

# Iran Runners-Up in Kurash World Championship



TEHRAN – Iranian athletes have finished second in the 13th Kurash World Championship held at Pune complex, India.

The Kurash Association of India organized the 13th World Senior Kurash Championship 2022 from 23 to 29 November at Balewadi Sports Complex Pune, where Iran ranked second by winning six gold, three silver, and four bronze medals.

Donya Aghaei, Zahra Bagheri, Fatemeh Barmaki, Masoud Ghavibazou, Elias Pakdel, and Javad Moradi received gold medals respectively in the weight category of -70, -87, +87, -90, -73, and

-100 kg in the event.

Fatemeh Fattahi, Muhammad Mehdi Barimanlou, and Ghassem Nourizadeh gained silver medals in the weight category of -63, -81, and -66.

Pardis Eidivandi, Saba Karamali, Leila Siahoushi, and Tahereh Azarpeivand won bronze medals in the weight category of -57, -78, -48, and -52.

Being one of the oldest martial arts the people had ever practiced, Kurash is an ancient type of upright jacket grappling that originated in the territory of modern Uzbekistan; the latest scientific research reveals that the age of Kurash is at least three and a half thousand years.

## Freestyle Wrestlers to Compete at U.S. 2022 World Cup



TEHRAN – Iran's lineup for the 2022 Freestyle World Cup in the U.S. was released.

The Freestyle and Women's Wrestling World Cup will be held at Xtream Arena in Coralville, Iowa, on December 10-11.

It is the first time that men's freestyle and women's freestyle will be held together side-by-side at the World Cup.

The World Cup is the annual international dual meet championships, conducted by United World Wrestling.

The top five teams in men's freestyle and the top five teams in women's wrestling from the 2022 Senior World Championships in Belgrade, Serbia in September have confirmed their participation.

There is also an All-World Team in each discipline, featuring the top available athlete from the World Championships in each weight class that were not from a nation that qualified for the World Cup.

The Iran World Cup team will feature five senior world medalists, as well as seven others who have won world medals at the age-group levels.

The team is led by two-time world champion Kamran Ghasempour at 97kg. Ghasempour won his world titles in 2021 and 2022, and also won U-23 world titles in 2018 and 2019.

- Iran Freestyle World Cup team:
- 57 kg – Reza Momeni
  - 61 kg – Armin Habibzadeh
  - 65 kg – Rahman Amouzad Khalili
  - 65 kg – Mohammadreza Bagheri Heydarabadi
  - 70 kg – Aliakbar Fazli Khalili
  - 70 kg – Amirmohammad Yazdani
  - 74 kg – Mohammadsadegh Firouzpour
  - 79 kg – Muhammad Nokhodi
  - 79 kg – Ali Savadkouhi
  - 86 kg – Alireza Karimi Machini
  - 92 kg – Amirhossein Firouzpour
  - 97 kg – Kamran Ghasempour
  - 97 kg – Amirali Azarpira
  - 125 kg – Amirreza Valadi

## Messi, Argentina Play Poland for Survival at World Cup

DOHA, Qatar (AP) — Lionel Messi has already come to Argentina's rescue at the World Cup. He might just have to do it all over again.

Another emotionally charged evening awaits Messi and the soccer-mad south American nation that worships him when Argentina meets Poland on Wednesday for a match with so much on the line.

For Messi, who is playing in likely his last World Cup. For Poland striker Robert Lewandowski, who might also be too old when soccer's biggest tournament rolls up next in 2026.

And for the World Cup as a whole. Because who, really, doesn't want to see Messi — one of the game's greatest ever players — in the late stages of a tournament that is heating up so nicely.

There are multiple permutations at play for the Group C finale: A win for the Argentines and they are



\*\*\*\*Argentina's Lionel Messi celebrates after scoring his side's opening goal during the World Cup group C soccer match between Argentina and Mexico, at the Lusail Stadium in Lusail, Qatar, Saturday, Nov. 26, 2022.

sure to advance, likely as the group winners. A draw, and they can either finish in second place behind Poland or be squeezed out by either Saudi Arabia or Mexico, who are playing

in a match taking place concurrently.

A loss? Well, that just doesn't bear thinking about for anyone associated with Argentina. The team wouldn't just be eliminated but humiliated.

Messi might never be seen in the Albiceleste's sky blue-and-white jersey again.

That scenario is too much for Argentina fans to take. It's why tears were shed on the field, among the technical staff and among the fanbase after Messi scored the crucial second-half goal to set Argentina on its way to a 2-0 win over Mexico on Saturday.

That victory meant Argentina bounced back from its shocking 2-1 loss to Saudi Arabia in its opening match and now has a fighting chance to avoiding a first group-stage exit since 2002.

"Now another World Cup has begun," said Messi, who will hope to score for the third straight match at this World Cup and has netted 13 goals for Argentina in 2022 — already a career-high haul in a single calendar year.

## Pacers Stun Lakers 116-115 in NAB



Indiana Pacers guard Andrew Nembhard, right, makes a buzzer beating 3-point shot to win the game as Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James defends during the second half of an NBA basketball game Monday, Nov. 28, 2022, in Los Angeles. The Pacers won 116-115.

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Rookie Andrew Nembhard hit a 3-pointer at the buzzer, and the Indiana Pacers rallied from a 17-point deficit in the fourth quarter for a stunning 116-115 victory over the Los Angeles Lakers on Monday night.

Tyrese Haliburton scored 24 points and hit a tying layup with 39 seconds left for the Pacers, who trailed 101-84 early in the fourth. LeBron James hit a one-handed floater with 20.9 seconds left, and Myles Turner missed an ensuing 3-point attempt for Indiana — but Haliburton got the long rebound and eventually found Nembhard alone on the perimeter with a crosscourt pass.

The Canadian second-round pick from Gonzaga drilled his fourth 3-pointer of the night over the onrushing James' out-

stretched hand. The bucket crushed the LA crowd and set off a frenzied on-court group celebration that even included Pacers president of basketball operations Kevin Pritchard.

Haliburton had 14 assists while rookie Benedict Mathurin added 23 points for the Pacers, who avoided their first back-to-back losses since October in dramatic fashion.

Anthony Davis had 25 points and 13 rebounds for the Lakers, who were well on their way to their sixth victory in seven games before their defense and ball movement both faltered down the stretch. Davis missed one of two free throws right after the Pacers missed three consecutive layups and tip-in attempts in the final minute, leaving the door open for Nembhard's eventual heroics.

James had 21 points and seven rebounds, while Russell Westbrook scored 17 of his 24 points in the second half and energized a crowd that seemed thrilled to be witnessing a corner-turning evening for the slow-starting Lakers — until Indiana closed with a 20-8 run in the catastrophic final five minutes.

## Portugal Beat Uruguay 2-0 to Become Third Team Into Last 16



Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo celebrates after scoring his side's opening goal during the World Cup group H soccer match between Portugal and Uruguay.

LUSAIL, Qatar (Reuters) - Portugal beat Uruguay 2-0 with two goals from midfielder Bruno Fernandes to become the third team after France and Brazil to qualify for the World Cup knockout stage.

The Europeans had dominated possession before Fernandes' 54th minute cross floated past Uruguayan goalkeeper Sergio Rochet, who was rooted to the spot as Cristiano Ronaldo rose to head the ball and initially celebrated the goal as his.

Fernandes scored the second in injury time after a penalty was awarded for handball following a video review.

Uruguay, who had knocked Portugal out of the 2018 World Cup, will rue a string of chances on the break: midfielder Rodrigo Bentancur skipped past three players only to see his shot brilliantly saved, Maxi Gomez hit the post and Luis Suarez shot into the side netting.

Portugal's second win in two games put them top of Group H on six points and heading into the last 16. Uruguay, third on one point, must beat Ghana in their final group game to have a chance of progressing.

## Qatar Says Worker Deaths for World Cup 'Between 400 and 500'

DOHA, Qatar (AP) — A top Qatari official involved in the country's World Cup organization has put the number of worker deaths for the tournament "between 400 and 500" for the first time, a drastically higher number than any other previously offered by Doha.

The comment by Hassan al-Thawadi, the secretary-general of Qatar's Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy, appeared to come off the cuff during an interview with British journalist Piers Morgan.

It also threatened to reinvigorate criticism by human rights groups over the toll of hosting the Middle East's first World Cup for the migrant labor that built over \$200 billion worth of stadiums, metro lines and new infrastructure needed for the tournament.

In the interview, portions of which Morgan posted online, the British journalist asks al-Thawadi: "What is the honest, realistic total do you think of migrant workers who died from — as a result of work they're doing for the World Cup in totality?"

"The estimate is around 400, between 400 and 500," al-Thawadi responds. "I don't have the exact number. That's something



that's been discussed."

But that figure hasn't been discussed publicly by Qatari officials previously. Reports from the Supreme Committee dating from 2014 through the end of 2021 only include the number of deaths of workers involved in building and refurbishing the stadiums now hosting the World Cup.

Those released figures put the total number of deaths at 40. They include 37 from what

the Qataris describe as nonwork incidents such as heart attacks and three from workplace incidents. One report also separately lists a worker death from the coronavirus amid the pandemic.

Al-Thawadi pointed to those figures when discussing work just on stadiums in the interview, right before offering the "between 400 to 500" death toll for all the infrastructure for the tournament.

## Ex-Boxing Referee Admits Cheating to Help Pacquiao Win Fight 22 Years Ago

PARIS (AFP) - Former boxing referee Carlos Padilla has admitted cheating to help fellow Filipino Manny Pacquiao defeat Australian Nedal "Skinny" Hussein in a fight more than two decades ago.

Pacquiao was 21 and a rising star when he went 10 rounds against Hussein for the WBC International super-bantamweight title near the Philippine capital Manila in 2000.

But in a stunning confession, Padilla -- known for refereeing the "Thrilla in Manila" between Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier in

1975 -- said he helped Pacquiao secure victory by "prolonging" the standard 10-count when the Filipino was knocked down and left dazed in the fourth round.

Pacquiao later headbutted Hussein, leaving the Australian with a cut above his left eye.

But Padilla classified the head clash as a "punch". Pacquiao won by a technical knockout after the doctor stopped the fight due to Hussein's bleeding.

Hussein, who was coached by Australian former world champion

Jeff Fenech, said on Instagram that Padilla's admission was a "travesty and a true injustice".

"They should be held accountable for the sport we love," Hussein said in a post addressed to World Boxing Council president Mauricio Sulaiman.

Pacquiao did not immediately respond to AFP's requests for comment.

The 43-year-old multiple world champion retired last year from the sport to make a failed crack at the presidency of his country.