

Muharraq edge past Al Najma

Tony Mitchell scores 28 points to spearhead victors in match-up between title-contenders in Zain Bahrain Basketball League

● Muharraq lead by as many as 11 points in third quarter

● Mohammed Hussain scores 27 to pace Najma in defeat

TDT | Manama

Muharraq posted a narrow 66-61 victory over Al Najma last night in the 2022/2023 Zain Bahrain Basketball League.

The week 18 contest between two of the Kingdom's title contenders was played at Zain Basketball Arena in Um Al Hassam.

Muharraq enjoyed leads as big as 11 points in the second-half but Najma roared back and regained the advantage momentarily. The two rivals battled hard in the final canto until Muharraq closed the game out on a 9-1 run, sparked by a Tony Mitchell three-pointer that tied the game at 60-apiece.

Bader Abdulla Malabes then made back-to-back baskets to push his team in front, including an off-balanced shot from the baseline that beat the shot-



Muharraq's Ali Shukrallah goes for a lay-up against Al Najma during their game

clock, and then two free-throws by Hussain Salman pegged the final score.

Mitchell finished as the game's leading scorer with 28 points. Malabes and Salman chipped in with 10 apiece, while Ali Jaffar had eight in the win. Ali Shukrallah also put in a fine effort, scoring six points and taking down 15 rebounds while registering four steals.

Najma were paced by the 27 of Mohammed Hussain. He buried three triples, but missed a crucial shot from beyond the arc in an attempt to tie the game with only seconds left on the clock. Ali Jaber chipped in with 12 points and 16 rebounds, while Mohammed Buallay and Abdulrahman Ghali each scored eight.

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Najma opened the game as the aggressors and took a slim 20-16 lead at the end of the first quarter. The two sides then matched each other point-for-point in the second period, with Najma taking a 36-32 advantage into the half.

In the third, Muharraq turned the tables and took a 40-38 lead on a Salman three-pointer. They went up by as many as 11 points, 53-42, but Najma closed the period strong, scoring five unanswered to get back to within 47-53.

Najma continued their spurt to start the final quarter and posted the first seven points, capped by a Hussain three-pointer to take the lead. The game remained close the rest of the

Standings

	P	W	L	Pts
Al Ahli	16	13	3	29
Manama	15	13	2	28
Muharraq	16	12	4	28
Al Ettihad	16	11	5	27
Bahrain Club	17	8	9	25
Al Najma	15	9	6	24
Al Hala	15	8	7	23
Nuwaidrat	15	6	10	22
Sitra	16	4	12	20
Samaheej	16	2	14	18
Isa Town	16	1	15	17

way leading up to the 60-all tie, and Muharraq's decisive plays to end the clash.

League action continues tomorrow with just one game on schedule. Defending champions Manama are set to take on Al Hala at 7.30pm.

Manama head into the contest with a 13-2 win-loss record as they look to regain first place on the league standings, while Hala will be aiming to improve their 8-7 record.

Manama are coming off a victory in the Gulf sub-zone of the FIBA West Asia Super League on Tuesday, when they overpowered Al Nassr from Saudi Arabia in a game played at home.

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