

Bahrain paddlers miss out on medal

Rashed Rashed and Sayed Ali Mahfoodh come up short in men's doubles medal bid in table tennis tournament at third GCC Games in Kuwait

● **Bahrain sweep past Saudi Arabia 3-0 in women's team match-up in padel**

● **National spikers set for crucial clash today against Kuwait in men's volleyball**

TDI | Manama

Bahrain's Rashed Rashed and Sayed Ali Mahfoodh missed out on a podium finish yesterday in the men's doubles category in table tennis at the third GCC Games in Kuwait.

Rashed and Mahfoodh had two chances to ensure a medal finish, but came up short both times.

They first lost their semi-final 1-3 (8-11, 9-11, 11-4, 7-11) to Ali Alkhadrawi and Abdulaziz Bu Shulaybi of Saudi Arabia—a win would have put them through to the title contest and ensured them of at least a silver medal.



Bahrain's Rashed Rashed, right, and Sayed Ali Mahfoodh in action in men's doubles table tennis yesterday

They then had a chance to claim the bronze in their match for third place against Qataris Ahmad Al Mohannadi and Mohammed Abdulhussein. However, they lost that contest with a 0-3 (4-11, 8-11, 10-12) score line.

Yesterday marked the final day of action in table tennis. Bahrain finished with one medal from the tournament in the men's team event.

Also yesterday, Bahrain swept

past Saudi 3-0 in their women's team match-up in padel.

Maryam Alammadi and Safa Safar got things off with a fine 6-3, 7-5 win over Areej Fareh and Sara Salhab, while Maryam Isa and Esra Nuruddin followed suit with a 6-2, 6-2 win over Najwa Salhab and Nora Alsoleiman.

The Bahraini tandem of Sara Khonji and Fatima Jassim then closed out the contest in the third match, beating Raghdah



Yesterday marked the final day of action in table tennis, and Bahrain finished with one medal from the competition in the men's team event



Bahraini Safa Safar competes in her women's padel match last night

Binwathlan and Rana Alshehri 6-4, 6-0 to complete the sweep.

The women's team will be looking to continue their winning ways today when they take on their counterparts from Oman at 4pm on the penultimate day of padel play.

Meanwhile, in ice hockey, Bahrain bowed to the UAE 2-7.

The nationals conceded two goals in the first period and three in the second, but were then able to score two of their own in the third and final frame, although

they also gave up another two goals to their opponents.

It was the third successive loss for the Bahrainis in the GCC Games' ice hockey tournament, which came to a close last night.

The third GCC Games continue today and Bahrain's focus will be in volleyball, where the senior men's national team are set to take on Kuwait in their concluding match of the tournament.

The result of the tie, which is

scheduled for a 7pm start, will determine the final rankings and the podium placers of the competition.

Bahrain continue to boast a 55-medal tally from the GCC Games, including 20 gold, 20 silver and 15 bronze medals.

The nationals are currently in second place on the medal table behind leaders Kuwait, while the UAE, Qatar, Oman and Saudi follow from third through sixth.

Aprilia secure Espargaro and Vinales through 2024



Aprilia Racing's Maverick Vinales during qualifying

AFP | London

Alex Espargaro and Maverick Vinales have signed new deals with Aprilia Racing for the 2023 and 2024 seasons, the Italian MotoGP factory outfit said yesterday.

Espargaro, who won his first race in the premier class in Argentina this year, has emerged as a contender for the rider's championship with the Spaniard sitting second in the standings after four podium finishes in seven races.

"This confirmation was just what the doctor ordered. We've worked hard together and grown together. We were a hope, now we are reality," Espargaro said in a statement.

"In 2021 we had already seen clear signs of our steps forward and now we are able to battle consistently with the best in the world. Continuing to do so with Aprilia is a source of pride for me."

Vinales, who moved to

In 2021 we had already seen clear signs of our steps forward and now we are able to battle consistently with the best in the world. Continuing to do so with Aprilia is a source of pride for me

ALEX ESPARGARO

Aprilia after a fall-out with Yamaha last year, has managed six points-scoring finishes this season.

"I believe in this project and I'm happy to be part of it. I've found a fantastic environment in Aprilia and this confirmation gives me the peace of mind to grow the way this team and I deserve to," Vinales said.

The next race of the MotoGP season is the Italian Grand Prix at Mugello this weekend.

Bahrain futsal teams get tough groups in Asian, West Asian tournaments

TDI | Manama

Bahrain's men's national futsal team have been drawn in a tough Group B for this year's AFC Futsal Asian Cup 2022, which is set to be held in Kuwait this September.

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) conducted the draw ceremony virtually yesterday, and the Bahrainis emerged in a group alongside Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

There are four groups in all for the competition's preliminary round.

Group A features Kuwait, Iraq, Thailand and Oman; Group C comprises Iran, Lebanon, Chinese Taipei and Indonesia; and Group D includes Japan, Vietnam, South Korea and Saudi Arabia.



Bahrain's men's national futsal team with their recently won bronze medals at the GCC Games in Kuwait (File photo)

Each of the top two teams from all four groups move through to the quarter-finals.

Meanwhile, the Bahrainis were also drawn in Group B for the fourth West Asian Football

Federation (WAFF) Men's Futsal Championship, to be held next month, also in Kuwait.

Bahrain are in a group along with Oman, Lebanon and the UAE. Group A consists of Kuwait, Palestine, Saudi Arabia and Iraq.

Following a single round-robin, the top two from each of the two groups move on to the semi-finals.

On the distaff, Bahrain's women's futsal team are also set to compete in the third WAFF Women's Futsal Championship in Saudi Arabia, also next month. They have been drawn along with Palestine, Iraq and the UAE for their competition.

The other group comprises Oman, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. The top two advance to the final four.

Kyrgios calls Tomic 'most hated athlete in Australia'

AFP | Sydney

Nick Kyrgios branded fellow tennis player Bernard Tomic "the most hated athlete in Australia" as a feud between the pair reignited yesterday.

The two used to be friends but fell out years ago and have since periodically taken potshots at each other.

Their bickering exploded again with Tomic late Wednesday saying he was Kyrgios' "idol" when both players made their way through the tennis ranks as youngsters.

"He's always been in my shadow growing up," said the 29-year-old Tomic, whose game has collapsed in recent years after a series of controversies and is now ranked 418th in the



Bernard Tomic of Australia (L) and compatriot Nick Kyrgios pose for a photo before their match

world.

"That's why any time someone mentions my name to him, it gets under his skin.

"He knows he can't rewrite history. The records that I set when I was 16, 17, 18, and 19 -- youngest Slam quarter-finalist

He knows he can't rewrite history. The records that I set when I was 16, 17, 18, and 19 -- youngest Slam quarter-finalist at Wimbledon (in 2011, since Boris Becker), the biggest tournament in the world

NICK KYRGIOS

at Wimbledon (in 2011, since Boris Becker), the biggest tournament in the world."

It followed Kyrgios, 27, telling Tomic to "quiet down" while boasting that he had "more money, more wins" than his compatriot.