

'Superhuman' Salah unhappy after being dropped, says Liverpool's Slot

Salah, who has struggled for goals recently, was praised for his "top professional" attitude despite the omission

● Salah benched for 2-0 win at West Ham

● Forward enduring rare scoring slump

AFP | London

Arne Slot admitted yesterday that "superhuman" Mohamed Salah was unhappy about being omitted from Liverpool's team for their vital 2-0 win against West Ham, but praised his attitude.

The Egypt forward was an unused substitute at the London Stadium on Sunday as Liverpool boss Slot made changes following a terrible run of nine defeats in 12 games in all competitions.

Misfiring Salah, 33, has scored just four Premier League goals this season -- in stark contrast to his haul of 29 last season, a tally that won him the Golden Boot.

Slot told reporters that during his reign as manager at Anfield, Salah had been a "superhuman being" but that he had not been at his best in recent weeks.

"As with all players around the world, there are also phases in your time at the club that you



Liverpool's Egyptian striker #11 Mohamed Salah (C) and Liverpool's Hungarian midfielder #08 Dominik Szoboszlai (R) attend a training session

are human," he said. "But he's scored so many goals for us and I'm sure he will in the future."

Slot, whose eighth-placed team host high-flying Sunderland on Wednesday, said he was not surprised by Salah's reaction to being left out, praising his

professionalism.

"That's a normal reaction from a player that's good enough to play for us," he said. "And I say it mildly, because he's been so outstanding for this club for so many years, and will be for us in the future."

"So, yeah, of course a player isn't happy when they're not playing. He wasn't the only one who wasn't happy that he wasn't starting, I can tell you."

The Dutchman said that Salah had been supportive of his teammates.



Slot said Salah's ability to stay available and perform every three days comes from ignoring emotions and obsessively maintaining his fitness, describing him as "always that top professional" regardless of minutes or form

"You cannot be a player that's available every three days and play on that high standard if you go with your emotions," he said.

"But Mo is so disciplined, knows what to do to stay fit, and no matter if he plays well, doesn't play well, if he plays or if he doesn't play, he will always be that top professional."

Slot said that Salah was scheduled to leave for the Africa Cup of Nations on December 15.

"As always in these situations,

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ARNE SLOT

there's a player involved, there's the nation involved -- Egypt in this situation -- and the club. And there are always talks about what is best for all three of us," he said.

Meanwhile, Sunderland manager Regis Le Bris -- whose newly-promoted side are an impressive sixth in the table -- said his players were relishing the prospect of playing at Anfield.

"We worked hard to have the privilege to play this kind of game," he said. "A challenging situation, a tough game but I think we want to live this kind of experience."

The Frenchman added: "Liverpool will be strong, the place (Anfield) is impressive but at the same time we want to be competitive so we'll see.

Kuwait Sweep Past Bahrain Side

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Bahrain's senior men's volleyball team slipped to their second straight defeat in the Arab Challenge Cup, losing 3-0 to Kuwait last night in Amman. After pushing Egypt across four sets on Monday, the Bahrainis entered this contest needing a response, but Kuwait's preci-

sion and composure proved too much to overcome.

The opening set set the tone. Kuwait controlled the rhythm early, using aggressive serving to disrupt Bahrain's first touch and limit their attacking options. Despite short bursts of resistance, Bahrain were forced into uncomfortable positions too frequently and dropped the frame 25-19.

The second set followed a similar pattern. Bahrain improved defensively and managed to string together longer rallies, but Kuwait's superior efficiency at the net told in the key moments. With momentum slipping away, Bahrain conceded the set 25-20 as Kuwait tightened their grip on the match.

The third set produced Bah-

rain's best volleyball of the night. They fought with greater urgency, led by the efforts of Mahmood Alafyah and Mohammed Abdulla, and even matched Kuwait with a four-point scoring run of their own. Yet when the decisive points approached, Kuwait again dictated the exchanges. Bahrain saved two match points but ultimately fell 26-24.

Atlas Lions Roar in Arab Cup

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

The 2nd day of the FIFA Arab Cup delivered high intensity across Qatar's stadiums. Morocco flexed their tournament credentials and looked every inch a tournament heavyweight with a confident 3-1 win over Comoros at Khalifa International Stadium, Egypt were held to a draw by Kuwait in Lusail, and Saudi Arabia edged Oman in a tight contest at Education City. The stage is now set for Bahrain's Group D opener tonight against Iraq at Stadium 974.

Morocco dominated from the first whistle. Soufayan Bouftini opened the scoring with a perfectly timed header that soared into the top corner, leaving the goalkeeper stranded. Tarik Tissoudali added a second with a curling low strike from the edge of the area, and Karim El Berkaoui completed the first-half flourish with a precise header from Hamza El Moussaoui's cross.

Comoros reduced the deficit in the second half via a Moroccan own goal when Mohamed Boulacsout misjudged a clearance, but the Atlas Lions controlled the tempo to secure a convincing opening win.

Karim El Berkaoui celebrates Morocco's third goal

In Lusail, Egypt controlled possession but struggled to break down Kuwait's disciplined defense. The visitors stunned the hosts when Al-Hajeri powered a header from a corner into the top corner. Egypt responded late, and Magdy Afsha's ferocious right-footed strike in the 87th minute salvaged a 1-1 draw.

Saudi Arabia's match against Oman was a tense tactical battle. Feras Al-Brikan opened the scoring with a towering header, only for Ghanim Al-Habashi to equalize moments later with a brilliant set-piece finish. Saleh Al-Shehri then restored the Green Falcons' lead with a blistering finish from a through ball, sealing a 2-1 win.

Bahrain now turn attention to their Group D opener against Iraq. After a week of training in Doha, coach Dragan Talajic stressed the need for focus and respect. "We accomplished our first task against Djibouti, but Iraq is a strong team.

Tomorrow requires total focus and tremendous effort," he said. "Our group is full of challenges. We aim to face every opponent with confidence and determination."



Move to honour Bahrain handball team with cash prizes

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Parliament has backed an urgent proposal calling on the government to grant cash bonuses and formal honours to Bahrain's national handball team after their victory in the Islamic Solidarity Championship.

The measure, passed on Tuesday, urges the government to reward and recognise the players 'as soon as possible'. It was submitted by MPs Jaleela Alawi, Mohammed Al Olaiwi, Mahmood Fardan, Second Deputy Speaker Ahmed Qarata and Ahmed Al Salloom.

According to the explanatory memorandum, the move falls within Parliament's drive to support sport and to acknowledge the results achieved by Bahraini youth in regional and

international competitions. The document describes the team's win as a well-earned achievement that carried Bahrain's flag to the winners' podium and showed that local players are able to compete for, and win, titles in different conditions.

The memorandum states that the victory shows the determination and resolve of young Bahrainis and the effort of national staff when they receive support and encouragement from the state. It adds that the result fits with government policy to strengthen the presence of Bahraini sport and to secure its place on the international stage.

MP Jaleela Al Sayed, who sponsored the proposal, said the urgent move seeks to grant financial bonuses and suitable honours to members of Bahrain's national handball team, in rec-



Jaleela Alawi, MP

ognition of their title in the Islamic Solidarity Championship. She said the step is intended to show government backing for the kingdom's champions and to encourage young Bahrainis to keep pursuing results in sport.

In its reasons for the motion, the memorandum says that rewarding the team would help

create a supportive setting for national talent in sport, allowing athletes to build their skills and reach higher levels of performance, which in turn would keep Bahrain's sporting progress going. It also notes that material and moral rewards show the state's appreciation for their efforts and urge them to keep raising Bahrain's name in various competitions.

The document further states that direct backing for national teams would improve their readiness for regional and international events and strengthen Bahrain's standing as a competitive player in sport. It also calls for clear and direct procedures to reward champions soon after they achieve success, in order to deepen national pride and encourage different sectors to seek excellence and public service.