

Bahrain defeat Uganda in friendly

Mahdi Abduljabbar, Ebrahim Al Khattal and Abdulla Duij all on target for nationals, who battle back from a goal down to claim well-deserved win

● **Bahrain debut all-new national football team kits**

● **Bahrainis to next face off with DR Congo in friendly on Tuesday**

TDT | Manama

Bahrain outclassed Uganda 3-1 last night in an international friendly match played at the National Stadium in Riffa.

Sporting an all-new national team kit, the hosts gave up an early goal but did well to battle back to come away with the well-deserved victory.

On target for the Bahrainis were Mahdi Abduljabbar, Ebrahim Al Khattal and Abdulla Duij.

The game was part of Bahrain's ongoing local training gathering, which continues until Tuesday. The nationals are preparing for their upcoming competitions, which include the third round of qualification for the AFC Asian Cup 2023, which will be held in June.

The Helio Sousa-coached squad is set to play another



Bahrain defender Hamad Shamsan, right, battles for possession with Uganda forward Muhammad Jagason

friendly against top African opposition. They next play DR Congo on the last day of their gathering.

Both of their exhibition opponents are classified higher on the current FIFA World Rankings, with Uganda 82nd and DR Congo 64th. Bahrain are presently ranked 91st.

The Ugandans opened the scoring in the ninth minute, when forward Karisa Milton headed home from close range off a cross from the right wing. Milton did well to place his ef-

fort to the left of the net, over the outstretched arm of Bahrain goalkeeper Sayed Shubbar Alawi.

Bahrain were then able to equalise in the 25th minute when Uganda goalkeeper Benjamin Ochan was shown the red card for taking down Bahrain's Al Khattal in the box. Abduljabbar stepped forward to take the kick, and he made no mistake sending the ball home to the top-left corner of the net.

The match headed into the break deadlocked at 1-1. But just

Bahrainis are set to be one of 24 national teams competing in the third stage of qualification for the AFC Asian Cup 2023. Six group winners and five best runners-up will qualify for the tournament



Bahrain's Ebrahim Al Khattal kicks the ball away as he is about to be challenged by Uganda's starting goalkeeper Benjamin Ochan, who was shown a red card after this play

88th minute, when Duij headed in from close range off a cross from outside of the penalty area by teammate Ali Madan.

The Bahrainis are set to be one of 24 national teams competing in the third stage of qualification for the AFC Asian Cup 2023. These teams are to be divided into six groups of four to play a single round-robin. The group winners and the best five runners-up across all groups will qualify for the Asian Cup, where they are joined by China and by the 12 teams which quali-

fied directly from the second round.

The Bahrainis have yet to learn of their groupings for their upcoming third round of qualifying for the AFC Asian Cup 2023. The draw is scheduled to be held on February 24.

Matches will be played over three days in June, including on the 8th, 11th and 14th. It was announced by the AFC that each group will hold their games in a centralised venue, and a bidding process will be held for the hosts.

Eira, Rohan claim juniors' tennis titles



Officials with the tournament winners in the awarding ceremony

● **Eira Corral wins girls' under-16 division after defeating Zaidan Hajjar in straight sets**

● **Rohan Mukherjee battles back from a set down to defeat Darion Ali to win boys' under-16 title**

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Eira Corral and Rohan Mukherjee were crowned champions of their respective singles categories in the ninth EK Kanoo Juniors Open Tennis Championship at Bahrain Tennis Club (BTC).

Eira won the girls' under-16 division after defeating Zaidan Hajjar 6-4, 6-2 in their final, while Rohan overcame a tough challenge from Darion Ali in their title-decider, which he won battling from behind 3-6, 7-5, 13-11.

“It was not an easy match for me since my opponent was playing really good as well but, I'm really happy to get the championship at the end

EIRA CORRAL

Following her win, Eira, from the Philippines, said that she is thankful to the tournament organisers and sponsors as well as her BTC personal coaches Hanna and Janji for helping her prepare for the tournament.

Eira also expressed her gratitude to BTC management for letting her train at the club's courts and her mom for supporting her all the way.

“It was not an easy match for me since my opponent was playing really good as well but, I'm really happy to get the championship at the end,” Eira commented.

Rohan, from India, said that

his final could have gone either way. “I guess I got a bit of luck in my favour,” he expressed. “I am really thankful and happy to see my mom watching me play, as well as my dad and brother.

“I would also like to thank the Bahrain Tennis Federation (BTF) for letting me train with them, especially BTF president Shaikh Abdulaziz bin Mubarak Al Khalifa.”

The two finals were followed by the official closing ceremony. A number of officials were on hand, including His Majesty the King's youth and sports affairs advisor Saleh Isa bin Hindi Al Mannai, BTF president Shaikh Abdulaziz, Ebrahim K Kanoo director Isa Mohamed Kanoo, Ebrahim K Kanoo assistant manager Ammar Bubshait, Ebrahim K Kanoo senior manager marketing Ayman Shehadeh, BTC honorary president Dr Ali Fakhro, BTC president Khamis Al Muqla and BTC member Faisal Al Mosawi.

They awarded Eira, Rohan and the tournament's winners in the other categories.

Rampant Barty to meet powerhouse Collins in Australian Open final



Ashleigh Barty

AFP | Melbourne

Aruthless Ashleigh Barty swept into her first Australian Open final yesterday with a clinical, straight-sets demolition of Madison Keys to set-up a title match with the hard-hitting Danielle Collins.

The world number one overwhelmed 51st-ranked Keys 6-1, 6-3 in just 62 minutes with another American awaiting after the all-business Collins crushed Polish seventh seed Iga Swiatek 6-4, 6-1.

Barty is the first Australian woman into the decider of her home Grand Slam since Wendy Turnbull in 1980 and is aiming to become the first winner since Chris O'Neil two years earlier. But the tenacious Collins stands in her way on Saturday with the 28-year-old enjoying a second coming after surgery last year for endometriosis left her pain free.

Nine months on and she has 32-7 win-loss record, capturing her maiden WTA singles titles last year in Palermo then San Jose.

BIC to host 2,000cc Challenge fourth round today



Action from a previous round

TDT | Manama

One of the region's leading national championships is back in action today at Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) in Sakhir.

Round four of the highly competitive BIC 2,000cc Challenge is scheduled to take place between 10.30am and 4pm as part of National Race Day at “The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East”.

Being the longest-running circuit racing series in Bahrain, it has become widely popular with competitors who battle it out in two-litre cars. The 2,000cc Challenge follows simple regulations, but is still extremely fun to watch with plenty of bumper-to-bumper action each meeting.

Today's events will be held along BIC's 2.550-kilomere Inner Track.

Fans are welcome to attend and will be able watch the action from BIC's Batelco Grandstand. Tickets are available at the gate for a nominal entry fee of BD2. Tickets are BD1 for children aged 12 and under.

Attendees should note that

the green shield, as shown on the BeAware App, must be presented on entry. Children under 12 are permitted entry when accompanied by a qualifying adult.

A grid of about a dozen drivers are returning for the meeting, which ushers in the second half of the seven-round 2,000cc season. They will be battling it out in the Challenge's Pro and Novice classes.

Amongst the leading participants in the series' top-tier category is defending champion Raed Raffii, who won both races in round three behind the wheel of his Honda S2000 contender. He is expecting a tough fight from the likes of Raed Himmo (Honda Civic), who has also already claimed race wins this campaign, and Majed Himmo (Honda Civic) and Nasser Al Alawi (Honda S2000), who are all competing in the Pro class.

In the Novice category, a tight battle is expected between Ali Al Mansoori (Honda Civic), Giovanni Salerno (Ford Focus), Andreas Buelow (Honda Civic), Wiebke Buelow (Honda Civic), and Moaaz Mohammed (Honda Civic EK).