

# Bahrain Take Silver After Five-Set Arab Junior Final Thriller

Resilient U18 side push Egypt to the limit in Amman

● Bahrain lose Arab Junior final 2-3 to Egypt in Amman

● Faidutti's team showed fight, rallying from two sets behind

● Egypt's power at the net proves decisive in the fifth set

Hussain Almaskati  
TDT | Manama

Bahrain's under-18 men's volleyball team finished runners-up at the 17th Arab Junior Volleyball Championship in Amman after a dramatic 2-3 defeat to Egypt in last



Team Bahrain receive their silver medals

night's final. The gold medal match played at the Sports Palace Hall went the distance, with Egypt prevailing 25-22, 25-20, 20-25, 23-25, 15-9.

Egypt's physical presence at the net initially had Bahrain on

the back foot, as they stormed into a two-set lead. But Santiago Faidutti's men refused to fold, clawing back the third set and edging the fourth after tense rallies. Their service strategy, aimed at unsettling

Egypt's reception, gave them a foothold, and a decider was forced.

In the fifth, Egypt's experience and power re-emerged. They built an early cushion through heavy blocking and

maintained control to seal the title.

The result capped a strong campaign in which Bahrain beat Kuwait, Iraq, Palestine, Jordan, and Lebanon before taking Egypt to the limit in the final.

Their silver medal confirmed the potential of a promising generation for the kingdom's volleyball future.

In the bronze-medal match, Libya defeated Lebanon 3-1 to complete the podium.

## Rooney forecasts 'massive future' for Arsenal teen sensation Dowman

AFP | London

Wayne Rooney believes Arsenal teenage rising star Max Dowman is set for a "massive future" following an impressive Premier League debut.

Dowman came on as a substitute aged just 15 years and 234 days during the Gunners' 5-0 win over Leeds at the Emirates on Saturday.

He also did more than take the field during his 26 minutes on the pitch, with the attacking midfielder earning a late penalty, which saw Viktor Gyokeres score from the spot.

Former England captain Rooney made his Everton debut aged 16 in 2002 and was five days short of his 17th birthday when he briefly became the Premier League's youngest goalscorer by registering a stunning late winner against Arsenal.

Speaking on his BBC podcast, the Wayne Rooney Show, the Manchester United great said of Dowman: "To play at that age in the Premier League is crazy. I know I played when I was young, but I think he's like

150 days younger than I was, or more.

"For Max and his family and friends, I'm sure they're all living in a dream and a fairytale and it probably hasn't hit home yet. But you can see his future is so bright, he is going to have a

massive future.

"Everyone you speak to in football, the same name keeps coming back: Max Dowman."

Dowman's team-mate Ethan Nwaneri remains the youngest player in Premier League history after featuring in Arsenal's 3-0 victory at Brentford in September 2022 aged 15 years and 181 days.

The now 39-year-old Rooney, speaking about the pressures that come with playing top-flight football at such an early age, added: "It's surreal. It's so strange that one minute you're in the youth

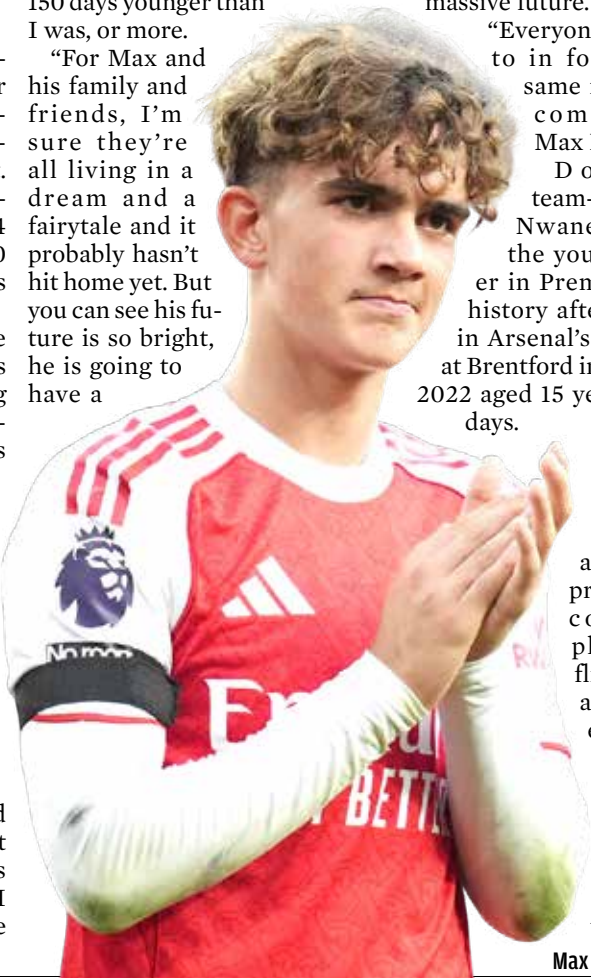
To play at that age in the Premier League is crazy. I know I played when I was young, but I think he's like 150 days younger than I was, or more. For Max and his family and friends, I'm sure they're all living in a dream and a fairytale and it probably hasn't hit home yet. But you can see his future is so bright, he is going to have a massive future

WAYNE ROONEY

team and the next you're in the first-team dressing room with some of your heroes.

"It's something you really need to get used to quickly because it can be overwhelming.

"Max Dowman looks like a very level-headed lad from everything I've seen and you hope he manages to deal with it and understands what's coming his way very soon."



Max Dowman

## Rothwell accepts Scottish giants Rangers already facing key week of season

AFP | London

Rangers midfielder Joe Rothwell believes his side are already facing a week that could define their season even at this early stage of the season.

The Glasgow giants are off to their worst start in the Scottish top flight since 1989 after a third consecutive 1-1 draw at St. Mirren on Sunday.

Manager Russell Martin, who was only appointed in June, has



Joe Rothwell

won just three of his opening nine games in all competitions,

the worst record of any permanent appointment in the club's history.

They now face the task of trying to overcome a 3-1 deficit in the second leg of the second leg of their Champions League play-off against Club Brugge in Belgium on Wednesday.

And they could fall nine points behind Scottish champions and arch-rivals Celtic with defeat in the Old Firm derby on Sunday.

"Wednesday night is a massive game for us," said Rothwell.

"If we can go there and turn that tie around, then it'll obviously give us massive confidence going into the weekend game."

The 30-year-old, a pre-season signing from English Premier League side Bournemouth, added: "And then we play that game and who knows where it can take us, if we manage to pick up three points.

## Gaudu pulls away from Vingegaard to take Vuelta stage



Team Groupama-FDJ's French rider David Gaudu celebrates winning the third stage

AFP | Ceres

David Gaudu surged to victory in the third stage of the Vuelta Espana in Ceres, in Italy, on Monday edging Mads Pedersen and Jonas Vingegaard who, despite being deprived of a second straight victory, hung onto the leader's red jersey.

The day before, Vingegaard powered away from his rivals in an uphill sprint to take the overall lead. Gaudu finished that stage third.

On Monday, at the end of a hilly 134.6 kilometre run from San Maurizio Canavese, Vingegaard was again well positioned as the pack came out of a final hairpin for a rising run to the line.

But Gaudu handled the corner better and when the Frenchman, who rides for Groupama, and Pedersen, a Dane with Lidl Trek accel-

erated in the home stretch, Vingegaard eased up, unable to match them.

Vingegaard collected a four-second bonus for finishing third but Gaudu gained 10 seconds and moved level on time with the Dane.

"That was hard," said Gaudu at the finish. "I'm very happy."

The finish completed a tough day for Vingegaard's Visma Lease a Bike team.

They announced in the morning that 18 of their bikes had been stolen overnight from a parked truck and also that one of Vingegaard's lieutenants Axel Zingle had been forced to drop out.

The Gazzetta Dello Sport report that Visma lost bikes worth a total of 250,000 euros (\$292,378), while Movistar and Lidl-Trek, who were staying in the same hotel near Turin, did not lose any equipment.