

Bahrain volleyball teams set for Asian events

Two of Kingdom's national squads set for leading continental competitions this summer

● **Bahrain in Pool F alongside Sri Lanka, Indonesia for AVC Challenge Cup for Men**

● **Bahrain in Pool D with Chinese Taipei, Mongolia for Asian Senior Men's Volleyball Championship**

● **Bahrain in Pool B with India, Thailand, Australia for Asian Men's U16 Volleyball Championship**

TDI | Manama

Two of Bahrain's national volleyball teams have learned of their preliminary round groups in three Asian competitions they will be competing in this summer.

The senior men's squad will be playing in two of those events, while the youth national team will contest the other.

The draws for all three tournaments were held by the Asian Volleyball Confederation.



Bahrain's senior men's national volleyball team in a tournament last year (File photo)

Bahrain's senior men will first be competing in the 2023 AVC Challenge Cup for Men in Taipei, Chinese Taipei from July 8 to 15.

The Bahrainis are among a record 17 teams that will vie for the lone berth up for grabs in the FIVB Men's Challenger Cup—a pathway to the FIVB Men's Volleyball Nations League.

The nationals will be playing in Pool F alongside Sri Lanka and Indonesia. Pool A features two teams in hosts Chinese Taipei and Kazakhstan; Pool B comprises Saudi Arabia, Thailand

and South Korea; while Uzbekistan, India and Hong Kong are in Pool C.

Pool D consists of Mongolia, the Philippines and Macau, with Australia, Pakistan and Vietnam in Pool E.

Following this event, the men's national team will also face off with the continent's best in the 22nd Asian Senior Men's Volleyball Championship, to be held in Tehran, Iran between August 19 and 26.

Bahrain are in Pool D with Chinese Taipei and Mongolia. Two-time champions Iran are

in Pool A with Hong Kong and Iraq; while Japan, Uzbekistan and Thailand are in Pool B. Pool C consists of China, Kazakhstan and Indonesia; while Qatar, India and Afghanistan are in Pool E. Pool F rounds out the teams with Pakistan, South Korea and Bangladesh.

Meanwhile, the youth national team will be playing in the first edition of the Asian Men's U16 Volleyball Championship from July 22 to 29 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

There are 15 teams set to compete in the tournament, which



Bahrain's senior men will be competing in the 2023 AVC Challenge Cup for Men in Taipei from July 8 to 15 and then the 22nd Asian Senior Men's Volleyball Championship in Tehran between August 19 and 26

also serves as Asian qualification for next year's FIVB Volleyball Men's U17 World Championship, with the top three teams booking their tickets.

Bahrain are in Pool B with India, Thailand and Australia; while Kazakhstan and Hong Kong join hosts Uzbekistan in Pool A. Pool C consists of Saudi Arabia, Iran, Japan and China; with Kuwait, Pakistan, Mongolia and Chinese Taipei in Pool D.

Conte slams 'selfish' Spurs players after Southampton draw



Antonio Conte
AFP | London

Tottenham Hotspur boss Antonio Conte tore into his "selfish" players, saying they "didn't want to play under pressure" after they squandered a chance to go third in the Premier League with a 3-3 draw Saturday away to bottom-of-the-table Southampton.

Spurs were on course to secure an important win in their quest for Champions League qualification when Ivan Perisic scored in the 74th minute after earlier goals by Pedro Porro and Harry Kane.

The visitors led 3-1 at that stage, after Che Adams had cancelled out Porro's opener.

But the Saints hit back, with Theo Walcott cutting the deficit in the 77th minute before James Ward-Prowse's stoppage-time penalty extended Spurs' winless run on the road to five matches.

Tottenham's recent defeats by AC Milan and Sheffield United saw them exit the Champions League and FA Cup respectively to ensure the club have now gone 15 years without a major trophy.

Man Utd capitalise on Fulham red mist to reach FA Cup semi-finals

AFP | London

Manchester United set up a FA Cup semi-final against Brighton in remarkable fashion as Fulham captain Aleksandar Mitrovic was sent off for pushing the referee in a 3-1 defeat at Old Trafford yesterday.

Mitrovic was shown one of three Fulham red cards in a matter of seconds as he barged into Chris Kavanagh for awarding United a penalty after a VAR review for Willian's handball on the line.

The Brazilian was also dismissed, along with Fulham manager Marco Silva on the touchline.

United took advantage as two goals from Bruno Fernandes and



Manchester United's Antony (L) vies with Fulham's Antonee Robinson (R)

Marcel Sabitzer's first for the club kept Erik ten Hag's men on course for a treble of cup competitions.

The Cottagers had been on

course to reach the last four for the first time in 21 years when Mitrovic fired them ahead early in the second half.

United needed goalkeeper

David de Gea to make a remarkable save to deny the Serbian a second before the tie completely turned on one incident 18 minutes from time.

Willian used his hand to deflect Jadon Sancho's shot behind, preventing a certain goal.

Kavanagh initially only gave a corner, but reversed his decision on seeing the replay to spark chaotic scenes.

Silva was first to be shown red for approaching the official near the VAR monitor.

Willian was then dismissed, but it is Mitrovic who faces the most severe ban after pushing the referee on the arm and then squaring up to Kavanagh.

Fernandes coolly sent Bernd Leno the wrong way from the penalty spot to level.

Saka stars as rampant Arsenal move eight points clear



Arsenal's English midfielder Bukayo Saka shoots to score their second goal

● **Bukayo Saka runs the show as Arsenal cruise past rudderless Crystal Palace**

AFP | London

Arsenal surged eight points clear at the top of the Premier League as Bukayo Saka's brace inspired a 4-1 rout of Crystal Palace yesterday.

Gabriel Martinelli opened the scoring in the first half at the Emirates Stadium to put the leaders on course for a sixth successive league victory.

It was redemption for Martinelli, whose missed penalty condemned Arsenal to Europa League last 16 defeat in their shoot-out against Sporting Lisbon on Thursday.

Mikel Arteta's side needed just 45 minutes against struggling Palace to erase the bitter taste of that loss.

Saka followed Martinelli's

After surrendering top spot with a defeat against City in February, Arsenal have responded impressively, showing a maturity and composure far beyond the Gunners' teams that routinely under-achieved in recent years

goal by doubling Arsenal's lead before half-time.

Granit Xhaka netted the third after the interval and Jeff Schlupp's reply was no consolation as the influential Saka's second capped Arsenal's stylish display.

Arsenal now have a substantial eight-point lead over second placed Manchester City, who took the weekend off from Premier League duty to thrash Burnley in the FA Cup quarter-finals on Saturday.

Ruthless Napoli continue title march with Torino thrashing

AFP | Milan

Victor Osimhen and Khvicha Kvaratskhelia were again the heroes for Napoli yesterday as Italy's champions-elect thumped Torino 4-0 and moved a whopping 21 points clear at the top of Serie A.

Nigeria striker Osimhen took his league-leading goal tally to 21 with two towering headers in each half with Kvaratskhelia's 35th-minute penalty sandwiched between his attacking partner's brace.

Kvaratskhelia then laid on Tanguy Ndombele's first Serie A goal in the 68th minute following great hold-up play from Osimhen as Napoli took another step towards a first league title since 1990 in front of an army of fans in Turin.

It was their first away trip after the end of



Napoli's Victor Osimhen (L) scores a header past Torino's goalkeeper Vanja Milinkovic-Savic

a two-month ban on travelling supporters following a motorway dust up with Roma fans in January.

"It feels great, the support has been over-

whelming... there are so many in this place, we were surprised to see them," Osimhen said.

"They are hoping, it has been so many years they have been believing and their support has been so good. No one deserves this more than the Napoli fans... I'm really happy to put a smile on their faces."

The fans were on hand to see their team put in a typically dominant display which means at worst Napoli will be 18 points ahead of Inter Milan with 11 matches remaining, if Simone Inzaghi's inconsistent side beat Juventus in Sunday's big match.

Lazio will move one point ahead of Inter if they win the Rome derby with fifth-placed Roma in the evening, a match which could have a big impact on the fight for the top four positions.