

Iran Stomp U.S. in World Para Volley Super 6



TEHRAN (Press TV) - The national Iranian men's sitting volleyball team has registered another emphatic win at the World Para Volley Men's World Super 6 Sitting Volleyball Competition, vanquishing the U.S. side. The Iranian squad swept past the United

States in straight sets (25-14, 25-18 and 25-17) at the Sadra Sport Complex in the northwestern Iranian city of Tabriz on Monday.

The World Para Volley Men's World Super 6 Sitting Volleyball Competition kicked off

on April 19, and will run through April 24.

The event has attracted national teams from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Germany, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Russia, Ukraine and the United States.

The national Iranian men's sitting volleyball team started the competition by seeing off the Russian squad 3-0 (25-22, 25-20 and 25-17) in its opening match on April 19.

The Iranian team recorded its second consecutive victory at the World Para Volley Men's World Super 6 Sitting Volleyball Competition the following day, defeating the Bosnian squad 3-2 (22-25, 25-17, 25-19, 22-25 and 15-12).

The Iranian sitting volleyball players triumphed over Ukraine 3-0 (25-14, 25-18 and 25-18) in their third fixture on April 21, before romping past Germany in straight sets (25-13, 25-12 and 25-15) the next day.

The photo shows a view of the match between Iran (players in white) and the United States at the World Para Volley Men's World Super 6 Sitting Volleyball Competition in Tabriz, northwestern Iran, on April 23, 2018.

Harden Hits Heights as Rockets Soar Over Timberwolves



Los Angeles (AFP) - James Harden scored 36 points as the Houston Rockets moved to the brink of a Western Conference first round playoff series victory with a 119-100 rout of the Minnesota Timberwolves.

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - James Harden has scored 36 points as the Houston Rockets moved to the brink of a Western Conference first round playoff series victory with a 119-100 rout of the Minnesota Timberwolves.

Harden underscored his status as front-runner for the NBA's Most Valuable Player award after leading a stunning third quarter performance that saw the Rockets explode for an astonishing 50 points.

That devastating burst of scoring -- a franchise record -- included 22 points from Harden as the Rockets transformed what had been a one-point contest at half-time into a comfortable victory.

The win gave Houston a 3-1 lead in the best-of-seven series, giving the Western Conference leaders a chance to book their place in the second round of the playoffs with a victory at home in game five on Wednesday.

The smart money will be on Houston to wrap up the series quickly after Monday's demolition job at Minnesota's Target Center arena.

While Harden's virtuoso third quarter performance ultimately decided the contest, the Rockets will also take heart from an offensive display that saw five players finish with double-digit points tallies.

Point guard Chris Paul weighed in with 25 points -- including 15 in the lop-sided third quarter -- while Eric Gordon had 18 and Trevor Ariza 15.

Center Clint Capela finished with 14 points, and also pulled down 17 rebounds during his 31 minutes on court.

The Timberwolves' scoring was led by Karl-Anthony Towns with 22 points, while Jimmy Butler (19) and Derrick Rose (17) also made significant contributions.

Ancelotti Offered Job of Italy Coach: Reports

MILAN (AFP) - Carlo Ancelotti is set to be given the job of reviving the fortunes of Italy's national team, according to reports on Tuesday.

Ancelotti, who was sacked by Bayern Munich last September, met with Italian Football Federation (FIGC) commissioner Roberto Fabbri and sub-commissioner Alessandro Costacurta in a Rome hotel on Monday, Corriere dello Sport reported.

Sky Sport Italia said the 58-year-old has been offered a two-year contract, which is likely to be less lucrative than his previous deal with the German champions.

Italy have been without a permanent coach since Gian Piero Ventura was sacked after they failed to qualify for the World Cup for the first time in 60 years after losing to Sweden in a two-legged playoff in November.

Ancelotti, who has also man-



Carlo Ancelotti has won the Champions League three times as a coach

aged Chelsea, Real Madrid, AC Milan, Juventus, Roma and Paris Saint-Germain, has three Champions League titles to his name as a coach. He has also won the league in Italy, France, Germany and England.

The FIGC budget for a new coach and his staff is five million euros (\$6.1 million) per year, which would be a big drop

from the reported 12 million euros plus bonuses that Ancelotti earned at Bayern Munich.

Ancelotti joined Bayern in 2016 and won the Bundesliga title in his first season but has been out of football since he was sacked following a 3-0 defeat to Paris Saint-Germain in the Champions League.

Costacurta is reported to have

offered Ancelotti, who has also been linked with former club Chelsea and the soon-to-be-vacant manager's job at Arsenal, a free hand in choosing his staff.

Ancelotti's son Davide, who was his assistant at Bayern, could play a role as well as former stars such as Andrea Pirlo, Gianluigi Buffon and Paolo Maldini.

Costacurta, who was coached by Ancelotti at AC Milan in the 1980s, was appointed to find a successor to Ventura and set a deadline of May 20 for the appointment of a new coach.

Among the other names touted were Zenit St Petersburg coach Roberto Mancini, Chelsea boss Antonio Conte and former Leicester coach Claudio Ranieri, now in charge of French club Nantes.

Italy's under-21 coach Luigi Di Biagio has been filling the position with the four-time world champions on an interim basis.

Ferrari Announces Electric Model Won't Be Out Sooner Than 2023



Ferrari LaFerrari Aperta 2017

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - At the beginning of the year, Fiat Chrysler CEO and Ferrari head honcho Sergio Marchionne hinted a fully electric supercar could be on the agenda, but it looks like it won't be happening in the near future.

Initially believed to be part of

the company's upcoming strategy plan (2018-2022), the prancing horse without a combustion engine has been pushed back until at least after the end of the next business plan. In other words, the soonest we'll get to see an electric Ferrari is 2023.

Why the change of heart? Marchionne revealed a few days ago during Ferrari's annual meeting that a pure EV is not relevant enough for the brand right now, hence why it has been put on the back burner. However, as Automotive News points out, the annual report for 2017 published by the Maranello-based marque does mention an entirely electric setup could be the way to go for high-end performance sports cars, thus replacing today's hybrids.

Speaking of hybrids, Marchionne admitted what Ferrari needs right now is models that combine a gasoline combustion engine with an electric motor. The official word at the moment is that the company's hasn't made up its mind about which model to electrify first. Whatever it will be, we will get to see it in

September 2019 at the Frankfurt Motor Show, rocking an electrified V8 of unknown specifications.

The model in question will serve as Ferrari's first series hybrid production model considering both the LaFerrari coupe and its droptop Aperta counterpart were limited-run cars.

Marchionne hinted the model in question will have to be "more of a traditional hybrid," though we are not quite sure what that means in this context. Maybe he was referring to a plug-in hybrid setup or something with an emphasis on efficiency rather than on outright performance.

Ferrari's chief executive officer told Bloomberg the gasoline-electric hybrid car that Ferrari is currently testing can "run silently," which effectively means that it has a pure electric mode.

Germany Submits Euro 2024 Bid



BERLIN (Reuters) - Germany on Tuesday submitted its official bid book for Euro 2024, saying the tournament would offer "perfect" organization and an atmosphere to match as it looks to land its first major soccer event since the 2006 World Cup.

Turkey is the only other country bidding but Germany is seen as the clear favorite to stage the tournament in six years time.

European soccer's ruling body UEFA is set to announce the winner on Sept. 27.

"We are submitting an excellent bid concept for a perfectly organized tournament, which offers a great opportunity for UEFA to further develop European football," German Football Association (DFB) President Reinhard Grindel told reporters.

Grindel had Germany's 2014 World Cup-winning captain Philipp Lahm, a bid ambassador, by his side as he handed in their file at UEFA headquarters in Nyon,

Switzerland. "EURO 2024 staged in the heart of Europe will enable all of the participants to be given the best possible support by their fans," Grindel said.

Germany's 2006 World Cup was hugely successful, with stadiums sold out and hundreds of thousands of fans gathering in outdoor viewing areas as easy rail and road access within Europe attracted large numbers of foreign visitors.

That tournament, however, has since been at the heart of several investigations in Germany and Switzerland over alleged payment irregularities.

Turkey is expected to submit its bid book later this week, UEFA said.

UEFA will evaluate the bid books and publish a written report on each one by September.

The 2020 European Championship will be staged at venues across Europe to mark UEFA's 60th anniversary.

Sharapova Eyes More Grand Slam Glory

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Maria Sharapova will not settle for lower-tier titles after making her comeback last year and the former world number one is determined to add to her five grand slam crowns.

The 31-year-old Russian returned from a 15-month doping ban at the Stuttgart Grand Prix last April and Sharapova has since won one title, the Tianjin Open, after inconsistent performances and injury problems.

She is back in Stuttgart this year and plays Caroline Garcia in the first round later on Tuesday. Sharapova, who won her last grand slam title at the 2014 French Open, has no plans to retire.