

Iran Futsal Remains Sixth in World Ranking



TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Iran futsal team remained unchanged in the latest **Futsal World Ranking** published.

Team Melli remained in sixth place with 1609 points and is the best Asian team.

Spain leads the standing with 1813, followed by Brazil with 1803 points. Argentina is third with 1698 points.

Russia and Portugal are fourth and fifth with 1654 and 1622 points, respectively.

Asian teams Japan and Thailand are 15th and 18th in the ranking with 1368 and 1325 points, respectively.

Iran national futsal team prepares for the 2021 AFC Futsal Championship.

Team Melli has been drawn along with South Korea, Saudi Arabia and Thailand in Group D.

Arsene Wenger: FIFA Ready to Use Automated Offside Calls in 2022 World Cup

ZURICH (Reuters) - FIFA will be ready to implement an automated system for offside calls at next year's World Cup in Qatar, Arsene Wenger said.

The game's rulemaker, IFAB, said last month it was continuing to review the offside law and planned to test technology that would allow for 'semi-automatic' decisions to limit the need for long waits for VAR reviews.

Wenger, however, said he supported the 'automated' offside technology, which directly informs a referee's assistant if an

incident is offside.

According to FIFA here, semi-automated offside technology provides VAR with additional information before the referee makes the final call.

"The automated offside I think will be ready for 2022," Wenger, FIFA's head of football development, was quoted as saying in The Times here.

Last month, former Netherlands forward Marco van Basten called on football's lawmakers to consider scrapping the offside rule, saying the game would be better off without it.

PSG Upset Bayern Munich in UEFA Champions League

BERLIN (Dispatches) - A brace from Kylian Mbappe and a clinical chance conversion from Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) inflicted hosts Bayern a 3-2 defeat in the first leg of the Champions League quarterfinals.

The PSG shocked Bayern with two first-half goals before the hosts turned up and leveled the scores. The visitors from France had the last laugh though as Mbappe's second of the night stunned wasteful Bayern.

The Bavarians needed no warm up time and left no doubt that they wanted to secure a win on home soil as Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting rattled the woodwork with only two minutes played.

However, the PSG caught a fairy tale start on the road as Mbappe completed a fast break via Neymar to surprise Bayern goalkeeper Manuel Neuer with the opener from the edge of the box.

The visitors thought they had doubled the lead in the 12th minute but Julian Draxler's goal



was ruled offside.

As the match progressed, Bayern gained the upper hand as Leon Goretzka forced Paris custodian Kaylor Navas into action with 19 minutes gone.

PSG's defense had its hands full but the visitors were able to soak up Bayern's pressure.

Bayern's nightmare continued as Paris doubled its advantage against the run of the play after Marquinhos benefitted on Neymar's

chipped ball to beat Neuer from close range in the 28th minute.

The hosts responded well and pressed relentlessly for a goal but for all that PSG remained a menace on counterattacks.

Bayern's powerplay got eventually rewarded in the 38th minute when Benjamin Pavard's cross into the box allowed Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting to halve the deficit by a header at the far post.

After the restart, the German gi-

ants picked up where they left off but Navas neutralized the promising chances from David Alaba and Pavard in the early stages of the second half.

Navas was hapless though at the hour mark when Joshua Kimmich's free-kick into the penalty box found Thomas Muller, who headed home the equalizer from a central position.

Bayern gained momentum and pressed PSG into defense, yet the visitors who once again scored out of thin air as Mbappe showed no mercy and wrapped up his brace following a fast break in the 68th minute.

Hansi Flick's men started an onslaught on Paris' goal, but the visitor's well-positioned defense stood firm to secure a 3-2 away win in the first leg.

The German record champions lose their match on home soil although they had 31 efforts on target whereas Paris scored only three goals from six shots on goal.

Asgreen Beats Van der Poel to Win Tour of Flanders



OUDENAARDE, Belgium (AFP)— Danish cyclist Kasper Asgreen timed his attack perfectly with about 250 meters left and overtook Dutchman Mathieu Van der Poel to win the Tour of Flanders classic for the first time.

Asgreen sat on the defending champion's wheel entering the last kilometer and then surged ahead of Van der Poel, who tried to resist but eased up just before the line when he knew defeat was inevitable.

Both completed the 254-kilometer (157.5-mile) trek in just over six hours.

The last Dane to win the race was Rolf Sorensen in 1997.

It was Asgreen's second big win of the season after victory late last month at the E3 Classic, which was

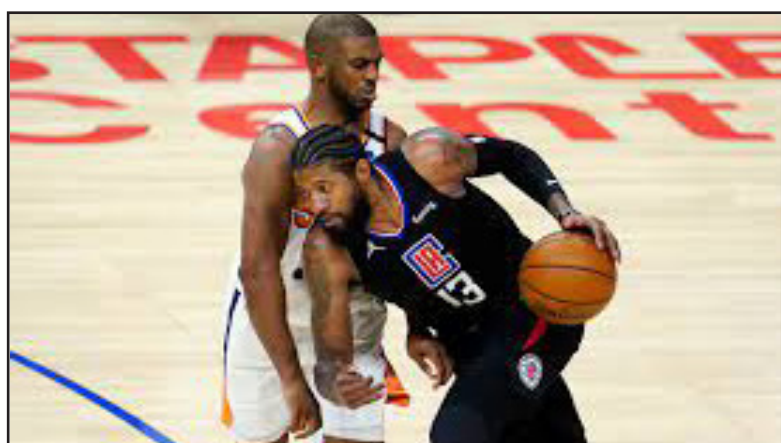
also held in the Flanders region of Belgium.

Van der Poel, who rides for the Alpecin-Fenix team, won last year's exciting race in a photo finish ahead of his former Cyclocross rival Wout van Aert of Belgium, who was dropped from the leading group of three riders with 17 kilometers (10.5 miles) to go. He finished third, about 30 seconds behind the front two.

His father Adrie van der Poel won the race in 1986.

First held in 1913, the race in the Flemish Ardennes region is also known as De Ronde and is one of five classics along with Milan-San Remo, Paris-Roubaix, Liege-Bastogne-Liege and the Giro di Lombardia.

Los Angeles Clippers Beat Phoenix Suns 113-103



LOS ANGELES (AP) — Paul George scored 33 points, Kawhi Leonard added 27 and the Los Angeles Clippers beat the Phoenix Suns 113-103 on Thursday night in a matchup of two of the top teams in the Western Conference.

George was 7 of 9 from 3-point range in 30 minutes in his eighth

30-point game of the season. His season high of 39 points was against Phoenix on Jan. 3. The Clippers made 18 3-pointers, which is the 12th time this season they have made 18 or more in a game.

Leonard scored 19 points in the second half to help the Clippers end of the Suns' winning streak at sev-

en. Los Angeles trailed 67-61 with eight minutes remaining in the third quarter before coming back with an 8-2 run to tie it.

LA led 83-81 at the end of the third quarter before opening the fourth with a 10-2 run to seize control. Its largest lead was 16 points late in the fourth.

Rajon Rondo, who was acquired from Atlanta near the deadline, added 15 points for the Clippers, who are 5-2 during a season-long, nine-game homestand. Even more important, they are assured of taking the season series from the Suns, which would give them a key tie-breaker if both teams would tie at the end of the regular season.

Phoenix, which was coming off a big overtime victory over NBA-leading Utah on Wednesday night, didn't have enough down the stretch. Devin Booker led the way

with 24 points, and Mikal Bridges had 20.

The Suns made 27 of their first 40 shots but were 9 of 31 after their hot start. They were 1 1/2 games behind Utah, but the Jazz's 19-point win over Portland puts them down 2 1/2 for the conference's top spot.

Clippers guard Patrick Beverley was ejected with 7:01 remaining for a Flagrant 2 foul against Chris Paul.

Replay determined that Beverley's shoulder check and extended elbow against Chris Paul on a fast break was an unnecessarily hard and excessive foul.

Marcus Morris Sr. was ejected late after picking up a pair of technical fouls in the fourth quarter.

DeMarcus Cousins played eight minutes in his LA debut on Tuesday, but did not see action Thursday.

Juve Squeeze Past Napoli in Rescheduled Serie A Fixture

ROME (Reuters) - Paulo Dybala marked his return with a moment of magic as Juventus beat Napoli 2-1 in a high-profile rescheduled Serie A fixture.

The Bianconeri has been struggling recently as the defending champions suffered a shock 1-0 home defeat to Benevento, followed by a 2-2 tie against city rivals Torino, so Andrea Pirlo's coaching spot was in doubt while his counterpart Gennaro Gattuso's future was also up in the air with Napoli's shaky performance.

The game between Juventus and Napoli was set to kick off



Juventus' Argentine forward Paulo Dybala, right, challenges Napoli's Spanish midfielder Fabian Ruiz during the Italian Serie A football match Juventus vs Napoli on April 7, 2021 at the Juventus stadium in Turin.

last October, but Napoli failed to make the trip to Turin due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Partenopei was originally handed a 3-0 defeat by default and docked one point, but the Coppa Italia holders won the appeal, so the fixture was postponed.

Leonardo Bonucci and Federico Bernardeschi were left out of Juve's squad for contacting the virus, Gianluigi Buffon got a rare start between the sticks and Cristiano Ronaldo partnered Alvaro Morata up front while Lorenzo Insigne, Hirving Lozano and Dries Mertens led Napoli's attacking trident.

Musetti Cruises Past Top-Seeded Evans at Sardegna Open



CAGLIARI, Sardinia (AFP) — Italian teenager Lorenzo Musetti saved four match points before beating top-seeded Daniel Evans 6-1, 1-6, 7-6 (8) to reach the Sardegna Open quarterfinals.

The 19-year-old Musetti closed the match out with a drop-shot winner then slammed his racket to the clay in celebration.

Musetti, who won the boys title at the 2019 Australian Open, is the youngest player ranked in the top 100 at No. 90.

Musetti will next face defending champion Laslo Djere, who defeated sixth-seeded John Millman 6-3, 6-3.

Also at the Cagliari Tennis Club, third-seeded Lorenzo Sonego eliminated Gilles Simon 6-4, 6-1 and will next face Yannick Hanfmann, who defeated Marco Cecchinato 7-5, 6-1.

Djere won the first edition of the tournament at Forte Village in October.