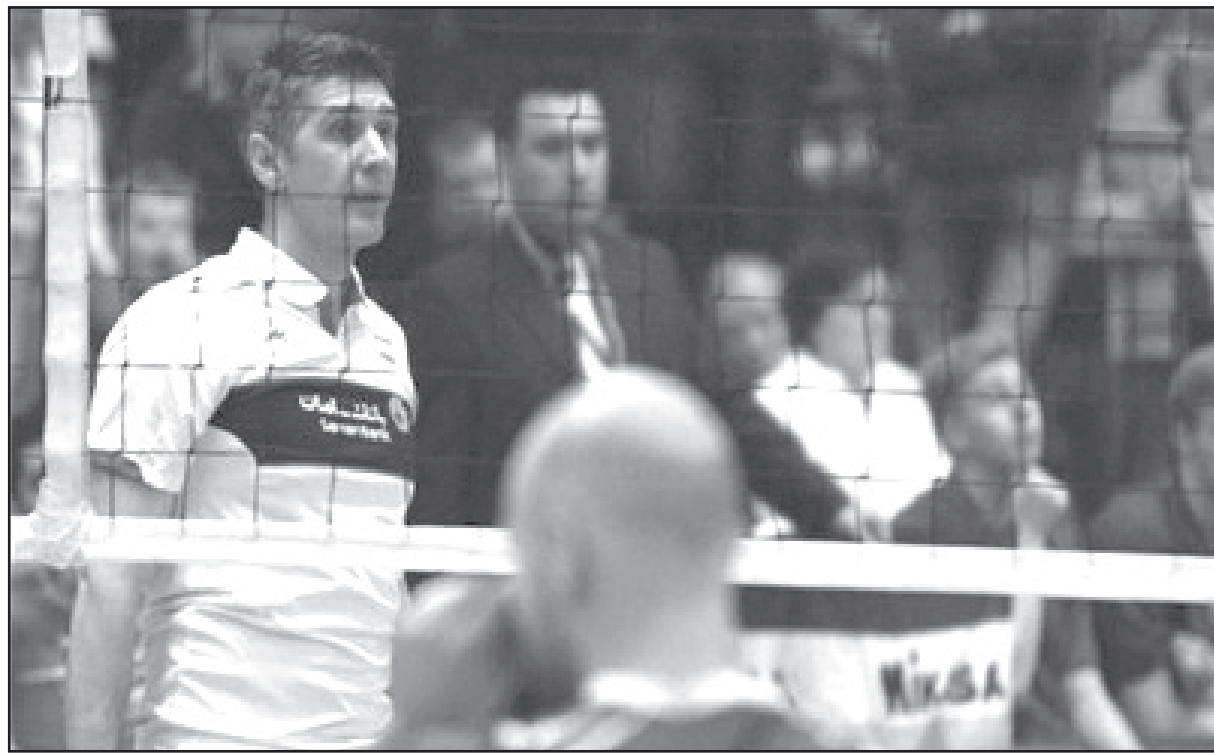


# Kovac: USA Played Better Than Iran



Slobodan Kovac

TEHRAN (Tasnim) - Iranian national volleyball team head coach Slobodan Kovac said that USA won the match against his men since they showed a better performance.

The US beat Iran 3-1 (25-16, 25-16, 20-25, 25-20) in Pool B match of the 2015 FIVB World League on Monday.

"USA played better than us again. It's so difficult to say something," Kovac said in the post match news conference.

"We made so many mistakes. No good face on the court. I've stayed with Iran more than 60 matches and I see so many players afraid to play and make mistakes and I don't know why," he added.

"My team in general receives very well. In these two matches we received so badly. Only at some points we played a good volleyball," the Serbian coach added.

## We must Not Underestimate Turkmenistan, Says Reza Ghoochannejhad

TEHRAN (Persianleague) - Iranian international striker Reza Ghoochannejhad believes that Team Melli have to take every opponent serious in order to qualify for the 2018 World Cup.

"Each game in the World Cup qualification road is important and we must not underestimate small teams. In the first step towards next World Cup we will face Turkmenistan which is not an easy opponent. Before that we will play a friendly match against Uzbekistan which is a simulation match for Turkmenistan game," Gucci told in an interview with Tasnim News Agency.

"We have to get a good result in the preliminary qualifica-



Reza Ghoochannejhad

tion round. In the previous World Cup qualification campaign we struggled against Lebanon and Qatar and we faced difficulties in the

final matches especially against South Korea. This time we will try our best to qualify for the World Cup more easily," Ghoochannejhad

added.

The 28-year old also insisted that he has not received any offer from an Iranian side as he doesn't want to play in Iran Pro League.

"I have just heard it from the media. It's all about newspapers and transfer rumors. I have not received any offer from Iran and that is just for Team Melli every time I come to Iran. I am still under contract with Charlton so I have to return to England as soon as possible," he added.

Iran, who is preparing for the 2018 FIFA World Cup qualifying stage, will face Turkmenistan in its first step towards the tournament.

## Tsonga Upsets Berdych to Light Up Roland Garros



Jo-Wilfried Tsonga of France celebrates after beating Tomas Berdych of the Czech Republic during their men's singles match at the French Open tennis tournament at the Roland Garros stadium in Paris, France

PARIS (China Daily) - Frenchman Jo-Wilfried Tsonga dismissed Czech star Tomas Berdych to delight the local spectators who came to Roland Garros and just found all play halted for more than two hours by rain on Sunday.

The No. 14 seed made through to the quarter-finals with a thrilling 6-3, 6-1, 6-7(5), 6-3 victory while the fourth-seeded Berdych got really upset with his demand of suspending the match amid drizzle denied and booed by fans.

Having wafted a backhand long, Berdych granted the injury-plagued Tsonga the victory, his very first over a top 10 player at a Grand Slam since he ousted Roger Federer here in 2013.

The Frenchman, one of the six players over 30 to feature in the last 16, will next play title tips Kei Nishikori of Japan.

"I was just trying to hang in there as much as I could. I was way far from my best tennis that I can play, and it's

definitely a very disappointing loss for me," Berdych told a post-match press conference.

"It's not the time that I want to go home from this event. But that's how it is."

Tsonga, on the contrary, was quite upbeat, saying that "I'm feeling good. I'm playing good tennis. I'm solid."

"I have people around me who stay positive for me, and they help me to never give up," he spoke of the home crowd. "That's why I'm happy today, because the confidence is back."

Gael Monfils was also doing well on Sunday, tying world No. 2 Roger Federer at one set all, when their last 16 showcase was suspended for darkness.

## Iran Stands 3rd at Izmir Cadet Wrestling Tournament

IZMİR (MNA) - Young Iranian wrestlers bagged 7 medals and stood at 3rd place at the 18th International Cadets Wrestling Tournament in Turkey.

Iranian junior wrestlers grabbed 4 gold medals, one silver and two bronze ones in the 18th International Cadets Mahmut Atalay and

Yaşar Erkan Tournament in free style, and greco-roman wrestling.

The tournament kicked off on May 29 with 10 participating countries and wrapped up on Sunday, in the Turkish city of Izmir.

Iran with a total of 7 medals stood at third place after Turkey and Georgia.

## Pele's Son Sacked as Coach of Brazilian Serie B Club

RIO DE JANEIRO (Xinhua) -- One of the sons of football legend Pele has been sacked as coach of Brazilian second tier club Mogi Mirim after just four matches in charge.

Edinho, 44, was told the news by Mogi Mirim president and Brazil World Cup winner Rivaldo on Sunday, just hours after the club's 0-0 draw with Oeste.

"Unfortunately, professional football is about results," Rivaldo said in a statement.

"Edinho showed qualities in his

day-to-day work but the team hasn't performed as we'd hoped and I believe it's necessary to make the change now so that we don't regret anything later."

Edinho led Mogi Mirim to two draws and two losses. The club is currently second last in Brazil's 20-team Serie B standings.

Before accepting the Mogi Mirim job, Edinho was an assistant coach for Santos, where his father scored 1,091 goals from 1,116 matches from 1956 to 1974. Enditem

## Mihajlovic Leaves Sampdoria

ROME (FIFA) - Sinisa Mihajlovic has stepped down as coach of Sampdoria amid speculation he will replace Rafael Benitez at Napoli, but insisted he does not have another job to go to.

Mihajlovic ended a two-year spell in charge at Samp after their 2-2 draw with relegated Parma in the final match of the season on Sunday.

"The most difficult time has come for me, that of the goodbyes," the Serbian said in an open letter on his club's official website. "These are my last words as coach of Sampdoria. My adventure has come to an end."

Mihajlovic, a former Samp player, joined the Genoa club in November 2013 with the team struggling at the lower end of the table.

He guided them to 12th place that season, while this year steering them to seventh - which could be good enough for a Europa League place dependant on the outcome of sixth-placed Genoa's appeal against the denial



Sinisa Mihajlovic

of a UEFA licence.

"I am proud to leave a club that is confident in its means, courageous and capable of facing top teams without fear," Mihajlovic said. "I leave a group of players that have grown a lot in the past two years."

"Whoever comes after me will find a team that has a work ethic, that knows what sacrifice, professionalism is. This is the biggest legacy I could leave."

"I am proud of the work done in the past two years and I believe the fans and the club should be. I've given everything I could for this club and I hope I have done enough to remain in the history of the club."

Mihajlovic, a long-time player in Italy's Serie A, coached Bologna, Catania, Fiorentina and the Serbian national team before landing the job at Samp.

"As a cycle ends I would like to quote John F Kennedy who said: 'We need to use time as a tool, not as a couch,'" the 46-year-old said. "It would be easy for me to remain here but I don't want to sit down."

"It wouldn't be fair for my career and probably neither for the team. I had an aim and I reached it. Now I'm looking for another challenge."

Mihajlovic insists he has not agreed terms with any other club yet.

"I leave Samp without having for the time being another team or an open negotiation," he said. "Anything can happen, even that I stay at home. But my head and my heart say it's the right decision."

## Aziz Yildirim Re-Elected Fenerbahce Chairman

ISTANBUL (Anadolu Agency) - Aziz Yildirim has been elected to his 12th term as chairman of Fenerbahce sports club at Sunday's general assembly.

Yildirim defeated his rival Hulusi Belgu after winning 5,504 votes at the election, while Belgu received 1,144 votes.

Aziz Yildirim has been at the helm of Fenerbahce, one of the biggest sports clubs in Turkey, since 1998.

The Yellow Canaries' chairman of 17 years, Yildirim had earlier said he would not stand, only to change tack after, he said, he saw a newspaper ad calling for his resignation.



Yildirim elected to 12th term atop one of Turkey's biggest sports clubs, winning 5,504 votes against rival Belgu's 1,144.