

Bahrain face Jordan in key qualifier

Group D leaders go head-to-head after opening victories



Bahrain's U20 football team

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Bahrain will look to take a major step towards the AFC U20 Asian Cup 2027 when they face Jordan tomorrow in their second Group D qualifier at Khalifa Sports City Stadium in Isa Town.

The kingdom's junior men's team kick off at 8.30pm, with both sides heading into the encounter on three points following victories in their opening

matches.

Ali Aamer's men began their campaign with a dramatic 3-2 win over Tajikistan, while Jordan edged Afghanistan 1-0 to set up an important meeting between the group's two early leaders.

The nationals will once again look to Ali Mahran for inspiration after the youngster fired a hat-trick in their opening victory.

Mahran headed home Rashed Al Jazzaf's delivery to open

the scoring in the sixth minute before Tajikistan responded through Azizbek Murotov eight minutes later.

The Bahrain forward restored his side's advantage just before half-time, knocking home Abdulrahman Bassam's corner to send the hosts into the break 2-1 ahead.

The contest was later halted following a floodlight failure and only resumed after a lengthy interruption.

Mahran completed his treble



Jordan's U20 football team

following the restart, pouncing on a rebound after Tajikistan goalkeeper Abubakr Rahmonqulov had denied Ahmed Nasser Alhumood.

An own goal in stoppage time reduced Bahrain's advantage, but Aamer's side held on to secure all three points.

Jordan, meanwhile, were made to work hard for their opening victory against Afghanistan. Ibrahim Jaber's side survived some early pressure before taking the lead shortly be-

fore half-time, when Mohannad Mahmoud's turn inside the area created the opening for Adeeb Ramadan to finish.

Afghanistan continued to push for an equaliser after the interval, but Jordan protected their slender advantage to begin their campaign with three points and a clean sheet.

With only the group winners guaranteed qualification, the encounter could have a significant bearing on who finishes top of Group D.

Afghanistan and Tajikistan, who are both still searching for their first points, meet earlier tomorrow at 5pm.

The final round of matches takes place on Sunday, when Jordan face Tajikistan at 5pm before Bahrain complete their campaign against Afghanistan at 8.30pm. The eight group winners and seven best runners-up will advance to next year's AFC U20 Asian Cup in China, scheduled to take place from March 24 to April 10.

Premier League action resumes tonight

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Malkiya and Al Najma will both search for their first points of the season when they face off tonight as the second matchweek of the 2026-27 Nasser bin Hamad Premier League gets underway.

The two sides meet at Al Ahli Club Stadium at 7pm, while East Riffa takes on Sitra simultaneously at the National Stadium.

Malkiya heads into their encounter looking to recover from a 3-0 opening-day defeat to Sitra, with Portuguese coach Alvaro Jose Rodrigues hoping for a response from his side.

The final scoreline did not fully reflect how long the contest remained in the balance; all three goals arrived in first or second-half stoppage time.

Skipper Ali Haram broke the deadlock just before the interval after reacting quickest to the rebound when his penalty struck the post.

The one-goal margin remained until the closing stages, when Haram turned provider for Ali AlAsfoor, who controlled the captain's chest-down before finding the net.



AlSayed Hussain Hani in possession during Malkiya's league opener

Malkiya's Hadi Ghazi was then shown a second yellow card after conceding another penalty, allowing Ali Nasser to convert from the spot with virtually the last kick and complete the 3-0 scoreline.

Al Najma will also look to bounce back under Tunisian coach Fethi Laabidi after suffering a 7-2 defeat to Al Khaldiya.

Having retained their top-flight place through the promotion/relegation play-offs last season, Najma endured a torrid opening half as Khaldiya struck



Al Najma's Ali Aldoseri brings the ball under control in their opening match

five times before the interval.

Walid Sabbar opened the scoring from the penalty spot in the 13th minute before Ousman AlHajj struck twice, with Gleison Moreira and captain Mehdi Humaidan adding two more in first-half stoppage time.

Najma pulled one back through a Mohammed Adel own goal six minutes after the restart, only for Nizar El Otmani to restore Khaldiya's five-goal cushion in the 62nd minute.

Rickson Conceicao reduced

the deficit to 6-2 in the 80th before Najma captain Ammar saved Saifeddine Bouhra's stoppage-time penalty, but El Otmami broke clear shortly afterwards to complete his brace and the 7-2 rout.

Tonight's other encounter sees Sitra looking to make it two wins from two when they take on newly promoted East Riffa.

Bahraini coach Hassan Sayed Isa will hope his side can carry their opening-day momentum into the contest, while East Riffa will aim to get off the mark under Hisham Al Mahoozi following a 2-0 loss to Hidd.

Algerian professionals Oussama Bellatreche and Samy Frioui scored either side of half-time to condemn the promoted side to defeat on their top-flight return.

Matchweek two continues on Friday, when Al Khaldiya faces A'ali at the National Stadium, while reigning champions Muharraq take on Al Ettifaq at Al Ahli Club Stadium.

The round concludes on Saturday, with Hidd facing Al Ahli at the National Stadium and Manama taking on Riffa at Al Ahli Club Stadium.

All four Friday and Saturday fixtures kick off at 7pm.

Sadrudinov bags Lausanne bronze



Said Sadrudinov with his bronze medal

● **Bahrain judoka defeats Adamian to reach Grand Slam podium**

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TDT | Manama

Bahrain's Said Sadrudinov claimed a bronze medal in the men's under-100kg category at the Lausanne Judo Grand Slam 2026 in Switzerland.

Sadrudinov secured his place on the podium with an ippon victory over Arman Adamian on the final day of the three-day competition, capping a strong showing against some of the world's leading judokas.

Georgia's Ilia Sulamanidze took gold after defeating the Netherlands' Simeon Catherina in the final, while Sadrudinov and Sarsenbaev earned the two bronze medals.

als.

Dr. Faisal Khalid Kanoo, vice-president of the Bahrain Combat Sports Council and president of the Bahrain Judo Federation, praised Sadrudinov's achievement amid a high-quality international field.

"We congratulate our athlete Said Sadrudinov on this well-deserved success at one of the strongest Grand Slam events on the international calendar," Kanoo said.

"The Lausanne tournament features the world's elite judokas, and winning a bronze medal at such a major sporting event reflects the progress judo has made in the kingdom, as well as the strength and determination shown by our athletes."

Kanoo added that the federation is aiming to build on the result and continue Bahrain's strong presence at major international competitions.

Bahrain Handball Super Cup faces cancellation

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The Bahrain Handball Super Cup could be cancelled this season due to the senior national team's upcoming international commitments.

The Bahrain Handball Federation is reportedly considering scrapping this season's edition of the competition, which traditionally serves as the curtain-raiser to the domestic

campaign and is usually staged in September or October.

The potential cancellation comes with Bahrain facing a busy international schedule over the coming months, beginning with the 2026 Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan.

The Asian champions will compete in Group B alongside Kuwait, South Korea, Iran and Kazakhstan, with the handball competition scheduled from September 19 to 29.



Bahrain are also set to take part in an international friendly tournament in Kuwait in November as part of their preparations for the 2027 IHF World Men's Handball Championship.

They have been drawn alongside Iceland, North Macedonia and Japan in Group H of the global showpiece.

The Super Cup was introduced seven seasons ago, with Al Najma dominating the competition with six titles.

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