

Budaiya Stun Al Ahli in Dramatic Comeback

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Budaiya completed a sensational turnaround yesterday at Khalifa Sports City Stadium, coming from 2-0 down to beat Al Ahli 3-2 in Matchday 11 of the Nasser Bin Hamad Premier League. Sayed Hassan Isa's men looked out of luck after early strikes from Abdulla Al Hashash and Fabrice Onana, but Budaiya's resilience, led by Daniel Asante and Adriano Suarez, ultimately turned the game on its head.

Al Ahli opened the scoring in the 5th minute after a clever build-up from Hamza Buihamghet and Victor de Oliveira, allowing Al Hashash to squeeze the ball past a crowded box. Thirteen minutes later, Victor de Oliveira again orchestrated the attack, teeing up Onana on the edge of the box. The Brazilian danced past defenders and hammered the ball into the net to double Al Ahli's lead, seemingly putting the game beyond Budaiya's reach.

However, Budaiya refused to back down. They sparked their comeback in the 64th minute when Abdulrahim Sido pounced on a loose cross from Asante, finishing first-time to make it 2-1. Ten minutes later, Adriano



Scenes of jubilation as Asante scores the winner

Suarez drew the visitors level, turning smartly in the box after another probing run from Asante. The decisive moment arrived in the 76th minute when Daniel Asante capped a rapid counterattack, sliding the ball into an empty net to complete a remarkable turnaround that sent the Budaiya fans into jubilation.

Elsewhere, Al Hidd were comfortable 2-0 winners against Al Shabab at Bahrain National Stadi-

um. Mohamed Al Akash opened the scoring in the 30th minute after a slick team move involving Oussema Belatrech and Adnan Fawaz, finishing expertly in the box. The win was sealed in the 70th minute when Belatrech converted a penalty following Abdulrahman Ali's high boot on Al Akash, a decision confirmed by VAR that also saw Ali sent off.

These results have tightened the mid-table battle. Al Hidd's

win moves them to 13 points, consolidating fifth place, while Budaiya's dramatic victory lifts them to 12 points, level with Al Ahli as both sides look to climb higher in the standings.

Matchday 11 continues today, with Aali facing champions Muharraq at 4:25 pm at Khalifa Sports City, followed by Makkia taking on Sitra at 7:00 pm at Shaikh Ali Bin Mohammed Stadium.

Australia win final Test to seal 4-1 Ashes triumph over England

AFP | Sydney

Australia won the final Ashes Test against England by five wickets yesterday to seal a dominant 4-1 victory after a gruelling series, sending the retiring Usman Khawaja out on a high.

The nervy hosts saw wickets tumble as they chased their 160

target, which they reached after lunch on day five with Cameron Green not-out 22 and Alex Carey on 16 at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

For England it was the final chapter in a miserable series.

"That's Ashes cricket. Everyone got tense," said Carey, who hit the winning runs.

"Usman is going to be missed.

A great career and a great way to finish."

Australia lost openers Travis Head (29) and Jake Weatherald (34), along with captain Steve Smith (12) and Khawaja, who made six in his final knock before retirement.

"It means a lot. So much has gone into it. The only

much as I wanted to hit the winning runs," said Khawaja, who was almost in tears as he walked off to a standing ovation after being bowled by Josh Tongue.

"The whole Test match I found it hard to control my emotions," Khawaja added after his 88th and final appearance on the Test stage.

Unbeaten Muharraq Storm Past Manama

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Champions Muharraq extended their unbeaten run in the Zain Bahrain Basketball League 2025/26 Premier Division with a statement 79-66 victory over Manama at Um Al Hassam Sports Hall yesterday. Trailing by eight at halftime, Muharraq flipped the script in the second half with a dominant third quarter and clinical execution down the stretch.

The game opened as a low-scoring battle, with Manama leading 42-34 at the break, relying on inside play from Donoven Carlisle and Subah Hussain, while Hasan Nowrooz finished the half with an impressive eight-point run. Muharraq kept pace thanks to Mohamed Amer's 18 points and Kerwin Roach's game-high 20 points, whose scoring and aggression near the rim, along with late-quarter contributions from Mahmood Abbas Isa and Ali Hussain Rashed, kept them within striking distance. Ma-



Muharraq's Kerwin Roach celebrates his game-high performance

nama were led by Mohammed Buallay with 12 points and Ali Jaber with 11, supported by other key contributors including Nowrooz, Hussain, and Carlisle.

Momentum shifted in the third quarter as Muharraq out-

side, and Rashed contributed tip-ins and free throws. Strong defense and transition play kept Manama struggling to respond, with only Emran Hasan and Nowrooz finding points in the quarter.

In the fourth, Muharraq sealed the win with continued consistent scoring, rebounding, and defensive intensity. Wayne Chism dominated the boards, adding crucial layups and free throws, while Roach and Abbas Isa maintained the offensive tempo. Manama fought valiantly but could not match Muharraq's second-half surge, leaving the challengers unable to close the gap.

With this win, Muharraq remain unbeaten after eight games, holding firm atop the six-team league. Their second-half turnaround showed depth, adaptability, and championship credentials. The Red Wolves will now turn to the FIBA West Asia Super League, hosting Shabab Al Ahli on January 12 before traveling to face Al Ittihad on January 19.

Muharraq sweep Majees in Arab Clubs opener



Muharraq player's huddle at El Menzah Sports Palace

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Bahrain's sole representatives racked up 27 points on serve compared to Majees' 16, with Swedish pro Jacob Link and Polish import Mateusz leading the charge under coach Yaseen Al Meel.

After this confident opener, the Kingdom's champions are set to face Al Ittihad of Libya today at 5 PM, aiming to keep their momentum going in the group stage.

stc Bahrain-Backed Race Night Set for 13th Meeting at REHC



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Horse racing fans in Bahrain are awaiting a high-profile evening as the 13th race meeting of the 2025-2026 season gets under way on Friday, January 9, at the Rashid Equestrian and Horse Racing Club in Riffa, under the sponsorship of stc Bahrain.

The meeting, scheduled to start at 4:00 pm, is expected to deliver strong competition across nine races for stc Bahrain trophies, alongside entertainment activities aimed at enhancing the spectator experience. Organisers said cash prizes will be awarded to racegoers through interactive questions held during the races, in addition to other promotional activities.

Tickets are available online

via the club's official website, with multiple categories offering different services and benefits, while on-site ticket sales will also be available on race days. Fans can also take part in the popular "Select 6" public tipping competition, which offers valuable cash prizes for successful predictions submitted through a dedicated online platform.

Officials said the meeting is likely to produce closely fought contests, with evenly matched horses competing across different classes. The evening will conclude with a beginners' race for locally bred horses, rounding off a programme designed to combine sporting intensity with fan engagement under the banner of stc Bahrain's continued support for the sport.