

Iran, Syria Friendly Match Confirmed



TEHRAN (Tasnim) – The Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI) has confirmed the friendly match with Syria in Tehran.

Team Melli will take on the Syrian football team on March 30 at the Azadi Stadium.

Iran and Syria are preparing for the 2022 World Cup qualifiers.

Iran is scheduled to play Hong Kong, Cambodia, Bahrain and Iraq, respectively at the Qualifications.

Fixtures:
 *Iran v Hong Kong, June 3
 *Cambodia v Iran, June 7
 *Iran v Bahrain, June 11
 *Iran v Iraq, June 15

Iran sits third in Group C behind Iraq and Bahrain.

Lakers Suffer Third Successive Loss



Westbrook scored the game-winning points for Washington

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The Los Angeles Lakers let a 17-point third-quarter lead slip as they fell to a 127-124 overtime defeat to the Washington Wizards.

The reversal means that the NBA champions have lost three games in a row for the first time this season.

Both LeBron James and Kyle Kuzma missed late three-point attempts to send the game to a second extra period.

Bradley Beal scored 33 points as the Wizards claimed five wins in a row for the first time in three years.

Russell Westbrook, who had 32 points, plus 14 rebounds and nine assists, made a shot inside and was fouled with 11.6 seconds remaining in overtime to put the Wizards up by three points.

Although he missed the free throw which gave the Lakers the chance to tie the score,

they were unable to make the shot.

James finished with 31 points, 13 assists and nine rebounds while Montrezl Harrell added 26 off the bench.

Elsewhere, Donovan Mitchell finished with 23 points and eight assists and three of his Utah Jazz team-mates scored at least 20 points each off the bench as their side beat the Charlotte Hornets 132-110.

The Miami Heat defeated Oklahoma City Thunder 108-94 while Devin Booker hit 32 points as the Phoenix Suns were comfortable 132-100 winners over the Portland Trail Blazers.

After an eight-day rest because of two weather-based postponements, the Dallas Mavericks beat the Memphis Grizzlies 102-92 while the Chicago Bulls were too strong for an under strength Houston Rockets, winning 120-100.

Ronaldo Scores Two Headers in Juve Win

TURIN, Italy (Dispatches) - Cristiano Ronaldo has scored twice as Juventus strolled to a 3-0 home win over bottom side Crotone in Serie A, with the victory taking the champions up to third in the standings.

Juve were a little sluggish to get going, but their ever-reliable talisman arrived to meet an Alex Sandro cross in the 38th minute to give Andrea Pirlo's side the lead.

Ronaldo looked hungry for more and another bullet header in first-half stoppage time doubled the lead, taking the Portugal forward back to the top of the league's scoring charts on 18 goals, one ahead of Inter Milan's Romelu Lukaku.

The 36-year-old had chances to complete a hat-trick but it was



Only Robert Lewandowski and Lionel Messi have scored more goals in Europe's top five leagues than Cristiano Ronaldo's 70 since his move to Juventus

Weston McKennie who added the third, hammering home his fourth Serie A goal of the season in the 66th minute.

A first win in four matches in

all competitions ensured Juve climbed from sixth to third in the table and onto 45 points, eight behind leaders Inter with a game in hand.

Crotone remain rooted to the foot of the table with 12 points from 23 games, eight points from the safety zone.

Aaron Ramsey thought he had given the champions the lead with a looping header only to see the ball come out off the crossbar, before Ronaldo showed him how it is done with two expertly-taken headers.

Always looking to break records, Crotone became the 78th different side Ronaldo has scored against in Europe's top five leagues - only Zlatan Ibrahimovic has scored against more teams since 2000.

A glaring miss at the end of the half showed Ronaldo is only human, before two fine saves denied him another hat-trick after the break.

Osaka Back to No. 2; Medvedev No. 3



Australian Open champion Naomi Osaka

MELBOURNE (Dispatches) - Naomi Osaka's Australian Open championship moved her up one spot to No. 2 in the WTA rankings, while men's finalist Daniil Medvedev rose to a career-best No. 3 behind winner Novak Djokovic on the ATP list.

Jennifer Brady, the 25-year-old American who was the runner-up

to Osaka, jumped 11 spots to No. 13, her first time inside the Top 20.

Aslan Karatsev's historic run from qualifying to the final four before losing to nine-time Australian Open champion Djokovic allowed him to vault 72 places from 114th to 42nd. He is the first man in the professional era to reach the semi-

finals in his debut in the main draw of a major tournament.

Despite winning the past two Grand Slam tournaments she entered, Osaka still trails No. 1 Ash Barty — who lost in the quarter-finals at Melbourne Park — because of the way the tennis tours are calculating what they're calling "frozen" rankings following last season's hiatus caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

Essentially, in order for players' rankings not to be hurt if they skipped events as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, the WTA gives credit for someone's best 16 tournaments since March 2019.

Barty took nearly a full year off, for example, but still has her points from winning the 2019 French Open and reaching the semifinals at the 2020 Australian Open.

Serena Williams climbed four spots from No. 11 to No. 7 to get back into the Top 10 after making it

to the semifinals in Australia a year after losing in the third round there.

After beating Medvedev 7-5, 6-2, 6-2 on Sunday for his 18th Grand Slam title, Djokovic is assured of remaining at No. 1 at least another two weeks, which will raise his career total in that spot to 311. That means he will break Roger Federer's ATP record of 310 weeks atop the rankings.

Rafael Nadal stayed at No. 2 after losing in the quarterfinals, while Medvedev's second appearance in a Grand Slam final pushed him up one spot. Medvedev trades places with Dominic Thiem, who dropped to No. 4 after losing in the fourth round.

There were no other changes in the men's Top 10, including Roger Federer remaining at No. 5 despite not having competed in more than a year after having two knee operations. He is expected to return to the tour next month.

Ganna Wins UAE Tour Time Trial as Pogacar Grabs Lead



Filippo Ganna of Team Ineos Grenadiers won the second stage time trial of the UAE Tour

DUBAI (Dispatches) - Italy's Filippo Ganna has won 13km individual time trial on the second stage of the UAE Tour as Tour de France champion Tadej Pogacar took over the race lead.

Ineos rider Ganna, the reigning time trial world champion, clocked 13min 56sec on the circuit around Al Hudaayriyat Island, finishing 14sec clear of Switzerland's Stefan Bissegger.

Pogacar was fourth on the day and inherited the leader's red jersey vacated by Mathieu van der Poel following Alpecin-Fenix's decision to withdraw from the race after a member of the team's staff

tested positive for Covid-19.

The Slovene holds a five-second lead over Portugal's Joao Almeida, who came sixth in the time trial.

"I did not start with any particular result in my mind, I just wanted to go as fast and as good as I could and I think I managed to do that," said Pogacar.

"I'm in a good position now with five stages to go, but anything can happen, and tomorrow we already have the hardest finish for this Tour at Jabel Hafeet."

Tuesday's third stage is a 162km run from Al Ain to Jebel Hafeet and concludes with a summit finish.

Czech Free-Diver Breaks Ice-Swim World Record

LAHOST, Czech Republic (Reuters) - Czech free-diver David Vencl swam nearly 81 meters (265.75 ft) beneath the ice on Tuesday, breaking the world record after braving the freezing water wearing only a swimsuit.

"This will do," Vencl said after emerging from his minute-and-half swim in water measured at temperatures of 3 degrees Celsius and pumping his fist in celebration.

The 38-year-old changed the location for the record attempt to a former quarry in Lahost, 100 kilometers north-west of Prague, from a glacial lake in Austria due to COVID restrictions which made international travel difficult.

Vencl, who dropped into the water through one hole cut in the one-foot-thick ice before emerging from another, beat the previous record of 250 feet set by Denmark's Stig Avall Severinsen in October, 2017 in southern Greenland.

