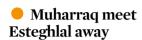
Muharraq chase ACL Two momentum

Bahrain's champions face Esteghlal as Khaldiya host Arkadag



Khaldiya host Arkadag in Riffa

Both seek Group Stage boost

TDT | Manama

ahrain's representatives in the 2025–26 AFC Champions League Two are in action tonight, with Muharraq facing Iran's Esteghlal in Tehran and Khaldiya hosting Arkadag of Turkmenistan in Riffa. Both fixtures are part of the second round of the group stage.

ACL Two is a restructured competition featuring 32 teams from 22 member associations. It sits below the AFC Champions League Elite and above the AFC Challenge League.

Muharraq in Tehran





Muharraq won the AFC Cup in 2008 and 2021, before ACL Two replaced it

at Shahr-e-Qods Stadium at Diarra. 7pm Bahrain time. The 2008 and 2021 AFC Cup winners are competing in ACL Two for the first time under its new format. They opened strongly with a and host Arkadag at the Bah-4-0 home victory over Jordan's rain National Stadium tonight at Al Wehdat and sit second in Group A with three points, lev- closed camp at Wyndham Grand el with UAE's Al Wasl, who lead Hotel after training in Riffa. on goal difference. Esteghlal They began their campaign with and Al Wehdat remain without a goalless draw away to Qatar's

tos has named a 25-man squad for the campaign, including goalkeepers Sayed Jaffar, Ebrahim Lutfalla, and Ashraf Waheed. The outfield options feature Hussain Jameel, Waleed Al-Hayyam, Amine Bennadi, Lucas Morellato, Mohamed Al-Hardan, Facundo Tobares, Abdulwahab Al-Malood, Soufine Mahrouq, Omar Saber, Lazar Djordjevic, Abdulwahab Hanan, Ahmad Rabeea, Hussain Abdulkarim, Mohamed Al-Banna, Abdulla Al-Khalasi, Juninho, Arthur Rezende, Bruno Santos, Elliot Simoes, Gervásio Olivera, and Abdulkarim

Khaldiya at Home

Khaldiya are back for their second consecutive campaign 9:15pm. The team moved into a Al Ahli SC, leaving them third in Head coach Fernando San- Group B with a single point.

Pakistan name spin-heavy squad for home South Africa Tests



Pakistan's Zahid Mahmood (L), Sajid Khan (C) and Noman Ali attend a practice session (file photo)

AFP | Karachi

 $\mathbf{P}^{ ext{akistan yesterday included}}$ five spinners and recalled paceman Shaheen Shah Afridi in an 18-man squad for the two-match Test series at home to South Africa.

Besides the deadly spin duo of Noman Ali and Sajid Khan, Pakistan named Abrar Ahmed, Faisal Akram and veteran Asif Afridi for the series starting in Lahore on October 12.

Shan Masood will captain a squad which also sees the return of fast bowler Shaheen after a year-long gap from the longest format.

ers in the spin department to Sajid 19 wickets in the last two supplement Sajid and Noman, Tests. with 38-year-old Afridi who is ented Akram," said a Pakistan Cricket Board statement.

Pakistan used industritio heaters, to dry out and tober 20 in the series, the first make spin-friendly pitches to for both teams in the fourth beat England 2-1 at home last cycle of the World Test Cham-

Pakistan lost the first Test ploved a spin-heavy attack finished ninth and last.



Pakistan previously used industrial fans and patio heaters to prepare spin-friendly pitches, a tactic that helped them beat England 2-1 in their last home series

"There are two newcom- with Noman taking 20 and

Also included yesterday was very experienced and the tal- uncapped wicketkeeper Rohail Nazir as back-up for regular Mohammad Rizwan.

The second Test will be al-sized fans, along with pa- played in Rawalpindi from Ocpionship (WTC).

South Africa won the WTC by an innings before they em- (2023-2025) while Pakistan

Bahrain's Manama take on Kuwaiti giants

Do-or-die Round of 16 for Bahrainis in Arab Cup

Manama seek to end losing streak

Qadsia top Group **B** challengers

Ahmed Salman remains key performer

TDT | Manama

 ${f B}$ ahrain's Manama Club will face Kuwait's Qadsia today at 3pm at Rashid Bin Hamdan Hall, Al-Nasr Club in Dubai, in the Round of 16 of the 37th Arab Basketball Clubs Championship.

Manama finished fourth in Group B with three points after losing all three preliminary matches: 79-73 to Lebanon's Antonine, 103-78 to Libya's Al Ahly Tripoli, and 76-65 to Kuwait sc.

Against Kuwait SC, Manama



led 33-32 at halftime, but Ku- Star player Ahmed Salman in action during Manama's previous outing

All 16 teams from the preliminary round advance to the Round of 16

wait dominated the third quarter 28-16 and extended their lead to as many as 15 points early in the final period. Manama reduced the deficit to six late on but could not recover. Ahmed Salman led Manama with 22 points, supported by Carl Jones (12) and Hasan Nowrooz (11).

Qadsia finished their group with five points from two wins and one loss. All Round of 16 games are knockouts, meaning that the losing side will be eliminated.

Saliba signs new long-term deal at Arsenal

AFP | London

*T*illiam Saliba has signed a new William Salloa Has Signed Hong-term contract with Arsenal, the Premier League club announced yesterday.

The France defender has reportedly put pen to paper on a five-year deal, which will keep him at the club until 2030. His previous contract had been due to run until 2027.

Saliba, 24, had been expected to extend his stay at the Emirates despite earlier reported interest from Real Madrid.

The centre-back joined the Gun-

ners in 2019 but had a number of to give everything, and loan spells before establishing him- now I'll give even more self as a regular in Mikel Arteta's to this club and to the team during the 2022/23 season.

Since then Saliba has been at the heart of an Arsenal side that "William is loved by all the has finished second in each of the players and staff, and that past three seasons in the Premier League.

"I feel at home. We have a good every day. team, we have a good squad, we have good staff. The coach is perfect has grown so much, embraced for me, so it's the best place to be," said Saliba.

the chance to wear this shirt. I try club."

Manager Arteta said: speaks volumes about his character, commitment and attitude

"Since joining us, William responsibility, and has created a strong connection with our "I enjoy every day when I have supporters and everyone at the

William Saliba



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