

Trial by fire in Mannheim

Bahrain's Youth Gain Valuable Exposure in Germany Campaign

TDI | Manama

Bahrain's first appearance at the Albert Schweitzer Tournament ended without a win, but with a clear picture of the standard that defines elite youth basketball.

The campaign, staged in Mannheim and Viernheim, concluded with hosts Germany defeating Slovenia in the final to secure the title and underline the tournament's reputation as one of the most competitive U18 basketball events in the world.

For the nationals, the final result came in a 58-75 defeat to China in the classification game, confirming

12th place after a week spent testing themselves against established international programs. Bahrain also attended the official closing ceremony following the final, marking the end of their debut campaign on the tournament stage.

Drawn into Group A, Bahrain faced an immediate rise in intensity. Germany, Slovenia, Sweden, Japan, and Türkiye arrived in succession, each bringing a level of pace, physical strength, and execution that punished small lapses. Bahrain had stretches where they held their ground and matched energy, but sustaining it across full games proved the

difference.

The win column stayed empty, but the value of the week sat elsewhere. The invitation from the German Basketball Federation reflected growing recognition of Bahraini youth basketball and placed the team in an environment that exposed the demands of top-tier international competition up close.

Attention now turns to the Gulf Basketball Association U18 qualifiers for the FIBA U18 Asia Cup 2026 in Doha. Bahrain's challenge is straightforward: take the lessons learned in Germany and convert them into results when qualification begins.



Bahrain players take part in the closing ceremony parade

Andreeva opens clay court season with title in Linz



Mirra Andreeva returns a shot to Victoria Mboko of Canada

AFP | Linz

Russian teenager Mirra Andreeva made the perfect start to her clay court campaign as she came from a set down to beat Anastasia Potapova 1-6, 6-4, 6-3 to land the WTA event in Linz yesterday.

It is a second title this season for the 18-year-old, ranked 10 in the world, who also won in Adelaide in January.

Broken in her opening service game, Andreeva piled up unforced errors, especially on

her forehand, and was swept aside by Potapova in just 29 minutes in the first set.

The top seed bounced back immediately, breaking the Potapova serve at the start of the second set and although she dropped her own service once, she broke again to level the match.

In the third set, the Russian-born Potapova, who has been competing this season under the Austrian flag, cracked under the power of Andreeva's raking shots into the corners.

Fans return to Bahrain sporting arenas

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Crowds are set to return across Bahrain's sporting arenas, bringing life back to stadiums and halls at a decisive stage of the season.

Authorities previously suspended fan attendance as a precautionary measure amid unfortunate regional conflicts. Now, they are moving to restore normal sporting atmospheres.

The Bahrain Football Association confirmed that supporters will be allowed back into stadiums starting from Round 18 of the Nasser bin Hamad Premier League, ending the suspension that had been in place since March 12. The round gets underway on Thursday, April 16, with both the title race and relegation battle finely poised.

Basketball will also welcome fans back, beginning with Game 3 of the Zain Bahrain Basket-

ball League final between Muharraq and Manama. The game is scheduled for tomorrow at 7pm at Khalifa Sports City Arena, where the presence of supporters is expected to add intensity to an already exciting series.

In handball, fans return starting Sunday with the resumption of attendance in the Khalid bin Hamad Handball League. The comeback coincides with the final round of the preliminary stage, including a key meeting between Al Najma Club and Al Ahli where crowd support could play a significant role.

Volleyball follows the same path, with the Bahrain Volleyball Association announcing the return of spectators to indoor competitions from Sunday. The federation has urged fans to support their teams while maintaining a positive sporting atmosphere.



Muharraq fans in full voice during a previous match

BIC to host Kanoo Motors Rolling Drag Night this Thursday and Open Track Night on Friday

Manama

Bahrain International Circuit (BIC), 'The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East', has announced the organisation of Kanoo Motors Rolling Drag Night on Thursday, 16 April, followed by Open Track Night for cars and motorbikes on Friday, 17 April, as part of a series of activities aimed at motorsport enthusiasts and speed lovers.

The events will deliver an exciting atmosphere at BIC's world-class venue, featuring competitive action on the circuit's quarter-mile drag strip and offering participants a unique driving experience at a facility that hosts some of the region's premier motorsport championships.



Kanoo Motors Rolling Drag Night offers participants the opportunity to take part using their own cars or motorbikes on the National Hot Rod As-

sociation (NHRA)-sanctioned quarter-mile strip. Participants will begin their runs from a rolling start at 80km/h, offering an added level of challenge and



excitement within a safe and controlled environment.

The Rolling Drag Night will take place on Thursday from 6pm to 11pm. Registration will

be available at the circuit, with participation fees set at BD22 per driver or rider.

Meanwhile, Open Track Night will be held Friday from 5pm to

9pm, with 8pm to 9pm being for members. The experience will take place along BIC's Inner Circuit, offering enthusiasts the opportunity to drive their own vehicles in a structured and professionally managed setting.

Participation fees are BD71.500 for advance bookings and BD82.500 for registrations on the day of the event. Single sessions cost BD33 each. Instructor sessions are also available, while additional drivers and passengers can be a part of the action, all for an additional fee. For further information or to register for either activity, interested participants are invited to visit the circuit's official website at bahraingp.com or contact the BIC Hotline on +973 1745 0000.

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