

# Iran Futsal Team Beats Uzbekistan for 2nd Time



TEHRAN— Iran national futsal team won its 2nd friendly match versus Uzbekistan 8-1 on Tuesday night.

Head Coach Vahid Shamsaie's team appeared much better than their first match versus Uzbekistan on Sunday that ended 5-3 in Iran's favor in the same sports hall, Tehran's Martyr Dastgerdi Sports Complex.

The good team of Uzbekistan had come to the field to make up for their Sunday loss, but was astonished to see the much better appearance of Iran side, who implemented their tactical plans smoothly and successfully from the beginning of the game's 1st half, which ended 5-0 in Iran's favor, so that they will play a more relaxed 2nd half.

In the 2nd half, too, Iran began

the game mightily from the very beginning with scoring yet another goal, which was of course not Iran's only goal in this half. Shamsaie's good team continued their attacks on Uzbekistan's net to score two more goals.

Uzbekistan's share of the goals in this game was only one goal, so that Iran will end its preparation camp with Uzbekistan with two won game and return to their homes.

Iran's goals are scored by Mahdi Karimi (2 goals), Saeed Ahmad-Abbasi (2 goals), Hossein Tayyebi (2 goals), and Behdad Sheikh-Ahmadi (also 2 goals).

## Giroud Sends Milan Into Semis Despite Late Napoli Rally



AC Milan's Sandro Tonali (left) fights for the ball with Napoli's Hirving Lozano during a Champions League quarterfinal second leg soccer match between Napoli and AC Milan, at Naples' Diego Armando Maradona stadium, on April 18, 2023.

MILAN (Reuters) - NAPLES - AC Milan reached the Champions League semi-finals for the first time since they won the trophy 16 years ago thanks to a first-half goal from Olivier Giroud at Napoli that secured a 1-1 draw and 2-1 aggregate win despite a barrage of pressure on Tuesday.

Napoli battled until the end but could not break down the resilient Milan defense until striker Victor Osimhen equalized three minutes into stoppage time with a bullet header but it was too late as the referee ended the match seconds later.

Seven-time European champions Milan will now face either Inter Milan or Benfica, who meet on Wednesday at the San Siro with the Italian side leading 2-0 from the first leg. Milan coach Stefano Pioli said he would welcome a semi-final against their city rivals.

"It would look like that, as Inter won the first leg so well. These will be another two difficult, exciting and wonderful clashes in the Champions League. We've done a great deal and don't want to stop now," he told Mediaset.

This was the third meeting between

Milan and Napoli in 16 days, with Pioli's visiting side having claimed a 4-0 victory against the runaway Serie A leaders on April 2.

After Milan won the quarter-final first leg 1-0, Napoli pushed for the opening goal from the start as the visitors were forced to defend deep against an attacking onslaught.

"I think the small advantage of the 1-0 in the first leg helped us in one sense and blocked us in another," Pioli said. "We chose, considering Osimhen was there, to sit a little deeper and not allow him those spaces where he can be devastating."

Milan struggled in a raucous atmosphere, with loud boos resounding throughout the stadium every time they gained possession, but they held off an aggressive Napoli side for most of the match with an impressive defensive display.

Milan had the chance to take the lead with a penalty after 22 minutes after Mario Rui clattered into Rafael Leao but goalkeeper Alex Meret dived to stop Giroud's low strike.

Meret saved Napoli again when he parried Giroud's attempt inside the box with his foot five minutes later.

## Ronaldo Upstaged by Another Ex-Man United Forward

JEDDAH (Reuters) - Cristiano Ronaldo was upstaged by another former Manchester United forward in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday as Al-Hilal's Odion Ighalo scored twice from the penalty spot in a 2-0 win over Al-Nassr.

Portugal striker Ronaldo moved to Al-Nassr on a lucrative deal last January and scored eight goals in his first five games but he has been unable to sustain that pace.

In Al-Nassr's first game since the departure of coach Rudi Garcia, Ronaldo drew a blank while Ighalo, who had a loan spell at Manchester United in 2020, scored twice to hand Asian champions Al-Hilal the win.

Ronaldo was yellow carded in the 57th minute after he tangled

with Gustavo Cuellar and things only got worse from there.

The 38-year-old had a goal disallowed for offside in the 77th minute and after he was awarded a penalty six minutes later the Video Assistant Referee reversed the decision.

Ronaldo was later taunted as he left the field with Al-Hilal fans waving Lionel Messi shirts.

Al-Nassr interim coach Dinko Jelacic told reporters the game changed when they conceded the first spot kick.

"The first penalty kick broke us, it was influential in the course of the match," he said.

"Al-Hilal were better than us in some periods. My team showed good glimpses and could pave the



Al-Nassr's Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo warms up ahead of the Saudi Pro League football match between Al-Hilal and Al-Nassr at the Prince Faisal Bin Fahd stadium in the capital Riyadh on April 18, 2023.

way for the next weeks."

Al-Nassr are three points be-

hind leaders Al-Ittihad, who have played a game less.

## Real Madrid Sail Into Champions League Semis, Chelsea Adrift



Chelsea's Kai Havertz, right, and Real Madrid's Eder Militao challenge for the ball during the Champions League quarterfinal second leg soccer match between Chelsea and Real Madrid at Stamford Bridge stadium in London, Tuesday, April 18, 2023.

LONDON (AP) — Real Madrid's pursuit of a 15th European Cup marches

on. Chelsea, meanwhile, does not know when

it will compete on this elite stage again.

Madrid's 2-0 win at Stamford Bridge on Tuesday completed a 4-0 aggregate victory and saw the Spanish giants advance to the Champions League semi-finals for the 11th time in 13 seasons.

Rodrygo scored twice in the second half to derail a spirited Chelsea comeback that lasted the best part of an hour, but ultimately ended in a fourth straight loss under interim manager Frank Lampard.

Madrid can continue its quest for more glory in a competition it has won a record 14 times, with either Manchester City or Bayern Munich to come in the next round.

"We are ready to be there and we are ready to fight for the final," Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti said.

City was leading Bayern 3-0 after the

first leg of the quarterfinals, setting up a likely rematch of last year's semi-finals. Madrid scored twice in added time and another in extra time at the Bernabeu last season to win 6-5 on aggregate.

Madrid is already the only team to successfully defend the Champions League in its modern guise - winning it three consecutive times from 2016-18 - and is still in contention to win it back-to-back again.

It is a record that no other team can compete with - and with a forward line of Vinicius Junior, Karim Benzema and Rodrygo in such daunting form, the defending champions will take some stopping.

Chelsea's miserable campaign, however, is now destined to end without a trophy.

## Alcaraz Brushes Aside Borges in Barcelona



BARCELONA (AFP) - World number two Carlos Alcaraz began his belated build-up to the French Open with an emphatic second-round win over Nuno Borges at the Barcelona Open on Tuesday.

The Spanish teenager was back in action after hand and back problems forced him to pull out of last week's 2023 debut on European clay at the Monte Carlo Masters.

The top seed swept aside the world number 79 from Portugal 6-3, 6-1 to set up an all Spanish last-16 clash with Roberto Bautista Agut after the 13th seed beat Bernabe Zapata Miralles 6-2, 6-2.

"I feel great," said Alcaraz, playing on the surface for the first time since Rio de Janeiro in February.

Alcaraz pulled out of Monte Carlo with the injuries that had hampered his last appearance, in the semi-finals in Miami where he succumbed to Jannik Sinner.

Alcaraz arrived in Miami as the world number one after success at Indian Wells, but was knocked off the top of the ATP rankings by Novak Djokovic after the loss to

Sinner.

The 19-year-old's bid to successfully defend a tour-level title for the first time got off to the best possible start, as he despatched Borges in 63 minutes on the court named after Rafael Nadal, another absentee from Monte Carlo.

Aside from unforced errors that enabled Borges to reclaim a break in the eighth game, Alcaraz showed little sign of rustiness.

He allowed the Portuguese only one more game in a lop-sided affair.

The 2022 US Open champion converted five of seven break points to continue his quest for a third title of the season after Indian Wells and Buenos Aires.

"Moving well, hitting the ball really well so I feel a lot of confidence playing here in Barcelona," said Alcaraz. "It's a really special place for me."

Norway's third seed Casper Ruud came through 6-2, 7-6 (7/1) against American Ben Shelton to set up a meeting with either Francesco Pas-saro or Francisco Cerundolo.

## Celtics Beat Hawks 119-106 for 2-0 Series Lead

BOSTON (AP) — Jayson Tatum knew what was coming and waited for his moment.

His team leading by 10 with less than three minutes to play, he hawked Atlanta's Trae Young as he dribbled on the right wing and tried to lead Tatum into a screen.

But the Celtics All-Star brushed it off and stretched to swat Young's attempt at a step-back 3-pointer. The loose ball was scooped up by Derrick White and tossed ahead to a streaking Tatum for an one-handed dunk.

The play ended a clinching late run and was the final basket of the night for Tatum and Boston beat Atlanta 119-106 on Tuesday night to take a 2-0 lead in the first-round playoff series.

While Tatum had the exclamation point and finished with 29 points and 10 rebounds, he said the night belonged to White. The defensive-minded guard contributed all over the court, pouring 26 points, seven rebounds and three blocks.

Jaylen Brown added 18 points. Boston outscored Atlanta 64-40 in the paint. Game 3 is Friday night in Atlanta.

Dejounte Murray led the Hawks with 29 points. Young had 24, but shot 9 of 22 from the field and 2 of 8 from beyond the arc. He also had five turnovers, bringing his total to 11 for the series.

Down by 20, the Hawks cut it to single digits late in the third quarter.

With Atlanta trailing 74-57, Young went to the bench and sat out the final 7:07 of the period, briefly visiting the locker room.

His teammates picked it up without him, outscoring the Celtics 24-16 to pull within nine — at 90-81 — entering the fourth.

Young returned to begin the final period and scored four straight points with just over five minutes to play to make it 104-95.

But the Celtics responded with a 15-2 run — bookended by a 3-pointer



Boston Celtics forward Jayson Tatum (0) drives to the basket against Atlanta Hawks forward De'Andre Hunter (12) during Game 2 in the first round of the NBA basketball playoffs, Tuesday, April 18, 2023, in Boston.

and Tatum's dunk — to get it back up to 119-97 with 2:16 left.

While the Hawks brought a better shooting touch on Tuesday, the Celtics took their overall energy up a notch, repeatedly beating Atlanta down the court in transition and outlasting Hawks to loose balls.

One glaring example was in the second quarter when Brown pried the ball free as De'Andre Hunter drove by.

Malcolm Brogdon corralled it and tossed it ahead a sprinting Brown, who had split between Young and Dejounte Murray as they got caught ball watching.