



## Lusail Intl Circuit announces early bird ticket offers for Formula 1 Qatar Airways Qatar Grand Prix

**Ahead of the F1 racing spectacle from 6-8 October, organizers unveil ticket offers and status of Lusail Circuit upgrade project**

TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK  
DOHA

THE Lusail International Circuit announced the official start of early bird ticket sales for the Formula 1 Qatar Airways Qatar Grand Prix, in the first of three sales phases. The eagerly anticipated racing spectacle will be held from October 6-8 at the redesigned Lusail International Circuit.

The announcement came during a joint press conference held in cooperation with Qatar Airways, the Official Airline and Global Partner of Formula 1 – and title sponsor of the MotoGP Grand Prix of Qatar, and the Public Works Authority “Ashghal”. This collaboration promises to deliver an unparalleled racing experience that is set to win the hearts of fans around the world.

The F1 racing extravaganza will ensure an action-packed weekend for fans. Race attendance will be optimized through three-day Grandstand tickets and one-day General Admission tickets, with special early bird offers up for grabs for a limited time only.

“F1 Family Friday” is a chance for the whole family to experience the incredible racing action together. Complimentary Friday-only General Admission tickets, exclusively for children under 12 years of age when accompanied by a ticketed adult, include entrance and free grandstand seating. Tickets are limited and must be booked online in advance.

Extending over three adrenaline-fueled days, the Formula 1 Qatar Airways Qatar Grand Prix will witness incredible racing, as the world’s most elite drivers go head to head. The on-circuit action will be complemented by unrivalled entertainment and hospitality experiences for fans.

The current remodeling of the Lusail International Circuit is set to increase the capacity of the grandstands and car parking lots. The surrounding and internal roads will be developed to provide easy access to the circuit by linking it to the main roads in the area while extensive improvements will also be made to the infrastructure of the circuit and associated facilities.

On the occasion, Abdulrahman Al Mannai, President of the Qatar Motor and Motorcycle Federation (QMMF), said: “I am very glad and proud that



Seated on dais from left: Steven Reynolds, Senior Vice President of Discover Qatar, Amro Al Hamad, Executive Director of the Qatar Motor and Motorcycle Federation and CEO of Lusail International Circuit, and Eng. Hamad Al Bader, Head of the Northern Areas Projects Section at the Roads Projects Department in Ashghal during a press conference on Wednesday.



Lusail International Circuit will host the Formula 1 Qatar Airways Qatar Grand Prix. It is another international achievement to be added to the list of impressive sports achievements by Qatar. I would like to extend my sincerest thanks and appreciation to the Ministry of Sports and Youth for the efforts it exerted to make the circuit upgrade project a success in the best possible way.

“Once completed, the circuit will be an extraordinary destination capable of hosting major tournaments and sporting events. We would also like to thank Qatar Airways, the Official Airline and Global Partner of Formula 1, and Qatar Tourism on their relentless efforts to promote tourism inside Qatar and abroad. We will unveil many exciting entertainment programs for race enthusiasts soon.

“I would also like to extend my

sincerest gratitude and appreciation to the Public Works Authority “Ashghal” for its tremendous efforts to make the project of upgrading the circuit, which is going according to schedule, a great success.”

Speaking after the press conference, Amro Al Hamad, Executive Director of the Qatar Motor and Motorcycle Federation and CEO of Lusail International Circuit, said: “We are delighted to bring Formula 1 back to Qatar, and we can’t wait to offer fans an unforgettable racing experience. The Lusail International Circuit will be more than ready to welcome enthusiasts from all over the world. We are committed to delivering a truly exceptional Grand Prix weekend, in collaboration with our partners Qatar Airways and Ashghal. The countdown has now officially begun.”

He added: “Our partnership with

**The F1 racing extravaganza will ensure an action-packed weekend for fans. Race attendance will be optimized through three-day Grandstand tickets and one-day General Admission tickets, with special early bird offers up for grabs for a limited time only.**

Qatar Airways brings great benefits to the Qatar Grand Prix, as it enhances the value of this prize race through global outreach and promotional campaigns. We are proud to collaborate with the airline to connect fans from more than 150 global destinations to come to Qatar and attend the Qatar Formula 1 Grand Prix.”

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, His Excellency Akbar Al Baker, said: “The Lusail Circuit Sports Club is a key element of the Formula 1 Qatar Airways Qatar Grand Prix 2023 where the world’s best F1 teams and drivers will compete for years to come. As the Global Partner and Official Airline of F1, we are offering exclusive travel packages with Qatar Airways Holidays for the upcoming races, and experiences, which deliver a motorsport spectacle like no other.”

Elaborating on the event prepara-

tions, a spokesperson for Ashghal confirmed that the circuit upgrade project is on track and is expected to be completed by October as planned.

Eng. Saoud Al Tamimi, Manager of the Roads Projects Department at the Public Works Authority “Ashghal”, stated: “The Lusail Circuit Sports Club Development Project, implemented by Ashghal, is part of the efforts exerted by all institutions to achieve Qatar’s vision in enhancing its position on the world map as the capital of sports. The Lusail Circuit will be upgraded into an exceptional destination capable of hosting major tournaments and sporting events and providing a unique experience for local motorsports and motorcycle fans coming to Qatar from all over the world.”

For his part, Eng. Hamad Al Bader, Head of the Northern Areas Projects Section at the Roads Projects Department in Ashghal, said: “The project aims to increase the capacity of the Lusail Circuit, develop its associated facilities and upgrade its infrastructure according to the highest international standards. Ashghal is currently implementing the project within three packages, which include developing the racetrack, constructing and renovating the grandstands to accommodate 40,000 spectators, and increasing the number of parking spaces to accommodate 10,000 cars. A number of main buildings will also be developed and constructed, and the intersections and roads surrounding the circuit will be developed and linked to the main roads.”

The variety of ticket options available to fans is designed to deliver an outstanding race experience at every ticket level. These include three-day Grandstand tickets around the circuit, with prices starting at QR1,000, as well as single-day and three-day General Admission tickets, with prices ranging from QR200 up to QR600.

To take advantage of the early bird offers, including the Complimentary (FOC) Friday-only General Admission tickets, and secure the best seats, fans are encouraged to visit the official website to book their tickets, at <https://tickets.lcsc.qa/>

In collaboration with F1 Experiences, exceptional hospitality packages will be offered across five tiered categories. More information on the program is available at: <https://hospitality.lcsc.qa/>

The F1 event also promises an unparalleled lineup of entertainment activities that will be announced during the next months. Do not miss this opportunity to witness the amazing competitions and experience the non-stop excitement of Formula 1 racing at the Lusail International Circuit.



### Quick read

## Qatar’s ace beach volleyball pair drawn in group two for Czech Ostrava Tour

THE Qatari beach volleyball team of Cherif Younousse and Ahmed Tijan (world ranked 7th) was drawn in Group Two for the Czech Ostrava Tour, one of the 5-star Elite16 tours for men and women, to be held from May 31 to June 4 with the participation of more than

74 teams from 23 countries. The second group includes the Dutch duo of Brewer & Meusen, and the Swedish duo of Ahman & Helvig, along with a fourth team that will qualify from the qualifiers. The Qatari national team seeks, through its participa-

tion in the tournament, to collect the largest number of classification points that qualify directly for the next Olympic Games (Paris 2024). The Qatari national team will start its matches in the Czech Ostrava tour on June 1 facing the fourth team from the qualifiers, then will play

two matches the next day against the Brewer and Meusen, and against Halman and Helvig. Younousse and Tijan had won the bronze medal at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and have achieved many distinguished results in recent years. (TNN)



# Sheikh Hamad re-elected as AGCFF president

TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK  
DOHA

QATAR Football Association (QFA) President HE Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Thani was re-elected as the President of the Arab Gulf Cup Football Federation (AGCFF) unanimously at the federation's Ordinary General Assembly meeting which was held in at the Ritz Carlton Doha on Wednesday.

HE Sheikh Hamad will hold his position for four years until 2027. HE Sheikh Hamad was earlier re-elected in May 2019.

Oman's Sheikh Salem bin Saeed Al Wahabi also retained his position as Vice-President of the body.

Moreover, Kuwait was confirmed as host nation for the 26th edition of Gulf Cup which will take place in December 2024.



HE Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Thani.

HE Sheikh Hamad expressed his happiness with the confidence he has gained from the member federations to lead the helm of Gulf football since the moment of the establishment of the Arab Gulf Cup Federation in 2016.

HE added: "The next stage will witness a great develop-

ment, especially after the articles of association of the Arabian Gulf Cup Federation were amended, and in light of these amendments, various tournaments will be created under the umbrella of the federation, as there are many ideas that are being studied at the level of club championships and the

group ages categories that we pay attention to.

The members of the General Assembly discussed the topics on the agenda, including the adoption of the minutes of the meeting of the General Conference, which was held in Basra on the sidelines of "Gulf 25", the administra-

tive report and the activities that were implemented.

The General Assembly also witnessed the vote on the alternative country for the Gulf 26, according to what is stipulated in the tournament regulations.

During the meeting, a committee was formed to review and develop the regulations headed by the Secretary-General of the Arab Gulf Cup Federation, Jassim Sultan Al Rumaihi, which will develop the regulations that contribute to the development of the Arab Gulf Cup Federation tournaments at the club and age groups level, and in coordination with the Gulf and continental federations to contribute to the establishment of successful tournaments that raise the level of Gulf football.

The meeting was attended by Sheikh Ali bin Khalifa

Al Khalifa, President of the Bahraini Federation, Ahmed Al Shaheen, President of the Kuwaiti Federation, Abdullah Al Junaibi, First Deputy and Acting President of the UAE Federation, Ali Jabbar, Vice-President of the Iraqi Federation, Mohsen bin Hamad Al Masrouri, Vice-President of the Omani Federation, and Khalid bin Abdulaziz. Bin Mejren, representative of the Saudi Federation, Ahmed Abdel Aziz Al Buainain, a member of the Qatari Federation, and Dr. Hamid Al Shaibani, Secretary-General of the Yemeni Federation.

It is worth mentioning that the Gulf Cup Football Association supervised the organization of the last two editions of the Arabian Gulf Cup, the first of which was held in the State of Qatar in 2019, and the second was in Iraq at the beginning of this year.

## Valencia coach vows to fight 'smears' after Vini Jr racist abuse



Valencia's Spanish coach Ruben Baraja shouts to players during the Spanish league football match between Valencia and Real Madrid at the Mestalla stadium in Valencia recently. (AFP)

PA MEDIA/DPA  
LONDON

VALENCIA head coach Ruben Baraja has said his club will fight back against "smears" after it was handed a five-game partial stadium closure and hefty fine following the racist abuse aimed at Real Madrid forward Vinicius Junior.

Speaking at a press conference, Baraja stressed he was "absolutely against racism," but echoed Valencia's earlier claim that the sanction was "unfair and disproportionate," and added: "I am not going to allow the Valencia CF fans and Mestalla to be smeared with labels that do not represent us." "Just as a player rightly fights back against insults and I support that with all my might, we as a

club and a fanbase rebel against those who, during the days since the game, have accused us of being what we are not."

Vinicius threatened to leave the pitch in the second half of Sunday's LaLiga match at the Mestalla after being subjected to alleged monkey chants from the crowd and Real Madrid, who said the incident constituted a "hate crime," filed a complaint with the Spanish State Attorney General's Office.

In response, Valencia have been ordered to shut the Mario Kempes south stand, where the alleged abuse happened, for five matches and have also been fined ?45,000 by the Spanish football federation (RFEF).

Reacting to that sanction, Valencia said in a strongly worded statement on Tuesday

evening: "Valencia CF wishes to show its total disagreement and indignation at the unfair and disproportionate penalty imposed by the competition committee on the club with the closure of the stand for five games."

"Valencia CF wants to publicly denounce that in this resolution of the RFEF competition committee they show evidence that contradicts what the national police and LaLiga say.

"In addition, this sanction is based on evidence that the club has not been able to see and without giving us a hearing."

"Valencia CF has condemned, condemns and will condemn in the most energetic way any act of racism or violence. These behaviours have no place in football or in society and we will continue to act in

the most forceful way to eradicate this scourge."

"For this reason, Valencia CF is collaborating from the first minute with the police and all relevant authorities to clarify the events that occurred last Sunday," the statement continued.

"In addition, it has applied the maximum possible sanction with the expulsion for life from our stadium to the fans that the police have identified for their racist behaviour."

"For this reason we consider that penalising and depriving all the fans who were not involved in these unfortunate incidents from seeing their team is a totally disproportionate, unfair and unprecedented measure against which we will fight."

## Rashford expected to return for Manchester United against Chelsea

PA MEDIA/DPA  
LONDON

MANAGER Erik ten Hag expects Marcus Rashford to be ready to face Chelsea on Thursday night but admitted he is not sure whether Manchester United's top scorer is fully fit.

Rashford has missed United's last two fixtures, first with a leg injury and then through illness, but has returned to training this week.

Asked if the 29-goal forward was ready to play, Ten Hag said: "It looks like (it). Yesterday, he returned to training, he looks quite fit but we have to see today what is the outcome of the training, how did we recover and then we will make our choices."

Rashford's absence against Wolves and Bournemouth - both games United won without him - once again brought into focus United's lack of depth in the forward positions.

Anthony Martial was handed a rare start on the south coast on Sunday, but headed straight down the tunnel when he was withdrawn after an hour before later returning to the bench.

Martial's reaction led to fresh speculation over his United future.

The 27-year-old, who finished last season on loan at

Sevilla, has scored eight times in 27 appearances for United this season, but has struggled at times with injuries.

"If you are not available, you can't score," Ten Hag said. "When he was available we played better, the team is winning games, he's also scoring goals but he has to be available."

And Ten Hag also batted away a question about speculation linking United with Paris Saint-Germain's Brazil forward Neymar by offering his stock answer on transfer rumours, saying: "When we have news, we will tell you."

United will secure a top-four place and a return to the Champions League for next season if they take at least a point against Frank Lampard's side.

"It's clear, we want to win every game," the Dutchman said. "That is what we do all season so tomorrow we want to do the same, we want to win the game, play dominant football and get the job done."

"We are in a project, we want to go back and win trophies, we win one trophy but we want more trophies, compete with the best, we are still in a journey but we think we are in the right direction but it can always be better. Because good is not good enough."



Manchester United's Dutch manager Erik ten Hag (C) gestures during the English Premier League football match against Bournemouth at the Vitality Stadium in Bournemouth recently. (AFP)

## Clubs reject entry of investor in the German football league

DPA  
FRANKFURT



Dortmund's German defender Mats Hummels and Augsburg's French forward Irvin Cardona (L) vie for the ball during the German first division Bundesliga match in Augsburg recently. (AFP)

THE Bundesliga and second division clubs have rejected the entry of an investor in the German football league (DFL).

A motion to this effect didn't receive the required two-thirds majority among the 36 clubs at an extraordinary general meeting on Wednesday.

There were 11 votes against the entry of investors and five abstentions, DFL head of the supervisory board Hans-Joachim Watzke said. The motion was not approved by four votes.

Watzke also suggested that the 11 votes against the investors came from second division clubs.

"Whoever abstains on such

an important question surprises me a bit, but everyone can do it the way they want," he told a news conference after the meeting.

The result is a massive defeat for the DFL leadership under Watzke and interim managing directors Axel Hellmann and Oliver Leki, who had campaigned for broad approval in the run-up to the meeting.

"Sometimes, life is simple. That's democracy. There was a clear majority, but not the one we wanted. Therefore, as of today, this topic is over," Watzke said.

The DFL was looking into selling parts of its shares to investors. As league rules mean no club can have an investor owning more than 50% of shares, a way around this,

and to make German football more competitive, is to seek investment into the top two divisions as a whole.

Bayer Leverkusen and Volkswagen-backed Wolfsburg are among the exceptions of the rule known as 50+1.

The plan was to set up a joint venture with an outside investor that would hold 12.5% of the media rights for the Bundesliga and second division for a term of 20 years.

DFL expected to receive around Euro2 billion (\$2.16 billion). Four private equity firms had bid to become the league's partners.

Of the fresh capital, 85% would flow into earmarked investments in future fields as well as strengthening the stability of the DFL. The 36 clubs from the Bundesliga and

second division would receive only 15% of the sum for free use.

After the vote, Watzke stressed that "nobody should raise solidarity issues in the near future" and said that top Bundesliga clubs Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund in particular were prepared to give up many media rights and have them marketed centrally.

"You can't be more supportive than we were here, especially the big clubs," Watzke said.

Fans, meanwhile, never welcomed the proposal, and since it was disclosed, many football supporters have shown their position with banners in stadiums saying "No to investors in the DFL," or "The league belongs to all of us - against investors."

# QGA and CB sign three year sponsorship agreement to host Commercial Bank Qatar Masters



Senior officials of Commercial Bank and Qatar Golf Association at an event in Doha on Wednesday.

## TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK DOHA

COMMERCIAL Bank has entered a partnership agreement with Qatar Golf Association to continue to be the official Title Sponsor for the tournament until 2025.

The highly-anticipated event is organized by The Qatar Golf Association (QGA), the Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC), Doha Golf Club and the long-term Title Sponsor, Commercial Bank.

First held in 1998, the Commercial Bank Qatar Masters helped establish Qatar as a world-class sporting venue and is considered to be the

country's annual 'must-attend' sporting and social event.

Sanctioned and supported by the DP World Tour, the tournament attracts annually around 20,000 spectators and is broadcasted to a global TV audience of over 450 million households and widely known for bringing together the world's best golf talent.

Hassan Nasser Al Naimi, President of Qatar Golf Association, commented: "We at the Qatar Golf Association are truly grateful for the contribution of Commercial Bank over the past twenty five years, which have helped us turn the Commercial Bank Qatar Masters into a major world

class golf tournament and it's utterly gratifying to announce the continued commitment and support of Commercial Bank for another three years to come".

Commercial Bank EGM, Chief Marketing Officer and Head of CB Premium Banking, Hussain Al Abdulla said: "Today, we're not just renewing a partnership; we're reaffirming our belief in the power of sport to connect, inspire, and drive us forward."

"This partnership between Commercial Bank and the Qatar Golf Association transcends the boundaries of a golf tournament. It's a testament to our commitment to

the community, our support for world-class sporting talent, and our role in showcasing Qatar as a hub of international events".

The 2023 Commercial Bank Qatar Masters will take place from October 26th to 29th.

The tournament attracts top professionals as it is the last qualifying tournament on the DP World Tour for the players who are ranked 110th and higher, primarily, to retain their Tour card and to be able to qualify for the final two tournaments of 2023, the Nedbank Golf Challenge (64 players) and the DP World Tour Championship (50 players).

# Tatum pours in 33 as Celtics beat Heat to avoid sweep

## STATS PERFORM/DPA BERLIN

JAYSON Tatum had 33 points and 11 rebounds as the Boston Celtics kept their season alive for at least one more game with a 116-99 win over the Miami Heat in Game 4 of the Eastern Conference finals.

Derrick White and Jaylen Brown each added 16 points and Grant Williams had 14 Boston, which trails the best-of-seven series 3-1 and will try to avoid elimination again in Game 5 on Thursday in Boston. No team in NBA history has ever successfully rallied from a 3-0 deficit in a best-of-seven series.

The Celtics trailed by nine early in the second half before reeling off 18 straight

points for a 70-61 lead. Tatum ignited the run with consecutive 3-pointers, White followed with another, and Marcus Smart also connected from deep.

Boston maintained the lead the rest of the way, though the Heat got within four late in the third. The Celtics responded to score the next seven points and led 88-79 heading to the fourth quarter.

After shooting 11 for 42 from long range in Game 3, the Celtics regained their stroke in this one by going 19 of 45 and limited the Heat to 8 for 32.

Jimmy Butler had 29 points for Miami, which was outscored 48-22 during a 14-minute stretch across the third and fourth quarters.



Jayson Tatum #0 of the Boston Celtics reacts against the Miami Heat during the fourth quarter in game four of the Eastern Conference Finals in Miami, Florida on Tuesday. (AFP)

## Qatar reaches Arab snooker championship semi-finals



Qatar qualified for the semi-finals of the snooker competition at the Arab Billiards and Snooker Championship, which is being held at the Saudi capital Riyadh. Twelve countries are participating in the event, which will conclude on May 29. Qatar players dominated the Group A, winning against Saudi Arabia A and B, and Kuwait to enter the semis. On Thursday they will face Jordan in the semi-finals. (TNN)

# IPL: Madhwal takes 5-5 as Mumbai demolish Lucknow in Eliminator

## AGENCIES

AKASH Madhwal had stunning figures of 5-5 as Mumbai Indians thrashed Lucknow Super Giants in the Indian Premier League Eliminator.

Cameron Green made 41 from 23 balls and put on 66 with Suryakumar Yadav - who hit 33 from 20 - to set the five-time champions on their way to 182-8.

Lucknow reached 69-2 in the ninth over of the chase, but lost eight wickets for 32 runs to crumble to 101 all out.

Mumbai will now play Gujarat Titans in Qualifier 2 for a place in the final.

After opting to bat first, Mumbai started well, although captain Rohit Sharma and fellow opener Ishan Kishan fell inside the powerplay.

The strokeplay of Green and Suryakumar, though, kept the run-rate high.

It was hovering around 10-an-over before Naveen-ul-Haq, having already dismissed Rohit, removed both Suryakumar and Green with a pair of superb slower balls in the 11th over.

Lucknow managed to slow Mumbai for the next few overs but, after being subbed in, impact player Nehal Wadhwa hit a quickfire 23 from 12 balls to take the Indians to an above-par total.



Mumbai Indians' Akash Madhwal (C) celebrates with teammates after the dismissal of Lucknow Super Giants' Nicholas Pooran (not pictured) during the Indian Premier League (IPL) Eliminator match at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai on Wednesday. (AFP)

Madhwal struck in the second over of the reply to remove Prerak Mankad and England seamer Chris Jordan ousted Kyle Mayers two overs later.

But Lucknow quickly rebuilt with Marcus Stoinis and skipper Krunal Pandya at the crease.

Just as the Super Giants looked in a position to kick on,

though, the innings unravelled.

Pandya holed out off Piyush Chawla to start the collapse and Madhwal took two wickets in two balls in the next over to get rid of Krishnappa Gowtham and Nicholas Pooran.

The needless run-out of Stoinis for 40 all but confirmed the outcome and there were two further run-outs before

Madhwal castled Mohsin Khan to seal an emphatic success midway through the 17th over.

**Scores: Mumbai Indians 182-8 (20 overs):** Green 41 (23), Yadav 33 (20); Naveen-ul-Haq 4-38, Thakur 3-34

**Lucknow Super Giants 101 (16.3 overs):** Stoinis 40 (27); Madhwal 5-5, Jordan 1-7.

**Mumbai Indians won by 81 runs.**

# Paes and Gupte acquire franchise for Tennis Premier League

## TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK KOLKATA

KOLKATA born tennis icon Leander Paes and Yatin Gupte, Chairman of Wardwizard Group, together have acquired a team from the City of Joy which is set to compete in the season 5 of the Tennis Premier League.

They will compete against the likes of the Pune Jaguars, co-owned by Sonali Bendre, Hy-

derabad Strikers, co-owned by Rakul Preet Singh, Bengaluru Spartans whose ambassador is Sania Mirza and Punjab Tigers, co-owned by Taapsee Pannu.

All games of the revolutionary Tennis Premier League will be played in the Balewadi Stadium in Pune in association with the All India Tennis Association (AITA) and Maharashtra State Lawn Tennis Association (MSLTA).

Gupte, expressed his delight about becoming a part of the Tennis Premier League as he shared, "In terms of recognition and popularity, TPL is the premier competition of Tennis in India, the level of competition in the league is fantastic. That prompted us to invest in a team that'll take on other competitive teams in the tournament and we are excited to be part of such a wonderful tournament. It also



Leander Paes.

gives us the opportunity to support and invest in Indian tennis, eventually helping elevate the status of tennis in India."

Speaking on why it made sense for him to come on-board as the co-owner of the franchise, Paes, said "I am glad to be the face and co-owner of the team as Kolkata is my hometown, it's where I have some of my fondest memories from."

"The South Club in Kolkata

is the most iconic tennis venue in the country that has hosted the most number of Davis Cup matches in India and has even produced legendary Indian tennis players such as Jaidip Mukerjee and Zeeshan Ali to name a few.

"I am sure that the presence of a team from Bengal will make season 5 of the Tennis Premier League even bigger than the previous editions."