



Riffa's Ali Madan (R) and Rodrigo Yuri (l) celebrate during yesterday's semi-final victory

Riffa edge Khaldiya in King's Cup classic

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

The King's Cup semi-final between holders Al Khaldiya and Riffa once again produced a dramatic contest, extending the recent rivalry between the two clubs. It finished 3-3 after extra time, before Riffa held their nerve to win 4-3 on penalties and secure their place in the final.

At Khalifa Sports City Stadium, the match unfolded as a series of shifting control rather than sustained dominance, with both sides repeatedly punished for brief lapses in concentration.

Riffa created the first clear opening in the 22nd minute when Lithuanian Dejan Georgijevic was released on the counterattack, but he was denied in a one-on-one that would later carry added significance.

That miss was quickly punished. Al Khaldiya struck in the 26th minute when Clyde

O'Connell arrived unmarked at the back post to turn in a low free-kick delivery from Adem Taous. The goal exposed Riffa's failure to track second-phase movement in the box.

Riffa responded after the interval through sustained set-piece pressure, and it told in the 54th minute when 18-year-old Bader Al Asam reacted quickest in a crowded area to force the ball home and restore parity.

The decisive phase of normal time arrived in the final 20 minutes, where control swung repeatedly and discipline became decisive. In the 78th minute, Riffa were awarded a penalty after Ali Madan was brought down, with VAR confirming contact inside the box. Brazilian Rodrigo Yuri converted with composure to make it 2-1.

The match then spilled over on the touchline as well as on the pitch. Riffa's head coach Mohammed Mashaan was shown a red card after protests from



Muharrag face Al Ahli today at Khalifa Sports City Stadium at 5:20pm in the King's Cup semi-final to decide the other finalist

the bench, while Al Khaldiya's coach Lassad Al Chabbi was booked as tempers flared on both sides.

Deep into stoppage time, Al Khaldiya were awarded a penalty of their own after Bader Bashir was clipped inside the area during a sustained spell of pressure. Mohammed Al Romaihi stepped up and converted

calmly to level the match at 2-2 and send it into extra time.

The pattern continued after the restart, with brief control followed by immediate punishment. Al Khaldiya regained the lead at 3-2 when Ali Abdulla Al Sharqawi was brought down by Yaqoob Diara inside the box, and Gleison Moreira converted the resulting penalty.

But the game refused to settle. Al Sharqawi was later sent off for dissent, adding further instability to the contest. Riffa then capitalised on one final chaotic moment when a set-piece led to a collision between goalkeeper Ricardo Silva and Samuel Toscas. The referee judged the contact to be a foul and awarded a late penalty. Rodrigo Yuri converted again to complete his brace and force penalties at 3-3.

In the shootout, Riffa showed greater composure under pressure, edging it 4-3 to confirm their place in the final of the 49th edition of the King's Cup.

Bahrain finish 12th after China defeat

Hussain Almaskati
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Bahrain's youth men's basketball national team ended their debut campaign in the 31st Albert Schweitzer Tournament in Germany with a 58-75 loss to China yesterday. The result came in the 11th-place classification game.

The defeat confirmed a 12th-place finish for the Bahrainis, who went winless in the preliminary round after losses to hosts Germany, Sweden, Slovenia, Japan, and Türkiye in Group A.

Bahrain were on the back foot early against China, who opened with a dominant first quarter to take a 27-11 lead. That gap proved decisive, with the nationals unable to fully recover despite improved performances in the remaining periods.

They showed better resistance in the second quarter, narrowly edging it 16-14, but still trailed 32-41 at the break. China regained control in the third, outscoring Bahrain 20-13 to stretch their advantage to 60-45 heading into the final frame.

Bahrain continued to battle in the fourth and again outscored their opponents 18-14, but the early deficit remained too much to overturn as China secured a comfortable 75-58 victory.

Hassan Abdulkadir led Bahrain with 21 points and 15 rebounds in another standout performance, while Somto Patrick Onoduanyi added 17 points and 15 boards. Mahdi Baqer contrib-



Onoduanyi looks to attack as Yizhaojie Zhang closes the gap

uted eight points, but Bahrain struggled from long range, converting just five of 25 attempts from beyond the arc.

China had a balanced scoring effort, with Boxin Zhao leading the way with 14 points and seven rebounds. Yuxiu Chen added 13 points, while

Ziyi Zhang scored 10 as they controlled the contest from the outset.

Vovorras' side were competing in Germany as part of their preparations for the Gulf Basketball Association qualifiers for the Fiba U18 Asia Cup 2026. Despite finishing without a win,

the team gained valuable experience against some of the world's top youth sides.

They will now turn their focus to the upcoming GBA qualifiers, aiming to build on the lessons learned and secure qualification for the continental tournament in Doha.

De Zerbi urges Spurs to unleash attacking 'DNA' in survival fight

AFP | London

Roberto De Zerbi called Ron Tottenham to embrace their attacking "DNA" in their relegation battle as he prepares to take charge of the team for the first time against Sunderland on Sunday.

The former Brighton and Marseille boss has been hired with a brief to stop Spurs suffering a catastrophic first relegation from the English top flight since 1977.

The London club are languishing just one point above the Premier League drop zone, with seven games remaining.

De Zerbi, 46, replaced interim head coach Igor Tudor, who failed to win any of his five league matches after taking over from the sacked Thomas Frank.

"What I want to do, what I want to achieve immediately is the character, is the right spirit, the right courage to play,



Roberto De Zerbi

to attack because the DNA of this club, of this squad, is to find the goal, to score," said the Italian.

Tottenham have not won a league game in 2026, but De Zerbi, speaking on Friday at his first press conference, is convinced they have the quality to stay up.

"I'm sure about the level of the players because many players in the past I was very, very close to bringing them to my former teams," he said.

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