

**Medvedev mounts astonishing comeback after Tsitsipas romps into semis**



Daniil Medvedev celebrates after defeating Felix Auger-Aliassime  
AFP | Melbourne

Men's title favourite Daniil Medvedev fought back from the brink of a shock exit yesterday to reach the Australian Open semi-final and keep his dream of a second Grand Slam crown alive.

Medvedev, the world number two, looked down and out as he lost the opening two sets to Canadian 21-year-old sensation Felix Auger-Aliassime before mounting a remarkable turnaround.

The Russian saved a match point at 4-5, 30-40 in the fourth set before completing an astonishing revival to beat the ninth seed 6-7 (4/7), 3-6, 7-6 (7/2), 7-5, 6-4 in a marathon 4hr 42min quarter-final that finished well after midnight on Rod Laver Arena.

Asked how he managed to win, the US Open champion Medvedev admitted: "I have no idea."

"I just fought to the last point and manage to raise my level."

# Samaheej, Nuwaidrat win tight Silver League games

Samaheej survive late scare against Sitra, while Nuwaidrat overcame a battling Al Ettihad

● **Samaheej lead by as many as 20 points before Sitra cut deficit to just two with two minutes left**

● **Abbas Jameel buries go-ahead three-pointer in Nuwaidrat's narrow victory over Ettihad**

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Samaheej and Nuwaidrat both triumphed yesterday in a pair of thrilling Silver League games in the 2021/2022 Zain Bahrain Basketball League, being played at Zain Basketball Arena in Um Al HassamXXXX.

Samaheej survived a late scare in an 89-79 victory over Sitra, while Nuwaidrat overcame a battling Al Ettihad 69-64.

In Samaheej's win, they took a commanding 34-16 lead at the end of the first quarter and appeared to be well in control. But Sitra gradually clawed their way back into the contest and made their opponents sweat over the game's final stages.

Samaheej led by as many as 20 points, but Sitra were able to get to within a single possession thrice in the final quarter. They last came to within two points, 78-80, with just over two minutes remaining in the game following a Mahdi Abdulameer driving lay-up.



Samaheej big man Mansour Kasse posts up against Sitra's Bader Aref during their game last night

But Samaheej answered by scoring the next four points, including two pressure-packed free-throws by Sayed Ali Mahmood and then a jump shot from Basel Adel with just 59 seconds to go.

Sitra got no closer the rest of the way.

Towering Senegalese professional Mansour Kasse and skipper Basel Adel combined for 54 points to spearhead Samaheej, who got all their production from just four players. Kasse scored with 28 and also took down 19 rebounds and registered four blocks, while Adel added 26 including four three-pointers.



**The Zain Bahrain Basketball League's Top Six round gets underway with two games, with Manama taking on Al Hala and then defending back-to-back champions Al Ahli facing Al Najma**

Mahmood contributed 19 markers, including five triples, and 10 rebounds, while Mohammed Abdulla Jaffar was their only other scorer with 16 points.

American Marcel Jones paced Sitra in the loss with 31 points and 18 rebounds while playing the full 40 minutes.

Veteran court general Hussain Taqi came off the bench to contribute 17, while Nawaf Nabeel finished with 12 in the loss.

With the result, Samaheej claimed their first win in three games in the Silver League, while Sitra were dealt their second loss to go with one win.

In Nuwaidrat's win, Abbas Jameel buried a go-ahead three-pointer with just under two minutes remaining to give his team a 67-64 lead after Ettihad managed to fight back from 10 points down in the first minute of the final quarter.

Ettihad then had multiple chances

## Silver League standings

	P	W	L	Pts
Nuwaidrat	4	4	0	8
Al Ettihad	3	2	1	5
Sitra	3	1	2	4
Samaheej	3	1	2	4
Isa Town	3	0	3	3

from four successive offensive rebounds to either tie the game or get to within one point, but they could not convert their attempts.

Hassan Abbas made them pay with two charity shots to ice the game with just 23 seconds remaining.

Jameel finished with 15 points to lead Nuwaidrat, all of which came from beyond the three-point line. Abbas and Murtadha Salman chipped in with 12 apiece, while Anthony Walker scored 11 and took down 14 rebounds.

For Ettihad, Hassan Fahad had 15 while Hassan Albossta came off the bench to contribute 14.

With the result, Nuwaidrat remained undefeated in four games as they top the Silver League standings. Ettihad suffered their first loss in three contests.

Tonight, the Zain Bahrain Basketball League's Top Six round gets underway with two games.

Manama face off with Al Hala at 5.30pm, followed by defending back-to-back champions Al Ahli taking on Al Najma at 7.30pm. Both games are scheduled to take place at Khalifa Sports City arena in Isa Town.

## BRAVE CF announces five nominees for 2021 Fighter Of The Year

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While all gallant warriors under the BRAVE Combat Federation umbrella go out and give it their all inside the cage, there are just a handful of mixed martial artists who have shown the true championship quality over the past twelve months.

These competitors have gone above and beyond their personal limits, delighting fans with spectacular performances.

Moreover, these fighters have captured the imaginations of fans in their home countries and fans from all over the world.

Here are the nominees for the 2021 Fighter of the Year.

2021 has been a busy year for Ali "The King Puncher" Bagautinov, who won all of his fights that included two victories in the prestigious BRAVE CF Flyweight Title Tournament to punch a ticket to the finals against the highly-touted Velimurad Alkhasov at a yet-to-be-announced event in 2022.

Joining Bagautinov in the same category is Marcel Grabinski, a heavy-handed German who has gone 2-0 in 2021 and ended the year with a first-round demolition of Mihail Kotruta at BRAVE CF 54 this past September.

Meanwhile, Sam "The Future" Patterson could very well be the next challenger for Ahmed Amir's BRAVE CF Lightweight World Championship in 2022 after racking up huge victories over the likes of Ylies Djiroun and Kamil Magomedov last year.

On the other hand, Brad "Superman" Katona was one of the blue-chip recruits who left a lasting impression in 2021, submitting previously-unbeaten Serbian Borislav Nikolic with a guillotine choke in the third round at BRAVE CF 50 in April and then following it up with a unanimous decision triumph against Russia's Bair Shtepin four months later.

Katona will vie for the vacant Bantamweight World Championship against Hamza Kooheji at BRAVE CF 57, which is set to take place at the



### BRAVE CF 2021 Awards - Fighter of The Year candidates

Ali Bagautinov

Marcel Grabinski

Sam Patterson

Tae Kyun Kim

Brad Katona

iconic Khalifa Sports City Arena in Isa Town, Bahrain on March 11.

Also making it to the list of nominees is Tae "Ares" Kyun Kim, who defied odds when he entered enemy territory to face Nurzhan Akishev in the main event of August's BRAVE CF 53 and walked away with a unanimous decision win.

Fans will play a big role in determining the winner of 2021's Fight of the Year by visiting the official Instagram page of BRAVE CF and casting their votes.

## Last chance for F1 tickets offer

● **Final five days for BIC's Early Bird discount with up to 15 per cent off on F1 Bahrain GP 2022 tickets**

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Action from a previous F1 race at BIC

Bahrain International Circuit (BIC), "The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East", is counting down the last five days from today for its Early Bird offer on tickets to the Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2022 - which will be the final chance for fans to enjoy discounted prices to attend an historic F1 race weekend, happening 18 to 20 March in Sakhir.

The region's biggest sporting and social extravaganza is only a few weeks away, but motorsport enthusiasts are being urged not to delay and secure their tickets today with up to 15 per cent off.

This year's Bahrain Grand Prix is set to be a once-in-a-generation occasion, as it ushers in the new era of F1 following perhaps the biggest shake-up in rules and regulations in the history of the top flight, to go along with the radical new car design and some new driver pairings.

Furthermore, being the opening round of the 2022 FIA F1 World Championship, Bahrain's fans are in the enviable position of being the first in the world to experience the pin-

nacle of motorsport like never before.

Under BIC's Early Bird offer, tickets can be purchased for all three days of the event with a 15 per cent discount for the Main Grandstand, which overlooks the circuit's start grid, finish line, F1 pit lane and main straight.

Tickets to all the other grandstands are on 10 per cent off, including the Batelco Grandstand, Turn One Grandstand and University Grandstands. There are a number of options available for the Batelco Grandstand seats. Tickets can be bought for all three days, for Friday only, or for Saturday and Sunday only.

Under an enhanced refund policy, customers can buy their race tickets with confidence. In addition to BIC's standard terms and conditions, the enhanced refund policy for F1 entitles buyers to a full refund if Government guidelines in the Kingdom of Bahrain prohibit any ticket holder from entry to the circuit due to COVID-19 restrictions or individual COVID-19 status. Also, for ticketholders

based outside of Bahrain, if restrictions imposed by the Government of Bahrain prohibit travel from their country of origin to Bahrain over the period of the race weekend, they will be entitled to a full refund.

Tickets can be purchased online at bahraingp.com or by calling the BIC Hotline on +973-17450000.

Discounts are also available for children aged three to 12 at 50 per cent off, with reductions also available to students, those with special needs, and senior citizens. Full prices and details are available at bahraingp.com.

The F1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2022 will feature plenty to look forward to both on and off the track. Aside from F1, racing will be held in the FIA Formula 2 Championship and FIA Formula 3 Championship as support events. Both F1 feeder series will be holding their 2022 season-openers at BIC.

In addition to this, the Porsche Sprint Cup Middle East will also take place, holding the fifth and final round of its 2021/2022 campaign.