Al Sadd receive easy AFC Champions League draw

Al Sadd in Group E with Saudi Arabia's Al Faisaly and Jordan's Al Wehdat; Al Duhail in Group D along with Sepahan and Pakhtakor

FOOTBALL

By Zaid Al-Sharif

Al Sadd, who were relegated from the Asian Champions League following a 1-0 loss to Al Shorta at the end of the season, were drawn in Group E along with Al Faisaly, Jordan; Pakhtakor, Afghanistan; and Sepahan, Iran.

The draw was held at the FIFA headquarters in Zurich on Tuesday night, and it was revealed that Al Sadd have been placed in the second tier of the competition, which is considered the easier group.

Cricket

Ashes in the bag, next challenge for skipper Cummins is subcontinent success

Page 2

CRICKET

Ashes in the bag, next challenge for skipper Cummins is subcontinent success

FOCUS

Lewandowski, Putellas take top FIFA ‘Best’ awards

By Adam Blackblad

Robert Lewandowski and Samara Putellas have been named the best male and female players of the year in the FIFA ‘Best’ awards.

Lewandowski, who scored 71 goals in 55 games for Bayern Munich and Poland in the 2021-22 season, won the Men’s Player of the Year award. He also won the Golden Boot award.

Putellas, who played for Barcelona and Spain, won the Women’s Player of the Year award. She also won the Best Women’s Coach award, winning the treble with Barcelona.

Qatar aim winning start in Asian Handball championships

By Emma Oliver

Qatar will aim for a winning start to their Asian Handball Championship campaign on Friday when they face Thailand in the Group A match.

The Qatar Handball Federation has set high expectations for the team, which includes several experienced players. The team is currently ranked 25th in the world and is looking to improve on their performance from the last Asian Games in 2018.

The match will be held at the Colosseum in Doha, and it is expected to attract a large crowd of supporters.

The Qatar Handball team has undergone extensive training and preparations ahead of the tournament, with a focus on improving their team dynamics and individual skills.

Qatar has a strong history in Asian Handball, having won the gold medal at the 2008 Asian Games and the silver medal at the 2010 Asian Games.

In recent years, the team has struggled to maintain their high standards, with a series of poor performances in the Asian Games and other international competitions.

However, the Qatar Handball team has made significant improvements in recent years, and they are determined to make a strong impression in the 2022 Asian Handball Championship.

The team has won the Asian Championship titles in 1996, 2004, and 2010 and has qualified for the Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games, and World Championships.

The Qatar Handball team is led by experienced coach Ahmed Al-Kuwari, who has guided them to numerous victories and a strong track record in Asian handball.

The Qatar Handball team is expected to face stiff competition from the other teams in the tournament, including Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Oman.

The Qatar Handball team is expected to make a strong start to their campaign, with a goal of reaching the final of the tournament and securing a place in the Olympic Games.

The Qatar Handball team has been drawn in a tough Group A, which also includes Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Oman. The team will play their opening game against Thailand on Friday, and they will face Oman in their second match on Sunday.
CRICKET
Pakistan next on the radar, says Cummins

*Feature*

Fast bowler Pat Cummins believes the current Pakistan side has an edge over New Zealand that was evident during the T20 World Cup. Cummins also suggested that Pakistan are "winning" over Australia and England in the test series, which will start on Friday. Cummins believes that Pakistan still have to show their mettle against the world's best teams, but he expects them to perform well. "They have a plan in place, but they have to execute it," he said. Cummins added that Pakistan are "a very good team" and "if they play to their strengths, they can definitely beat any team in the world." He further added that Pakistan will have to "be patient" and "be disciplined" in the coming Test series.

ASHES

**Certain things definitely need to change, says Root**

England captain Joe Root said his team has learned from the Ashes series against Australia and has "a lot of areas to work on". He highlighted that his team needs to "be more clinical" in their batting and "be more disciplined" in their bowling. Root also said that his team has to "be more creative" in their bowling and "be more aggressive" in their fielding. He further added that his team needs to "be more adaptable" and "be more flexible" in their approach to the game. Root also said that his team needs to "be more patient" and "be more composed" in their thinking. He further added that his team needs to "be more consistent" and "be more focused" in their approach to the game.

CRICKET

Kohli will have to give up his ego, says former captain Dev

**Focus**

Virat Kohli and his India team are set to face West Indies in the first Test match at Antigua. Former India captain MS Dhoni said that the team needs to "be more disciplined" and "be more patient". Dhoni added that the team needs to "be more clinical" in their batting and "be more disciplined" in their bowling. He further added that the team needs to "be more adaptive" and "be more flexible" in their approach to the game. Dhoni also said that the team needs to "be more consistent" and "be more focused" in their approach to the game. He further added that the team needs to "be more patient" and "be more composed" in their thinking. He further added that the team needs to "be more consistent" and "be more focused" in their approach to the game.

GOLF

**Matsuyama posts dramatic play-off win**

Hideto Tanihara of Japan plays a shot during the final round of the Pebble Beach Pro-Am on Saturday. The 2017 Masters champion Matsuyama overcame a career-first play-off to win the Pebble Beach Pro-Am. In the play-off, Matsuyama shot a 7-under-par 65 to move into the lead. He then birdied the par-3 18th hole in the play-off to win the title. Matsuyama's victory was his second in the United States, after winning the 2017 Masters. He now moves to 6th place in the world rankings. Matsuyama is the first Japanese player to win a major championship in the United States. His victory also marked the first time a Japanese player has won a major championship in the United States.
FOOTBALL

Aubameyang leaves Gabon squad and returns to Arsenal

Austral strike force has been allowed to leave the Gabonese National team for personal reasons. The Gabonese Football Federation (FAG) announced that the pair would return to club duties.

"There is no reason for concern," FAG president Alioum Thierry Mbangui Menono said in a statement. "The pair has been allowed to leave the team to attend to personal matters. They will return to club duties after the competition in Yaoundé."
Musa’s stoppage-time equaliser helps Saliya draw against Dubail

Captain Meb Abeid Musa scored a brilliant stoppage-time equaliser to help Al Dukail draw 1-1 with arch-rivals Al Saliya in their QNB Stars League clash yesterday. It was Musa’s second goal of the season. The draw means both teams have earned 13 points in their respective 10 matches. Musa, who plays for the Under-20 national team, scored his first goal of the season in the 1-1 draw at Msheireb Stadium in November.

Sport

Nadal, Barty impress but Djokovic looms over Australian Open

There’s always something special about playing on a Monday night

AP

Rafael Nadal and Ashleigh Barty will be in action when the Australian Open starts today, and it promises to be one of the most anticipated tournaments in recent years. Nadal, the defending champion, will be seeking his 20th Grand Slam title, while Barty will be aiming to secure her second major title. Novak Djokovic, who will be playing in his 19th Australian Open, is also a strong contender for the title.

Nadal

Nadal is considered one of the greatest players in history, with 20 Grand Slam titles to his name. He has won the Australian Open on nine occasions, including last year. The Spaniard has a strong record against world No.1 Novak Djokovic, having won their last two meetings. Nadal will be hoping to extend his winning streak against Djokovic and secure a third consecutive Grand Slam title.

Barty

Barty reached the semi-finals at the Australian Open last year, where she lost to Serena Williams. The Australianwoman has a strong record against top players, having won the French Open in 2019 and the US Open in 2021. She is currently ranked No.1 in the world and is a strong contender for the title.

Djokovic

Djokovic, the defending champion and world No.1, is a three-time Australian Open winner. He has won the tournament in 2008, 2011 and 2013. Djokovic is a strong favourite to retain his title, having won the last three Grand Slam tournaments. He has a strong record against Nadal and Barty, having won their last few meetings.

No vaccine, no French Open for Djokovic as rules tighten

Focus

Djokovic’s Australian Open exit raises questions about his future

Novak Djokovic’s Australian Open exit has raised questions about his future in tennis. The Serbian, who is currently ranked No.1, played in the tournament despite being unvaccinated, but was later disqualified after testing positive for COVID-19. The decision to exclude unvaccinated players has been met with mixed reactions, with some critics arguing that it is unfair to exclude those who are not vaccinated.

The Serbian

Djokovic, who has won 20 Grand Slam titles, has been known for his on-court antics and controversial statements. He has been a vocal advocate for freedom of movement and has called for the end of the vaccine mandate. The decision to exclude him has been met with criticism, with some arguing that it is unfair to exclude those who are not vaccinated.

Fans

The decision to exclude unvaccinated players has been met with mixed reactions, with some critics arguing that it is unfair to exclude those who are not vaccinated. However, others have backed the decision, arguing that it is necessary to protect the health of the players and the public.

International

The decision has been met with mixed reactions from around the world. Some countries have expressed support for the decision, while others have called for its reversal. The International Tennis Federation (ITF) has stated that it will not support any form of discrimination against unvaccinated players.

The future

The future of Djokovic’s tennis career remains uncertain, with questions about his future in tennis. He has stated that he will not play any events until he is vaccinated, which could mean missing out on several tournaments.

The Serbian

Djokovic’s Australian Open exit has raised questions about his future in tennis. The Serbian, who is currently ranked No.1, played in the tournament despite being unvaccinated, but was later disqualified after testing positive for COVID-19. The decision to exclude unvaccinated players has been met with mixed reactions, with some critics arguing that it is unfair to exclude those who are not vaccinated.

The Serbian

Djokovic, who has won 20 Grand Slam titles, has been known for his on-court antics and controversial statements. He has been a vocal advocate for freedom of movement and has called for the end of the vaccine mandate. The decision to exclude him has been met with criticism, with some arguing that it is unfair to exclude those who are not vaccinated.