

Sharipov wrestles his way to bronze

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Shamil Sharipov claimed wrestling bronze for Bahrain at the 20th Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, yesterday after an impressive run through the men's freestyle 125kg competition.

Sharipov won three of his four bouts at Nagoya City Inae Sports Center, beginning his campaign with a dominant 11-0 victory over South Korea's Kim Gwanuk in the round of 16.

The Bahraini won by technical superiority without conceding a point and repeated the feat in the quarter-finals, beating Kyrgyzstan's Arslanbek Turdubekov by the same 11-0 scoreline to reach the last four.



Action from the men's freestyle 125kg competition

Sharipov then faced China's Buheerdun in the semi-finals and built a 7-4 advantage before his opponent turned the contest

around to win by fall, sending the Bahraini into a bronze-medal match.

He responded in style against

Mongolia's Nambardagva Batbayar, shutting out his opponent 9-0 to secure Bahrain's latest medal with a victory by points.

Iran's Amir Hossein Zare went on to take gold in the division, with Buheerdun settling for silver. Sharipov shared bronze with Kazakhstan's Yedige Kassimbek.

The medal took Bahrain's overall tally to 22, comprising 11 gold, five silver and six bronze, leaving the kingdom ninth in the medal table.

Elsewhere, Bahrain's Khidir Saipudin



bowed out in the men's freestyle 86kg round of 16 following a 9-5 defeat to Kyrgyzstan's Malik Shavaev.

Alibeg Alibegov also saw his campaign end in the men's freestyle 65kg last after a closely fought contest against South Korea's Yun Junsik finished 5-5 on technical points, with Yun awarded the victory by points.

Alibegov was eventually classified 14th.

Bahrain return to the mat today for the concluding day of wrestling, with Magomedrasul Asluev facing Tajikistan's Viktor Ras-Shamil Sharipov with his bronze medal

Asian Games Medal Tally				
#	Nation	G	S	B Total
1	China	162	81	73 316
2	Japan	72	83	85 240
3	South Korea	33	39	62 134
4	Uzbekistan	20	23	22 65
5	India	16	25	35 76
6	Iran	15	17	13 45
7	Thailand	15	11	17 43
8	Kazakhstan	12	21	44 77
9	Bahrain	11	5	6 22

sadin in the men's freestyle 74kg round of 16 and Magomed Sharipov taking on Uzbekistan's Sherzod Poyonov in the 97kg last 16.

The wrestling programme concludes on the penultimate day of the Asian Games.

Hero's welcome for handball champions



Bahrain's handball team with officials on their return to the kingdom

Hussain Almaskati
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Bahrain's Asian Games gold-medal-winning handball team were warmly received

on their return to the kingdom on Thursday evening.

The Bahrain Olympic Committee organised a reception at the VIP hall of Bahrain International Airport following

the team's triumph at the 20th Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan.

The players and coaching staff were greeted by General Sports Authority chief executive

Dr Abdulrahman Askar, Bahrain Olympic Committee secretary general Faris Mustafa Al Kooheji and several Bahrain Handball Association board members.

Two decades on the line

● Bahrain's Ali Makki Takes the Whistle to Nagoya

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For more than twenty years, Ali Makki has watched volleyball evolve from the sidelines — not as a player, but as the man entrusted to call it fair. Now, that journey has taken him to Japan, where the Bahraini international referee is officiating at the 20th Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya.

Makki's path began modestly in 2004, calling local matches and slowly sharpening his instincts for the game. It would take more than a decade of steady work before he reached a turning point: in 2016, he completed his international refereeing studies in Qatar, followed by Bahrain's own certification requirements in 2018. Each step, he says, demanded more than rulebook knowledge — it demanded discipline.

"A successful referee does not depend only on knowledge of the laws of the game," Makki explains. Composure under pressure, split-second judgment and self-belief matter just as much, he says, especially when the game itself keeps changing — tactically, technically, and through new refereeing technology.

Officiating internationally, Makki notes, carries a weight beyond personal achievement. Every call made abroad reflects on the country he represents, a responsibility he has carried through numerous regional, Arab and Asian tournaments



Ali Makki during the 20th Asian Games in Nagoya, Japan

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The international level was not merely about obtaining a classification or certificate. It was a greater responsibility because an international referee represents his country in external competitions and must demonstrate a high level of commitment, discipline and technical competence

ALI MAKKI

over the years.

His presence in Nagoya, extended through an invitation from the Asian Volleyball Confederation, adds another chapter to that record — and reinforces Bahrain's growing footprint in the sport, not just on the court but in the officials who keep its games running.

From a local gymnasium in 2004 to center stage at Asia's largest multi-sport event, Makki's career stands as quiet proof that the men in stripes have stories worth telling too.

Spikers set for Arab title defence

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Bahrain's senior men's volleyball team will leave for Amman, Jordan, tomorrow to defend their title at the 24th Arab Men's Volleyball Championship.

The regional competition is scheduled to run from October 4 to 14 at the Sports Palace in Al-Hussein Youth City.

Bahrain head into the tournament as defending champions, having lifted the trophy on home soil in November 2024 after defeating Qatar in four sets in the final.

That triumph, achieved under former head coach Jorge Elgueta, was the kingdom's third Arab title following previous successes in 1992 and 2008.

The Bahrainis will this time be led by Montenegrin head coach Ivan Joksimovic, who



Bahrain's senior men's volleyball squad

took charge in April after guiding Dar Kulaib to an unbeaten domestic league title.

Joksimovic enjoyed an impressive start to his tenure, steering Bahrain to GCC Games gold in Doha in May without dropping a set before leading them to fourth place at the AVC Men's Cup in India.

Their most recent outing came at last month's AVC Men's Continental Championship in

Japan, where they exited the pool stage.

Among those who featured for Bahrain in that tournament were setters Ali Ebrahim and Mahmood Alafyah; outside hitters Sayed Hashem Ali, Mahmood Abdulwahed, Mahmood Salman and Ahmed Mohamed Saleh; middle blockers Mohamed Abdulla, Ali Yusuf and Hasan Haider; opposite hitters Ali Khamis and Abdulla

Ebrahim; and liberos Ayman Haroon and Abbas Sultan.

Nine teams had initially been listed for the Arab championship, with hosts Jordan joined by Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Egypt, Algeria, Palestine and Tunisia.

The final line-up could be reduced, however, with reports indicating that Egypt and Tunisia have withdrawn from the competition.

Kalawadh falls short in Asiad taekwondo

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Bahrain's Fatema Kalawadh bowed out of the women's -49kg taekwondo competition at the 20th Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, yesterday after a round-of-16 defeat.

Kalawadh faced Chinese Taipei's Wang Chieh-ling at Toyohashi Gymnasium, where she was beaten 2-0 in rounds.

Wang controlled the open-

ing round to win 9-0 before a much tighter second finished 2-2, with the Chinese Taipei athlete awarded the round by superiority to seal the contest.

The result left the Bahraini joint ninth in the 16-woman competition. Wang went on to lose in the quarter-finals to the Philippines' Tachiana Keizha Mangin, who eventually took silver.

China's Ma Jingyue claimed gold, with Japan's Ruka Oka-

moto and Thailand's Patcharakon Poolkerd securing the two bronze medals.

Bahrain return to action today on the concluding day of taekwondo, with Ola Aldoseri facing South Korea's Song Dabin in the women's +67kg round of 16 at Toyohashi Gymnasium at 4.12am Bahrain time.

The competition concludes on the penultimate day of the Asian Games.

Faraj Bows Out of Jiu-Jitsu

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Bahrain's Khaled Faraj bowed out of the men's -94kg jiu-jitsu competition at the 20th Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, yesterday following a round-of-16 defeat.

Faraj received a bye through the opening round at Aichi Prefectural Martial Arts Hall before facing South Korea's Park

Sunghu in the last 16.

The Bahraini was beaten 5-0 on points in a contest lasting five minutes and 53 seconds, bringing his campaign to an end.

Park continued his run all the way to the gold-medal contest, where Saudi Arabia's Omar Tariq Nada defeated him by submission.

Nada consequently took gold, with Park settling for silver,

while the UAE's Amaar Alhosani and South Korea's Kim Heedong secured the two bronze medals.

Faraj was Bahrain's final representative in jiu-jitsu, with the competition concluding today.

The kingdom's campaign also included Abdulla Ali, who reached the round of 16 in the men's -62kg competition before being eliminated by Kyrgyzstan's Taalaibek Baiyshev.