

Balew qualifies for 5000m final

Bahrain's Last Push for Gold in Tokyo Worlds

- **Balew advances in 5000m heats**
- **Final set for championship close**
- **Naser, Yavi both win medals**

TDT | Manama

Bahrain's Birhanu Balew booked his place in the men's 5000m final at the World Athletics Championships Tokyo 2025, clocking 13:41.75 to finish third in his heat yesterday. The 29-year-old edged Britain's George Mills by just 0.01 seconds to claim one of the eight automatic qualifying spots in a tightly packed field. The final is set for tomorrow at 1:47pm Bahrain time.

His heat featured some of the biggest names in long-distance running, including Ethiopia's

Men's 5000m Heat 2 - Tokyo 25			
Pos	Athlete	Country	Time
1	Biniam Mehary	ETH	13:41.52
2	Jimmy Gressier	FRA	13:41.64
3	Birhanu Balew	BRN	13:41.75
4	George Mills	GBR	13:41.76
5	Valentin Soca	URU	13:41.80
6	Grant Fisher	USA	13:41.83
7	Yann Schrub	FRA	13:42.00
8	Jakob Ingebrigtsen	NOR	13:42.15

Biniam Mehary, France's Jimmy Gressier, US star Grant Fisher, and reigning Olympic and world champion Jakob Ingebrigtsen of Norway. Mehary took the heat win in 13:41.52, followed by Gressier in 13:41.64.

Bahrain's Championships So Far

Balew is the last Bahraini in action at Tokyo 2025. Earlier this week, Winfred Yavi claimed silver in the women's 3000m steeplechase in 8:56.46, while Salwa Eid Naser secured bronze in the women's 400m with a time of 48.19 in a historic sub-48 final.

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Balew edged through his heat by 0.01 seconds

Nelly Jepkosgei also competed, running 2:02.79 in the women's 800m heats but missing out on the semi-finals. In the 5000m semi yesterday, Balew finished approximately 53 seconds off his season and personal best of 12:48.67 set earlier this year in Paris. While advancing to the medal race confirmed his place among the world's elite, the final result reflected either tactical pacing or a lack of peak form heading into the concluding day of the championships.



Balew (C) races ahead of his competitors

Slot thanks Everton for solidarity after Jota tragedy



Diogo Jotar reacts during a match (file photo)

AFP | London

Liverpool manager Arne Slot thanked Everton for the support they showed their Merseyside rivals after Diogo Jota's tragic death in July. Jota died at the age of 28 in a car accident in Spain, plunging Liverpool into mourning just weeks after they celebrated winning the Premier League title.

The Portuguese's final goal came in the last Merseyside derby in a 1-0 Liverpool win in April.

Everton make the trip back to Anfield on Saturday and yesterday Slot took the opportunity to praise the respect between the clubs despite their intense rivalry.

"They are a good team and there is rivalry but what I also liked and what I want to emphasise is - what they did when Diogo passed away," he told reporters yesterday.

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ARNE SLOT

Despite cruising to the title last season, Liverpool transformed their squad with a record spend of nearly £450 million (\$612 million) for an English club in one transfer window.

The scale of change has shown in some disjointed performances from Slot's men, but they have still managed to win all five of their Premier League and Champions League games so far thanks to late winners in every match.

"I prefer the situation of winning the games and pointing out that we can still improve things, compared to losing games," added Slot.

Hamilton tops practice in Ferrari 1-2 as McLaren struggle in Baku

- **Leclerc and Russell finish behind**

AFP | Baku

Lewis Hamilton topped the times ahead of his Ferrari team-mate Charles Leclerc and former partner George Russell of Mercedes in yesterday's crash-hit second free practice session for this weekend's Azerbaijan Grand Prix.

As the title-chasing McLaren duo series leader Oscar Piastri and closest rival Lando Norris experienced a difficult afternoon of scrapes and suspension failures, the seven-time champion demonstrated why he had felt optimistic on Thursday.

He finished the session with a best lap in 1 minute 41.293 seconds to edge 0.074sec ahead of Baku maestro Leclerc, who is chasing a fifth consecutive pole on the intimidating street track.

Russell was third, almost half a second adrift, ahead of his team-mate Kimi Antonelli, Oliver Bearman of Haas and four-



Ferrari's British driver Lewis Hamilton drives during a practice session

time champion Max Verstappen of Red Bull.

Liam Lawson was seventh for Racing Bulls ahead of Esteban Ocon in the second Haas, Williams' Alex Albon and Norris who suffered an awkward afternoon along with teammate Piastri.

Norris, who is 31 points behind Piastri in the champion-

ship, began the day well enough clocking the best time in the morning session as the pair posted an impressive 1-2.

But it went pear-shaped when the Briton crashed in the second session, smacking the wall at Turn Four. It seemed he had damaged his car's suspension and left rear wheel and he limped back to the pits, missing

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A victory on Sunday would make Hamilton the first Formula 1 driver in history to reach 5,000 championship points

most of the action.

Piastri then brushed the wall at Turn 15, returning to the pits for a check-up.

He was released to continue but caused another scare in the McLaren garage when he locked up at Turn Two with 20 minutes remaining, a signal not only that he was pushing hard in his long run laps, but also that Baku bites any indiscretion.

In the end Piastri could only clock the twelfth fastest time, two places below Norris.

India fend off Oman to claim 21-run Asia Cup win

TDT | Manama

India survived a spirited chase from Oman to secure a 21-run victory in their Asia Cup group clash at the Zayed Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Opting to bat first, India posted 188 for eight in their 20 overs.

Sanju Samson anchored the innings with a composed 56 off 45 balls, while opener Abhishek Sharma blasted 38 from just 15 deliveries to give the start momentum. Quick cameos from Axar Patel (26 off 13) and Tilak Varma (29 off 18) pushed India close to the 190-mark



India's Shivam Dube (L) and Sanju Samson run between the wickets

despite regular breakthroughs by Jiten Ramanandi and Aamir Kaleem, who claimed two wickets apiece.

Chasing 189, Oman began steadily through skipper Jatinder Singh (32) and Kaleem, who struck a fluent 64 off 46 balls with seven fours and two sixes. The partnership between Kaleem and Hammad Mirza (51 off 33) kept the chase alive until the final overs. However, India's bowlers held their nerve, with Kuldeep Yadav, Hardik Pandya, Harshit Rana and Arshdeep Singh sharing the wickets as Oman were restricted to 167 for four.