

**Daniel claims first Middleweight title**

Daniel "Gaucho" Souza Pereira brutalizes Chad Hanekom to become first-ever BRAVE CF Middleweight champion | **P15**

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**HM King declares holiday**

Ministries, government departments and public establishments will remain closed today, marking the historic achievement of Bahrain National Team, as declared by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa.

**HRH Crown Prince congratulates HM King**

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa received a cable of congratulations from His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al-Khalifa, the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister on the historic achievement of Bahrain's National Team, which won the 24th Gulf Cup.



**Bahrain end 50 year wait**

**Kingdom beat Saudi Arabia to lift historic first-ever Arabian Gulf Cup**

Bahrain were last night finally crowned champions of the Arabian Gulf Cup! The Bahrainis claimed the coveted title after a wait of nearly 50 years. Mohammed Al Rumaihi scored the decisive goal in the national team's 1-0 victory against Saudi Arabia in yesterday's final, played at a rocking Abdullah bin Khalifa Stadium in Doha. The lanky striker tapped in the winner in the 69th minute off a brilliant cross from the right-wing by in-form midfielder Mahdi Humaidan. That was enough to separate the two sides at the final whistle and earn the Helio Sousa-coached Bahrainis their historic first-ever Gulf Cup trophy. Bahrain hosted the first-ever edition of the regional competition in 1970 but Bahrain captain and goalkeeper Sayed Mohammed Jaffar, right, along with star striker Ismaeel Abdullatif and fellow-keeper Hamad Aldoseri lift the Gulf Cup

had never won until last night. They finished as runners-up four other times, but can now be called champions of the tournament's hugely exciting 24th edition. After the match, both Bahrain and Saudi were presented their respective awards by the Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani. Asian Football Confederation president and former Bahrain Football Association (BFA) president Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa was also in attendance, as were BFA president Shaikh Ali Ahmed Al Khalifa and high-ranking Bahrain officials.

Bahrain survived a couple of early scares in the match as the Saudis started off as the early aggressors. Saudi came close to breaking the goalless deadlock in the third minute when midfielder Salem Al Dawsari hit the crossbar with a dangerous shot just inches outside the box. Bahrain were then saved once again from disaster just seven minutes later, after Saudi team captain Salman Al Faraj missed a penalty. The Saudis were rewarded the spot-kick after Bahrain's Jassim Al-Shaikh took down Al Dawsari after his fine one-two with Abdullah Otaif in the penalty area. Al Faraj stepped up to

take the penalty but he hit his shot off the top-left corner of the goal frame, much to the relief of the Bahraini contingent. Bahrain then had their own chances to score but came just short. Humaidan was the first to go on target with a powerful low shot on the edge of the penalty area in the 13th minute, but his attempt was calmly collected by Saudi goalkeeper Fawaz Al Qarni. Five minutes before the half, Humaidan had a high header flicked over the crossbar by Al Qarni. The Bahrainis were then spared from conceding another penalty after Saudi striker Abdullah Al Hamdan appeared to be taken down by Humaidan in the box. Replays proved inconclusive and, even after using VAR technology, the match referee made no change to his non-call.

The match remained goalless at the interval. In the second half, Kumail Alaswad started things off with a shot on target that was easily saved by Al Qarni. That set the stage for the game-winner in the 69th minute. Following a long goal-kick from Bahraini keeper Sayed Mohammed Jaffar, the Bahrainis attacked from the right-wing. Humaidan was then unleashed with a short pass from Sayed Redha Isa, and he then sent in a precision low cross right in the face of goal, where Al Rumaihi was able to evade his marker and tap the ball into the bottom-left corner of the net. The Saudis tried valiantly to equalise from there and there were a few tense moments towards the end of the contest. The referee awarded more than eight minutes of second-half stoppage time, and just seconds before the final whistle, Jaffar tipped a short Saudi attempt over the crossbar. That was a crucial moment that saved the victory for Bahrain.

**Score card**  
**Bahrain 1 - 0 Saudi Arabia**  
 (M Al Rumaihi 69')

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