Afghanistan qualifies for next round of 2022 Asian Cup after India draw

KABUL: Afghanistan and India played out a 1-1 draw in their last match of Group E of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 and AFC Asian Cup China 2023 Joint Qualifier, at the Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium in Doha, Qatar, on Tuesday (June 15, 2021). With this result, India finishes third place in the standings with seven points from eight matches and Afghanistan ended the group E match with standing in fourth place.

India qualified directly with a draw on Tuesday match, however Afghanistan qualified to the next round with Bahrain's 4:0 goals against Hong Kong.

India took the lead via a 75th-minute own goal courtesy of Afghanistan goalkeeper Ovays Azizi, but the Afghans pulled back their equalizer minutes later, through their teenage sensation Hossein Zamani.

The Blue Tigers got out off the blocks well right from kick-off as Manvir Singh soared up the right flank, made his way into the Afghanistan box and pulled the trigger. However, his shot was parried out for a corner by Afghan goalkeeper Ovays Azizi. The resulting corner by Brandon was cleared, but it fell kindly to Glan Martins on the edge of the area, whose shot was eventually blocked.

Afghanistan also attempted to create their chances in the opening exchanges as David Ahmed Najem found some space on the right and whipped in a few crosses, but India custodian Gurpreet Singh Sandhu was alert to the danger and came out to collect.

India started to grow into the game soon enough and Manvir once again raced down the right and played it through to an overlapping Suresh Singh Wangjam, who earned a corner for the side. Sandesh Jhingan managed to get a firm header onto the Brandon corner but the effort was cleared off the line by Afghan defender Haroon Amiri.

Glan Martins was putting in a lot of hard work in the middle of the park as he managed to make a crucial interception in the attacking third, before passing it to Sunil Chhetri, whose shot was again saved by Azizi.

Brandon Fernandes was his usual self throughout the first 45 minutes, threading his passes to the attacking options again and again. A free kick in the middle of the park around the 20th minute turned into a chance when Brandon chipped it towards Chhetri inside the box, but Masih Saighani was alert to the danger and cleared the ball.

Five minutes later, Ashique managed to beat Amiri down the left flank and dashed into the box, before attempting a grounded cut-back aimed at Chhetri. Saighani was once again up to the task and intercepted the ball before any damage could be inflicted.

A little after the half-hour mark, Afghanistan made an inroad into the India half, as Omid Popalzay was played through down the right. But Blue Tigers center back Chinglensana Singh came across and bundled into the midfielder, picking up a yellow card for his efforts to stop the attack.

Afghanistan started building up a bit of momentum and earned another free kick in the Indian third of the pitch, a few minutes later. Popalazay floated the ball in towards Amiri, but Jhingan was on hand to get in the way and avert the danger.

With a little under five minutes of regulation time of the first half left on the clock, Afghan forward Amir Sharifi manufactured some space outside the Indian penalty area and pulled the trigger. However, his left-footed effort was straight at Gurpreet, who smothered the ball comfortably.

At the stroke of the 45th minute, Suresh made a crucial interception in the middle of the park, to catch the Afghan defense off-guard. The young midfielder carried the ball to the edge of the Afghan area, before playing it through to Manvir. However, Afghan keeper Azizi came out bravely to foil the opportunity, as the referee soon blew his whistle to end the first half.

After the changeover, Afghanistan looked to string a few passes together in the Indian half but ended up giving away a chance to their opponents. Ashique intercepted a pass in the middle of the park and raced up the middle, looking to run at the Afghan defenders. He had options in the form of Chhetri on the left and Manvir on the right but was tackled by Amiri.

As India began to settle down in the second half, the Blue Tigers started to play the ball out of the back. A little under 10 minutes into the second half, one particular chance was created out of a string of passes that started all the way from the keeper.

Gurpreet found Suresh in the defensive half, as the latter played it to Bheke with his first touch. Under pressure, the fullback struck the ball down the line to put Manvir through on the right flank once again but the cross was stopped.

Minutes later, Gurpreet made a crucial save to keep the scores at 0-0. Saighani hooved a long ball to Popalzay, who chested it down and volleyed it from outside the area, but Gurpreet was up to the task, as he plucked the ball out of the air.

Amiri stood in India's way once again on the hour mark, when he headed way a free-kick by Brandon, that was aimed at Manvir, who had shaken off his marker inside the box, and looked set for a free header.

A bit of dogged work in the opposition third by Ashique meant that the winger found some real estate just outside the Afghan penalty area, but Amiri soon came across and bundled him over, taking a yellow card to avert the immediate danger. Sunil Chhetri stood over the free-kick, as he curled it inches over the bar.

That was the last action of the day for the Blue Tigers captain, as Igor Stimac brought on Liston Colaco in place of the 36-year-old. Meanwhile, Lalengmawia Ralte (Apuia) also came on for Brandon Fernandes.

India's perseverance finally paid off in the 75th minute, when Ashique and Manvir worked some space on the left flank, as the former had the time and space to send in a measured cross towards Liston inside the box. Afghan keeper Azizi fumbled the ball while collecting it, and turned it into his own net.

India thought they had their second goal a few minutes later, when Ashique again weaved his way into the box and sent in a cross, for Liston, who turned it in. However, the referee had already blown his whistle, as he had adjudged Ashique to have carried the ball over the goalline. That was Ashique's last action of the night, as he was replaced by Bipin Singh.

Afghanistan soon went on the attack, looking for the equalizer, and found it through their teenage sensation Hossein Zamani, who came on in the second half. Receiving a cut-back from Noor Husin, Zamani curled a right-footer into the Indian goal, off the far post.

Manvir had a chance late in the second half, when he got his head onto a ball whipped in from the left by Subhasish, but his header went over the crossbar. Both the sides had a few last exchanges in added time, but the clock soon ran down, as the match ended in a 1-1 draw.

Monitoring Desk

US Open: Bryson DeChambeau would be happy to play with Brooks Koepka at Torrey Pines

Bryson DeChambeau insisted he would relish the chance to play alongside Brooks Koepka at this week's US Open, but denied he had been asked about the prospect by tournament organisers.

Reports emerged that DeChambeau was contacted by the USGA regarding being grouped

with Koepka over the first two rounds, with the defending champion rumoured to have declined.

But both Americans, who have been embroiled in an apparent feud since the PGA Championship last month, have claimed there was no pre-tournament contact from the USGA, and the pair have been kept apart for the first two rounds.

The dispute between DeChambeau and Koepka has dominated discussion on the PGA Tour over the last few weeks, with the weight of support seemingly behind Koepka. Some fans at The Memorial were removed from the course for shouting "Brooksy" at DeChambeau, prompting Koepka to offer the offending fans cases of free beer to compensate them for having their day cut short.

But DeChambeau has maintained that he finds the whole situation amusing and dismissed the rivalry as "great banter", and he claimed he would have no problem in partnering Koepka later in the tournament.

"I think it's fun," said DeChambeau. "There's a point where it's great banter. I personally love it. I think that, as time goes on, I hope on the weekend we can play against each other and compete. I think it would be fun and would be great for the game.

"For me, I'm always going to be trying to play my game and not really worry too much about what other people are doing, but I think there are just times where, if it gets outside the scope of just integrity and honour, yeah, that can get a little interesting.

Women's Cricket on Sky Sports: Celebrating 25 years with a look at the best of the women's game

Watch live coverage from all four days of the Women's Test match between England and India, live on Sky Sports Cricket from Wednesday; Click on the video below to watch the most memorable moments from Sky Sports' 25 years covering women's cricket

Sky Sports celebrates 25 years of covering women's cricket in 2021 by showing more live games than it ever has before, starting with the Test match between England and India on Wednesday.

Sky Sports is committed to showing 52 live women's cricket games this year, which is more than double the amount of the previous high mark of 24 set in 2019.

The first time Sky showed women's cricket was on June 16, 1996, when England played New Zealand at Leicester in the second one-day international of their series. Debbie Hockley scored 75 which led New Zealand to a 56-run victory, with Charlotte Edwards' international debut still a month away. Edwards would go on to earn 309 caps across all formats.

Two years later, it was the first Ashes clash as England faced Australia at Derby. Australia ran out winners on that occasion by 64 runs, with future commentator Mel Jones scoring 58.

The highlight of the 1999 season saw Clare Connor - future director of women's cricket at the ECB - take a hat-trick in the ODI against India.

The ECB's director of women's cricket, Clare Connor, describes how both she and the England players have suffered online abuse and the importance of sports' united stand against hate

The first-ever T20 international match - men's or women's - took place at Hove in 2004 between England and New Zealand. It was a close finish, with the tourists emerging victorious by nine runs. And three years later, the Sky cameras were there to see New Zealand's Amy Satterthwaite record a world-record-at-the-time bowling analysis of 6-17 in the T20I at Taunton.

In 2009, the year started with England winning the Women's World Cup in Australia, defeating the hosts by four wickets in the final to win their first world title for 16 years.

Tyson Fury and Deontay Wilder in tense face-off – Fury predicts: 'I guarantee he does not go past [round seven]'

Tyson Fury has newfound "one-punch knockout power" and promised to "run over" Deontay Wilder when they went face to face.

Fury and Wilder met at a press conference on Tuesday night ahead of their trilogy fight for the WBC heavyweight championship on July 24 in Las Vegas.

Wilder spoke only briefly to thank his legal team for enforcing this fight before donning headphones and refusing all questions to allow the shirtless Fury to make a bold prediction.

"I gave my game plan away the last time because he wasn't good enough to do anything about it," said Fury. "I'll do the same thing this time.

"Before, I only had five or six weeks practicing what to do to him. This time, I've had 18 months. I'm building my weight up, trying to get up to 300lbs, because I'm looking for a big knockout straight away.

"I don't believe he's mentally, physically or emotionally involved. He's doing this for the wrong reasons and, when people do that, they wind up getting hurt."

Wilder floored Fury twice in their first fight which ended in a draw. Fury comprehensively won their rematch.

Fury's trainer Sugarhill Steward warned: "He now has power to knock a man out with one punch. "That's something I'm happy he has now, along with his other boxing skills and his boxing IQ. He has one-punch knockout power." Wilder sat silently next to his former opponent and new trainer Malik Scott, who insisted they could arrive into the trilogy fight with a new skills-based tactic.

But Fury said: "Deontay is stubborn. No matter what Malik Scott tells him to do, Deontay will do what he wants."

Scott hit back: "That's wrong!"

Fury: "In a real fight he will revert back to type. As soon as I hit him with my first right hand, he will see red and think: 'I need to take his head off'."

Scott argued back: "You're a one-punch knockout artist? There is no history of you knocking somebody out with one punch."

Fury reminded Scott of hurting him in a past sparring session and said: "You can't expect him to do something that you couldn't do. You can't teach him to be a great fighter when you weren't one.

"I bust both of these guys' ear drums! The trainer and the fighter!" Wilder dispensed with the services of trainer Mark Breland, who threw in the towel to end the previous fight with Fury, and called him "disloyal".

New trainer Scott continued: "Deontay is raw power. I am technically sound. We match well.

"Deontay has made mental adjustments. All I needed was a receptive athlete. "I believe Deontay will become two-time champion, by knockout.

"It's about mental adjustments to the craft. That will pay big dividends. People haven't seen him in the gym. Tyson Fury, Deontay Wilder "The Bermane Stiverne second fight - that whole camp Deontay was boxing on his toes. The Kelvin Price fight? He was boxing on his toes.

Andy Murray makes superb start to his Queen's Club campaign with victory over Benoit Paire

Andy Murray made a superb winning start in his first singles outing since March as the former world No 1 defeated Benoit Paire at Queen's Club on Tuesday.

With Wimbledon just around the corner, Murray's tennis appears to be in good shape as the three-time Grand Slam winner made a successful return in his first singles outing on grass in three years by defeating Frenchman Paire 6-3 6-2.

Murray has struggled to return to his former level since having hip resurfacing surgery in January 2019 with niggling injuries limiting his tournament time.

"The body is old but, I did quite well with my movement today," Murray said on court after his victory.

"It's my first match on grass in three years, I've only played three or four practice sets in the build up to this, so I didn't know exactly how I was going to play or how I was going to feel. I think for a first match, it was good.

"I love it, I love playing tennis," Murray continued, before he paused due to the emotion of the occasion overcoming him.

"Obviously, competing is why you put in all of the hard work. In the last few years, I've not got to do that as much as I would have liked, so it's just great that I'm out here and able to compete again."

He missed this year's Australian Open after testing positive for COVID-19 and has not played a match since March after suffering a groin injury in his sleep and then deciding to skip the clay-court season in order to prepare for the British summer.

The Scot had voiced concerns about his fitness before the match, but the victory at the scene of five of his ATP titles was another positive step forward.

Murray could maybe not have hand-picked a more accommodating opponent in Paire, who had won only two of his previous 17 matches this year, for his latest tentative return.

The 34-year-old, currently ranked 123 in the world, took 65 minutes to dispatch the Frenchman and set up a meeting against top seed Matteo Berrettini.