

# Lions of Mesopotamia Roar Past Bahrain

Iraq Breaks 10-Game Jinx Against the Reds in Arab Cup Opener

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TDT | Manama

Bahrain suffered a bitter start to their Arab Cup Group D campaign, losing 2-1 to Iraq at Stadium 974 in Doha yesterday. Before this match, Iraq had gone 10 games without a win against the Reds (2 Bahrain wins and 8 draws). The opening goal was a cruel twist of fate. Aymen Hussain, top scorer of the 2024 AFC Asian Cup, met a cross with a firm header that goalkeeper Ebrahim Lutfalla initially saved, only for the ball to rebound off his trailing foot and into the net. Lutfalla was immediately substituted by coach Dragan Talajic, with Omar Salem coming on. Iraq doubled their lead in the 25th minute through a chaotic sequence. Ahmed Alhajjaj dived in the box after faking contact from Bahrain's Vincent Emmanuel, and the loose ball fell to Ali Jasem. His shot from out-



Mohamed Marhoon charges through a wall of Iraqi defenders

side the area struck Mohanad Ali inadvertently, but the deflection dropped perfectly for Ali to volley home. VAR checked for offside but allowed the goal. Bahrain pulled one back in the 79th minute when Sayed Hashim, in the right place at the right time, tapped in a low delivery from Abdulla Al Khulasi. But the late strike wasn't



Bahraini faithful bring the noise at Stadium 974

enough, leaving Bahraini supporters frustrated. The night worsened in stoppage time as Riffa's Abdulla Al Khattal was sent off for a reckless headbutt on Amjad Attwan, drawing further frustration from the traveling fans. He will miss the Reds' next Arab Cup match against reigning champions Algeria on Saturday at 4:30pm at Khalifa International Stadium.

## BIC to offer pure adrenaline rush as drivers or passengers in Track Experiences this Saturday

Manama

Bahrain International Circuit (BIC), 'The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East', hosts the latest edition of its widely popular Track Experiences this Saturday (Editor's note: 6 December), offering thrills in three ultra-quick race cars. Track Experiences gives fans a pure adrenaline rush, putting them in the driver's or passenger's seat to navigate the challenging turns of a globally renowned Formula 1 circuit. Saturday's Track Experiences is scheduled to be held from 8am to 3.30pm and fans will be able to choose between a Renault Clio Cup and either a Radical SR1 or SR3 race car. Those opting for the Clio Cup Experiences will get an awesome introduction into the high-octane world of motor-



sports, getting behind the wheel of a Clio Cup sports car that boasts a 1.6-litre, Turbocharged engine. The Driving Experience takes the participant onto the track behind a professional instructor in lead-follow manner, while the Passenger Experience re-

terested participants must complete a Clio Cup Drive in order to take part in this activity. The Radical SR3 Passenger Experience takes fans from zero to 100kph in about 3.4 seconds, making for a memorable number of laps around BIC alongside the circuit's expert instructors. The cost to get behind the wheel for the Clio Cup Driver Experience is BD121, while the Clio Cup Passenger Experience is BD27,500. For the Radical SR1 Driver Experience, the cost is BD132, while the Radical SR3 Passenger Experience is BD38,500. For more information on Saturday's Track Experiences or on all other events and activities at BIC, visit bahraingp.com, call the BIC Hotline, or follow the circuit's official accounts on social media.

## Stokes prefers media heat in Australia to 'miserable, cold' England

AFP | Brisbane

Defiant England captain Ben Stokes says he will not allow intense media attention stop him enjoying Australia, calling it preferable to being back home where it is "miserable, freezing cold and dark" at this time of year. The team's every move is being scrutinised on the five-Test Ashes tour, with players followed through the airport, on golf courses and on a trip to an aquarium. Stokes and others players were this week snapped riding electric scooters around Brisbane without helmets, prompting a front-page "Pommy Idiots" headline from the city's Courier-Mail newspaper on Thursday. Not wearing a helmet is punishable by a fine under Queensland state law with police saying they had "engaged



England's Ben Stokes bowls during a training session with those persons to inform and educate them on compliance requirements". Stokes said being under the microscope was part and parcel of being on tour in Australia and he was not letting it get to him. "If they (the media) think it is going to stop us enjoying this country when we have time off then it is not going to do that," he told the BBC.

## BIC welcomes fans for Rotax MAX Challenge Grand Finals 2025

Manama

Bahrain International Circuit (BIC), 'The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East', began welcoming fans from yesterday for the Rotax MAX Challenge Grand Finals (RMC GF) 2025, taking place at BIC's world-class grassroots motorsport facility Bahrain International Karting Circuit (BIKC).. The event, one of the biggest in the world of karting held each year, has brought nearly 400 of the sport's very best to the Kingdom, representing 60 nations worldwide. They are battling it out in eight high-octane categories, with racing having already gotten underway and continuing all this week. The ongoing non-qualifying practices continued yesterday, which will also feature qualifying practices and the start of qualifying heats, which will be held until today.



The pre-finals and finals are then set for tomorrow and Saturday, respectively, wrapping up the huge occasion at BIKC.

All are welcome to attend and enjoy the high-intensity, wheel-to-wheel racing. Entrance is free of charge and will be on a first-

come, first-served basis. BIKC will be opening its gates to fans from 10am until the end of track activity on each day,

except tomorrow, when spectators can access the circuit from 4.30pm. Amongst the field of karters competing this week are Team Bahrain, who are represented by 11 drivers. Flying the Kingdom's flag on their home track are Tariq Soofi racing in the Micro MAX class, Shaikh Ahmed bin Saqer Al Khalifa and Jude Andrews in the Mini MAX, Demir Abali and Rashid Hilal in the Junior MAX, Tye Mejia in the Senior MAX, Abdulla Sajjad and Abdulqader Qasem in the DD2, and Yousif Alaali, Vedant Menon, and Mohammed Alhasan in the E20 Senior. There is also racing taking place in the DD2 Masters and E20 Masters categories. This year's RMC GF marks the third time in five years that Rotax karting's most prestigious meeting is being held in Sakhir, following the success of the previous events in 2023 and

2021. The competitors are lighting up BIKC's 1.414-kilometre CIK-FIA track with sessions in both daytime and night conditions. BIKC was designed to the highest international standards and is capable of hosting world championship races under the CIK-FIA. The track made motorsport history in 2012 when it became the first karting venue ever to host a world championship-level event at night, thanks to BIKC's high-specification floodlight system. Drivers such as Max Verstappen, Lando Norris, George Russell, and many more, who are all amongst the biggest stars in F1 today, have competed at BIKC during the early years of their careers. For more information on this year's RMC GF, visit bahraingp.com, call the BIC Hotline on +973-17450000, or follow the circuit's official social media channels.