

Saudi Arabia To Host World Cup Of Pool Kingdom Adds 9-Ball to Grass Roots Sports Portfolio



Pictured: Barry Hearn (right) with Prince Abdulaziz Bin Turki AlFaisal Al Saud (centre) and Carlo Boutagy (left)

Saudi Arabia has announced it will host the 2020 World Cup of Pool, which will run from the 23rd-28th June 2020 in Jeddah.

Sanctioned by the WPA, the World Cup of Pool will present 32 two-player teams from 31 countries with players selected by qualifying criteria and qualification events which will take place globally. As host nation, Saudi Arabia will enter two teams to be selected by the Saudi Arabian Billiards and Snooker Federation.

The World Cup of Pool has been an established major event in 9-ball since 2006 and adopts a straight-knockout format. Matches are race to 7 in the first two rounds, race to 9 in the quarter-finals and semi-finals, and race to 11 in the final.

Austrian pair Albin Ouschan and Mario He are defending champions having won the trophy for a second time in 2019. Previous winners of the World Cup of Pool include Philippines, China and USA.

The newly formed partnership with Matchroom Pool kick starts a ten-year agreement, throughout which the Kingdom aims to raise the profile of pool at grass roots level by way of coaching visits, player appearances and school seminars.

Prince Abdulaziz Bin Turki AlFaisal Al Saud, Chairman of the GSA, said: "The 2020 World Cup of Pool is another significant step for the Kingdom, that showcases our to desire to open up as welcoming hosts to a diverse mix of world-class sporting events, while also offering the people of Saudi Arabia a chance to be inspired to play a vast array of sports all year-round.

"We are a young vibrant nation with a vast country and a growing list of interests. Early in 2020, Jeddah will stage the opening of the Dakar Rally, the Spanish SuperCup football and the Saudi International Golf Tournament, and it's very pleasing to include the World Cup of Pool as further highlight in our sporting calendar."

Carlo Boutagy, CEO of CBX, the official promoter of the event in Saudi Arabia said: "CBX is honoured to promote and manage the 2020 World Cup of Pool in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. We look forward to showcasing this tactical and absorbing sport which is enjoyed widely throughout the Kingdom.

He added: "Our continued association with Matchroom brings together two organisations that have a dynamic wealth of expertise in delivering world class sporting events. The 2020 World Cup of Pool in Jeddah promises to be an exceptional tournament."

Matchroom Sport Chairman Barry Hearn said: "This is a huge moment for 9-ball pool. The sport is expanding globally and we are thrilled to be able to bring one of the biggest and most prestigious events to the Middle East.

Hearn added: "This is a great chance for pool fans in Saudi Arabia to see the world's elite players in one of the biggest tournaments. It is also an opportunity for us to help grow this fantastic sport in the Middle East and we look forward to working with our partners to deliver a huge event, benefitting in particular grass-root interest in pool and inspiring the youth of Saudi Arabia to achieve excellence in this sport."

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