

## Haaland 'not stressed' by goal drought ahead of Champions League final



Manchester City's Erling Haaland (C) and Calvin Phillips (R) take part in a team training session

AFP | London

Erling Haaland says he is "not stressed" about his mini goal drought ahead of Saturday's Champions League final against Inter Milan after already scoring 52 in his first season at Manchester City.

The Norwegian smashed the Premier League record for goals in a single campaign, with 36, and has helped take City to within one game of a historic treble after also lifting the FA Cup.

But a four-game scoreless streak is the longest of Haaland's City career to date and he has netted just once in his past seven matches.

"You can think of it as one goal in seven games or 52 goals in 52 games and eight assists, I think (he has nine)," said Haaland. "You can think of it in both ways. I'm not stressed. I feel really good."

"I didn't expect to score this many goals but, again, I could have scored more. I've been missing a lot of chances, so I could have scored more. That's the truth."

City were already the dominant domestic force in English

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ERLING HAALAND

football before Haaland's arrival from Borussia Dortmund last year.

However, the English champions are still to conquer Europe and his signing was seen as the final piece in the jigsaw to deliver Champions League glory.

"Of course I feel pressure. I would lie if I said I didn't," the 22-year-old said.

"You say it yourself and it's true -- they won the Premier League without me, they won every trophy without me."

"So I'm here to try to do a thing that the club has never done before and I'll do my best."

City are huge favourites to get the better of the Italian giants in Istanbul and become just the second side to do the treble of Premier League, FA Cup and Champions League in the same season.

Pep Guardiola's men became the first team to win the English domestic treble of Premier League, FA Cup and League Cup four years ago.

# Bahrain squad set for junior handball worlds

Final team roster announced for 2023 IHF Men's Junior World Championship

● Bahrainis to travel to Athens today for final lead-up to under-21 worlds

● Nationals to face Greek counterparts in two friendlies, Morocco in another

TDT | Manama

Bahrain announced yesterday the final 18-player line-up that will be competing at the 2023 IHF Men's Junior World Championship, set to be held in Germany and Greece from June 20 to July 2.

The Bahrainis have been training over the past several weeks with a squad of 22 players, and the Bahrain Handball Association (BHA) revealed yesterday the last cuts for the official roster that will be flying the Kingdom's flag at the under-21 tournament.

The team features Abdulla Abdulkarim and Komail Fouad from Al Najma; Sadiq Jaafar and Hussain Ali from Tubli; Mahmood Al Khunaizi from



HH Shaikh Isa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa greets a player during his visit to their training session

Al Ettihad; Mustafa Al Hayki, Ahmed Al Zain and Hassan Khalil from Al Ahli; Yasser Qambar and Ali Madan from Barbar; Ali Redha from Tadhamun; Ali Al Asheeri and Hesham Ahmed from Al Dair; Mohammed Hameed, Ali Jameel and Ali Mahmood from Al Ettifaq; and Ahmed Redha and Jassim Khamis from Al Shabab.

The Bahrainis are scheduled to travel to Athens today morning for their final lead-up to the competition. There, they will hold a training camp and be playing two warm-up games against their counterparts from Greece and one against Morocco, with the possibility of another friendly against a European team taking part in the worlds.

The travelling Bahraini delegation is being headed by BHA board member Abdulrazzaq Khalil. It also includes head coach Essam Abdulla and his assistant Raed Al Marzouq, team manager Hussain Al Fardan and other administrative and support staff.

Meanwhile, Bahrain Olympic Committee (BOC) vice-president His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa paid a visit to the junior national team at one of their local training sessions this week. HH Shaikh Isa was accompanied by BOC secretary general Faris Al Kooheji and a number of BOC and BHA officials.

HH Shaikh Isa gave words of encouragement to the team's up-and-coming young players and wished them the best in the tournament.

The junior nationals are in

Group F for the worlds, along-

side Sweden, Slovenia and Greenland. There are 32 teams in all competing, divided into eight pools of four for the preliminary round.

Group A features France, Poland, Croatia and the US. Group B comprises Algeria, Germany, Tunisia and Libya. Group C consists of Portugal, Brazil, Kuwait and Costa Rica; while Group D includes Spain, Faroe Islands, Japan and Angola. Group E features Hungary, Denmark, Argentina and Norway; while Group G comprises Serbia, Morocco, Chile and Iceland. The field is completed by Egypt, Greece, Cuba and Saudi Arabia in Group H.

At the end of a single round-robin in the preliminary stage, the top two teams from each group move on to the tournament's main round.

This year's event will be only the third time Bahrain's juniors are competing. They previously also took part in the 1995 and 2019 editions, both times finishing 17th overall.



**Bahrain will be competing in the junior handball world championship for only the third time in the tournament's history. They previously also took part in the 1995 and 2019 editions, both times finishing 17th overall**

## Sloppy Australia stay on top in WTC final after Jadeja's double strike

AFP | London

India's Ravindra Jadeja took two prize wickets but Australia remained in command of the World Test Championship final despite an error-strewn display at The Oval yesterday.

Jadeja removed first-innings century-makers Steve Smith and Travis Head but a third day of dropped catches, wickets off no-balls and rash shots still ended with Australia 296 runs ahead at 123-4 in their second innings.

Marnus Labuschagne, the world's top-ranked Test batsman, survived several painful blows on a pitch of variable bounce to be 41 not out at stumps.

When Scott Boland knocked over Srikar Bharat's stumps with just the second ball of the day, India were 317 runs behind with only four first-innings wickets standing.

But Ajinkya Rahane (89) and Shardul Thakur (51) then made the most of Australia's mistakes a week before the first Ashes Test against England during a



India's Mohammed Shami and Shardul Thakur chat during the match

seventh-wicket stand of 109. India surged past the follow-on total before they were eventually dismissed for 296.

Australia captain Pat Cummins took 3-83 in his 20 overs but his figures would have been better but for six no-balls.

And Australia were 2-1 when under-pressure opener David Warner, who had managed just one century in his previous 33 Test innings, was caught behind

off Mohammed Siraj. Usman Khawaja, Warner's opening partner, fell cheaply for the second time this match when, on 13, he followed a first-innings duck by carelessly edging a wide ball from Umesh Yadav to wicketkeeper Bharat as the pacer took his first wicket of the final.

Left-arm spinner Jadeja then removed Smith and Head, al-

### Scorecard

**Australia** 123 for 4 (Labuschagne 41\*, Jadeja 2-25) and 469 lead  
**India** 296 (Rahane 89, Shardul 51, Cummins 3-83) by 296 runs

though both batsmen played a part in their own downfall.

Star batsman Smith had spent just over five-and-a-half hours at the crease for 121 in Australia's first-innings 469.

But on Friday he gave his wicket away for 34 when he skyed a drive off Jadeja to cover.

Head's dynamic 163 had established Australia's strong position in the final. He continued to attack Friday only for a quick-fire 18 to end when, attempting a booming drive against the turn out of the rough, his miscued shot gave Jadeja a simple return catch.

Australia were now 111-4, still a lead of 284 against an India side missing Ravichandran Ashwin after the star off-spinner, the world's top-ranked Test bowler, was omitted in favour of an extra seamer.

## Neville joins Canada coaching staff

AFP | Miami

Former Manchester United defender has joined the coaching staff of Canada's national team ahead of next week's CONCACAF Nations League Final Four.

Neville was sacked as Inter

Miami coach last week, just days before Lionel Messi announced he would be joining the Major League Soccer club.

The former England women's national team coach will work under John Herdman, the English head coach of the Canadian national side.

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