

Iran, China Set Up 2012 Final Rematch at 2016 AVC Cup Showdown



TEHRAN (Kayhan International Sports Desk) - Iran's B national team won its third AVC (Asian Volleyball Confederation) Cup title. The Iranian team defeated China 3-1 (23-25 25-23 25-21 25-23) in the final of the 5th AVC Cup for Men.

Iran Miss Chance to Get to Futsal World Cup Finals



Iran's national futsal squad

MEDELLIN (AFC) - The Islamic Republic of Iran lost out on a place in the final of the FIFA Futsal World Cup Colombia 2016 after bowing down to Russia 4-3 in Medellin on Tuesday (local time).

The European side led from the start at the Coliseo Ivan de Bedout to reach their first-ever Futsal World Cup final, though they were

made to work hard for it by the Asian champions, who had shown their pedigree in making it to the last four after victories over reigning world champions Brazil in the Round of 16 and Paraguay in the quarter-finals.

A scrappy first half saw both sides find the score sheet before half-time. It was Russia that took

the lead through Dmitry Lyskov, who made the most of some patient build-up to create a foot of space from his marker and shoot across Iran goalkeeper Alireza Samimi into the top left corner for 1-0.

Iran's response came through a stunning free-kick from Ahmad Esmailpour. His effort curled around the Russian wall and into the top right corner, leaving Gustavo frozen in the Russian goal.

Russia restored their lead shortly after the break through Sergey Abramov's sumptuous volley for his second of the tournament. Then came arguably the turning point of the match, as both sides exchanged goals midway through the second half.

Iran felt they had turned the momentum back in their favor when Ali Hassan Zadeh showed great composure to make it 2-2. Yet,

seconds later, Russia responded through their captain Vladislav Shayakmetov to leave the Iranians chasing the match once more.

With time winding down, Iran used the flying goalkeeper in a bid to draw level for a third time. Yet, with an empty Iranian net to aim for, Russia scored their match winner through Ivan Chishkala from his own half.

Though the task looked insurmountable, Iran's never-say-die spirit that has been at the foundation of their Colombia 2016 campaign made the final seconds of this semi-final interesting, as Mahdi Javid converted on the rebound to make the scoreline a more accurate reflection of this hard-fought contest.

Iran scorers:

Ahmad Esmailpour (16'27")

Ali Hassan Zadeh (29'12")

Mahdi Javid (39'49").

'We Didn't Estimate We Would Win 3-0'

ABU DHABI (DAWN) - Pakistan blanked the West Indies 3-0 in the T20 series with another dominating eight wicket win in the third and final match here on Tuesday.

After beating Carlos Brathwaite's men by nine wickets and 16 runs in the first two matches at Dubai, Pakistan, under Sarfraz, secured their first-ever 3-0 whitewash in a T20 series.

"We didn't estimate we would win 3-0," said Sarfraz. "But I will give full credit to the boys for doing everything better than them and that's why we have won the series."

The wicketkeeper-batsman believes the clean sweep over the world champions is the first step towards building a formidable outfit for the future.

Sarfraz said the win will go a long way towards establishing a T20 team, struggling after being ousted in the first round of the World Twenty20 held in India in March-April this

year that forced the then skipper Shahid Afridi to step down.

Sarfraz, who was handed over the leadership, has won all four matches — also beating England at Manchester earlier this month.

"Of course, this is the first step towards building a new team," the 29-year-old said, adding, "If we want to become a good team then we have to bring consistency."

Sarfraz was pleased to see the players, regardless of their experience at the international level standing up to the task.

"Both junior and senior players are performing and contributing and that is the sign of a good team."

Left-arm spinner Imad Wasim, declared man of the series for his nine wickets in the series, rocked the West Indies' top order with figures of three for 21.

West Indies' below par total of 103-5 was

never a bother for Pakistan, who chased down the target in 15.1 overs for the loss of two wickets.

All did not go well for the West Indies after winning the World Twenty20 title.

World Twenty20 winning captain Darren Sammy was replaced by Carlos Brathwaite while successful coach Phil Simmons was sacked.

Sarfraz said he was enjoying the captaincy.

"It's nice to see senior and juniors cooperating and contributing. It's a combination of juniors and seniors and I am enjoying it as a leader."

Pakistan and West Indies will now play three One-Day Internationals (ODI) with the first game in Sharjah on Friday.

The ODI will be followed by three Tests, the first a day-night game in Dubai from October 13.

Johanna Konta Improves Her Chance of Reaching WTA Finals With Wuhan Win

BEIJING (Euro Sport) - British number one Johanna Konta boosted her chances of making the WTA Finals later this month by beating one of her rivals Carla Suarez Navarro in the Dongfeng Motor Wuhan Open.

With only the top eight players in the Road to Singapore qualifying, Konta, in 10th, cut the deficit on eighth-placed Suarez Navarro after a 7-5 7-6 (8/6) win.

That sets up a quarter-final clash with either world number one Angelique Kerber or Petra

Kvitova and the chance to further gain points on the Spaniard, while also maintaining pace with ninth-placed Madison Keys, who earlier booked her last-eight spot.

It was a gritty performance from the 25-year-old, who decisively won the crucial points in the match, continually holding off her opponent's challenge in the second set.

After saving a break point at 5-5, Konta then came out and immediately broke, with some strong hitting forcing four er-

rors from Suarez Navarro before serving it out for 7-5.

The second set was an undulating affair as, after an early exchange of breaks, Suarez Navarro took the ascendancy to break to love and then hold to lead 5-3.

She put the Konta serve under even more pressure in a marathon game that went to eight deuces and saw the Brit save three set points, eventually holding on her fifth game point before coming out to break Suarez Navarro back and force a tie-break.

Suarez Navarro again assumed control in the breaker as she took a 6-3 lead before a steely Konta reeled off five successive points to take the match, matching her run to the last eight here in 2015.

Meanwhile, British number three Naomi Broady is out of the Taskent Open in Uzbekistan after a second-round loss to Irina Khromacheva.

Broady is seeded eighth and would have harboured hopes of going deep into the tournament, but she succumbed to the Russian, who won 6-2 6-4.

Real Madrid Borussia Dortmund Draw 2-2 in Pulsating Match



Andre Schuerrle struck in the 87th minute to earn Borussia Dortmund a point.

DORTMUND (Indian Express) - Andre Schuerrle came off the bench to snatch a late goal and earn a deserved point for Borussia Dortmund as they twice came from behind to earn a 2-2 draw with Champions League holders Real Madrid in a compelling Group F encounter on Tuesday.

The Germany international lashed high into the net from inside the area to level in the 87th minute after Raphael Varane had restored Real's advantage in the 68th.

The France defender's goal made up for an earlier slip that allowed Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang to cancel out Cristiano Ronaldo's 17th minute opener towards the end of the first half.

Dortmund and Real each have four points with the Germans top on goal difference, while Sporting Lisbon are third on three points after beating visitors Legia Warsaw 2-0.

The hosts made an electric start at the Westfalenstadion after Ronaldo had tested Roman Burki with an early free-kick, with Gonzalo Castro and Aubameyang each firing at Real goalkeeper Keylor Navas and Ousmane Dembele shooting over.

Real were also let off the hook when referee Mark Clattenburg failed to spot a clear handball by Ronaldo in the area while defending a free-kick.

Just as a Dortmund opener looked inevitable, Real struck first with a perfectly executed counter-attack.

Karim Benzema began the move with a dart down the left before

finding support in Toni Kroos, who worked the ball towards Gareth Bale. He then teed up Ronaldo to arrow into the far corner.

Ronaldo raced to the sidelines to salute Portuguese compatriots Pepe and Fabio Coentrao and coach Zinedine Zidane, signalling that Saturday's disagreement over his substitution in a La Liga match had been quickly forgotten.

Thomas Tuchel's side stuck with their game plan of pressing Real high and hitting them with lightning speed, although their equaliser came from a free-kick.

Real stopper Navas, making his first appearance of the season, could only weakly punch Raphael Guerreiro's shot at team mate Varane and the ball trickled towards the goal-line, helped across by Aubameyang.

Dortmund's impressive French winger Dembele spurned a second clear chance of the game in the second half as the home side retained their tempo, although Real also grew in confidence down the other end.

Bale and Benzema wasted chances before Varane put Zidane's side ahead again, tapping home after Benzema had crashed a shot against the bar.

Dortmund again raised their game, though.

Navas turned away two shots from lively substitute Emre Mor as the Germans sought an equaliser, urged on by a fervent home support, but was powerless to keep out the rocket from Schuerrle.

Mesut Ozil Set to Take Wilshere's Number 10 Shirt in £200,000-A-Week Contract Extension



Mesut Ozil

LONDON (Euro Sport) - Arsenal will apparently offer Germany playmaker Mesut Ozil the number 10 shirt worn by Jack Wilshere as part of his new contract.

According to reports this morning, Ozil is finally ready to agree a new contract with Arsene Wenger's side after a year of contract negotiations.

Wenger has never hidden his desire to keep Ozil - signed from Real Madrid for £42.5m in 2013 - at the

club. The 27-year-old turned out 56 times last season for club and country, culminating in Arsenal finishing second in the Premier League and Germany's run to the last four of Euro 2016 where they lost to France.

SportBild in Germany are saying Ozil will take over Wilshere's number with the news of Ozil's contract set to be announced on October 15.

Wilshere is spending the season on loan at Bournemouth.

South America Beat Europe 1-0 at 'Evergrande Cup' All Star

BEIJING (Xinhua) - The great and good of footballing yesteryear took to the field in Chengdu, the capital of southwest China's Sichuan Province, for the Evergrande Cup All Star game on Tuesday evening.

Some of the most decorated legends of the last 20 years faced off in the match which pitted South American legends against their European counterparts.

The main draw for the Chinese crowd was undoubtedly FC Barcelona

legend Ronaldinho, who remains a huge star in the country after his memorable five-year spell with the Catalan club.

Other famous faces taking part included Bulgaria legend Hristo Stoichkov, Portuguese stars Luis Figo and Simao and Brazilian World Cup winners Dida and Roque Junior.

The low tempo match, which was notable for the lack of athletic physique on display, finished 1-0 to the South American side.