

# Iran Men's Sabre Team Runner-Up at Asian Fencing Championships



The Iranian men's national sabre team

TEHRAN (Dispatches) - The Iranian men's national sabre team has delivered great displays of skills and agility at the 2017 Asian Fencing Championships, and managed to

finish in the second place overall at the prestigious continental event.

On Tuesday, the Iranian squad, comprised of Mojtaba Abedini, Ali Pakdaman, Mohamad Rahbari and

Mohammad Fotouhi, reached the final of the men's sabre team competition at AsiaWorld-Expo, but conceded a narrow 42-45 defeat against South Korea and settled for the silver medal.

Sabre is a light cutting and thrusting weapon in the sport of fencing. In the sabre section, the entire body above the waist, except the weapon hand, is targeted. Hits with the entire blade or point are valid. Touches that land outside of the target area are not scored.

Earlier in the tournament, Rahbari had lost to South Korean fencer Gu Bon-gil 8-15 in the final contest of men's individual sabre section, and received the silver medal.

Ali Pakdaman, another representative from the Islamic Republic of Iran, was awarded the bronze.

The 2017 Asian Fencing Championships kicked off in Hong Kong on June 15, and ran through June 20.

The competitions reportedly brought together a total of 340 male and female fencers from various Asian countries, including China, Hong Kong, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Thailand and Vietnam.

## Faghani to Officiate Germany-Chile in Confederations Cup



TEHRAN (Tasnim) - Alireza Faghani from Iran has been chosen as referee of Group B match between Germany and Chile in the 2017 FIFA Confederations Cup.

The match will be held in Kazan, Russia on Thursday.

Faghani will be assisted with his countrymen Reza Sokhandan and

Mohammadreza Mansouri.

Alireza Faghani made history by becoming the first Asian referee to officiate the final of a Men's Olympic.

Faghani, 39, became a FIFA referee in 2008, only a year after officiating in the top flight league in Iran.

## Italian Runner to Run in Lut Desert to Record Name in Guinness

TEHRAN (Dispatches) - An Italian runner plans to run 80 kilometers in Lut Desert in a 70-degree day to record his name in the Guinness Book of Records.

Modin Afzali, coordinator of the program for the Italian runner and director of a tourism agency in Lut Desert, told media that Paolo Venturini, the Italian nature adventurer will go to Gandom Baran, the hottest spot of the Lut Desert, on July 30th, when the temperature reaches 65 to 70 degrees, to run 80 kilometers in a day.

In late July, he added, the Lut Desert would have the highest



possible temperature and Venturini has chosen this day to record his

name in the Guinness at the hottest temperature.

He added the event will also record the name of Lut Desert in the Guinness Book of Records.

Lut Desert is a large salt desert in Kerman and Sistan and Baluchistan province, and is the world's 25th largest desert.

For this purpose, Afzali noted, two Guinness experts and a cameraman of Italian TV program Sky Sports will accompany the runner.

This is one of the achievements of the last year's marathon, when foreign runners, including Paolo Venturini ran in the Lut Desert. "He decided last year to record his name as a Lut Desert runner," Afzali added.

## India Wants to Host 2032 Olympics, 2030 Asian Games - IOA Chief

MUMBAI (Dispatches) - India's Olympic Association has asked the government for permission to bid for the 2032 Olympics and 2030 Asian Games as part of a drive to put the country at the heart of the international sporting community, IOA President N. Ramachandran has said.

Ramachandran said the IOA also wanted India to host the Asian Beach Games in 2020, the Olympic Council of Asia's general assembly that year, and the International Olympic Committee session in 2021.

The aim, Ramachandran said, was to use the engagement as a

catalyst for the growth of Olympic sports in India and to help improve the country's miserable standing in pretty much every sport apart from cricket.

As the world's second-most populous nation after China, Ramachandran said it was time for India to follow its powerful neighbor in showcasing its burgeoning economic muscle through sport.

Dismissing concerns about whether India can afford to stage such huge sporting spectacles, Ramachandran said the country was one of the few in the region that did have the means.

## Hamilton Determined to Deliver in Baku



LONDON (Reuters) - Azerbaijan, a new race last year, is the only grand prix on Formula One's current calendar that Lewis Hamilton has yet to win and the Briton heads back to Baku determined to deliver this weekend.

After a dominant weekend in Canada where he led a Mercedes one-two to regain momentum after a stinging defeat to Ferrari in Monaco, Hamilton is on a high and with the praise of team boss Toto Wolff ringing in his ears.

"Lewis is in the best place I have

seen him during any of the last five years since he joined the team," the Austrian said this week.

"Not only because he had a great weekend in Montreal, but because he is coping so well with the difficult days. This is what the very best are made of."

Hamilton will also be keen to banish the memory of a disappointing first visit to the anti-clockwise track running along the shores of the Caspian Sea and around the walls of the medieval old town.

## Coleman Poised to Upstage Gatlin at U.S. Athletics Trials



Veteran sprinter Justin Gatlin has become a mentor to prodigy and rival Christian Coleman (AFP Photo/ANDY LYONS)

SACRAMENTO (AFP) - The next generation of American sprinting talent will be on display Thursday when the U.S. Track and Field Championships get under way in Sacramento with places at this year's World Championships up for grabs.

With Usain Bolt preparing to hang up his spikes later this year, the athletics world will get a glimpse of the sprinters likely to be in the frame to inherit the Jamaican star's throne when he departs the sport.

For the best part of a decade, drug-

tainted veteran Justin Gatlin has been the dominant force in American sprinting over 100m and 200m, while remaining an emphatic second best against Bolt in major championships.

Gatlin finished runner-up to the Jamaican twice in the 100m at the last two world championships in 2013 and 2015, and once again at the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro last August.

But the grizzled 35-year-old will be back at Sacramento's Hornet Stadium this week hoping to book his place on the U.S. team for the World Championships at London in August -- and possibly another showdown with Bolt.

However, Gatlin might well find himself in a dogfight just to qualify for London judging by his results this season.

Gatlin, who has a 100m personal best of 9.74 seconds set in 2015, has not come close to that kind of time this year, only once ducking below 10 seconds.

He clocked a disappointing fifth place at the Prefontaine Classic Diamond

League meeting a month ago in Eugene, Oregon.

More significantly, while Gatlin has struggled to rediscover his best form, American sprinting has been crackling with excitement over the displays of collegiate star Christian Coleman.

The 21-year-old University of Tennessee prodigy sent shockwaves rippling throughout the athletics world earlier this month when he scorched to a world-leading fastest time of the season, 9.82.

The fact that Coleman eased up as he crossed the line in the U.S. college championships semi-final suggests he has the potential to go faster.

Conditions in Sacramento this week are likely to suit fast times, with the mercury forecast to reach 105 degrees Fahrenheit (41 degrees Celsius).

Coleman was a teammate of Gatlin on the U.S. squad in Rio last season, an alternate in the 4x100m relay squad. The youngster revealed that Gatlin had become a mentor to him.

## FIFA Issues Warning to Mexico Over Fans' Homophobic Chants

SOCHI (Dispatches) - FIFA has issued a warning to Mexico over the conduct its fans' in the Confederations Cup.

The chant occurred in Mexico's opening game against Portugal in Russia, and it was directed towards the opposing team's goalkeeper.

This is in line with what Mexican fans have been doing for quite a while, most notably during the 2014 World Cup in Brazil, but FIFA has said that they're going to start cracking down on offensive incidents.

It's a concerted effort by FIFA to

fix its image problem, something that the fans are apparently not going to help with.

FIFA issued a statement on the warning, claiming that Anin Yeboah of the disciplinary committee "decided to impose a warning on the Mexican Football Federation for

the misconduct of a small group of Mexican fans in relation to insulting and discriminatory chants."

The league's disciplinary committee leader has already helped to institute a policy that will allow referees to end matches in the face of hateful or offensive actions by fans.

## Federer Claims First Win of Grass-Court Season

HALLE (Dispatches) - Eighteen-time major champion Roger Federer has picked up his first win of the grass-court season by thrashing Japan's Yuichi Sugita in the first round at Halle.

The Swiss top seed, who skipped the entire clay-court schedule in order to be fully fit for Wimbledon, brushed aside lucky loser Sugita 6-3, 6-1 in just 51

minutes. Federer, who won his first Grand Slam title since 2012 at the Australian Open in January, lost the first match of his return to German veteran Tommy Haas in Stuttgart last week.

But the world number five was back to his imperious best, as he broke in the fourth game en route to the opening set.