

Bahrain set for semis challenge in West Asian women's futsal

Kingdom's national team take on counterparts from hosts Saudi Arabia for a place in the gold medal game of the third West Asian Futsal Federation Women's Futsal Championship 2022

● **Bahrain scheduled to face off with Saudi Arabia at 6pm, Bahrain time**

● **Group B winners Kuwait to play Iraq in other match of final four at 8.30pm**

TDT | Manama

Bahrain's women's national futsal team take on their counterparts from Saudi Arabia tonight in the semi-finals of the third West Asian Futsal Federation (WAFF) Women's Futsal Championship 2022, taking place in Jahez, Saudi Arabia.

The nationals qualified for the last four after winning both their games in Group A of the preliminary round.



Bahrain's Vasmeeen Tobellah in action for Bahrain against Iraq in the group stage (File photo)

They first thrashed Palestine 6-0 before edging past a battling Iraq 1-0. That earned them the full six points in their division table.

The Bahrainis made it through to the semis alongside the Iraqis, who are set to take on Group B winners Kuwait in the other contest.

Bahrain's match with hosts Saudi is scheduled for a 6pm kick-off this evening. It will be followed by the Iraq and Kuwait clash starting at 8.30pm.

The winners will move on to the gold medal contest, which is scheduled to be held on Friday kicking off at 8.30pm.

The bronze medal game will take place the same evening as the early match at 6pm.

The Bahrain team in Jahez comprises Hessa Al Isa, Shaikha Alanood bint Hamad Al Khalifa, skipper Yasmeen Tobellah, Dalal Abdulla Mohammed, Zahra Nizar Hamid, Rose Tobellah,



Bahrain's Hessa Al Isa is currently the joint-leading scorer of the competition with three goals, along with Kuwait's Shrouq Basha

Manar Yaqoob, Fatima Hamad Mohammed, Amira Sowar, Hafar Abdulrahman Al Ansari, Rawan Al Ali, Liiia Javed Sabkar, Eman Al Khattal and Wisal Ahmed Al Yasi.

Hessa is currently the joint-leading scorer of the competition with three

goals, along with Kuwait's Shrouq Basha.

Shaikha Alanood is right behind them on the top scorers list with two goals, alongside Kuwaitis Reem Almulla and Abeer Alrefaie.

Meanwhile, national team goalkeeper Zahra Ali is also recognised for her brilliant showing between the posts to date. Bahrain are the only team in the tournament with a clean sheet so far.

The Bahrainis are competing in the WAFF event fresh from winning the gold medal at the women's futsal competition at the third GCC Games in Kuwait, which took place in late May.

They had been training daily under the supervision of head coach Lino Gomes, who is from Brazil, and their coaching staff.

Heading into the tournament, the Bahrainis will be aiming for gold to add to their silver medals won in 2019.

Norris conflicted over 'porpoising' rule changes but stresses driver safety



Lando Norris of McLaren waves on the drivers parade ahead of the F1 Grand Prix of Canada

Reuters | Montreal

McLaren's Lando Norris on Monday said he is conflicted about FIA's plans to introduce changes to reduce or eliminate the "porpoising" problem affecting this season's Formula One cars, but added that driver safety was paramount.

F1 introduced a radical rules overhaul this year that has seen cars generate a significant chunk of their downforce from the underside of the floor.

This has led to the "porpoising", in which the cars bounce dramatically at high speeds, like the motion of a porpoise through water.

Concern reached new levels at the Azerbaijan Grand Prix when seven-times world champion Lewis Hamilton struggled to get out of his Mercedes at the end of a punishing race.

However, Red Bull's Christian Horner, whose team are leading both championships and have a more stable car, has said it is unfair to change the rules for all mid-season when one team is struggling more

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LANDO NORRIS

than most.

"I must admit to being a bit conflicted on it. The truth is we are not massively affected by porpoising, so we were not pushing for change," Norris wrote in the Daily Telegraph.

"If there is a real danger that drivers could have long-term health consequences ... or that they could lose focus and crash, then something has to be done. Safety has to come first, and while it might not be affecting me now, these regulations are long term.

"My main concern is that it is fair for everyone - ideally you would implement any changes post-season - but inevitably it is going to affect some more than others."

Noor continues fine form at swimming worlds

● **Talented 16-year-old Bahraini wins women's 50m backstroke heat, but does not advance to next stage**

TDT | Manama

Bahraini swimmer Noor Taha yesterday won her women's 50 metres backstroke heat at the 19th FINA World Championships 2022 in Budapest, Hungary.

Noor was one of nine competitors in the opening race of four in the first round of the event.

The 16-year-old Bahraini showed her limitless potential



Bahrain's Noor Taha is shown on the giant video screen in the arena after winning her heat

by winning her heat in 31.38 seconds. She had a reaction time of 0.60s.

Noor completed the race 0.57s ahead of runner-up Ariuntamir Enkh-Angalan of Mongolia,

while Lucia Ruchti of Kenya came third 0.95s off Noor's winning pace.

Despite her strong showing, Noor was unable to advance to the semi-final round.

Only 16 swimmers from all the heats made it through. Kylie Masse from Canada was the top qualifier in 27.26s, while Paulina Peda of Poland was the last to advance in 28.47s.

Noor's result marked her second successive victory at the worlds, although she did not advance both times. She previously also won her women's 100m backstroke heat.

Bahrain's participation at the global competition continues. There are three other Bahrain national team swimmers taking part, including Omar Al Rowaila, Saud Ghali and Ayah Bin Rajab.

The young nationals are being guided in Budapest by national team head coach Alex Karpalev.

Djokovic top men's seed for Wimbledon in absence of Medvedev, Zverev

Reuters | London

Wimbledon champion Novak Djokovic will head into next week's tournament as the men's top seed with Russian world number one Daniil Medvedev banned from taking part while Germany's second-ranked Alexander Zverev is out injured.

Organisers of the grasscourt Grand Slam have banned players from Russia and Belarus from playing at this year's Wimbledon following Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, which Russia calls a 'special operation'.

Zverev had surgery on torn ligaments in his right ankle this month after he was forced to retire from his French Open semi-final against Rafael Nadal.

Djokovic, who was unable to defend his 2021 Australian Open title and the 2,000 ranking points he earned due to his non-vaccinated status against COVID-19, recently lost his world



Novak Djokovic in action during a practice session

number one spot to Medvedev.

The Serbian, who has won the last three editions of the grasscourt major, will slip further down the rankings after Wimbledon as he will lose another 2,000 points with the ATP and WTA stripping the tournament of points.

The absence of Medvedev and Zverev means Nadal, who is halfway through a possible

calendar year Slam after winning the Australian and French Open titles, to be seeded second.

It also results in Djokovic and Nadal finding themselves in different halves of the draw and they cannot face each other until the men's final on July 10. The duo met in this year's Roland Garros quarter-final where the Spaniard triumphed.

Britain has two players in the

top 10 seeds at their home major with Cameron Norrie ninth while US Open champion Emma Raducanu is 10th in the absence of Belarussian Aryna Sabalenka.

Poland's world number one Iga Swiatek will be the women's top seed with Estonian Annett Kontaveit the number two.

There will be a 23-time Grand Slam winner in the women's draw in Serena Williams, but she will not be seeded.



Novak Djokovic has won the last three editions of Wimbledon