

Iranian Female Shooter Elaheh Ahmadi Breaks New Record

Kyahan Int'l Sports Desk

TEHRAN - Iranian female shooter Elaheh Ahmadi set a new world record in the women's shooting air rifle with 630.3 points at Azdai Sports Complex in Tehran on Monday.

Ahamdi beat China's Yi Siling record who had claimed the gold medal with 502.9 points in Mexico Shooting events.

And also in 2016, Elaheh Ahmadi has been named the world's best athlete of the 10-meter air rifle women division in the March edition of the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) rankings.

At the 2012 Summer Olympics, the Iranian shooter reached the final in the women's 10 meter air rifle and also competed in the 50 meter rifle 3 positions.



Iranian female sports shooter Elaheh Ahmadi

F1 to Set Up Fully-Fledged Local Entity in China

SHANGHAI (Reuters) - Formula One's planned Chinese joint venture will have its own marketing, licensing and media rights arms dedicated to growing the sport's presence in the vast but still nascent market, commercial managing director Sean Bratches has said.

"What we will do is effectively set up a similar structure to what we have in London," the former ESPN executive told Reuters at the weekend's Chinese Grand Prix in Shanghai.

"With a head of marketing, a head of licensing, a head of media rights, a head of sponsorship, a head of digital, etc. and really activate the brand here like its own entity," added the American.

Sources told media last week that Liberty Media, who took over as Formula One's



commercial rights holder last year, was talking to potential local partners including Inter Milan owner Suning and La Liga rights holder DDMC to form a joint venture that would help manage business development in China.

Bratches declined to confirm any names but said he had spent the last few weeks in Shanghai and Beijing talking to a "number

of entities."

He added, however, that the sport's relationship with local company Juss Events Co Ltd., who currently organize the race, would continue.

Formula One held its first grand prix in China in 2004. Despite a steadily growing fanbase, a Chinese population of 1.3 billion means there still remains a vast opportunity for the sport to tap.

Rockets Beat Wolves 104-101

HOUSTON (AP) - Trailing by 1 in the fourth quarter against the Minnesota Timberwolves, the Houston Rockets needed someone to step up.

No surprise that it was James Harden who came through.

Harden scored 44 points and powered a big fourth-quarter run that allowed the Rockets to outlast the Timberwolves 104-101 Sunday night in Game 1 of the first-round playoff series.

Minnesota scored four straight points to get within 3 with about 30 seconds left. Chris Paul added two free throws after that for Houston, but a tip-in by Karl-Anthony Towns got Minnesota back within 3. After a bad pass by Paul gave the Timberwolves a chance to tie it with 1.5 seconds left, Jimmy Butler's shot was short.

The Timberwolves had a one-point lead with about seven minutes left when Houston used a 9-0 run, with the last seven points from Harden, to make it 94-86 with about four minutes to go. Harden, who also had a steal in that span, capped the run with a 3-pointer that prompted Minnesota coach Tom Thibodeau to call a timeout.

Jeff Teague ended Minnesota's scoring drought with two free throws after the timeout and added a 3-point play after a basket by Harden. Harden made another shot to give him 11 straight points for Houston before another basket by Teague.

Harden got Capela in on the scoring after that, finding him for an alley-oop that pushed the lead to 101-93 with less than three minutes left.

The top-seeded Rockets had their hands full with the No. 8 Timberwolves on a night where Houston made just 10 of 37 3-pointers.



HOUSTON, TX - APRIL 15: James Harden #13 of the Houston Rockets reacts during the game against the Minnesota Timberwolves in Game One of Round One of the 2018 NBA Playoffs on April 15, 2018 at the Toyota Center in Houston, Texas.

Harden shot 7 for 12 on 3-pointers, but Trevor Ariza, P.J. Tucker, Eric Gordon and Paul combined to make just 3 of their 22 tries.

Houston kept All-Star big man Towns in check, limiting him to just eight points after he'd

averaged 21.3 in leading the Wolves to their first playoff appearance since 2004. Andrew Wiggins scored 18 points to lead Minnesota.

Thibodeau said the Rockets did a good job of switching on Towns and using double-teams to slow him down, but admitted he has to do more.

The Wolves scored the first nine points of the second half to take a 56-54 lead. Tucker made a 3 for the Rockets after that, but Minnesota used a 6-1 spurt, with 3s from Wiggins and Teague, to go back on top 62-58.

The Rockets had managed just six points in the quarter when Gerald Green made a basket with to cut the lead to 1 with about five minutes left in the third. Derrick Rose added a bucket seconds later, but Houston scored six straight points after that to put Houston up 68-65. Harden got things going when he made a 3-pointer while being fouled by Rose and also made the free throw.

Minnesota led by a basket after a jump shot by Towns with about two minutes left in the quarter. Harden took over after that, scoring the last six points of the quarter to leave Houston up 76-72 entering the fourth.

Harden hit a 3-pointer before making a driving layup he was fouled on by Gorgui Dieng. Harden flexed each bicep twice while peering down at the muscles after the shot before making the free throw.

The Rockets swept the regular-season series 4-0, winning by an average of 15.8 points a game and it looked like this one might be another blowout early as the Rockets raced out to a 17-6 lead behind 10 early points from Clint Capela. But the Timberwolves got going after that and had tied it up by late in the first quarter.

The Rockets led 54-47 at halftime.

Khachanov, Zverev, Medvedev Reach Monte Carlo 2nd Round

MONACO (AP) - Karen Khachanov was clinical on his serve in a 7-5, 6-4 win against Thanasi Kokkinakis of Australia in the first round of the Monte Carlo Masters on Sunday.

The big-serving Russian had five aces and did not face a single break point. He might even have made the win more comfortable.

Kokkinakis recently beat 20-time Grand Slam champion Roger Federer in the second round of the Miami Open - becoming the lowest-ranked man to beat a No. 1 in 15 years - but the powerful Australian could not produce anything like that form this time.

Khachanov constantly pressured his opponent's serve, yet could only convert two of his 13 break points.

Khachanov, who won his second career ATP Tour title at the Open 13 in Marseille in February, next faces either Gilles Simon or 16th-seeded Adrian Mannarino.

If he beats the winner of that all-French match, Khachanov could

face defending champion Rafael Nadal in the third round.

Nadal has a first-round bye and plays Aljaz Bedene or Mirza Basic in round two. The 10-time champion needs to win the tournament or Federer regains top ranking.

In Sunday's other first-round matches, there were wins for Mischa Zverev of Germany and Daniil Medvedev of Russia.

Zverev labored to a 6-2, 6-7 (4), 6-1 win against 17-year-old Canadian Felix Auger-Aliassime, and next faces seventh-seeded Frenchman Lucas Pouille.

Medvedev rallied to beat Marton Fucsovics of Hungary 6-7 (4), 6-2, 7-5, saving seven of eight break points. He meets either Kei Nishikori of Japan or 12th-seeded Czech Tomas Berdych, the 2015 runner-up. They play Monday.

Two-time champion Novak Djokovic, still struggling with a persistent right elbow injury, is also in first-round action Monday.

Pele Confident Neymar Can Lead Brazil at World Cup

DUBAI (AFP) - Brazilian legend Pele says he is confident about Brazil's chances at the upcoming World Cup and expects injured star Neymar to be fully fit to lead the side in Russia.

Speaking to AFP in Dubai, the 77-year-old, who has been in ailing health recently, put his faith in Paris Saint-Germain striker Neymar's ability to recover from a fractured foot in time to lead Brazil to a possible sixth global football title.

"We don't know exactly what is going to happen, but I think for the World Cup he's going to be in shape because his injury is not so bad," said Pele, the only person to have won the World Cup three times as a player.

"I wish he has the same luck I had in the World Cup."

PSG's Neymar, the world's most expensive player, has not played since breaking a metatarsal bone in his right foot on February 25 in a Ligue 1 match against Marseille. He said last week he is still recovering following surgery but expects to be fit in time for the World Cup from June 14 to July 15.

Pele said he expected few surprises at the tournament, identifying Lionel Messi's Argentina, Germany, England and France as potential challengers -- although he didn't mention 2010 world champions Spain or current European laureates Portugal, led by their talisman Cristiano Ronaldo.



Denmark's Michael Valgren of Astana won the Amstel Gold Race on Sunday

Valgren Drops Sagan, Valverde to Win Amstel Gold Race

VALKENBURG, Netherlands (AFP) - Denmark's Michael Valgren of Astana won the Amstel Gold Race, beating Roman Kreuziger in a cat-and-mouse finale after a rolling 263km race from Maastricht.

Italy's Enrico Gasparotto was third by a few seconds while pre-race favourites Peter Sagan and Alejandro Valverde came fourth and fifth after being dropped by a lightning break around 1km from the finish.

"The team was counting on me," said Valgren, who underlined his classics form with a fourth-place finish at the recent Tour of Flanders.

"In the escape I had the help of Jakob Fuglsang who was so strong and after all his efforts I had to win."

A minute's silence was observed at the start in memory of Belgian Michael Goolaerts, who died after suffering heart failure during the Paris-Roubaix last Sunday.

The only one of the 'Ardenne Classics' to be run on Dutch soil featured 34 small climbs over constantly rolling terrain on narrow country roads.

As expected, an early breakaway formed and the nine frontrunners went on to build a lead of over 15 minutes.