

ALKASS U17 UPDATES

DAY 03

FIRST DRAW OF THE TOURNAMENT: ASPIRE ACADEMY VS RANGERS FC 1-1

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ONE-ON-ONE: LAURIE ELLIS, HEAD COUCH OF RANGERS FC

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REAL MADRID PLAYERS UNWIND AT QATAR'S DUNES DESERT SAFARI AFTER EVENTFUL MATCHES



RECAP: 14.02.2025

On the second day of the Al Kass U-17 International Cup on 14th February 2025 saw two thrilling encounters featuring some of the tournament's strongest teams. The day started with an exciting clash between Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) and Real Madrid CF, followed by a high-intensity match between Al Ahly FC and Kashiwa Reysol.



Real Madrid CF vs Paris Saint-Germain F.C.:

The day began with a highly anticipated showdown between two football giants. The match kicked off at a rapid pace, with Real Madrid's forward, Bryan Gonçalves, opening the scoring just 10 minutes in, giving the Spanish side an early lead.

As the first half progressed, PSG pushed forward in search of an equalizer. Their persistence paid off in the closing moments before halftime when a VAR review awarded them a penalty. Although the initial attempt was saved, Real Madrid's goalkeeper, Jose Alberto, was ruled to have moved off his line too early, leading to a retake. PSG's No. 9, Romeo Garnier, calmly converted the second attempt, leveling the score at 1-1.

just minutes later, Garnier struck again in stoppage time, securing a 2-1 lead for PSG before the break. The second half saw strong performances from both teams, with Madrid pushing for an equalizer and PSG defending resolutely. However, neither side managed to add to the scoreline, resulting in a hard-fought 2-1 victory for the French club.

Al Ahly FC vs Kashiwa Reysol:

the second match of the tournament featured a competitive encounter between Egyptian powerhouse Al Ahly FC and Japanese club Kashiwa Reysol. Both teams approached the game with a strong tactical setup, seeking an early advantage.



RECAP: 14.02.2025

After a tense first half with limited clear-cut chances, the breakthrough finally came in the 56th minute when Kashiwa Reysol's No. 19, Takumi Suzuki, found the back of the net with a clinical finish, giving his team a crucial 1-0 lead.

Despite Al Ahly's relentless efforts to equalize, the Japanese side held firm defensively, effectively shutting down their opponent's attacking opportunities. With disciplined defending and well-coordinated teamwork, Kashiwa Reysol managed to preserve their lead until the final whistle, securing a narrow but well-earned victory.

This result further underlined the competitive nature of the tournament, setting the stage for more thrilling encounters in the coming matches.



MATCH 1: ASPIRE ACADEMY VS RANGERS FC

The third day of the Alkass International Cup kicked off with a match between Aspire Academy and Rangers Football Club. Aspire played in red, while Rangers played in blue. Early in the game, Aspire's player number 20, Javier Rubio, found the net around the 55th minute, giving his team the lead and boosting their momentum. However, as the first half neared its end, Alfie Hutchison of Rangers equalized, bringing the score to 1-1. The second half saw relentless efforts from both sides, with Rangers' goalkeeper, Jaden Millarvie, standing out for his exceptional saves against some of the most challenging shots. In the end, neither team managed to secure a win, and the match concluded in a 1-1 draw, earning each team one point.

"I WAS VERY HAPPY WITH THE TEAM PERFORMANCE, AND I KNEW IT WAS GOING TO BE A TOUGH MATCH, BUT THE TEAM WILL FIGHT TILL THE END TO QUALIFY FOR THE NEXT ROUND."

**- ALVARO MEJIA PEREZ
HEAD COACH OF ASPIRE ACADEMY**



PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS



PRESS CONFERENCE: ASPIRE ACADEMY VS RANGERS FC



At a post-match press conference, Aspire Academy Head Coach Alvaro Mejia Perez said he was pleased with his team's performance after scoring a draw against opponent Rangers Football Club at their second match in the tournament. Perez reiterated his team's great success at the second half. He added that the boys came to the pitch knowing that it was going to be a tough match, and vowed that Aspire Academy will fight until the end to qualify. Coach Perez noted that everything was still open and the team now looks forward to what happens in the next game. He went on to stress that the team's priority for now was to qualify for the next round.

Addressing the media, Rangers Football Club Head Coach Laurence Ellis said the match was a tough challenge for his team, which he said was also good for the boys to improve. Coach Ellis noted that the team had a good rhythm in the first half, but the second half had been a little bit more difficult with Aspire playing in a difficult level physically. Overall, the Scottish coach believes that the team was competitive in both games and are in a really strong position. He added that the players will give every ounce of energy to get the results needed to qualify for the next stage of the tournament.

MATCH 2: MOHAMMED VI VS SEATTLE SOUNDERS

The second game of the day saw American club Seattle Sounders face off against Moroccan club Mohammed VI. Seattle took an early lead in the 16th minute with a goal from Ashton Riggs, followed by a second from forward Omar Said Hassan in the 31st minute, making it 2-0. Near the end of the first half, Mohammed VI had a potential penalty opportunity, but after a VAR review, it was not awarded. The second half was intense, featuring multiple yellow cards and a red card for Mohammed VI captain Oualid Ibn Saleh. As the match neared its conclusion, Callum Lyons sealed Seattle's victory with a final goal, securing a 3-0 win.



***“WE WILL GIVE EVERYTHING WE CAN,
AND WE WILL GET POSITIVE RESULTS THE NEXT GAME.”***

- ETHAN O'NEILL

HEAD COACH OF SEATTLE SOUNDERS



PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS: MOHAMMED VI VS SEATTLE SOUNDERS



PRESS CONFERENCE: MOHAMMED VI VS SEATTLE SOUNDERS



Seattle Sounders Head Coach Ethan O'Neill sounded upbeat after a 3-0 win over Mohammed VI in their second match at the tournament. The US coach said the team got very good results and the players controlled large part of the game even though they didn't have the ball. O'Neill said he was proud of his players and believed they have a huge chance to get into the qualifying rounds.

On the other hand, Mohammed VI Head Coach Khalid Sekkat said his team also did the best they can, noting that their opponents were a little bit bigger than his players. Sekkat said the the team will correct their mistakes at the tournament and will try to improve their skills better. Still, the Moroccan coach believes the team presented a very good performance, and added that the boys will learn from all their mistakes to perform better in the next match.



ONE-ON-ONE: LAURIE ELLIS, HEAD COACH OF RANGERS FC

You won the 2019 Cup, was there any pressure from the team to coming to Qatar to win the tournament again?

We want to be competitive in every game, but we've got young players with us. Our team is a mix of under 16 and under 15 players. So, we put expectations on the boys to give their best, to work as hard as they possibly can, and to show their quality in the games. If that means we win, lose, or draw, and if they've given their best, we're delighted. But we can't come to a tournament like this, and put too much expectation on the ultimate result of winning the tournament. But we're here to compete in every game and we are here to make sure that we give ourselves a chance of winning.

How do you balance that as a coach, to motivate the boys towards victory while not putting extreme pressure on them, staying competitive but still having fun?

If we put too much pressure on them to win, they might change the decisions in games and the way they play together. They might be worried about the possibility of making a mistake, worried about the situation and feel more pressured. We try to remove the pressure from them so that they can play their normal game, they can feel free to repeat what we do back home and to just give the maximum effort to be the best player they can be. And then to help the other players around them as well.

How do you motivate your players after losing a game?

If we go through a difficult period back in Scotland where we lose a game or two, we have to return to reminding the players about our principles and what we expect from them. And we also remind them of situations when they've already done it, and that fills the players with confidence. We remind them that ok, this is just another game, and we go back on the pitch to repeat that.

Background: I have been working on professional football since I was 17. That's 28 years ago. I've been coaching professionally since I finished playing about 15 years ago. 15 years of professional coaching.

Describe to us your routines and disciplines for the team?

It's actually important that we always remember that they're children. And these boys are coming to the end of their youth development phase, and are now on the edge of becoming young professionals. So it's a really difficult period for them. Their bodies are changing, their minds are going through lots of different changes as they grow up. So we've got to always think about caring for the boys and nurturing them, and making sure they can trust us; and they know that everything that we are doing is within their interests. It's actually important that we follow a good structure and that they know that we are consistent in what we say, but we do it with a smile.





RANKING SCHEDULE: 15.02.2025

#	TEAM	PLAYED	WON	DRAW	LOSS	POINTS
1	 ASPIRE ACADEMY	2	1	1	0	4
2	 AL KHORAFIA	2	1	1	0	4
3	 AL SHARJA	2	1	0	1	3
4	 AL KHAYMA	2	0	0	2	0

PHOTO OF THE DAY



GROUP A		GROUP B	
	ASPIRE ACADEMY		REAL MADRID CF
	MOHAMMED VI FA		PARIS SAINT GERMAIN F.C.
	RANGERS FOOTBALL CLUB		AL AHLY FC
	SEATTLE SOUNDERS FC		KASHIWA REYSOL

DATE	NO.	TEAMS		KICK-OFF	
Thursday 13.02	1	Aspire Academy 	vs	Mohammed VI FA 	15:30
	2	Rangers Football Club 	vs	Seattle Sounders FC 	17:50
Friday 14.02	3	Real Madrid CF 	vs	Paris Saint-Germain F.C. 	15:30
	4	Al Ahly FC 	vs	Kashiwa Reysol 	18:00
Saturday 15.02	5	Aspire Academy 	vs	Rangers Football Club 	15:30
	6	Mohammed VI FA 	vs	Seattle Sounders FC 	18:00
Sunday 16.02	7	Real Madrid CF 	vs	Al Ahly FC 	15:30
	8	Paris Saint-Germain F.C. 	vs	Kashiwa Reysol 	18:00
Monday 17.02	9	Aspire Academy 	vs	Seattle Sounders FC 	15:30
	10	Mohammed VI FA 	vs	Rangers Football Club 	18:00
Tuesday 18.02	11	Real Madrid CF 	vs	Kashiwa Reysol 	15:30
	12	Paris Saint-Germain F.C. 	vs	Al Ahly FC 	18:00
POSITION PLAYOFF (8-5 Pos.)					
Wednesday 19.02	13	Group A Pos. 3	vs	Group B Pos. 3	15:30
	14	Group A Pos. 4	vs	Group B Pos. 4	18:15
SEMI-FINAL					
Thursday 20.02	15	Group A Pos. 1	vs	Group B Pos. 2	15:30
	16	Group B Pos. 1	vs	Group A Pos. 2	18:15
POSITION 4 & 3					
Saturday 22.02	17	Loser Game no. 15	vs	Loser Game no. 16	13:15
	FINAL				
	18	Winner Game no. 15	vs	Winner Game no. 16	16:00

