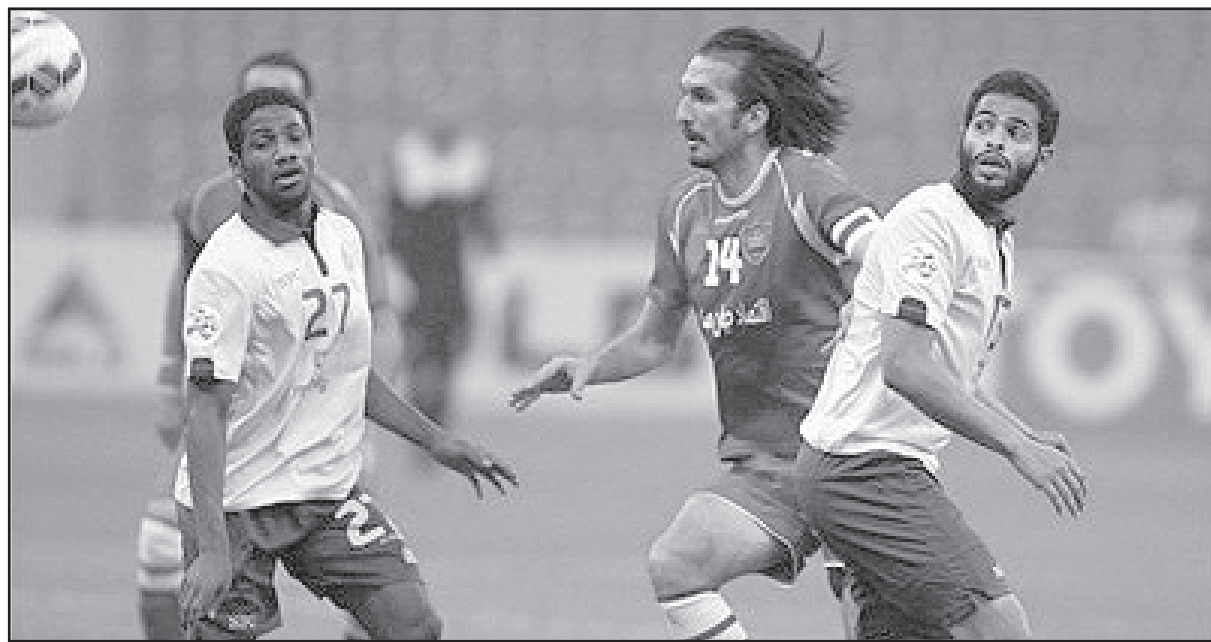


Persepolis Beaten by Saudi Al-Nassr in ACL



Persepolis of Iran suffered a heavy defeat against Al-Nassr of Saudi Arabia

TEHRAN (Dispatches) – Persepolis of Iran suffered a heavy defeat against Al-Nassr of Saudi Arabia on Tuesday night.

Group A leader Persepolis lost to Al-Nassr at the King Fahad stadium

in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Adrian Mierzejewski opened the scoring just after the half hour mark. Omid Alishah twice tested Al Nassr goalkeeper Abdullah Al Enezi in the opening half with a header

that was tipped over the crossbar in the 22nd minute and a curling effort on the half-hour that Al Enezi was able to bat away.

The Iranian team also put Al-Nassr under pressure in the second

half to equalize the match but two late goals by Fabian Estoyanoff and Hassan Al Raheb gave the Saudi league champion a 3-0 win.

Iran's Persepolis coach Hamid Derakhshan was left to rue missed chances in the match against Al-Nassr.

"I want to congratulate Al-Nassr for their win although we should have got a better result," Derakhshan told the-afc.

"We controlled the match for certain periods but the first goal was like a cold shower for us. It surprised us," he added.

"We tried our best to comeback in the second half but we didn't take advantage of the chances that we created. We will try our best to get the three points in the next match and get back on track," he added.

In Tashkent, Qatari champion Lekhwiya edged past Bunyodkor thanks to a goal from Nam Tae-hee from the penalty spot.

Al-Hilal Lucky to Get Draw against Foolad, Coach Giorgos Donis

TEHRAN (Tasnim) - Al Hilal football team head coach Giorgos Donis admitted his side was lucky to get a draw against Foolad of Khuzestan.

Al-Hilal of Saudi Arabia drew 0-0 with Foolad in Group C of the AFC Champions League on Tuesday and moved top of the group.

"Foolad was dominant team in the first 30 minutes of the match and we were lucky not to concede a goal," Giorgos Donis said in the

post match news conference.

"As we expected, Foolad's match was very difficult. I believe that turf was bad and we could not play the football we wanted to play," he added.

"We also had good chances in the first half and didn't take advantage of them. In the first 25 minutes of the second half, Foolad was the better team and we were lucky," Donis stated.

Kayongo-Mutumba Joins Iran's Rah Ahan



Kayongo-Mutumba

TEHRAN (Tasnim) - Martin Kayongo-Mutumba has joined Rah Ahan of Iran until the end of the season.

The Swedish 29-year-old winger has joined Rah Ahan for an undisclosed fee.

Mutumba started his career in Vasalunds IF as a young child, but in 1999 he joined AIK, still as a youth player.

In the fall of 2002 he made his first appearance with the senior squad against Kalmar FF, playing the last five minutes of the game.

He has also played in Swedish national AFC United and Turkey's Çaykur Rizespor and Orduspor football teams.

Rah Ahan sits rock bottom of the Iran Professional League table at the moment.

Iran Female Football Players Depart for Taiwan



Iran female football players depart for Taiwan

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iran women's national football team headed to Taiwan to participate in qualifying games of Rio 2016 Olympics.

The squad departed Tehran for Taiwan last night and will compete with national teams of Taiwan and Laos. The players have spent last three months in training camp and have held two preparatory games with Uzbek women national team.

Members of Iran women's national football team include Shabnam Behesht, Parvin Farhadi Khah,

Maryam Yektayi, Sarah Zohrabi Nia, Fereshte Khosravi, Mahdiyeh Amighi, Kvistan Khosravi, Zahra Ghanbari, Azar Mousa, Neda Abdollahzadeh, Melika Motavalli, Tanin Naraghi, Paria Nowrouzi, Fereshteh Karimi, Sara Ghomi, Fatemeh Gerayli, Fatemeh Arjangi, Zahra Hatam Nejad, Fatemeh Rahmati, and Helaleh Abdollahi.

Iran's competitions with Laos and Taiwan teams is scheduled to take place in 22 and 24 March, 2015, respectively.

Volunteers Will Help to Make the Russia 2018 Preliminary Draw an Unforgettable Experience

MOSCOW (FIFA) - The Russia 2018 Local Organising Committee is now issuing a first call for volunteers. The recruitment campaign for the Preliminary Draw opens today, Wednesday 18 March 2015 on FIFA.com.

As only a total of 300 volunteers are required for the first official 2018 FIFA World Cup™ event on Russian soil, the process will be closed once 2,000 applications have been reached. The application is open to everyone, but a priority will be given to Russian-speaking persons and residents in St. Petersburg. Candidates should be aged 18 and over, speak English and possess effective teamwork skills. Previous volunteering experience

will be an additional advantage.

Volunteers are the backbone of staging any major sporting event in the world. Organising a truly inspiring tournament such as the FIFA World Cup would never be possible without the efforts and passion of those committed to volunteering. Volunteers offer event organisers a wide range of skills to assist with multiple tasks such as running competitions, providing services for participants, sponsors and spectators, working with media and security organisations.

The primary role of volunteers is to help create a positive and supportive environment for everybody involved in the event. With their helpfulness and friendliness, vol-

unteers contribute to every aspect of the event including the players' and spectators' experience, working with team officials, VIP guests or media representatives.

The 2018 FIFA World Cup Preliminary Draw will take place on 25 July 2015 at the Konstantinovsky Palace in St. Petersburg and will be the first big test for Russia 2018's volunteers who will play a key part in making a success of the event, which will be attended by around 800 journalists and more than 1,000 guests, including sports stars and celebrities.

The official volunteer programme for the FIFA Confederations Cup 2017 and the 2018 FIFA World Cup is scheduled to be launched in June 2015, with around 20,000 volun-

teers expected to be recruited to work ahead of and during the tournaments. For three years to come, the programme will see volunteer centres set up in all 11 host cities, a common information space created, volunteers selected and trained, and their work organised. The range of functions to be performed by volunteers is very broad, and will include various roles, from working with spectators, staging ceremonies and providing language services to organising transport, accommodation and medical care.

Becoming a volunteer for Russia 2018 will be a unique opportunity to be part of one of the world's greatest sporting events and contribute to creating an unforgettable festive atmosphere.

Rockets Use Big 4th Quarter to Surge Past Magic

HOUSTON (Xinhua) -- The Houston Rockets used a big fourth quarter to surge past the Orlando Magic 107-94 Tuesday night at Toyota Center, claiming their second straight win.

The Rockets had a close game with the Magic, especially in the first three quarters, with neither of them able to establish a sizeable lead.

Houston had a late jolt in the last

period, sank back-to-back 3-pointers and quickly regained an advantage Orlando found hard to overturn.

Donatas Motiejunas scored 23 points for Houston, James Harden

and Josh Smith each had 17 points. Victor Oladipo grabbed 29 points, while Aaron Gordon added 13 points for the Magic, who have dropped four in a row.

Dolphins Tight End Clay Signs Bills' Offer

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) -- Tight end Charles Clay moved one step closer to leaving the Miami Dolphins after signing the Buffalo Bills' five-year, \$38 million contract offer on Tuesday night.

A person familiar with the situation told The Associated Press that the Bills extended Clay the offer. And a second person told the AP that Clay had signed it. Both people

spoke on the condition of anonymity because the Bills and Clay have not publicly discussed their negotiations.

The signing means the Dolphins have five days to match the offer or lose Clay to Buffalo without compensation. Miami retained the right to match after awarding Clay a transition tag two weeks ago. The move

ensured that Clay will make at least \$7 million this season.

The Dolphins could be handcuffed by salary-cap constraints to match the Bills' offer after Miami signed free-agent All-Pro defensive tackle Ndamukong Suh to a \$114 million, six-year contract last week. It made Suh the highest-paid defensive player in NFL history.



Miami Dolphins tight end Charles Clay (42) warms up on the field before an NFL football game against the New England Patriots.

Namibia – a Small Nation With Giant Ambitions

WINDHOEK (FIH) - With a population of just 2.1 million people, Namibia is one of the least densely-populated countries in the world, and has an economy based around mining, agriculture and herding. But this small country, which was governed by South Africa until 1990, has aspirations to join the top tiers of international hockey.

Hockey in Namibia is a sport growing in popularity, it is ranked as one of the top five sports for participants in the country, along with cricket, rugby, football and cycling.

While the outdoor game is played by more than 4,000 people, with temperatures in the country sometimes in the mid 40s, the indoor version of hockey is also growing at speed, with several clubs playing league hockey and the women's national team representing Africa at the 2011 Indoor World Cup in Poland. In 2014, the African Indoor Championships were held in the capital city Windhoek, where both the men's and women's teams came second behind South Africa. This was the qualifying event for the FIH Indoor World Cup.

Marc Nel was a former head coach of one of the Namibian hockey teams and he has just been elected as President of the Namibian Hockey Union, with an executive board of nine people. This is the body that will be driving hockey in the south-west African country forward, by championing schemes to increase participation as well as working to secure funding for new facilities. There has already been a significant step forward in this quest with a new hockey turf expected to be completed at the end of the year.

A national programme of excellence is only possible with a wide grassroots pool to draw talent from, so Nel was pleased to announce during a recent visit by FIH representatives that the youth programme is paying off with a lot of inter school competitions and many young players already feeding into the major league sides.

While a lack of water in the country – less than 350mm average rainfall – and a semi-arid climate, which includes the Namib Desert, the proposed hockey turf will not be water-based, but the NHU is working with the pitch provider, to work on a viable alternative, using little water but still providing a high standard surface.

As part of the development programme, European national teams will be invited to use the new pitch and facilities for warm weather training and with Namibia's long association with Germany, the NHU are hoping that the European giants might be the first visitors to the new pitch and facilities.