**ADIDAS REVEALS ‘AL RIHLA’, THE NEW OFFICIAL MATCH BALL OF THE FIFA WORLD CUP 2022™**

* **The 14th successive ball adidas has created for the FIFA World Cup™ travels faster in flight than any other World Cup ball to support the highest game speeds**
* **1% of Al Rihla’s net sales will go to the Common Goal movement, to help drive social change and support grassroots football communities worldwide**
* **Al Rihla kicks off a journey of possibilities for footballers around the world as it visits 10 cities where adidas will launch new equity-focused initiatives**

**Herzogenaurach, 30th of March, 2022 –** Today, adidas reveals **Al Rihla** – the Official Match Ball for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™. It is the 14th successive ball adidas has created for the FIFA World Cup™ and is designed to support the highest game speeds as it travels faster in flight than any other World Cup ball.

*“The game is getting faster, and as it speeds up, accuracy and flight stability becomes critically important. The new design allows the ball to maintain its speed significantly higher as it journeys through the air. For the biggest global stage in all of sport, we set out to make the impossible, possible with radical innovation by creating the fastest and most accurate World Cup ball to-date,”* said **Franziska Loeffelmann, Design Director - Football Graphics & Hardwear, adidas**.

Designed from the inside out using data from rigorous testing in adidas labs, wind tunnels, and on-pitch, Al Rihla provides the highest level of accuracy and reliability on the field of play, due in part to its new panel shape and surface textures:

* **CTR-CORE** – An innovative core within the ball that is tuned to improve accuracy and consistency, supporting fast, precise play with maximum shape and air retention
* **SPEEDSHELL** – The ball’s polyurethane (PU) skin featuring micro and macro textures and a new 20-piece panel shape, which enhances aerodynamics to improve the accuracy, flight stability and swerve of shots

The ball was also designed with the environment at its heart - all components have been carefully considered, and Al Rihla is the first World Cup ball made using only water-based inks and glues.

The bold, vibrant color and graphics set on a pearlescent background reflect the ever-increasing speed of the game, with speed revealing the spectrum of color to excite players and fans around the world from grassroots to elite levels.

Al Rihla translates as “the journey” in Arabic and has been inspired by the architecture, iconic boats, and the flag of Qatar. The launch will mark the start of Al Rihla's journey to 10 cities across the globe where adidas is creating a series of initiatives aimed at improving access and equity in sport amongst local communities.

Starting its journey in Qatar, Al Rihla will be unveiled alongside World Cup greats, Casillas and Kaka, and iconic players, Farah Jefry and Nouf Al Anzi. They will be joined on pitch by a diverse mix of talent featuring aspiring woman football players from Qatar, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and some young next generation players from Aspire academy.

Al Rihla will debut on a specially created pitch at the launch event before being transported and donated to Challenge F.C., Saudi Arabia’s first ever women’s football league champions, to become a permanent fixture in Riyadh, delivering lasting impact for this team, who are currently without a permanent training facility.

The launch in Qatar will be the starting point of a journey of possibility as Al Rihla travels to locations around the world to create a series of purposeful activations. Each activation aims to help improve access and equity experienced by those in the local footballing communities in locations including Dubai, Tokyo, Shanghai, Mexico City or New York, among others.

*“At adidas, we believe sport belongs to all, and we have been committed and active in improving access and equity for our global community of footballers. As part of this commitment, on its journey around the world, Al Rihla will support local communities with activations designed to create lasting impact for grassroots and beyond,”* said **Nick Craggs, General Manager – Football, adidas**.

*“We are also proud to continue our work with Common Goal, with 1% of Al Rihla’s net sales supporting the movement, together using football as a vehicle to drive social change and meaningful impact for the lives of young people.”*

Al Rihla is the first World Cup ball in the 92-year history of the tournament which will directly contribute to raising funds to positively impact lives across the world, with 1% of Al Rihla’s net sales contributed going to the Common Goal movement.

In 2020 the brand launched the adidas Football Collective – a new movement committed to creating change through football, that brings together past, current, and future initiatives aiming to empower teams and football communities around the world.

*The adidas World Cup Ball 2022 Pro (RRP €140 / $140) drops on the 30th of March and will be exclusively available via adidas.com and adidas retail stores until 12th of April.*

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**For further media information please visit** [**http://news.adidas.com/GLOBAL/PERFORMANCE/FOOTBALL**](http://news.adidas.com/GLOBAL/PERFORMANCE/FOOTBALL) **or contact:** **adidasglobalfootball@hkstrategies.com**

**About adidas in Football**

adidas is the global leader in football. It is the official supplier of the most important football tournaments in the world, such as the FIFA World Cup™, the UEFA European Championship, the UEFA Champions League & Major League Soccer. adidas also sponsors some of the world’s top clubs including Real Madrid, Manchester United, Arsenal, FC Bayern Munich & Juventus, as well as top Federations such as Germany (DFB), Spain (RFEF), Belgium (RBFA), Argentina (AFA) & (as of January 2023) Italy (FIGC). adidas is also partner to some of the best athletes in the game including Leo Messi, Paul Pogba, Mohamed Salah, Paulo Dybala, Karim Benzema, Catarina Macario, Jude Bellingham, Vivianne Miedema, Trinity Rodman, Jennifer Hermoso, Serge Gnabry, Pedri, Joao Felix, Lindsey Horan & Wendie Renard.