

Shabab stun Khalidiya; Muharraq held

Winning streaks snapped in matchday 3 of NPL

● **Binong's volley settles Khalidiya match**

● **Juninho score late equaliser for Muharraq against Malkiya**

TDT | Manama

Al Khalidiya's nine-point start ended with a 1-0 defeat to Al Shabab at Khalifa Sports City. Khalidiya had reached the game after narrow 1-0 league wins and a 0-0 draw in the AFC Champions League, but their backline could not contain a Shabab counter shortly after the break.

Hussain Al Qassab drove forward, found Stephane Binong, whose wobbling first touch did not prevent him recovering to slot a low volley into the far corner for the only goal.

Khalidiya starting XI: Hamad Al Doseri; Sayed Dhiya Saeed; Ahmed Bughammar; Mousa Coulibaly; Ayoub El Amloud; Hazza Ali; Dominique Mendy; Komail Al Aswad; Saifeddine Bouhra; Gleison Moreira; Joel Beya.

Al Shabab starting XI: Mahmood Al Ajmi; Hussain Al Qassab; Ahmed Kamil; Muja-



Mohammed Al Faleh (L) celebrates his opening goal vs. Muharraq



Both leaders showed cracks despite perfect opening runs

ba Abdali; Stephane Binong; Ali Redha Isa; Mahmood Al Kayssoumi; Abdulrahman Ali; Alaa Anas; Abdullahi Abdulrahman; Chikamuso Okechukwu.

Champions Drop Points

Muharraq were held 1-1 by Al Malkiya at the Bahrain National Stadium. Malkiya struck first in the 14th minute when Mohammed Al Faleh met a headed knock-on from Mohammed Salem and unleashed a volley past goalkeeper Ebrahim Lutfalla. Celebrations spilled into a scuffle and Muharraq substitute Hussain Jameel, who had not started, was sent off from the bench.

Fahad Al Asmari was also shown red for Al Malkiya in first-half stoppage time for a late challenge on Waleed Al Hayyam. With just over 20 min-

utes remaining Juninho levelled for Muharraq — he chested Abdulkarim's cross and half-volleyed into the near post.

Muharraq starting XI: Ebrahim Lutfalla; Waleed Al Hayam; Amine Benaddi; Mohamed Al Hardan; Soufiane Mahrouk; Hanan Abdulwahab; Gervasio Olivera; Mohamed Al Banna; Juninho; Arthur Rezende; Elliot Simoes.

Al Malkiya starting XI: Goodwill; Ahmed Muslim; Qassim Habib; Samuel Sarfo; Hassan Isa; Mohammed Salem; Mohammed Alfaleh; Cyril Olisema; Fahad Al Asmari; Nani; Abdulhalim Abbo.

Standings and Context

Thursday's action saw both games end in stalemates, with Riffa held by Hidd (0-0) and Najma and Sitra also sharing the points (0-0). After yesterday's results, Muharraq remain top of the table with two wins and a draw, while Khalidiya drop to second on six points after their first defeat. Malkiya are in fifth with a win and two draws, and Shabab move up to seventh with one win, one draw, and one loss.

The Nasser bin Hamad Premier League continues today with A'ali facing Al Ahli and Budaiya taking on Bahrain SC, both fixtures kicking off at 7pm.

Bahrain Paralympic Committee Participates in International General Assembly in Seoul



Shaikh Mohammed bin Duaij Al Khalifa, President of the Bahrain Paralympic Committee, led the kingdom's delegation at the International Paralympic Committee General Assembly held in Seoul from September 24-27. The Bahraini delegation included Secretary-General Ali Mohamed Al Majed, executive director of finance and administration Shaikh Ahmed bin Salman Al Khalifa, office director Noor Hussein, and senior sports coordinator Mahmoud Mohamed. Discussions at the assembly centred on strengthening international cooperation, exchanging expertise among national committees, and advancing the global Paralympic movement to better support athletes worldwide

Chelsea's Palmer sidelined with groin injury

AFP | Dubai

Cole Palmer will likely be out of action until after next month's international break to give the Chelsea midfielder time to shake off a groin problem, manager Enzo Maresca said yesterday.

The England international came off midway through the first half in Chelsea's 2-1

defeat at Manchester United last week, their first Premier League defeat of the season.

The 23-year-old had previously missed games against West Ham and Fulham with the same issue.

Maresca told reporters that Chelsea had decided to "protect" Palmer so his injury would not get worse.

Fritz says path to Grand Slam glory goes through Alcaraz, Sinner

AFP | Paris

Taylor Fritz said yesterday he expects Carlos Alcaraz and Jannik Sinner to continue dominating Grand Slams but he "can't count on them not being there" if he wants to win one.

World number one Alcaraz and number two Sinner have contested every Grand Slam final this year, with American Fritz the last player to break up the duopoly.

Fritz, now the world number five, reached last year's US Open final, where he lost to Italy's Sinner.

Fritz, who beat Portugal's Nuno Borges 7-5, 7-6 (7/4) at the Japan Open on Saturday, said he could not afford to be afraid of meeting the top two if he wants to win his first Grand Slam title.

"I can't count on making it



Taylor Fritz in action

happen on maybe the one-off Slam where they have a random loss or something like that," Fritz said.

"I need to be able to play at a

level where, on a day at a Grand Slam, I can be able to beat one of them and make it happen that way.

"I can't count on them not



I can't count on making it happen on maybe the one-off Slam where they have a random loss or something like that. I need to be able to play at a level where, on a day at a Grand Slam, I can be able to beat one of them and make it happen that way. I can't count on them not being there – I feel like they're always going to be there

TAYLOR FRITZ

being there – I feel like they're always going to be there," he added.

Zverev wins Beijing opener as Gauff launches title defence

AFP | Beijing

Alexander Zverev saw off Lorenzo Sonego 6-4, 6-3 with a decisive ace at the China Open yesterday as Coco Gauff launched her bid for a repeat crown.

World number three Zverev, the second seed in Beijing, next faces France's Corentin Moutet.

The German and Sonego went toe-to-toe for 50 minutes before Zverev converted a break to edge the 30-year-old Italian in the first set after a brief back-and-forth at the net.

A confident Zverev won four



Germany's Alexander Zverev hits a return to Italy's Lorenzo Sonego

straight games in the second for a commanding 5-1 lead.

Although 44th-ranked Sonego held on a little longer, the 28-year-old closed out the match with an ace on his first match point.

"Good start to a tournament," Zverev told Chinese platform Migu Sports after the win.

"(Sonego is) somebody that is tricky for me. We had long matches, tough battles in the past but I'm happy to be through, definitely."

Also in action at the Beijing ATP 500 event, fan favourite Daniil Medvedev beat Cameron Norrie 6-3, 6-4.