

Azmoun Chosen AFC National Team Player of Week



Iran national team forward Sardar Azmoun

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Iran national team forward Sardar Azmoun was chosen as the AFC National Team Player of the Week.

Azmoun defeated his compatriots Mehdi Taremi and Ali Gholizadeh in the poll.

One of Asia's top strikers celebrated his return to the international stage by finding the back of net, with Iran's Azmoun playing a key role in his side's 2-1 win over Uzbekistan last Thursday.

The Zenit Saint-Petersburg star was arguably the best known of the Iranian arrivals in Tashkent, and he lived up to his billing when he rocketed the ball past Eldor Suyunov from 25 yards just before half-time, helping Team Melli to a first win under new head coach Dragan Skočić.

He won the poll with 32 percent of votes.

Real Sociedad Go Top in Spain as Both Real Madrid, Barca Lose

MADRID (Dispatches) -- Real Sociedad went top of the table after the sixth round of matches in the La Liga this weekend thanks to a 3-0 win away to Betis.

The side from San Sebastian produced an excellent all-round display in a game between the teams who had started the weekend second and third in the table.

Sociedad opened the scoring when Portu headed home Mikel Oyarzabal's cross two minutes before halftime.

Oyarzabal scored his team's second goal from the penalty spot in the 74th minute after Marc Bartra was penalized for pulling back Real Sociedad striker Alexander Isak.

Adan Januzaj then rounded off an emphatic win with a thumping shot 14 minutes later.

After a 2-1 home victory over Valencia, Villarreal climbed to the second place on



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goal difference.

Valencia sold midfielder Dani Parejo to join Villarreal in the summer to try and cut their wage bill but it worked out to be expensive when Parejo scored Villarreal's winning goal in the east coast derby.

Paco Alcacer's penalty put Villarreal ahead in the sixth minute. Although Goncalo Guedes' 37th minute thunderbolt leveled the score, Parejo's deflected shot in second half still gave the three points to Villarreal.

Cadiz produced the shock of the weekend on Saturday with a 16th minute goal from striker 'Choco' Lozano giving the recently promoted side their first ever away win against Real Madrid.

Barca fared no better than Madrid as they lost 1-0 in Getafe.

Real Madrid now sits in third while the Barca is in ninth place.

Salah Becomes Third Fastest Liverpool Player to Reach 100 Goals

LIVERPOOL (Dispatches) - Egypt superstar Mohamed Salah became the third fastest Liverpool player to reach 100 goals by putting the Reds ahead a second time in a drawn Merseyside thriller against Everton at the weekend.

The 28-year-old, who moved to Anfield from Roma three years ago, is the third quickest goals centurion after Roger Hunt and Jack Parkinson.

The Egypt forward reached his 100 goals milestone as the champions drew. Salah fired Liverpool into a 2-1 lead when he met Yerry Mina's poor clearance with a superb strike into the far corner.



Egypt superstar Mohamed Salah became the third fastest Liverpool player to reach 100

Roglic Set to Retain Vuelta as Chris Froome Bids Farewell to Ineos Chapter

PARIS (Reuters) - Primoz Roglic will be looking for more redemption after his Tour de France heart-break as he prepares for a COVID-19-threatened Vuelta a Espana as Chris Froome bids farewell to Ineos-Grenadiers after 11 years with the British outfit.

Slovenian Roglic, who lost the Tour on the last competitive stage to his compatriot Tadej Pogacar, won the Liege-Bastogne-Liege 'Monument' classic and is in prime position to retain his title in Spain when the race begins on Tuesday.

Backed by a strong Jumbo-Visma team featuring top climbers Sepp Kuss and George Bennett, Roglic is well armed for one of the toughest first weeks in a grand tour, featuring three mountain-top



Primoz Roglic

finishes after the planned Grand Depart from the Netherlands was scrapped amid the COVID-19 crisis.

Spain has been hit hard by the novel coronavirus and organisers have ruled teams will be ejected from the race should two riders

test positive for COVID-19 within a one-week period.

No rider tested positive on the Tour de France in September, but this month's Giro d'Italia has seen two teams, and some top riders, leave the race after being infected by the virus.

Jumbo-Visma was one of them but they are expected to be at full strength for the Vuelta, with Roglic co-leading the team alongside former Giro d'Italia champion Dutchman Tom Dumoulin.

"During the Vuelta it will become clear who will be our main man. Our team is at the start with two favourites for the final victory, one of them is last year's winner," said sports director Grisha Niermann ahead of the first stage in Irun.

Trio Announces Joint 2027 Women's World Cup Bid



USA's players celebrate with the trophy after the France 2019 Women's World Cup football final match between USA and the Netherlands, on July 7, 2019, at the Lyon Stadium in Lyon, central-eastern France.

AMSTERDAM (Dispatches) - Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium have announced a joint bid to host the 2027 Women's World Cup.

The three countries' football associations said they had presented plans to world governing body FIFA and will draft further details, such as the host cities, in the coming months.

Last year, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Iceland and the Faroe Islands said they were working on a joint bid.

The 2023 edition will be held in Australia and New Zealand.

Germany hosted the Women's

World Cup in 2011, while the Netherlands staged the Women's Euro 2017 championship. Belgium has never held a major women's tournament.

"Women's football in our countries is indeed in differing phases of development, but we share the aspiration to give the sport a boost nationally and globally by Organising this World Cup," said the three countries in a joint statement.

England will host the next European Championships in 2022. The tournament was due to be played in 2021 but has been delayed by the coronavirus pandemic.

Kubica Reflects on First Circuit Racing Podium Since 2010



Robert Kubica says he was delighted to end a circuit racing podium drought

BRUSSELS (Dispatches) - Robert Kubica has qualified 10th on the grid for the second of the two races at the Belgian venue, and took advantage of the ensuing chaos ahead of him to jump to sixth place early on.

The Polish driver decided to extend his first stint and was last of the drivers to come into the pits on lap 18, with the strategic gamble allowing him to leapfrog the Audis of Mike Rockenfeller and Jamie Green to move up to fourth.

Equipped with fresher tyres, Kubica reeled in the WRT Audi of Ferdinand Habsburg with ease 12 laps from the finish, eventually finishing third behind championship protagonists Rene Rast and Nico Muller.

It marked Kubica's first podium finish in his rookie DTM season with customer BMW squad ART, and his first in a top-level racing series since his drive to third place in the 2010 Belgian Grand Prix with the Renault F1 team.

Kubica admitted that an incident-

packed race that saw six retirements played a part in his rostrum finish, but felt the result was "pay-off" for the mechanics who rebuilt his car overnight following technical troubles in Saturday's Race 1.

"Yeah, for sure it's unexpected,"

Kubica said after the race. "I think today we used our opportunities. Of course we were not able to finish on the podium [on merit alone], but [apart from] what happened in front of us [we] also [showed] quite good pace in crucial moments.

"After yesterday we had a DNF with some technical issues, I think it's great payoff for hardwork from the guys.

"It feels as a podium. It's been a long time I haven't been on the podium. Still third is not a win, but realistically we couldn't expect this. We take it home.

"Quite important moment because in the end we joined the DTM this season and we had really difficult start of the year. I think this podium is great feeling, great day.