

Bahrain juniors beat Qatar to win UAE handball title

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

National junior handball team won the UAE International Youth Friendly Championship on Wednesday after beating Qatar 32-24 in the final in Dubai.

The victory at Shabab Al Ahli Club's hall in Al Mamzar gave Bahrain the title after a sharp response to their narrow defeat by the same side in the preliminary round. It came as part of their build-up to next month's Asian Championship in China.

Bahrain had lost 31-30 to Qatar on Monday after leading 16-15 at half-time, but turned the tables in the final with a far firmer display to end the tournament on top.

The national team reached the final by finishing second in the preliminary round on goal difference ahead of hosts the UAE. Qatar topped the four-team table before the two sides met again for the championship.

Bahrain ended the round-robin stage with one win, one draw



Action from the match

and one defeat. They opened with a 35-35 draw against the UAE, beat Oman 40-33, then lost by one goal to Qatar.

The tournament, organised by the UAE Handball Federation in co-operation with Shabab Al Ahli Club, brought together Bahrain, Qatar, the UAE and Oman. The teams played each other once in the preliminary round, with the top two advancing to the final.

Bahrain are using the Dubai event as part of their preparations for the 19th Asian Men's Junior Handball Championship, which will be held in Chuzhou, China, from July 15.

The national team, led by Bahraini coach Hussam Madan, are seeking to sharpen their technical and physical readiness, improve understanding between the players and gain high-level match practice before the Asian contest.

Bahrain have been drawn in Group A with China, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Chinese Taipei and Hong Kong-China. They will open their campaign on July 15 against hosts China.

Unstoppable U18s storm into Arab championship final



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Bahrain's under-18 basketball team secured a place in the Arab Championship final after beating Morocco 73-46 in Tunisia on Wednesday to claim their fourth straight win.

The young national side produced another strong display, pairing sharp attacking play with a fighting spirit throughout the match to keep their perfect run alive and move within one step of the title.

Bahrain had opened their campaign with a 60-51 win over Algeria before beating

hosts Tunisia 78-66. They then defeated Libya 73-58, before Wednesday's 27-point victory over Morocco sealed their place in the final.

The team still have one preliminary-round match left, against Egypt tomorrow, which will decide the final order of the group before the title match.

The Arab under-18 championship is being played in a single round-robin format, with the six teams facing each other once. The top two sides advance to the final, while the third- and fourth-placed teams meet in the third-place play-off.

Mbappe scores twice as France breeze past Sweden into last 16

● Olise provides key assists for goals

● Mbappe levels Messi on six goals

● Next face Paraguay in last 16

AFP | East Rutherford

Kylian Mbappe scored twice and Michael Olise was in scintillating form as France beat Sweden 3-0 at the World Cup and set up a last-16 clash with Paraguay.

Mbappe finished a superb move to break the deadlock just before half-time in the last-32 watched by 80,663 at the MetLife Stadium in New Jersey, after France had already hit the woodwork twice -- once through Mbappe and once through Olise.

The French were on top throughout against a limited Swedish side, utterly dominating in terms of possession and shots on goal.

Olise set up Paris Saint-Germain winger Bradley Barcola for the second on 53 minutes, and then delivered a delightful pass for Mbappe to complete a convincing victory.

Mbappe's strikes saw him move level with Lionel Messi on six goals in the all-star golden boot race at this World Cup.

The France captain now has 18 World Cup goals in total, meaning he is just one behind Messi's overall record of 19 -- a mark which 27-year-old Mbappe will keep chasing.



Kylian Mbappe #10 of France scores his team's first goal

He celebrated his first goal by running across to embrace coach Didier Deschamps, who missed France's final group game against Norway to travel home for his mother's funeral.

Deschamps will step down at the end of the competition after 14 highly successful years in charge.

Going out in the last 32 would have been such an anti-climactic way to depart for Deschamps, who captained the first France team to win the World Cup in 1998 and coached them to glory in 2018.

In 1998, France's run to victory on home soil included a 1-0 last-16 win over Paraguay, when Laurent Blanc scored a golden

goal in extra time. Les Bleus will face the South Americans in the last 16 again this time, on Saturday in Philadelphia.

France will be fully expected to win and march on.

Olise on another planet

Mbappe and Olise were again central figures, with Ousmane Dembele also showing flashes of his brilliance while Barcola was preferred to Desire Doue as the fourth forward.

Sweden have quality in attack too, with the Premier League trio of Viktor Gyokeres, Alexander Isak and Anthony Elanga. But they couldn't get enough of the ball to create chances and



Graham Potter's team now go home.

Getting this far should really be seen as a success for them, however, after they only made it to North America through the back door of the play-offs.

Intense pressure

Olise released Mbappe through the middle to put the ball in the net in the 20th minute, only for a tight offside call to cut short the celebrations.

However, that sparked an intense spell of French pressure which eventually resulted in the opening goal.

Some of their football was mesmerising, as Mbappe hit the post from a Jules Kounde ball across the face of goal and Adrien Rabiot fired narrowly over.

Olise then struck an upright with a breathtaking overhead bicycle kick before Dembele put the rebound wide.

The opener came right on half-time, after an Olise effort was tipped behind by Swedish 'keeper Jacob Widell Zetterstrom.

Dembele and Olise combined at the resulting corner before finding Mbappe, and he did the rest.

Haaland hailed as 'greatest' after more World Cup heroics



Erling Haaland #9 of Norway celebrates scoring his team's second goal

AFP | Arlington

Erling Haaland was described as "devastating" and "the greatest goalscorer in the world" after pouncing for a dramatic late winner for Norway at the World Cup.

The Manchester City predator had a quiet afternoon at the home of the Dallas Cowboys before prodding home in the 86th minute for a thrilling 2-1 victory over the Ivory Coast.

It was Haaland's fifth goal in three games in North America, having been rested for the 4-1 loss to France in the group phase.

Only Lionel Messi, with six, has more goals so far at the tournament.

Haaland led the Norway squad on a rendition of their

now-famous "Viking Row" celebration on the pitch and told broadcasters: "This is unbelievable.

"I can't swear, but it is unbelievable. This is history."

Haaland's goal gave Norway their first win in a World Cup knockout match and sent them into a last-16 showdown with Brazil.

He has scored in each of his last 13 competitive internationals, scoring 25 goals in that run.

Norway will be underdogs against Brazil but captain Martin Odegaard said with Haaland up front they always had a chance.

"It's amazing to have him in the team, we're lucky to have him and it's just about giving him as many opportunities as possible," he said.