

Iranian Cyclist Wins First Gold at Para Asian Track Championships



TEHRAN (MNA) – Mehdi Mohammadi has won first gold medal for Iran at 7th edition of Para Asian Track Championships in Malaysia. Iran has dispatched three cyclists including Mehdi Mohammadi, Alreza Ghasemi, and Bahram Soilemani to the competition, according to the Islamic Republic of Iran National Paralympics Committee (IRINPC). Mehdi Mohammadi grabbed the gold medal at the individual stage,

while the other two Iranian cyclists came sixth and seventh and failed to be among the first four cyclists. The cyclists are scheduled to compete against their rivals at 1-kilometer and spirit pursuit events on Monday. The 7th edition of Para Asian Track Championships began in the Malaysian capital city of Kuala Lumpur on Friday February 16, and will finish on February 20, 2018.

Federer Becomes Oldest ATP World Number One



Federer of Switzerland celebrates after defeating Robin Haase of the Netherlands, February 16, 2018.

ROTTERDAM (Reuters) - Roger Federer added yet another record to his vast collection when he guaranteed becoming the oldest ATP world number one by beating Dutchman Robin Haase 4-6 6-1 6-1 to reach the semi-finals in Rotterdam on Friday. Fresh from winning his 20th grand slam title in Melbourne this month, Federer took a wildcard into the ABN AMRO World Tennis event with his eyes fixed on a return to number one for the first time since November 2012. Needing to reach the last four to overtake great rival Rafael Nadal, Federer showed some early nerves in his quarter-final clash in the port city's Ahoy Arena, dropping serve in the ninth game on his way to conceding the first set. But the 36-year-old Swiss, as he usually does, moved through the gears to punish a physically struggling Haase. A demoralized Haase double-faulted on match point and after an initially restrained celebration Federer sat on his chair and looked close to tears as his feat sank in -- as did some of the Swiss fans leading the rapturous applause. "Reaching number one is one of, if not the ultimate achievement in our sport," Federer said on court after being handed a huge No.1 shaped plaque by Dutch former Wimbledon champion Richard Krajicek, the tournament director. "Sometimes at the beginning you just kind of get there because you played so well, but later you have to fight for it and have to wrestle it back from someone who deserves to be there. When you are older you maybe have to put double the work in. This maybe means the most to me in my career."

Federer, whose glittering career has re-ignited since taking six months off in 2016, has won three of the last five grand slams having gone five years without one. One of the greatest ever late-career runs by any sportsman or woman means he surpasses Andre Agassi who was the previous oldest man to top the ATP rankings. American Agassi was 33 when he scaled the summit in 2003. He was one of the first to congratulate Federer. "Roger Federer continues to raise the bar in our sport. Congratulations on yet another remarkable achievement!!" Agassi said on Twitter. Federer also set another record with the more than five-year gap between his previous and most recent stints as world number one being the longest since ATP rankings began in 1973. Incredibly Federer first reached number one in 2004, as a 22-year-old, and having now returned there 14 years later playing some of the best tennis of his career, he looks capable of another lengthy stretch on the throne. He already holds the record of 302 weeks ranked number one. On his Instagram account later, Federer said: "A night to remember forever. Thank you to all my fans who have been there for me since the beginning." The journey continues on Saturday when Federer faces Italian Andreas Seppi in the semi-final with a 97th career title in sight. Seppi beat Russian Daniil Medvedev in three sets. The other semi-final will feature Bulgaria's Grigor Dimitrov and Belgian David Goffin. Dimitrov beat Andrey Rublev while Goffin was given a walkover by injured Czech Tomas Berdych.

Olympic Streak Over as Canada Loses to Czechs in Shootout

GANGNEUNG, South Korea (AP) — The Czech Republic rallied twice to hand the Canadian men's hockey team its first Olympic loss in eight years Saturday, riding goaltender Pavel Francouz to a 3-2 win in a shootout. Canada had won 11 consecutive games at the Olympics — the first 10 with NHL players — dating to a loss to the United States in pool play in Vancouver in 2010. Canada opened these games with a comfortable 5-1 win over the Swiss that confirmed its status as one of the favorites in the tournament.



Still, Russia, the United States and now Canada have all lost in the preliminary round. Mason Raymond and Rene Bourque scored first-period goals for Canada, but Dominik Kubalik and Michal Jordan answered for the Czechs, who used a successful forecheck. The Czechs tied it up 35 seconds into the second period: Ben Scrivens, who had mishandled the puck seconds earlier, stopped a Michal Birner shot but Jordan banged in the rebound. Canada outshot the Czechs 33-20 through overtime, but Francouz stood tall — particularly in the extra session. The three-on-three overtime on the big ice was frantic entertainment with quality scoring chances. Canada's Derek Roy made some nifty rushes but couldn't finish it off, while Mat Robinson broke up a two-on-one before losing the puck on a breakaway.

Czech Ledicka Wins Shock Olympic Super-G, Vonn Sixth

PYEONGCHANG, South Korea (AFP) - Czech snowboarder Ester Ledicka sprang one of the biggest shocks in Winter Games history when she won the super-G on Saturday with US star Lindsey Vonn finishing sixth. Ledicka, favorite in the snowboard parallel slalom in a week's time, clocked 1min 21.11sec down the polished 2km-long Jeongseon course to edge defending champion Anna Veith of Austria by one-hundredth of a second. Liechtenstein's Tina Weirather took bronze. Not only did Ledicka deprive Veith of what looked like a rare double, she pushed Vonn back into sixth spot, the American star paying the price for a massive error that saw her lose valuable time at the bottom of

the course. A shell-shocked Ledicka, said: "All the other girls didn't risk a lot. There must be a lot of pressure on them. I was just trying to do my best run. After newly-crowned giant slalom gold medallist Mikaela Shiffrin's disappointing fourth place in Friday's slalom, all eyes were on Vonn for a U.S. medal comeback as she opened her Pyeongchang campaign in brilliant sunshine. On a technically testing super-G on hard-packed, artificial snow, an almost capacity crowd of 4,000 roared as the American was shown getting ready to move into the start gate. Dressed in a figure-hugging white catsuit with red and blue stripes, and blonde hair tied tight back into a pony tail



Czech snowboarder Ester Ledicka skies to victory in the women's Super-G at the Pyeongchang 2018 Winter Olympic Games on Saturday.

tucked into a white helmet, the American shot out and skied the top two-thirds of the course well, reaching speeds of 100 kmh and flying more than 30 meters off the jumps. Pushing herself to the max, she overcooked it coming into the bottom third, however, and just four gates from the finish went wide on a turn. Be-gloved left hand desperately driven into the snow to correct herself and scrape inside the next gate.

Paulo Dybala Set for Juventus Return Against Torino



Paulo Dybala celebrates after scoring for Juventus against Spal in Serie A.

ROME (Dispatches) - Paulo Dybala is back in contention for Juventus as they prepare to take on local rivals Torino on Sunday. The striker has not played since Jan. 6 because of a hamstring

problem but has returned to full training and could feature. "Having Paulo back is very important and means we can raise our level of quality that much more," full-back Alex Sandro told the club's official website. Massimiliano Allegri's men have won eight Serie A matches in a row heading into the Derby della Mole, with their most recent game the 2-2 home draw with Tottenham in the Champions League round of 16 on Tuesday. Sandro insists there is a "positive spirit" in the Juve camp and added: "The draw with Tottenham was not a negative result. Torino are unbeaten in five matches under new coach Walter Mazzarri, and have not lost since a Coppa Italia defeat to Juventus on Jan. 3. "I always had an excellent relationship with Tomas. We still live in the same building and talk plenty, even if maybe these days it's better to stay apart!" Juventus head into the game one point behind leaders Napoli.

Mainz Beat Hertha to Boost Chances of Bundesliga Survival

BERLIN (AP) - Swedish midfielder Robin Quaison has scored twice as Mainz beat Hertha Berlin 2-0 for a boost in its fight against Bundesliga relegation. Hertha had been hoping to close in on the qualification places for European football next season, but the side disappointed in front of its own fans as it slumped to its first loss in five games. There was further bad news for Hertha with forward Vedad Ibisevic going off early with what assistant coach Rainer Widmayer said at half-time was a broken nose. Mainz had several chances in the first half, and the visitors duly went ahead minutes before the break when Quaison eluded four Hertha defenders to score inside the left post. The ball went between two of the players' legs. Quaison grabbed his second midway through the second half after latching onto a simple ball over the top from Jean-Philippe Gbamin and firing through goalkeeper Rune Jarstein's legs. The home fans responded with whistles for their team's lackluster performance. Mainz remains in the relegation playoff spot ahead of the rest of the 23rd round, level on points with Werder Bremen and one behind Stuttgart and Wolfsburg.