

Iran Futsal Remains Unchanged in World Futsal Ranking



TEHRAN (Tasnim) – The Iranian national futsal team remained unchanged in the world futsal ranking in the latest Futsal World Ranking released on Thursday.

Team Melli is sixth in the world with 1603 points and is still the best Asian team in the ranking.

Brazil and Spain are first and second with 1810 and 1801 points, respectively.

Argentina remains third with 1694 points.

Russia and Portugal are fourth and fifth with 1642 and 1639 points, respectively.

Japan and Thailand are 16th and 17th in the ranking with 1368 and 1325 points, respectively.

Iran national futsal team prepares for the 2020 AFC Futsal Championship in November, where it has been drawn along with South Korea, Saudi Arabia and Thailand in Group D.

Basketball League to Start in Iran on October 15



TEHRAN (Tasnim) – The Iranian Basketball Super League (IBSL) 2020-21 Season will start on October 15.

In a session held at the Iran Basketball Federation headquarters, it was decided that the IBSL in the men's division would start on October 15 and in the women's division on September 24.

The Iranian Basketball Super League is a professional men's basketball league in Iran. It was founded in 1998. The league follows the promotion and relegation system in which the worst two teams are relegated to 1st Division. Zob Ahan Isfahan is the most decorated team with nine titles.

NBA Players Protest Racial Injustice as League Returns to Action

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - NBA teams bowed their heads and knelt during the playing of the U.S. national anthem while wearing Black Lives Matter T-shirts on Thursday as the league returned for the first time since the coronavirus halted play in March with two thrilling games.

Coaches and game officials joined players from the Utah Jazz, New Orleans Pelicans and Los Angeles Lakers and Clippers in taking a knee to protest against racial injustice and police brutality in the first games in 140 days.

Black Lives Matter was also written on the courts at the ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex in the Walt Disney World Resort near Orlando, where the NBA plans to finish its season with 22 teams



Players and coaches kneel during the national anthem before the Utah Jazz against the New Orleans Pelicans NBA basketball game, July 30, 2020, in Lake Buena Vista, U.S.

inside a bio-secure bubble.

"The game of basketball has always been bigger than just the ball,

the rim, 10 guys on the floor and referees," the Lakers LeBron James said after hitting the game-winning

shot in his team's 103-101 win over the Clippers.

"It's an opportunity to use this platform to spread a lot of positivity and love throughout the whole world."

He said that while there has been progress in the fight against systemic racism, the key was to maintain the momentum.

"We want to keep our foot on the gas," he said. "We're dealing with a lot of racism, a lot of social injustice and a lot of police brutality, not only in my neighborhood and not only with Black people, but with all people of color."

Some players had messages like "Equality," "Education Reform" and "Say Their Names" on the backs of their jerseys in place of their names.

Swiss Launches Criminal Probe of FIFA Boss Infantino



FIFA President Gianni

ZURICH (Reuters) - Criminal proceedings have been opened against

FIFA president Gianni Infantino by a special prosecutor looking into deal-

ings between the head of the global soccer body and Swiss Attorney General Michael Lauber, Swiss authorities said on Thursday.

The special prosecutor Stefan Keller, appointed last month to review complaints against the two men and others, had found indications of criminal conduct related to their meetings, according to the AB-BA watchdog which oversees the Attorney General's Office.

"This concerns abuse of public office, breach of official secrecy, assisting offenders and incitement to these acts," the watchdog said in a statement. Both Lauber and Infantino have denied wrongdoing.

FIFA said in a statement that it would cooperate fully while Infantino said that it was "perfectly legitimate and perfectly legal" to meet the Swiss Attorney General. "It's not a violation of anything," he said.

"It has been my aim from day one, and it remains my aim, to assist the authorities with investigating past wrongdoings at FIFA," he added. "FIFA officials have met with prosecutors in other jurisdictions across the world for exactly these purposes."

Infantino was elected in 2016 to replace disgraced Sepp Blatter, who also became the subject of criminal proceedings in 2015.

Premier League Looking at Clinical Passports Solution for Fans' Return



Clinical passports may be the key to bringing fans back to football stadia, Premier League Chief Executive Richard Masters says

LONDON (AFP) - Clinical passports may be the solution in getting fans back to football stadia, the Premier League's chief executive Richard Masters said on Friday.

Masters says having defied the skeptics in resuming and bringing the season to a climax -- behind closed doors -- after the hiatus caused by the coronavirus pandemic, the next step was to resolve the supporters' conundrum.

The 2020/21 Premier League and lower-tier English Football League begin their new seasons on September 12 and Masters said in a column for The Times that every solution was being examined to give fans the chance to watch their team again.

"We are also willing to see how we can support the development of "clinical passports" -- an app-based system that looks at all symptoms and other COVID-19 contributing factors -- as well as other measures," he wrote.

Masters said the EPL was seeking to work with local councils on

transport solutions.

Masters said bringing fans back was vital not only for their teams on the pitch but for a variety of reasons off it too.

"The importance of fans is not only related to the match-day experience and team performance," he said.

"Without them, there is also a significant financial impact on clubs at all levels of the game, and their cities, towns and communities."

Masters, though, urged patience as the solutions will not be found quickly.

"There is still a lot to be done, and it will not happen overnight," he said.

"We must test and prove what is possible, in tandem with the authorities, within a framework that is flexible and can adapt to fast-moving circumstances and developing expertise."

A number of sports events have been held with a limited number of fans in England in the last few days.

F1 Driver Perez to Miss British GP After COVID-19 Positive

SILVERSTONE (Reuters) - Mexican Formula One driver Sergio Perez will miss Sunday's British Grand Prix after testing positive for COVID-19, his Racing Point team said on Thursday.

The Canadian-owned outfit said the 30-year-old, who is the first driver to test positive since the pandemic-hit season started this month, was "physically well and in good spirits".

They said they planned to replace him for the race at Silverstone.

With Britain extending the virus isolation period to 10 days from seven on Thursday, Perez also looks set to miss the 70th Anniversary Grand Prix -- race five -- at the same circuit on the following weekend.

Racing Point share reserves with engine supplier Mercedes, who have Belgian Stoffel Vandoorne and Mexican Esteban Gutierrez in those roles.



Racing Point's Mexican driver Sergio Perez addresses the drivers' press conference for the Formula One Hungarian Grand Prix at the Hungaroring circuit in Mogyorod near Budapest, Hungary, on July 16, 2020.

Murray Predicts More U.S. Open Withdrawals

LONDON (Reuters) - Britain's Andy Murray expects some of the top male players to follow women's world number one Ash Barty in skipping next month's U.S. Open in New York due to concerns over the coronavirus pandemic.

Australian Barty said on Thursday she was not comfortable travelling to the United States amid the pandemic for the hardcourt Grand Slam, which begins on Aug. 31.

"I have heard some of the top male players aren't going to play. I would expect that would be the case,"

former world number one Murray told British media.

"It's everyone's personal decision. If they don't feel safe, and don't feel comfortable, travelling and going there and putting themselves and their team at an increased risk, then it's completely understandable."

Novak Djokovic, Rafa Nadal and Serena Williams have all entered the Aug. 20-28 Western & Southern Open in New York, which was relocated from Cincinnati this year because of COVID-19 and will serve as a tune-up for the U.S. Open.

Both tournaments will be played without fans in at-

tendance with organizers United States Tennis Association planning to set up a strict bio-security 'bubble' to minimize the risk of contracting the novel coronavirus.

"All of the players will have some reservations and it's whether or not you feel comfortable taking that risk," Murray said at the Battle Of The Brits Team Tennis event.

Murray has previously said he was still "apprehensive" about travelling to New York but he is mentally preparing for the Grand Slam.



Britain's Andy Murray