

# Iranian Junior, U-21 Karate Teams Win Asian Championships



TEHRAN (Dispatches) – Iranian junior and U-21 karate teams have claimed the title of the 16th edition of the Asian championship in Astana, Kazakhstan.

Iranian junior team won three gold medals, one silver and four bronze medals.

Iran U-21 team also seized seven gold medals, three silvers and two bronze medals.

Japan came second, winning six gold medals, four silvers and six bronzes in two categories.

Kazakhstan finished in third place with six gold medals, two silvers and four bronzes.

The competitions have brought 660 karate practitioners from 27 Asian countries together in Astana, Kazakhstan.

## Man United Named Most Valuable Team



MANCHESTER (Dispatches) - Manchester United are sitting atop the soccer world once again.

At least, in terms of financial value... Sorry, Jose, you still have quite a bit of work to do at Old Trafford on the pitch.

Off the pitch the Red Devils were named the most valuable soccer team on the planet by Forbes Magazine, as they moved ahead of Spanish giants Barcelona and Real Madrid with Man United worth an estimated \$3.69 billion.

That's an 11 percent increase, the biggest rise in the top 10, on last year and they're the third most valuable sports team overall.

The NFL dominated the top 50 list with 29 teams included as the Dallas Cowboys are the most valuable sports team on the planet at \$4.2 billion and Major League Baseball's New York Yankees came in second at \$3.7 billion.

Below is a look at the top 10 overall sports teams with teams from the NFL, MLB, NBA and the soccer world all making the top 50 and seven soccer teams were in the top 50.

Four Premier League teams made the list with Manchester City at 35th with a value of \$2.083 billion, Arsenal in 43rd at \$1.93 billion and Chelsea in 45th at \$1.84 billion. Bayern Munich were the only other soccer team to make the top 50 at 15th with a value of \$2.71 billion.

Forbes' top 10 most valuable teams

1. Dallas Cowboys – \$4.2 billion
2. New York Yankees – \$3.7 billion
3. Manchester United – \$3.69 billion
4. Barcelona – \$3.64 billion
5. Real Madrid – \$3.58 billion
6. New England Patriots – \$3.4 billion
7. New York Knicks – \$3.3 billion
8. New York Giants – \$3.1 billion
9. San Francisco 49ers – \$3 billion
10. Los Angeles Lakers – \$3 billion
15. Bayern Munich – \$2.71 billion
35. Manchester City – \$2.083 billion
43. Arsenal – \$1.93 billion
45. Chelsea – \$1.84 billion

## Bottas Leads Mercedes One-Two in British GP Practice

SILVERSTONE, England (Reuters) - Formula One champions Mercedes made a statement of intent in British Grand Prix practice on Friday with Valtteri Bottas leading home favorite Lewis Hamilton at the top of the timesheets as Ferrari were left far behind.

The Finn, keeping up the momentum after winning in Austria, was nearly half a second faster than his closest non-Mercedes rival with the 2017 Formula One cars looking significantly quicker and the champions in ominous form.

Red Bull's Dutch teenager Max Verstappen, who has had five retirements in the last seven races,



F1 - Formula One - British Grand Prix 2017 - Silverstone, Britain - July 14, 2017 Mercedes' Valtteri Bottas in action

and Australian Daniel Ricciardo were third and fourth respectively at an overcast Silverstone.

"Mercedes look really strong but we look to be in the fight with Ferrari. At the moment we're battling Ferrari and not Mercedes," commented Ricciardo, who has been on podium for five races in a row.

Hamilton, who will be chasing his fifth British Grand Prix victory and fourth in a row on Sunday, was 0.078 off his team mate's best time of one minute 29.106 seconds.

Bottas's time was quicker than Hamilton's 2016 pole position of 1:29.287.

## Chris Froome Loses Tour de France Lead in Stage 12



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LONDON (Dispatches) - Chris Froome has lost the Tour de France yellow jersey to Italian Fabio Aru by fading in the final kilometer of Stage 12 in the France's Romain Bardet, third in the overall standings, won the stage.

Rigoberto Uran and Aru were second and third, two seconds behind. Froome, who entered the day with an 18-second lead on Aru,

was 22 seconds back of Bardet.

The Brit Froome is trying to move within one Tour title of the career record of five shared by Jacques Anquetil, Eddy Merckx, Bernard Hinault and Miguel Indurain.

Riders face three category-one climbs on the 63-mile day, with a 16-mile descent to the finish on Bastille Day, when French riders are always motivated to go for stage wins.

## Venus Williams Gains 9th Wimbledon Final, Awaits Muguruza

LONDON (AP) — All these years later, Wimbledon still brings out the best in Venus Williams.

With her latest display of gutsy serving and big hitting, Williams beat Johanna Konta 6-4, 6-2 on Thursday to reach her ninth title match at the All England Club and first since 2009.

At 37, Williams is the oldest Wimbledon finalist since Martina Navratilova was the 1994 runner-up at that age.

Williams also stopped Konta's bid to become the first woman from Britain in 40 years to win the country's Grand Slam tournament.

"I couldn't have asked for more, but I'll ask for a little more. One more win would be amazing," Williams said. "It won't be a given, but I'm going to give it my all."

She will be seeking her sixth Wimbledon championship and eighth Grand Slam singles trophy overall. Her most recent came in 2008, when she defeated her younger sister, Serena, for the title

at the All England Club. A year later, she lost the final to Serena.

In the time since, Williams revealed that she was diagnosed with Sjogren's syndrome, which can sap energy and cause joint pain. As time went on, there were questions about whether she might retire, especially after a half-dozen first-round losses at major tournaments. But she kept on going, and lately has returned to winning.

Her resurgence began in earnest at Wimbledon a year ago, when she made it to the semifinals. Then, at the Australian Open in January, Williams reached the final, where she lost to — yes, you guessed it — her sister. Serena is off the tour for the rest of this year because she is pregnant.

On Saturday, the 10th-seeded American will participate in her second Grand Slam final of the season, and 16th of her career, this time against 14th-seeded Garbine Muguruza of Spain.

## Japan International Honda Signs for Mexican Club Pachuca



TOKYO (Reuters) - Japan attacking midfielder Keisuke Honda has joined Mexican side Pachuca, the CONCACAF Champions League holders announced on Friday, two months after leaving AC Milan as a free agent.

"I have just signed for Pachuca and I'm very happy," Honda said in Spanish in a video on the club's Twitter feed.

The club did not disclose the details of his contract.

Honda, 31, has 86 caps for Japan, scoring 36 goals, and is the only

Japanese player to score in two separate World Cups, netting in the 2010 and 2014 tournaments.

He joined Milan in January 2014 for a reported 20 million euro (\$22.8 million) fee from CSKA Moscow but could not halt the decline of the Italian giants, who finished outside the top five in each of his four seasons at the San Siro.

He admitted after his last game, a 2-1 defeat at Cagliari for which he was named club captain, that his time at Milan had been a disappointment.

## Los Angeles Clubs Keen on Ibrahimovic

LONDON (Dispatches) - Both Los Angeles-based Major League Soccer clubs are interested in signing Zlatan Ibrahimovic if the Swede decides to end his career outside Europe.

Free agent Ibrahimovic is currently recovering from knee surgery at Manchester United's training ground.

United have not ruled out signing the 35-year-old on a short-term contract once he is fit, but LA Galaxy and Los Angeles FC are both interested in him.

The Swede has said he will make a "big announcement" about his future soon.

His agent Mino Raiola has

previously said the former Sweden forward will stay in Europe while in March LA Galaxy told Ibrahimovic they were willing to make him the highest-paid player in MLS history.

It is understood they have not changed their view of the player, who scored 28 goals in his debut season for United before rupturing

his cruciate knee ligaments against Anderlecht in April.

LA Galaxy coach Curt Onalfo would not comment on the former Paris St-Germain striker when asked about the much-travelled player on Thursday, but did add the "DNA of the Galaxy is to attract world-class players, so we are

always looking for one".

Meanwhile, the new Los Angeles FC franchise, which plays its first MLS season in 2018, may sign a star name before appointing their coach.

BBC Sport has been told Ibrahimovic, as a result of his star quality, and another former

Manchester United player, Javier Hernandez - owing to the huge Mexican population in Los Angeles - are considered perfect candidates to be a symbolic signing for Los Angeles FC.

Hernandez, 28, has a contract with Bayer Leverkusen that is not due to expire until 2018.