

ALKASS U17 UPDATES

FROM GROUPS TO GLORY
SEMIFINALS SET FOR ALKASS
INTERNATIONAL CUP

DAY 06



RECAP: 17.02.2025

Seattle Sounders secured a 1-0 victory over Aspire Academy, advancing to the semi-finals of the Alkass International Cup U-17. Early in the match, Omar Hassan's penalty was saved by Aspire's Ahmed Saber, but after a VAR review, the retake was successful, giving Hassan his third goal of the tournament. Despite both teams pushing for more in the second half, the score remained unchanged. Seattle's win ensures their spot in the semi-finals. Aspire's coach highlighted the importance of learning from both successes and setbacks, while Seattle's coach expressed pride in his team's resilience.



In a thrilling encounter, Mohammed VI Academy and Rangers FC battled to a 1-1 draw. Mohammed VI's captain, Ayman Ezzarky, opened the scoring in the 18th minute, but Rangers quickly responded through Kyle Glasgow just four minutes later. The match saw drama when Rangers were awarded a penalty, but Mohammed VI's goalkeeper, Yahya Errakani, made a crucial save to keep his side in the game. Despite both teams pushing for a winner, neither could find the back of the net, securing Rangers' spot in the knockout stages.



MATCH 1: REAL MADRID CF VS KASHIWA REYSOL

Under rainy conditions, the sixth day of the Alkass International Tournament began with an exciting clash between the Spanish U-17 club Real Madrid and Japan's Kashiwa Reysol. Raul Banica struck early, scoring the only goal of the first half. Kashiwa Reysol responded strongly in the second half, with Juki Uetake scoring an equalizer to bring the score to 1-1. Despite their efforts, Kashiwa Reysol couldn't score again, giving Real Madrid an advantage. This draw secured Real Madrid's spot in the semi-finals.

"THIS GAME PREPARED US FOR THE SEMI-FINALS, AND POTENTIALLY FOR THE FINAL."

*-ALVARO LOPEZ BERM
REAL MADRID HEAD COACH*



"IT'S REGRETTABLE TO DRAW IN TODAY'S MATCH, BUT IT WAS A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW OUR FOOTBALL TO THE WORLD."

*-TAKESHI WATANABE
KASHIWA REYSOL HEAD COACH*



PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS:



PRESS CONFERENCE: REAL MADRID CF VS KASHIWA REYSOL



Real Madrid Head Coach Alvaro LOPEZ BERMEJO addressed the media following the match, explaining the squad rotation strategy used throughout the tournament. He noted that all players had opportunities on the field as the coaching staff worked to identify the best lineup for the semifinal and potentially the final. The tournament, he emphasized, was not just about winning each match but also about refining the team's structure for the crucial knockout rounds.

Looking ahead to the next match against Seattle Sounders, the coach acknowledged the challenge ahead, describing the Sounders as a physically strong team that topped their group. He pointed out that some of the Seattle players are a year older, giving them a physical advantage, and predicted a tough battle for his side. However, he expressed confidence in his squad's ability to compete at the highest level.

Kashiwa Reysol Head Coach Takeshi WATANABE shared his disappointment over his team's performance. He admitted that while they had hoped for a win, they ultimately let the game slip away. Despite the setback, he saw the tournament as a valuable opportunity for his team to showcase their football on the international stage.

When asked whether facing a big club like Real Madrid affected his players mentally, he acknowledged that while Madrid is a globally recognized team, his squad did not let that intimidate them. He stressed that, at the youth level, all players are on similar footing, and if his team had performed at their best, they could have secured a victory.

Reflecting on the overall experience, the coach emphasized the physical toll the tournament had taken on his squad, noting that recovery would be essential before their next match against Aspire Academy. He remained optimistic, stating that the competition had been a valuable learning experience and would help prepare his players for future international tournaments.

MATCH 2: PARIS SAINT-GERMAIN F.C. VS ALAHLI FC

The second match of the day between PSG and Al Ahly started at a slow pace until the 33rd minute when Abdelaziz Said opened the scoring. In the second half, Al Ahly intensified their attacks, determined to secure a victory, backed by a passionate crowd that chanted tirelessly for the entire 80 minutes. Despite their relentless efforts, they were unable to score another goal. Then, in the 86th minute and six minutes into extra time, Noha Tiehi struck for PSG, leveling the score and securing a dramatic finish to the match.

“ THE TEAM I CONSIDER AN OPPONENT IS RANGERS. SO, I LOOK FORWARD TO THE NEXT GAME.”

-YANNICK DUMAS

PARIS SAINT-GERMAIN HEAD COACH



PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS:



PRESS CONFERENCE: PARIS SAINT-GERMAIN F.C. VS AL AHLY FC



Al Ahly FC despite not making it to the semi-finals are pleased with their performance, especially with the team's improvement throughout the tournament, said Head Coach Oussama Sayed Hassanein at a post-match press conference after scoring a draw against Paris Saint-Germain.

He added that the boys put in a great effort and really wanted to win. He admitted that the team had about three chances they could have converted into a goal. However, they're happy with how the team displayed itself against PSG.

Asked about their overall performance, Hassanein said in the first game the boys felt a little bit of nervousness coming into a big tournament and going up against big teams. But in the second match against Real Madrid, the team played a good game even though they lost that game, the team put on a great effort.

"We stuck to the game plan and we did what we could. And in this game, it's nothing less than that. We definitely gave it our all, and we tried our best to get the best result that we wanted," he added.



Also addressing the media, PSG Head Coach Yannick Dumas noted that the teams played a great match and his players faced a tough team. Dumas also stressed that taking part at the tournament was an opportunity to give the youngsters and the team a chance to prove themselves and get some minutes into the match.

Asked on which teams he considered their greatest opponents or are most likely to reach the championship, Dumas said, "I think a great team that we could pair up against are Rangers. Their style of play and being similar to English football is high level football, so I think it'll be a great matchup against them and we're gonna try and improve ourselves".

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE BLEACHERS

"I LOVE FOOTBALL, PLAYING IT AND WATCHING IT, THAT'S WHY I AM HERE TODAY TO SUPPORT KASHIWA REYSOL, EVEN THOUGH THE OTHER TEAM IS PLAYING VERY WELL, I WILL STILL SUPPORT MY TEAM."

*- HIMARI TAKATA
KASHIWA REYSOL FAN*

"I HAVE BEEN A DEVOTED AL AHLY FAN SINCE CHILDHOOD, STANDING BY THE TEAM THROUGH EVERY TRIUMPH AND CHALLENGE. NO MATTER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, WE COME TOGETHER AS A LOYAL GROUP, SUPPORTING OUR CLUB IN EVERY TOURNAMENT. OUR LOVE FOR AL AHLY RUNS DEEP, AND WE ARE ALWAYS READY TO FOLLOW THEM WHEREVER THEY GO. AL AHLY IS NOT JUST A TEAM—IT'S A PART OF WHO WE ARE. NO MATTER WHAT I HAVE GOING ON, I WILL DROP EVERYTHING TO WATCH OR ATTEND A GAME BECAUSE THIS CLUB IS IN MY HEART AND THE HEART OF EVERY FAN HERE."

*- OMAR
AL AHLY FC FAN*



ONE-ON-ONE: AL AHLY GOAL KEEPER, MOHAMMED EBEID ATEF ANWAR

Did you feel any pressure facing Real Madrid and PSG in your match up games?

"I was excited to play against Real Madrid as well as PSG and participate in Alkass Cup for the first time. I was very excited and wanted to win the cup for Al Ahly, but the team wasn't very lucky to win many points until now. But I've been improving throughout the tournament. And as I have been gaining experience from competing with different teams, I get more excited game after game".

How does it feel winning Best Player of the Match as a goalkeeper during your game against Real Madrid?

"I was concentrating about the team winning the game. I felt so good because I was saving too many attempts, about eight or nine times. But I wanted the team to win and gain more points to keep competing in the Cup; and I did what I can do. I wasn't too happy winning the award because the team lost the game. Here in Al Ahly, we all think about winning the whole game, not personal winning. But I felt somewhat happy because I won this trophy in a match against Real Madrid; and I want to thank our coach and the club administration for winning this award".

What are you most proud about your team?

"One of our teammates got a red card from the first 10 minutes in the game; and that made us fight even more. We tried as much as we can to gain more chances to get an attempt for a goal for us and to win the game. We kept fighting until the end; and until the last moment we hoped to score a goal or two but we could not. I want to thank our team for fighting until the last moment. We are sad for losing the match; but after each match in the night, we close this chapter and begin another chapter to win the next match and to be stronger than before".

How do you see yourself 10 years from now?

"I will work on myself to participate in the first team of Al Ahly Club. And my other big dream is to participate with the national team of Egypt and to be a very good player. Football is evolving day after day in Egypt. It is a very big tournament. It's very competitive and it's getting more full support".

Many young Egyptians and Middle Eastern young people look up to you. What's your advise to them to be a good athlete?

"To work on themselves first. Watch big matches, and be intentional about working on their weaknesses from childhood until they get bigger".





RANKING SCHEDULE: 16.02.2025



#	TEAM	PLAYED	WON	DRAW	LOSS	POINTS
1		3	2	1	1	7
2		3	1	1	1	4
3		3	1	1	1	4
4		3	0	1	2	5

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	4-1
	2	Rangers Football Club 	vs 	Seattle Sounders FC	2-0
Friday 14.02	3	Real Madrid CF 	vs 	Paris Saint-Germain F.C.	2-1
	4	Al Ahly FC 	vs 	Kashiwa Reysol	0-1
Saturday 15.02	5	Aspire Academy 	vs 	Rangers Football Club	1-1
	6	Mohammed VI FA 	vs 	Seattle Sounders FC	0-3
Sunday 16.02	7	Real Madrid CF 	vs 	Al Ahly FC	1-0
	8	Paris Saint-Germain F.C. 	vs 	Kashiwa Reysol	3-1
Monday 17.02	9	Aspire Academy 	vs 	Seattle Sounders FC	0-1
	10	Mohammed VI FA 	vs 	Rangers Football Club	1-1
Tuesday 18.02	11	Real Madrid CF 	vs 	Kashiwa Reysol	1-1
	12	Paris Saint-Germain F.C. 	vs 	Al Ahly FC	1-1
POSITION PLAYOFF (8-5 Pos.)					
Wednesday 19.02	13	Aspire Academy	vs	Kashiwa Reysol	15:30
	14	Mohammed VI FA	vs	Al Ahly FC	18:15
SEMI-FINAL					
Thursday 20.02	15	Seattle Sounders FC	vs	Real Madrid CF	15:30
	16	Paris Saint-Germain F.C.	vs	Rangers Football Club	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

