

SPORTS

sports

Bahrain to host volleyball world championship

TDT | Manama

The next edition of the Under-21 Volleyball World Championship is scheduled to take place in Bahrain from July 18 to 27 with 16 teams from around the globe to compete for glory.

Bahrain Olympic Committee (BOC) secretary general Mohammed Al Nusuf has extended the committee's commitment to support the Bahrain Volleyball Association (BVA) in hosting the event.

As a build up to Bahrain's preparations for the prestigious event, Al Nusuf and other BOC representatives visited BVA premises and met its vice-pres-

ident Jehad Khalfan, who made a presentation on the association strategy to create the future team of Bahrain, which started two years ago.

Khalafan, who is also head of national teams committee, has revealed his committee's plan to prepare the nation's under-21 team for this major international competition.

Late on, BVA general secretary Feras Al Halwachi made a presentation on the association's preparations to host the under-21 world championship by emphasizing on the arrangements made to provide an ideal environment for the competition.

The visiting delegation was

also briefed on the draw for the championship, to be held on June 2 in the presence of representative of the World Volleyball Federation.

In his statement, Al Nusuf said he was pleased for the efforts of the association, headed by president Shaikh Ali bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, to develop the game level, and wished them success in bringing this championship to Bahrain.

He affirmed BOC's keenness to stand by the association in hosting the championship by providing all that their services and facilities in accordance to the available sources in an attempt to make this event a memorable one.

Edwards plays Group C high series as qualifying heats up

TDT | Manama

AJ Edwards bowled the high series amongst Group C participants as qualifying headed into its final week of action in the 2019 edition of The Godfathers Tournament, being played at Funland Centre.

The competition is being held in memory of the late Murtadha Qudrat Rasti and the late Shaikh Ebrahim bin Mohammed Al Khalifa.

Edwards posted a 543 score to add to his two other top series of 550 and 530, raising his average to 180.3 pins per game from a 1,623 total. Edwards's trial helped him rise to fourth on the standings of his division, which is for beginning bowlers.

The American is now ranked only behind the Bahraini top three of Hisham Mohammed, Layla Janahi and Ahmed Refacs.

Mohammed has a 187.3 average and 1,686 total, while Janahi has a 181.8 average from a 1,636 total. Refacs enjoyed marks of 180.4 and 1,624 in third place.



AJ Edwards posted a 543 score to add to his two other top series of 550 and 530, raising his average to 180.3 pins per game from a 1,623 total

Classified right behind Edwards were Ali Mahmoud and Jose Garcia in fifth and sixth, respectively.

Meanwhile, the high series of the day was scored by Ahmed Almalki in Group A who had a 684 count. Ali Al Helo challenged him while topping the Group B scores of 675 pins.

In Group A, featuring elite bowlers, Almalki's trial was his best in the qualification stage to date as he improved to ninth

place on the division standings.

His other two top series were 651 and 626, as he brought his average to 217.9 with 1,961 total.

Abdulla Abdulkarim (238.6 average, 2,147 total), Emerson Gotencio (235.4, 2,119) and Dante Tisdom (233.0, 2,097) continued to lead the group. They were followed by Fawaz Abdulla, Ahmed Alkhaja and Ahmed Algaoud in the top six.

Al Helo was the leading Group B scorer, and his 675 was a vast improvement on his other two top trials of 564 and 535. Unfortunately, he still has a long way to go to claim a place amongst the top qualifiers in this division of intermediate bowlers. He raised his average to 197.1 with a 1,774 total to go to 24th on the standings.

Mustafa Qaed (221.0, 1,989) maintained his place at the top of the group, with Abdulrahman Alali (220.3, 1,983) in second and Essa Taqi (218.4, 1,966) third.

Patrick Toney, Ali Abdulla and Abdulla Almurbati were fourth through sixth.

Emotional Hami excused media

AFP | Monaco

An emotional Lewis Hamilton was excused from attending an official news conference yesterday ahead of this weekend's Monaco Grand Prix, following the death of Niki Lauda.

The defending five-time world champion, 34, arrived in the Mediterranean principality, to begin preparations for the classic race and was promptly withdrawn from the media event at the request of his Mercedes team.

Hamilton, the world championship leader, was described as being emotional following the death of Lauda on Monday. He was due to attend the news briefing alongside Ferrari's Monegasque driver Charles Leclerc and Dutchman Max Verstappen of Red Bull.

A Mercedes spokesperson said: "We asked for Lewis to be excused in the circumstances... The FIA have kindly agreed a dispensation."

Another scheduled news briefing with Mercedes team chief Toto Wolff, who worked closely with non-executive chairman Lauda, was postponed until Thursday.

Hamilton's Mercedes team-



Mercedes' British driver Lewis Hamilton arrives for a team family picture after the Spanish GP (file photo)

mate Valtteri Bottas took Hamilton's place at the news conference.

"It meant a lot to me, but also to every single team member," said the Finn, when asked to reflect on Lauda's death.

"Niki was a big part of the Mercedes family. He was a massive motivation for myself as a driver for everything he achieved and the difficult career he had -- with the comeback.

"It is not nice in terms of a mind-set for the team, but I am sure we can respect Niki by going flat out on track and getting a good result this weekend."

Verstappen said: "Niki was a

legend of the sport. He achieved a lot in his career, but also after his career had finished -- he was generous and funny. He was a great guy and it is a big loss to Formula One."

Hamilton had earlier posted messages expressing his feelings on social media.

"My buddy, I'm struggling to believe you are gone," said Hamilton. "I will miss our conversations, our laughs, the big hugs after winning races together.

"It's truly been an honour working alongside you over these past seven years. I wouldn't have been in this team if it wasn't for you ..."

Ferrari and Mercedes to carry Lauda tributes

AFP | Monte Carlo

Ferrari and Mercedes will set their rivalry aside and join in tributes to honour Niki Lauda at this weekend's Monaco Grand Prix, the teams said yesterday.

As the Formula One paddock gathered in the cramped Mediterranean harbour, it was also confirmed the sport is planning an official tribute to Lauda who passed away earlier this week, ahead of Sunday's blue riband showcase event.

It is expected to include a



Former Formula One Champion Niki Lauda is pictured ahead of the British Formula One Grand Prix at Silverstone in 2016

time world champion Austrian on their cars with Mercedes team members also expected to wear black armbands in memory of the manufacturer's former non-executive chairman. McLaren, for whom he also raced, plan to honour Lauda with a tribute through their vehicles.

As a driver, Lauda won the Monaco Grand Prix with Ferrari in 1975 and 1976, but he also enjoyed successes with Mercedes from the pit wall after joining the team's management.

Hazard is my Chelsea benchmark, says Pulisic

AFP | London

Christian Pulisic says he wants to make the same impact that Eden Hazard has had at Chelsea and hopes to play alongside the Belgium superstar at Stamford Bridge.

The US international signed a five-and-a-half year contract with Maurizio Sarri's

team in January but was immediately loaned back to Germany to finish the season at Borussia Dortmund.

"It is incredible to see what Eden can do," Pulisic, 20, told the BBC. "He (Hazard) is a guy to look up to and what I would love to become.

"It is definitely a goal. Any player would be dumb not to want to be in the same team as him."

But the £58 million (\$73m) signing appears unlikely to get his wish to play alongside Chelsea's star man, with Hazard linked with a move to Real Madrid.



Christian Pulisic

Combine CC cruise past Shahzad Zafar

TDT | Manama

Combine CC defeated Shahzad Zafar by 31 runs in the Carrefour Ramadan Cricket Blitz at The Football Academy at Saar. Batting first Combine CC posted 45 runs. Rizwan Masood top scored with 14 runs. Asad claimed 2 wickets for Shahzad Zafar. In reply Shahzad Zafar could only manage 14 runs.

Super Tools Fire & Safety defeated Carrefour Red by 36 runs in another fixture. Batting first Super Tools Fire & Safety posted 59 runs. Haider Ali top scored with 17 runs. In reply Carrefour Red could only manage 23 runs. Haider Ali claimed 2 wickets for Super Fire & Safety.

Matchless defeated Carre-



Combine CC players after the match

four Bahrain Mall by 36 runs in another fixture. Batting first matchless posted 57 runs. In

reply Carrefour Bahrain Mall could only manage 21 runs.

Alfa Fire Bahrain defeated

Hamza Air Conditioning Climax by 17 runs in another fixture.