

Iran Take World Junior Wushu Championships Crown for 1st Time

TEHRAN (Press TV) - Young Iranian wushu practitioners have displayed impressive physical and mental skills at the seventh edition of the World Junior Wushu Championships in Brazil, and won the title for the first time in both Taolu (form) and Sanda (sparring) disciplines of the prestigious tournament.

Iranian athletes were crowned as the champion of the international sports event, having clinched eleven gold, eight silver and seven bronze medals.

They were followed by contestants from Hong Kong in the second place, who collected ten gold, four silver and eight bronze

medals.

American wushu practitioners claimed the third place, having pocketed eight gold, four silver and three bronze medals.

The Iranian team secured 11 gold medals through Seyyedeh Sogand Golshani, Seyyed Mohammad Hosseini, Aida Haydari, Kimia Shoushtari, Mohammad Mehdi Rezaei, Ebrahim Aslani, Shoja' Panahi, Mohammad Farhadi, Hamid Kianian, Mohamad Hajizadeh and Hassan Lotfi.

Mehdi Khani, Nazanin Bazdar, Mina Panahi, Fatemeh Jazini, Mohammad Ali Mojiri plus boys' and girls' duelin teams could add eight silvers to Iran's medal tally.



Additionally, Zahra Botshekan, Yasin Shahraki, Panahi, Khani, Bazdar and Mojiri settled for a bronze medal each.

The seventh edition of the World Junior Wushu Championships opened on July 9, and ran through July 16, 2018.

Ronaldo Targets Champions League Glory at New Club Juventus

TURIN, Italy (Reuters) - Juventus's record signing Cristiano Ronaldo has said his move from Real Madrid was a "well thought out decision" as the Portugal forward aims to help his new club win their first Champions League title in more than two decades.

Ronaldo, who joined the Italian champions last week on a four-year contract for 100 million euros (88.53 million pounds), added that he did not want to stay in his comfort zone after winning three straight European Cups with Real.

The 33-year-old left Los Blancos as their all-time top scorer with 451 goals in all competitions and won two La Liga titles and four Champions League trophies over nine years.

"I'm a person who likes to think about the present," he told a news conference on Monday. "I'm still



Cristiano Ronaldo

very young and I always liked the challenges, from Sporting, to Manchester (United), to Real (Madrid) and now Juventus.

"It was a well thought-out decision. It is the best club in Italy. It has an outstanding manager (Massimiliano Allegri) and

coaches so it was not a difficult decision to take."

"I am very ambitious and I like new challenges. I hope everything will go very well. Luck always helps but you have to look for it."

Ronaldo said one of the factors in joining Juve was the standing

ovation given to him by the Turin club's fans on his last visit, when he scored an astonishing overhead kick for Real in the Champions League quarter-finals.

"It was a really stunning moment for me," he added. "Being welcomed this way is so rewarding. It increases your motivation to start a new adventure."

The signing of the five-times world player of the year and Champions League top scorer for the last six seasons is a major coup for Juve, who have lifted the Serie A title for the last seven seasons but have not won Europe's top prize since 1996.

Ronaldo scored twice when Real beat Juventus 4-1 in the 2017 Champions League final in between triumphs over Atletico Madrid and Liverpool in Europe's elite club competition.

Mercedes Still Fastest Despite Lost Points: Wolff



LONDON (Reuters) - Formula One champions Mercedes made mistakes in the last three back-to-

back races but they still have the fastest car, according to team boss Toto Wolff.

World champion Lewis Hamilton won in France last month but suffered his first retirement in two years at the following race in Austria and was second in his home British Grand Prix after going from pole position to last.

The Briton heads to Hockenheim for this weekend's German Grand Prix with an eight-point gap to make up on Ferrari's four-times champion Sebastian Vettel, who will be racing in front of his home crowd.

Vettel won in Silverstone while Red Bull's 20-year-old Dutchman Max Verstappen took his first win

of the season at his team's home race in Austria.

The triple header was a first for Formula One, the scheduling aimed at avoiding a clash with the World Cup final in Russia.

Mercedes started all three races from pole position but Hamilton and team mate Valtteri Bottas scored only 61 points between them, compared to 98 for championship leaders Ferrari and 65 for Red Bull.

Hockenheim is the 11th race of the 21-round season and Mercedes have won just three times, compared to six by the same stage last year.

Maradona Takes Charge of Belarus Club

BREST, Belarus (Reuters) - Argentina great Diego Maradona has taken over as chairman of Belarus soccer club Dynamo Brest after signing a three-year contract and said he hoped the country's strongman President Alexander Lukashenko would become a fan.

Maradona has caused a sensation in Belarus by agreeing to take charge of a club that was rescued from bankruptcy two years ago. He plans to move to Brest after parting company with Al-Fujairah FC where he was coach of the United Arab Emirates club.

He touched down in Belarus after being a FIFA ambassador at the World Cup in next door Russia, where his matchday antics, including giving an obscene middle-finger gesture to Nigeria fans during one game, raised eyebrows.

"I want to make a photo with Lukashenko, I hope he will become

our fan," Maradona said at a press conference after landing in Brest to the cheers of two dozen supporters, and being given a traditional welcome of bread and salt.

"I can live without problems in Belarus," he added.

Dynamo Brest have never won a league title and a local supporter told Reuters that until a couple of years ago the club had so little money that supporters sometimes were asked to raise funds for team jerseys.

But with the arrival of a new investor from the UAE, the club has won two domestic cups and plans to build a new stadium with a capacity of 30,000 fans.

"Given the fact that boss Diego will live in Brest, I think people will come from all over the world to watch the game," said the club's director of development Viktor Radkov.



Diego Maradona

Radkov said Maradona, who captained Argentina to World Cup success in 1986, will live in a mansion with a small gym in Brest and believes the Argentinian will move there by August.

"He had certain requirements, but all

of them were reasonable," Radkov said.

The 57-year-old former Barcelona and Napoli forward previously managed UAE team Al-Wasl along with the Argentina national team from 2008 to 2010.

Vollyballers Stun Germany in 2018 Sitting Volleyball World Championships

TEHRAN (Dispatches) - The Iran men's national sitting volleyball team has thrashed Germany in consecutive sets at the 2018 World ParaVolley Sitting Volleyball World Championships in the Netherlands.

The Iranian team, which had routed Japan 3-0 (25-8, 25-9 and 25-16) at the start of its campaign against Japan the previous day, further asserted its dominance at the prestigious tournament and notched up a 3-0 (25-20, 25-9 and 25-13) win over Germany at a Pool B match in the southeastern Dutch city of Venlo on Monday evening.

The Iran men's national sitting volleyball team is scheduled to face Russia on Wednesday

evening.

Separately, the Iran women's national sitting volleyball team slumped to a 0-3 (15-25, 17-25 and 18-25) loss against China on Monday.

The Iranian sitting volleyball players had earlier brushed aside their Slovenian counterparts in straight sets (25-10, 25-12 and 28-25).

The national Iranian women's sitting volleyball team will play Italy in its next match in the eastern Dutch city of Arnhem on Wednesday.

The 2018 World ParaVolley Sitting Volleyball World Championships began on July 15, and will finish on July 22, 2018.

Ping-Pong Diplomacy Between Two Koreas

DAEJEON, South Korea (AFP) - Table tennis players from North and South Korea played alongside each other at an international tournament Tuesday, winning their matchups in the latest instalment of Korean sporting diplomacy.

The sport has long had an unusual impact in foreign affairs, most notably in the "ping pong diplomacy" of the 1970s between China and the U.S.

And sports have also had a role in the current rapprochement on the Korean peninsula, which was catalyzed by the Winter Olympics in the South in February.

The two Koreas marched together behind a unification flag at the Games' opening ceremony and formed a sometimes controversial unified women's ice hockey team, while the host's President Moon Jae-in seized the opportunity to broker talks between Pyongyang and Washington.

Three months later North and South Korea's women table tennis players combined into a united team rather than play each other in the world team championships quarter-final, although they went on to lose their semi-final and had to settle for bronze.

FC Barcelona Report Record Revenues

MADRID (Dispatches)-Revenues at La Liga winner Barcelona hit a record €914m (£809m) in the 2017-18 season, the club has said.

The Spanish football giant also said it was on track to achieve revenues of €1bn by 2021.

Barcelona received a world record transfer fee of £200.6m from Paris St Germain for Brazilian Neymar in 2017.

Since then the Catalan club has twice broken its transfer record on the signings of Ousmane Dembele (£96.8m) and Philippe Coutinho (£106.4m).

Operating profits at the club were €32m, while the net profit was €13m.

"The board has valued the final balance of the year positively, and it's in line with the strategic plan of the club to reach €1,000m of income in 2021," the club said.

As well as reclaiming the La Liga title from rivals Real Madrid during 2017-18, the club also won the Copa del Rey for a fourth successive season.

But they were knocked out of the Champions League by Italy's Roma at the quarter-final stage.

Pacquiao Eyes 'Two or Three Fights' More After Matthyse Win

GENERAL SANTOS, Philippines (AFP) - Manny Pacquiao has said he was good for "two or three" more fights, naming Terence Crawford, Vasyl Lomachenko or Floyd Mayweather as possible opponents a day after winning a new world title.

The 39-year-old Filipino shrugged off renewed calls by friends including President Rodrigo Duterte to hang up his gloves after stopping World Boxing Association welterweight champion Lucas Matthyse, saying he would

be "lonely" outside the ring.

Pacquiao flew back from Kuala Lumpur to his southern Philippine home town Monday, where a crowd of at least a thousand supporters waited for more than four hours to wave at or shake hands with him.

Pacquiao, already one of the greatest boxers in history with unprecedented world titles in eight weight classes, silenced some of his critics last weekend by pummeling the dangerous Argentine into submission by technical knockout in the seventh round.