

Bahrain take on Tunisia in handball world championship



Bahrain head coach Aron Kristjansson

● **Tonight's match is scheduled for an 8pm start, Bahrain time**

● **Bahrainis also set to face Denmark, Belgium in Group B**

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Bahrain take on Tunisia this evening to begin their campaign in the 28th International Handball Federation (IHF) Men's Handball World Championship, being co-hosted by Poland and Sweden.

For this opening stage of the tournament, the nationals are in Group H, which will be played at Malmo Arena in the Swedish city of Malmo.

Bahrain's game tonight is scheduled for an 8pm throw-off, Bahrain time. It is the first of three matches in their division. They next play reigning world champions Denmark on Sunday before closing out this phase on Tuesday next week against Belgium.

The Bahrainis are one of 32 national teams from five confederations competing in the worlds. They have been divided into eight groups for the preliminaries.

After a single round-robin, the top three teams from each of the eight groups move on to the main round, where they will be divided into four further groups of six teams apiece.

The other eight squads will vie for the President's Cup.

Bahrain head coach Aron Kristjansson from Iceland has 19 players at the world championships. They are long-time skipper Hussain Al Sayyad, Mohammed Mirza, Ali Mirza, Jassim Al Salatna, Mohammed Abdulhussain, Mohammed Habib Mohammed, Ali Eid, Hasan Alsama-heeji, Ahmed Fadhul, Mohammed Ali, Hassan Mirza, Komail Mahfoodh, Hesham Ahmed Isa, Qassim Qambar, Abdulla Alzaimoor, Mujtaba Alzaimoor, Mahmood Hussain Mohammed, Muntadher Ebrahim Ali and Abdulla Ali.

Four in a row for BRX!

Sebastien Loeb extends stage-winning run to close in on second in Dakar Rally

● **Sebastien Loeb wins 247km 11th stage for fifth triumph in this year's Dakar Rally**

● **French star moves within reach of outright second place with three days remaining**

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After a fourth successive stage victory for Bahrain Raid Xtreme (BRX), Sebastien Loeb aims to extend his winning run as the Dakar Rally continues its dramatic passage through the Empty Quarter in Saudi Arabia.

Partnered by Fabian Lurquin in his BRX Prodrive Hunter, Loeb's victory on yesterday's 247km 11th stage, his fifth in this year's event and 21st overall, moved him within reach of outright second place with three days remaining.

It was another day to underline the power and versatility of the Prodrive Hunters, with Guerlain Chicherit and Alex Winocq recovering from a difficult time yesterday to take second place, within 2mins 16 secs of the nine-time World Rally Champion.

Also recovering superbly after yesterday's broken suspension, Vaidotas Zala and Paulo Fuiza



Sebastien Loeb in action in yesterday's 11th stage

were on course for another podium finish in the third Prodrive Hunter yesterday before coming to a halt for 20 minutes before resuming.

BRX Team Principal Gus Betele commented: "Seb drove brilliantly today to give us here at Bahrain Raid Xtreme another stage victory to now make six from eleven stages so far.

"That's proof of the hard work that everyone here on the rally, and those back at Prodrive International, have done since the start of this project. We're now within striking distance of second overall too.

"With Guerlain making second place, it was another good day for BRX, although frustrating for Vaidotas after a strong start to the stage. However,

there are sure to be some further twists and turns over the remaining three days before Sunday."

Fifth fastest yesterday, Nasser Al Attiyah has an overall lead of 1 hr 21 mins 4 secs in his Toyota from Lucas Moraes, but the Brazilian driver is under pressure in second place in his Toyota, with Loeb now just 9 mins 37 secs away.

The first half of the two-day Shaybah Empty Quarter Marathon stage delivered the cars to a remote bivouac set amongst huge dunes, reflecting the early days of the Dakar before the arrival of the Internet and smart phones.

With assistance trucks and mechanics also excluded, there was a strong emphasis yester-

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day on protecting the cars, as there will be tomorrow, and Loeb produced a master class in all-round driving through the majestic, but potentially hazardous, dunes of the Empty Quarter.

After securing another maximum points-haul with his latest stage victory, he has extended his lead over Al Attiyah in the World Rally-Raid Championship standings, with finishing positions in Dammam on Sunday to decide who leads after this year's opening round.

Chicherit, who felt ill on yesterday's stage after a hard impact, again underlined his liking for the Prodrive Hunter which he drove to a milestone first victory for the car in the Rallye Du Maroc three months ago.

Bahrain Darts Masters 2023 gets underway with fantastic first day of action at BIC

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Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) kicked off last night one of the Kingdom's biggest international sporting events this year with the first night of action in the highly anticipated Bahrain Darts Masters 2023, supported by Bahrain Tourism and Exhibition Authority. The spectacular event marks the opening round of the PDC World Series of Darts.

Sixteen of the world's greatest players, including eight of the game's juggernauts and another eight of Asia's best, shone in the spotlight at the beautifully decorated Dome Tent at "The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East", which was transformed to replicate the electric atmosphere at the famed Alexandra Palace in the UK, best known as the host venue of the World Darts Championship.

Among the sport's protagonists in action at BIC were recently crowned World Champion and current world number one Michael Smith, who took on Bahrain's very own Abdulnaser Yusuf.

Reigning World Series of Darts Finals champion Gerwyn Price played against legendary Singapore icon Paul Lim, while world number two Peter Wright locked horns with World Championship qualifier Toru Suzuki of Japan.



Dimitri Van den Bergh greets fans before his match

Rising star and world number five Luke Humphries made his World Series of Darts debut against Hong Kong's Man Lok Leung, while five-time World Champion Raymond van Barneveld, making his first World Series appearance since 2019, took on Japan's Yuki Yamada.

Former World Champion Rob Cross marked his World Series return against India's Nitin Kumar, while former Premier League and World Cup of Darts champion Jonny Clayton played Bahrain qualifier Bassim Mahmood.

Dimitri Van den Bergh, winner of two World Series of Darts



Fans cheer during the event



Rob Cross interacts with fans attending the event

titles last year, rounded off the first round match-ups against the Philippines' Alain Abiabi.

They all went head-to-head for the chance to advance to the quarter-finals.

Play continues tonight at BIC with the evening's programme scheduled to start at 7pm. The semi-finals and final will follow right after the round of eight.

Gates will open to fans from 6pm. All those attending will be able to enjoy the event's incredible atmosphere, with fancy dress encouraged and an extensive range of food and drinks on offer.

Tickets can still be purchased. They start at BD25 for general admission. Premium seating is

also available with hospitality options inclusive of food and beverages. All options can be purchased at bahraingp.com or through the BIC Hotline on +973-17450000.

The Bahrain Darts Masters 2023 is being supported by Bahrain Tourism and Exhibition Authority (BTEA). BIC and leading sports promoter CBX teamed up with the PDC to bring the World Series of Darts to Bahrain, in partnership with the BTEA. The event is also supported by DSV and The Gulf Hotel.

The Bahrain Darts Masters 2023 is being broadcast live to a TV audience reaching over 200 million people in more than 185 countries worldwide.



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