sold to Viacom18 for $116.7 million. The two deals made the WPL the second-most valuable women's league after the WNBA women's basketball in the United States. All-format India captain Harmanpreet Kaur led Mumbai to victory in the inaugural season with a seven-wicket win over Delhi in March.

FOOTBALL

Eintracht thrash Bayern 5-1, Leipzig win in Dortmund

'We didn't defend consistently and were punished mercilessly today'

AFP
Berlin

Bayern Munich suffered a jolt to their title defence, losing their first league game of the season 5-1 in Frankfurt yesterday while RB Leipzig triumphed 3-2 at 10-men Borussia Dortmund.

In a wet and wild contest in Frankfurt, the hosts raced into an extraordinary 3-0 first-half lead, with Omar Marmoush, Junior Dina Ebimbe, and Hugo Larsson scoring the goals as Dino Toppmoeller's side outmuscled a timid Bayern.

Joshua Kimmich dragged Bayern back into the match just before half-time but French midfielder Ebimbe had other ideas, capping a scintillating counter-attack after a mistake by Dayot Upamecano to make it four.

Ansgar Knauff added a fifth to put the game out of reach for Thomas Tuchel's side to complete a memorable performance for Frankfurt, who become the first team to score five goals against Bayern in the first 60 minutes of a league game since Frankfurt themselves, in 1975.

A stunned Tuchel said after the game that his side were punished by a Frankfurt team who were callous in front of goal.

"We didn't defend consistently and were punished mercilessly today," Tuchel told German broadcaster ARD.

"That's why this result is very difficult to digest on the scoreboard. We deserved to lose. Not 5-1, but we deserved to lose. That is the bottom line."

Leaders Bayer Leverkusen retain their three-point cushion and travel to third-place Stuttgart on Sunday on a weekend when six of the Bundesliga's top seven face each other.



Eintracht Frankfurt's French midfielder Eric Ebimbe (left) celebrates scoring a goal during the Bundesliga match against Bayern Munich in Frankfurt yesterday. *(AFP)*

In the late game contested between two sides in the chasing pack, Leipzig beat Dortmund in an absorbing contest at Signal Iduna Park.

Dortmund were dealt an early blow with Mats Hummels' red card, which denied the visitors a penalty but they went on to take the lead in the 32nd minute through a Ramy Bensebaini own goal.

Ten-man Dortmund clawed their way back into the contest through Niklas Suele's close-range finish on the stroke of half-time - but Leipzig's Austrian forward Christoph Baumgartner tapped in to put Leipzig back in front early in the second half.

Yussuf Poulsen struck as the clock ticked into injury time to make it three goals and three points, keeping Leipzig fourth and opening a gap of four points to fifth-placed Dortmund, despite Niclas Fuellkrug's late header briefly giving Dortmund hope.

Union Berlin won their first game since August 26 with a 3-1 victory over Borussia Moenchengladbach ensuring a winning start in the Bundesliga under new coach Nenad Bjelica. The Croatian boss ran down the touchline to join the celebrations with his players as the team climbed to 15th.

Elsewhere, Werder Bremen arrested a four-game winless slump with a 2-0 win over Augsburg, secured by Niklas Stark's first-half strike and Marvin Ducksch's, midway through the second

Heidenheim edged out Darmstadt with a 3-2 win in a meeting of two of the newly-promoted strugglers. Jan Schoeppner scored twice for Heidenheim, which leaves Darmstadt winless in seven Bundesliga games.

LA LIGA

Real held as Ruibal rocket earns draw for Betis

AFP
Barcelona

Leaders Real Madrid stumbled to a 1-1 draw at Real Betis yesterday as Aitor Ruibal's brilliant strike cancelled out Jude Bellingham's league-best 12th goal of the season.

Bellingham slotted Madrid ahead at the Benito Villamarin early in the second half after combining magnificently with Brahim Diaz. But Ruibal drilled an angled shot into the top corner from outside the area to earn Betis a point and extend their unbeaten run in La Liga to 11 matches.

Madrid pulled one point clear of Girona but could lose top spot on Sunday if the surprise challengers beat neighbours Barcelona in a Catalan derby.

The visitors thought they had taken the lead when Diaz turned in from close range on 16 minutes after a superb exchange between Bellingham and Rodrygo.

Bellingham backheeled the ball towards Rodrygo who slid the ball between the legs of a defender. An attempted clearance ricocheted off Rodrygo and left Diaz with a tap-in, but the Brazilian was offside in the build-up.



Real Betis' striker Aitor Ruibal heads the ball during the La Liga match against Real Madrid in Seville yesterday. *(AFP)*

Chasing a fifth successive home league win, Betis twice went close as Ayoze Perez saw an attempt well saved by Andriy Lunin before Willian Jose bent an effort narrowly wide of the far post. Betis goalkeeper Rui Silva clawed behind a long-range drive from Luka Modric, but he was powerless to stop Bellingham breaking the deadlock eight minutes after half-time. The England midfielder retrieved the ball deep in Betis territory near the touchline, finding Diaz and chesting down the scooped return pass as he strode into the box and stroked past Silva.

Madrid's lead lasted only 13 minutes as Ruibal was afforded far too much time and space before he rifled home from 20 metres, grabbing his first league goal in a two-and-a-half years. Both teams pushed for a winner and former Madrid attacker Isco nearly undid his old club when he headed against the post.

Joselu dribbled an effort agonisingly wide in stoppage time at the other end before Lunin tipped over centre-back Chadi Riad's header with the last touch of the game.

Las Palmas continued their promising run on their return to the top flight, winning 1-0 at Alaves courtesy of Kirian Rodriguez's goal that moved them back up to eighth place. Barca could trim the gap to Madrid to two points if they beat Girona today.

LONGINES HATHAB - QATAR EQUESTRIAN TOUR

Al-Baker claims Big Tour, al-Bukhari wins Amateur class

By Sports Reporer
Doha

Mohamed Khalifa al-Baker claimed the top honours in Big Tour class of the 6th leg of Longines Hathab - Qatar Equestrian Tour at the outdoor arena of Qatar Equestrian Federation yesterday.

Al-Baker astride bay stud Lissabon 56 completed two flawlessly rounds in the 145/150cm class with a time of 41.94 and 35.15secs respectively and take home a prize of QR25,000.

Cyrine Cherif had to be content with the runners-up spot after she finished in 41.13 and 36.72secs on bay mare I'am Moerhoeve's Princess while Khalid Mohamed al-Emadi astride dark bay gelding Little Lord Pezi 2 was third in 44.12 and 36.80secs in the two phases, respectively.

Earlier in the Amateur class, Mohamed Eisa al-Bukhari stood out riding BCO Come on Boy Z clocking 44.57 and 21.20secs. Ali Abdulla al-Muhannadi claimed the runners-up spot astride Kroaat Van Orchid's finishing in 40.06 and 22.97secs. Amer Hamad al-Mansoori with Levant Van De Veldho was third in 41.15 and 23.07secs, respectively.

The Open class was claimed by Mohamed Dhafi al-Marri on Destiny 297 (43.52 & 20.82secs) ahead of Hamad Nasser al-Qadi on Hugo Z (44.68 & 20.94secs). Hamad Towain al-Marri was third riding Baron Z H (44.29 & 21.12secs).



Mohamed Khalifa al-Baker celebrates with his bay stud Lissabon 56 after winning the Big Tour class during the sixth round of the Longines Hathab - Qatar Equestrian Tour at the outdoor arena of Qatar Equestrian Federation yesterday.



Amateur class podium finishers pose with Dr Dafi Nasser al-Ardi, Chairman of the Medical Committee and Abdullah al-Qashouti, Media Director of the tournament.

Muriel late backheel takes Atalanta past AC Milan

Experienced Colombia striker Luis Muriel scored a 95th-minute winner with a backheel as Atalanta beat AC Milan 3-2 in Serie A yesterday. The three points send Atalanta a point off the fourth and final Champions League place and stopped Milan from keeping up pace with the top two in the table, leaders Juventus and Inter Milan. The defeat, just Milan's fourth in the league this season, comes at a bad time before Champions League trip to Newcastle, where Stefano Pioli's side have to win to keep their hopes of reaching the knock-out stages alive. Muriel's first goal of the campaign came after two efforts from Nigeria forward Ademola Lookman in Bergamo. Olivier Giroud and forward Luka Jovic had equalised for the visitors. Lookman broke the deadlock after 38 minutes despite Milan's control of the game. His low effort was deflected by Fikayo Tomori above Mike Maignan as Lookman claimed his fifth league goal of the season. It looked like Milan would go into the break trailing, before Giroud levelled matters four minutes into injury time with Milan's eighth attempt at goal. The veteran France attacker headed in a corner from Alessandro Florenzi, but whistles circled around the ground as the home fans thought Lookman had been fouled by Milan midfielder Yunus Musah in the build-up to the set-piece. Five minutes after the break Maignan stopped 19-year-old Giorgio Scalvini from reclaiming the lead for the hosts by tipping the defender's effort over the bar. Three minutes later, Lookman went one better than Scalvini with a poacher's finish from Charles De Ketelaere's dangerous cross to make it 2-1. Five minutes later, 19-times league champions Milan were level. Jovic claimed his second goal assisted by Christian Pulisic's low cross. Muriel was introduced two minutes later and claimed the winner.

FOCUS

Khalifa wins 2nd round of Freestyle Drifting Championship

By Sports Reporter
Doha

Khalifa al-Meer won 2nd rounds of Freestyle Drifting Championship at the Qatar Racing Club (QRC) on Friday.

With the participation of more than 75 cars, the freestyle drifting championship concluded the second round. The event took place under the auspices of His Excellency Sheikh Khalid bin Hamad al-Thani, the chairman of QRC. The competitions began on Thursday, dedicated to registration and technical inspection to confirm compliance with safety and security standards for both the car and the racer. Friday was reserved for the actual competitions, preceded by an informative meeting with the organizers and the judging committee. Important technical and artistic matters were clarified before the race officially started at 5:00pm. Each racer was given one opportunity to enter the track and showcase a set of manoeuvres within a specified time frame.

Al-Meer managed to secure his presence on the podium for the second consecutive round. After finishing third in the first round, he delivered an outstanding performance this time, claiming the top spot on the podium and won the prize of QR20,000.

This round witnessed strong competition for the top five positions. The champion of the previous round, Abdullah al-Qahtani. Abdulrahman al-Kubaisi secured the fourth position. The top three positions on the podium saw new faces, with Nasser al-Khalfan claiming the third position. Abdullah al-Marri secured the second position.

At the end of the competitions, His Excellency Sheikh Jabor bin Khaled al-Thani, the General Manager of Qatar Racing Club, crowned the top three winners, marking the conclusion of the second round of the championship. Preparations have now begun for the third round of competitions scheduled for the end of this month.



His Excellency Sheikh Jabor bin Khaled al-Thani, General Manager of QRC, poses with the the winners of the second round of Freestyle Drifting Championship.

HORSE RACING

Al-Hajri's Alouqa wins Ras Mlaiji Cup

By Sports Reporter
Doha

Mohamed Ahmed S F al-Hajri-owned and trained Alouqa rounded off a brilliant day of racing by winning the Ras Mlaiji Cup at the Al Uqda Racecourse yesterday.

Under jockey Carlos Henrique, the five-year-old gelding continued his fine form, grabbing his second victory in his fourth start this season, as he took the 2000m Local Purebred Arabian Handicap beating Al Rakaben Stud's Mukabr by a length. Alouqa won the Local Purebred Arabian Handicap 50-70 (class 5) defeating Mohamed Ghazali-trained Benghazi Al Naif by a neck on November 9.

Jockey Mohamed Moussa guided Dr Fahad Salman F S al-Hajri-trained four-year-old bay colt to the second place ahead of Three Quarter Racing's Haraiqu.

Abdulla Rashid al-Kubaisi, QREC Racing Manager, crowned the winners.

Jockey Lukas Delozier completed a double as he guided Faraj Saleh M al-Otaibi's Veverka Py to 1,300m Purebred Arabian Handicap (60-80) for three-year-old+ win.

The Mohamed Ghazali trained six-year-old bay horse defeated Abdulaziz Saleh al-Jaber's Habes. Earlier in the day, Delozier guided HE Sheikha Iman bint Mohamed bin Khalifa al-Thani's Haman to 2,000m Purebred Arabian Novice Plate for three-year-old+ race.



The connections of Alouqa celebrate after the gelding won the Ras Mlaiji Cup at the Al Uqda Racecourse yesterday. **PICTURES**: *Juhaim*


Jockey Carlos Henrique leads Alouqa to Ras Mlaiji Cup victory.

RESULTS 5TH AL UQDA MEETING - RAS MLAIJI CUP

WINNERS: (Horse, Trainer, Jockey)

1 - Ras Mlaiji Cup - Local Purebred Arabian Handicap 65-85 (Class 4)
Alouqa, Mohamed Ahmed al-Hajri, Carlos Henrique

2 - Purebred Arabian Handicap 60-80 (Class 4)
Veverka Py, Mohamed Ghazali, Lukas Delozier

3 - Thoroughbred Handicap 65-85 (Class 4)
Desert Games, Abdulla al-Mulla, Ivan Rossi

4 - Purebred Arabian Novice Plate (Class 5)
Haman, Rudy Andre Nerbonne, Lukas Delozier

5 - Thoroughbred Handicap 55-75 (Class 5)
Perfect Approach, Georges Mikhalides, Jefferson Smith

6 - Thoroughbred Maiden Plate (2yo Only) (Class 6)
Waqif, Hamad al-Jehani, Tomas Lukasek

7 - Local Thoroughbred Handicap 25-45 (Class 6)
Mallhog, Fahad bin Mubarak al-Groon, Saleh Faraj al-Otaibi

Al-Attiyah receives World Rally-Raid trophy at FIA Award Ceremony



Qatari racing legend Nasser al-Attiyah and his French co-driver Mathieu Baumel pose with their World Rally-Raid trophies during the FIA Award Ceremony in Baku, Azerbaijan, yesterday. Al-Attiyah won the FIA World Cup for Cross-Country Bajas after a gap of 15 years. The reigning Dakar Rally champion also received his record 19th FIA Middle East Rally Championship (MERC) title trophy during the ceremony. This time, al-Attiyah shared the MERC title with Oman's Abdullah al-Rawahi after they tied for points. The glittering FIA ceremony was dedicated for single-seater, circuit sport and road sport categories as drivers and co-drivers from around the world were recognised for their standout achievements during the last 12 months.



PREMIER LEAGUE

United suffer humiliating defeat to Bournemouth

Liverpool go top after win over Crystal Palce, while Arsenal drop to second

AFP
Manchester

Manchester United's shambolic season took another turn for the worse in a 3-0 home defeat to Bournemouth as Liverpool went top of the Premier League yesterday. Jurgen Klopp admitted Liverpool were fortunate to win 2-1 at 10-man Crystal Palace after Jordan Ayew's harsh red card changed the game late on.

Liverpool's victory in the day's early kick-off gave them a one-point lead over second placed Arsenal, who blew the chance to regain top spot later as they crashed to a 1-0 defeat at surging Aston Villa. Third placed Villa's club record 15th consecutive home league victory lifted them to within two points of the leaders.

United's season hit a new low as Bournemouth secured their first ever victory at Old Trafford in style. Erik ten Hag's men had risen to sixth thanks to six wins in eight Premier League games. But a dreadful display put the Dutchman's position back under the spotlight ahead of a likely exit from the Champions League at the group stage in midweek.

Dominic Solanke put Bournemouth in front after just five minutes when he turned home Lewis Cook's cross. Solanke hit the post and Antoine Semenyo came close as Bournemouth continued to have the better of the chances. But they had to wait until 68 minutes to double their lead when Philip Billing rose to head home Marcus Tavernier's cross. Marcos Senesi then set the seal on a famous victory as Andoni Iraola's men moved 10 points clear of the relegation zone thanks to a fourth win in five games.


Bournemouth's Marcos Senesi (centre) celebrates after scoring against Manchester United during the Premier League match in Manchester yesterday. *(AFP)*

At Villa Park, Unai Emery's side completed a memorable week by following Wednesday's 1-0 victory against champions Manchester City with another statement success against the team who started the weekend in first place. John McGinn's seventh minute goal proved decisive as the Scotland midfielder controlled Leon Bailey's pass before turning to drill a powerful finish past David Raya from close-range.

There was late VAR drama when Kai Havertz's goal was disallowed for handball as the Arsenal forward bundled it over the line in stoppage-time. It was a sweet moment for Villa boss Unai Emery, who was sacked by Arsenal after less than two seasons in charge in 2019. The Spaniard has revitalised Villa since arriving from Villarreal last season, with four wins in their last five league matches giving fans hope of a first title since 1981. Arsenal's first defeat in five league games was a frustrating setback after their recent march to top spot.

At Selhurst Park, Liverpool fought back to maintain their own title challenge. Palace were denied a first-half penalty by a VAR intervention but were awarded a spot-kick early in the second period as VAR spotted a foul on Jean-Philippe Mateta by Jarell Quansah. Mateta converted the penalty, but the Eagles were undone by two controversial yellow cards shown to Ayew.

Liverpool took advantage of the red card within seconds as Mohamed Salah's deflected shot brought up his 200th goal for the club. Substitute Harvey Elliott then fired home a 91st-minute winner from outside the box to take Liverpool a point clear of Arsenal at the top of the table. "I'm a very happy manager in this moment, but I know we were lucky as well," said Klopp. "For 76 minutes it was a really bad performance."

At the bottom of the table, Chris Wilder kickstarted his second spell in charge of Sheffield United with a 1-0 win over Brentford. James McAtee scored the only goal as the Blades' second victory of the season edged them to within two points of safety.

Burnley remain off the bottom on goal difference after holding on for a 1-1 draw at Brighton. Wilson Odobert put the Clarets ahead, but Simon Adingra rescued a point for Brighton, who remain eighth. Nottingham Forest eased the pressure on manager Steve Cooper by ending a four-game losing streak with a 1-1 draw at Wolves.

Fan leaders from across Asia set to visit Qatar ahead of Asian Cup

Doha: With just over a month to go until the AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2023, fan leaders representing the 24 participating nations will be visiting Qatar from December 9-11 as excitement builds ahead of Asia's biggest football tournament. The delegation will visit stadiums and explore various tourist sites and cultural attractions to learn more about the wide range of experiences that Qatar has to offer as host country.

"Fans are the beating heart of the tournament. We are excited to welcome our friends from across the continent to showcase the beauty of the country and provide a preview of what fans can expect when they visit Qatar," said Faisal Khalid, Fan Engagement Senior Manager at the AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2023 Local Organising Committee (LOC).

Fan leaders play a vital role in informing organisers on how to best deliver the best experience possible. Their involvement provides the LOC with much needed feedback for future sporting events. Qatar is set to host the Asian Cup for a record third time after successfully hosting it in 1988 and 2011.

Twenty-four of the continent's best teams will compete for the continent's most prestigious football title. A total of 51 matches will be played across nine stadiums from January 12-February 10 2024.

For more information about the Asian Cup Qatar, visit http://asiancup2023.qa and follow @Qatar2023 on X (formerly known as Twitter), Facebook and Instagram. The tournament's Volunteer Programme can also be found on @qatar2023volunteers

RI SUK BREAKS WORLD RECORD AT QATAR CUP IWF GRAND PRIX II



North Korea lifter Ri Suk broke world record in a stunning performance at the Qatar Cup IWF Grand Prix II in Doha yesterday. The 20-year-old Ri broke seven junior world records in five good lifts in the 64kg category. When she made 146kg on her final attempt she also bettered the senior clean and jerk world record set four years ago by Deng Wei, the Chinese star who won Olympic gold and five world titles before retiring in 2020. Ri Suk's (114-146-260) teammate Rim Un Sim came second on 113-141-254 and Ruth Ayodele from Nigeria was third on 98-120-218. To complete a golden day for North Korea, Ri Chong Song (right) won the men's 81kg to give his team its seventh victory in Doha and an unassailable lead at the top of the Grand Prix medals table. Rahmat Erwin from Indonesia failed with a clean and jerk world record attempt and finished second.

