

# Iran Athlete Runner-Up in Lebanon Snowboard Tournament



TEHRAN —Iranian athlete Yasin Husseinzadeh has become vice-champion in a snowboard competition being held in Lebanon.

Husseinzadeh has ranked second in the competitions. Earlier, he could rank first in the junior category of the sporting event.

Also, the 16-year-old snowboarder bagged his first gold medal in the adult category of the tournament at the outset of the tournament.

Seyyed Mortaza Seyyd is leading the Iranian squad in the Lebanese snowboard tournament which kickstarted on February 11.

## Napoli Cruise to 3-0 Win Over Cremonese

NAPLES (Reuters) - Serie A leaders Napoli eased to a 3-0 home win over bottom side Cremonese on Sunday, claiming their sixth consecutive league win.

Napoli took the lead in the 21st minute through winger Khvicha Kvaratskhelia who kept the ball from going off the pitch and went on to finish his solo effort with a low shot into the bottom right corner.

Striker Victor Osimhen doubled their advantage shortly after the hour mark from

close range, scoring in his sixth league game in a row to make it eight goals in 2023.

Substitute midfielder Eljif Elmas sealed the win 11 minutes from time, after he was set up by defender Giovanni Di Lorenzo.

Napoli are 16 points above second-placed Inter Milan, who travel to Sampdoria on Monday.

Cremonese, who are still without a league win this season, remain bottom of the standings on eight points.



Napoli's Macedonian midfielder Eljif Elmas scores his side's third goal during the Italian Serie A football match between Napoli and Cremonese on Feb 12, 2023 at the Diego-Maradona stadium in Naples.

## Juventus Survive Late Scare to Beat Fiorentina

TURIN (AFP) - Adrien Rabiot headed Juventus to a hard-fought 1-0 win over old rivals Fiorentina on Sunday but survived a scare after the away side's late leveller was ruled out for offside.

France midfielder Rabiot met Angel Di Maria's exquisite cross with a header which just crossed the line in the 34th minute, his fourth Serie A goal of the season which moved Juventus up to ninth.

Fiorentina thought they had snatched a late point when Gaetano Castrovilli rifled home a first-time finish with a minute remaining.

However his superb finish was chalked off following a pitchside VAR check when referee Michael Fabbrì ruled Luca Ranieri was offside and interfering with play in the build-up to the goal.

Massimiliano Allegri's side are in mid-table due to the 15-point penalty inflicted last month for what

the Italian Football Federation ruled was illicit transfer activity designed to artificially boost their accounts.

After 22 matches played Juve are 10 points behind Lazio who currently occupy the last European place in sixth following their 2-0 home defeat to Atalanta on Saturday night.

Juventus could have come away with a bigger victory but Dusan Vlahovic was denied his third goal in as many matches when his superb lifted finish over Pietro Terracciano just before the hour mark was ruled out for the tightest of offsides.

Moise Kean replaced Vlahovic in the 65th minute and should have added to Juve's lead twice in a matter of seconds, Terracciano rushing out to stop the Italy forward who then could not finish from close range at the subsequent corner.

However the away side were not just spectators and Jonathan Ikone was stopped from levelling almost straight after Rabiot's winner when Manuel Locatelli pulled off an acrobatic clearance.

Juve are level on 29 points with Monza, whose dream debut Serie A season continued with a 1-0 win at Bologna which moved them into the top half of the division.

Giulio Donati poked home the only goal in the 25th minute of a tight game at the Stadio Dall'Ara.

Raffaele Palladino's side are unbeaten in eight matches in the league, a run which includes drawing with Inter Milan and a historic win at Juventus.

Marko Arnautovic returned to action after over a month out but the presence of Bologna's star forward was not enough to inspire his team to get a result.

Thiago Motta's Bologna drop

down a place to 10th after being overtaken by Monza on goal difference.

Both are a point behind Udinese, whose defender Destiny Udogie scored the fastest goal of the Serie A season in their 2-2 draw with Sassuolo.

Italy international Udogie, who will join Tottenham Hotspur next season, opened the scoring after just 25 seconds with a right-footed strike from the edge of the area.

However the 20-year-old's strike couldn't stop Udinese's dismal run of form at home, where they have not won a match since beating Inter Milan in mid-September.

Udinese started the season strongly but have won only once in their last 14 league matches.

Sassuolo are 15th and are sweating on the condition of star man Domenico Berardi who had to leave the field with a thigh problem.

## Barcelona Beat Villarreal 1-0 to Go 11 Points Clear in LaLiga



Villarreal's Spanish midfielder Alex Baena (left) vies with Barcelona's Dutch midfielder Frenkie de Jong during the Spanish League football match between Villarreal CF and FC Barcelona at La Ceramica stadium in Vila-real on Feb 12, 2023.

VILLAREAL, Spain (Reuters) - A first-half strike from Pedri gave Barcelona a 1-0 win over Villarreal at the Estadio de la Ceramica on Sunday to extend their lead over Real Madrid at the top of LaLiga to 11 points and keep them on course for a first league title since 2019.

Robert Lewandowski fired an early chance straight at goalkeeper Pepe Reina but he had better luck with his passing, teeing up Pedri in a brilliant exchange that set up the 20-year-old to clip the ball into the net in the 18th minute.

Lewandowski almost scored a second eight minutes later after another flowing Barca attack, but Reina was able to get down smartly to steer away his left-footed shot from inside the box.

In a game punctuated by some crunching tackles, Villarreal lost midfielder Francis Coquelin to what looked to be a nasty knee injury in the 35th minute, and referee Alejandro Hernandez Hernandez doled out eight yellow

cards, four to each team, over the 90 minutes.

Though the home side had more possession it was the visitors who created the better chances, with Lewandowski and Raphinha both coming close to doubling the lead as the action ebbed and flowed.

On the few occasions Villarreal did break through, they found centre back Ronald Araujo in imperious form, and he came to his side's rescue more than once with well-timed clearances and tackles in the second half.

Lewandowski had one last effort at getting the better of Reina but again he came up short as the keeper pulled off another fine save to deny the Polish international, but it wasn't enough to prevent Barcelona from taking all three points.

The win leaves Barca top of the standings on 56 points after 21 games, while Villarreal are in eighth position on 31 points, seven off LaLiga's fourth Champions League place, currently occupied by Atletico Madrid.

## Raptors Beat Pistons 119-118 in NBA



Toronto Raptors' Thaddeus Young (21) claims a defensive rebound from Detroit Pistons' Isaiah Stewart during first-half NBA basketball game action in Toronto, Sunday, Feb. 12, 2023.

TORONTO (AP) — Fred VanVleet scored 35 points, topping 30 for a career-best ninth time this season, and Pascal Siakam added 28 points as the Toronto Raptors beat the Detroit Pistons 119-118 Sunday for their fourth win in five games.

Scottie Barnes scored 20 points and Precious Achiuwa had 11 points and 11 rebounds as Toronto won its second straight win over Detroit after losing the previous six meetings.

VanVleet and the Raptors bounced back after blowing a 12-point lead in the final five minutes of Friday's home loss to Utah. Toronto is 20-7 all-time when VanVleet scores 30 or more points. Siakam has scored 25 or more in three straight games.

Detroit's Dwane Casey worked with both Siakam and VanVleet when he was head coach in Toronto. Bojan Bogdanovic scored 33 points, Alec Burks had 21, and Hamidou Diallo and Jaden Ivey each had 18 for the Pistons. Detroit failed once again to win consecutive games for the second time this

season.

Detroit beat San Antonio in double overtime Friday in a matchup of two of the NBA's worst teams. The Pistons haven't won back-to-back games since victories at Denver and Utah on Nov. 22 and 23, following all 10 wins since with defeats.

Ivey's 3-pointer with 10.1 seconds left in the fourth quarter cut it to 116-113 before VanVleet answered with a pair of free throws.

Bogdanovic hit two free throws, but Achiuwa made one of two at the line to put Toronto up by four points with 4.4 seconds left. Ivey's 3 at the buzzer wasn't enough for Detroit.

Pistons center Jalen Duren injured his right ankle in the second quarter, but returned to start the second half. The rookie teenager scored a career-high 30 points Friday. The 19-year-old Duren finished with six points in 21 minutes. Toronto scored 14 points off 18 Detroit turnovers. The Raptors allowed a season-low five points off their eight turnovers.

## IOC Not on Wrong Side of History Over Russia, Says Bach

PARIS (Reuters) - International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach said his organization is not on the wrong side of history after opening the door for Russian and Belarusian athletes to participate in next year's Summer Games in Paris.

The IOC received a backlash after setting out a path last month for athletes of both countries to earn slots for the Olympics through Asian qualifying and to compete as neutrals, with no flags or anthems.

Athletes from Russia and its neighbor Belarus have been banned from many international competitions.

In a letter to Bach last week, Ukrainian athletes said the IOC was "on the wrong side of history" after Bach had urged Ukraine to drop threats of a

boycott.

When asked if the IOC was on the wrong side of history, Bach told reporters on Sunday: "No, history will show who is doing more for peace. The ones who try to keep lines open, to communicate or the ones who want to isolate or divide."

Lithuania's sports minister said on Friday a group of 35 countries, including the United States, Germany and Australia, will demand Russian and Belarusian athletes be banned from the 2024 Olympics.

Russian Sports Minister Oleg Matysin was quoted as saying by TASS news agency that the calls were "absolutely unacceptable".

Bach, speaking at the Alpine skiing world championships in



International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach attends the opening of the Executive Board meeting at the Olympic House in Lausanne, Switzerland, December 5, 2022.

Courchevel, France, said the IOC stood in "solidarity" with Ukraine's athletes.

"With every Ukrainian athlete,

we can from a human point of view understand their reactions, we share their suffering," he said.