



■ Race officials during yesterday's preparations

# Stage set for new endurance season

UNDER the patronage of Supreme Council for Youth and Sports chairman, Bahrain Olympic Committee president and Bahrain Royal Equestrian and Endurance Federation (Breef) president Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the national endurance horse racing season officially kicks off today with the Qualifying Race for 80km to take place at the Bahrain International Endurance Village in Zallaq.

The event is set to get underway at 6am. It will be held over three stages, with the first and second stages of 30km each (red and blue colour, respectively), and the third and final stages of over 20km (yellow colour).

The pre-race veterinary examination was conducted yesterday, in the presence of Veterinary Committee members headed by Chairman Dr Abdul Rahman Abu Al Shook from Bahrain. Others were Mohamed Ibrahim Al Hammad of Saudi Arabia, Dr Rula Shaban from UAE, Dr C.V. Narengjin of India, Dr Abbas Al Hayki of Bahrain, Dr Zahid Rafiq of Pakistan, Dr Ibrahim Yousef of Bahrain, Dr Sabah Al



■ Veterinary examination in progress

Kaabi from Bahrain and Dr Hassan Al Hashem from Saudi Arabia.

Meanwhile, Breef President Shaikh Faisal bin Rashid Al Khalifa has formed the organisational and technical staff for today's race.

Shaikh Faisal assured that the opening race of the season will be a strong

and distinctive one, explaining that it is expected to witness excitement, enthusiasm and determination from the riders of all the participating stables.

He expects to see a large number of competitors in this race, especially following the strong field of participants last season. He added that the riders

have gained much experience from the previous events that would help them to perform well, especially since last season was a grand success.

Shaikh Faisal praised the support of Shaikh Nasser in addition to the great efforts made by all those involved in organising today's race.

## Howard stars as Rockets rout Spurs

**HOUSTON:** Heading into a game with the San Antonio Spurs, Houston Rockets coach Kevin McHale had his eye on a few matchups. A specific one that caught his eye was getting Dwight Howard in the post.

The plan worked. With San Antonio missing big bodies Tim Duncan, who was rested along with fellow veteran Manu Ginobili, and Tiago Splitter (right calf tightness), Howard dominated the interior from the opening tip, scoring 32 points and grabbing 16 rebounds in leading Houston to a 98-81 victory.

The win runs Houston's record to a league best 6-0 while dropping San Antonio's mark to 2-2.

With no Duncan or Splitter inside Houston had a decided advantage down low and exploited it from the beginning, feeding Howard at every turn. Whether on the pick-and-roll, at the elbow, or on alley-oop passes, Howard was the target and had a double-double - 20 points and 12 rebounds - by half-time as he exploited a vulnerable Spurs interior defence where Matt Bonner, Jeff Ayers, and Aron Baynes struggled to keep up.

When Howard was not scoring inside, James Harden filled the stat sheet, adding 20 points, six rebounds and six assists for the Rockets. While he had his share of points, Harden was clear after the game about the advantage of having a force inside.

The Spurs started the game sluggishly, going scoreless in the first six minutes.

While San Antonio rebounded and pulled to within 18-15 at the end of the first quarter, that was as close as the Spurs would get. The tough night finished with the defending NBA champs, who trailed by as many as 31, shooting just 34.4 per cent from the field.

At Portland, LaMarcus Aldridge had 20 points as Trail Blazers routed the Dallas Mavericks 108-87.

## All Blacks wary of England

**LONDON:** New Zealand captain Richie McCaw said the memory of what happened to the All Blacks at Twickenham two years ago would ensure there was no complacency in the world champions' camp come today's clash with England.

The All Blacks have won their last four Tests against England, including a 3-0 series win in New Zealand in June.

But in 2012 they arrived in London as equally firm favourites only for England to upset the formbook in stunning style with a 38-21 victory.

McCaw, asked if this weekend's clash represented the "focal point" of a tour that started with a 74-6 rout of the United States in Chicago last week and also features Tests against Scotland and Wales, replied: "Yeah, for a number of reasons.

"For me I think you think back two years ago when we got tripped up here," added McCaw, speaking at New Zealand's London hotel yesterday.

"Two years ago going into a month off having had a loss, which in the end was quite a few points, made it an interesting old (southern hemisphere) summer," said the 33-year-old McCaw, the outstanding openside flanker of his generation.

"I don't want to have that summer again so let's get the job right this week."

Today's match will also be the last time New Zealand play at Twickenham ahead of next year's World Cup in England.

McCaw, who led his side to World Cup glory on home soil in 2011, will be looking to lift the Webb Ellis Trophy again at Twickenham, the venue for next year's final.

"We have talked about it a little bit, that it's the last time that we are here in England playing at a place where hopefully we will get a crack to play at next year.

"As we have seen even this year, a week's a long time in footy let alone ten months," he added.

"But I guess at a venue against an opposition we could potentially play next year it would be nice to go away with a bit of time off and a good feeling."

McCaw has a reputation among opposing sides for rarely being penalised by referees at the contested breakdown area.

However, McCaw said this had more to do with common sense than the All Blacks' 'aura'.

"I think having an understanding of the guy with the whistle is pretty key," said McCaw.

"At the end of the day I go out there and do my bit for the team within what he will allow you to do. That's always the way I have played."

### RUGBY TEST FIXTURES

- TODAY  
(All Bahrain time)  
**Italy v Samoa**  
(5pm)  
**England v New Zealand**  
(5.30pm)  
**Wales v Australia**  
(5.30pm)  
**France v Fiji**  
(7.45pm)  
**Ireland v South Africa**  
(8.30pm)  
**Scotland v Argentina**  
(8.30pm)

**dilmun club** Weekly What's On at a Glance

**WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK AT THE DILLY:**

<b>SAT.</b> 08 November	Library 10.00 - 13.45 pm Candles: Grand Sale from 10.00 am - 1.00 pm Quality Pre-loved Maternity, Baby, Children & Teenage Items. Stables: Private/Shared lessons from 8am - 9am and 4.00 - 8.00 pm Stella Bar: Live Sports. 3.45 pm Liverpool v Chelsea / 6 pm Man Utd v Crystal Palace / 8.30 Queen Park Rangers v Man City / 10 pm Real Madrid v Valleciano
<b>SUN.</b> 09 November	Squash Court: Circuit Class from 9.00 - 10.00 am Stables: Pony Club lessons from 4.00 - 7.00 pm Private/Shared lessons from 8am - 9am and 4.00 - 8.00 pm Stella Bar: Live Sports. 4.30 pm West Brom v Newcastle / 4.30 pm Sunderland v Everton 4.30 pm Tottenham v Stoke City / 7.00 pm Swansea v Arsenal Candles: Dinner for Two at 7.00 pm Tennis Court: Teen Cardio Tennis from 5.45 - 6.45 pm
<b>MON.</b> 10 November	Library: 9.00 - 12.45 pm Bistro: Canasta starts 10.30 am Stables: Pony Club lessons from 4.00 - 7.00 pm Private/Shared lessons from 8am - 9am and 4.00 - 8.00 pm Candles Squash Court: Squash League 7.00 - 9.00 pm
<b>TUE.</b> 11 November	Squash Court: Circuit Class from 9.00 - 10.00 am Candles: Darts Night starts 7.30 pm Stables: Pony Club lessons from 4.00 - 7.00 pm Private/Shared lessons from 8am - 9am and 4.00 - 8.00 pm
<b>WED.</b> 12 November	Squash Court: Circuit Class from 7.00 - 8.00 pm Stables: Pony Club lessons from 4.00 - 7.00 pm Private/Shared lessons from 8am - 9am and 4.00 - 8.00 pm Tennis Court: Social Tennis Starts 6.00 pm Bistro: Indian Night
<b>THU.</b> 13 November	Library: 14.00 - 17.45 pm Squash Court: Monkeynastix from 4.00 - 6.00 pm Stables: Pony Club lessons from 4.00 - 7.00 pm Private/Shared lessons from 8am - 9am and 4.00 - 8.00 pm Tennis Court: Adult Cardio Tennis from 6.00 - 7.00 pm Bulls Head Lounge: Lucky Key Draw starts 9.30 pm
<b>FRI.</b> 14 November	Library 10.00 - 13.45 pm Dilly Brunch: Roast Beef and Roast Chicken Stella Bar: Pool Competition starts 8.00 pm

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