

Real Madrid captain Sergio Ramos lifts the trophy with the teammates (Picture courtesy: independent.co.uk)

FIFA CLUB WORLD CUP UAE 2017

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Real Champions

Abu Dhabi

Cristiano Ronaldo's superb free-kick gave Real Madrid a 1-0 win over Brazilian side Gremio as they retained their FIFA Club World Cup title in Abu Dhabi.

Portugal forward Ronaldo, voted the Best FIFA Men's Player for 2017 and the Ballon d'Or winner for a fifth time, broke the deadlock after 53 minutes when he clipped the ball over the wall and into the bottom corner.

The hard-earned victory over a stubborn Gremio side at the Zayed Sports City Stadium was Real's third

FIFA Club World Cup since 2014, equalling the record of LaLiga rivals Barcelona.

Real, who beat Al Jazira 2-1 in the semi-final with a goal from substitute Gareth Bale, started brightly as an effort from Karim Benzema was deflected behind.

Ronaldo then curled a shot wide before Isco fired over.

As the half-hour mark approached, the Brazilians had a chance to threaten when Casemiro conceded a free-kick 30 yards out.

Edilson opted for a long-range effort, which flew just over.

Ronaldo found himself with a clear sight of the Gremio goal after benefiting from a deflection, but could not get the ball under control.

As half-time approached, it was then Ronaldo's turn to fire in a free-kick from distance, which again was narrowly too high.

The Champions League holders continued to press early in the second half.

Ronaldo sent another long-range shot wide before the deadlock was finally broken.

The Portugal forward was tripped just outside the Gremio penalty area

by Jailson.

Ronaldo got up to take the free-kick himself and he dink it up over the wall and down into the bottom left corner past the diving goalkeeper.

Gremio, who beat Mexican side Pachuca to secure a place in Saturday's final, were forced to go on the offensive, but lacked any real threat.

It looked like Real had scored again just before the hour, but Ronaldo's effort was ruled out by an offside flag.

Gremio goalkeeper Marcelo

Grohe pushed a 20-yard effort from Luka Modric on to a post as Real continued to press.

With 10 minutes left, Bale replaced Benzema, and the Wales forward soon forced Grohe into another good save, this time tipping his curling shot over.

Earlier yesterday, Pachuca secured third place after a 4-1 win over home club Al Jazira. (eurosport)



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