

Sousa calls up 23 for Bangkok camp

Senior men's national team set to miss key players from Riffa and East Riffa for training in Thai capital due to club commitments

● Three of Bahrain's overseas-based professionals called up, along with players from five local clubs

● Bahrainis scheduled to hold camp between May 11 and 31, with an international friendly against Thais on last day

TDT | Manama

Bahrain head coach Helio Sousa has named a 23-member senior men's national football team for their upcoming overseas training camp in Bangkok, which they are conducting as part of their preparations for their AFC Asian Cup 2023 qualifiers next month. The team currently does not



Bahrain's talented star Komail Alaswad of Riffa Club, right, is one of the key names currently missing from the team

include any top names from national champions Riffa and top side East Riffa, as they will be busy with their clubs competing in the group stages of this year's AFC Cup competition in the mid-

dle of this month.

Sousa has called up three of the Kingdom's foreign-based professionals to the squad, including Ali Haram and Abdulla Hazaa from Al Tadhamon in Ku-



Bahrain are looking to secure their seventh appearance in the AFC Asian Cup, having also appeared in the 1988, 2004, 2007, 2011, 2015 and 2019 editions

wait, and Abdulla Yousef from Slovan Liberec in the Czech Republic.

The rest of the players are from five local clubs, including Al Khaldiya, Muharraq, Manama, Al Ahli and Budaiya.

The Khaldiya contingent are Mahdi Humaidan, Ahmed Abdulla, Ahmed Bughammar,

Mohammed Adel, Mohammed Hardan, Sayed Dhiya Saeed and Sayed Shubbar Alawi. From Muharraq are Abdulwahab Al Malood, Amine Hasan, Rashed Al Hooti, Waleed Al Hayam and Sayed Mohammed Jaafar. From Manama are Mahdi Abdullatif and Ebrahim Khat-tal; while from Ahli are Abbas Ayyad, Jamal Rashid and Mohammed Abdulwahab. Abdul-laziz Mohammed from Budaiya completes the line-up of 23.

Bahrain's training camp in the Thai capital is scheduled for May 11 to 31. During their Bangkok camp, they will be playing a training game on May 24, in addition to an international friendly against their Thai counterparts on the 31st.

The Asian Cup qualifiers are then scheduled for the second week of June. Sousa is expected to include some key players from Riffa and East Riffa in

those matches.

Bahrain are in Group E of Asian Cup qualifying along with Turkmenistan, Bangladesh and Malaysia.

The group's games are set to be hosted in Kuala Lumpur, and they will be played over a single round on three match-days, including on June 8 against Bangladesh, on June 11 against Malaysia, and on June 14 against Turkmenistan.

The AFC Asian Cup is scheduled to kick off on June 16 next year in China.

Bahrain are looking to secure their seventh appearance in the tournament proper. They first appeared in 1988, and have qualified for the last five tournaments in 2004, 2007, 2011, 2015 and 2019.

The Bahrainis' best finish in the competition was fourth in 2004. They reached the last 16 in 2019, but did not make it past the group stage the other times.

Jabeur downs Halep to reach semi-finals in Madrid

Reuters | Madrid

Tunisian Ons Jabeur reached her career-second WTA 1000 semi-final after beating former world number one Simona Halep 6-3 6-2 at the Madrid Open yesterday.

Jabeur, who reached the Indian Wells last four in 2021, won an impressive 77.8% points on her first serve and converted four of her five break points against two-times champion Halep to seal the victory in just



Tunisia's Ons Jabeur in action over an hour.

World number 10 Jabeur will face the winner of the match

between Ekaterina Anisimova and Amanda Alexandrova for a spot in her first WTA 1000 final.

Sara Sorribes Tormo of Spain will face American Jessica Pegula and Ukraine's Anhelina Kalinina will take on Swiss Jil Teichmann in the other quarter-finals.

In the men's draw, 21-times major winner Rafa Nadal, world number three Alexander Zverev and Greece's Stefanos Tsitsipas are all in action later yesterday in the round of 32.

World Cup winner Ginter rejoins hometown club Freiburg

AFP | Berlin

Bundesliga side Freiburg announced yesterday the signing of 2014 World Cup winner Matthias Ginter, who will return to his former club from Borussia Moenchengladbach on a free transfer.

The centre-back came up through the Freiburg academy but left in 2014 to join Bundesliga rivals Borussia Dortmund before switching to Gladbach in 2017.

Ginter, 28, has been signed



Matthias Ginter

as a replacement for current Germany international Nico Schlotterbeck, who is leaving Freiburg at the end of the season for Dortmund.

"I wanted to do something

special in my career, and there's nothing more meaningful to me than a return to SC Freiburg and to my home," said Ginter in a statement.

He was part of the Germany squad that won the 2014 World Cup without making an appearance at the finals in Brazil.

He won the last of his 28 international caps last November.

Freiburg are fourth in the Bundesliga with two games left and on course to qualify for the Champions League for the first time next season.

Brooks, F1's last remaining winner from 1950s, dies at 90

Reuters | London

Tony Brooks, the British 'racing dentist' who was Formula One's last surviving grand prix winner from the 1950s and finished second in the 1959 world championship, has died aged 90.

"I was saddened to hear the news that Tony Brooks has died," said Formula One chief executive Stefano Domenicali in a statement.

"He was part of a special group of drivers who were pioneers and pushed the boundaries at a time of great risk."

The BBC said the news was



Matthias Ginter

announced by Brooks' daughter Giulia.

Charles Anthony Standish Brooks, known as Tony, won six grands prix during one of the sport's deadliest eras, making his championship debut with BRM in 1956 and retiring in 1961 at the age of 29.

He also drove for Vanwall,

Ferrari and Cooper.

"Brooks was a tremendous driver, the greatest -- if he'll forgive me saying this -- 'unknown' racing driver there's ever been," late compatriot Stirling Moss told writer Nigel Roebuck in the 1986 book 'Grand Prix Greats'.

"He was far better than several people who won the world championship."

The Briton, a keen amateur racer, was a 23-year-old dentistry student at Manchester University preparing for his finals when he won the 1955 non-championship Syracuse Grand Prix in Sicily.

Mercedes boss Wolff hopes China can host several races in future

Reuters | London

The Chinese Grand Prix is absent from the calendar for the third straight year due to the COVID-19 pandemic but Mercedes boss Toto Wolff said Formula One can have a "strong footprint" in the country and hopes it will one day host three races each season.

China is relatively lacking in motorsport culture, but is a key market for Formula One with a rapidly emerging middle class



Mercedes boss Toto Wolff looks on prior to a race (file photo)

"We've been in Shanghai before and couldn't be there the last two years, but this is an important market for us. I'd like to not only race in Shanghai, I'd also like to race in Beijing. It's a fantastic market for us as Mercedes, and I believe we should be embedded there with a strong footprint"

TOTO WOLFF

and lure as an attractive market for automakers.

Formula One has also extended its contract with the Chinese Grand Prix until 2025 and there has long been talk of a second race in the country.

"We've been in Shanghai before and couldn't be there the last two years, but this is an important market for us," Wolff told Xinhua news agency at the FIA Formula E Championship in Monaco over the weekend.

"I'd like to not only race in Shanghai, I'd also like to race in Beijing. It's a fantastic market for us as Mercedes, and I believe we should be embedded

there with a strong footprint.

"We have three races in the United States now - Las Vegas, Miami and Austin - and if we can do the same thing in China, that would be great."

China's first Formula One driver Guanyu Zhou enjoyed a superb start to his career at the season-opening Bahrain Grand Prix in March, as the Alfa Romeo rookie finished in the points on his debut.

Chinese drivers have tested Formula One machinery before with Ma Qing Hua and Dutch-born Ho-Pin Tung, who was reserve for Renault in 2010 in another first.

Ter Stegen to miss Germany's Nations League ties in June

AFP | Barcelona

Barcelona's Marc-Andre ter Stegen will miss Germany's Nations League games against England, Italy and Hungary this June, the goalkeeper announced yesterday.

The 30-year-old is an understudy to Germany captain Manuel Neuer and has opted to take a break this summer with one eye on the World Cup finals in Qatar, which kicks off this November.



Marc-Andre ter Stegen

He said he was given approval from Germany head coach Hansi Flick.

"I'm happy every time I am

selected, but on the other hand, after three intensive seasons without a summer break, the national coach agrees that I need this," ter Stegen told the German football association's website.

Ter Stegen will miss games against Italy in Bologna on June 4, England three days later in Munich and then Hungary in Budapest on June 11.

He also misses the return fixture against the Azzurri in Moenchengaldbach on June 14.