



The champions CBK

Boubyan Bank fall in final

CBK win KBC trophy

KUWAIT CITY, May 3: Kuwait Cricket held the Finals for the most prestigious KBC T20 Champions Trophy sponsored by the Kuwait Banks Club at the Doha Entertainment City Ground.

KBC in collaboration with Kuwait Cricket has been sponsoring this tournament for over a decade making it a special trophy for the Banks League.

Top banks in Kuwait namely, CBK,

Boubyan Bank, NBK, KFH, Warba Bank, Burgan Bank, ABK, AUB, Gulf Bank and KIB were competing for the KBC T20 Trophy.

The guests of honor Nasser Al Badier, Saud Abdul Aziz Al Ali, Abu Ali from the KBC, Paul Dawood (General Manager — Operations, CBK), Talal Al Nasser (Head of sports activities at CBK), and Abdul Aziz Al Ayadi, from

CBK were present to watch the grand finals as well as part of the presentation ceremony.

Dignitaries from Kuwait Cricket Mahmoud Bastaki (the Chairman of Kuwait Cricket) including Sajid Ashraf (Director General for Kuwait Cricket), Rishi Jayan (Director of Seniors Cricket and IT), Harshith Vora (Director for Juniors Cricket), Robert D'souza (Director of Logistics and Facilities) and Naveen Dhananjayan (Director for Match Officials) were present for the occasion.

In an exciting day of final Gulf Bank faced KFH for the plate finals. Gulf Bank elected to field on winning the toss and did well to not allow KFH batsmen to settle by picking up 3 wickets for 36 runs in 4.1 overs. Gulf Bank kept the pressure on as KFH were 65 for 5 in 8.5 overs. Mohammad Arfat (23 runs) and Mohammad Amir (25 runs of 13 balls) ensured KFH reach a total of 151 runs in 20 overs.

Gulf Bank started off brilliantly as they reached 93 runs in 12.4 overs for

CRICKET

the loss of just 1 wicket. Vinod Nevgi scored a fine 50 and captain Mohammad Waleed scored 41 runs. Experienced KFH all rounder and Man of the Match Zahid Khan ran through the Gulf Bank middle order by picking up 4 wickets and turned the match in KFH's favor. Saad Khalid and Fazal Ur Rehman picked up 2 and 3 wickets respectively to wrap up Gulf Bank for 130 runs and KFH won the exciting match by 21 runs.

For the KBC championship CBK played against the favorites Boubyan Bank. Boubyan won the toss and elected to bat first. Aamir Javed looked in sublime form as he gave a great platform for Boubyan by scoring 67 runs of 32 balls and taking Boubyan total to 96 for 3 in 9.3 overs. Imran Gafur continued the scoring responsibility too by scoring a quick 59 of 34 balls well supported by Abid Mushtaque's 33 to post a big target of 194 runs for CBK to chase.

CBK showed up when it mattered the most on the finals day as Diyu Xavier and Nithin Simon fearlessly put up a smashing 110 runs partnership for the 2nd wicket. Nithin Simon exhibited some spectacular batting for his 71 off 35 balls and Man of the Finals Diyu Xavier as elegant as always carried CBK over the finishing line in style with his 87 not out in just 46 balls. CBK reached the target in 18 overs. This is CBK's first trophy as winners and a deserved one.

Palat scores twice as Lightning 'take' lead

Sharks shut out Knights, tie series

LOS ANGELES, May 3, (AFP): Ondrej Palat scored twice and Andrei Vasilevskiy stopped 28 shots as the Tampa Bay Lightning defeated the Boston Bruins 4-1 to seize a 2-1 lead in their Eastern Conference NHL playoff series.

Palat, of the Czech Republic, scored two unanswered goals in the first period on Wednesday with the first coming just 1:47 in and the second at 3:19 for the Lightning who have won two consecutive games after losing the second round series opener on home ice.

"Boston came in and took one of our games at home, we had to take one of theirs on the road," said Tampa Bay coach Jon Cooper. "We did that."

Palat's first goal came after Boston defenceman Matt Grzelecky lost track of the puck in his own end resulting in a two-on-one chance for the Lightning which they finished off in front of a crowd of 17,500 at the Boston Garden arena.

Palat made it 2-0 just 92 seconds later on a shot that deflected off Bruins defenceman Torey Krug past Boston goaltender Tuukka Rask.

The Bruins cut the lead to 2-1 at 14:12 when Patrice Bergeron scored on the powerplay for his fourth goal of the postseason.

Cirelli, with his first career NHL postseason goal, scored just over two minutes later to restore the Lightning's two-goal lead.

Tampa forward Steven Stamkos closed out the scoring with a long shot into the empty net on the power play with 42 seconds left. It was just the second goal of the playoffs for Stamkos who had 86 points in the regular season.

"It's not good, obviously, but we've come back a lot," said Bruins coach Bruce Cassidy. "So this is nothing new."

Rask finished with 33 saves for the Bruins, who host Game Four on Friday night.



San Jose Sharks center Tomas Hertl (foreground), from the Czech Republic, reaches for the puck in front of Vegas Golden Knights defenceman Deryk Engelland during the first period of Game 4 of an NHL hockey second round playoff series in San Jose, California on May 2. (AP)

Bruins defenceman Charlie McAvoy said they are just going to have to regroup for the next game.

"Playoffs are desperate hockey," McAvoy said. "You don't ever go into any games saying 'Oh, we have the luxury of being able to lose this one.'"

In San Jose, the Sharks scored twice in the first period en route to a 4-0 victory over the Vegas Golden Knights that tied their Western Conference series at two games apiece.

Marcus Sorensen, Joonas Donskoi, Tomas Hertl and Joe Pavelski all scored for the Sharks and goaltender Martin Jones stopped 34 shots in his sixth career playoff shutout.

"I thought that was probably our most complete game of the series," Jones said.

"We managed the puck really well tonight, we made them work for offense."

"Our penalty kill was big tonight as well," he added after Vegas failed to convert all five power-play chances.

Game Five of the series, which has seen the teams alternate victories, is in Las Vegas on Friday.

The National Hockey League's efforts to grow the sport in China will continue with a first ever exhibition game in Shenzhen, Guangdong on Sept 19, the league announced on Wednesday.

The Boston Bruins will battle the Calgary Flames at the Shenzhen Universiade Sports Centre in the city located 32 kms (20 miles) northwest of Hong Kong.

Four days later the same two teams will meet in another pre-season exhibition game at the Cadillac Arena in Beijing.

Last year the Vancouver Canucks and Los Angeles Kings played games in Beijing and Shanghai in front of large crowds at the Cadillac Arena and the Mercedes-Benz Arena.

The games follow recent developments at the grass roots level with

ICE HOCKEY

the staging of youth ice hockey clinics by NHL teams in Hong Kong, Shanghai and Beijing.

With a population of 1.3 billion, China is pushing to promote ice hockey and other winter sports ahead of the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing.

Local and federal governments have been pouring money into new facilities, equipment and training for players and coaches in the past few years with the majority of the new rinks being built in shopping malls.

NHL commissioner Gary Bettman has so far been noncommittal about NHL players participating in 2022 after skipping the Winter Games in South Korea this year.

In 2015, the New York Islanders made Song Andong the first Chinese-born player to be drafted into the NHL. Song had one goal and three points in 98 games with the Madison Capitols of the United States Hockey League and is committed to play at Cornell University next season.



Roma's Serbian defender Aleksandar Kolarov (right), is tackled by Liverpool's Brazilian midfielder Roberto Firmino during the UEFA Champions League semifinal second leg football match AS Roma vs Liverpool FC at the Stadio Olimpico in Rome on May 2. (AFP)

Inter need win at Udinese

Serie A could go out with whimper rather than bang

MILAN, May 3, (RTRS): Serie A is threatening to go out with a whimper rather than a bang as Juventus could wrap up their seventh successive title at the weekend with two matches to spare.

One week ago, Italian fans were reveling in one of the most enthralling titles races in years after Juve's lead at the top was cut to one point over Napoli.

Milan vs Hellas beIN SPORTS 4HD

19:00 local (Saturday)

Juventus vs Bologna beIN SPORTS 4HD

21:45 local (Saturday)

Udinese vs Inter beIN SPORTS 4HD

13:30 local (Sunday)

Napoli vs Torino beIN SPORTS 4HD

16:00 local (Sunday)

Lazio vs Atalanta beIN SPORTS 9HD

16:00 local (Sunday)

Sassuolo vs Sampdoria beIN SPORTS 4HD

19:00 local (Sunday)

Cagliari vs Roma beIN SPORTS 4HD

21:45 local (Sunday)

Excitement mounted even further when Juve trailed Inter Milan 2-1 at San Siro last Saturday — but within 24 hours the momentum had shifted dramatically.

First, Juventus struck twice in the last five minutes to beat Inter 3-2, then Napoli slumped to a 3-0 defeat at Fiorentina, leaving them four points behind with three games to play.

Juve now need only to win home games against Bologna and Verona, both in the lower half of the table, to clinch the title, no matter what happens in their visit to AS Roma.

The title could even be theirs on Sunday if they beat Bologna on Saturday and Napoli then lose at home to Walter Mazzarri's Torino.

Juventus forward Gonzalo Higuain, who headed the winner against Inter, said that game had been a potentially decisive moment in what has been a memorable title race.

Napoli, meanwhile, have struggled in recent home matches against modest opposition.

They scraped past Genoa 1-0, needed two goals in the last two minutes to beat Chievo 2-1 and twice came from behind in a 4-2 win over Udinese.

Elsewhere, Inter Milan need to win at struggling Udinese to maintain any realistic chance of qualifying for the Champions League next season and ending a six-year absence from the competition.

The defeat to Juventus left Inter in fifth place, four points adrift of the top-four finish they need to qualify.

LONDON, May 3, (RTRS): Manchester United striker Romelu Lukaku has been ruled out of Friday's Premier League trip to Brighton and Hove Albion due to an ankle injury, but manager Jose Mourinho is "positive" that the Belgian will be fit for the FA Cup final.

Manchester United's Romelu Lukaku walks off to be substituted after sustaining an injury.

The 24-year-old, who has scored 16 league goals and provided seven assists in 34 appearances for United, was substituted in the second half of last weekend's 2-1 victory over Arsenal.

Lukaku posted pictures of himself recovering at the Move to Cure Clinic in Belgium on his Instagram account earlier on Thursday.

"I just know that, of course, (he is) not (available) tomorrow. Apart from that, we need to wait for more scans, more time but not tomorrow," Mourinho told a news conference.

"Hope so. Looks positive," the Portuguese added when asked about Lukaku's hopes of playing in the FA Cup final against Chelsea on May 19.

Lukaku's compatriot Marouane Fellaini was quoted by British media saying that United made a mistake in not

extending his contract last year and that he was willing to move away from the club when his current deal expires in June.

Mourinho believes that contract talks between United and Fellaini have been positive but says the final decision on a new deal rests with the midfielder.

"Still positive. He's important, he's a player I like. But if for him he has a different position in relation to other players with contracts — we can control their destiny in a different way," the Portuguese boss added.

"The destiny is in his hands, he'll decide what makes him happy. He knows I want him to stay, the club do, he has an offer but it's up to him now."

Stoke City manager Paul Lambert is confident his team can handle the pressure of their must-win encounter with Crystal Palace on Saturday as they look to climb out of the Premier League relegation zone.



Lukaku

Lambert confident Stoke can handle relegation pressure

Lukaku out of Brighton clash, says Mourinho

Brighton vs Man U beIN SPORTS 2HD, 11HD

22:00 local

Stoke vs Palace beIN SPORTS 2HD, 11HD

14:30 local (Saturday)

West Brom vs Spurs beIN SPORTS 2HD, 11HD

17:00 local (Saturday)

Everton vs Southampton beIN

SPORTS 2HD, 11HD

19:30 local (Saturday)

Man City vs Huddersfield beIN SPORTS 2HD, 11HD

15:30 local (Sunday)

Chelsea vs Liverpool beIN SPORTS 2HD, 11HD

18:30 local (Sunday)

Arsenal vs Burnley beIN SPORTS 5HD

18:30 local (Sunday)

The Potters slightly boosted their survival hopes after earning their third successive draw at Liverpool last Saturday.

However, a 12-game winless run has left Stoke three points behind 17th-placed Swansea City with two matches remaining.

"I'm still full of belief as I was when I arrived and until it's impossible then I won't stop believing we can stay in this league," Lambert, who arrived at Stoke in January, told Premier League Productions.

"If we can win our two games then we'll have given ourselves a chance

and hopefully it will be enough to keep us in the division."

"The players are under the pressure of wanting to win, that never changes and they will deal with that, it's instilled in them, they're professional and know what they need to do."

Stoke face Roy Hodgson's Palace who have scored 13 goals in last six games, including five without conceding against Leicester City last weekend.

"I always think Crystal Palace have goals in them, they're a strong side and scoring five last weekend is a big thing to do at this level," Lambert added.

"Wilfried Zaha will be a threat be-

cause of the way he plays the game. He's quick and enjoying a run of form at the minute — but he's not the only danger — so obviously we will have to nullify that."

Relegation-threatened Southampton must maintain their positive momentum if they are to record back-to-back Premier League wins for the first time this season, manager Mark Hughes said ahead of Saturday's trip to Everton.

Southampton, who are 18th in the table, ended an eight-game winless streak with a 2-1 home victory over Bournemouth last weekend and are within a point of safety with three games left in the campaign.

The Saints, who have won just two of their last 22 league matches, could move out of the relegation zone with a victory at Goodison Park.

"Momentum is great if you gain momentum at the right time. Clearly if you are going for trophies and you are playing well in key games then that will help you to be successful," Hughes told a news conference on Thursday.

"The same is true for teams in our situation. If we can build momentum on the back of the Bournemouth result then that is going to help us.