

Leader Congratulates Iranian Wrestlers on Winning Asia Titles



TEHRAN - Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has extended a mes-

sage of congratulation to Iran's national Greco-Roman and freestyle wrestling teams for clinching Asian

championship titles at recent competitions in Kyrgyzstan.

"I sincerely extend my gratitude to Greco-Roman wrestling champions and freestyle wrestling medalists, who delighted the nation with their competence and determination," the Leader wrote in his message on Wednesday.

Iranian Greco-Roman wrestlers claimed four gold medals, three silvers and two bronzes to win the team title of the 2024 Asian Wrestling Championships in the Kyrgyz capital city of Bishkek.

Saeid Morad Gholi Esmail Leivesi in 67-kilogram, Naser Ghasem Alizadeh in 87-kilogram, Muhammadhadi Abdollah Saravi in 97-kilogram and Amin Mirzaza-

deh in 130-kilogram weight classes won four gold medals.

Pouya Soulat Dadmarz in 55-kilogram, Muhammadreza Mahmoud Rostami in 72-kilogram and Rasoul Sadegh Garmsiri in 82-kilogram divisions collected three silver medals.

Amir Reza Dehbozorgi and Iman Hussein Khoun Muhammadi in 60-kilogram and 63-kilogram categories won two bronzes.

Iran won the team title with 200 points. Kyrgyzstan finished in second place with 144 points and Japan came third with 142.

Earlier, Iran's freestyle team won the title with 190 points, followed by Japan and Kyrgyzstan with 130 and 121 points, respectively.

Iran Defeat Bahrain at Int'l Ice Hockey Tournament



TEHRAN - The Iranian ice hockey team has beaten Bahrain 8-1 in the international ice hockey tournament underway in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

"Ice Box Iran Mall" represented Iran in the international ice hockey tournament in Turkmenistan.

Iranian team emerged victorious against "Bahrain Ice Hockey Club" from Bahrain in group A at the main arena of the Winter Sports Complex.

The first period was a tough battle

and ended in a draw - 1:1. However, the Iranian hockey players seized the initiative in the following two periods and achieved a significant victory - 8:1 (1:1, 4:0, and 3:0).

Club teams from Bahrain, Belarus, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Oman, Russia, Turkmenistan, Turkey, and Uzbekistan take part in the tournament.

The international hockey tournament is underway in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan from April 15-20, 2024.

Mbappe Scores Twice as PSG Beat 10-Man Barca to Reach Semifinals

BARCELONA (Reuters) - Paris St Germain's Kylian Mbappe scored twice in the second half to help his side to a 4-1 comeback win at 10-man Barcelona in their Champions League quarterfinal, second leg to wrap up a 6-4 aggregate victory on Tuesday.

After winning 3-2 in Paris and taking a 1-0 lead with an early Raphinha goal in the return, Barca collapsed after going down to 10 men just before the half-hour when last man Ronald Araujo was red-carded for fouling Bradley Barcola.

Former Barcelona forward Ousmane Dembele equalized for the visitors just before the break while Vitorinha and Mbappe finished the job in the second half, with PSG facing Borussia Dortmund in the semi-finals after the Germans beat Atletico Madrid.

Having failed to get past the round of 16 in the last two seasons and being pinned against the ropes by a Barca side who were in the ascendancy, PSG



Paris Saint-Germain's French forward #07 Kylian Mbappe kicks the ball during the UEFA Champions League quarter-final second leg football match between FC Barcelona and Paris SG at the Estadi Olimpic Lluis Companys in Barcelona on April 16, 2024.

put on a gritty performance to make the most of the home side's mistakes and turn the tie around.

PSG manager Luis Enrique, who won the treble in charge of Barcelona in 2015, made three changes from the defeat in Paris.

Bringing in Barcola up front

was crucial as the France winger was a constant menace to Barca's defense, running up and down the left channel as PSG dominated from the start.

But Barcelona seemed comfortable to sit back and counter attack, with Raphinha giving them the lead in the 12th minute.

Teenager Lamine Yamal took a long pass in his stride before slicing past Nuno Mendes in the right channel and putting the ball on a plate for the Brazilian to score the opener.

Barca then wasted a chance to extend their lead when Robert Lewandowski missed from close range and were down to 10 men just before the half-hour after last man Ronald Araujo was shown a red card for a foul on Barcola just outside the penalty area.

The Uruguay defender and his Barca team mates argued with the referee, saying it was a shoulder charge and Pau Cubarsi was close by and ready to challenge Barcola, but it was in vain and Araujo eventually made his way off the field.

Former Barcelona forward Ousmane Dembele put the resulting free kick just wide but did not miss the target nine minutes later, firing home for the visitors in the 40th to equalize on the night from another great play by Barcola.

Dortmund Edge Atletico in Thriller to Reach Semifinals



Dortmund's Austrian midfielder #20 Marcel Sabitzer scores his team's fourth goal 4:2 during the UEFA Champions League quarter-final second leg football match between Borussia Dortmund and Atletico Madrid in Dortmund, western Germany on April 16, 2024.

DORTMUND (Reuters) - Borussia Dortmund stormed into the Champions League semi-finals with a rip-roaring 4-2 home win over Atletico Madrid on Tuesday that saw them fight back from a 2-1 defeat in the first leg to win the tie 5-4 on aggregate.

The German side scored twice in the first half and looked to be cruising into the last four, but Atletico bounced back with two goals early in the second half to put Dortmund on the ropes before they dug deep to complete a superb comeback.

The German side will now take on Paris St Germain, who came back from 4-2 down to beat Barcelona 6-4 on aggregate, in the semi-finals, with a place in the final on June 1 at London's Wembley Stadium at stake.

"We played an incredibly good first half, then there was the extremely unfortunate goal conceded, (but) how we came back, wow," delighted Dortmund coach Edin Terzic said in a TV interview.

The game got off to a flying start, and midfielder Marcel Sabitzer was only prevented from putting the home side ahead in the third minute by a last-ditch block from

Cesar Azpilicueta as the home side came flying out of the blocks.

Julian Brandt put Dortmund level on aggregate in the 34th minute, latching on to a brilliant pass from Mats Hummels and firing home, and five minutes later Dortmund took the lead in the quarter-final tie as Ian Maatsen cut in from the left and drilled a perfectly-placed shot in at the foot of the far post.

Atletico coach Diego Simeone made a triple substitution at the break and it paid dividends almost immediately as Dortmund defender Hummels turned the ball into his own net in the 49th minute, and substitute Angel Correa put the Spaniards back in the lead in the tie in the 64th, scoring at the second attempt.

However, the home side struck back and striker Niclas Fuellkrug made it 4-4 on aggregate with a brilliant glancing header from Sabitzer's cross in the 74th minute.

The home fans had barely retaken their seats following that goal when Sabitzer popped up on the edge of the box, steadying himself with an excellent first touch before drilling home the winner in front of an ecstatic crowd three minutes later.

James Leads Lakers Into NBA Play-Offs

NEW ORLEANS (AP) - LeBron James, Anthony Davis and their supporting cast have the Los Angeles Lakers looking like a tougher out in the playoffs than they appeared to be just a few weeks earlier.

The New Orleans Pelicans, meanwhile, find themselves on the brink of elimination and wondering about the health of star power forward Zion Williamson, whose dominant NBA postseason debut was cut short by an injury in the final minutes of a tight game.

James had 23 points, nine assists and nine rebounds, and the Lakers secured a playoff berth with a 110-106 victory over the Pelicans in the Western Conference play-in tournament on Tuesday night.

Williamson had 40 points and 11 rebounds. But shortly after tying the game at 95 on a driving layup with 3:19 to go, Williamson went to the locker room, throwing a towel to the floor in disgust as he walked into the tunnel with an apparent injury.

After the game, Pelicans coach Willie Green said Williamson had "left leg soreness."

"He's going to have some imaging on it tomorrow and we'll figure out more," Green said.

Soon after Williamson went out, James hit a jumper, Davis dunked Austin Reaves' alley-oop lob, DeAngelo Russell hit a 3 and Davis

grabbed a crucial offensive rebound, after which he hit two free throws to help the Lakers hold on.

The Pelicans "threw some heavy blows at us," Lakers coach Darvin Ham said. "They kept swinging. We kept fighting back.

"It revealed a lot about us and what we're made of," he added.

Davis finished with 20 points and 15 rebounds. Russell scored 21, hitting five times from deep. James was 10 of 10 on free throws and Davis 8 of 10.

The Lakers advance to face defending champion Denver in the first round in a rematch of last season's Western Conference finals, a sweep by the Nuggets. Game 1 is Saturday night.

The Pelicans will host Sacramento on Friday, with the winner earning the No. 8 seed in the West. The Kings eliminated Golden State in the later play-in game on Wednesday night.

Williamson, Green said, was "fantastic."

The Lakers went 14 of 35 from 3-point range. The Pelicans hit 9 of 29 from deep and Williamson didn't get a lot of help from the Pelicans' usual high scorers. Brandon Ingram

— in his second game back from a 12-game absence because of a knee injury — missed 8 of 12 shots and finished with 11 points after spending the final few minutes on the



Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James (23) goes to the basket in the first half of an NBA basketball play-in tournament game against the New Orleans Pelicans, Tuesday, April 16, 2024, in New Orleans.

bench.

Trey Murphy III scored 12, hitting two 3s from beyond 28 feet in the second half to help New Orleans come back from an 18-point second-half deficit to tie it.

The Lakers led 75-57 after Rui Hachimura's layup in the third quarter. But New Orleans got back in the game by outscoring Los Angeles 19-8 during the final 5:31 of the period.

Williamson sparked the surge with a pair of layups. Murphy pulled up for a 31-foot 3-pointer in the final minute of the quarter and Williamson's free throw made it 83-76 at the

end of the period.

Looking to redeem themselves for a lackluster loss to the Lakers on Sunday, the Pelicans put together a promising opening quarter and took a 34-28 lead on Herb Jones' 3.

Los Angeles surged into the lead by outscoring New Orleans 34-16 in the second quarter, leading by as many as 14 after James, who had 15 first-half points, hit two free throws to make it 58-44.

In the final seconds of the half, Williamson sprinted nearly the length of the court on the dribble for a floating layup at the horn that made it 60-50.