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Sinner surges into last 16 on 'great day' for happy couple

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SPORT



EQUESTRIAN

Seabra triumphs in CSI4* Grand Prix, Qatari riders shine in Doha Tour

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HE SHEIKH JOAAN BIN HAMAD AL THANI RIFLE DAY

Aafoor triumphs as jockey Mazur claims four wins

On an action-packed 10-race card day, Abbes retains the HE Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani Trophy



HE Sheikh Hamad bin Joaan al-Thani presented the trophies to connections of Aafoor after the colt won the HE Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani Rifle at the Al Rayyan Racecourse yesterday. QREC chairman Issa bin Mohammed al-Mohannadi was also present at the award ceremony. **PICTURES: Juhaim**

By Sports Reporter
Doha

Jockey Szczepan Mazur enjoyed a four-win 'amazing' afternoon yesterday as he guided Al Jeryan Stud's Aafoor to HE Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani Rifle triumph by half a length at the Al Rayyan Racecourse yesterday.

On an action-packed 10-race card day, Abbes retained the HE Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani Trophy (Gr 3 PA) for the four-year-old+ Purebred Arabians for the third year in a row.

In the feature race, Aafoor – the four-year-old son of Qurbaan trained by M H K al-Attayah – delivered an incredibly powerful and determined performance in the final strides, taking on some of the strongest horses, to land the coveted title and give a third win on the day to the owner and the trainer and a fourth to Mazur. "It was an amazing day as I won the four races on the card," said Mazur.

The Polish jockey was all praise for the colt for his speed in the 2200, race for the four-year-old+ thoroughbreds. "Aafoor travelled very well in the last stretch of the race. Basically, I sit behind the best horse (Haunted Dream). I followed him all the time, which was actually the best for me as it was the horse to beat, which I did at the end, and it was just the right call," he said.

Mazur notched his third win of the day, when he guided Al Buraq to a thrilling win in the HE Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani Trophy for Local Thoroughbreds, completing a double for Al Jeryan Stud and trainer M H K al-Attayah.

A patient, precise ride from Mazur also saw Al Falah Stud's Phoebus make an impressive impact on Qatar debut, winning the HE Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani



HE Sheikh Hamad bin Joaan al-Thani with the connections of Abbes, which won the HE Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani Trophy for the four-year-old+ Purebred Arabians.

Trophy for three-year-old thoroughbreds in just his third career start. The colt struck in the home straight to secure the win.

Mazur claimed his first win of the day when he guided Al Jeryan Stud AJS Agadir to victory in the Local Purebred Arabian Novice Cup for four-year-old+. The five-year-old mare left her competition in the dust, storming to an impressive victory by 8½ lengths after making a stunning sweep in the home straight, winning the cup.

Wathnan Racing-owned and Hamad al-Jehani-trained Haunted Dream came second and last year's winner Simca Mille of Wathnan Racing, ridden by Maxime Guyon finished third.

HE Sheikh Hamad bin Joaan al-Thani crowned the winners in the presence of HE Issa bin Mohammed al-Mohannadi, QREC chairman.

In the penultimate race of the day, champion Abbes retained the HE Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani Trophy for the third year in a row. Wathnan Racing-owned

and Alban de Mieulle-trained the eight-year-old grey horse clinched the victory by a short head from stablemate Raed, not only securing a one-two for the owner and trainer, but also adding their fourth win on the day. With the win jockey James Doyle also completed a quick-fire double.

Doyle was earlier in the winners' enclosure, when he guided Wathnan Racing's Lippo De Carrere to HE Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani Trophy for the Purebred Arabians (four-year-olds) victory as the 4-year-old bay colt mesmerised the racegoers on Qatar debut with the commanding win in the colours of Wathnan Racing. The son of Al Mourtajez, saddled by Alban de Mieulle, surged through the home straight to overtake the leading pack and was eased to a very comfortable victory, completing a remarkable treble for the connections.

Sheikh Hamad also crowned the winners of the traditional Al Sabiq races in presence of QREC Chairman al-Mohannadi. The



Szczepan Mazur pilots Aafoor to HE Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani Rifle victory at the Al Rayyan Racecourse yesterday.



James Doyle guides Abbes to HE Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani Trophy.

first four placed riders were Hamad Meshlesh al-Khayareen aboard Malzoom, Abdulrahman Abdullah al-Hajri aboard Burkan Al Zaeem, Rashid Mohamed Abdulla aboard AJS Saddam and Abdulla Hezam al-Saaq al-Marri aboard Nasser Al Meydan.

RESULTS

23rd Al Rayyan Meeting - HE Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani Rifle Day
WINNERS: (Horse, Trainer, Jockey)
1 - HE Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani Rifle - Thoroughbred (Class 1) (Far Bend) Aafoor, M H K al-Attayah, Szczepan Mazur
2 - H E Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani Trophy (Gr3 PA) Abbes, Alban de Mieulle, James Doyle
3 - H E Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani Trophy, Purebred Arabians, 4YO Lippo De Carrere, Alban de Mieulle, James Doyle
4 - H E Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani Trophy, Purebred Arabians, 4YO+ RB Mary Lylah, Alban de Mieulle, Maxime

Guyon
5 - H E Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani Trophy General Panic, Ibrahim Saeed al-Malki, Tomas Lukasek
6 - H E Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani Trophy, Local Thoroughbreds Al Buraq, M H K al-Attayah, Szczepan Mazur
7 - H E Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani Trophy, Thoroughbred Open Sprint Phoebus, Hamad Al Jehani, Szczepan Mazur
8 - H E Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani Trophy, Local Thoroughbreds Ballymount Boy, Alban de Mieulle, Maxime Guyon
9 - Local Purebred Arabian Novice Cup AJS Agadir, M H K al-Attayah, Szczepan Mazur
10: Local Purebred Arabian Premium Maiden Cup Deauville, Mohamed Khaled Elahmed, Alberto Sanna

FOOTBALL

Al Wasl overcome Al Sadd to lift Qatar-UAE Super Shield

By Sports Reporter
Doha

Nicolas Gimenez scored the lone goal as Al Wasl defeated Al Sadd to win the Qatar-UAE Super Shield at the Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium yesterday.

The midfielder's 54th minute strike proved to be just enough as the Emiratis won the prestigious title of the bilateral tournament. The two teams appeared to be evenly matched, with clear-cut chances few and far between and with no room for any errors.

However, Al Sadd began to grow into the game with each passing minute, and they could have translated their dominance into goals earlier in the first half were they more clinical in the final third. Al Wasl, the UAE league defending champions, gave the home side a huge scare in the 41st minute

when Ali Saleh almost got the opener after a sweeping run that took the intervention of Al Sadd's defender Pedro Miguel, who stretched to the fullest, to block what was an undeniable goal-bound attempt from the Emirati winger.

Al Sadd came into the second half determined as it was evident in their more purposeful play upfront as they kept Al Wasl's defence line on their toes.

But visitors eventually opened the scoring in the 54th minute through Gimenez, whose pinpointed right-footed rocket of a shot from 25 yards out, from an assist by Haris Seferovic, sailed straight into goalkeeper Saad al-Sheeb's net.

The Wolves had an opportunity of restoring parity five minutes later after a flurry of attempts at the opposition goal, but the visitors defence stood solid as they staved off the attacks. Another opportunity came begging in the 66th minute after Miguel's overhead crossed perfectly

located substitute Hassan al-Haydos, but Al Wasl's goalkeeper Khaled al-Senani's reflexes were sharp enough to stave off the thumping header from the Al Sadd forward.

The hosts continued to pile pressure on Al Wasl in search of the much-needed equaliser and Rafa Mújica, who came in for Cristo Gonzalez, painfully saw his long-range shot bounce off the crossbar on its way out in the 78th minute.

Al Wasl's Senani was on hand to make a one-arm brilliant save from a set piece by Ahmed Suhail in four minutes of added time to keep his team in the lead and to the disappointment of the Al Sadd's stands, who never relented in their support of their side till the final whistle.

Al Sadd were later reduced to ten men three minutes later after al-Haydos was given the marching orders for his part in a brawl that broke out towards the end of the match.



Al Wasl players celebrate after winning the Qatar-UAE Super Shield at the Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium in Doha. **PICTURE: Noushad Thekkayil**

Chebli shines in the opening round of Qatar National Sprint



Lebanese driver Mansour Chebli secured two wins while Qatar's Maher Serre and Nadim Ziade each secured podium finishes twice during the opening round of the 2025 Qatar National Sprint yesterday, organised by the Qatar Motor & Motorcycle Federation. The season opener saw Chebli winning both the O1 and P1 classes. Ziade won the P2 class and also came third in the P1 class behind Chebli and second-placed Ihar Selivonchyk. Serre secured his victory in the O3 class before finishing third in the P2 class where Ziade triumphed and Aleksander Jokic finished second. In the O2 class, Amro Abdulla emerged victorious, while Francesco Fornaciari topped the podium in the P3 class. Melina Jokic made her mark by winning the women's event in the opening round. The second round will take place on February 15.

CRICKET

Noman, Sajid help Pakistan dominate WI in spin battle

'We don't want the lead to go over 250 because it's a spin-favouring surface'

AFP
Multan, Pakistan

Noman Ali and Sajid Khan guided Pakistan to a strong position against the West Indies after another spin-dominated second day's play in the opening Test in Multan yesterday.

The spin duo shared nine wickets between them to dismiss the West Indies for 137 in reply to the home team's 230 all out.

By the close, Pakistan stretched their lead to 202 by scoring 109-3 in their second innings, with Kamran Ghulam and Saud Shakeel batting on nine and two respectively when bad light ended play 25 minutes early.

Left-arm spinner Jomel Warrican (2-17) dismissed Muhammad Hurraira for 29 after an opening stand of 67 and Babar Azam for a second failure, trapped leg-before for five. Skipper Shan Masood looked solid for his 52, hitting two sixes and two fours, before Warrican ran him out after attempting a quick single. "The weather is foggy so if we have continuous play and take our lead over 300 then we can win this Test," said Sajid.

"It's great to bowl with Noman, who always guides me."

Warrican wants the target to be under 250. "Obviously we don't want to get the lead go over 250 because it's a spin-favouring surface," said Warrican.

"We need a good comeback in batting the second time around on this pitch."

The dry and grassless Multan pitch has already produced 23 wickets in six sessions - 19 on day two - even though two-and-



Pakistan's Noman Ali (right) celebrates after taking the wicket of West Indies' Kevin Sinclair (centre) during the second day of the first Test at the Multan Cricket Stadium in Multan yesterday. (AFP)

a-half hours were lost on day one and another 30 minutes on Saturday because of poor visibility.

Noman grabbed 5-39 for his seventh five-wicket haul in Tests while Sajid finished with 4-65 to dismiss the West Indies after lunch in a first innings that lasted just 25.2 overs.

Noman and Sajid, who shared 39 of the 40 wickets in the last two Tests against England in Pakistan's 2-1 series win last year, were once again unplayable. Sajid opened the bowling and removed Mikyle Louis (one), Keacy Carty

(0), Kraigg Brathwaite (11) and Kavem Hodge (four) in his first three overs. Noman then further jolted the tourists with another four wickets to leave them tottering on 66-8. The tailenders showed more resistance, with number 10 batsman Warrican unbeaten on 31 and Gudakesh Motie adding 19.

Jayden Seales was the last wicket to fall for 22. Seales hit three sixes before holing out off spinner Abrar Ahmed. Earlier, Warrican took 3-69 as Pakistan lost their last six wickets for 43 runs after

resuming at 143-4. Shakeel top-scored for Pakistan with 84 off 157 deliveries, including six boundaries, while keeper Mohammad Rizwan added 71. Shakeel added an invaluable 141 for the fifth wicket with Rizwan, lifting Pakistan from a precarious 46-4 on day one.

BRIEF SCORES: Pakistan 230 (Shakeel 84, Rizwan 71, Seales 3-27) **and 109 for 3** (Masood 52, Hurraira 29, Warrican 2-17) **lead West Indies 137** (Warrican 31, Noman 5-39, Sajid 4-65) **by 202 runs.**

GOLF

Hillier holds narrow lead as McIlroy hopes for final-round surge

AFP
Dubai

New Zealand's Daniel Hillier birdied his last two holes to edge ahead by one shot going into the final round of the Dubai Desert Classic yesterday, while four-time champion Rory McIlroy was seven strokes off the lead. At the Majlis course of Emirates Golf Club, Hillier enjoyed a three-shot lead midway through the back nine as swirling wind made for tough scoring conditions.

However, the world No.223 made three successive bogeys from the 13th to 15th holes to open the doors for his rivals before the strong finish took him to 13-under par 203 aggregate.

"It was a grind. I figured it was going to be that at the start of the day with all that wind," said Hillier. "It was tough but I enjoyed it out there and looking forward to having a crack at it tomorrow... A win would be life-changing."

The 26-year-old Hillier served notice with two wins on the Challenge Tour before his triumph at the 2023 British Masters. But 2024 was a difficult year as he went without a single top-10 finish in 27 starts.

McIlroy is looking to become the first player to win the same tournament three years in a row on the DP World Tour since Ernie Els at the Heineken Classic (2002-2004).

The world No 3 seemed to be going nowhere after making the turn at one-over par, but battled the elements and made four birdies on the back nine.

McIlroy was tied 12th at six-under total, seven behind the leader. He was still upbeat about his chances, but he insisted he needed some help from the weather. The Northern Irishman had charged from being 10 shots behind at the halfway stage last year. "I would say the winning score will go much past 15, depending on the conditions, obviously," said McIlroy.

"So, I'd need to go out and shoot 63 tomorrow. If the conditions are right, I've been able to do that before, especially if you

can make a score on the front nine before that scorable back nine."

Hillier (70) finished one ahead of the in-form LIV Golf star Tyrrell Hatton. Hatton, the world No 17 who has not finished outside the top-six in his last three DP World Tour starts, shot a 68 to reach 12-under par total.

Scotland's Ewen Ferguson (74) birdied on the last to finish solo third at 10-under, while Kiwi Ryan Fox (69) and England's Laurie Canter (71) were tied fourth at 9-under 207.

Hatton made an eagle two early in his round on the 356-yard par-4 second hole when he drove the green and made an eight-foot eagle putt. There were three bogeys on the tough front nine, but the 33-year-old made up for it with four birdies on the back nine.

"It was pretty tough out there, to be honest," said Hatton. "The wind was swirling around... But I'm happy with the finish." Hatton lost his cool on the seventh hole and took his frustrations out on a tee marker, earning the Englishman a talking-to by officials. Yes, I probably shouldn't have done it," Hatton told BBC Sport.

Leading third-round scores (par 72; GBR & IRL unless stated):

- 203 - Daniel Hillier (NZL) 68-65-70
- 204 - Tyrrell Hatton 71-65-68
- 206 - Ewen Ferguson 67-65-74
- 207 - Ryan Fox (NZL) 68-70-69, Laurie Canter 68-68-71
- 208 - Shaun Norris (RSA) 69-67-72, Dylan Frittelli (RSA) 73-68-67, Tom McKibbin 70-69-69, Calum Hill 67-74-67
- 209 - Rasmus Hoeggaard (DEN) 71-66-72, Guido Migliozzi (ITA) 66-73-70
- 210 - Rory McIlroy 70-71-69, Niklas Noergaard (DEN) 71-68-71, Jason Scriver (AUS) 67-69-74, Min Woo Lee (AUS) 71-66-73, Robert MacIntyre 71-69-70, Johannes Veerman (USA) 68-70-72, David Ford (USA) 65-75-70
- 211 - Ricardo Gouveia (POR) 65-72-74, Jayden Schaper (RSA) 71-73-67, Li Haotong (CHN) 70-71-70, Adam Scott (AUS) 71-71-69, Thorbjorn Olesen (DEN) 70-67-74, Michael Lorenzo-Vera (FRA) 67-74-70.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Rohit leads India as injured Bumrah called up

AFP
New Delhi

Out-of-form captain Rohit Sharma will lead India in the one day international home series against England and at next month's Champions Trophy, selectors said yesterday.

The 37-year-old Rohit and star batsman Virat Kohli, 36, have both faced questions about their futures after poor form since India won the T20 World Cup last year. Also in the squad is fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah. Rated as one of the best bowlers of his generation, Bumrah suffered a back niggle in the final game of the five-Test series in Australia, which India lost 3-1. He is expected to be fit for In-



India captain Rohit Sharma (right) and chairman of the selection committee Ajit Agarkar address a press conference in Mumbai. (AFP)

dia's Champions Trophy opener against Bangladesh in Dubai on February 20, chief selector Ajit Agarkar said.

India have kept rookie Hars-

hit Rana as back-up for Bumrah, who may not be ready for three ODIs against England beginning early next month. Bumrah's new-ball partner Mohammed Shami is

making his comeback after a long injury layoff, along with wrist-spinner Kuldeep Yadav. Test opener Yashasvi Jaiswal has been called up for the first time in ODIs.

The first ODI against England is on February 6. Before that India face England in five T20s. The Champions Trophy takes place in Pakistan and Dubai from February 19 with India placed in Group A alongside Bangladesh, Pakistan and New Zealand.

INDIA SQUAD
Rohit Sharma (capt), Shubman Gill (vice-capt), Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, K L Rahul, Hardik Pandya, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Kuldeep Yadav, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami, Arshdeep Singh, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Rishabh Pant, Ravindra Jadeja.



New Zealand's Daniel Hillier in action during the third round of the Dubai Desert Classic yesterday. (Reuters)

TENNIS

Sinner surges into last 16 on 'great day' for happy couple

Svitolina and Monfils register wins, Swiatek destroys Raducanu as Rybakina fights through injury

AFP
Melbourne

Defending champion Jannik Sinner raced to victory at the Australian Open yesterday to sweep into the last 16 as Iga Swiatek demolished Emma Raducanu.

Also into the second week is 38-year-old Gael Monfils after he stunned fourth seed Taylor Fritz - with the veteran's wife Elina Svitolina also enjoying a shock win immediately after on the same court.

"It's really a great day for us today, beating top-four players and playing great tennis," said Ukraine's Svitolina.

American qualifier Learner Tien, 19, won in straight sets to extend his fairytale run on his debut in Melbourne.

But Danielle Collins, the pantomime villain after thanking hecklers for "paying my bills" in the previous round, lost and was booed.

Italian world number one Sinner dropped a set for the first time in 14 matches in the second round.

But there were no such wobble against the unseeded Marcos Giron on Rod Laver Arena as he sprinted home 6-3, 6-4, 6-2 in 2hr 1min, slamming 35 winners and eight aces.

Awaiting him next is Holger Rune after the Danish 13th seed defeated Serbian Miomir Kecmanovic in five sets.

"If I want to go on in this tournament I have to improve," said the 23-year-old Sinner.

French showman Monfils rolled back the years to storm back and defeat the American Fritz 3-6, 7-5, 7-6 (7/1), 6-4.

The unseeded Monfils, who hit a career-high ranking of six in 2016 but is now 41st, is enjoying a late-career flourish.

A week ago he became the oldest singles champion in ATP Tour history when he swept to victory at the Auckland Classic.

Monfils faces another American in 21st seed Ben Shelton, who is a big fan.

"I think that any time he's on the court, it's a box-office match," said Shelton. Monfils is married to Svitolina, who emulated his giant-killing efforts when she de-



Italy's Jannik Sinner hits a return against USA's Marcos Giron during their Australian Open match in Melbourne yesterday. (AFP)



France's Gael Monfils (left) with his wife Ukraine's Elina Svitolina following her victory against Italy's Jasmine Paolini in the Australian Open in Melbourne yesterday. (AFP)

feated world number four Jasmine Paolini, also on Margaret Court Arena. Svitolina came through 2-6, 6-4, 6-0.

"I warmed up the court for her," joked Monfils.

Svitolina said the supportive presence of husband Gael Mon-



Poland's Iga Swiatek celebrates the match point against Britain's Emma Raducanu yesterday. (AFP)

files meant a lot. "Most of the big tournaments we have each other by our sides. It means a lot to us to have someone who understands what we are going through. Yeah,

it's a really nice feeling for me personally," Svitolina told reporters.

Tien became the youngest man to reach the fourth round since Rafael Nadal in 2005 when

he overcame injured Frenchman Corentin Moutet.

The gifted teenager won 7-6 (12/10), 6-3, 6-3 with Moutet collapsing clutching his leg in the third set before gamely carrying on.

"Honestly it feels pretty crazy to be in the second week," he said. Tien stunned three-time runner-up Daniil Medvedev in a five-set epic in the previous round.

Home hope Alex de Minaur, the eighth seed, went through in four sets against Argentina's Francisco Cerundolo and will face American Alex Michelsen for a place in the quarter-finals.

In a one-sided battle of former US Open champions, Swiatek romped to a 6-1, 6-0 triumph in a statement victory over Raducanu as she pursues a first Melbourne crown.

Emma Navarro, the eighth seed from the United States, joined the Pole in the next round with a gritty three-set win over Ons Jabeur.

Sixth seed Elena Rybakina also advanced despite a back problem.

"I felt like the ball is listening to me," Swiatek said after rattling off 11 straight games in a brutal display against Britain's Raducanu on Rod Laver Arena.

The 23-year-old Swiatek is a five-time major winner but she has never gone beyond the semi-finals at Melbourne Park.

She faces world number 128 German Eva Lys next.

Lys beat Jaqueline Cristian of Romania in three sets to become the first women's singles "lucky loser" to reach the fourth round since the event moved to Melbourne Park in 1988.

Former Wimbledon champion Rybakina of Kazakhstan needed a medical timeout to treat a back spasm before winning 6-3, 6-4 against Dayana Yastremska of Ukraine.

Asked if her back would be OK, she replied: "Not really. So I will see my physio and hopefully he does some magic."

Rybakina will face Madison Keys after she swatted aside fellow American Collins 6-4, 6-4, with Collins getting booed in and out of the arena.

Novak Djokovic, Carlos Alcaraz, Aryna Sabalenka and Coco Gauff are all in action today.

LA LIGA

Leganes snap leaders Atletico's winning streak

AFP
Madrid

Antoine Griezmann missed a late penalty as La Liga leaders Atletico Madrid stumbled to a shock 1-0 defeat at Leganes yesterday, ending a club record run of 15 consecutive victories.

Matija Nastasic nodded Leganes ahead early in the second half, with Griezmann dragging a poor penalty wide in the final stages to consign Atletico to a second defeat of the league season.

Diego Simeone's side's superb form towards the end of 2024 took them above rivals Real Madrid and Barcelona at the half-way point, but their poor display against Leganes opened the door to Spain's big two.

Real Madrid have the chance to move top of the table on Sunday when they host Las Palmas, while Barcelona can cut down the six-point gap on Atletico later Saturday at Getafe.

"We didn't get into the game well enough, I thought we were low on energy, it wasn't enough from us," Atletico goalkeeper Jan Oblak told DAZN.

"We'll keep our head up after (winning) 15 games, we lost this one and we have to keep going forwards... unfortunately the streak is over."

The goalkeeper said Atletico would keep battling to win the title for the first time since 2021.

"The league is long, there are a lot of games until the end and it's clear that it doesn't end in January," added Oblak.



Leganes' Matija Nastasic (right) celebrates with supporters after scoring his team's first goal during the La Liga match against Atletico in Leganes yesterday. (AFP)

Madrid minnows Leganes, 15th, battled well in defence to keep Atletico at bay in the first half.

Rojiblancos striker Julian Alvarez hit the woodwork and had another effort blocked, while Griezmann struck the post and Marko Dmitrovic batted away his second effort from the rebound.

At the other end Juan Cruz threatened on a rare foray forward for the hosts but Oblak reacted well to keep out his cross-shot.

Early in the second half, Serbian defender Nastasic headed Leganes in front from a corner, and they protected their advantage without much stress until

controversially conceding a penalty for a debatable handball by Sergio Gonzalez.

Griezmann took responsibility from the penalty spot, but rolled his 90th-minute effort wide of the goal.

Substitute Angel Correa had a final chance to level for Atletico but Dmitrovic bravely blocked his effort from close range to secure Leganes' victory.

Leganes also beat Barcelona in December and Dmitrovic said their shock wins come down to elbow grease.

"There's nothing special (about the team), there's work behind every game, the whole week," said Dmitrovic.

"Yes, we were capable of beating two of the three biggest sides in La Liga, now there's no excuses - what we did against Barca and Atletico we have to repeat in other games."

"You can't guarantee you'll win games in this league, but the same effort, desire, hope and work, we have to repeat."

Atletico must now bounce back in the Champions League, where they are aiming to reach the knock-out rounds, against Bayer Leverkusen on Tuesday.

"They were 15 extraordinary games, I feel enormously proud at having set the (consecutive) winning record in Atletico's history," Simeone told DAZN.

"Their goal gave them the strength to keep working hard in defence, and it's a strength to defend as well as Leganes did..."

"We have to accept that defeat is part of the game and prepare ourselves for Tuesday."

LIGUE 1

Barcola strikes as leaders PSG fight back to beat Lens 2-1



Paris Saint-Germain's forward Bradley Barcola (left) vies with Lens' defender Facundo Medina during the Ligue 1 match at Stade Bollaert-Delelis in Lens, France, yesterday. (AFP)

AFP
Paris

Bradley Barcola showed new signing Khvicha Kvaratskhelia he will not easily give up his place in the Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) line-up as his late strike gave the Ligue 1 leaders a 2-1 win at Lens yesterday.

It looked like PSG were going to drop points in their last domestic outing before next Wednesday's crunch Champions League clash with Manchester City as they fell behind in the

first half to Mbala Nzola's goal for Lens. However, Barcola set up Fabian Ruiz to equalise for PSG just before the hour mark, and the France winger then lashed in a fine winning goal with four minutes left.

Luis Enrique's side remain unbeaten domestically this season and are now 10 points clear at the top of Ligue 1 from Marseille, who host Strasbourg on Sunday.

PSG, who were without Achraf Hakimi, Marquinhos and the ill Ousmane Dembele in Lens, now face Pep Guardiola's City in a crucial European encounter.

The French champions sit one point and one place outside the qualifying places for the knock-out phase and so can ill afford to lose to City at the Parc des Princes.

Kvaratskhelia, brought in to contest a spot on the left wing with Barcola, was not involved in Lens, having only completed his reported 70 million-euro (\$72mn) transfer to PSG from Napoli late on Friday.

The Georgian is also not eligible to play against City or in their final league phase match of the Champions League away to VfB Stuttgart on January 29.

DOHA INTERNATIONAL EQUESTRIAN TOUR

Seabra clinches CSI4* Grand Prix, Qatari riders impress

Italy's Gaudio won the CSI4*- Faults & Time - 1.45m class, while also finishing third at Al Shaqab

By Sports Reporter
Doha

Duarte Seabra of Portugal surprised a top field to claim the CSI4* Grand Prix title while Qatari riders excelled in the CSI2* and Future Riders' category at the Al Shaqab on the final day of the second round of Doha International Equestrian Tour yesterday.

As many as six different classes for the CSI1* two-star and four-star categories, in addition to a round for the Future Riders were staged as the second round of the Tour witnessed more than 320 participations by local and international riders, with total prizes amounting to more than €500,000.

The marquee CSI4* - Grand Prix - Jump Off - 1.55m class which added to the glorious lit up Longines outdoor arena of Al Shaqab threw up a surprise winner in Seabra. The Portuguese excelled on Dourados 2, a grey gelding, with a swift flawless round in 39.03 seconds in the jump-off for the top prize of €50,000.

Gerfried Puck of Austria had to settle for the second place with a time of 39.75 seconds on the back chestnut stallion Equitron Naxcel V. Puck won €40,000. German rider Jan Friedrich Meier-Zimmermann came in third place, achieving 38.97 seconds on the back of Aaron Dams.

German rider Janne Friederike Meyer-Zimmermann on chestnut mare Iron Dames Dubai du Cedre finished third in 38.97 seconds to win €30,000.

The CSI4* Grand Prix podium finishers were crowned by Rashid Nasser al-Kaabi, Chairman of the Organising Committee of Doha International Tour, and Sheikh Ahmed bin Noah al-Thani, Secretary-General of Qatar Equestrian Federation and Member of the Organising Committee.

GAUDIANO DAZZLES TO WIN CSI4*- FAULTS & TIME - 1.45M

The international CSI4*- Faults & Time - 1.45m class had Emanuele Gaudio taking two podium places. The Italian, riding bay stallion Nikolaj de Music, emerged as the winner in 50.84 seconds, and with darkbay stallion Vasco 118 he took the third podium spot finishing in 52.78 seconds. Portuguese Mariano Martinez Bastida, on bay gelding Belano Vd Wijnhoeve Z, was second finishing in 52.28 seconds. The winners were crowned by Saud al-Rumaihi, Director of Facilities and Logistics Support of Doha International Tour.

Meanwhile, Puck earlier bagged the CSI2* - Grand Prix - Jump Off - 1.45m title. The Austrian stood out on bay mare



Duarte Seabra of Portugal takes a lap of honour with his gelding Dourados 2 after winning the CSI4* Grand Prix during the the second round of Doha International Equestrian Tour at Al Shaqab yesterday.



Qatar's Hussain Said Haidan won the CSI2* - Faults & Time - 1.35m class.

Equitron Melody Vd Smidshoeve with a best jump off time of 33.76 seconds. Seabra on bay mare Geniale Star Kervec finished runner-up, clocking 35.37 seconds. Italian Roberto Previtali with a time of 37.08 seconds on chestnut stallion Qashquai SB was third. The winners were crowned by Ali bin Yousef al-Rumaihi, Member of the Board of Directors of QEF.



The CSI4* Grand Prix podium finishers were crowned by Rashid Nasser al-Kaabi, Chairman of the Organising Committee of Doha International Tour, and Sheikh Ahmed bin Noah al-Thani, Secretary-General of Qatar Equestrian Federation and Member of the Organising Committee.

QATAR'S HAIDAN WINS CSI2* 1.35M CLASS

Qatari rider Hussain Said Haidan excelled in the international CSI2* - Faults & Time - 1.35m class as he rode Viahipi d'Auzay, a chestnut gelding, impressively to claim the title with a clear round of 52.06 seconds. Saudi Arabia's Bader Alfard, on grey mare Hw Cosette, was the runners-up with a



Nayla bint Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani celebrates after winning the Optimum Time - 1.00m class at the Longines indoor arena of Al Shaqab.

time of 53.5 seconds on Cosette, while Frenchman Antoine Ermann on bay stallion Je T'Adore finished third place with a time of 56.41 seconds. The winners were crowned by Nasser al-Kuwari, Director of Support Services at the tournament.

The international CSI1* - Grand Prix - Jump Off - 1.25m - was won by Abdulaziz Fahad Aleid of Saudi Arabia, who com-

NAYLA BINT TAMIM BIN HAMAD AL-THANI SHINES IN FUTURE RIDERS

In the National Competition - Optimum Time - 1.00m class at the Longines indoor arena of Al Shaqab, Nayla bint Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani showed her class as she guided Bon Suela to return the best time of 67.23 seconds, 0.23 seconds behind the ideal time and claim the title.

Khalifa bin Joaan bin Hamad al-Thani, 0.41 seconds behind the ideal time, riding Zion II was second, while the third best time was achieved by Egypt's Yassin Mohamed Khalifa on Fanta Sparta, 0.91 seconds behind the ideal time.

PREMIER LEAGUE

Nunez brace rescues Liverpool, Arsenal held by Aston Villa

AFP
London

Darwin Nunez struck twice in stoppage time to earn Liverpool a 2-0 win at Brentford and a six-point Premier League lead over Arsenal, who blew a two-goal lead to draw 2-2 against Aston Villa yesterday.

Liverpool looked set to drop points for the third consecutive league game until the much-maligned Uruguayan doubled his tally of Premier League goals for the season in the dying seconds in west London. Nunez swept home Trent Alexander-Arnold's cross before smashing in a second for a vital twist in the title race.

Liverpool had been wasteful in front of goal in a 1-1 draw at Nottingham Forest in midweek and Arne Slot's men nearly let another two points slip away. On a rare quiet day for Mohamed Salah, Slot was forced to turn to Nunez to make an impact off the bench and he duly delivered.

The 25-year-old had not scored in the league since November but was in the right place to finish after a neat one-two between Harvey Elliott and Alexander-Arnold. Substitute Elliott was the creator for the second, feeding Nunez to cut inside and fire past Mark Flekken.

Liverpool also had a game in hand over injury-hit Arsenal, whose title challenge faltered once more at the Emirates. Gabriel Martinelli gave the Gunners a deserved first-half lead when Emi Martinez failed to prevent his effort crossing the line. It was a similar story for Arsenal's second as Martinez got a touch to Kai Havertz's shot but could not keep it out.

Just when Mikel Arteta's men



Liverpool's Darwin Nunez celebrates after scoring against Brentford during the Premier League match in London. (AFP)

seemed to be cruising, Villa hit back through Youri Tielemans' header. The Belgian midfielder then hit the post with the chance to level for Villa seconds later. The visitors did equalise 22 minutes from time when Ollie Watkins cushioned in Matty Cash's cross off the underside of the crossbar. Arsenal thought they had a late winner but Mikel Merino's effort deflected in off Havertz's hand and the goal was ruled out by a VAR review.

Bournemouth snapped Newcastle's winning streak in stunning fashion as Justin Kluivert's hat-trick fired the Cherries up to sixth. The Magpies were looking to set a club record with a 10th consecutive victory in all competitions but were thoroughly outplayed by the visitors, who are themselves now on an 11-game unbeaten streak.

Kluivert, son of former Newcastle striker Patrick Kluivert, scored a hat-trick of penalties earlier this season at Wolves. This time all three of his crisp finishes came

from open play as Bournemouth were rampant at St James' Park.

Milos Kerkez added a fourth in stoppage time as Andoni Iraola's men closed to within one point of fourth-placed Newcastle. Bournemouth have never qualified for European competition before and Kluivert said that is the goal for an ambitious squad.

Leicester have lost seven consecutive Premier League games as a 2-0 home defeat to Fulham edged Ruud van Nistelrooy's men closer to a return to the Championship. Emile Smith Rowe and Adama Traore were on target for the visitors, who move up to ninth. Crystal Palace are up to 12th after a third win in four games thanks to Jean-Philippe Mateta's double in a 2-0 win at 10-man West Ham. Mateta opened the scoring early in the second half before Konstantinos Mavropanos' red card gave the Hammers a mountain to climb. The Frenchman then sealed the points from the penalty spot late on.

BUNDESLIGA

Superb Wirtz keeps Leverkusen on pace with leaders Bayern

AFP
Munich, Germany

Bayer Leverkusen starlet Florian Wirtz scored a brace as the German Bundesliga champions beat Borussia Moenchengladbach 3-1 yesterday, to keep four points behind leaders Bayern Munich. Bayern went seven clear with a 3-2 win over Wolfsburg earlier on in the day, handing down the gauntlet but Leverkusen were dominant and controlled in notching their 11th straight win in all competitions.

With 32 minutes gone, Leverkusen enforcer Granit Xhaka won the ball in midfield and fed Wirtz, who beat a defender and slotted calmly home. When Leverkusen won a penalty for handball midway through the second half, the 21-year-old Wirtz stepped up and converted.

Patrik Schick latched onto a Wirtz pass to score Leverkusen's third, keeping his remarkable recent goalscoring run alive. The Czech striker now has 12 goals in his past eight league games. Germany midfielder Wirtz, who also scored a brace against Gladbach in August, now has nine goals to go with eight assists in 18 league games this season. Gladbach's Tim Klierdiest scored a consolation goal in stoppage time. Having broken Bayern's 11-year title streak last campaign, Leverkusen eliminated the Bavarians from the German Cup this season. The two

sides meet in Leverkusen in mid-February. The only negative for Xabi Alonso's Leverkusen, who travel to Atletico Madrid in the Champions League midweek, was the loss of Martin Terrier, who was taken from the field early on with what looked like a serious ankle injury.

Earlier, Leon Goretzka scored a brace in Bayern's home win over Wolfsburg. Goretzka, who has been revived under Bayern coach Vincent Kompany this season, cut a superb low shot across the goal to open the scoring 20 minutes in. Wolfsburg hit back against the run of play with a simple Mohammed Amoura goal shortly afterwards. The Bavarian giants wrestled back control of the game before half-time as Michael Olise, in the starting XI ahead of the recovering Jamal Musiala, finished off a fluent team move. Goretzka then added his second on the 62-minute mark, heading in an Olise free-kick.

Amoura scored with two minutes left to give Wolfsburg hope, but the visitors were unable to break through and remain winless in 32 games against Bayern in Munich, 30 of which have been defeats. RB Leipzig let a three-goal lead slip to draw 3-3 away at lowly Bochum, with the hosts' Myron Boadu scoring three goals in 13 second-half minutes. Leipzig were without suspended forwards Benjamin Sesko and Lois Openda, but had no trouble scoring early, with Willi Orban, Antonio Nusa and Christoph Baumgartner putting the visitors 3-0 up after just 21 minutes.

Juve into Champions League spots with Milan win

Milan, Italy: Juventus moved into Serie A's Champions League positions after convincingly beating AC Milan 2-0, as leaders Napoli prepare for a huge clash at title rivals Atalanta.

Goals in five second-half minutes from Samuel Mbangula and Timothy Weah gave Juventus a deserved win in Turin which pushed Thiago Motta's side up to fourth, a point ahead of Lazio who are at Verona today.

Unbeaten Juve snapped a run

of three straight draws which had taken their tally of league stalemates to 13, with Saturday's win just their eighth in 21 fixtures in Italy's top flight. Milan stay eighth and are now six points from the top four, albeit with a game in hand at Bologna which was postponed due to flooding in October and is yet to be rescheduled.

Sergio Conceicao's team didn't show up for the second half of a match full of incident and attacking intent, after playing full part

in a hugely entertaining opening period. Bologna continued their resurgence with a straightforward 3-1 win over Monza, who remain bottom of the table after six defeats in seven matches. Vincenzo Italiano's side bounced back from Daniel Maldini's fourth-minute opener for the away side with strikes from Santiago Castro, Jens Odgaard and Riccardo Orsolini, goals which moved Bologna up to sixth on 33 points, four points behind Juve.