

GSA Launches Clubs Excellence Award

● New initiative among measures aimed at improving Bahrain's sporting sector

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Bahrain's sports clubs will now compete for a new award recognising excellence in how they are run.

The Khalid bin Hamad Award for Institutional Excellence for Clubs was approved at the General Sports Authority's (GSA) ninth board meeting at Al Wadi Palace on Sunday. It aims to raise standards across clubs' administrative, financial and technical operations, while encouraging better management.

The meeting was chaired by His Highness Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Supreme Council for Youth and Sports



first deputy chairman, GSA chairman and Bahrain Olympic Committee president. GSA vice-chairman His Highness Shaikh Salman bin Mohammed Al Khalifa and other board members attended.

Shaikh Khalid praised the GSA's executive team, led by chief executive Dr Abdulrahman Askar, for its work in developing sport in the kingdom.

Alongside improving how clubs are run, developing young

talent was a key focus of the meeting. The board discussed activating a schools and universities sports unit to increase participation, strengthen links with organised sport and help identify promising athletes.

The focus on young Bahrainis extended beyond the playing field, with plans reviewed to create more opportunities for them to work in sport and improve how sporting organisations are structured and run.

Safety at sports facilities was another area addressed; first-aid provision at clubs, federations and other venues was discussed as a way to improve their response to medical emergencies.

Attention then turned to the GSA's facilities, with the Juffair Youth Centre hall set to be offered for commercial naming rights. It follows Khalifa Sports City and Isa Sports City as the authority seeks to generate greater value from its venues.



HH Shaikh Khalid chairs the GSA board meeting in Riffa

Hedin names Bahrain's Asiad squad

Golden generation target the one major title still missing

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Bahrain have named their 16-player handball squad for the 20th Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan.

The nationals will be led by Swedish coach Robert Hedin as they look to win the men's title for the first time.

Captain Hussain Al Sayyad, Mohammed Abdhussain, Mohammed Habib Hasan, Mohammed Habib Al Nasser, Hassan Madan, Hisham Al Ustadh, Hassan Mirza and Ahmed Jalal have all been selected.

The squad also includes Jassim Khamis, Ahmed Kadhem, Ali Mahmood, Mohammed

Hameed, Sayed Ali Shubber, Abdulla Abdulkarim, Salman Al Showaikh and Ahmed Eid.

Nine teams will contest the competition, which begins on Saturday and runs until September 29.

The Warriors have been drawn in Group B alongside South Korea, Kuwait, Iran and Kazakhstan. Hosts Japan, China, Hong Kong and three-time defending champions Qatar make up Group A.

Bahrain begin their campaign against Kazakhstan on Sunday at 6.30am, Bahrain time, before facing Iran the following day at 8.30am.

The nationals then take on



Bahrain handball coach Robert Hedin

South Korea on Wednesday at 11.30am before completing the preliminary round against Kuwait on Friday at 7.30am.

The top four teams from each group will advance to the quarter-finals on September 26. With only four sides in Group A, all are guaranteed a place in the knockout stage, while only the bottom team in Bahrain's five-team group will be eliminated.

The semi-finals take place two days later, followed by the medal matches on September 29.

The kingdom enter the Games after winning three major titles in the space of seven months.

Their successful run began

with gold at the Islamic Solidarity Games in Riyadh last November. Bahrain then claimed their maiden Asian Men's Handball Championship crown in Kuwait in January before triumphing at the fourth GCC Games in Doha in May.

The Asian Games crown is the one major title still missing from the kingdom's recent collection. Bronze in 2014 was followed by silver medals in 2018 and 2022, leaving the reigning Asian champions aiming to go one better in Japan.

Preparations included a training camp in Egypt, where the squad played several friendly matches ahead of the continental showpiece.

Jaber Claims Portugal Endurance Crown

Hussain Almaskati

Royal Endurance Team rider Jaber Bader Jaffar claimed victory in the 120.6-kilometre junior and young riders race during the team's participation in the Portugal International Endurance Races.

Jaber produced a strong performance across the different stages before completing the distance in first place to secure the title.

The Bahraini outfit also celebrated a podium finish in the 120.6km open race, where Loay Tareq Ahmed finished runner-up.

UAE rider Hazza Mohammed Al Sayari took victory, while Portugal's Maria Prazeres completed the top three.

The results came after the Royal Endurance Team had earlier competed in the FEI Endurance World Championship for Young Horses in Barroca d'Alva, where Fahad Helal Al Khatri led Bahrain's challenge with a fourth-place finish.

Royal Stables and Royal Endurance Team director general Dr Khalid Ahmed Hassan



Action from the race

praised the latest results, saying they reflected the work carried out by the team in the build-up to the races.

He said the Portugal programme had achieved several of its objectives, particularly in preparing both riders and horses for upcoming competitions while providing further international experience.

Dr Khalid added that the results would provide further motivation as the team continues its preparations for forthcoming assignments, and wished the riders success in their next appearances.

Zverev holds off Shelton to win US Open title

AFP | New York

Alexander Zverev held off Ben Shelton to win the US Open on Sunday, capturing the second Grand Slam of his career just months after winning the French Open.

The top-seeded German ruthlessly snuffed out a late surge by Shelton to triumph 6-3, 7-6 (7/2), 5-7, 6-2, ending the eighth seed's bid to become the first US man in 23 years to win a Grand Slam title.

Zverev expunged the bitter memory of his 2020 US Open defeat, when he was two points from victory before falling to Dominic Thiem in five sets.

It would be six years -- with two major finals disappointments -- before he would break through this season.

"I think God has seen how hard we worked, how much we suffered, how much pain we went through and I think 2026 is the outcome of all the years that happened before," Zverev said at the trophy presentation.

The 23-year-old Shelton was one month shy of his first birthday when Andy Roddick hoisted the 2003 US Open trophy in the last major triumph for a US



Germany's Alexander Zverev hugs the trophy

man.

Hopes were high that Shelton could end the drought after his epic five-set quarter-final victory over defending champion Carlos Alcaraz, and a come-

from-behind win over compatriot Frances Tiafoe in the semi-finals.

But Zverev's all-court excellence proved too much for Shelton, despite the support of

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Zverev's victory erases the memory of his 2020 US Open final loss, when he came within two points of beating Dominic Thiem

a star-studded Arthur Ashe Stadium crowd trying to will the American to victory.

With their backing, Shelton surged in the third set, eliminating the errors that Zverev had ruthlessly exploited.

Serving to extend the set, Zverev fell behind 0-40. Shelton fired long on his first set point but on the second Zverev's forehand volley went wide. Shelton had his first break of the match and they were headed to a fourth set.

Zverev, however, responded immediately and decisively.