

Iranian Judokas Get Three Medals in Junior Asian Cup

TEHRAN (Dispatches) - Iranian judo practitioners have displayed fine athletic skills at the Junior Asian Cup in Uzbekistan, and been awarded three medals, including one silver, at the continental sporting event.

Abolfazl Shojaei defeated a contestant from the host nation in the first round of men's under 90-kilogram weight class.

He later obtained two consecutive victories over Tajik and Kazakh rivals, and advanced to the semi-final round.

Shojaei prevailed over another representative from Uzbekistan and found a place in the title challenge.



This photo shows members of the Iranian judo team at the Junior Asian Judo Cup in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

He, however, lost to his Kazakh opponent in the final and scooped the silver.

Additionally, Reza Azizi earned a bronze medal in the men's over 90-kilogram weight division.

Maral Mardani also claimed the third spot in the women's over 70-kilogram weight section.

The Junior Asian Judo Cup kicked off in the Uzbek capital city of Tashkent on April 11, and finished on April 15, 2018.

The tournament attracted 255 judo practitioners from 10 countries, including the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

76ers Roll Past Heat in Playoff Opener



PHILADELPHIA, PA - APRIL 14: Robert Covington #33 of the Philadelphia 76ers reacts against the Miami Heat in game one of round one of the 2018 NBA Playoffs on April 14, 2018 at Wells Fargo Center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

the Heat were just another victim in a winning streak that includes nine straight without Embiid.

He was a spectator because of a broken orbital bone around his left eye and has remained hopeful from the outset he can return early in the series. The Sixers could end this one in a hurry with Embiid back in the lineup.

Simmons helped compensate for his absence and dished and dazzled in the paint.

The Heat also had no answer for Sixers super subs Ersan Ilyasova and Belinelli; the duo combined to hit four 3-pointers in the third quarter that helped shift the tone from physical and foul-filled to a long-distance game that allowed the Sixers to put away this one. They used a 15-0 run in the third in their first postseason game in five seasons under Brown to get the rout rolling.

Brown, who won championships as an assistant in San Antonio, won 47 games his first three seasons as the Sixers underwent the Process - and 52, plus Game 1 this season.

The 76ers aced their first test. Redick, who said he briefly lost vision in his left eye following a hard fall early in the game, scored 28 points to lead the Sixers, who host Game 2 on Monday. Belinelli had 25 and Ilyasova 17.

Embiid ditched the black mask he's been wearing in light shooting drills for a white "Phantom of the Opera" mask to ring the ceremonial Liberty Bell before tipoff.

The Sixers crowd roared as Embiid, the self-proclaimed "Phantom of the Process," waved his arms toward the crowd and exhorted them to get louder. Sixers fans started tailgating in the sports complex about seven hours before tipoff and one group posted a sign on their tent that read "Saturdays Are For The Process." The Sixers had a blue-out and gave away free T-shirts in preparation of their first playoff game since 2012.

The Game 1 victory sure didn't surprise Embiid.

PHILADELPHIA (AP) - Joel Embiid used some body English as he scampered down the baseline and tried to will Marco Belinelli's off-balance 3-pointer through the net.

Belinelli buried it, because of course he would. Even the wild ones go in of late for the Sixers.

With their injured Embiid on the bench, the 76ers proved one more time in their biggest game in six years they can romp without their All-Star. Embiid wore a white mask as he rang a miniature Liberty Bell - then the Miami Heat got their bell rung in Game 1 of the first-round series.

Ben Simmons had 17 points, 14 assists and nine rebounds in his playoff debut, and the Sixers rolled to a 130-103 victory on Saturday night for their 17th straight win.

"I feel this group has something special in it," coach Brett Brown said.

Led by four each from JJ Redick and Belinelli, the 76ers hit a team playoff-record 18 3-pointers (on 28 attempts).

The Sixers have stormed through the NBA since mid-March and

Barca Beat Valencia to Set New Spanish Record



Barcelona's Andres Iniesta (R) competes during a Spanish league soccer match between Barcelona and Valencia in Barcelona, Spain, on April 14, 2018. Barcelona won 2-1.

Barca rode their luck at times and had goalkeeper Ter Stegen to thank for keeping an impressive Valencia at bay until the closing minutes of the game.

Goncalo Guedes had the first chance of the game, but Ter Stegen was at full stretch to save his curling shot and as so often happens against Barca, the league leaders needed just one chance to score as Luis Suarez accepted Coutinho's pass to score.

Guedes continued to be a constant threat and had two more chances; one of which was blocked and another which drew another save from the Barca keeper, who was also called into action to deny Valencia's top scorer, Rodrigo.

Valencia's midfield was giving Barca a hard-time as they looked to end their 38-run of games without defeat, but a Messi header wide of the post reminded them you can never be

overconfident in the Camp Nou.

The visitors should have been level just three minutes after the break after Rodrigo took advantage of Umtiti's error to round Ter Stegen, only for Gerard Pique to clear his shot off the line when it looked easier to score.

Again the miss was punished as Umtiti atoned for his error heading home Barca's second from a Coutinho corner in the 52nd minute, before Coutinho, who was having an influential game, flashed a long range shot just wide of the post.

Neto then produced an acrobatic save to deny Andres Iniesta's acrobatic volley, while Messi fired just wide.

Valencia got a late lifeline when Demebele brought down Jose Gaya and Dani Parejo scored a penalty which sneaked under Ter Stege, but there was no time for an equalizer.

MADRID (Dispatches) - Luis Suarez and Samuel Umtiti scored the goals as FC Barcelona recovered from their midweek Champions League exit to

beat Valencia 2-1 to extend their lead at the top of the Liga Santander table and set a new record of 39 unbeaten matches in Spain.

Gatlin-Coleman Team Cruise to Year's Fastest 4x100m Relay

TENNESSEE (Reuters) - World champion Justin Gatlin and his team mates sped to the year's fastest 4x100 metres relay on Saturday, clocking 38.08 seconds at the Tennessee Relays in Knoxville.

Indoor 60 meters world-record holder Christian Coleman, Gatlin, Ronnie Baker and Mike Rodgers combined to supplant the previous 2018 best of 38.13 seconds that England ran earlier in the day to win the Commonwealth Games in Australia.

Organisers had hoped the newly formed team would challenge the American record of 37.38 seconds set twice by U.S. national teams with



Gatlin a member each time.

But windy conditions, the earliness of the season and the lack of training together hindered the effort.

That would approach the world

record of 36.84 seconds set by Usain Bolt and his Jamaican team mates at the 2012 Olympics.

Gatlin had organized the team of the four top-ranked U.S. 100 meters

sprinters for 2017 just to see how fast they could run.

Although they had practiced only once, for 45 minutes on Friday, the effort made him and his relay mates ready for more.

"We want to take it worldwide," Gatlin said. "Maybe some Diamond League meets if possible and run against national teams."

Gatlin said it was time to bring a world or Olympic 4x100 relay title back to the United States.

American men have not won a world championship in the event since 2007 and the drought in the Olympics stretches more than a decade with the last title coming in 2000.

Lee Wins 3rd Individual Title in Last Commonwealth Games

GOLD COAST, Australia (AP) -- Aging champion Lee Chong Wei gave newly-promoted world No. 1 Srikanth Kidambi a demonstration in how to peak for a championship on Sunday, claiming his third Commonwealth Games gold medal in the men's singles.

The 35-year-old Malaysian star, a three-time Olympic silver medalist, rallied after dropping the first game to beat Kidambi 19-21, 21-14, 21-14 at the Carrara Sports and Leisure Centre only hours before the closing ceremony of the games.

Kidambi beat Lee as he helped India win the mixed team title and had the better of the first game in the singles final until the Malaysian veteran found his touch.

Lee, who is 10 years older than Kidambi, won the individual and mixed gold medals in the 2006 and 2010 editions in Melbourne and New Delhi and will retire from Commonwealth Games competition with five golds and a silver.



Malaysia's Lee Chong Wei plays against India's Srikanth Kidambi during their men's singles badminton final match at Carrara Sports Hall during the Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast, Australia, Sunday, April 15, 2018.

Hamilton Takes a Record But Still in No-Man's Land

SHANGHAI (Reuters) - Four times world champion Lewis Hamilton set a Formula One record of 28 successive scoring finishes on Sunday but was in no mood for celebrating.

"I was in no man's land today. I had no pace so I was just trying to hold on for whatever I had," the Mercedes driver told reporters at the Chinese Grand Prix.

"I had the older tyre on and I was running out of it."

The Briton finished fifth on track but moved up to fourth after a 10 second penalty was applied to Red Bull's Max Verstappen.

That allowed him to cut Sebastian Vettel's overall lead from 17 points to nine, with the Ferrari driver finishing only eighth.

"Obviously it's a tough battle ahead of us. I would say on my side but also us as a team, we've been underperforming," said Hamilton. The Briton had also said in

Bahrain last weekend, when he finished third after starting ninth, that he had felt he was driving around in no-man's land.

But he arrived in Shanghai with an enviable record, winner an unprecedented five times at a Chinese circuit that has long favored Mercedes.

Hamilton was never a force to reckon with this time, however, qualifying only fourth and losing a place immediately at the start.

With Red Bull's Daniel Ricciardo winning the race, champions Mercedes have now been beaten three races in a row for the first time in the V6 turbo hybrid era that started in 2014.

Hamilton could at least depend on his car's impressive reliability, collecting points for the 28th race in a row and claiming outright a record he had previously held jointly with Ferrari's Kimi Raikkonen.