

DAILY NEWS

Saturday 09 Feb 2019



ASPIRE CLIMB HIGHER AS ROMA INSPIRE

ASPIRE ACADEMY 3 - 1 RANGERS FC

KASHIWA REYSOL 0 - 2 AS ROMA

ALKASS[®]
INTERNATIONAL CUP



HARD-EARNED VICTORIES SEND ASPIRE & ROMA INTO QUARTER-FINALS



Aspire Academy bounced back from their bad-tempered defeat by Raja Casablanca to stun Glasgow Rangers, thanks to two goals by Fahad Al-Abdulla.

The hosts, who had two players sent off in their opener, gave a much improved and more disciplined performance to win 3-1 against a Rangers side who had looked superb two days earlier when defeating Raja. Aspire took the lead when Al-Abdulla scored at the second attempt following Mekki Tombari's cross, and Abdulrahman Al-Abdulrahman doubled the advantage after a shocking back pass by Murray Miller.

Rangers pulled one back when Matt Yates netted his second goal of the tournament following great work by Arron Lyall on the wing but within minutes Aspire restored their two goal advantage after Al-Abdulla produced a nice turn and finish, with the ball going in off the upright post.

Roma became the first team in this year's tournament to win both of their group matches but the fact Kashiwa only lost by two goals means they will also progress to the quarter-finals, with 2018 champions PSG – the most successful club in the history of the competition with three wins - being eliminated.

Roma have been excellent so far in the tournament and must be considered among the favorites to lift the cup. Kashiwa, last year's beaten finalists, were the better team in the first half but Roma were much improved after the break with a fine shot by Nicola Zalewski.

Roma will now face the runners-up from Group D, while Kashiwa will take on the winners of that group. Real Madrid are currently top with four points, but Suwon Samsung could leapfrog them on goal difference when they take on Spartak Moscow on Saturday.

Views of the coaches

Fabio Cesar Montesin, Head Coach, Aspire Academy

"Congratulations to the boys. I'm very happy for them. It was a very good result. We were under pressure, because of the first game that we lost, so the only result we needed, was a victory and alhamdulillah, today we played a very good match with great intensity from the first minute.

"There is still room for improvement, but I am very happy. We need them to grow individually and become better as a team and I am sure they will grow further."

Shin Yamanaka, Head Coach, Kashiwa Reysol

"Roma were a very strong team. They played well and had the ball most of the time, while we were only defending. This is a tournament with a great atmosphere, and the level of competition is very high. We are doing our best to show what can we do, and we will be focusing more in the coming days to rise above in the quarter-finals."

Fabrizio Piccareta, Head Coach, AS Roma

"The first half was not easy for us but Kashiwa are a very good side. They have plenty of quality, they are a very good possession-based team. We changed our approach in the second half and we deserved the win, as we were much more in control. I am very happy for my players.

"The organization here, the set-up, the hospitality, the facilities, everything is absolutely top-class. This is the best environment I have ever been to in my life and I worked in good environment, in England and other countries, but this is something else, unbelievable indeed. Aspire Academy is a joy for anyone working in football."



DEVELOPING A WINNING MENTALITY FROM A YOUNG AGE

need to play counter-attack, they have to know how; if they need to play a positional game, they have to know how; if they have to play directly, they have to know how; and if they have to defend in a high block, they have to know how. We give them all the tools that they need to do that."

Real showed plenty of determination in both of their group games, keeping a spirited Spartak Moscow side at bay in the second half of their opening match to hold on for a 3-2 win, and then displaying a never say die attitude to grab a late equaliser against South Korean side Suwon Samsung.

Playing for a club like Real Madrid, even at Under 17 level, brings extra pressure for young players but the coaches do their best to give them the qualities they need to cope with any situation.

Gomez added: "I'm not sure if pressure is the right word, but of course we are at a club where we are expected to win. In the youth teams, we need to help them evolve them, we need to prepare them, but we cannot forget in which club we are that by its nature needs to win every single game that we play.

"Whether you train the Under 8 boys, the Under 17s or the first team, always in this club you have to win. But I think that the players enjoy that responsibility, and it prepares them to play at professional level. They will want to win every single game. They will need to play with that idea, with that pressure if you want to use that word. I prefer to describe it as winning mentality."

Real's first team have lacked that winning touch this season, possibly missing the goal scoring prowess of Ronaldo, but Gomez will be hoping his squad can take some silverware back to Madrid next week.

Real Madrid have shown they know what is required to win the Alkass International Cup, having done so in 2017, and of course the Spaniards are among the world's most successful clubs at senior level.

The La Liga outfit are one of the most glamorous clubs in the world, so few players would find it easy to turn down the opportunity to join them, and opposition teams always raise their game when facing Los Blancos.

Real fans have become accustomed to seeing some of the world's greatest players wearing their colors. From Alfredo Di Stefano and Ferenc Puskas in the 1950s to the likes of Hugo Sánchez, Zinedine Zidane, David Beckham, Cristiano Ronaldo in more recent times, and Gareth Bale and Karim Benzema in the current team, Real Madrid have a long history of attracting the very best.

One of their current squad, central midfielder Oscar Rodriguez, twice played at the Alkass International Cup in 2014 and 2015 and he totally ran the show with some superb performances.

Another current Real player, Brahim Diaz, also played here in 2014 - albeit not in the white of Real. Diaz, said to have the dribbling skills of Lionel Messi, had just joined Manchester City from Malaga when he lined up at Aspire, but he has recently signed for Real and great things are expected from him.

Zidane's sons Enzo and Luca have also played here, with contrasting fortunes. Enzo was sent off after just nine minutes against Aspire Football Dreams in 2013 but Luca helped Real to the final 12 months later, when he was skipper of the side that lost to Aspire International in the showpiece.

Whether there are any future 'Galácticos' - Spanish for galactics, referring to superstars - in the Real Madrid Under 17 side currently playing in the Alkass tournament remains to be seen, but there are seven internationals in their squad and they have shown glimpses of quality so far in the tournament.

Pau Aran and Icelandic teenager Andri Gudjohnsen, whose father Eidur played for Real's arch rivals Barcelona, have already showcased their talent during this tournament and their neat build-up play and tidy passing suggests they are already being taught the 'Real' way to play football.

Manuel Fernandez Gomez, Head Coach of the Real Under 17 side, said: "The Real Madrid style is that a player can adapt to whatever the game demands. What we try to give them in training is the resources that they need, depending on the game's demands. We train concepts, both defensive and offensive, that are useful for them in the field.

"At Real Madrid, we prepare our players to play different models of the game. If they

ASPIRE HIT THE RIGHT NOTES WITH VICTORY OVER RANGERS

Aspire Academy claimed a splendid 3-1 win against a highly fancied Glasgow Rangers team who many have tipped to go all the way at Al Kass 2019.

Aspire had made two enforced changes from their first game, a 1-0 loss to Raja Casablanca in which they finished with nine players. Fahad Al-Abdulla and Abdalla Yousif started in place of the suspended Mostafa Kadira and Mohamed Aiaash this time round.

Meanwhile, Rangers had made three changes, with the hugely impressive Nathan Young-Coombes rested along with Adam Devine and keeper Lewis Budinauckas.

Aspire's pacey winger Mekki Tombari caught the eye early on with a series of lung-bursting runs down the wing, while Khalid Bin Sabaa saw plenty of the ball and showed some deft touches.

And, on 15 minutes, Tombari got in behind the Rangers defence down the right and crossed for midfielder Fahad Al-Abdulla to slot home on the rebound, after his first effort was saved.

Minutes later, and it could have been two, when Naif Alhadrami was sent clear to go one-on-one with keeper Jay Hogarth, but his shot was easily saved.

For Rangers, Kai Kennedy was one again pulling the strings in central midfield, his combination of power and precise passing making him difficult to close down.

The local supporters were in fine voice, with traditional call and response songs rolling down from the stands, accompanied by the percussive rhythms of a tabla drummer. And,



on the field, the Aspire youngsters were also very much on song. Just after the restart, they had a chance to extend their lead when Abdulrahman Al-Abdulrahman broke away down the right and supplied an inviting cross for Bin Sabaa, but his first time volley was miscued.

The game began to open up, and Young-Coombes – on as a substitute for the injured Ross McCausland - was presented with a great chance to level matters for Rangers, but he was off-balance and fired wide when he might have done better. However, his presence in the Scottish front line was beginning to trouble Aspire's defenders.

Chances continued to stack up for both sides, with Al-Abdulrahman skewing horribly wide when the ball fell to him unmarked on the edge of the area. However, just after the hour mark, he atoned for this miss to send the home support wild.

Murray Miller was put under pressure in a central position 30 yards out, and he played a backpass straight to Al-Abdulrahman, who was loitering with intent on the edge of the box. The Qatari forward gratefully accepted the gift, sliding the ball under keeper Hogarth to put Aspire two up.

With 20 minutes remaining, Kennedy had a golden chance to reduce the deficit for Rangers, but Aspire keeper Yousef Balideh saved from close range to maintain his side's two-goal advantage.

Nathan-Coombes continued to threaten, and won a free kick on the left-hand corner of the area with 10 minutes remaining. Christopher McKee's brilliant effort missed the target by a matter of centimetres.

Rangers were knocking on the door, and got a goal back soon after, when Arron Lyall got away down the right and cut back for fellow substitute Matt Yates to chest down and plant a fine effort into the roof of the net.

Suddenly a draw looked on the cards but, incredibly, Fahad Al Abdulla restored Aspire's two-goal lead straight from the restart in spectacular fashion. His superb turn and shot from the edge of the area went in off the post to spark delirium in the stands.

The result means that both sides progress into the knockout stages, and they have each shown enough so far to suggest they could go deep into the tournament at Al Kass 2019.

ASPIRE ACADEMY

GK Yousef Balideh
DF Abdalla Yousif
MF Faisal Azadi (C)
FW Abdulrahman Al-Abdulrahman
MF Naif Alhadhrani
FW Mekki Tombari
DF Khaled Bin Sabaa
DF Muhammad Zidan
DF Abdulla Al-Sulaiti
MF Fahad Al-Abdulla
MF Jassem Abdulsallam



RANGERS FC

GK Jay Myles Hogarth
DF David Kyle Hogarth (C)
DF Harris David O'Connor
MF Ciaran Dickson
FW Christopher Colin McKee
MF Kai Alexander Kennedy
MF Murray Joseph Miller
DF Leon John Phillips Thomson
DF Adam Gary Devine
FW Ross Leslie Alan McCausland
FW Charlie Steven Allen



MAN OF THE MATCH

Yousef Balideh, Aspire Academy
MVP of the Match



THE EXPERTS SAY...

Rhodri Williams -
Al Kass Analyst

Roma look like a complete team, they look like they have been together for a long time. I think they came here with that intention of pushing the big sides like Real Madrid all the way. There's just something about them. I like the way they're very comfortable on the ball. Kashiwa Reysol are a very difficult side to play against and really they dealt with them a lot easier than I thought they would. Kashiwa is probably one of the best sides we've seen at this tournament keeping the possession of the ball and passing it very quickly. We've seen Kashiwa Reysol pulled teams apart in previous years. They got to the final last year. They are a very good team.

MATCH SCORE



X



3

1

ASPIRE ACADEMY

RANGERS FC



DARREN
RANGERS SUPPORTER

"I am from Scotland and came here to support Rangers today. I have been living in Qatar for four years and every year I look forward to the Al Kass International Cup because the Scottish love a good game of football and the quality of the games and players in this tournament is very impressive. This tournament gets better every year. It was a good game today. Unfortunately, our team lost but Aspire played very strong game and the better team won today. Our boys are having hard luck this time but if they put in a bit more effort, I am sure they can give the other teams a run for their money. We are very proud of our boys and it's great to see the Scottish community in Qatar coming to the matches to support our boys and this tournament in uniting the diversity in Qatar. I hope Rangers score victories in the upcoming matches so the Scottish in Qatar can celebrate together. Go Rangers!"

"WE ARE VERY HAPPY WITH THE OUTCOME OF THE GAME TODAY AND ASPIRE'S PERFORMANCE. BOTH OF US CAME HERE TO SUPPORT ASPIRE AND ESPECIALLY OUR FRIEND, HAMOOD IN JERSEY NUMBER 19 AND HE WAS QUITE IMPRESSIVE IN TODAY'S GAME."

MELISSA AND KAREEN
ASPIRE SUPPORTERS

"ALL OF US ARE OVERWHELMED WITH THE GAME ASPIRE PLAYED TODAY AND THEIR FANTASTIC VICTORY. AL KASS INTERNATIONAL CUP IS HAPPENING AT THE PERFECT TIME AS QATAR IS IN A FOOTBALL FRENZY RIGHT NOW ESPECIALLY AFTER THE HISTORIC PERFORMANCE OF OUR CHAMPIONS, AL-ANNABI IN THE ASIAN CUP."

HAMAD
ASPIRE SUPPORTER



ROMA WIN CONFIRMS PSG'S EXIT FROM THE TOURNAMENT

Roma clinched top spot in Group B with a two-goal victory over last year's runners-up Kashiwa Reysol, although their second goal didn't come until the very last action of the match.

The result suited both teams as Kashiwa still progress from the group stages at the expense of reigning champions PSG, due to the three-time winners crashing 5-2 against Roma two days earlier.

It was a game of two halves as Japanese side Kashiwa were the better side in the opening 45 minutes, but after the break Roma began to show the class that had torn PSG to pieces.

Kashiwa started brightly, with Seitoamanueru Omori (twice), Naito Saito and Takuma Otake all trying their luck at goal.

For all the pressure by Kashiwa, it was Roma who almost took the lead after half-an-hour when Riccardo Ciervo cut in from the right and fired a left-foot shot beyond the keeper's outstretched hand but it bounced back off the underside of the bar.

Kashiwa enjoyed 56% possession in the first half but Roma looked much brighter in the second half and Matteo Cancellieri got plenty of power behind a long-range effort but it was comfortably saved.

Ten minutes into the second half Roma took the lead when Nicola Zalewski received the ball out on the left and he burst into penalty area before unleashing a low drive that gave the keeper no chance.

Cancellieri had another opportunity on goal midway through the second half but his free-kick failed to trouble the keeper.

Kashiwa had netted a last-gasp equalizer against PSG in their opening match but any hopes of snatching anything from this game disappeared when they conceded a penalty in the fourth and final minute of added on time.

The decision, made with the assistance of VAR, was given for handball and Daniel Tueto Fotso stepped up to give Massato Sasaki no chance with his spot-kick.

The result was no less than Roma deserved with Tommaso Milanese pulling the strings in midfield, and they can now look forward to Monday's quarter-finals with confidence.

KASHIWA REYSOL

GK Masato Sasaki
DF Hayato Fujimoto
DF Ibuki Toda (C)
MF Sohki Tamura
DF Fumito Okihara
FW Seitoamanueru Omori
DF Takuma Otake
MF Naito Saito
FW Shun Nakajima
MF Daichi Sugawara
DF Hayato Tanaka



AS ROMA

GK Pietro Boer
FW Matteo Tomassini
DF Mattia Ciucci
MF Filippo Tripi (C)
DF Samuele Suffer
MF Andrea Astrologo
MF Edoardo Bove
MF Tommaso Pantaleo Milanese
FW Riccardo Ciervo
FW Matteo Cancellieri
FW Vittorio Alberto Agostinelli



MAN OF THE MATCH

Tommaso Milanese , AS Roma
MVP of the Match



THE EXPERTS SAY...

Nick Summerbee –
Al Kass Analyst

Rangers changed it a bit but they've already qualified so they're relaxed a little bit. I don't think they realized how good Aspire were. Aspire didn't play so well in their first game but they came back and they're back to the best. I thought Mekki Tombari and Fahad Al-Abdullah were fantastic. Aspire were back to their best, they were back to moving the ball quickly, creating opportunities, not giving Rangers any space or time at all. It was a good performance. Both sides will learn from this. Aspire won't play like they did in the first game and Rangers now realize they have to bring their A-game to every game.

MATCH SCORE



X



0

KASHIWA REYSOL

2

AS ROMA

Qatar

الوعد ٢٠٢٢
See you in 2022

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See You in 2022

The Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy (SC) is well advanced in the planning and delivery of host country operations for the 2022 FIFA World Cup Qatar™.

The SC is also making rapid progress in building stadiums and other infrastructure, and ensuring the tournament and its preparations contribute to Qatar's sustainable development.

From the stadiums where football history will be made to infrastructure, accommodation and transport, the SC and our stakeholders are making sure that Qatar is ready to welcome the world in 2022.

We aim to showcase Qatar's unique identity through a 2022 FIFA World Cup™ which connects people in a shared celebration of football and our region. Every fan will have an unforgettable and seamless experience in Qatar, feeling at home as they, their friends and families explore an amazing world of experiences with hospitality at its heart.

Hosting the tournament is already creating a lasting legacy. Through infrastructure, education, football for development, support for regional innovation and a dedication to improving workers' welfare, our efforts are forging a better future for Qatar, the Middle East, Asia and the world.



GAMES SCHEDULE

| GROUP STAGE | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------|---|------------------------|---|--------------------------|---|-------------------|
| GROUP A | | GROUP B | | GROUP C | | GROUP D | |
|  | Aspire Academy |  | Paris Saint Germain FC |  | FC Bayern München |  | Real Madrid CF |
|  | Rangers FC |  | AS Roma |  | Altinordu FK |  | FC Spartak Moscow |
|  | Raja Club Athletic |  | Kashiwa Reysol |  | Etoile Sportive Du Sahel |  | Suwon Samsung F.C |
| DATE | NO. | TEAMS | | TIME | VENUE | | |
| Mon. 4 Feb | 1 | Paris Saint Germain FC | 1-1 | Kashiwa Reysol | 16:35 | 5 | |
| | 2 | Aspire Academy | 0-1 | Raja Club Athletic | 18:45 | 5 | |
| Tue. 5 Feb | 3 | FC Bayern München | 2-3 | Etoile Sportive Du Sahel | 16:35 | 4 | |
| | 4 | FC Spartak Moscow | 2-3 | Real Madrid CF | 18:45 | 4 | |
| Wed. 6 Feb | 5 | Raja Club Athletic | 0-3 | Rangers FC | 16:35 | 5 | |
| | 6 | AS Roma | 5-2 | Paris Saint Germain FC | 18:45 | 5 | |
| Thu. 7 Feb | 7 | Altinordu FK | 1-0 | Etoile Sportive Du Sahel | 16:35 | 4 | |
| | 8 | Real Madrid CF | 1-1 | Suwon Samsung F.C | 18:45 | 4 | |
| Fri. 8 Feb | 9 | Aspire Academy | 3-1 | Rangers FC | 16:35 | 5 | |
| | 10 | Kashiwa Reysol | 0-2 | AS Roma | 18:45 | 5 | |
| Sat. 9 Feb | 11 | FC Bayern München | VS | Altinordu FK | 16:35 | 4 | |
| | 12 | Suwon Samsung F.C | | FC Spartak Moscow | 18:45 | 4 | |
| POSITIONS 9 - 12 | | | | | | | |
| Sun. 10 Feb | 13 | Position 9 | VS | Position 10 | 16:35 | 4 | |
| | 14 | Position 11 | | Position 12 | 19:00 | 4 | |
| QUARTER FINALS | | | | | | | |
| Sun. 10 Feb | 15 | 1st Group A | VS | 2nd Group C | 16:35 | 5 | |
| | 16 | 1st Group C | | 2nd Group A | 19:00 | 5 | |
| Mon. 11 Feb | 17 | 1st Group B | VS | 2nd Group D | 16:35 | 5 | |
| | 18 | 1st Group D | | 2nd Group B | 19:00 | 5 | |
| PLAY OFFS POSITIONS 8 - 5 | | | | | | | |
| Tue. 12 Feb | 19 | Loser Game No. 15 | VS | Loser Game No. 18 | 16:35 | 4 | |
| | 20 | Loser Game No. 16 | | Loser Game No. 17 | 19:00 | 4 | |
| SEMI FINALS | | | | | | | |
| Wed. 13 Feb | 21 | Winner Game No. 15 | VS | Winner Game No. 18 | 16:35 | 5 | |
| | 22 | Winner Game No. 16 | | Winner Game No. 17 | 19:00 | 5 | |
| PLAY OFFS POSITIONS 8 - 5 | | | | | | | |
| Thu. 14 Feb | 23 | Loser Game No. 19 | VS | Loser Game No. 20 | 15:00 | 4 | |
| | 24 | Winner Game No. 19 | | Winner Game No. 20 | 17:45 | 4 | |
| POSITIONS 3 - 4 & GRAND FINAL | | | | | | | |
| Fri. 15 Feb | 25 | Loser Game No. 21 | VS | Loser Game No. 22 | 15:00 | 5 | |
| | 26 | Winner Game No. 21 | | Winner Game No. 22 | 17:45 | 5 | |