

Sports

Zain recognizes top players of Kuwait Premier League

'Best Player' award to Daham, Al Harbi, Al Khaldi, Ashkanani, Al Feneni, Al Hajri



The recognition ceremony was attended by Zain and KFA officials and members of the technical committee.

KUWAIT: Zain has awarded the winners of its 'Best Player' award in the third section's rounds of the Kuwait Premier League (Dawri Zain) in recognition of their outstanding performance on the pitch. The company dedicates the award to players who contribute to adding elegance to the league and ultimately elevating Kuwaiti football. The awardees are Al Naser's Mohammed Daham (winner in three rounds), Kazima's Hamad Al Harbi and Shibeeb Al Khaldi, Al Arabi's Hussain Ashkanani, Al Salmiya's Mubarak Al Feneni, and Al Kuwait's Fahad Al Hajri.

The recognition took place at Zain's HQ, attended by members of the technical committee, Kuwait Football Association officials, and Zain executives.

Zain offers KD 50,000 of prizes for athletes and fans per season, which is the biggest prize pool ever to be distributed in the Kuwaiti League's history. By dedicating cash prizes for athletes, the company seeks to encourage players to pursue excellence and elevate the league's performance.

Zain's cash prizes for athletes are as follows: Player of the Season Prize: KD 10,000, Player of the Round Prize: KD 500, Season's Top Scorer Prize: KD 5,000, Season's Best Goalkeeper Prize: KD 5,000, Season's Best Coach KD 3,000, and Season's Rising Star Prize: KD 2,000. A special committee has been formed in coordination with the Kuwait Football Association to outline the stan-

dards and criteria on which the winners are selected. The committee is membered by former Kuwaiti international players Saad Al Houti (as the committee's head), Wael Sulaiman, Osama Hussain, and Mohammed Benyaan.

Zain is the Official Partner and Sponsor of the KFA's competitions for the 2022-2026 seasons, including the Kuwaiti Premier League (Dawri Zain), the Zain First Division League, HH the Amir's Cup, HH the Crown Prince's Cup, and the KFA Cup (Zain Cup). Zain's role centers around three main areas: supporting athletes with cash prizes, launching social events and interacting with fans at stadiums, and an all-new surprise: the first-ever Fantasy

Football League in Kuwaiti football's history. These contributions and more go in line with the KFA's vision to further enrich the local football scene, given that it is the most beloved sports among Kuwaitis.

Zain firmly believes that the private sector has a vital and active role in developing the local sports and youth sectors, and it makes this belief a reality by sponsoring and supporting some of the biggest sports programs in the nation. This partnership with Kuwait's top football competition comes to strengthen the leadership role Zain plays in the local sports scene and is perfectly in line with the company's sustainability and social responsibility strategy towards the sports and youth sectors.

Panthers secure Stanley Cup final

MIAMI: Matthew Tkachuk scored a dramatic last-gasp goal to fire the Florida Panthers into the Stanley Cup final for only the second time in franchise history with a 4-3 win over the Carolina Hurricanes on Wednesday. Tkachuk ensured the Panthers will advance to the National Hockey League's championship series for the first time since 1996 after rifling home with just 4.3 seconds remaining to seal a 4-0 Eastern Conference finals sweep. Tkachuk's goal - his third game-winner of the series - was the final act of a pulsating contest at the FLA Live Arena in Sunrise.

Carolina, who had trailed 2-0 in the first period, thought they had done enough to force overtime after Jesper Fast leveled it at 3-3 with just over three minutes remaining. But Florida launched a furious late onslaught and deft play by Tkachuk led to his late winner amid incredible scenes. Earlier, Anthony Duclair got the Panthers' off to a dream start, firing the home side into a 1-0 lead after just 41 seconds following a goalmouth scramble. Carolina's problems went from bad to worse moments later when key defenseman Jacob Slavin was knocked out of the contest after a hit from Panthers forward Sam Bennett.

Slavin was attempting to play out from behind his own net when Bennett poleaxed him with a check that flattened the Carolina player. Slavin, whose head struck the boards as he crashed to the ice, attempted to get up but fell over before being helped off. He was subsequently ruled out of the remainder of the game with an upper body injury. Tkachuk then made it



FLORIDA: Sergei Bobrovsky #72 of the Florida Panthers celebrates with his teammates after defeating the Carolina Hurricanes in Game Four to win the Eastern Conference Final of the 2023 Stanley Cup Playoffs on May 24, 2023. - AFP

2-0 to the Panthers after 10min 23sec of the first period with a power play goal.

Carolina responded superbly and were thrown a lifeline after 13 minutes when Paul Stastny pulled a goal back, bundling a rebound after a long range effort from Brady Skjei. Teuvo Teravainen then put Carolina on level terms early in the second period,

guiding the puck past Sergei Bobrovsky for 2-2. Ryan Lomberg but the Panthers back in front and it looked as if the lead would hold until Fast's equalizer stunned the hosts before Tchapuk's sensational late winner. Florida will play either the Vegas Golden Knights or the Dallas Stars in the Stanley Cup final. The Golden Knights lead their series against Dallas 3-0. — AFP

Champions League final chaos leaves scars, one year on

PARIS: As Paris steps up preparations for the 2024 Olympics, memories of the chaos that marred last year's Champions League final in the French capital remain raw for supporters of the clubs involved. The game between Liverpool and Real Madrid at the Stade de France, in the northern Paris suburb of Saint-Denis, on May 28, 2022, was won 1-0 by the Spanish team. Yet the occasion was overshadowed by the fiasco outside, with kick-off delayed by 37 minutes as fans struggled to get into France's na-

tional stadium after police funneled them into overcrowded bottlenecks as they approached. They then fired tear gas towards thousands of supporters locked behind metal fences on the perimeter to the stadium. One year on, fans who were there remain traumatized by the experience. John Marquis, a Liverpool fan from Guernsey who had tickets to attend the match with his daughter, never made it inside the stadium. "It was after half-time when it really turned nasty," said Marquis, adding that he felt "the whoosh of a baton that missed my skull by millimeters".

'Life-changing'

He says he has not watched Liverpool since, and struggles with panic attacks and in crowded environments. "It has literally been life-changing," he said. "I have been diagnosed as suffering from PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder). "I no longer have the strength or ability to follow Liverpool FC. I have and will never watch Liverpool

FC again." Like many Liverpool fans, the experience at the Stade de France brought back memories for Marquis of the 1989 Hillsborough disaster, which cost the lives of 97 of the club's supporters. "Of course a lot of the people who were there (in Paris) were already at Hillsborough in '89 and it re-triggers obviously," Peter Scarfe, who survived that disaster but watched the Stade de France final on television, told AFP.

Scarfe called for people to be held responsible for the Paris chaos and said it was "frightening" that the same stadium will be the centrepiece of this year's Rugby World Cup and the upcoming Olympics. "What we didn't get 34 years ago was accountability," he said. "This time that's what people are pushing for. They want accountability. They want the world to recognize that there were huge mistakes made." The French authorities initially tried to blame Liverpool supporters and claimed an "industrial scale fraud" of fake tickets was the problem. — AFP

Wu, Zhang end China's 86-year French Open wait

PARIS: Twelve months ago, a despondent Wu Yibing was retiring with injury from a low-level clay court tournament in Italy, earning a meagre 530 euros (\$570) for his troubles. Fast-forward a year and 23-year-old Wu is his country's highest-ranked male player at 59 in the world and about to spearhead a landmark assault at the French Open where it has been 86 years since a Chinese man last played in the main draw. Wu will not be alone when the season's second major gets underway on Sunday as Zhang Zhizhen is also guaranteed a spot.

Shang Juncheng can make it three Chinese men in the tournament if he gets through the final qualifying round on Thursday. "The excitement in China around the top Chinese male players is palpable now and there is strong media interest linked to the breakthrough of these players on tour," ATP executive vice-president Alison Lee told AFP. Kho Sin-Khie and Choy Wai-Chuen were the last men to represent China in the French capital back in 1937. Long overshadowed by their female counterparts, Wu and Zhang have been racking up an impressive series of 'firsts'.

Wu was the first Chinese man to make the third round of the US Open in 2022 where it took world number one and defending champion Daniil Medvedev to stop him. He took his new-found celebrity status with good humor. "I'm a good-looking guy, I guess," he replied when told he was the hottest topic on Chinese social media. Earlier this year, Wu became the first Chinese player to win an ATP Tour title in Dallas. Unlike the small change he pocketed at Francavilla al Mare in Italy this time last year, Wu is guaranteed at least 69,000 euros (\$74,300) just by playing his first round at Roland Garros.

A US Open junior champion in 2017, Wu, the son of a boxer, was sidelined for the best part of three years from March 2019 to January 2022 with elbow, back, shoulder and wrist injuries. Covid lockdown deepened his gloom. However, he rapidly made up for lost time. In March 2022, he was 1,869 in the world; in April this year, he reached a career high of 55. Wu won his first ATP Tour-level match on clay in Rome last week and has already added two more in Geneva this week on his way to the quarter-finals. Zhang, 26, is currently ranked at 70 and has yet to win a main draw match in three attempts at the Slams. — AFP

Classifieds

Change of Name

We, Firoz Ahmed, holder of Indian Passport No. M3188091, issued in Kuwait on 22/11/2014 and Fathima Khatoon, holder of Indian Passport No. S9923284, issued in Kuwait on 08/11/2018, permanent address, No. 4089, 2nd cross, 2nd stage, Kumarswamy Layout, Bangalore - 5960078, Karnataka, India, declare that we have changed our minor son's name from Khidash Firoz Ahamed to Muhammad Omar, holding Indian Passport No. T6756273, issued in Kuwait on 20/08/2019 and Civil ID No. 315012501706, presently residing in block 11, street Yatrib Bldg. No. 14, Al Salmiya, Kuwait and permanent address in India, No. 4089, 2nd cross,

2nd stage, Kumarswamy Layout, Bangalore - 5960078, Karnataka, India. In all his dealings and documents, he will be known by the name of Muhammad Omar. (#3543) 26/05/2023

I, Md Forhad Hossain, holder of valid Bangladeshi Passport No. EK0911221, do hereby change my son's name to Sajid (given name) Forhad (surname), holder of valid Bangladeshi Passport No. EL0446996 for all future purposes. He will henceforth be known in the name Sajid Forhad and I also undertake to carry out this name change in all his documents (#3544) 26/05/2023

I, Geja, holder of Indian Passport No. P7110431, having permanent address Punjab, India - 144620, residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as Gurmej (given name) and Singh (surname). (#3541) 25/05/2023

I, Ajjj, S/o Saifuddin, Civil ID No. 281061504679, Passport No. Z3828425, hereby declare that I have changed my name as Aziz Arif S/o Saifuddin Arif. So from now in future I will be known by my new name: Aziz Arif, S/o Saifuddin Arif, Address: 107, Ward No.18, Saket Residency, Barwani, (M.P) - 451551, India. (#3542) 25/05/2023

I, Taher, holder of Indian Passport No. U9301842, issued in Jaipur on 04/03/2021 and Civil ID No. 306020902089, have changed my name Taher to Taher Companywala in all dealings and documents. I will be known by name of Taher (given name) and Companywala (surname) (#3539) 24/05/2023

I, Inus, S/o Mohammed Amin, holder of Indian Passport No. L-1434907, issued in Kuwait on 11-09-2013, permanent resident of B-sector, V-1-line, room no. 05, Cheeta Camp, Mumbai-400088, presently residing in Khaitan, Block-09, Street-30, Unit-1,

Building No.10, Kuwait will henceforth be known as Mohammed Yunus Mohammed Amin (given name) Shaikh (surname) as per documents. Objection(s), if any, may be forwarded to Embassy of India, State of Kuwait. (#3540) 24/05/2023

I, Rashida, holder of Indian Passport No. P5031442, issued in Jaipur on 27/09/2016 and Civil ID No. 281022207276, have changed my name Rashida to Rashida Companywala in all dealings and documents. I will be known by name of Rashida (given name) and Companywala (surname). (#3539) 24/05/2023