

Iran Beach Footballers Win Asian Continental Cup Title



The Iranian men's national beach soccer team

TEHRAN (Press TV) - The Iranian men's national beach soccer team has won the trophy at the first edition of the Continental Tournament in China following an emphatic and well-served victory over Oman.

The Iranian outfit trounced the Omani contingent 6-3 in Ordos's city in China's northern Inner

Mongolia Autonomous Region to stand on the top of the table at the end of its campaign in the three-day-long continental tournament.

The Iranian team exerted a spell of pressure on Omanis' goal from the beginning of the game, and defender Amir Hossein Akbari was on target four times to put the ball at the back of the opponent's net and score a double brace, also known as a haul.

Seyyed Ali Nazem and Payman Hosseini added a goal each for the Iranian team against Oman.

Iranian sportsmen had defeated Japan 5-1 in the semi-finals in the march to the final clash.

The tournament served as a warm-

up event for the participating teams prior to the 5th edition of Asian Beach Games, which will open in the south-central Vietnamese city of Da Nang on September 24, and will run until October 3.

The competing countries in the first edition of the Continental Tournament also had an eye on the Asian qualification tournament for the the 2017 FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup, whose date and venue are yet to be announced.

The 2017 FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup, which will mark the ninth edition of the international sports event, will be played from April 27 to May 7 in the Bahamian capital city of Nassau.

Football's Champions League Rules Change

NYON (Anadolu Agency) - The Champions League will see the top teams from Europe's four leading football leagues guaranteed a place in the group stages of the tournament from 2018, European football's governing body UEFA said Friday.

Four teams from each of the English, Spanish, German and Italian leagues will not have to

face qualification for the contest, UEFA said in a statement.

"The top four clubs from the four top-ranked national associations will now qualify automatically for the group stage of the UEFA Champions League," the statement said.

Under changes, the previous season's Europa League winner will automatically qualify for the group stages.

China Roster Set for Tehran

BEIJING (FIBA) - China coach Li Nan has settled on the 12-man roster for the FIBA Asia Challenge in Tehran (Iran) in September.

The roster includes a number of young and promising young talents such as Fan Ziming, Hu Jinqiu, Zhao Yanhao and Zou Yuchen, who recently represented China at the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio.

Returning to the national team is Tao Hanlin. The 25 year-old was one of the bright spots for China in Wuhan where he finished as the team's second top scorer with 12 points and 6 rebounds per game.

China 12-player roster for 2016 FIBA Asia Challenge

Cui Jinming	He Tianju
Fang Shuo	Yuan Shuai
Liu Zhixuan	Zou Yuchen
Fan Ziming	Zhao Yanhao
Hu Jinqiu	Tao Hanlin

Zhao Dapeng Wu Qian

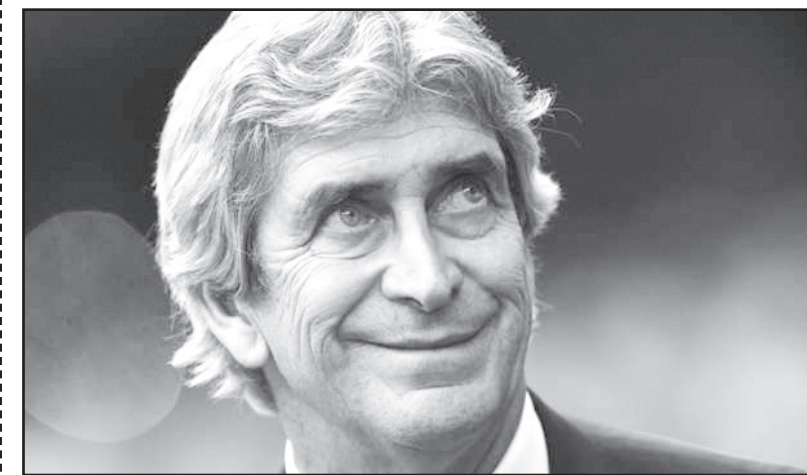
The East Asians will be looking to prove a point in Tehran following their poor showing in Rio.

China has never won the FIBA Asia Challenge, previously known as FIBA Asia Cup. They hosted the event two-years ago but failed to finish in the top three following a dramatic loss to the Philippines.

China is in Group A and will play 2008 edition Champions Jordan on the opening day of the tournament (9 September) before facing Kazakhstan two days later.

The top five teams in the FIBA Asia Challenge will earn for their respective sub-zones an extra berth in the 2017 FIBA Asia Cup (formerly the FIBA Asia Championship).

Pellegrini Becomes New Hebei China Fortune Boss



The Chilean had been out of work since leaving Manchester City at the end of the 2015-16 season but has now become the latest big-name arrival in the Chinese Super League

BEIJING (Goal) - Former Manchester City boss Manuel Pellegrini has become the new coach of Chinese Super League side Hebei China Fortune.

Pellegrini, 62, had been out of a job since the end of the 2015-16 seasons after he was replaced at the Etihad Stadium by Pep Guardiola.

The Chilean was officially confirmed on Saturday as Hebei's new coach via their official Weibo account - China's popular social media platform.

He will be coaching the likes of Ezequiel Lavezzi, Gervinho, Stephane Mbia, Gael Kakuta and Ersan Gulum at the Qinquangdao Olympic Sports Center Stadium.

Polish Olympian Sells Medal to Help Three-Year-Old With Cancer

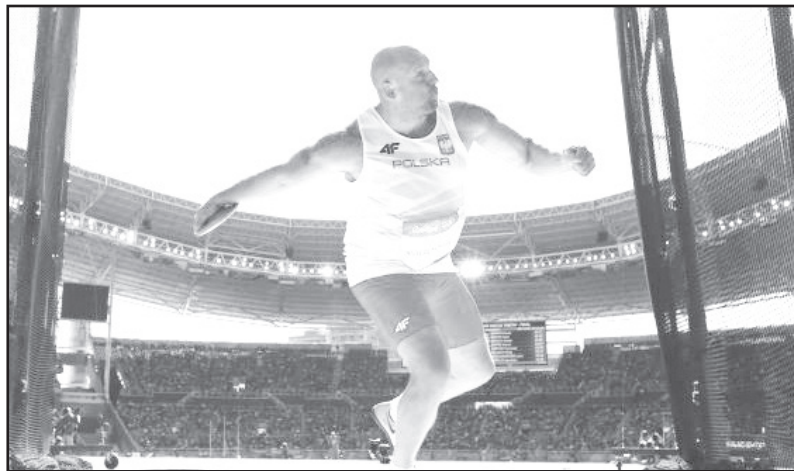
WARSAW (The Hindu) - Polish discus thrower Piotr Malachowski has donated his Olympic silver medal to raise funds for a three-year-old boy with a rare form of cancer.

Malachowski threw 67.55m to claim silver, finishing 82cm adrift of Germany's Christoph Harting who took gold.

It was the 33-year-old's second Olympic medal having taken silver back in 2008 at Beijing.

His donation enabled compatriot Olek Szymanski, who has retinoblastoma (an eye cancer affecting young children), to fly to New York to undergo treatment.

"My silver medal is worth a lot more than a week ago," said Malachowski.



Piotr Malachowski threw 67.55m to take silver

"It is worth the health of little Olek." He added: "We were able to show that together we can do wonders. It is our great shared success."

"Winning an Olympic medal is one of an athlete's life dreams. Of course, the most precious is gold. "I did everything in my power to get it. Unfortunately this time I did not succeed."

Malachowski made his original appeal via Facebook where he remarked: "In Rio I fought for the gold. Today I appeal to everyone - let's fight together about something that is even more precious: the health of this fantastic boy."

"If you help me, my silver can be more precious than gold."

Williams and Djokovic Sit Atop U.S. Open Draw, With Injuries Sharing Spotlight



Djokovic aims to defend his title, while Williams is seeking to win her 23rd major tournament.

WASHINGTON (NY Times) -Serena Williams and Novak Djokovic arrived at the United States Open as the top seeds and favorites to win, but both are nursing injuries.

Williams is recovering from a sore right shoulder that forced her to withdraw from an event in Cincinnati last week. Djokovic has a left wrist issue that may have contributed to his loss to Juan Martin del Potro in the first round at the Rio Olympics.

This is a far different entrance into the United States Open than Williams and Djokovic made a year ago.

Each surged into the tournament in 2015, with Williams on a highly publicized quest to win the Grand Slam, and Djokovic in search of his third major title of the year. Djokovic collected his championship, but Williams came up short of her goal.

Now attention will focus squarely on how they are able to

negotiate through their maladies, at least in the early rounds.

"It wasn't very easy, I think, physically," Williams said of her past few weeks. "I was just trying so hard and trying everything to get better. At the end of the day, I knew I gave the best effort I could, and it just wasn't enough."

Williams said that her sore shoulder first cropped up the day after she won Wimbledon in July. Then she went to the Olympics and sustained an uncharacteristic third-round loss to No. 20 Elina Svitolina, 6-4, 6-3. Just two months earlier, Williams had pounded Svitolina, 6-1, 6-1, at the French Open.

Djokovic, who won the Australian and French Opens this year, did not cite a precise diagnosis for his wrist injury. He noted the coincidence of playing in Rio against del Potro, who missed three years on the tour with a left wrist injury that required multiple surgeries. Djokovic called the wrist "that essential part of your body as a

tennis player."

Djokovic said the injury occurred while he was practicing in Rio, stressing that it was not the reason for his earlier loss to Sam Querrey in the third round at Wimbledon. But Djokovic did say he was dealing with an unspecified personal problem at Wimbledon.

"We all have private issues," he said, adding that the matter had been resolved.

But the wrist injury is not, and Djokovic, who ended his practice early on Friday, said he was trying a variety of methods to make it heal faster, including electrical stimulation. (He is in the same half of the draw as fourth-seeded Rafael Nadal, who is returning from a wrist injury of his own.)

"Sometimes time is what you need as an athlete, and the U.S. Open is around the corner and I don't have much time," Djokovic said. "I try to compensate and improvise as much as I can and find the best ways of getting myself properly ready."

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