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ASHES | Page 2

Australia's Head, Starc orchestrate England downfall



SPOTLIGHT | Page 3

Qatar shine with two golds, a bronze as CISM 2025 ends

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FIFA U17 WORLD CUP QATAR 2025

FOOTBALL

Mancini makes winning start in QSL as Sadd beat Sailiya

By Sports Reporter
Doha

Roberto Mancini made a winning start to his Qatar Stars League tenure as Al Sadd defeated Al Sailiya 3-1 at the Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium yesterday.

Giovanni Henrique opened the scoring in the 18th minute, giving the hosts a deserved lead at half-time. Akram Afif doubled Sadd's advantage seconds after the restart, before Adam Ounas – on loan from Al Sadd – pulled one back for Al Sailiya five minutes later.

However, Henrique restored the two-goal cushion in the 55th minute with his second of the night, though his evening ended early after receiving a red card, leaving Sadd to play the final 25 minutes with ten men.

The victory marked Mancini's first match in the QSL after his appointment last week on a two-and-a-half-season deal.

The 60-year-old Italian, who previously guided Italy to the UEFA Euro 2020 crown and led Manchester City to their first Premier League title, replaced Felix Sanchez following the Spaniard's departure in October.



Roberto Mancini took over Al Sadd on November 13 on a two-and-a-half-season deal.

Defending champions Al Sadd climbed to 17 points and moved into fourth place ahead of Qatar SC, who take on Al Arabi today. Al Sailiya, meanwhile, are in 10th place on seven points, extending their winless run to three matches.

RAYYAN EDGE UMM SALAL TO GO SECOND

Al Rayyan secured a hard-fought 2-1 victory over Umm Salal at Al Khor Stadium, climbing to second place with their sixth win of the campaign.

The Lions took the lead in the 15th minute when Abdulrahman Faiz al-Rashidi inadvertently turned a Roger Guedes cross into his own net. Umm Salal hit back in the 32nd minute through a superb Oussama Tannane free-kick, curled from just outside the box and off the inside of the left post.

Ahmed Alaaeldin struck the winner in the 55th minute, firing a composed finish from the centre of the area to seal the points for Rayyan.

Umm Salal came close to equalising again when another Tannane free-kick brushed the crossbar after a deflection in the 59th minute, but the rebound stayed out as The Orange Fortress fell to their fifth defeat of the season. Umm Salal remain in 11th place on six points.



Al Sadd's Giovanni Henrique celebrates after scoring against Al Sailiya.

PREMIER LEAGUE

Liverpool stunned by Forest, Newcastle damage City hopes

Chelsea moved up to second place with a 2-0 win at Burnley

AFP
London

Troubled Liverpool's woeful season hit a new low with a shocking 3-0 home defeat against Nottingham Forest, while Newcastle dented Manchester City's Premier League title challenge as Harvey Barnes' brace sealed a controversial 2-1 victory yesterday.

The spluttering champions fell behind in the 33rd minute when Murillo's fierce strike punished their failure to deal with Elliot Anderson's corner. Reds boss Arne Slot was fuming that the goal was allowed despite Forest's Dan Ndoye appearing to obstruct Liverpool keeper Alisson Becker – an offence that led Virgil van Dijk's equaliser to be disallowed in the 3-0 loss at Manchester City before the international break.

Sean Dyche's side doubled their lead after 46 minutes when Nicolo Savona slotted home from Neco Williams' cut-back. With Liverpool's defence in disarray, Morgan Gibbs-White scored Forest's third from the rebound after Omari Hutchinson's shot was saved in the 78th minute.

Beaten by Forest at Anfield for a second successive season, Liverpool have lost eight of their last 11 games in all competitions, including six of their last seven in the top flight. It is the first time Liverpool have lost consecutive league games by a three-goal margin since 1965. Slot admitted on Friday that Liverpool's players are still affected by the tragic death of Diogo Jota in a crash crash in Spain in July. And once again they were devoid of inspiration and energy in another lethargic display that left them languishing in 11th place, eight points behind leaders Arsenal.

Liverpool's stunning decline comes after a summer spending spree of over £400mn ($523mn). Alexander Isak was hauled off in the second half of his fourth league start for Liverpool following a British record move from Newcastle that has failed to live up to the hype.

Sweden striker Isak has yet to score for the Reds in the top flight. "Another big disappointment. We started off quite well but we conceded the 1-0 and weren't able to play the way we did in the first half hour," Slot said. "If things go well or things go bad, it's my responsibility. We weren't able to create enough. I tried to adjust a few things, but it didn't work out. We are in a very bad spell."

At St James' Park, Manchester City trailed to Barnes' 63rd-minute drive from the edge of the area before Ruben Dias equalised with a deflected strike five minutes later. Two minutes after Dias levelled, Barnes bagged



Newcastle United's Harvey Barnes (second left) scores against Manchester City. *(AFP)*



Nottingham Forest's Murillo (centre) celebrates after scoring against Liverpool. *(AFP)*

Newcastle's contentious second goal with a fierce volley, which was allowed to stand after a lengthy VAR check for a potential offside against Bruno Guimaraes, whose header had cannoned back off the bar. Guardiola was also aggrieved over a rejected first-half penalty claim by Phil Foden. City's fourth league defeat this season left them in third place, four points behind leaders Arsenal, who host Tottenham today. Erling Haaland was held without a goal for only the third time in 21 matches for City and Norway this season.

Chelsea moved up to second place with a 2-0 win at Burnley. Pedro Neto's diving header put Chelsea ahead just before the interval and Enzo Fernandez netted in the closing stages. Enzo Maresca's side, who sit three points behind Arsenal, have won eight of their last 10 matches in all competitions, making it a memorable 50th Premier League game in charge for the Italian.

It was the ideal warm-up for Chelsea ahead of a crucial week featuring home games against Barcelona in the Champions League on Tuesday and Arsenal in the Premier League on November 30.

New Wolves manager Rob Edwards suffered a 2-0 debut defeat against fourth-placed Crystal Palace at Molineux. Brighton came from behind to defeat Brentford 2-1 at the Amex Stadium.

Raul Jimenez's 84th-minute goal gave Fulham a 1-0 victory against Sunderland at Craven Cottage. West Ham blew a two-goal lead in their 2-2 draw at Bournemouth.

U-17 WORLD CUP

Ice-cold Dell's killer instinct powers Brazil's hunt for title

There was no hotter spot in Doha on Friday than Pitch 7 of the Aspire Zone, where Brazil and Morocco played off for a berth in the FIFA U-17 World Cup semi-finals.

The Moroccan fans turned the temperature up in the stadium, but it was a cold-blooded striker who turned the game in Brazil's favour. With poise and precision, Dell, who had already found the net early in the game, struck again in the 95th minute, drifting past the keeper with a deft feint and slotting home the winner to complete a 2-1 victory.

"It's an incredible feeling" the striker said. "It was a magical goal, taking it past the keeper and finishing with my left. I was blessed by God to stay so cool."

The cold shower that Morocco received from Dell, who is nicknamed the 'Haaland of the Sertao,' was switched on in the 16th minute. When the cross came in from his Bahia teammate Ruan Pablo, the No. 9 pounced, meeting it first time to open the scoring.

"I love bigging up Pablo; we've played together for a long time. I'm his biggest fan, and he knows it. Off the pitch, he's great fun, a true friend. We've known each other for so long that we know exactly where each other will either pass or lay it off."

Morocco equalised just before half-time, and for much of the second half, it looked like Brazil were heading for a third straight penalty shootout. But Dell had other ideas. In the dying seconds of the match, he popped in the winner and ran off celebrating in front of the rival fans.

"It definitely fired me up even more," said the striker, who even used a local expression from the northeast of Brazil to describe the energy fans bring to the game.

"With a noisy, 'zuadento' crowd like that cheering for Morocco, we had to focus even harder to try to hear what the coaching staff and our teammates were saying. We communicate a lot as a team, and when we're fully focused, the mistakes disappear and our game flows."

The striker insists there's no secret to his cool demeanour, which is "the result of hard work, ambition, and joy."

He knows that the semi-final against Portugal tomorrow might not feature as lively a crowd as against Morocco, but he promises he'll do everything to stay just as clinical. "The motivation has to grow every game, especially in a semi-final. Portugal is like a derby," said the striker, whose sole focus is on reaching the top of the podium at Khalifa International Stadium on November 27. "Our goal is to be champions. Since Granja [Comary] – Brazil's national team training centre – in Rio de Janeiro, we've been training to become champions. I don't think any team comes here just to coast, like they're on holiday."



Brazil's U-17 striker Dell has been nicknamed the 'Haaland of Sertao'.

CRICKET

ASHES

Head's 69-ball ton powers Australia to win in opener

Hosts destroy England by eight wickets in two days, Starc claims 10

Reuters
Perth

Makeshift opener Travis Head scored a brilliant century and paceman Mitchell Starc claimed a 10-wicket haul as Australia ran out eight-wicket victors against England yesterday inside an astonishing two days during the Ashes opener at Perth Stadium.

The manic style of cricket, which produced the shortest Ashes test by overs-bowled to deliver a result since 1888, kept the crowd enthralled as both sides gained and relinquished the ascendancy throughout.

"That was incredible to witness," Australia's stand-in captain Steve Smith said after Head struck a match-winning 123 off 83 balls.

"Trav took it on and played one of the great Ashes knocks."

England had set Australia a target of 205 after being bowled out for 164 by tea on day two, losing nine second-session wickets in the wake of a Scott Boland masterclass of four for 33. Head, replacing opener Usman Khawaja, who gingerly left the field in England's 27th over with back trouble, got Australia's run chase off to a rollicking start, giving the tourists a taste of their own 'Bazball' medicine in the third session.

The near 50,000-strong crowd came to life when Head slashed Brydon Carse for six over third man to bring up 50 for his side, and later roared their approval when he peeled four boundaries off Ben Stokes' second over.

Marnus Labuschagne added an unbeaten 49-ball 51 after debutant Jake Weatherald (23) fell to Carse, but the moment belonged to Head, who after 69 balls brought up Australia's equal-third fastest century with a risky uppercut and scurried single.

"I was just pleased with the way I started and when we got around that 40, 50 partnership, it felt like it was right there for the taking," Head said. The fourth innings raced to a conclusion with Head clubbing four sixes and 16 boundaries before launching Carse to Ollie Pope at deep midwicket, hugging Labuschagne and soaking in the applause as he walked off.



Australia's Travis Head celebrates after reaching his century against England in Perth yesterday. *(Reuters)*

"It was so hard to be able to continue with plans that we tried to implement because he had an answer to everything," England captain Stokes said.

In the 29th over, Smith, unbeaten on two, hit the winning run with a single punched to the off-side giving Australia a 1-0 lead in the five-match series.

England elected to bat on day one, but would have quickly questioned their decision when Starc ran riot, claiming a career-best seven for 58 as the tourists crashed to 172 all out. Harry Brook compiled an enterprising 52 before feathering debutant Brendan Doggett to keeper Alex Carey and Pope added 46 before being trapped lbw to Cameron Green.

However, Starc left the other batsmen bereft of answers, including Joe Root who was caught for a duck. England's fast bowlers responded in kind, ripping out nine Australia wickets before stumps on day one. Stokes counter-attacked with 5-23, his sixth Test 'five-fer', to end a frenetic day where 19 wickets fell - reminiscent of India's clash with Australia at the same venue last year when 17 wickets fell on the opening day. The tourists eked out the final Australian wicket early on day two to take a 40-run first innings lead with the hosts reduced to 132 all out.

In a comparatively sedate passage of play before lunch, the visitors added 59 for the loss of Zak Crawley, who suffered his second first-over duck of the match at the hands of Starc, leading the attack in the absence of stalwarts Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood.

Boland rose to the occasion with 4-33 after earlier going wicketless, capturing his initial breakthrough in the second session when opener Ben Duckett was caught by Smith for 28.

The 36-year-old claimed two more in his next over by executing an immaculate line-and-length, with Pope left punching his bat in frustration after being caught behind on 33 and the dangerous Brook trudging off for a three-ball duck having nicked to first slip. An almighty roar came from the crowd when Joe Root, on eight, chopped-on Starc from well outside off-stump.

Not even the boisterous "Barmy Army" could lift the tourists, as Starc, who ended with 3-55, celebrated his first match-haul of 10 wickets in an Ashes test with a bouncy delivery that Stokes (2) popped to second slip.

On a painstaking review, Jamie Smith was adjudged to have edged debutant Doggett (3-51) to Carey and England's last recognised batsman walked off for 15 as the home side pressed their advantage. Gus Atkinson and Carse added a 50-run partnership but Boland closed out the innings by having Atkinson caught in the deep for 37, setting the stage for Head to finish a remarkable test in unforgettable fashion.

BRIEF SCORES: Australia 132 and 205 for 2 (Head 123, Labuschagne 51*, Carse 2-44) **beat England 172 and 164** (Atkinson 37, Boland 4-33, Starc 3-55) **by eight wickets.**

TRI-SERIES

Sahibzada sparkles as Pakistan beat Sri Lanka

Agencies
Rawalpindi



Sahibzada Farhan struck unbeaten 80 off 45 balls - his T20I career best - to help Pakistan beat Sri Lanka by seven wickets as they chased the 129-run target in 15.3 overs picking up their second-consecutive win in the Tri-nation T20I series here at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Pakistan will now take on Zimbabwe at the same venue today in the fourth match of the series with the toss slated to take place at 5.30pm PKT.

In pursuit of the target, opening batters Sahibzada and Saim Ayub (20, 18b, 4x4s) provided their team a blistering 47-run stand in five overs before the latter departed. Saim also became just the ninth Pakistan batter to cross the 1,000 T20I runs landmark during the outing.

Sahibzada then stitched a 69-run second-wicket stand with Babar Azam (16, 22b, 1x6) in which he contributed 53 runs also bringing up his sixth T20I half-century off 33 balls.

With Dushmantha Chameera striking twice on consecutive balls, Sahibzada kept his charge going and ended hit the winning runs in style with a boundary in the 16th over.

The right-handed opening batter struck six fours and five sixes also becoming the Pakistan batter to hit 100 or more sixes in T20s in a year.

Earlier, Sri Lanka got off to a flying start with Kamil Mishara hitting two fours and as many sixes before departing in the fourth over with 32 runs on the board. Pakistan further dented Sri Lanka's progress in the subsequent when Mohammad Wasim Jnr's brilliant throw from third run out Kusal Mendis.

Sri Lanka's score of 65-3 at the halfway mark turned to 78-5 in the 12th over, when player of the match Mohammad Nawaz removed Kusal Perera (25, 19b, 2x4s, 1x6) and Dasun Shanaka on consecutive deliveries. Nawaz returned to remove Kamindu Mendis in the 14th over as Sri Lanka slipped to 86-6.

Janith Liyanage, who top scored for Sri Lanka with 41 off 38 balls hitting three fours and one six, then formed a 31-ball 35-run seventh-wicket stand with Wanindu Hasaranga (11, 12b, 1x4) as they posted a fighting 128-7 in 20 overs.

Apart from Nawaz's 3-16 in four overs, Faheem Ashraf, Salman Mirza and Abrar Ahmed struck once each.

BRIEF SCORES: Pakistan 131 for 3 (Farhan 80*, Chameera 2-29, Shanaka 1-14) **beat Sri Lanka 128 for 7** (Liyanage 41*, Nawaz 3-16, Mirza 1-26) **by seven wickets.**

India to face Nepal in blind women's T20 WC final

India beat Australia yesterday to enter the final of the first blind women's T20 world cup against Nepal, winners of the other semi-final against Pakistan in Colombo.
Australia won the first semi-final by nine wickets while Nepal cruised into Sunday's final at Colombo's P. Saravanamuttu Stadium after beating Pakistan by seven wickets.
Australia's Chanakan Buakhao top scored with 34 to take their total to 109-9 in their 20 overs. India's Simranjeet Kour took 1-6 having bowled two overs. Australia suffered six runouts.
Basanti Hansda top scored for India with 45 while Ganga Kadam (41) and K Karuna (16) were not out when they took India into the finals with 112-1 in 11.5 overs. In the second match for the day, Nepal won by seven wickets after restricting Pakistan at 169-6 in their 20 overs. Nepal lost two quick wickets, but managed to coast to a comfortable victory. Pakistan's poor bowling helped, conceding 47 extras, making it the highest score for Nepal. Nepal's Binita Pun scored 46 off 23 balls before being ruled out hit wicket. Susma Tamang was not out on 36. Pakistan's Shumaila Kiran with 1-10 was the best bowler while Mehreen Ali ended up with 1-45. The final will be played today at the Saravanamuttu Stadium which is the oldest Test cricket venue in Sri Lanka.

FOCUS

South Africa 247-6 after Kuldeep takes three in second India Test

AFP
Guwahati



India's Kuldeep Yadav celebrates with teammates after taking the wicket of South Africa's Wiaan Mulder during the first day of the second Test at the Barsapara Cricket Stadium in Guwahati yesterday. *(AFP)*

Spinner Kuldeep Yadav took three wickets as India rattled South Africa with late strikes to leave the tourists 247-6 at stumps on the first day of the second Test yesterday.

Tristan Stubbs, who made 49, and skipper Temba Bavuma (41) put on 84 runs for the third wicket after South Africa elected to bat in their bid for a first Test series win in India in 25 years.

The World Test champions won the first Test of the two-match series by 30 runs at Kolkata's Eden Gardens. Ravindra Jadeja sent back Bavuma with his left-arm spin in the final session before Kuldeep denied Stubbs his fifty to raise the noise of a large weekend crowd in Guwahati.

Left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep (3-48) dismissed Wiaan Mulder for 13 and pace bowler Mohammed Siraj ended Tony de Zorzi's defiance on 28 with the second new ball to further dent South Africa.

"I think it was just good old-fashioned attritional Test cricket," India's assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate told reporters.

"And I thought both sides accounted for themselves very well. I thought we stuck at it brilliantly. Just when the game was slipping away, a couple of times we managed to get a foothold back into the game."

Ten Doeschate said it was an "even day". Left-hander Senuran Muthusamy, on 25, and wicket-keeper-batter Kyle Verreynne, on one, were batting when bad light forced stumps with only 81.5 overs possible, fewer than the usual 90 overs in a day. Aiden Markram, who scored 38, and Ryan Rickelton (35) fell either side of the first break to Jasprit Bumrah and Kuldeep after an opening partnership of 82. Bavuma and Stubbs, promoted to number three in the batting order, then got to the grind and slowly took the attack to the hosts with regular boundaries as the pair used their feet against the Indian spinners.

Jadeja broke through with his left-arm spin to dismiss in-form Bavuma, who scored the only fifty in the opener in Kolkata, after the batter chipped to mid-off. Stubbs attempted to keep up the tempo as he hit Jadeja for a six but soon Kuldeep had him caught at slip.

"I definitely think it's better wicket for batting," said Stubbs.

"I do think they bowl quite well, the seamers especially, just kept bowling straight lines. But all of us (batters) had opportunities, and if you look in it, no one kicked on, so we can take that on ourselves."

Play started 30 minutes earlier than usual, with the order of the session breaks reversed, meaning tea came before lunch at India's newest Test venue, which attracted an opening-day crowd of more than 15,000 fans. Bumrah had Markram bowled at the stroke of tea when the batsman inside-edged a delivery on to his stumps.

Kuldeep struck on the third ball after the break to cut short Rickelton's 82-ball stay. The openers had started cautiously and Markram got off the mark on his 17th ball with a crunching cover drive for four off Bumrah. Bumrah nearly had his revenge next ball only for K L Rahul to drop a regulation chance at second slip. The bowler covered his face in dismay.

South Africa, who recently drew 1-1 in Pakistan, are chasing a first series win in India since Hansie Cronje's team triumphed there in 2000.

BRIEF SCORES: South Africa 247 for 6 (Stubbs 49, Bavuma 41, Kuldeep 3-48).

SPOTLIGHT

New Zealand sweep West Indies ODI series with convincing win

AFP
Hamilton



New Zealand players pose after winning the series following the third ODI against West Indies in Hamilton yesterday. *(AFP)*

Matt Henry took 4-43 and Mark Chapman crafted 64 as New Zealand coasted to a four-wicket win over the West Indies in the third one-day international yesterday for a series sweep.

The tourists' top order failed to fire once again, skittled for 161 in Hamilton before New Zealand eased to 162-6 off 30.2 overs.

The chase started poorly, with the home side reduced to 32-3, before Chapman's steady knock was supplemented by an unbeaten 40 from Michael Bracewell. The most one-sided match of the series left New Zealand savouring a 3-0 triumph, following their 3-1 win in the T20 series.

The teams will next contest three Tests, starting in Christchurch on December 2.

Henry, expected to be a key figure in the Test series, hoped they could continue their winning momentum into the longer format. "It's an exciting little stretch of cricket coming up," he said.

"We've been playing some really good cricket and we've been winning some of the key moments, which has got us over the line.

"Everyone's stepping up in different ways, which is great."

The West Indies won the toss but their specialist batsmen struggled to establish themselves, a problem evident throughout both white-ball series.

Captain Shai Hope scored a century in game two but he lamented the inability of their top order to build big scores across the series. He said it was unacceptable for their innings to last just 36.2 overs at Seddon Park.

"Again, we're just not clicking with the bat unfortunately," he said.

"We haven't assessed the conditions and adapted as quickly as we should, that was a big issue in this game in particular.

"We just didn't get in. We didn't get that flow, that momentum."

Henry rocked the visitors early with two wickets in the space of three balls in his third over, removing opener Ackeem Auguste for 17 and Keacy Carty without scoring.

Wickets fell regularly from that point, including that of Hope, caught down the leg side for 16 off the bowling of Zak Foulkes to follow his century in game two. With his team teetering at 95-7, Roston Chase led a low-order rearguard with 38 before falling to Henry.

Top order trio Devon Conway, Rachin Ravindra and Will Young all departed early for New Zealand but Chapman combined with Bracewell for 75 runs for the fifth wicket to make the outcome safe.

Chapman swatted 19 runs off Matthew Forde in the 27th over to lift the 31-year-old past 50 for a seventh time.

His 63-ball knock featured eight fours and two sixes.

BRIEF SCORES: New Zealand 162 for 6 (Chapman 64, Bracewell 40*, Seales 2-35, Forde 2-46) beat West Indies 161 (Chase 38, Henry 4-43, Duffy 2-27, Santner 2-27) **by four wickets**

SPOTLIGHT

Qatar claim two gold, 1 bronze as CISM 2025 concludes

Colonel Nilton Gomes congratulates Qatar on the 'organisational and technical success' of the event

By Sports Reporter
Al Khor





The closing ceremony the 47th CISM World Military Championships was attended by Major General Dr Yousef Dossmal al-Kuwari, President of the Military Sports Federation, and Colonel Nilton Gomes, President of the International Military Sports Council (CISM), alongside Brigadier General Mohammed bin Zayed al-Otaibi, Commander of the Joint Special Forces and President of the Qatar Air Sports Committee.



The Qatar Parachuting Accuracy Team capped off the 47th CISM World Military Championships in spectacular fashion yesterday, capturing gold medals in both the team and individual competitions as the event drew to a close at Um Shakhout Airport.

Hosted by the Qatar Air Sports Committee (QASC), the 10-day championship saw 320 athletes from 30 nations compete under the motto 'Friendship through Sport'. The host nation delivered a commanding performance in the finale, securing two golds and one bronze medal.

In a dramatic finish to the Team Accuracy category, the Qatari team secured first place with a total score of 25 points.

The victory was decided on a tie-break based on attempt superiority, edging out the Czech Republic, who finished as runners-up with the same score. The Swiss team took the bronze medal with 26 points, followed by Germany, the UAE, and Slovenia.

The Qatari squad — comprising Khalid Shaja, Abdulaziz al-Hajjaji, Mohammed Saeed al-Marri, Saleh al-Obaidly and Mohammed al-Attas — was lauded for their discipline and precision.

In the Men's Individual Accuracy Landing competition, Qatar's Khalid Shaja claimed the gold medal. He finished with a score of 5 points, sharing the top podium spot with German challenger Robin Gschmair.

Qatar added a second medal in the individual category as Mohamed Saeed al-Marri bagged the bronze, tying for third place with Slovenian jumper Majik Becon on 6 points.

CHINA DOMINATE WOMEN'S FIELD

Chinese delegation asserted their dominance in the women's division, winning the Team Accuracy title with a commanding score of 66 points. France took silver (84 points) and South Korea took bronze (112 points).

Chinese skydiver Yong Miao won the Women's Individual title with 7 points, holding off French runner-up Leocadie Ollivier de Pury.

CLOSING CEREMONY AND FLAG HANDOVER

The closing ceremony was a grand affair attended by Major General Dr Yousef Dossmal al-Kuwari, President of the Military Sports Federation, and Colonel Nilton Gomes, President of the International Military Sports Council (CISM), alongside Brigadier General Mohammed bin Zayed al-Otaibi, Commander of the Joint Special Forces and President of the QASC.

In his address, Brigadier General al-Otaibi expressed profound gratitude to the global delegations for their discipline and sportsmanship.

He dedicated the Qatari team's 'golden achievement' to His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs, HE Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman bin Hassan al-Thani.

"These achievements are the fruit of the support the committee receives from the wise leadership," al-Otaibi stated, praising the officers and staff of the Qatar Air Sports Committee for their tireless dedication. "These achievements did not come from a vacuum," al-Otaibi said, watching his team celebrate. "They are the fruit of support, hard work, and the unyielding will to raise Qatar's flag on the global stage.

GLOBAL PRAISE FOR ORGANISATION

The event was widely lauded for its logistical success. Colonel Nilton Gomes congratulated Qatar on the 'organisational and technical success' of the championships.

"This championship is not just a sports competition, but a meeting point for cultures and shared passion," Gomes remarked. He emphasised that Qatar had established an "unprecedented model" for hosting military athletics, noting that the hospitality extended to the 320 athletes reflected positively on the high-level performances seen throughout the week.

The event also enjoyed extensive media coverage, with Salem al-Fahida, Head of Media Affairs at QASC, noting the influx of elite photographers and social media specialists who broadcast the 'mark of quality' of the championship to the world.

As the ceremony concluded, the CISM flag was lowered by Major General Dr Yousef Dasmal al-Kuwari. In a symbolic gesture of continuity, Brigadier General al-Otaibi handed the flag to Colonel Gomes, who then passed it to the representative of Slovakia, officially designating them as the hosts for the next World Military Parachuting Championships.

Qatar's Jo Shen wins Women's Rapid Chess gold at Arab Championship

Kuwait: Qatar's national Chess team player **Jo Shen** won the gold medal in the Women's Rapid Chess event at the ongoing Arab Chess Championship, hosted in Kuwait until November 25.

The tournament features 87 players from 18 Arab countries, under the supervision of the Arab Chess Federation.

Jo Shen claimed first place in the overall standings of the rapid event after securing a perfect 9 points from 9 rounds, ahead of Jordan's Ruba al-Qudah, who finished second with 7 points, while Algeria's Lina Nasr came third with 6.5 points, earning the bronze medal. Lebanon's Nadia Fawaz ranked fourth with 5.5 points, equal to Jordan's Boshra Alshaeby, but edged her on tiebreaks, followed by Palestine's Iman.

Qatar's Ghada al-Khalifi finished in 16th place with 2 points.

Jo Shen had previously won double gold in the women's rapid and blitz events at the Arab Games held in Algeria in July 2023, topping the standings with 7 points.

In the remaining results for Qatar's players, International Master Hussein Aziz finished 16th in the rapid event with 4.5 points, the same tally as Hamad al-Kuwari, who ranked 19th, trailing on tiebreaks.

The championship continues today with the start of the Blitz Chess competition.

Speaking to Qatar News Agency (QNA), President of the Qatar Chess Federation, Mohammed al-Mudahka, expressed his satisfaction with the team's performance, noting that participation in the tournament offered players valuable exposure to different playing styles, in addition to improving their international ratings and achieving strong results.

Al-Mudahka emphasised that the championship features some of the Arab World's top players, presenting an excellent opportunity to boost international rankings for Qatar's team. He added that the tournament has become one of the most important events on the Arab Chess Federation's calendar, as it provides a truly competitive environment in classical, rapid, and blitz formats and awards international titles to the champions.



TENNIS

Six-time champions Spain beat Germany 2-1 to set up Davis Cup final clash against Italy

Reuters
Bologna, Italy



Pedro Martinez Portero (centre) celebrates Spain's victory next to teammates and captain David Ferrer (right) at the end of the 2025 Davis Cup semi-final doubles match against Germany at the Super Tennis Arena in Bologna, northern Italy, yesterday. *(AFP)*

Six-times champions Spain edged past Germany 2-1 yesterday to reach their first Davis Cup final since 2019, with their doubles pair Marcel Granollers and Pedro Martinez clinching a 6-2 3-6 6-3 win over Kevin Krawietz and Tim Puetz in the decisive match.

The Spanish pair came out firing, racing to a 4-0 lead in the opening set and showing no signs of nerves as they closed it out comfortably.

Krawietz and Puetz responded in the second, surging ahead 4-1 before forcing a deciding set.

Just when momentum seemed to be swinging in favour of Germany – three-times champions, with their last triumph in 1993 – Granollers and Martinez steadied themselves, breaking early for a 4-1 lead in the final set and holding firm to seal Spain's spot in Sunday's final against Italy.

"I feel really happy. I'm very proud of my players – they fought a lot to be here. Now it's normal that we are really excited but after this we have to take rest and be ready for tomorrow," Spain captain David Ferrer said. "I think Italy have very good players, of course. They don't have Jannik Sinner and Lorenzo Musetti but we also don't have Carlos Alcaraz with us.

"But I'm sure they're going to compete, I don't know what is going to be the key, maybe if we try to win the first match we are going to be close to winning."

Competing without world number one Alcaraz, who withdrew on the eve of the event due to a hamstring injury, Spain found inspiration in Pablo Carreno Busta, ranked 89th in the world, who delivered a gutsy 6-4 7-6 (6) victory over Jan-Lennard Struff in the first match of the day in Bologna.

The 34-year-old Carreno Busta clawed back from 1-6 down in the second-set tiebreak, saving five consecutive set points before sealing the win in one hour and 44 minutes.

"I was playing probably my best tennis at the end of the second set," Carreno Busta said.

"In a tiebreak we're 6-1 down, of course you are not thinking of winning but just try to be focused on every point. Don't think of the score. I know that it's easy to say and tough to do it but, well, sometimes if you believe you can do so, I think was the key.

"For me, to be here on the Spanish team, playing this competition is probably a dream. Because a few months ago it was dead – I (had) my injury on elbow, suffering a lot. I didn't know if I could play game tennis. So for me to be here again – this is a dream and (I am) enjoying every moment."

Germany's Alexander Zverev pulled his team back into contention with a battling display in the second singles match, defeating Jaume Munar 7-6(2) 7-6(5).

The world number three broke Munar early to lead 2-1 in the first set but the Spaniard responded to force a tiebreak, where Zverev was in firm control. The second set saw Munar claim an early break but Zverev fought back to make it 3-3, then capitalised in the tiebreak when the world number 36 unravelled with four straight forehand errors. Despite Munar saving two match points, Zverev sealed the win in a little under two hours.

HORSE RACING

Taymoor Al Shahania claims Qetaifan Cup



Jockey Alberto Sanna guided Taymoor Al Shahania to the Qetaifan Cup victory at the Al Uqda Racecourse yesterday. **PICTURE:** *Juhaim*

By Sports Reporter
Doha

Taymoor Al Shahania displayed impressive grit to capture the Qetaifan Cup, a Purebred Arabian Conditions race for three-year-old+ run over 1200m at Al Uqda Racecourse yesterday.

The four-year-old bay colt, owned by Al Bida Racing and trained by Ibrahim Khaled Elahmed, shadowed the longtime leader before unleashing a perfectly timed run under Alberto Sanna, snatching victory in the final strides by a short head from a valiant Naseeb Zakhir.

Qatar Racing and Equestrian Club's (QREC) Racing Manager Abdulla Rashid al-Kubaisi presented the trophies to the winning connections.

The meeting witnessed a total of nine thrilling races with action set to resume on Wednesday at Al Rayyan Racecourse featuring the Ras Laffan Cup.

RESULTS
14th Al Uqda Race Meeting - Qetaifan Cup

WINNERS: (Horse, Trainer, Jockey)
1 - Qetaifan Cup - Purebred Arabian Conditions (Class 2)
Taymoor Al Shahania, Ibrahim Khaled Elahmed, Alberto Sanna
2 - Local Thoroughbred Handicap (0-65)
Moharb, Jassim al-Ghazali, Marco Casamento
3 - Purebred Arabian Handicap (65-85)
Duke Of Monlau, Mohammed al-Ghazali, Damien Morin
4 - Thoroughbred Handicap 55-75
Mawhob, Mohammed Ahmed al-Hajri, Salman Fahad al-Hajri
5 - Thoroughbred Handicap (55-75)
Far Shot, Mohammed Hassan al-Matwi, Salman Fahad al-Hajri
6 - Local Purebred Arabian Handicap (0-65)
Thahan, Saeed al-Shafi, Tomas Lukasek
7 - Local Thoroughbred Rated Maiden Plate
Muraykh, Owaida Salem al-Hajri, Abdulla Rashid al-Hajri
8 - Thoroughbred Handicap (0-60)
Thunder Valley, Hadi al-Ramzani, Damien Morin
9 - Thoroughbred Handicap (0-70)
Ghassan, Eng Osama Omer al-Dafea, Gavin Matt Ryan

LA LIGA

Barcelona thrash Athletic at rebuilt Camp Nou in style

'TODAY WAS A SPECIAL DAY, NOT ONLY FOR ME BUT FOR EVERYONE'

AFP
Barcelona

Barcelona made a triumphant return to their rebuilt Camp Nou stadium yesterday following two and a half years in exile with a 4-0 win over Athletic Bilbao to go joint top of La Liga.

The Spanish champions had planned to reopen their stadium a year ago but construction delays and other setbacks meant they were forced to wait for their homecoming.

Ferran Torres netted a brace after Robert Lewandowski opened the scoring. Fermin Lopez also struck in a comfortable win against Athletic, who had Oihan Sancet sent off in the second half.

Hansi Flick's side pulled level with Real Madrid at the top of the table. Los Blancos visit Elche on Sunday. "For everyone, the players, the staff, the coaches, it was a special game, and also for the fans to be back here in this stadium is unbelievable," Flick told reporters.

"I'm happy with the clean sheet, the four goals and the three points – the perfect day for us."

Barca set off fireworks before and after the game as a little more than 45,000 fans filled the three stands which had been opened.

Despite exorbitant prices, the match was virtually sold out. Barca hope to be able to open up more seats by 2026, and be at the full 105,000 capacity next season.

"We have to wait, step by step... we are looking forward (to that)," said Flick.

"It was amazing today," he continued. "And at the end, with the right result for us."

The coach was able to name Joan Garcia after the goalkeeper had missed the previous nine games injured. Garcia helped the team keep their first clean sheet since September.

Fans had to wait much longer than planned to return to Camp Nou, but were quickly able to celebrate the team's first goal at the new stadium.

Veteran striker Lewandowski, wearing the captain's armband, opened the scoring in the fourth minute. Eric Garcia, playing in midfield in place of the suspended Frenkie de Jong, won the ball high up the pitch and Lewandowski beat Unai Simon at his near post with a powerful low strike.

The Basque goalkeeper got a hand to the ball and should have kept it out, but Lewandowski was able to chalk up his eighth league goal of his injury-hit, stop-start season.

"Today was a special day, not only for me but for everyone," Lewandowski told Barca One.

"I'm very happy that I could score the first goal, coming back to Camp Nou..." he continued.

"I think this first goal for me is something that I'm going to remember forever."

All-time Barca great Lionel Messi made an impromptu visit to the renovated stadium a couple of weeks ago and fans sang his name in the 10th minute, not forgetting Barca's glittering past even as they began a new era.

The home fans also made clear they had not forgotten Nico Williams's decision not to sign for them and whistled the Spain forward at every opportunity. Lopez came close to a second for Barca but Simon saved his effort and Dani Olmo fired narrowly wide.

Former Barca coach Ernesto Valverde's Athletic made life difficult at times for Barca in the first half but without creating too much danger themselves.

Athletic forward Unai Gomez fired over and Williams curled wide before Barca doubled their lead on the stroke of half-time.

Lamine Yamal played Torres through on goal with the outside of his boot and the striker beat Simon, who again could have kept the shot out.

The Catalan giants struck again early in the second half when Garcia again pressed well high in Athletic territory and then fed Lopez, who finished neatly.

Athletic's miserable afternoon became even worse when midfielder Sancet hacked down Lopez in frustration and was dismissed after a VAR review.

Flick brought on Brazilian winger Raphinha in the second half after a spell out injured. He whipped a shot narrowly wide within seconds of his introduction.

Barca wrapped up a perfect afternoon back in their home when Yamal played another superb pass to put Torres through, and the former Manchester City forward tucked away his second.


Barcelona's Ferran Torres celebrates with Lamine Yamal scoring his team's fourth goal during the La Liga match against Athletic Club Bilbao at Camp Nou Stadium in Barcelona yesterday. *(AFP)*

FOCUS

Outstanding Olise lifts Bayern eight clear in Bundesliga

AFP
Munich

Michael Olise scored twice and set up three more goals as Bayern Munich came from two down to beat Freiburg 6-2 at home in the Bundesliga yesterday.

Olise created goals for Lennart Karl, Dayot Upamecano and Nicolas Jackson, while Harry Kane also got on the scoresheet as Bayern clicked into gear, having trailed after early goals from Freiburg's Yuito Suzuki and Johan Manzambi.

The win sent Bayern eight points at the top of the table, after Borussia Dortmund dropped points at home to Stuttgart.

Kane told reporters his side "showed character" to fight back. "In the second half, we had more energy. We did well with and without the ball and showed the true face of Bayern Munich," he said.

Bayern midfielder Aleksander Pavlovic, who created Kane's goal, had high praise for the 17-year-old Karl. "I've never seen a player with so much self-confidence at his age," said Pavlovic. "He's an amazing player and it's so fun to play with him."

With Wednesday's trip to Arsenal on his mind, Bayern coach Vincent Kompany shuffled his deck, leaving captain Joshua Kimmich on the bench and resting former Gunners forward Serge Gnabry. The move looked to have backfired early with Suzuki and Manzambi both scoring from set-pieces to put Freiburg two up.

Bayern stormed back, teenage winger Karl collecting an Olise pass and sliding home. The starlet then created Bayern's second for Olise, repaying the favour for the France forward to hit a deflected shot home from close range.

Karl had a goal struck off for offside early in the second but Bayern took the lead shortly after, Upamecano tapping in an Olise corner. Kane scored with half an hour remaining, blasting in from close range for Bayern's fourth. The England captain now has 24 goals in 18 games in all competitions this season, including 14 from 11 in the league.

Olise teed up Jackson for a fifth and then added a late goal to round out the comeback and complete an incredible performance for the defending German champions, who have dropped just two points in 18 matches in all competitions this season.

Borussia Dortmund led twice but were twice pegged back in a 3-3 home draw against Stuttgart, with visiting Germany striker Deniz Undav scoring a second-half hat-trick.

An Emre Can penalty and a Maximilian Beier tap-in had Dortmund 2-0 up at half-time. Undav scored twice either side of home striker Serhou Guirassy having a goal struck off for offside. Dortmund thought they had won when Karim Adeyemi scored on the counter in the final minute, but Undav completed his hat-trick in the first minute of stoppage time to snatch a point.

Dortmund have not beaten Stuttgart in any competition since October 2022, losing five and drawing two in that time. Elsewhere, Bayer Leverkusen cruised to a 3-1 win away at Wolfsburg, with Jonas Hofmann, Edmond Tapsoba and Malik Tillman scoring for the visitors.

The win took Leverkusen past Dortmund and Stuttgart into second. The 2024 Bundesliga champions have picked up 22 of a possible 27 points under coach Kasper Hjulmand, who came in when Erik ten Hag was sacked after just two league games.

Anton Kade scored the only goal as Augsburg beat Hamburg 1-0 at home, while Borussia Moenchengladbach deepened last-placed Heidenheim's woes with a 3-0 away win.


Bayern Munich's Michael Olise celebrates scoring his team's sixth goal during the Bundesliga match against Freiburg in Munich yesterday. *(AFP)*

SERIE A

Juventus risk losing touch at the top after draw at Fiorentina

Reuters
Florence

Juventus were held to a 1-1 draw at bottom side Fiorentina yesterday, a second successive stalemate which threatens to derail the Turin side's ambitions to challenge at the top of Serie A.

Luciano Spalletti's Juventus stay sixth on 20 points, with four of the five clubs ahead of them in the standings still to play this weekend, and Inter Milan, AS Roma and Bologna leading the way on 24 points. Fiorentina remain in bottom place on six points.

The first half was marked more by what happened in the stands rather than on the pitch, with Juventus's Serbian striker Dusan Vlahovic, a former Fiorentina player, the target of discriminatory chants from the home fans.

Early in the match, the referee asked for an announcement to be made calling for a stop to the chants or the game would be interrupted. When Vlahovic looked to have earned a penalty, the insults only increased.

The referee pointed to the spot when Vlahovic was pulled back by defender Pablo Mari but, after a check at the VAR monitor, the forward was judged to have fouled the Fiorentina man.

The insults resumed and the referee brought play to a halt, with Fiorentina captain Luca Ranieri appealing for common sense from the fans behind the goal.

On the pitch, former Juventus forward Moise Kean almost put Fiorentina ahead when he cut in from the wing before letting fly with a shot which cannoned back off the crossbar.

Vlahovic had the perfect chance to silence the home fans when sent through on goal but after rounding keeper David de Gea, he took the ball too wide and his effort ended up in the side netting.

Juventus found the opening goal deep into added time before the break, with Filip Kostic hitting a shot from distance which flew past De Gea and into the far bottom corner.

Fiorentina levelled three minutes after halftime, Kean laying off the ball and Rolando Mandragora sending a curling shot from outside the area sailing into the top corner. Minutes later Kean's strike was parried away by keeper Michele Di Gregorio as Fiorentina took the upper hand and for long periods looked the more likely to find a winner.

Juventus had a late chance from a Weston McKennie header but De Gea stretched to tip the ball over the bar and both sides had to settle for one point apiece which does little for their respective objectives.

Fiorentina are still without a win after 12 league games, while Juventus have won only two matches in their last 13 across Serie A and the Champions League.


Juventus' Filip Kostic (right) celebrates with teammate Kenan Yildiz after scoring a goal during the Serie A match against Fiorentina at Artemio Franchi stadium in Florence yesterday. *(AFP)*

LENS WIN TO JOIN MARSEILLE AT TOP IN LIGUE 1

Lens edged Strasbourg 1-0 yesterday to claim their sixth win in seven games and move level on points with Marseille at the top of Ligue 1.
Ismaelo Ganiou grabbed the winner midway through the second half before Strasbourg's Valentin Barco was sent off.
Lens also finished with 10 men as Morgan Guilavogui saw red in stoppage time. Marseille, who thrashed Nice 5-1 on Friday, and Lens are a point clear of European champions Paris Saint-Germain. Marseille's player of the season so far Mason Greenwood scored twice while former Arsenal frontman Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, Timothy Weah and Igor Paixao were all on the scoresheet. Aubameyang was unmarked when he tapped home in the 11th minute. Greenwood ripped Nice open down the right and scored either side of half-time. Greenwood has ten goals in Ligue 1 this season, one ahead of Joaquin Panichelli of Strasbourg. *(AFP)*

SPOTLIGHT

Amorim ignores Premier League table on his United anniversary

AFP
London

Ruben Amorim is refusing to take anything for granted as he approaches a match against Everton at Old Trafford tomorrow that marks the first anniversary of his maiden game in charge of Manchester United.

Amorim's reign as United manager started with a 1-1 draw away to Ipswich and since then the Portuguese boss has experienced plenty of lows in charge of the English football giants.

But recent results have been encouraging, with United heading into this weekend's round of matches seventh in the Premier League table and unbeaten in their last five games.

When it was pointed out to Amorim that United only face three top-10 teams in the next 10 matches, he told reporters: "It doesn't matter. In our league, it doesn't matter. "The table it doesn't matter as everything is so tight. That is irrelevant.



"If you know the history of our team, we never know where the difficult games are. That is completely irrelevant in the Premier League."

Much has changed at United since last November's trip to Ipswich, where Marcus Rashford scored early in the 1-1 draw.

The forward is among five starters from that match who are no longer members of the United squad.

"The first thinking was about thinking the environment is completely different in the Premier League and I was excited with that," said Amorim.

"Right away I knew we would struggle with some things. But it was that feeling of, yes, this is the best league in the world. It is maybe the best club in the world, but at the same time it is a big job and it is going to require a lot of work."

Nevertheless, an optimistic Amorim added: "I think we are showing that (improvement), but the important thing is that it doesn't matter what we did in the recent games, we cannot forget that we started in that point to suffer a lot last year.

"We have to take that into account and to play every game like it is the last one or the first one.

"If you ask me, yes, I expect a team (now) with more control and with more dominance, playing better football and the most important thing is we are more competitive in every way."