



Talajic Calls For Bahrain Response

Coach targets Khaleeji 27 turnaround as Reds prepare for UAE test

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Bahrain head coach Dragan Talajic has called on his players to respond to their opening Gulf Cup setback when the defending champions face the UAE tomorrow in Jeddah.

The Reds enter their second Group B encounter seeking their first points after a 2-0 defeat to Qatar, with kick-off set for 9pm at Prince Abdullah Al Faisal Sports City Stadium.

Talajic offered his assessment of the opener after a contest that remained goalless until Boualem Khoukhi broke the deadlock in the 61st minute.

Qatar were reduced to 10 men when Ahmed Fathy received a second yellow card in the 70th minute, but the Bahrainis were unable to capitalise before Abbas Al Asfoor was also dismissed late on. Hassan Al Haydos converted the resulting penalty to seal the result.

“We performed well in the first half and were positive, but some individual mistakes affected our concentration and cost us goals,” Talajic said.



Dragan Talajic on the touchline in Bahrain's opener

“We had hoped for a better start to the tournament, but we have to learn from our mistakes, focus on the coming matches and trust in our ability to produce a better level.”

With two group fixtures remaining, the Croatian remains determined to turn the title defence around.

“We still have two matches and six points to play for,” he

added. “We will fight to bounce back, achieve two victories and make our Bahraini supporters happy.”

UAE Focus

Attention has now shifted to an Emirati side who made an emphatic start with a 4-0 victory over Yemen.

Preparations continued yesterday with a split programme



Ali Al Doseri controls the ball during training

following the Qatar match. Players who did not feature trained as normal, while those involved underwent a recovery session at the team hotel.

The squad will hold their main training session today, with Talajic also due to address the media at 12pm alongside striker Mahdi Abduljabbar.

Tomorrow's Group B action begins with Qatar taking on

Yemen at 6.55pm before Bahrain and the UAE meet at 9pm.

The kingdom then complete their group campaign against Yemen on Wednesday, with the top two sides advancing to the semi-finals on October 3.

Elsewhere in the tournament today, Kuwait face Iraq at 6.55pm before Oman take on Saudi Arabia at 9pm in the second round of Group A fixtures.

Man City found guilty of 114 Premier League charges

AFP | London

Manchester City have been found guilty of all but one of 115 Premier League charges they face for breaching financial regulations, the Athletic reported yesterday.

The report added that no sanction had yet been decided and that City are set to appeal.

The outcome of an independent hearing that began more than two years ago could send shock waves through English football.

The legacy of City's trophy-laden era is on the line over accusations it had been built on financial impropriety.

City were charged by the Premier League in 2023 following an investigation into alleged breaches between 2009 and 2018.

The club, who have always denied the allegations, were accused of failing to provide accurate financial information and details of payments to players and coaches, as well as breaches of financial sustainability rules.

Khamis denied in boxing last 16



Maryam Khamis lands a right hand against Bhutan's Kinga Wangmo

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Bahrain's Maryam Khamis bowed out of the women's 54kg boxing competition at the 20th Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya yesterday after suffering a unanimous-decision defeat to Bhutan's Kinga Wangmo.

Khamis was beaten 5-0 at Nishio Gymnasium, with all five judges awarding the contest to her opponent.

Wangmo swept the opening two rounds across the scorecards before the Bahraini earned the nod from one judge in the third.

Four judges eventually scored the bout 30-27 in favour of the Bhutanese fighter, with the other returning a 29-28 verdict.

Lobaina Up Next

Khamis' defeat leaves Jorge Lobaina as Bahrain's sole remaining boxer at the Games, with the 90kg contender set to trade jabs with Kyrgyzstan's Bakyt Toktosun Uulu in the round of 16 today.

Victory would send Lobaina through to Monday's quarter-finals, with the semi-finals scheduled for Wednesday.

Bahrain entered the competition with five fighters, but Ali Abdalla, Omar Budhaheen and Hamsa Vogel had already been eliminated before Khamis became the fourth member of the squad to see her campaign end.

Lobaina now carries the kingdom's hopes in the ring, with the boxing programme continuing through to October 2.

Unstoppable

Bahrain complete perfect Asian Games handball group campaign

Hussain Almaskati
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Bahrain marched into the men's handball quarter-finals at the 20th Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya yesterday, battling past Kuwait 28-25 to complete a flawless Group B campaign.

The Warriors made it four victories from four at Kasugai City Gymnasium, having already beaten Kazakhstan, Iran and South Korea, to finish top with eight points.

Swedish coach Robert Hedin's side will now face Hong Kong, China in the last eight today as their pursuit of a maiden Asian Games handball title continues.

On the court, Bahrain began brightly, with Hasan Madan scoring twice from six metres before Mohamed Habib Naser struck from nine metres to help establish an early 5-4 advantage.

Ahmed Kadhem later converted from the left wing to make it 7-4, but Kuwait gradually fought back. Husain Al Mutawa levelled from the penalty line before Saleh Ali helped turn the game around as the Kuwaitis moved 13-11 ahead.

Sayed Shubbar pulled one

back shortly before the interval, cutting the deficit to 13-12 at half-time.

Second-Half Surge

Kuwait extended their advantage to 14-12 after the restart, but Naser repeatedly hauled the Bahrainis back, scoring the equalisers at 14-14, 16-16 and 17-17.

The Gulf rivals edged back in front, only for Jasim Khamis to swing the momentum. He levelled at 18-18 before Salman Al Showaikh put his team ahead, then struck again and converted a fast break following his own steal to make it 21-18.

Bahrain captain Hussain Al Sayyad then struck from nine metres and on a breakthrough to stretch the lead to 24-19. After Kuwait pulled one back, Kadhem converted from the left wing to restore the five-goal cushion.

Kuwait cut the deficit to 27-25 late on,

but Shubbar converted from six metres with four seconds remaining to seal the win.

Naser led Bahrain's scoring with six goals, while Kadhem converted all four of his attempts. Madan and Khamis added four apiece.

Title Ambition

The result left the nationals top of Group B with eight points, having scored 135 goals and conceded

86. South Korea finished second, followed by Kuwait and Iran, with all four progressing to the knockout stage.

The Bahrainis are seeking a maiden Asian Games handball title after reaching the podium at each of the previous three editions. They took bronze at Incheon 2014 before successive silver medals behind Qatar at Jakarta-Palembang 2018 and Hangzhou 2022.

Their latest bid follows an impressive run under Hedin, beginning with Islamic Solidarity Games gold in Riyadh last November. The kingdom then captured their maiden Asian Men's Handball Championship crown in Kuwait before triumphing at the GCC Games in Doha.

Attention now turns to Group A fourth-placed Hong Kong, China, who await Bahrain in today's quarter-final at 12pm. Their opponents advanced despite losing all three group matches, while three-time defending champions Qatar topped the section ahead of Japan and China.

Elsewhere in the last eight, Qatar face Iran, Japan meet Kuwait and South Korea take on China. The semi-finals take place on Monday, followed by the medal matches on Tuesday.



Mohamed Habib Naser rises to shoot against Kuwait