## Kingdom gears up for star-studded Bahrain International Cup

Rashid Equestrian and Horse Racing Club readies world-class facilities ahead of Friday's prestigious international fixture

Event now upgraded to Group 2

Elite horses from four nations competing

🛑 Bahrain's "Kalif" leads home hopes

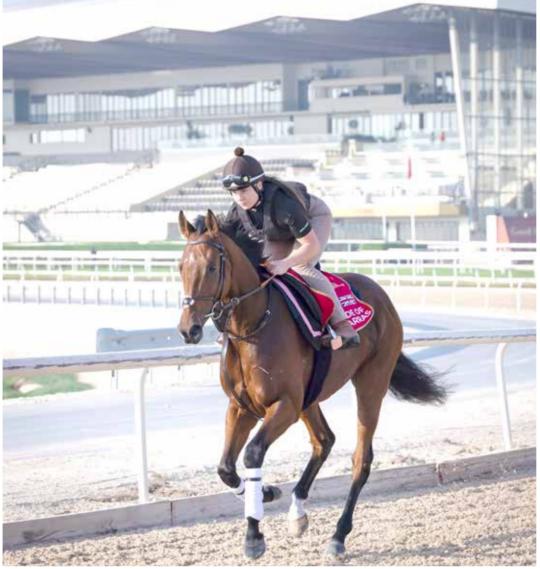
TDT | Manama

**₹**he Rashid Equestrian and Horse Racing Club is stepping up preparations to host the seventh edition of the Bahrain International Cup on Friday evening, welcoming elite horses, trainers, and jockeys from across the globe.

Organizers said intensive work is underway to ensure the event's success at the Sakhir course, with global sponsors lending support.

Held under the patronage of His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Minister of the Court of the Prime Minister, the event has grown into one of the region's most prestigious international racing fixtures. The cup's upgrade to Group 2 status and an increase in prize money have reinforced Bahrain's position as a rising destination in global horse racing.

The 2025 edition carries adtogether some of the high-



ditional significance, bringing Participating horses continue their preparations

est-ranked horses and lead- al field includes entries from the UAE alongside Bahrain's resenting Victorious Forever ported by a series of competitive dom and are training ahead of ing jockeys. The internation- Britain, France, Ireland, and own contender "Kalif," rep- Stables. Among the challeng- events, including the Gulf Air Friday's marquee event.





The event's prestige has been elevated as it has been upgraded to Group 2 status, a higher classification that reflects the quality of the competition and attracts a more elite field

ers are the UAE's "Military Or- through the club's official webder," Britain's "Lions Pride," "Bright Picture," and Ireland's side sections. International "Gallen."

Cup for purebred Bahraini Arabian horses, the Brown Advisory Cup for locally bred horses, and additional contests such as the Lexus Cup, Bayonne Cup, Bapco Energies Cup, and Economic Development Board Cup.

Spectators can expect a festive evening filled with both top-class racing and family-oriented entertainment. Organizers said the event highlights Bahrain's growing reputation as a host of world-class sporting occasions while promoting sports tourism and showcasing the Kingdom's cultural heritage.

Tickets for the Bahrain International Cup are available site, Bahrainturfclub.com, with "Persica," "Pride of Arras," and seating options ranging from 'Royal Champion," France's family areas to premium trackhorses and racing delegations The main race will be sup- have already arrived in the King-

## Muharraq Snap Winless Run with Late Surge Against Ittihad

Hussain Almaskati TDT | Manama

 $B^{
m ahrain's\ Muharraq\ Club\ finally\ got\ off\ the\ mark\ in\ the}$ 2025-26 FIBA West Asia Super League, edging Saudi Arabia's Ittihad Club 84-79 in a fascinating contest at the BBA Arena yesterday. The Group A clash saw Muharraq overcome an early deficit and produce a late flourish to secure their first win after back-to-back losses to Kazma SC and Shabab Al Ahli.

The Red Wolves entered the game riding high on momentum from their recent domestic success, having claimed the 2024-25 Super Cup by defeating Manama. Ittihad, meanwhile, sought to extend their perfect start in the Gulf League, having already beaten Shabab Al Ahli 94-88 and Kazma 92-81.

holding a 69-65 advantage head- 3-0 bid. ing into the final period.



Mohammed Hamoda celebrates as coach Schomers rallies Muharraq

In the closing minutes, Ham-raq included Nick West with 25 Schomers. ilton and Mohammed Ameer points and 8 rebounds, Ham-

stepped up. With the score tied ilton's near triple-double of to their next fixtures: they host Muharraq stormed out of the at 79-all, Hamilton converted 20 points, 10 rebounds, and 8 Kuwait's Kazma on Bahraini blocks, posting 36 points in the a three-point play with 1:21 re- assists, and Kerwin Roach Jr., National Day, December 16 at first quarter, only for Ittihad to maining before feeding Ameer who added 18 points, 10 as- 7:30pm at the BBA Arena, then recover with 22 points in the sec- for a decisive underbasket finish sists, 6 rebounds, 5 steals, and a welcome UAE's Shabab Al Ahli ond. The seesaw battle continued with 24.3 seconds left, sealing block. "We had some really good on January 12 at 7:30pm, aimthrough the third, with Muharraq the win and spoiling Ittihad's fastbreaks and stops when it ing to avenge their earlier decounted, and that made the diffeat, before closing the Group Top performers for Muhar- ference," said head coach Peter A phase against Saudi Arabia's

Muharraq now look ahead 19 at 8pm.

Ittihad in Jeddah on January

## 'Fired-up' Fritz sees off Musetti in ATP Finals

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Taylor Fritz got his bid for a He only qualified for the first ATP Finals crown off Finals on Saturday after Noto the best possible start with vak Djokovic pulled out with a comprehensive 6-3, 6-4 win injury, shortly after beating over home favourite Lorenzo the Italian in the final of the Musetti in Turin yesterday.

The 28-year-old American, an early break and holding on match. to pocket the first set.

who was a late addition to the line-up.

Athens event.

Winning 84 percent of his who lost in last year's final to first serves and giving away Jannik Sinner, was out of the just four break point chancblocks quickly in the Jimmy es, none of which were taken, Connors group match, taking Fritz continued to control the

The American broke to go The crowd did their best to 3-1 up and served cleanly all lift a visibly fatigued Musetti the way to the line.

