

بطولة العالم العسكرية الاولى للقدرة 1st CISM Military World Endurance Championship



15th Dec 2012 Kingdom of Bahrain



GREAT RIVALRY

Thumbs up for Bahrain as hosts

● Bahraini and UAE riders brace for tough race



STRONG contenders from Bahrain and the UAE are raring to go tomorrow in the First CISM World Military Endurance Championship in Sakhir.

Bahrain Royal Endurance Team captain Col. Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa and UAE's Shaikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum will lead elite riders from their respective nations in the biggest and first-of-its-kind endurance event.

The Bahrain team also includes Lt. Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Shaikh Salman bin Saqer Al Khalifa, Abdulrahman Al Zayed, Abdulrahman Saad and Yaqoub Al Hammadi.

On his part, world champion Shaikh Mohammed is racing along with compatriots Shaikh Hamdan bin Majid Al Maktoum, Shaikh Juma Al Maktoum, Mansoor Ahmed, Ismail Mohamed and Salman Al Sabri.

Shaikh Mohammed will head into this race as one of the leading contenders for the trophy, having a rich victory record in endurance competitions. His first visit to the Kingdom was at the Bahrain International Championship on April 7, 2000.

To be held at the Bahrain International Endurance Village, the 120-km ride will see other entrants from Brazil, Estonia, Ecuador, Italy, Kuwait, Morocco, Palestine, Uruguay and Qatar vying for the prestigious trophy.

Meanwhile, the championship was last night declared open by Chief of Staff Maj. Gen. Shaikh Daij bin Salman Al Khalifa.

Also present were Supreme Council for Youth and Sports chairman and Bahrain Olympic Committee president Col. Shaikh Nasser, Organising Committee Chairman and Bahrain Royal Equestrian and Endurance Federation Lt. Shaikh Khalid, Col. Alexandre Morisod of the International Military Sports Council (CISM) and other officials.

Lt. Shaikh Khalid said he was pleased that this first-of-its-kind endurance event coincides with Bahrain's National Day celebrations and His Majesty King Hamad's accession to the throne.

Lt. Shaikh Khalid said that Bahrain has become a favourite destination to embrace international sporting events, with the support of the kingdom's government.

Later on, the ceremony started with

■ A folkloric dance is performed amidst fireworks at the village. Inset, Shaikh Daij declares the championship open



■ Shaikh Nasser, left, and Shaikh Mohammed will lead their respective nations in tomorrow's race

a variety of entertaining shows, using modern technology of glittering sounds and lights.

A special presentation, highlighting the relationship between the horses and the Kingdom of Bahrain and what they share of authentic culture, was then presented.



■ Shaikh Daij, along with Shaikh Nasser, Shaikh Khalid and other senior military personnel arriving at the village

The military music band from the Bahrain Defence Force then performed some folkloric show that was admired by the attendees at the ceremony, while the Royal Mounted team introduced another show on the relationship between equestrian and the people of Bahrain.

The veterinary examination is set for today at 3pm at the endurance village,

while championship regulations were reviewed at the technical meeting at the village, in the presence of officials from the organising committee, the CISM and the technical committee.

The organising committee also held a special ceremony in honour of the delegations and media representatives took place yesterday at the Royal Stables.



INTERNATIONAL Military Sports Council (CISM) general secretary Col. Alexandre Morisod gave Bahrain double thumbs up for the outstanding organisation of the First CISM World Military Endurance Championship in Sakhir.

Morisod said he was impressed with the remarkable efforts exerted by the organising committee, represented in the Bahrain Royal Equestrian and Endurance Federation, and expressed confidence in the Kingdom's ability to make this first-of-its-kind international event a huge success.

"In the frame of this race

organised in Manama this year, it is important to inform the Bahrain audience on what



■ Col Morisod

C I S M stands for and what CISM does," said the Swiss general secretary ahead of yesterday's opening ceremony.

Founded on the 18th of February 1948, the CISM is one of the largest multi-disciplinary organisations in the world.

"We organise various sporting events for the armed forces of our 133 member countries. The motto under which we operate is 'Friendship through Sport'."

Numerous worldwide, continental and regional activities take place throughout 300 days of the year. The two pillars of CISM which function as the basis for these events are sport and solidarity.

"Our ultimate goal is to contribute to world peace by uniting armed forces through sports. The Armed Forces of Bahrain are deeply involved in UN Peacekeeping operations and have always been pioneers in changing the role of the soldiers from a repressive mission to a peaceful and humanitarian duty," added Morisod.

Khalaf wins GCC billiards nine-ball bronze medal

FAHAD Khalaf took the Nine-Ball bronze medal in the 2012 GCC Billiards Championship, which concluded yesterday at the Ezone Club in Dubai.

The Bahraini cueist, who put on a spirited show in the early stages of the tournament, was sent out crashing with a 3-9 defeat to UAE's Salah Al Rimawi in the semi-final match.

Early on, Khalaf started his campaign losing his first round tie to Kuwaiti Bader Al Awadi 5-9, which saw him play in the losing bracket match against title contender Omar Al

Shaheen 9-6 to set up his game with Saeed in the final eight round.

In his quarter-final match with host country's Ali Saeed, Khalaf played one of his best days in this competition to capture a 9-3 victory and move into the semi-finals.

Bahrain's cueists were also spearheaded by Omar Asheq and Ali Kabat, both unable to equal Khalaf's achievement.

Asheq lost his matches to Khalid Sbeitah (7-9) and Omar Al Shaheen (8-9), while Kabat suffered respective defeats to UAE's

Salah Al Rimawi (6-9) and Bader Al Hamdan of Saudi Arabia (3-9).

Meanwhile, in the Nine-Ball team event, Bahrain suffered a 1-2 defeat to the UAE. Khalaf lost his first game to Saeed 4-9, then Abbas went down 5-9 to Al Rimawi, while Bahrain's only win came from Asheq who defeated Khalid Sbeitah 9-7.

The Bahrain team secured fourth place in the Eight-ball team event held earlier this week.

After two consecutive defeats to Qatar and the UAE, which saw their

podium chances vanish, the nationals bounced back to register their maiden win, beating Saudi Arabia 2-1.

Reserve player Ali Abdulkarim, who played his first game in the tournament instead of regular cueist Abdulla Essa, gave Bahrain the lead beating Abdulla Al Awad 7-5.

Khalaf could have doubled Bahrain's advantage, only to lose his game to Bader Al Hamdan 2-7. The third and deciding game saw Omar Asheq win over his Saudi opponent 7-6 to seal Bahrain's only win in the tournament.



■ Bahrain's Khalaf in action