

Red streak continues

Undefeated Bahrain face Kuwait tonight as the WAVA Championship enters the knockout stage

● Bahrain tops Pool A with three straight-set wins and 9 points

● Kuwait stand between the hosts and a semi-final berth

● Quarter-finals begin today at Isa Bin Rashid Arena

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

The Bahraini juggernaut rolled through the group stage, untouched and unbothered. Their latest display on Monday, which was a 3-0 sweep of the UAE (25-15, 25-15, 25-18) on the final day of preliminary play, sealed their place atop Pool A and set the tone for today's quarter-finals at the WAVA Men's Volleyball Championship.

Led by head coach Arnaud Josserand, "Al Ahmar" once again showed why they've become the tournament's team to beat. By the second set, Bahrain were already rotating freely — not to recover, but to reassert dominance with fresh legs and fresh angles.

Three players — Mohamed Anan, Mohamed Yaqoob, and Mohamed Jassim — shared top-scoring honors with eight points apiece. The UAE's offensive threat, led by Mohamed Al Suwaidi (8 points), never truly sparked, as Bahrain's block-and-serve game smothered their rhythm from start to finish.

Complete Team Display

It wasn't just the scoreline that told the story. Bahrain posted 75 total points to UAE's 48, with a 6-0 ace serve advantage and twice as many blocks (6-2). Even the French Ambassador to Bahrain, Eric Giraud-Telme, made his appreciation known as he was seen applauding court-side and shaking hands with Josser-



Bahrain celebrate after their win against UAE

Quarterfinals Begin

Jordan vs Saudi Arabia at 1 PM

Oman vs UAE at 3 PM

Qatar vs Lebanon at 5 PM

Kuwait vs Bahrain at 7 PM



Bahrain finished the prelims without dropping a single set

and after the final whistle.

Eyes on Knockouts

"Alhamdulillah for the win," said Bahraini attacker Ali Ebrahim post-match. "The prelims are done, and now we focus on the knockouts. With all respect to our opponents, this was our toughest game so far because the UAE's level is high. But we stayed calm and got it done."

Now, with the group stage wrapped, all eight teams march into tonight's quarter-finals. For Bahrain, the path to gold begins just the way they wanted.

Elsewhere in the championship

Jordan finally broke through with their first win of the tournament, beating Lebanon 3-1 with set scores of 25-20, 31-29,

19-25, and 25-17. Captain Hassan and Waleed's tactical guidance helped shore up the serve game, while Mahmoud Al Naqib starred with 18 points. Lebanon's Paul Bou Akl led all scorers with 19 points in a losing cause. Jordan now sit third in Pool A with three points; Lebanon remain winless.

"We were able to be at our best," said Al Naqib. "Our level keeps improving. This was a team win, and InshAllah we continue to raise the heads of Jordanians in this tournament."

Saudi Arabia found form at just the right time, picking up their first win in a tight match

against Oman. They won 3-0 with scores of 25-22, 25-23, and 28-26. Middle blocker Waleed Al Otaibi's standout blocking made the difference, as the Saudis recorded 12 blocks. Mohammad Adel (18 points) and Marwan Hawsawi (16 points) fueled the offense.

"It was a tough game," Hawsawi said. "But we found a way. The best is yet to come."

Qatar extinguished Kuwait's comeback hopes in a five-set thriller to top Pool B with 8 points. The match ended 3-2 in Qatar's favor, with set scores of 25-12, 23-25, 25-17, 22-25, and 15-11. Bilal Abu Naboot was immense, racking up 20 points including a staggering 11 blocks. Despite a solid effort from Rashid Anbar and the rest of Kuwait's squad, Qatar survived the scare and held firm in the final set.

"Three games in three days is not easy," said Qatar's Abdulrahman Bakri. "We stayed focused, and our goal hasn't changed because every match is a step toward the championship."



Action from the match against UAE



Bahrain celebrate after the final whistle

Paret-Peintre delivers Tour de France home win in Mont Ventoux thriller

● Pogacar extended overall lead

● Vingegaard attacked relentlessly

AFP | Mont Ventoux

Valentin Paret-Peintre bagged a first home win on an enthralling stage 16 of the Tour de France yesterday pipping Ireland's Ben Healy atop the 1910m altitude Mont Ventoux finish line.

Behind them Jonas Vingegaard attacked overall leader Tadej Pogacar relentlessly but the defending champion tracked the



Soudal Quick-Step team's French rider Valentin Paret-Peintre cycles to the finish line

Dane all the way up the 15km ascent to extend his lead by two seconds.

Trailing by 4min 13sec at the start of this stage Vingegaard attacked with 9km to climb on Mont Ventoux, whose eery upper reaches resemble a lunar landscape

They were eclipsed, however, by a frantic fight for the line and the stage win between EF's Healy and Soudal Quick-Step's Paret-Peintre who relieved home hopes on a Tour raced entirely on French soil.

Vingegaard and his Visma team did everything they could to hurt the Team UAE leader Pogacar, but the 26-year-old resisted all they threw at him despite being isolated from his team-



Mont Ventoux's brutal reputation includes past chaos: from Froome running on foot in 2016 to Tom Simpson's tragic 1967 death after collapsing mid-climb and asking to be remounted

lore after epic past battles.

Chris Froome ran part of the way up during a frantic wait for mechanical assistance, while even the great Eddy Merckx once needed oxygen at the summit.

Tom Simpson died here in 1967 after collapsing on a baking climb but asking to be helped back onto the saddle.

Stage 17 should be one for the sprinters as Tim Merlier hopes to add to his two stage wins and current green jersey Jonathan Milan also targets a second win at the 700m straight run to the finish line at Valence.

The weather however could rewrite the script with 50kph winds forecast along the 170km run.

mates early in the climb which is already etched into Tour folk-