

Iran Defeat China at IWBF AOZ



TEHRAN – Iran's men's wheelchair basketball team emerged victorious over China 84-53 in the 2024 IWBF Asia Oceania Zone (AOZ) Championships on Wednesday.

Previously in the tournament, Team Melli beat South Korea 67-48, Thailand 86-51 and Japan 74-65, but lost to Australia 69-60.

Iran's team was recently awarded the title of the "2023 Best Asian Team Performance" by the Asian Paralympic Committee.

The competition serves as a qualification for the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games and the winner will qualify for the Paralympics.

The 2024 IWBF Asia Oceania Championships in men's and women's divisions are being held in Bangkok, Thailand from January 12 to 20.

15-Year-Old Shooter Beyranvand Makes History



TEHRAN – 15-year-old Iranian shooter Mohammad Beyranvand earned a shock place at the Paris 2024 Games in Kuwait City after winning a shoot-off in the men's trap at the Asian Olympic qualifier.

After China's Guo Yuhao – who secured the second available Olympic quota place – had missed his second effort in the shoot-off to give the Iranian teenager a 2-1 win, the latter raised his arms into the air before falling onto his back with hands over his face, shedding tears.

The shock was understandable for a youngster who last year finished 71st at the World Championships and 54th in the Almaty

ISSF World Cup.

Beyranvand will not turn 16 until Aug. 28 this year – 26 days after the shooting event concludes at the Paris Games – and is currently in line to join three others who have competed in shooting at an Olympics aged 15, the youngest on record.

The next challenge on his horizon could be to better the performance of China's Sheng Lihao, who became the youngest-ever shooter to win an Olympic medal when he took silver in the men's 10m air rifle at the Tokyo 2020 Games.

India's Lakshay Lakshay came third, scoring 33 points.

Shiffrin Takes 94th World Cup Win in Flachau Night Slalom



United States' Mikaela Shiffrin competes during an alpine ski, women's World Cup slalom in Flachau, Austria, on Jan 16, 2024.

FLACHAU, Austria (Reuters) - Mikaela Shiffrin had tears in her eyes after capping an emotional few days with a record-extending 94th Alpine skiing World Cup win in a floodlit night slalom in Flachau, Austria, on Tuesday.

The American had missed weekend races in Altenmarkt-Zauchensee due to illness and then made a trip to Switzerland when partner Aleksander Aamodt-Kilde was airlifted to hospital after crashing in the Wengen downhill on Saturday.

The win was Shiffrin's record-extending 57th in slalom and she

now leads the World Cup standings in the discipline by 25 points. Shiffrin and Vlhova have won all the slaloms so far this season and 13 of the last 14.

Shiffrin also tied Ingemar Stenmark's record of 81 slalom podiums with her sixth win of the season.

Sweden's Olympic giant slalom champion Sara Hector finished third, her first World Cup slalom podium.

The next races this weekend are on home snow for Vlhova in the Slovakian resort of Jasna.

Vlahovic Double Fires Juventus to 3-0 Win Over Sassuolo

TURIN (Reuters) - A stunning first-half brace by striker Dusan Vlahovic helped Juventus to a 3-0 win over Sassuolo in Serie A on Tuesday as Massimiliano Allegri's side extended their unbeaten league run to 15 games in front of a sold-out home crowd.

Juve remain second in the standings on 49 points, two points behind leaders Inter Milan and seven above third-placed AC Milan.

Juve allowed the visitors more possession but stayed in control of a lively clash at the Juventus Stadium and Vlahovic broke the deadlock in the 15th minute with a rasping shot from just outside the box.

The Serbia striker made it 2-0 before the break with a free kick from long range for his ninth goal of the season.

"Vlahovic played a good game, he was much more calm," Allegri told a press conference.



Sassuolo's Ryan Flamingo (left) and Juventus Turin's Filip Kostic challenge for the ball during the Serie A soccer match between Juventus Turin and Sassuolo Calcio in Turin, Italy, on Jan 16, 2024.

"This morning I spoke to him and told him that he wanted to overdo it (in the Coppa Italia quarter-final) against Frosinone, he got into an argument with the referee. Tonight he was much more lucid."

The 23-year-old has been involved in a goal in four consecutive Serie A appearances, with three goals and two assists, for the first time in more than three years.

"Dusan went through a complicat-

ed moment because he wasn't well. Now he's working hard to improve and is finding the right calm to manage the match," Allegri added.

Sassuolo, who inflicted Juve's only loss of the season in all competitions in a 4-2 defeat in the reverse fixture, went close in the 53rd minute through forward Domenico Berardi, who struck just wide from the edge of the box.

Juve keeper Wojciech Szczesny pulled off a brilliant save to deny yet another powerful shot from Berardi 10 minutes later before substitute Federico Chiesa sealed the win for the hosts in the 89th minute with a low strike into the middle of the goal.

Juve next travel to 13th-placed Lecce on Sunday where they can leapfrog Inter into top spot as Simone Inzaghi's men only return to Serie A action on Jan. 28 following the Italian Super Cup played in Saudi Arabia.

Mexico Withdraws Bid for 2036 Summer Games



MEXICO CITY AFP - Mexico has dropped out of the race to host the 2036 Olympic Games, the president of the National Olympic Committee (COM) said on Tuesday, citing the "tough competition".

Former Foreign minister Marcelo Ebrard and the COM announced in Oct 2022 Mexico's intention to host the 2036 Olympics.

The country had previously hosted the Summer Games in 1968.

South Korea, India, Egypt and Qatar have also expressed their intention to bid for the 2036 Games.

COM president Maria Jose Alcalá said that Mexico would now only consider launching a bid for the Youth Games.

"We had a talk with the International Olympic Committee and we saw that the competition is very tough," Alcalá told reporters at a sponsors' event on Tuesday.

"We are turning around to see if we can have the bid for the Youth

Olympic Games, which is where we would have a great chance."

"It would be before the 2036 Games... We are in talks with the IOC."

Alcalá added that Mexico could also bid for the 2027 Pan American Games after the northern state of Nuevo Leon showed interest in hosting the event. The Colombian city of Barranquilla was recently stripped of the hosting rights after failing to meet its contractual obligations.

"There is an approach from Nuevo Leon, they are the only ones who have approached us. That is still under discussion," Alcalá said.

Saudi Arabia Beat Oman in Asian Cup

DOHA (Reuters) - Saudi Arabia came from behind to beat Oman 2-1 in their Asian Cup Group F opener on Tuesday at a packed Khalifa International Stadium with Ali Al-Bulayhi's winner arriving in the sixth minute of stoppage time after a VAR intervention.

With the score tied at 1-1, Al-Bulayhi scored with a close-range header from a set piece and although the linesman's flag immediately went up for offside, VAR awarded Roberto Mancini's side the goal.

"The goal is a gift to the Saudi people. This is what great players do," said Al-Bulayhi, who celebrated the dramatic winner in trademark fashion by inflating a green balloon near the corner flag.

The victory takes Saudi Arabia level on three points with Thailand, who beat Kyrgyzstan 2-0 in the other Group F encounter earlier in the day when Supachai Chaided scored either side of halftime.

Oman's opener in the 14th minute



Saudi Arabia's Mukhtar Ali and Saud Abdulhamid in action with Oman's Ahmed Al Kaabi and Ali Al-Busaidi

came against the run of play when the Saudis took a poor corner and as their opponents countered at speed, defender Hassan Al-Tambakti clipped Muhsen Al-Ghassani just as he entered the box.

The penalty was awarded after a VAR review and Salaah Al-Yahyaie stepped up to score with a confident finish

down the middle to draw a massive roar that echoed inside the cavernous arena.

Oman were disciplined in defense and Saudi Arabia found it difficult to break through the wall of red shirts while on the odd occasion they did get through, they wasted their opportunities with shots that did not find the target.

Suns Surge Past Kings in Final Seconds

WASHINGTON (AP) - Kevin Durant hit two free throws with 1.8 seconds remaining as the Phoenix Suns concluded the game with a 32-8 surge and beat the visiting Sacramento Kings 119-117 on Tuesday night.

Grayson Allen scored 29 points and matched the franchise record of nine 3-pointers for the second time this month for the Suns. Durant scored 27 points and Devin Booker had 16 points and 11 assists for Phoenix, which overcame a 22-point, fourth-quarter deficit to win its third straight game.

Bradley Beal and Eric Gordon had 13 points apiece for the Suns. Jusuf Nurkic had 10 points and 15 rebounds as Phoenix ended its four-game losing streak against the Kings.

De'Aaron Fox made six 3-pointers and had 33 points and six assists for Sacramento, which lost its third straight game. Domantas

Sabonis added 21 points, 12 rebounds and 11 assists for his 11th triple-double of the season.

Keegan Murray scored 18 points, Sasha Vezenkov added 14 points and Malik Monk had 13 points and eight assists for the Kings.

Monk's 3-point attempt bounced off the glass and was no good as time expired.

Sacramento shot 50 percent, including 18 of 40 from 3-point range. Kevin Huerter added 10 points for the Kings.

The Suns hit 49.4 percent of their attempts and were 17 of 37 from behind the arc.

The Kings seemed to be cruising to a win when Fox drilled a 3-pointer to make it 109-87 with 8:22 left.

Allen buried a 3-pointer and Durant scored the next five points to bring the Suns within 113-104 with 4:14 remaining.

Sabonis got the roll on an inside



Phoenix Suns forward Kevin Durant (35) celebrates after beating the Sacramento Kings 119-117 at Footprint Center.

shot to give Sacramento a 115-109 lead with 2:08 left before Gordon drained back-to-back 3-pointers to knot the score at 115 with 45.1 seconds left.