

# Hamideh Esmailnejad Wins Gold in Turkish Indoor Athletics Championships



TEHRAN – Iranian woman sprinter Hamideh Esmailnejad claimed a gold medal at the Turkish Indoor Athletics Championships.

She crossed the finish line in 7:50 seconds in the 60-meter contest of the sporting event.

In the preliminary round of the competitions, Esmailnejad achieved the qualifying standard with a time of 7.55 seconds and progressed to the final stage.

Two athletes from Turkey stood in the second and third places with times of 7.91 and 8.22 seconds respectively.

## Qatar Edge Uzbekistan on Penalties to Set Up Asian Cup Semifinal With Iran

DOHA (Reuters) - Qatar had taken the lead shortly before the half-hour mark when captain Hassan Al Haydos dribbled into the box and his attempted cross took a deflection which went through the gloves of Utkir Yusupov into his own net to go down as an own goal.

But Uzbekistan did not give up and took the game to Qatar, having several attempts on goal until the 59th minute when Odiljon Hamrobekov managed to take a shot that brushed the fingers of Barsham in goal before finding the net.

Neither side could find a breakthrough in 90 minutes while Uzbekistan survived a late rally from Qatar in extra time to force penalties, where Uzbekistan's Rustam Ashurmatov and Qatar's 2019 top scorer Almoez Ali had their efforts saved.

Qatar had their hearts in their mouths when Al-Mahdi Ali Mukhtar skied his effort but Barsham turned savior to seal their progress and give the hosts a memorable night in the desert.

Earlier on Saturday, Iran knocked out four-times cham-



Qatar's Akram Afif reacts.

pions and the continent's top-ranked side Japan.

## Mbappe to Join Real Madrid at End of Season, Reports Say



PSG's Kylian Mbappe reacts during the French League One soccer match between Strasbourg and Paris Saint-Germain at Stade de la Meinau stadium in Strasbourg, France, Feb 2, 2024.

PARIS (Reuters) - France captain Kylian Mbappe will join La-Liga giants Real Madrid when his contract with Paris St Germain finishes at the end of the season, Le Parisien and ESPN reported on Saturday.

Mbappe said last year he would not renew his contract at the Ligue 1 side when it expired at the end of the 2023-24 campaign, allowing him to move on to another club on a free transfer.

French newspaper Le Parisien and ESPN, citing sources, said

the 25-year-old striker would announce a pre-contract agreement with the 14-times European champions next week.

Media reports last September said Mbappe had agreed to forego loyalty bonuses worth up to 100 million euros (\$107.84 million) to leave PSG as a free agent.

Mbappe was heavily linked with a move to Real in 2022 but announced a contract extension with PSG just weeks before the transfer window opened.

## Historic Comeback in Chamonix as 'Lucky' Yule Turns Tide to Win Slalom

CHAMONIX, France (AFP) - Swiss skier Daniel Yule said he was "lucky" to make history at Chamonix on Sunday but that it was "absolutely incredible" to become the first man to come from 30th after the first run to win a World Cup slalom.

The 30-year-old, whose six previous World Cup wins have all come in slalom, was the last qualifier for the second run, having finished a mere 0.05sec ahead of Fabien Ax Swartz.

His 30th position meant Yule was first out of the gate in the second run and as the piste at Les Houches worsened, he had the best of the conditions.

His run of 47.22sec was over half a second faster than anyone else and gave him a combined time of 1min 36.24sec which was 0.16sec quicker than fellow

Swiss Loic Meillard, who had been fifth-fastest on the first run.

"Absolutely incredible. I got really lucky staying 30th after the first run but then I managed to ski an amazing second run," said Yule whose performance eclipsed the previous slalom record when Lucas Braathen came from 29th to win in Wen-gen two years ago.

Olympic champion Clement Noel, still looking for his first victory of the season, produced a fine first run to top the leaderboard at halfway but the Frenchman produced the third-slowest second run, over two seconds off Yule, to finish third, 0.18sec behind the winner on combined times.

The Austrian Manuel Feller finished fourth and still leads



Daniel Yule came from 30th to win the men's slalom at Chamonix.

the discipline standings, 164 points ahead of the German Linus Strasser, who had to settle for equal 14th.

The Chamonix slalom is the only race on the weekend's program, as the two runs scheduled for Friday and Saturday were cancelled because of a winter thaw, making it impossible to

hold a downhill in good conditions.

The women, who were due to ski at Garmisch in Germany, were also unable to compete for the same reasons.

The men's World Cup continues on Saturday in Bankso, Bulgaria, where a giant and a slalom are on the program.

## President Raisi Lauds Iran's Advance to AFC Asian Cup Semifinals



TEHRAN – Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi praised the national football team's players and coaching staff for scoring a dramatic stoppage-time win over Japan and advancing to the semifinals of the AFC Asian Cup 2023.

In a telephone conversation with Iran's head coach Amir Ghaliehnoei on Saturday evening, Raisi expressed gratitude to the national football team for their tireless efforts.

He also paid tribute to the national team's players and coaching staff for bringing joy to the Iranian people, expressing hope that Iran would win the title in the games.

Iran, backed by their thousands of vociferous supporters, knocked out Japan on Saturday and earned a spot in the semifinals of the AFC Asian Cup 2023 with a 2-1 win at Education City Stadium in Doha, Qatar.

In a tournament that is now well-known for its late drama, Iran's captain Alireza Jahanbakhsh delivered one of the most famous goals in his country's Asian Cup history with a heart-in-mouths stoppage-time penalty that booked Team Melli a place in the second semifinal on Wednesday.

Iran football team has jumped

one place in the latest International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) rankings, securing the 20th position in the world.

Iran's victory over Palestine, Hong Kong, the UAE, Syria, and Japan in the AFC Asian Cup 2023 in Qatar paved the way for their ascent in the FIFA ranking.

After defeating Japan 2-1 and cruising into the semifinals, Team Melli's points in FIFA ranking increased +21.04 and reached 1608.27.

Among Asian teams, Iran continues to hold the second position, after Japan with 1614.33 points.

Iran has a chance to replace Japan in the FIFA ranking by defeating their opponents in the semifinals and final of the 2023 AFC Asian Cup.

Argentina, the champion of the 2022 FIFA World Cup, still holds the top position, while teams like France, Brazil, England, Belgium, Croatia, the Netherlands, Italy, Portugal, and Spain occupy the second to tenth spots.

Powerful football teams such as Sweden, Ukraine, Serbia, Poland, Scotland, Wales, the Czech Republic, Turkey, and Norway are now ranked lower than Iran's national team.

## Stephen Curry Scores Season-High 60 Points in Warriors' 141-134 OT Loss to Hawks



Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry (30) scores as Atlanta Hawks center Clint Capela (15) defends in the first half of an NBA basketball game Saturday, Feb. 3, 2024, in Atlanta.

ATLANTA (AP) — Another loss for Golden State drained the joy out of Stephen Curry's second career 60-point game.

Curry scored a season-high 60 points in the Warriors' 141-134 overtime loss to Trae Young and the Atlanta Hawks on Saturday night. "It sucks to not have something to show for it," Curry said after the Warriors fell four games under .500 at 21-25. Golden State is 12th in the Western Conference.

Curry had eight points in overtime to finish only two points shy of his career high of 62 at home against Portland on Jan. 3, 2021. He was 22 of 38 shots from the field, hitting 10 of 23 3-pointers, and made all six of his free throws.

Young led the Hawks with 35 points. Dejounte Murray scored the last seven points in an 11-0 run to open the overtime for Atlanta and finished with 19 points. Onyeka Okongwu had a career-high 22 points and a season-high 16 rebounds, and Jalen Johnson scored 21 points.

Curry scored 22 points in the fourth quarter, including a go-ahead

jumper with 14 seconds remaining. Murray answered with a jumper from the free-throw line to tie it. Curry missed a last-second jumper to send it to overtime.

The Hawks have taken advantage of a six-game homestand to win four straight games, matching their best stretch of the season. They are 4-1 on the homestand.

Young and Curry embraced on the court after the game. Young often says he looks up to Curry and enjoys the opportunities to play against one of his favorite players.

Young, averaging 27.3 points, is second in the NBA with 11 assists per game but did not make the All-Star team.

The Warriors were short-handed, especially after the first half.

Forward Dario Saric (illness) missed his second consecutive game. Forward Andrew Wiggins suffered what Kerr said was a left foot injury late in the first half and Jonathan Kuminga fouled out with 1:06 remaining in regulation. X-rays on Wiggins' foot were negative.

Kerr said Saric could join the team for its next game at Brooklyn.