

Iran Beach Soccer Unchanged in World Rankings

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – The Iranian national beach soccer team remained unchanged in the beach soccer world ranking.

Morocco become the new Mover of the Month thanks to its laudable win at the Morocco Beach Soccer Cup Agadir 2018. The team jumped from the 25th to the 10th position in the BSWW Overall World Rankings.

The Iranian team still is the best Asian team in the ranking with 2488 points.

Japan and the UAE are 9th and 11th respectively in the world ranking.

Brazil, who won the 2017 FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup, stayed atop of the ranking with 3620 points.

Portugal is second in the rankings with 2867 points.

Russia and Italy sit fourth and fifth with 2340 and 1962 points respectively.



Venus Reaches San Jose Quarterfinals

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Seven-time Grand Slam winner Venus Williams held off Britain's Heather Watson 6-4, 4-6, 6-0 on Thursday to reach the quarterfinals of the WTA hardcourt tournament in San Jose, California.

Third-seeded Williams is the highest seed left in a tournament that saw second-seed Madison Keys follow top-seeded Garbine Muguruza in pulling out because of injury on Thursday.

Keys, the defending champion, pulled out with a right wrist injury before taking the court for her second-round opener against Australia's Ajla Tomljanovic.

"I have been feeling pain in my wrist over the last couple of days and felt worse today," said Keys, who was replaced in the draw by lucky loser Magdalena Frech.

Tomljanovic beat Poland's Frech 6-4, 3-6, 6-3 to book a quarter-final clash with fifth-seeded Romanian Mihaela Buzarnescu, a 7-5, 2-6, 6-1 winner over American teenager Amanda Anisimova.

Williams will take on Greece's Maria Sakkari, who dominated eighth-seeded Hungarian Timea Babos 6-0, 6-1.

Williams, who won the title in this event in 2000 and 2002, came back with a vengeance after dropping the

second set to Watson. She broke the Briton three times in the final set, dropping just four points on her serve.

"It was a tough match and she played incredible. There were times where I had no answers," said Williams, who said her goal was to "control the points and enjoy the battle, just get out there and try to do what I know that I can."

"It worked out, thankfully." Williams, now the highest-ranked player in the draw, will kick off Thursday's night session against Great Britain's Heather Watson.

Buzarnescu said she felt the pressure against qualifier Anisimova.

"She's from the new generation, and I'm from the old one, and I knew the pressure would be on me because she has nothing to lose," the Romanian said.

The other two quarter-final matchups were decided on Wednesday, when Britain's Johanna Konta followed up her stunning defeat of Serena Williams with a straight-sets victory over US teenager Sofia Kenin to book a meeting with fourth-seeded Elise Mertens of Belgium.

American Daniell Collins will take on former world number one Victoria Azarenka for a place in the semi-finals

Egypt Names Aguirre as National Coach Despite Investigation

CAIRO (Dispatches) - Javier Aguirre became the new coach of Egypt on Thursday despite his involvement in a match-fixing investigation in Spain.

Spanish prosecutors said in February that Aguirre was facing two years in prison if convicted in a case involving a total of 41 players and former club officials. He has denied any wrongdoing, but Japan fired him as its coach in 2015 for his ties to the investigation.

"Everything is cleared," Aguirre said at a news conference in Cairo on Thursday. "There is no way it (the investigation) will affect my work here."

The case involves Spanish clubs Levante and Zaragoza in 2011. The prosecutors cited evidence Zaragoza paid 965,000 euros to Levante's players to lose a match to Zaragoza. Coached by Aguirre at the time, Zaragoza avoided relegation by beating Levante 2-1 in the final round of the season.

A lower court shelved the case



Egypt's new national football team coach Javier Aguirre (right) receives a team T-shirt from Hany Abo Rida, the Football Association chairman, during a press conference in Cairo, Egypt, Aug 2, 2018.

but it was reopened this year after an appeal by prosecutors in Valencia, where the match was played.

"The case was closed and I don't know why it was reopened," Aguirre, a former Mexico player and coach, said.

performance in the World Cup in Russia. Egypt lost all of its three group matches at its first World Cup in 28 years, under Argentine Hector Cuper, who was fired in late June.

"Like in Mexico, there are a lot of expectations and dreams here," Aguirre said. "We want to be one of the top teams in the world and we have everything that would make our dreams come true."

Egyptian Football Association chairman Hany Abo Rida said the 59-year-old Aguirre signed a four-year contract with an annual salary of \$1.4 million. He will receive a \$500,000 bonus if Egypt qualifies for the World Cup in 2022 in Qatar.

Egypt's first competitive match under Aguirre will be an African Nations Cup qualifier at home on Sept 7 against Niger.

Ricciardo to Leave Red Bull for Renault at End of F1 Season



Australian Formula One driver Daniel Ricciardo of Aston Martin Red Bull Racing during the first free practice session of the Hungarian Formula One Grand Prix at the Hungaroring circuit, in Mogyorod, north-east of Budapest, Hungary, Friday, July 27, 2018.

MILTON KEYNES, England (AP) - Daniel Ricciardo is leaving Red Bull for Renault at the end of this Formula One season.

The Australian driver, who has won seven races since joining Red Bull in 2014, has agreed to a two-year deal with Renault.

Ricciardo says "it was time for me to take on a fresh and new challenge."

Replacing Carlos Sainz, Ricciardo will partner Nico Hulkenberg at the French

manufacturer. Ricciardo says "there is a lot ahead in order to allow Renault to reach their target of competing at the highest level but I have been impressed by their progression in only two years."

The 29-year-old Ricciardo is already familiar with Renault, whose engines have powered Red Bull's cars.

Ricciardo is fifth in the 20-driver standings after 12 of the season's 21 races.

Milan, Turin, Cortina to Launch Joint Bid for 2026 Olympics



In this Feb 20, 2006 file photo, the Mole Antonelliana (left) Turin's most famous landmark, is backdropped by the Alps, in Turin, northern Italy.

MILAN (Dispatches) - Italy will launch a three-city bid to host the 2026 Winter Olympics in Milan, Turin and Cortina.

The Italian Olympic Committee has announced the move, having decided a joint bid was more cost effective. It was unanimously voted for by the CONI board.

Milan Mayor Giuseppe Sala, however, has criticized the decision and says that while his city would still be willing to host Olympic events, it will not be involved in the governance of the bid.

According to CONI's 'Olympic Masterplan', Milan will host four events: curling, women's ice hockey, short track speed skating and figure skating.

Cortina would have the same number of competitions, with the sliding sports (bobsleigh, skeleton and luge) and Alpine skiing, while the Nordic combined and ski jumping would be

held in nearby Val di Fiemme.

Speed skating and men's ice hockey would take place in Turin, with slalom Alpine skiing in nearby Sestriere.

Snowboarding, biathlon, freestyle and Nordic skiing would be staged in the Valtellina region, which is between Milan and Cortina.

Other possible candidates for the 2026 Olympics are: Stockholm; Erzurum, Turkey; Calgary, Canada; and Sapporo, Japan.

International Olympic Committee members will pick the host in Milan in October 2019.

Two years ago, Italy was forced to suspend Rome's bid for the 2024 Summer Olympics because of staunch opposition from the city's mayor.

It was the second time in four years a Rome bid was withdrawn or suspended. In 2012, then-premier Mario Monti scrapped the city's bid for the 2020 Olympics because of financial concerns.

Matthysse Hangs Up Gloves After Loss to Pacquiao



Manny Pacquiao in action against Lucas Matthysse

BUENOS AIRES (Reuters) - Argentine boxer Lucas Matthysse has announced his retirement from the ring, almost three weeks after losing his WBA welterweight title to Filipino great Manny Pacquiao.

"Today I decided to hang up my gloves," the 35-year-old Matthysse said on Instagram. "Another stage of my life is here... Proud to have remained at the top level for 10 years where I fought the world's best boxers."

Known as La Maquina, or The Machine, Matthysse, who also held the interim WBC super lightweight title, bowed out with a career record of 39 wins (36 KO) and five losses.

He lost his WBA title to Pacquiao, 39, in Kuala Lumpur on July 15 after the fight was stopped in the seventh round. It was Pacquiao's 11th world title in an incredible career that has made him a national hero in his native Philippines.

Spain Winger Pedro Signs Chelsea Contact Extension



LONDON (Dispatches) - Chelsea forward Pedro has signed a one-year contact extension that will keep him at Stamford Bridge until 2020.

Pedro, 31, joined the Blues from Barcelona in August 2015 for £21m and helped the club win the Premier League in 2016-17 and last season's

FA Cup. The Spain winger has scored 28 goals in 131 games and netted in pre-season against Perth Glory and Inter Milan.

"I am comfortable here and want to win new titles and trophies," said Pedro, who spent nine seasons at Barcelona.