

Bahrain-backed **Paris FC** flying high

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Bahrain-backed Paris FC have made an impressive start to the new Ligue 1 season, climbing to second after taking seven points from their opening three matches under new head coach Liam Rosenior. The capital club began with a goalless draw at Troyes before sweeping aside Nice 3-0 at home. They followed that with their biggest result yet on Sunday, beating Marseille 3-2 at the Stade Velodrome.

Summer signing Lassine Sinayoko was the star of the show, scoring a hat-trick. He struck after just 23 seconds and completed his treble with an 86th-minute penalty.

Their early-season form carries particular interest in the kingdom because of Bahrain's long-standing relationship with the French club.

The partnership dates back to 2020, when Bahrain became a minority shareholder and main sponsor as Paris FC pursued pro-



HH Shaikh Nasser during his visit to Paris FC headquarters last February

motion to the top flight.

That association remains highly visible through the 'Bahrain Victorious' slogan on the

team's shirts, providing the kingdom with exposure in one of Europe's leading football leagues. Those ties were further high-

lighted in February when His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Representative of His Majesty the King for



Sinayoko celebrates after scoring against Marseille

Humanitarian Work and Youth Affairs, visited the club's headquarters.

Shaikh Nasser highlighted the partnership's role in strengthening Bahrain's international sporting presence while promoting its investment and tourism opportunities.

Paris FC returned to Ligue 1

in 2025 following a 46-year absence. They finished a respectable 11th in their first campaign back, laying the foundations for their promising start to a second season among France's elite.

The Parisians will look to remain unbeaten on Saturday when they host Lyon at Stade Jean Bouin.

Matchweek 3 begins with blockbuster



Mahdi Abduljabbar celebrates his goal for Riffa in the previous round

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Riffa and Al Khaldiya will put their perfect starts on the line tonight when the two title contenders meet in the headline fixture of matchweek three in the Nasser bin Hamad Premier League.

The early-season showdown kicks off at 7pm at Bahrain National Stadium, while defending champions Muharraq face newly promoted Manama simultaneously at Khalifa Sports

City Stadium.

Riffa have made an impressive start under Kuwaiti coach Mohamed Mashaan. They opened with a 2-0 victory over Al Ettifaq before cruising to a 5-1 win against Manama last Saturday.

Al Khaldiya have been equally convincing in their first two matches under new Croatian manager Goran Tomic. Last season's runners-up began with a 7-2 demolition of Al Najma before overcoming A'Ali 3-1.

At Khalifa Sports City, Mu-



Al Sabbar is joined by his Khaldiya teammates after scoring in their previous match

harraq will look to steady their campaign after parting ways with head coach Isa Al Saadoon following a difficult opening two rounds.

The Red Wolves drew 1-1 with rivals Al Ahli in their first match before suffering a surprise defeat to promoted Al Ettifaq.

Manama have also collected only one point under Bahraini coach Ismaeel Karami. They marked their return to the top flight with a 1-1 draw against

A'Ali but were then handed a heavy defeat by the Sky Blues.

The round continues tomorrow, with A'Ali taking on Malkiya at Khalifa Sports City and Al Najma meeting promoted East Riffa at Bahrain National Stadium.

Saturday's closing fixtures will see Sitra face Hidd at Khalifa Sports City, while Al Ahli go up against Al Ettifaq at the National Stadium.

All six matches kick off at 7pm.

World Cup final scorer Torres leads Ballon d'Or nominees



Ferran Torres celebrates scoring the World Cup winner (file photo)

AFP | Paris

Ferran Torres, whose goal against Argentina won the World Cup for Spain in July, leads a 30-man list for the men's Ballon d'Or revealed yesterday.

The 26-year-old who has since joined Paris Saint-Germain is one of six Spanish World Cup winners on the list, alongside 2024 laureate Rodri and last year's runner-up Lamine Yamal.

In the women's section, three-time winner Aitana Bonmati did not make the shortlist after breaking her leg midway through the season, but her former Barcelona team-mate Alexia Putellas, the winner in 2021 and 2022 and now a London City Lionesses player, is there.

Torres also won La Liga with Barcelona in May but is now teaming up with last year's Ballon d'Or winner Ousmane Dembele at PSG.

France international Dembele is one of nine PSG team-mates on the list to have won the Champions League in each of the last two years.

With Torres having joined the club, that makes it 10 current PSG players in total on

the list.

Among them, Fabian Ruiz is the only player to have won the Champions League and World Cup in 2026.

Flying Georgian winger Khvicha Kvaratskhelia was one of the stars of PSG's successful Champions League defence, alongside Portuguese midfielder Vitinha and Joao Neves, and all three are nominated.

Messi in for 17th time

Eight-time Ballon d'Or winner Lionel Messi received his 17th nomination, but his eternal rival Cristiano Ronaldo did not make the cut this time.

Messi helped inspire an ill-disciplined Argentina to the World Cup final, where they took almost 120 minutes to muster their first shot against Spain in a one-sided final.

England captain Harry Kane, who won the Bundesliga with Bayern Munich, is included as is his French team-mate and wing wizard Michael Olise.

Real Madrid's Jude Bellingham earned his nomination with an impressive World Cup for England, scoring seven goals -- matching Erling Haaland's tally and beaten only by Messi (eight) and Kylian Mbappe, on 10.

Mac Allister 'very sad' at lack of new Liverpool deal

AFP | London

Alexis Mac Allister threw his future at Liverpool into doubt yesterday after revealing his frustration at not being offered a new contract by the Premier League giants.

Fellow midfielders Dominik Szoboszlai and Ryan Gravenberch have been handed bumper new deals in recent months.

Mac Allister, whose contract expires in 2028, said he could



Alexis Mac Allister

have left during the transfer window, but insisted he remains

committed to the Reds.

"There were options to leave this summer," the Argentine told a pre-match press conference ahead of Atletico Madrid's visit in the Champions League on Wednesday.

"I think as everyone knows I received the news that the club was not in a position to offer me a new contract, which of course makes me very, very sad."

The 27-year-old added: "I think I give 100 percent for this

football club every single day in training, games. Of course I can have very good games, bad games, like everyone, but I always give my best.

"I see Dominik and Ryan renewing their contracts and that makes me very happy because they deserve it, but at the same time it makes me a little bit sad I didn't get mine."

Mac Allister, nonetheless, insisted his disappointment would not translate onto the pitch.