

HH Shaikh Nasser set to lead Royal Team in World Endurance Championship in Spain

TDI | Manama

Under the leadership of HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Representative of HM the King for Humanitarian Works and Youth Affairs and Captain of the Team, the Royal Endurance Team is set to undergo the veterinary examination ahead of the World Endurance Championship for horses aged eight years which will take place in Spain with the participate of elite riders.

HH Shaikh Nasser will lead the team which also includes Mayoof Al Rumaihi, Sultan Abdulaziz Al Rumaihi, Isa Al Enzi, Mohammed Khalifa Al Ruwaie and Khalifa Mubarak Sabt. The veterinary test will take place today in addition to the technical meeting, after which the participants will receive their exclusive numbers.

Commenting on this, Dr Khalid Ahmed Hassan Manager of the team said: "HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa



HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa

has decided a set of objectives for taking part in this event. His Highness' vision focuses on supporting young riders through allowing them to participate in top races in order to be ready to carry Bahrain's flag in the endurance races in the future."



Horses are bathed after training

Cordoba signs Khulaifat

Bahraini talent Hisham Al Khulaifat to represent Cordoba's youth team this season

● **Hisham hand picked after capturing attention during Cordoba's last visit to Bahrain**

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In line with the vision of HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Representative of HM the King for Humanitarian Works, and as part of the keenness to support Bahraini players, Spanish side Cordoba has signed Hisham Al Khulaifat who plays for the Bahraini National Youth team.

Khulaifat will be the first Bahraini to join a Spanish club and showcase his skills in the Spanish stadiums.

The move comes as the team put together a series of positive results in the past period thanks to the backing of HH Shaikh Nasser.

His Highness affirmed that the Kingdom of Bahrain is heading towards upgrading its players' skills across all sports in line with its vision that involves making successful generations composed of young individuals who have high technical abilities and capable of accomplishing top honours and earning high positions at the regional and international levels.

"As part of our belief in young



Hisham Al Khulaifat at Cordoba's stadium

Bahraini talents, we witness today the transfer of a young Bahraini player, namely Hisham Al Khulaifat to the youth team of Cordoba. He will ply his trade for them this season. It will be a unique experience for him as he will be able to show his skills in the Spanish stadiums and compete against great players who have outstanding skills and achievements in addition to participating in advanced professional training sessions," HH Shaikh Nasser said.

Hisham was hand picked after capturing the attention during the last visit of Cordoba to Bahrain. He managed to pass the technical tests which took place in Spain in August.

Commenting on this, Khulaifat expressed utmost thanks and appreciation to HH Shaikh Nasser for his constant support to play abroad and experience the life of a professional football player and Cordoba CF have helped me achieve that. I hope to play for the first team one day and make the supporters and Bahrain proud!"

Khulaifat currently plays with Bahrain's under 20 national team and aims to play with the first team. "To get the call-up to the first team won't be easy but I'm willing to work and sacrifice a lot so we will see what happens in the future."



HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa



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HH SHAIKH NASSER BIN HAMAD AL KHALIFA

Khulaifat began playing football at the age of four after joining Arsenal academy in Bahrain. He later trained under another academy called tekkers Bahrain until he was 13 after which he played for Al Najma club until 2021.

Cordoba currently plays in the third tier of the Spanish football league system

Man Utd boss Ten Hag 'convinced' Maguire can recover form

AFP | London

Manchester United manager Eric ten Hag says he is "convinced" Harry Maguire can turn his form around after another error-strewn display in England's Nations League match against Germany.

Maguire, ruled out of United's derby at Manchester City on Sunday due to injury, gave away a penalty against Germany on Monday and lost possession before the visitors' second goal in the 3-3 draw.

His latest sub-par performance led to renewed talk about whether the 29-year-old defender, who has been out of form and favour at United, should still be in the England team, just weeks away from the World Cup.

But Ten Hag, like England boss Gareth Southgate, retains faith in Maguire and is certain he will improve.

"First of all, of course I have to



Eric ten Hag and Harry Maguire after a match (file photo)

coach him, I have to back him," Ten Hag said at his pre-match press conference yesterday.

"But I back him because I believe in him. In the period I worked with him in pre-season he was good, I think I would say really good -- training and games.

"Then he fell out (of the starting line-up) but it's also to do with the good performance of the centre-backs who are play-

ing now." Argentina's Lisandro Martinez and France international Raphael Varane have been Ten Hag's preferred centre-back partnership in recent games.

Ten Hag said everyone in United's squad and on their coaching staff still believe in the former Leicester centre-back, who picked up a knock on England duty.

"Now it is about him," he



Argentina's Lisandro Martinez and France international Raphael Varane have been Ten Hag's preferred centre-back partnership in recent games

said. "That is what I told him. I'm sure he can do it. He will turn around this. I am really convinced of that."

United's match on Sunday will be their first Premier League outing since they beat Arsenal 3-1 on September 4 -- the Crystal Palace and Leeds fixtures were called off following the death of Queen Elizabeth II.

Stones injury not long-term, says Man City boss Guardiola



Manchester City's manager Pep Guardiola (R) speaks with John Stones (L) during a match (file photo)

Reuters | London

Manchester City defender John Stones could return from injury in two weeks and be available for the World Cup while midfielder Calvin Phillips could also make it to Qatar following shoulder surgery, manager Pep Guardiola said yesterday.

Stones went off after hurting his hamstring in England's Nations League draw against Germany on Monday, casting doubt over his participation in the Nov. 20-Dec. 18 World Cup.

"It won't be 4-6 weeks, it might be less. I don't know when he will be back but two weeks, 10 days hopefully," Guardiola told reporters ahead of Sunday's derby clash at home to Manchester United.

Phillips withdrew from the England squad for games against Italy and Germany this month to undergo surgery and

He took the right decision (to have surgery), otherwise he couldn't move forward. Every training session he was out. Hopefully he can be back in time to go to World Cup

JOHN STONES

Guardiola said the player was recovering well.

"He took the right decision (to have surgery), otherwise he couldn't move forward. Every training session he was out. Hopefully he can be back in time to go to World Cup," he added.

Champions City, who head into the derby one point behind leaders Arsenal, will face a resurgent United who have won their last four league games after a torrid start to the season.

Stunned Ruud follows ill Norrie out of Korea Open

AFP | Seoul

World number two Casper Ruud crashed out of the Korea Open quarter-finals yesterday to 56th-ranked Yoshihito Nishioka, while Britain's Cameron Norrie pulled out ill.

Japan's Nishioka had the top seed and US Open finalist on the back foot from the start, break-

ing his first service game without allowing the Norwegian to take a point before powering to the first set 6-2.

Ruud rallied to take the second set 6-3 but was outclassed in the third set as Nishioka won it 6-2 to take a shock victory in just under two hours in Seoul.

Nishioka will face either Mackenzie McDonald of the United States or Aleksandar Kovacevic from Serbia in the semi-finals.

"It was an unfortunate result but that's how it is sometimes," said the 23-year-old Ruud, who was also the runner-up at the French Open.



Casper Ruud in action during his match