



## Al Sadd rock as the stars return, beat Al Arabi 2-0; Al Duhail back at the top

TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK  
DOHA

DEFENDING champions Al Sadd defeated Al Arabi 2-0 in the Week 11 encounter of QNB Stars League season 2022-23 at the Grand Hamad Stadium on Monday.

In other matches of the day, Al Duhail beat Umm Salal 2-0 to take the top spot in the standings while Al Ahli and Al Markhiya were locked in a 2-2 draw.

Strengthened by the return of some of their top stars following the recent Arabian Gulf Cup 25, Al Sadd registered their second win in a row.

The Wolves rode on the goals from Santi Cazorla - in the 66th minute off a penalty, and from captain Hassan Al Haydos in the 72nd minute.

The result took Al Sadd into the top five of the standings with 13 points from nine matches while Al Arabi (22 points) lost their leadership position to Al Duhail (23 pts).

The Qatar Derby clash was a tough battle between Al Arabi and Al Sadd but the latter showed a solid defence making things difficult for The Dream Team.

Al Arabi did make a raid in as early as the 5th minute but an alert Wooyoung Jung staved off the threat.

It didn't take Al Sadd to make the charge and a big chance came their way in the 15th minute when Akram Afif put Baghdad Bounedjah through with a superb cross but the Algerian star deflected it just wide of the goal.

The battle continued and in the 40th minute Al Arabi's Youssef Msakni looked menacing but an alert Al Sadd goalkeeper Yousef Abdullah stood ground.

Al Sadd emerged stronger in the second half making forays and using the open spaces, yet they lacked at the finish.

The big moment came when a Bounedjah kick hit the hand of Aron Gunnarsson just on the left-side edge of the



Al Sadd players celebrate their opening goal against Al Arabi in their QNB Stars League Week 11 match, played at the Grand Hamad Stadium on Monday.



Al Duhail players rejoice with Michael Olunga (2nd right) after he scored one of his two goals against Umm Salal in their QNB Stars League Week 11 match at the Abdullah Bin Khalifa Stadium on Monday.

to hand Umm Salal a 2-0 defeat at the Abdullah Bin Khalifa Stadium.

Olunga struck in the 61st and 68th minutes of the match.

The victory also took Al Duhail's points tally to 23 points in ten matches - coming from 7 victories, 2 draws and 1 loss in the league so far.

Al Shamal remained in the eighth position in the league table having 10 points. They have won 3 matches, drawn 1 game, but have suffered 4 losses thus far.

Against the Red Knights, Al Shamal put up their good defence in the opening half foiling several of their attempts on goal.

Al Shamal's Guinean goalkeeper Babacar Seck stood out with his saves and alert anticipation which left Al Duhail frustrated at times.

In the 40th minute, Al Duhail midfielder Lotfi Majder managed to score but Olunga was ruled offside, and clearly so.

Al Duhail however didn't have to wait much longer in the second half as their captain Al-moez Ali and Olunga made for a fine combine to fetch the first goal. After a rasping drive from Al-moez ricocheted off goalkeeper Seck, Olunga moved in to latch on to the chance and score.

Olunga produced his and his team's second goal minutes soon, positioning himself perfectly to reach for Ferjani Sassi's flag kick and place it in the left corner of the net.

The goal also saw Olunga become the league's top-scorer. He now has a tally of 9 goals, one ahead of Jacinto Dala of Al Wakrah, who has scored 8 goals.

While Al Shamal tried hard to rally they couldn't succeed much in breaking Al Duhail's defence line.

Their one good chance came in the 84th minute when substitute Abdulaziz Adel Ibrahim tried to reach for a header and get a feeble back touch and the ball went on to hit the left goal post and roll away.

danger area. A VAR check by the referee ruled a penalty and Santi Cazorla made no mistake with the kick.

Al Sadd doubled their lead soon and with a spectacular goal. It resulted off a free kick that was headed off by an Al Arabi defender but the ball went straight to Haydos who was waiting outside the box. He seized the opportunity essaying a superb volley which went through the legs of two defenders and deflected off a third and beat a diving goalkeeper to his left.

There on, Al Arabi found it difficult to challenge Al Sadd though they tried to push hard.

In the 79th minute a Msakni header went well above the target while another of his effort in the added time didn't have much pace and went straight to goalkeeper Al Hail.

### Olunga brace in Al Duhail win

Al Duhail rode on the brace of Kenyan striker Michael Olunga

## Sabalenka blasts past Bencic to reach AO quarter-finals

PA MEDIA/DPA  
MELBOURNE

ARYNA Sabalenka gave a statement of her intent at the Australian Open by powering past Belinda Bencic to reach the quarter-finals.

The Belarusian began the season by winning a title in Adelaide and is yet to drop a set in 2023 as she bids to win a first Grand Slam title.

Sabalenka has been knocking on the door for several years, reaching back-to-back semi-finals at the US Open and the last four at Wimbledon in 2021, but is yet to make a final.

Last year she began the season struggling to land her serve in the court but everything appears to have come together and Sabalenka was superb in a 7-5 6-2 victory over 12th seed Bencic, another in-form player, hitting 32 winners and only 18 unforced errors.

Consulting a biomechanical expert proved the key to fixing her serving issues and Sabalenka now sees it as a blessing in disguise.

"I'm super happy that this thing with my serve happened to me," she said. "Before I wouldn't be really open for that. I would be like, 'You know what, my serve is fine, I don't want to change anything'."

Actually, even when my serve was working, it wasn't really right. "I was, in that moment, open for whatever. I was



Belarus' Aryna Sabalenka hits a return against Switzerland's Belinda Bencic during their women's singles match on day eight of the Australian Open in Melbourne on Monday. (AFP)

just like, 'Please, someone help me to fix this serve.'

"I want believe that the way I'm working right now, the way I'm on the court right now, this is the new beginning, and this is the next step."

The conditions at Melbourne Park this year are clearly favouring the power players and Sabalenka will be a big favourite to make the final from the bottom half, particularly following the exit of fourth seed Caroline Garcia in another upset.

Next up for fifth seed Sabalenka will be a clash with unseeded Croatian Donna Vekic, who ended the run of 17-year-old Linda Fruhvirtova with a 6-2 1-6 6-3 victory.

Vekic was also a former teenage prodigy and made her

debut here a decade ago but this is only her second Grand Slam quarter-final.

Former world number one Karolina Pliskova has slid virtually unnoticed through the draw, reaching the last eight with a 6-0 6-4 victory over Zhang Shuai.

Garcia ended last season by winning the biggest title of her career at the WTA Finals and arrived in Melbourne as one of the favourites but fell to a shock loss against 45th-ranked Magda Linette.

The Pole, who has unexpectedly gone further than her compatriots Iga Swiatek and Hubert Hurkacz, claimed a 7-6 (3) 6-4 victory to make the first Grand Slam quarter-final of her career.

## Former Australian tennis star Dokic slams trolls

AGENCIES  
BRISBANE (AUSTRALIA)

FORMER Australian tennis star Jelena Dokic has hit back at online trolls she says have bombarded her with negative comments about her body at the Australian Open, the CNN reported.

In an Instagram post on Monday, Dokic, who is working as a commentator for CNN affiliate 9 at the event, said the "body shaming" and "fat shaming" she had received in the past 24 hours was "disgusting."

"The most common comment being 'what happened to her, she is so big?'" Dokic wrote. "I will tell you what happened, I am finding a way and surviving and fighting. And it really doesn't matter what I am doing and what happened because size shouldn't matter."

Dokic, now a commentator at the Australian Open was also offered support by players in their on court interviews including Alize Cornet of France and Serbian Novak Djokovic.

Dokic retired in 2014, after several career highs including reaching the 1999 Wimbledon quarterfinals, aged just 16. A year later, she made the last four at Wimbledon.

In 2000, she represented Australia at the Sydney Olympics, and also reached the Wimbledon semi-finals. Her world ranking peaked at No.4 after reaching the 2002 French



Player-turned commentator Jelena Dokic (R) talks to Poland's Magda Linette after her women's singles match against France's Caroline Garcia at the Australian Open in Melbourne on Monday. (AFP)

Open quarterfinals.

But Dokic's on-court success came at a tremendous cost, as she revealed in her autobiography, "Unbreakable," first published in 2018.

In the book, Dokic details the physical, verbal, and mental abuse she says she suffered at the hands of her father and former coach, Damar Dokic.

Dokic cut ties with her father in 2002, leaving "in the middle of the night" with just her racquet bag and a suitcase, she said.

When the book was released, Dokic's father did not respond to CNN's request for comment. He told Serbian daily Blic in 2009 that "there is no child that was not beaten by parents, same with Jelena."

In recent posts on Instagram, the former tennis player says she won't be silenced by bullies. "I am here, fighting for all those out there being abused, fat shamed," she said. "I can't change the world but I am going to continue speaking up, calling this behaviour out, using my platform for something good and to support other people out there and to give others a voice and try to make others feel less alone and scared."

Dokic has spoken in the past about her struggles with her mental health. Last June, in a video posted to Instagram, she revealed she had come close to taking her own life and said getting professional help had saved her. (inputs TNN)

# Ter Stegen hailed as FC Barcelona's 'life insurance' after Getafe masterclass

**Benzema and Kroos deliver vital 2-0 win for Real Madrid over Athletic Bilbao in Spanish La Liga on Sunday**

DPA  
BERLIN

MARC-ANDRE ter Stegen was described as Barcelona's "life insurance" as the German goalkeeper came to the rescue against Getafe.

Pedri's goal in the 35th minute was enough for Barcelona as they ground out a 1-0 victory at Camp Nou, preserving their three-point cushion over Real Madrid at the top of LaLiga.

Ter Stegen, a sturdy presence throughout, saved brilliantly from Borja Mayoral six minutes after the goal, standing up to the Getafe man and making himself big after Pedri almost undid his earlier good work with a dreadful backpass.

Grateful defender Eric Garcia said: "Marc is life insurance with us."

Everything he brings us with his footwork and then his saves, he has shown it again. He is very important for us." Germany international Ter Stegen said the points were "worth gold" after what he recognised was a sloppy performance from Barcelona, a week on from winning the Supercopa de Espana.

The hosts were without Robert Lewandowski due to the striker's suspension, and it showed, with Ansu Fati not



Barcelona goalkeeper Ter Stegen.

posing the same threat and struggling to impress himself on the game.

Ter Stegen, with 13 clean sheets in 17 LaLiga games this season, said: "What I try to do is always be in the game. I was being attentive and at the right moment I was able to get closer

and make it a little more difficult for them." Quoted in Mundo Deportivo, he said: "I try to give 100 per cent, for myself and for the team. Victories like today's make us stronger."

"It's true that we had opportunities to close the game and we didn't.



Real Madrid's French forward Karim Benzema (left) vies for the ball with Athletic Bilbao's defender Aitor Paredes during the Spanish League match at the San Mames stadium in Bilbao on Sunday. (AFP)

So you have to suffer until the end.

"Perhaps in some victories you have to suffer, but when we're 2-0 it always benefits you, and you finish the game earlier."

Elsewhere, goals for Karim Benzema and Toni Kroos saw Real Madrid battle their way to a 2-0 win against Athletic Bil-

bao in a lively LaLiga encounter on Sunday.

Veteran France international Benzema hooked back a loose ball with a sensational volley to beat Unai Simon in the 24th minute at San Mames Stadium.

Kroos then swept home a breakaway finish in the

90th minute to wrap up the points for Carlo Ancelotti's men and keep the pressure on league leaders Barcelona.

But Ernesto Valverde's side will be left to mull whether they should have taken a point from the encounter after pushing hard for a draw before Kroos' goal ended those hopes.

## Arsenal's Odegaard: We don't care about Man City or any other team

PA MEDIA/DPA  
LONDON

MARTIN Odegaard says Arsenal "don't care" about Manchester City as they remain focused on their own impressive form in the Premier League title race.

The Gunners opened up a five-point lead at the top of the table following their last-gasp 3-2 win over Manchester United on Sunday.

City are their closest challengers but the reigning champions have played a game more than Arsenal, who they meet in the FA Cup fourth round on Friday.

The two have yet to face one another in the league this season and, despite their advantage, Arsenal boss Mikel Arteta said after the United win that City remain the best team in the division.

Odegaard, though, has no interest in what City are doing - Pep Guardiola's side having closed the gap from eight points to just two before the United victory.

"No, honestly, we don't care about City or any other team," the Arsenal captain replied when asked if there was more pressure on the game because of City's two wins.

"We expected them to win



Arsenal's Martin Odegaard during the English Premier League match against Manchester United at the Emirates Stadium in London on Sunday. (AFP)

so that was not a big surprise and we just focused on our game, to come here and win and that's what we did. The way we won this game gives us a special feeling that will help as well.

"It's a long season. We're just halfway through, there are many games to be played so we have to stay calm and humble. Our only focus is the next game and that's all that matters. We have to stay focused like this."

Arsenal now sit on 50 points, their best-ever total at the midway stage of a Premier League season, eclipsing even that of Arsene Wenger's Invincibles.

Such form has now made them many people's favourites to win the title for the first time since that 2003-04 campaign, but Odegaard will not be letting minds shift away from the task at hand.

"It's way too far ahead to think about that now," he added. "We have to stay in the moment, everyone should enjoy the moment. We're doing really well but we have to stay calm, it's a long way to go and we have to keep working and improving. Then we'll see."

Marcus Rashford had put United ahead with a fine strike

before an Eddie Nketiah header took the sides in level at the break.

Bukayo Saka's curling effort had Arsenal in front and after Lisandro Martinez equalised with his first United goal, Nketiah settled the contest with a last-minute winner.

United had been talked about as outsiders for the title after their derby win over City last weekend, but since then a late goal saw them pegged back to draw at Palace before the same fate saw them leave Arsenal with nothing.

"It is about details. If you are not focused on every detail, you can't win," Martinez told MUTV.

"We have to be strong and we have to learn also from every experience. It cannot happen again, for sure it cannot happen again."

"We have to be really focused on the game and we have to kill the game. We have to win."

"For sure, it is a dream to score my first goal here in Manchester United. I am really happy with that, but in the end it was not the result that I want. We have to keep going."

"We don't have a day to be sad. We have to go tomorrow and change. We have to go for the next one."

## Everton sack Lampard with club second bottom



Everton's English manager Frank Lampard watches his players warm up ahead of an English Premier League match at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester recently. (AFP)

PA MEDIA/DPA  
LONDON

FRANK Lampard has been sacked by Everton with the club second bottom of the Premier League, according to British media reports on Monday.

Just over a year after ending Rafael Benitez's ill-fated 200-day stay, owner Farhad Moshiri looks to have fired his sixth manager in just under seven years since taking over.

Lampard appears to have paid the price for a run of nine defeats in 12 league matches which has left the club embroiled in a second successive relegation battle.

Only 10 days ago Moshiri offered public backing for his

manager but hugely-damaging defeats to fellow strugglers Southampton and West Ham look to have forced a change.

The former Derby and Chelsea boss won just nine and lost 21 of his 38 Premier League matches since taking over and would depart eight days before the first anniversary of his appointment.

Everton have scored just 34 goals during that period, and this season they have 15 goals in 20 games and have managed to score more than once in a game twice this season.

It would leave the club looking for an eighth permanent manager since May 2016, with a first relegation since 1951 looming large.

## Allegri has no regrets over Real snub despite Juve's point deduction

DPA  
ROME

MASSIMILIANO Allegri has no regrets after choosing Juventus over Real Madrid despite the Bianconeri's 15-point penalty in Serie A.

Juve were penalised on Friday after an investigation into past transfer dealings, with the club expected to appeal, before sharing the spoils in a 3-3 thriller with Atalanta two days later.

The stalemate saw the Bianconeri - who were third before the points deduction - move up to ninth, though they trail fourth-placed Roma by 14 points as they bid for an unlikely Champions League qualification.

Allegri vowed to stay at Juve after the punishment and reiterated his commitment as he suggested he made the right choice



Juventus' coach Massimiliano Allegri during the Italian Serie A match against Atalanta at the Juventus Stadium in Turin on Sunday. (AFP)

in rejecting Madrid, who he had agreed a contract with in July 2021 before an approach from his former employers.

"I never regret my choices, when they are made at that moment they are right," the Juve

coach told Sky Sport Italia. "I am very happy to be at Juventus, in life there are always difficulties that help you grow, I am happy to be part of this club and I have no regrets. "When I make choices I am convinced

of them, of course, I don't have a crystal ball. We are making young people develop and there are the foundations for a good future." Juve appointed Francesco Calvo as their new chief football officer in the wake of the points deduction, after former president Andrea Agnelli and the rest of his board resigned in November.

Calvo will report to new chief executive officer Maurizio Scanavino following the latter's appointment earlier this week, though Allegri does not want to be distracted by the off-field on-goings in Turin.

"We have to think only of football and not get distracted by what's happening outside," Allegri said when asked about Calvo. "It was important to get a result and we hope to win again on Sunday [at home to Monza]."

## Koeman plans Netherlands tactical changes after Van Gaal criticism

DPA  
AMSTERDAM

RONALD Koeman plans to adopt a more attacking style of play with the Netherlands than the one established by his predecessor Louis van Gaal.

The Oranje reached the quarter-finals of the World Cup in Qatar under Van Gaal, but criticisms were directed at a style of football that was perceived to be negative. A five-man defensive line proved to be miserly, conceding just twice in the first four matches of the tournament, but fans wanted more creative output from a side that boasted the likes of Memphis Depay and Cody Gakpo.

The Netherlands' venture in Qatar came to an end against Argentina in a shoot-out defeat, having fought back from a two-goal deficit in a game that marked the final stand of Van Gaal's third spell at the helm.

A similar approach will not be adopted under Koeman, who instead plans to return to the four-man defence he used during his previous stint in charge from 2018-2020. "In principle, we are going back to the system we played before," he said.

"I also change the system sometimes, but we are going to form the basic system with four defenders. In the end, it's all about the implementation of the system. I also played with five players at the back at Barcelona, with three central defenders, and that went very well. "Everything revolves around: put high pressure or let yourself sink. That makes a system offensive or not."

Assessing the Netherlands' performance at the World Cup, Koeman praised Van Gaal's unbeaten record that stretched until the quarter-final defeat to Argentina and hopes he can enjoy a similar run of form, albeit in his own approach.

# Djokovic, Rublev, Shelton and Paul reach Open quarters

PA MEDIA/DPA  
MELBOURNE

NOVAK Djokovic was firing on all cylinders as he dismantled home favourite Alex De Minaur to reach the quarter-finals of the Australian Open for the 13th time on Monday.

The nine-time champion's damaged left hamstring has dominated discussions around his chances of triumphing again at Melbourne Park but there were no signs of discomfort here as he eased to a 6-2 6-1 6-2 victory with a ruthless display.

It was a very uncomfortable evening, though, for De Minaur - the last remaining home singles hope - on Rod Laver Arena as he was outplayed in all areas.

Watched by his girlfriend, British player Katie Boulter, the 23-year-old tried his best to find a way into the contest but, with no big weapons, he was simply unable to hurt Djokovic, who broke serve six times and did not face a single break point himself.

Speaking on court, the fourth seed said: "I cannot say 'I'm sorry you haven't watched a longer match'. I really wanted to win in straight sets. I thought the first four, five games were quite close.

"I started feeling I guess more loose, more free, to go through the ball and be more aggressive. I kept my focus all the way through and played the best match of this year so far." On his hamstring, Djokovic said: "I didn't feel anything today. Today was great. I thank my medical team, thank God, anybody that really helped me.

"I don't want to celebrate too early. I know things can change really quickly and I don't take anything for granted. I'm really pleased today with the way I moved today and the way I hit the ball." Djokovic will next take on fifth seed Andrey Rublev, who won one of the matches of the tournament against 19-year-old Holger Rune.

The Dane arrived at Melbourne Park as the hottest



TOPSHOT - Serbia's Novak Djokovic hits a return against Australia's Alex De Minaur during their men's singles match on day eight of the Australian Open on Monday. (AFP)

young prospect in men's tennis and looked set to reach his second grand slam quarter-final.

But he was unable to serve out the match in the fifth set, missed two match points on Rublev's serve at 5-6 and then squandered a 5-0 lead in the deciding tie-break.

As the tension ramped up on Rod Laver Arena, Russian Rublev then missed two match points of his own only for the ball to dribble over the net on his third chance, giving him a 6-3 3-6 6-3 4-6 7-6 (9) victory. Rublev dropped flat on his back behind the baseline before apologising to his young opponent.

"It's not a roller coaster, it's like they put a gun to your head," said the 25-year-old. "I never in my life was able to win matches like this. It's something that I will remember for sure all my life.

I have no words, I'm shaking.

"Now I can go to the casino. If I (bet), for sure I'm going to win." It was the cruellest way for Rune to lose, and the ninth seed said: "Of course, it's not the end of the world, but it



USA's Ben Shelton celebrates after victory against USA's JJ. Wolf during their men's singles match at the Australian Open on Monday. (AFP)

hurts.

"It was super close. I had my chances. He played well, as well. The match points, nothing really to do. The luck was on his side. I think I did a lot. I fought until the end." The other last-eight clash in the bottom half will be an unexpected all-American affair between 25-year-old Tommy Paul and 20-year-old Ben Shelton.

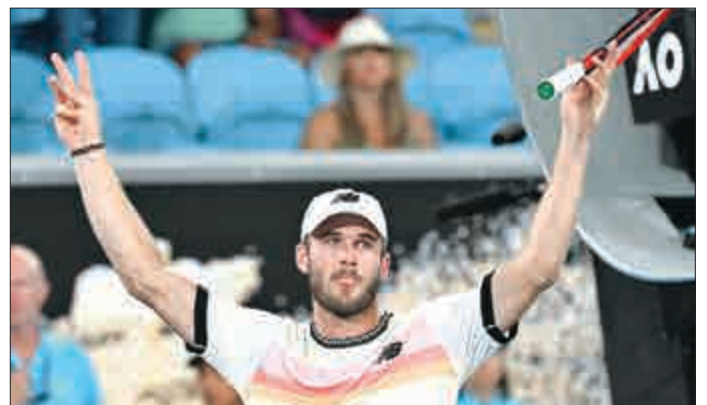
Big-serving Shelton has put together an amazing run at not just his first Australian Open but on the first trip of his life outside the US.

He claimed a second five-set win of the tournament, beating countryman JJ Wolf 6-7 (5) 6-2 6-7 (4) 7-6 (4) 6-2.

Shelton, who is still in college, said: "It's definitely a surprise.



Russia's Andrey Rublev hits a return against Denmark's Holger Rune during their men's singles match at the Australian Open on Monday. (AFP)



USA's Tommy Paul celebrates victory against Spain's Roberto Bautista Agut at the Australian Open on Monday. (AFP)

## AO QF LINE-UPS

### MEN

Karen Khachanov (RUS x18) v Sebastian Korda (USA x29)  
Stefanos Tsitsipas (GRE x3) v Jiri Lehecka (CZE)  
Andrey Rublev (RUS x5) v Novak Djokovic (SRB x4)  
Ben Shelton (USA) v Tommy Paul (USA)

### WOMEN

Elena Rybakina (KAZ x22) v Jelena Ostapenko (LAT x17)  
Jessica Pegula (USA x3) v Victoria Azarenka (BLR x24)  
Karolina Pliskova (CZE x30) v Magda Linette (POL)  
Aryna Sabalenka (BLR x5) v Donna Vekic (CRO)

I got on the plane with no expectations. I know that it's very hard to adjust to Australia from the United States just with the jet lag, time change and everything.

"Never being out of the United States, I knew it would be a struggle.

So I think it maybe has

helped me a little bit kind of not having that expectation or the feeling that I have to perform, but being able to just go out there, be myself and play free."

Paul, ranked 35, made it three Americans through to the last eight with a 6-2 4-6 6-2 7-5 victory over Andy Murray's conqueror Roberto Bautista Agut.

## Quick read

### Kyrgios undergoes knee surgery

Melbourne: Nick Kyrgios is ready to do "everything I can do get back to my best" after undergoing knee surgery. Last year's Wimbledon runner-up was left "devastated" when he had to withdraw from the Australian Open.

Kyrgios was ruled out of his home Grand Slam after an MRI scan on his knee revealed a cyst as a result of a small lateral meniscus tear.

The world number 21 on Monday revealed he had gone under the knife and is looking forward to starting out on the road to recovery.

He posted on Instagram: "Surgery complete. I'll be doing everything I can do get back to my best. To the real ones checking in and sending the vibes..

I love you." Kyrgios won the seventh ATP Tour singles title of his career in Washington last August and claimed the Australian Open men's doubles title with Thanasi Kokkinakis in his homeland 12 months ago.

The 27-year-old was beaten by Novak Djokovic in his maiden major singles final at the All England Club last July.

(STATS Perform/DPA)

### Nadal to be out for at least six weeks with injury

Rafael Nadal is expected to be sidelined for between six and eight weeks with the injury he suffered at the Australian Open last Wednesday. The Spaniard's reign as champion at Melbourne Park ended prematurely in the second round with defeat by American Mackenzie McDonald. Nadal pulled up suddenly late in the second set and clutched at his left hip. He opted to finish the match after an off-court medical timeout but his movement was severely hampered.

The 36-year-old underwent a scan in Melbourne on Thursday morning that showed a grade two tear of his iliopsoas muscle. An update from Nadal's team said he would return to Spain for a period of rest and treatment, with the normal recovery time for the injury from six to eight weeks. If that timeframe proves correct, Nadal could also miss the BNP Paribas Open in Indian Wells at the start of March but should be recovered in time for his favourite European clay-court swing. (PA Media/DPA)

## 111th Australian Open offers equal prize for men & women



THE 2023 Australian Open is entering exciting business end of the tournament. Here's a look at a few things that you may not know.

**Defending champions are out**  
Reigning singles champions Ashleigh Barty has retired while Rafael Nadal lost in the second round to American Mackenzie McDonald. Barty had become the first Australian to win the title since Chris O'Neil in 1978 when she defeated American Danielle Collins in straight sets.

**Djokovic going great guns**  
Serbian star Novak Djokovic has entered the quarter-finals of the men's singles. Last year, Djokovic was denied entry to Australia for three years after having his visa revoked in 2022 for refusing the COVID-19 vaccination. But thanks to a change in the government, his ban was lifted.

**The Winning Prize**  
The Australian Open is the first

Grand Slam to provide both male and female champions with the same prize money. The awards for the 2023 tournament will total \$53 million, or 76.5 million Australian dollars. The winners of the singles titles for men and women will get 2.975 million Australian dollars, or over \$2 million. Compared to last year, when they earned 4.4 million Australian dollars, or roughly \$3.15 million, a reduction of 37.5%.

**Where to Watch AO 2023**  
Watch the 2023 Australian Open online by streaming it on TOD. Viewers across the Middle East and North Africa can tune in from the opening round on Monday, January 16 to the finals on Sunday, January 29 for over 40 hours of live action daily, in both Arabic and English. TOD, MENA region's leading streaming platform for sports and entertainment, will showcase the men's pre-finals, semi-finals, and finals with both Arabic and English commentary.

## US enjoying Grand Slam revival Down Under

STATS PERFORM/DPA  
MELBOURNE

FOR the first time since 2005, the United States will be represented by three players in the men's singles quarter-finals of a Grand Slam.

Tommy Paul's win over world number 25 Roberto Bautista Agut on Monday ensured his place in the last eight, where he will face compatriot Ben Shelton.

With Sebastian Korda, who defeated Daniil Medvedev in round three, ticking off another top-10 opponent in the form of Hubert Hurkacz, the US has three male players in the last eight of a major for the first time since the 2005 US Open, when Robby Ginepri, Andre Agassi and James Blake reached the quarters.

It is the first time the US has had three representatives in the Australian Open quarter-finals since 2000, when Agassi, Pete Sampras and Chris Woodruff made it that far.

While Korda will face Karen Khachanov for a place in the semi-finals, Paul will go head-to-head with Shelton, the world number 89.



USA's JJ. Wolf hits a return against USA's Ben Shelton during their match on Monday. (AFP)

Shelton is the lowest-ranked American player to reach a major quarter-final in over 22 years, since Todd Martin at the US Open in 2000, and the lowest-ranked American to get so far in Melbourne since Michael Chang in 1996.

The 20-year-old has already beaten one compatriot, having defeated JJ Wolff in a five-set thriller in his last match.

Meanwhile, it is the first time since 2006 that no Spanish male players will feature in the quarter-finals at the Australian Open.

# Hobby horsing Sara emulates mother in putting Qatar on the world map

## Twelve-year-old excels at Hobby Horsing Championship in Finland

VINAY NAYUDU  
DOHA

IN what is a case of Like Mother, Like Daughter, Sara Alberola Grimaldi has taken to athletics and followed it with Hobby Horsing superbly to mark a remarkable rise at the age of 12.

The daughter of a Finnish-Italian mother (Elisa) and Spanish father (Javier), the Qatar-born and now grade six student at the American School of Doha was introduced to the sport during Covid by her mother. And within a year, Sara flew off to Finland with her hobby horse "Zoro" to participate in the biggest Hobby Horsing event in the world and she instantly put Qatar on the map of this new sport emerging on top in June, 2022.

For the uninitiated, Hobby Horsing is a sport with gymnastic elements which uses hobby horses, also known as stick horses. Movement sequences are similar to those in show jumping or dressage and partly simulated in courses, without real horses being used. Participants predominantly use self-made hobby horses.

Hobby Horsing first kicked off professionally in Finland in 2012. It is officially recognized as a sport and has more than 10,000 fans. The sport is also growing in the rest of Europe, USA, and in Australia. The Equestrian Federation of Finland organizes the event, which gathers thousands of spectators and hundreds of participants.

There are several sub-categories in the competition, which include dressage and show jumping. The championship is held in the city of Seinajoki, attracting hobby horse enthusiasts from all over the world. Participants need to perform a series of stunts such as jumping over obstacles, but they are also judged on their gaits, posture, running style, the hobby horse itself, and overall energy.

Hobby Horsing is not part of the Olympic Games just yet, but it has been proposed for inclusion at the Games and the popular Finnish sport is striv-



Sara Alberola Grimaldi during a practice Hobby Horsing high jump (centre); during the Hobby Horsing Championship 2022 in Finland (left); and (on right) horse riding at the Riding School at Al Shaqab.



Sara explains her Finland Horse Hobbying Championship experience along with her mother Elisa. (PICS: VINOD DIVAKARAN)

**"I shall be going back in July 2023 for the competition in Finland again. It is the biggest in the world and is held once every year. The Finnish record for the highest jump is 1m 41cm."**

ing for acceptance alongside skateboarding, breakdancing, and surfing.

If accepted, hobby horse riders would compete for team and individual medals in the three main current Olympic disciplines, namely show jumping, dressage, and eventing.

At Seinajoki, Sara participated in the 60 cm showjumping competition completing a clean circuit of obstacles cantering as fast as possible. "I love sport, horses and crafting and Hobby Horsing is the perfect combination for me.

It was my first official competition, and I was very excited. I competed with my hobby horse Zoro, a paint horse mare who loves to gallop fast. Zoro is in her comfort zone when riding western and trail riding," she tells you.

Sara, who is also into athletics, soccer, fencing and horse riding, has taken to Hobby Horsing like fish to water. Speaking of her experience, she explained, "My mom introduced me to this. She showed me how to make a hobby horse and I really

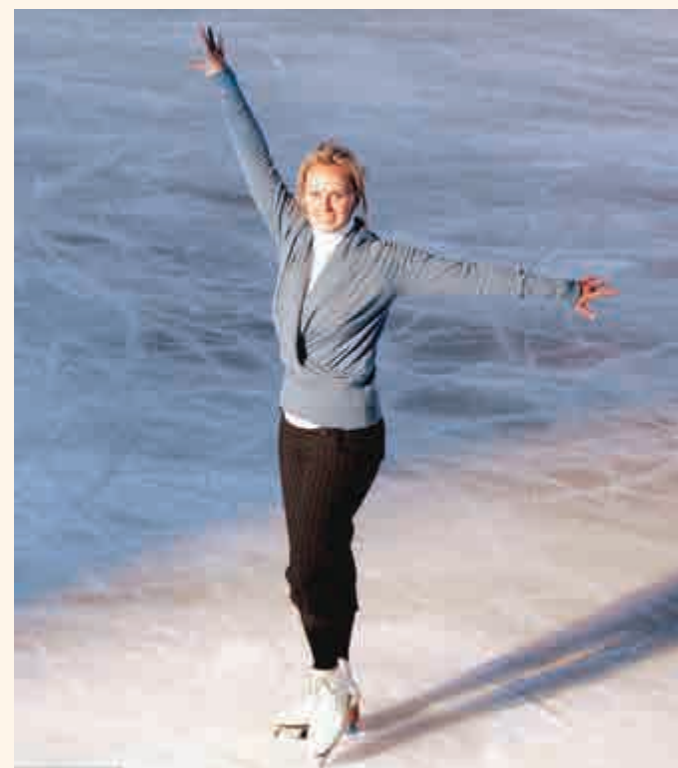


Figure-skater Elisa Grimaldi during an event in London. Elisa had first represented Qatar at a championship in the UAE in June 2008.

got interested. My first horse was made out of scrap material, like old school, and then "I started building with new materials before Covid struck. It was then I tried to get some people into it but many laughed at me, some people wondered if I was seriously enjoying this while some people just let me do it."

It was only when Elisa took Sara to Finland for the compe-

tion, the athlete realized the sport's and her own potential. "It was amazing! It was huge. Having everyone there also meant there was nothing to be scared of being laughed at because everyone was doing the same thing and those who excelled were appreciated and awarded," said Sara.

"It made me realize that this is a serious sport inclined to be at the Olympics as an ex-

hibition sport. So now I devote my free time to training outdoors with my jumps. While the sport may not be widely known but it is widely practiced the world over."

"I train every day and watch tutorials online. My room is my laboratory, full of materials, recycled pieces and sticks. Creating my own hobby horse is very rewarding and requires hard-work, patience and commitment", said Sara, who made her first hobby horse at the age of nine, when her horse riding classes were interrupted by the COVID-19 restrictions.

Her hard work is now making her look ahead. "I shall be going back in July 2023 for the competition in Finland

again. It is the biggest in the world and is held once every year. It's really a nice experience to participate. Since there are so many people competing in various ages that they don't categorize age-wise but by the height you are jumping. So it's like not how tall you are but how high you want to jump. The Finnish record for the highest jump is 1m 41cm," she stressed.

What Sara achieved in Finland representing Qatar was akin to her mother Elisa, who as a figure skater stood first for Qatar in the biggest figure skating competition of GCC in the UAE way back in June 2008.

Speaking of her daughter and Hobby Horsing, Elisa said, "The high jump speciality is like the high jump in athletics. The physique and scaling techniques of the athletes are exactly like high jump athletes. It is very difficult by the way to jump heights with a horse head between your legs!"

Elisa added that for Sara, the sport is an extension of horse riding. "It is her passion for arts, and outside the stables, it's an extension of horse riding for her. She is very talented in show jumping but real horses might not be always accessible."

Guiding the elder daughter of her two, Elisa sees an athletic streak and discipline in Sara which she feels can take her the distance. "She is ambitious and driven; after her Finnish experience in 2022, Sara will participate to the same event on June 17th 2023. In the meantime, she is planning to deliver workshops for children in Doha, start her own club and expand the Hobby Horsing phenomenon in the Middle East," said Elisa.

## I had bananas thrown at me at school: Hamilton

PA MEDIA/DPA  
LONDON

LEWIS Hamilton has said he had bananas thrown at him and was repeatedly called the "n-word" at school.

The seven-time Formula One world champion, who was born and educated in Stevenage in south-east England, detailed the racial abuse in the On Purpose podcast which was released on Monday.

The 38-year-old, who is preparing for his 17th season in F1 having become the first black driver to win the title, said: "For me, school was the most traumatizing and most difficult part of my life.

"I was already being bullied at the age of six. At that particular school I was one of three kids of colour and just bigger, stronger, bullying kids were throwing me around a lot of the time.

"And the constant jabs, the things that are either thrown at you, like bananas, or people that would use the n-word just

so relaxed.

People calling you half-caste and not knowing where you fit in. That for me was difficult.

"In my (secondary) school there were six or seven black kids out of 1,200 kids and three of us were put outside the headmasters' office all the time. The headmaster just had it out for us - and particularly me.

"I felt the system was up against me and I was swimming against the tide. There were a lot of things I suppressed.

"I didn't feel I could go home and tell my parents that these kids kept calling me the n-word, or I got bullied or beaten up at school today, I didn't want my dad to think I was not strong."

Hamilton remains F1's sole black driver. He has established Mission 44 - which aims to enhance the lives of people from under-represented groups - and Ignite, a joint enterprise with his Mercedes team to improve diversity and inclusion in motor racing.



Seven-time Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton.

## Quick read

### Russell says he has learnt to drive at 99% in F1

The British driver is entering the final year of his deal with Mercedes.

But it is anticipated that he will stay on the grid beyond his 40th birthday by signing a new multi-year contract.

Looking ahead to life after F1, Hamilton added in the podcast, which was recorded in November: "It is going to be really, really hard when I stop racing. I have been doing it for 30 years. When you stop, what is going to match that?"

"Nothing is going to match being in a stadium, being at a race, being at the pinnacle of the sport and being at the front of the grid or coming through the grid and that emotion that I get with that.

"When I do stop there will be a big hole so I am trying to focus and find things that can replace that and be just as rewarding." Hamilton will unveil his new Mercedes at the team's launch at Silverstone on February 15 ahead of the first round of the new season in Bahrain on March 5.

Mercedes driver George Russell heads into the 2023 Formula One season having scored more points than team-mate Lewis Hamilton last year after learning not to push too hard. Russell picked up the Silver Arrows' only win of 2022 in Brazil in his first full season with the former dominant team. "I always kind of knew that driving at 99%, there's a lot more performance than at 101%. At 101%, you are off the cliff and you are past the peak," the ex-Williams driver told Autosport and other media.

"If you drive at 99%, you have probably only left 0.01 of a second on the table. If you drive at 101%, you've lost the car or you've crashed." The 23-year-old Briton outshone compatriot Hamilton last season. "In some regards, I almost felt like a bit of a rookie this season because of the level at which this team works - we're talking about things that I've never even spoken about before in Formula One," he remarked. (DPA)

# Ministry stresses need for adherence to code of ethics for private schools & kindergartens

QNA  
DOHA

THE Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) has underlined the importance of schools and Kindergartens' commitment to the code of ethics issued in Arabic and English languages in 2022, including the key materials set forth in the charter.

This came during a meeting between the Private Education Affairs Sector at MoEHE and the male and female managers of schools and Kindergartens, during which they discussed an array of topics and themes that must be adhered to, in addition to raising the awareness of school community on their criticality.

During the meeting, Assistant Undersecretary for Education Affairs at MoEHE Omar Abdel Aziz Al Naama pointed out that the most critical points schools and Kindergartens must adhere to entail the code of ethics for private schools and kindergartens issued in Arabic and English languages in 2022.

"This is in addition to the key



materials of functions and duties included in the code, starting from schools' owners, managers, the administrative and teaching staff, guardians, students and all councils," Naama said.

He emphasised the importance of sensitising the school community through holding constant workshops, seminars and programmes, stressing the need for adherence to the Islamic and national identity values, including the values of the authentic Qatari community.

He added that all these values should be promoted through conducting a wide range of activities, programmes

and lessons dedicated to students, in addition to preparing constant training workshops for the administrative and teaching staff, and sensitising the new teachers about those ethics and other relevant matters and commitments.

"Private schools in Qatar have applied the teaching of the three compulsory materials - Arabic language, Islamic education and Qatari history - whose outcomes have been positively demonstrated during the last three years, as well as their endeavours and keenness to execute these policies and persistently verify their outcomes," Naama said.



He added that measures were positive with respect to students' academic accomplishment, considering the importance of undertaking all efforts by teachers, whether for the three compulsory materials or other curricula.

He outlined the importance of taking all necessary measures to ensure safety and security of school community, in addition to setting clear-eyed and approved planning for all relevant matters, stressing that all these key foundational aspects achieve safe and good school environment, which precipitate undertaking further efforts and

setting plans by school administrations to upgrade their educational findings.

He also underscored the importance of clarifying the general policies pursued by schools for students' guardians, administrative and teaching staff, and setting specified protocols to identify their roles and responsibilities.

He pointed out that MoEHE strives to lay out general policy guidelines that help private schools and kindergartens complete its policies that will be announced later, adding that the education sector intends to form a permanent consultative

committee under the chairmanship of Assistant Undersecretary for Education Affairs, in pursuit of presenting ideas and sharing proposals within a joint partnership between MoEHE and private education institutions to foster permanent partnership and cooperation.

For his part, Director of Private Schools Affairs Department Rashid Ahmad Mohamad Al Ameri outlined the efforts undertaken by MoEHE in the supervision and follow-up processes conducted by the department each year.

He presented a sample of some studies that were conducted via general statistics, in addition to highlighting some aspects that require adherence from schools.

The meeting underlined the importance of verifying the core educational and supporting sources to ensure they do not contravene the inherent community's values, and conduct general oversight over all educational sources by the school teachers, including sources in libraries and other assisting materials.

## 24 Human Nutrition students of QU submit graduation projects

TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK  
DOHA

TWENTY-FOUR students of College of Health Science at Qatar University's (QU) Human Nutrition Department have successfully presented their graduation research projects.

Under the supervision of Dr. Maya Bassil, students Nour Ghazal, Ghalya Bukshaisha, Shaikha Al-Zeyara presented their study on "Risk and determinants of sarcopenia in people with diabetes: findings from Qatar Biobank cohort." They found that Qatari adults with diabetes consumed less total and animal protein, have lower muscle mass and strength and are more likely to suffer from sarcopenia.

Another group of students, presented their study titled "Does following vegetarian diets result in greater weight loss? Findings from Qatar Biobank". Conducted by Shouq Abdulla and Noora Al Musaifri, the study found no effect of following a vegetarian diet on body weight parameters. However, following a low-calorie diet was associated with lower body mass index.

The study entitled "Evaluation of the effect of different antimicrobials on the quality and shelf-life of ready to eat hummus," was supervised by Dr. Layal Karam and presented by Fatima Ghonim, Salma Ghonim and Shama Al-Ahmed. They reported that treatments that included vinegar used alone or in combination had significantly higher antimicrobial effectiveness, thus providing a potential natural method for hummus preservation and shelf-life extension.



Students of QU College of Health Science present graduation research projects.

Under Prof. Zumin Shi's supervision, students Shouq Al-Marri, Moudhi Al-Hajri and Asma Sultan presented their study on "Tea and coffee consumption patterns and glycemic control in Qatari adults with diabetes." They found that Qatari adults with diabetes who showed high consumption of Arabic coffee and tea and who were taking hypertensive medications and using insulin injections, had a better glycemic control compared to those with lower Arabic beverage consumption.

The next project titled "Cross-sectional study of the association between dietary patterns and total urinary phthalate concentrations among US adults," supervised by Dr. Tahra El Obeid was presented by Maryam Al Tamimi, Asma Marzoughi, Kaltham Al Malki and Hanan Nur Hossain. They found that the Mediterranean diet significantly associated with lower concentrations of specific phthalate biomarkers, while the Western dietary pattern was associated with

higher phthalate biomarker concentrations.

Under Prof. Abdelhamid Kerkadi, students Noora Al-Attayah, Sara Al-Mahmoud, Khulood Saeed presented their study on "Relationship between adiposity indices and bone mineral density at different sites among females in Qatar." They reported that in women, adiposity indices were positively correlated with Bone Mineral Density (BMD), at all BMD sites in younger age groups and negatively associated within the older age groups for certain BMD sites.

The next project, supervised by Prof. Reema Teyeem, "Consumption of fruits and vegetables is associated with gastric cancer risk: Findings from case-control study" was presented by Maryam Al-Jumaili, Noora Al-Naimi and Rawdhah Al-Amer. They found that although many fruits and vegetables may reduce the risk of gastric cancer, others may increase it. The method of vegetable and fruit preparation may affect the nutritive value.

## Qatar University professors emphasise crucial role of education to achieve SDGs

TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK  
DOHA

A NUMBER of professors from Qatar University's (QU) College of Education have emphasised the importance of prioritising education and the role of the educated individual in building a strong and sustainable society in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), on the occasion of International Day of Education celebrated every year on January 24.

Dr Mayamin Altae, professor of Educational Sciences, said: "The fourth goal of the SDGs focuses on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all, which essentially means education is the backbone for achieving the SDGs and ensuring a secure future for generations to come."

"The power of education is demonstrated through preparing students to be broad-minded citizens, empathetic to their peers and across borders, capable of renouncing violence and taking effective action to promote world peace. Quality education equips people with knowledge, skills and values that enable them to live with dignity and contributes to making societies safer and stronger."

Dr Ayad Taama, professor of Art Education, said: "The strongest characteristic of education is its ability to build a promising generation that

contributes to building the state. This is not exclusively the role of the state, but also starts from the home and family and the extent to which these participants interact to achieve scientific, educational and ethical goals, which is based on the sense of responsibility and benefitting from development plans of other societies in developed countries.



Dr Nasser Al Rawahi and Dr Ayad Taama

"The importance of education in shaping society starts here, relying on the development of educational curricula and paying attention to modern studies and research and how to apply them."

Dr Nasser Al Rawahi, professor of Physical Education, said: "In light of technological developments and the explosion of knowledge and information that the world is witnessing in all fields of life, the process of developing and improving educational programmes has become a societal requirement imposed by the reality of the tremendous scientific development."

## Qatari WCM-Q medical student presents research on incurable blood cancer at US health conference

TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK  
DOHA

A QATARI medical student at Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar (WCM-Q) has presented research into a rare and incurable form of blood cancer at the 64th American Society of Haematology (ASH) Annual Meeting and Exposition, which took place in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Second-year medical student Haya Al Ansari gave a presentation about a clinical research trial she worked on with a team of doctors from Weill Cornell Medicine in New York. The trial investigated the efficacy of two existing drugs that could help in the treatment of mantle cell lymphoma, which remains incurable. Al Ansari presented to more than 4,000 delegates from different parts of the world at the event.

While mantle cell lymphoma can be treated with a number of



WCM-Q medical student Haya Al Ansari at the annual meeting of the American Society of Haematology in New Orleans.

drugs and put into remission, it cannot be cured fully because drug resistance develops and the cancer returns. The study, titled 'Combined Inhibition of CDK2 and BCL2 Overrides Resistance to Targeting BTK and CDK4/6 in Mantle Cell Lymphoma Therapy,' notes: "Each successive treatment failure is associated

with a more rapidly proliferating disease and fewer treatment options. Understanding the drug-resistance mechanism and developing effective, well-tolerated, new therapies for MCL are urgently needed."

The trial used genomic analysis of tissue and blood samples from patients being treated for

mantle cell lymphoma to determine that the two drugs - named venetoclax and ibrutinib - were more effective when used in combination than separately. Both drugs are already approved for treatment of mantle cell lymphoma but are typically administered in succession rather than in combination.

Al Ansari, who was first author of the study, worked on the paper with Dr Selina Chen-Kiang, professor of microbiology and immunology, Dr Maurizio Di Liberto, assistant professor of research in pathology and laboratory medicine, Dr Xiangao Huang, assistant professor of research in pathology and laboratory medicine, and Dr Yang Hu, bioinformatics analyst, all of Weill Cornell Medicine in New York (WCM NY), among other investigators from WCM NY and a number of US colleges. Al Ansari was also presented with the 2022 ASH Abstract Achievement



Dr Nayef Mazloum, assistant dean at WCM-Q

Award, which is bestowed upon trainees who are the first author and presenter of a high-scoring abstract at the annual conference.

Al Ansari's participation began when she met one of her mentors, Dr Chen-Kiang, during her Medical Student Research Award (MSRA) programme at WCM NY last year. MSRA is an

initiative designed for WCM-Q first-year medical students, providing them a chance to take the lead in securing their own research experiences between the first and second year of the medical programme during the summer break.

Al Ansari said: "Mantle cell lymphoma is very rare and hard to treat, and patients usually end up relapsing because medications do not work in the long-term. The presentation showed two drugs that target the disease and could avoid resistance more effectively when used in combination."

Dr Nayef Mazloum, assistant dean for student research and assistant professor of microbiology & immunology at Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar, said: "It is extremely gratifying that our student Haya Al Ansari has not only participated in this important piece of research but has also presented it at a major conference."