

## SPORTS

## sports

# Ukraine qualify for Euro 2020

● Ukraine defeated Portugal

● Racist abuse twice halts England's 6-0 victory in Bulgaria

AFP | Paris

Ukraine booked their place in Euro 2020 after squeezing past Portugal as Cristiano Ronaldo scored his 700th career goal on a night stained by Bulgaria fans racially abusing England players while their side were hit for six in Sofia.

Andriy Shevchenko's unbeaten team are through to next summer's finals with a match to spare as Group B winners thanks to first-half goals from Roman Yaremchuk and Andriy Yarmolenko, which meant that Ronaldo's 72nd-minute penalty wasn't enough for Portugal.

Ukraine join Poland, Russia, Italy and Belgium in the multi-host tournament which kicks off in Rome on June 12, with Shevchenko -- who scored 48 times for Ukraine in 111 matches -- proving a similar success on the bench as he was on the pitch. Second-placed Portugal's fate is still in the balance, with Serbia just a point behind them with two matches remaining after they beat Lithuania 2-1.

Portugal dominated the second half and pulled one back



Portugal's defender Raphael Guerreiro and Ukraine's forward Andriy Yarmolenko vie for the ball

when Ronaldo blasted home the spot-kick to make it 700 goals for club and country, but they couldn't find an equaliser despite some good chances.

"There are days like these, when the ball just doesn't want to go in," said Portuguese midfielder Danilo. "No need to do the maths now: we just need to win the next two games to reach Euro 2020."

Group A leaders England still have to wait for their place at the Euros despite hammering hapless Bulgaria 6-0, but the focus of attention was again on the stands as the home fans caused mayhem with racist chanting that twice caused the match to

be halted.

It was another England match blighted by racism from opposition fans after England's black players were targeted with monkey chants during their 5-1 win at Montenegro in March.

## Racism mars England win

The level of abuse from a section of the Bulgarian support led the English Football Association to demand an investigation from UEFA, asking European football's governing body to open a probe "as a matter of urgency".

Tyrone Mings was one of those targeted on his England debut, and he said that stopping the game did have the desired

effect of reducing racist abuse in the second half.

"We made the decision at half-time to come out and play the game which we thought was the right decision," said Mings. "If anything else happened, we would have taken appropriate action."

England led 2-0 through early goals from Marcus Rashford and Ross Barkley when play was first stopped and an announcement made to supporters that the game could be suspended the abuse continued.

Once restarted, England quickly made it 3-0 through Barkley before a second stoppage, with Croatian referee Ivan



700 goals have been scored by Cristiano Ronaldo in his career

Bebek holding discussions with players and coaching staff from both sides.

Raheem Sterling then netted twice either side of half-time before Harry Kane rounded off the scoring to take England to the brink of qualification.

## Ayhan denies France

France also missed a spot in the Euros when Kaan Ayhan's leveller snatched a point for Turkey in a match played against a backdrop of diplomatic tensions after Paris condemned Ankara for its military offensive against Kurdish forces in Syria.

Substitute Olivier Giroud headed France in front on 76 minutes at the Stade de France. Ayhan nodded home six minutes later -- and celebrated with a military salute in front of the Turkish supporters -- to leave Didier Deschamps side waiting.

"We did what we needed to win the match based on the play and number of chances. They didn't have many but put away a set-piece," said Deschamps, whose team lost 2-0 to Turkey in June.

## Hamza Kooheji to represent Bahrain in home soil

TDT | Manama

Bantamweight contender Hamza Kooheji will get a chance to be closer to a title shot on November 15th, when he takes on Nahuel Gandolfi at BRAVE 29, which takes place at Khalifa Sports City Arena, in Isa Town.

The historical show will be the main attraction of the BRAVE International Combat Week, Asia's largest combat sports festival.

Bahrain's own Kooheji has been preparing for his BRAVE CF comeback in the United States alongside former BRAVE CF Lightweight world champion Abdul-Kareem Al-Selwady, at the world-famous Fortis MMA gym, in Texas.

With a professional record of eight wins against two losses, "The Pride of Bahrain" is on a two-fight win streak, beating Crisanto Pitpitunge at BRAVE CF 16, and following it up with an impressive victory over Yay-ong Wang at BRAVE CF 21. He hasn't fought yet in 2019, and Bahraini fans can expect a much-improved fighter when he takes to the BRAVE CF Arena on November 15th.

Nahuel Gandolfi is from Argentina, but trains in Brazil, at Astra Fight Team, and will drop down from Featherweight to take on Kooheji in his debut. A dangerous ground fighter, Gandolfi has eight of his 11 career victories by submission.

## Bahrain's Mattar to compete in karting finals



Mohammed Mattar (R) in Le Mans with coach Abbas Sarhan

TDT | Manama

Champion Bahraini karter Mohammed Mattar is set to fly the kingdom's flag in international competition over the next couple of weeks in Europe.

Mattar will be battling in the IAME International Final 2019 in Le Mans, France, over the next few days and then also race in the Rotax Max Challenge Grand Finals 2019 in Sarno, Italy from October 19 to 26.

Mattar is already in Le Mans and over the past few days has been taking part in free practice and qualifying sessions, where he is racing in the X30 Super Shifter category.

Today, he will take part in the Heats, which continue tomorrow and Friday. The Pre-Finals

and Finals will then be held on Friday and Saturday.

There are several other competition categories in the IAME meeting, including the X30 Senior, X30 Junior, X30 Master, X30 Pro and X30 Mini, and the MINIME FFSA/Cadet MUK.

The IAME International Final is in its eighth edition. The event is bringing together over 500 of the top karters from around the world.

Meanwhile, Mattar will be competing in the Senior Max category in the Rotax Max Challenge Grand Finals in Sarno. He is one of more than 70 entries in the class, which is also set to feature drivers coming from all across the globe.

The event also features racing in the DD2, DD2 Masters, Junior, Micro, Mini and E-Kart THUNDER classes.

## BTC to host world's top young players

TDT | Manama

The Kingdom of Bahrain once again welcomes some of the world's future tennis stars as Bahrain Tennis Club (BTC) hosts the 11th Bahrain ITF Juniors Tennis Championship 2019 from October 21 to 26 at the BTC hard courts in Juffair.

The prestigious tournament is being held under the patronage of Deputy Prime Minister Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa. It is a part of the International Tennis Federation (ITF) World Tennis Tour Juniors, and it continues the tradition of BTC's hosting of world-class tennis competitions each year.

The tournament coordinator Hamdi Abduljawad said the

highly ranked youngsters from around the world will be vying for glory in four categories, including the boys' singles, boys' doubles, girls' singles and girls' doubles.

Hamdi added also a main draw of 32 boys and 32 girls aged 18 and below will be competing for their respective singles titles. For the doubles championships, there will be a maximum of 16 pairings each for boys and girls.

Among the top players pencilled in to compete for the boys this year are Daniel Webb and Alexander Knox Jones of Great Britain, Garv Bahl and Vansh Bhagiani of India, Boris Stastny of the Czech Republic, Mark Owen Ender of Germany and the French pair of Pablo Trochu

and Victor Paganetti.

For the girls, last year's singles winner Nina Danisova of Slovakia is returning to defend her title. Some of the other top players she could be facing are Charlotte Russell and Jessica Dhome-Casanova of Great Britain, Sarah Dev and Hrudaya Shah of India, Rosaleen Aioussef of Russia, Stefania Bojica of Romania and Hagar Ramadan and Carolin Fawzy from Egypt.

A number of Bahrain's leading young players are also expected to be in the field.

Prior to the official start of the tournament, there will be a qualifying draw for both singles events.

BTC has had the privilege of organising the ITF champion-

ship since its inaugural event held in October of 2009. It was a strategic move by the club's officials, who aspired to take tennis in Bahrain to a higher international level.

Since then, the championship in Bahrain has become a staple on the ITF juniors calendar, and it is one of the top tournaments to look forward to each year. It attracts many players from all over the globe, and has achieved monumental success.

BTC has received tremendous feedback for hosting the tournament over the years, including the utmost appreciation of the ITF's higher-ranked officials, who have expressed their gratitude and support towards BTC for organising many more tournaments in the future.



Players of KCA Blue Sea after winning their match against Riffa Stars on Sunday in the KCA - Zayani Motors International Volleyball Tournament 2019. KCA Blue Sea won all 3 sets with score 25-13, 25-10 and 27-25. On Monday, Al Reef Panasia-B won their match against Lulu by winning all 3 sets