

Winless Bahrain Defeated by Türkiye

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TDT | Manama

Bahrain's youth men's national team concluded their 31st Albert Schweitzer Tournament campaign in Germany with a 57-86 defeat to Türkiye yesterday, finishing their debut appearance with five losses from as many games.

The Bahrainis started brightly, exchanging leads with their opponents in a thrilling first period. Türkiye surged ahead with a 9-2 run, but Ali Barhoom responded with six points to keep Bahrain within striking distance at 20-18.

The second quarter saw the Turks seize control. Kartal Bora imsek led their side with eight points in a 21-14 stretch, while Demir Öztürk and Ömer Alp Elitas added five and eight points respectively, giving Türkiye a 41-32 halftime advantage. Bahrain struggled to maintain momentum despite strong efforts from Hassan Abdulkadir and Somto Onoduenyi.

Türkiye's dominance became more pronounced in the third period, outscoring Bahrain 19-4. Elitas continued his fine form, while Kerem Sertakar contributed seven points as Bahrain found it increasingly difficult to break through Türkiye's defence.

In the final quarter, Türkiye kept their foot on the gas. Sertakar and Elitas combined for 12 points, with Öztürk finishing with 12 points and five rebounds, imsek 16 points,



Yousif Meshael in action against Türkiye

Elitas 19 points, and Sertakar 15 points. Bahrain's Onoduenyi led his side with 12 points, Abdulkadir added 16 points and 10 rebounds, Barhoom chipped in eight points, and Yousif Meshael scored 10 in a valiant effort.

The defeat completed Bahrain's preliminary round, which

included losses to hosts Germany, Sweden, Slovenia, and Japan. With a 0-5 record, the team now moves into classification contests to determine rankings from ninth to 12th place.

Following the preliminaries, the top two teams from each pool will progress to the semi-

nals, set for today, with gold and bronze medal games scheduled for Saturday, the tournament's final day. Bahrain will use the experience gained in Germany as preparation for the Gulf Basketball Association qualifiers ahead of the FIBA U18 Asia Cup 2026 in Qatar.

Sinner and Alcaraz wobble but advance to Monte Carlo quarter-finals



Spain's Carlos Alcaraz

Monaco, Principality Of Monaco

Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz both suffered second-set stumbles on Thursday in their race for the number one ranking but recovered to reach the last eight of the Monte Carlo Masters.

Sinner, who said he ran out of steam in the second set, beat the wildly erratic Tomas Machac, 6-1, 6-7 (3/7), 6-3.

Alcaraz followed Sinner on to the centre court and his match went to a similar pattern before he beat Tomas Etcheverry 6-1, 4-6, 6-3.

Alcaraz, the defending champion, could lose the No.1 ranking to Sinner, who was finishing a ban last year and has no ranking points to lose this week. The Italian came into Monaco after winning the Masters tournaments in Indian Wells and Miami.

On Thursday, Sinner galloped through the first set but slowed in the second, allowing Machac to hit his way back into the match.

"I was struggling a little bit, was a bit tired," Sinner said.

"I felt great before the match, in the second set I struggled a bit with trying to

find the right energy. This can happen. I tried to push myself through which I've done."

Machac squandered two set points on serve at 5-4 in the second but then romped through the tie-break.

That ended Sinner's record streak of 36 straight sets in 1000-level events but he stayed cool to stretch his run of Masters wins to 19.

Even with his opponent struggling, the Czech kept flailing for winners. He handed Sinner the third-set initiative when wild hitting handed the Italian a break to love in the third game.

Sinner held serve twice before breaking to love to wrap up victory in two hours and one minute.

His quarter-final opponent, sixth seed Felix Auger-Aliassime, needed to expend less energy. The Canadian was leading Casper Ruud 7-5, 2-2 when the Norwegian retired.

"I hope I can recover as much as I can for tomorrow," said Sinner.

Alcaraz also blazed through the first set.

"I was hitting the ball really well in the first set, like ten out of ten," said the Spaniard.

But in the second he made 23 unforced errors.

Choudhary smashes Lucknow to dramatic IPL win over Kolkata

AFP | Kolkata, India

Youngster Mukul Choudhary played the innings of his life, smashing seven sixes on his way to an unbeaten 54 to haul Lucknow Super Kings to a dramatic, last-ball, three-wicket victory over Kolkata Knight Riders in the IPL yesterday.

Chasing Kolkata's competitive 181-4 at Eden Gardens, Lucknow were in all sorts of trouble at 128-7 after 16 overs despite Ayush Badoni's fluent 54 when Choudhary, playing only his third IPL match, altered the script with a spectacular display of power hitting.

The powerful right-hander blasted a bouquet of sixes in the last four overs to score 52 off his last 19 balls and leave the home team still searching for their first victory.

"There is always pressure, but God has given us this opportunity, and I try to do what I can do," said the 21-year-old Choudhary, who revealed that he was playing only his second match under



Lucknow Super Giants Indian cricket player Mukul Choudhary (C) celebrates with captain Rishabh Pant (2R) after winning the 2026 Indian Premier League (IPL) T20 match between Kolkata Knight Riders and Lucknow Super Giants at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata

lights.

"My plan was to play till the end. I believe in myself so much that I knew if I batted till the end, I could take the team home."

Kolkata had recovered from a mid-innings slump after being put in, Rowman Powell providing the impetus with an unbeaten 39 during a 70-run

alliance for the fifth wicket with Cameron Green. Lucknow began brightly through Mitchell Marsh and Aiden Markram, who put on 41.

But once Vaibhav Arora dismissed both openers in the space of six deliveries in the fifth over, Kolkata applied relentless pressure.

Arora was tasked with defending 14 in the final over, but Choudhary and Avesh Khan scrambled the winning bye with one needed off the last ball.

Kolkata lost Kiwi opener Finn Allen in the second over of the contest, caught at third man off Prince Yadav, and were shackled in the first four overs by Mo-

ammed Shami's accuracy and swing, but once skipper Ajinkya Rahane and Angkrish Raghuvanshi spent a little time in the middle, they began to find their range.

The floodgates opened in the sixth over when Raghuvanshi smacked Avesh for two fours and a six, and with Rahane opening his shoulders, runs came at a decent clip. The second-wicket pair had added 84 when Lucknow broke through with leg-spinner Digvesh Rathi having Rahane smartly caught at mid-wicket by Shami.

That sparked a mini-collapse with the home side losing three for 12 in 19 balls, including Raghuvanshi for a fluent 45.

Lucknow surged back into contention by conceding just 17 runs from overs 11 through 15, requiring Powell and Green to first steady the ship and then deliver the acceleration.

Green, the most expensive buy at the December auction in Abu Dhabi at Rs 25.2 crore (\$2.8 million), shrugged off a

sluggish start with a flurry of late boundaries on his way to an unbeaten 32.

Powell was more enterprising, smashing four fours and two sixes, but both were trumped by Choudhary.



The Indian Premier League is the most valuable cricket league in the world, with its brand value crossing \$10 billion, making it one of the richest sports leagues globally—on par with major leagues like the NFL and NBA in terms of commercial impact.