

Fast break to Cairo: Bahrain's U-19s ready for Handball worlds

Bahrain's juniors hit the world stage, opening against Japan in Group G

- Group includes host Japan, Egypt, and South Korea
 - Preparation boosted by Saudi friendly week
 - Eyes on main round return in Egypt
- TDT | Manama



Bahrain's squad during a pre-tournament training drill

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Bahrain reached the main round in their 2007 U-19 World debut and are eager to end the 18-year wait



Action from training

Bahrain's next generation of handball talent will open their U-19 World Championship campaign in Cairo tomorrow, August 6, against Japan at 5:15 PM Bahrain time. It's a tough welcome to Group G, often dubbed the "Group of Death," with hosts Egypt on Thursday at 7:30 PM and South

Korea on Friday at 5:15 PM. Only the top two sides will move on to the main round. The rest drop into the President's Cup.

Friendly Fire

Preparation has been thorough. Bahrain capped off weeks

of intense domestic drills with a closed door friendly against Saudi Arabia, where they focused on defensive compactness and disciplined transition play under match pressure. The Saudi camp allowed coaches to fine tune tempo and execution ahead

of Egypt.

Chasing a Return

Bahrain's route to Cairo was paved by a fifth-place finish at last year's Asian Youth Championship in Amman, where they faced familiar foes like Japan and Korea. Their 2007 debut remains their best U 19 World result, reaching the eight-team

main round. In their four appearances since, they have never made it out of the group stage.

Sethbacks and Support

Goalkeeper Mohamed Sham-louh has been ruled out of the tournament with a shoulder

injury, a blow to Bahrain's last line defense. Still, with strong backing from the Bahrain Handball Federation and Olympic Committee, including overseas training access, this squad enters Egypt better prepared than ever.

Pakistan beat West Indies by 13 runs to capture T20 series



Pakistan's Sahibzada Farhan, left, and Saim Ayub, right, celebrate reaching 100 runs with their opening partnership

AFP | Lauderhill

Sahibzada Farhan and Saim Ayub combined for a 138 opening partnership and Pakistan defeated the West Indies by 13 runs on Sunday to capture their T20 International Series. Pakistan won the series opener by 14 runs but dropped the second match by two wickets to set up a Sunday night decider at Lauderhill, Florida. After winning the toss and choosing to bat first, Pakistan were rewarded with a powerhouse performance by Farhan and Ayub. Pakistan went 189 for four as Farhan hammered the hosts for 74 runs on 53 balls, smashing five sixes and three fours, while Ayub lasted 19 overs, finishing on 66 from 49 balls with two sixes and four fours. Farhan was caught by West Indies captain Shai Hope at long off from a delivery by Shamar Joseph on the second ball of the 17th over. Hasan Nawaz entered but was retired after only 15 runs, caught by Romario Shepherd at long off from a delivery by Roston Chase on the penulti-

mate ball of the 18th over. Mohammad Haris was run out for only two runs by Gudakesh Motie to start the 19th over and Ayub finally exited on the last ball of the penultimate over, Jason Holder's delivery grabbed by Sherfane Rutherford at sweeper cover. Set 190 to win, West Indies struck for 30 runs on the first 10 balls from Hasan Ali and Mohammad Nawaz. Jewel Andrew was caught by Hasan Ali at long on, bowled by Haris Rauf for 24, the first West Indies wicket falling at 44. Ayub caught Hope bowled out by Nawaz for seven in the ninth over with the hosts still 116 runs from victory. Alick Athanaze lasted 13 overs before being taken for 60, caught by Khushdil Shah bowled by Ayub with West Indies on 110, needing 80 runs off the last 42 deliveries. Chase was retired on the last ball of the 17th over and his replacement, last-ball hero Holder from the win a night earlier, was bowled out by Su-fiyam Muqeem two balls later for a duck, leaving the hosts 41 runs shy with 16 balls remaining.

Despondent Hamilton and Ferrari crash back to earth

- Hamilton finishes 12th in Hungary
- Vasseur defends frustrated driver

AFP | Budapest

Lewis Hamilton received support from his Ferrari team boss Fred Vasseur on Sunday just hours after the Briton cut a dejected figure following a lacklustre drive to 12th place in the Hungarian Grand Prix. While team-mate Charles Leclerc proved unable to convert Ferrari's first pole position of the season into victory due to unexplained mechanical problems during the race, seven-time champion Hamilton was battling to escape midfield and finished where he started. As on Saturday, when he was dumped out of Q2 and appeared miserable, claiming he was "completely useless" and saying the team should "bring in another driver", Hamilton seemed utterly deflated. To most observers, it appeared as if the pressures of living up to the hype of his spectacular marquee move from Mercedes, where he won six titles, and expectations at Ferrari were overwhelming him. At 40, talk of imminent retirement circled around him. But Vasseur was swift to defend Hamilton, who has always been prone to impulsive heart-on-sleeve reactions. "I don't need to motivate him," said Vasseur. "Honestly, he's frustrated, but not demotivated. "He's demanding, but I think it's also why he's (a) seven-time world champion. I can perfectly understand this situation. "Sometimes, you are making comments on what the driver



Ferrari's British driver Lewis Hamilton stops at the pits during the Formula One Hungarian Grand Prix

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After being knocked out in Q2, a dejected Hamilton claimed he was "completely useless" and said the team should "bring in another driver."

is saying (in) the car, but if you put the microphone on some other sportsmen, in football and so on, I'm not sure that it would be much better. "Sometimes, just after the race or just after qualifying, you are very disappointed and the first reaction is harsh. I can understand the frustration, but we are all frustrated." 'He will be back' Vasseur added Hamilton's weekend appeared worse than it really was because of the tight

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He's demanding, but I think it's also why he's (a) seven-time world champion. I can perfectly understand this situation. Sometimes, you are making comments on what the driver is saying (in) the car, but if you put the microphone on some other sportsmen, in football and so on, I'm not sure that it would be much better

FRED VASSEUR

and competitive times that led him to miss out on reaching Q3 on Saturday. "For sure, when you are a seven-time world champion, your team-mate is on pole position and you are out in Q2, it's a tough situation," he said. "But overall, we can also have a deep look that he was in front of Charles in Q1 and with the

first set that he was one-tenth off in Q2. We were not far away from having the two cars out in Q2. "I can understand the frustration from Lewis. That's normal and he will come back. He was stuck in a DRS train, but when he was alone, the pace was good. "I'm sure that he will be back and he will perform." Fourth-placed Leclerc backed his team-mate. "At the end, we are one team and as much as I want to finish in front of Lewis, I want both of us to be successful and for Ferrari to be successful, and obviously this weekend has been a tough one for Lewis," Leclerc said. "But I have no doubt that it's a one-off and I'm sure the second part of the season will be a lot more positive." Hamilton, sixth in the drivers' standings, but without a podium for Ferrari this year, said he was looking forward to a much-needed "break from work" during F1's August holiday before the Dutch Grand Prix on the final weekend of this month.