

Bahrain brush aside China

Aidan Payne/DTNN
aidan@dt.bh

Bahrain won comfortably by nine wickets against China in its fifth match and the sixth round of round-robin matches yesterday in the International Cricket Council (ICC) 2017 World Cricket League (WCL) Asia Region Division One in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Batting first, China were dismissed for just 65 in 32.1 overs, despite a positive start when they began with a 20-run opening partnership in 8.2 overs by Lu Cang Cang (11 off 34 deliveries, 1x4) and Jing Shuyao (9, 2x4).

After the partnership was broken, the only double figure innings came from Zhang Peng (10 off 38) and Yan Hua Wen (10 off 23, 1x4).

Four Bahraini bowlers shared the wickets with man of the match being Gamini Arachchige (four for seven) in 4.1 overs the pick of the bowlers, while Tahir Dar (two for eight) in 8, Babar Ali (two for 11) in 8 and Junaid Aziz (two for 19) in 5 picked up the rest.

Bahrain in reply easily reached the target scoring 66 for one in just six overs as wicket keeper Imran Ali Butt (14 not out off 11, 3x4) and Janaka Chaturanga (26 off

12, 1x4, 3x6) put on 34 for the opening stand before the latter was bowled by Zhang Peng (one for 25) in two overs.

Mohammed Sameer (23 not out off 13, 3x4, 1x6) came to the crease and batted Bahrain to victory.

Bahrain prepared for this championship with five friendly matches in Sri Lanka, winning three and losing two, getting acclimatised and getting used to turf wickets.

Under head coach Rexie Arunvasagam and manager Syed Rizwan Shah, the squad comprises the captain, Azeem Ul Haq, Tahir Dar, Babar Ali, Junaid Aziz, Gamini Arachchige, Imran Ali Butt, Janaka Chaturanga, Mohammed Rafeh, Aamar Shahzad, Mohammed Sameer, Mohammed Iqbal, Awad Khan, Bilal Mansoor, Jabbar Amjad, Mohammed Ismail.

The winner of the qualifier progresses to the ICC WCL Division 5 which will be staged in September 2017. Five regional qualifiers will play alongside two teams relegated from Division 4 and one team from Division 5.

Standings (after six rounds): (played-won-lost-points):

Saudi Arabia	(5-5-0-10),
Qatar	(5-4-1-8),
Kuwait	(5-3-2-6),
Bahrain	(5-3-2-6),
Thailand	(5-2-3-4),
Bhutan	(5-1-4-2),
China	(6-0-6-0).

Today's schedule: Rest Day:

Tomorrow:

- 1) **Bahrain vs Bhutan,**
- 2) **Qatar vs Saudi Arabia,**
- 3) **Kuwait vs Thailand.**

Other scores:

- 1) Saudi Arabia 171/9 in 44.4 overs (Inayat Saeed 42, Omar Imtiaz 30no, Abdul Waheed 28, Mohammed Afzal 20, Ryan Raina 2/31, Daniel Jacob 3/31, Nopphon Senamontree 3/34) bt Thailand 166 all out in 43.5 overs (Weerachai Maneerat 53, Ryan Raina 34, Mohammed Shafique Haque 26; Hammad Saeed 6/21, Imran Arif 2/38) by 1 wicket. Man of the Match: Hammad Saeed.
- 2) Kuwait 179/7 in 24 overs (Ali Zaheer 69, Aamir Javed 42, Mohammed Ghuloom 20; Suprit Pradhan 4/30, Tenzin Wangchuk 2/20) bt Bhutan 104/9 in 24 overs (Suprit Pradhan 39, Damber Gurung 25; Abdulla Ghulam 5/18) by 75 runs. Man of the Match: Abdulla Ghulam.



Austrian tennis player Dominic Thiem celebrates his victory

Thiem beats Murray

Barcelona

Dominic Thiem claimed his first win over world number one Andy Murray to book his place in the final of the Barcelona Open on Saturday 6-2, 3-6, 6-4.

The Austrian will face Rafael Nadal, who is looking for his 10th title in Barcelona, or Argentina's Horacio Zeballos on Sunday.

Murray squeezed past Albert Ramos-Vinolas in a three-hour encounter on Friday and looked flat-footed as Thiem roared through the opening set with three breaks of serve in just over half an hour.

The Scot had to stave off

another break point in a marathon opening game to the second set.

But he held on and then jumped at his chance to break for 5-3 before serving out to take the match to a decider.

Murray, though, still looks a pale shadow of the player that rose to number one on a spectacular run at the end of last year as he struggles for form and fitness after an elbow injury.

Thiem had to battle back from a break down in the third, but constantly put pressure on the Murray serve and broke another three times in the deciding set to seal his place in the final.



Real Madrid's Brazilian defender Marcelo celebrates a goal

Marcelo rescues Madrid

Madrid

Real Madrid needed another late winner to edge closer to the La Liga title as Marcelo was the hero in a 2-1 home win over Valencia yesterday.

Cristiano Ronaldo opened the scoring midway through the first half, but also saw a penalty saved by spot-kick specialist Diego Alves early in the second period.

Former Madrid man Dani Parejo looked to have handed Valencia an unlikely point with a stunning free-kick eight minutes from time.

Real stormed forward and needed just four minutes to find the winner when Marcelo cut inside and fired into the far corner.

Real now lead Barcelona by three points at the top of the table with four games to go for both sides.

Barca, though, can move back to the summit of La Liga with victory in the Catalan derby later at Espanyol.

Madrid boss Zinedine Zidane recalled eight of the side that started last weekend's 3-2 El Clasico defeat to Barcelona and had been rested for a 6-2 thrashing of Deportivo la Coruna in midweek.

However, the habitual first team nearly got off to the worst possible start.

Captain Sergio Ramos was returning from suspension after his 22nd career red card in the Clasico and his weak header allowed Santi Mina through on goal inside the first minute.

Keylor Navas came out to block the Valencia striker's first effort before his follow-up hit the outside of the post.

Fabian Orellana also screwed a great chance wide as Valencia enjoyed the better of the early stages.

However, Ronaldo punished their profligacy in characteristic fashion as he bulletted Dani Carvajal's cross into the far corner on 27 minutes.

That goal took Ronaldo's tally in league football to 367 goals to surpass legendary English striker Jimmy Greaves in Europe's top leagues.

However, even the four-time World Player of the Year struggles to beat Alves from the spot.

Madrid were awarded a penalty when Luka Modric went down under slight contact from Parejo 11

minutes into the second half.

And for the third time in four penalties against Alves, Ronaldo was denied by the Brazilian.

Ronaldo then missed an even easier chance as he bundled over and then crashed into the goalpost from Marco Asensio's enticing cross.

At the other end Navas's search for a clean sheet continues as for the 15th straight game the Costa Rica international was beaten, this time by Parejo's dipping free-kick to set up a grandstand finish.

Yet, for the seventh time in La Liga this season, Madrid struck late to maintain the upper hand in the title race as Marcelo used his weaker right foot to fire across and past the helpless Alves to joyous scenes of relief at the Bernabeu.



Spanish La Liga:

Real Sociedad	2	Granada	1
Real Madrid	2	Valencia	1
Las Palmas	0	Atletico Madrid	5
Espanyol	0	Barcelona	3

Russian Premier League:

Lokomotiv	0	Rubin Kazan	1
Terek Grozny	5	Ural Yekaterinburg	2

Real Madrid's Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo tries to control the ball