

Iran Beat Kuwait at Ice Hockey Women's Asia Championship



TEHRAN – Iran defeated Kuwait 20-0 at the 2023 IIHF Ice Hockey Women's Asia and Oceania Championship.

Team Melli Banovan, who had defeated India 17-1 in its opening match in Group B.

Group A consists of Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia and the UAE.

The IIHF Asia and Oceania Championship (formally the IIHF Challenge Cup of Asia) is a series of international ice hockey tournaments in the continent of Asia.

The event started on April 30 in Bangkok, Thailand and will finish on May 8.

Harden Scores 45, 76ers Down Celtics 119-115

BOSTON (AP) — James Harden was asked for most of this season to be a facilitator for a 76ers team built around big man Joel Embiid.

With the MVP finalist sidelined for the opener of his team's second-round playoff series with the Celtics, Philadelphia called on a vintage version of Harden.

Harden matched his playoff career high with 45 points and hit a go-ahead, step-back 3-pointer over Al Horford with 8.7 seconds left as the 76ers rallied without Embiid to beat Boston 119-115 in Game 1 of the Eastern Conference semifinals on Monday night.

Tyrese Maxey added 26 points and Tobias Harris finished with 18 for the Sixers, who made 17 3-pointers with Embiid watching from the bench. He sprained his right knee in Game 3 of Philadelphia's first-round sweep of the Brooklyn Nets.

After the Sixers endured an early scoring onslaught from the Celtics, 76ers coach Doc Rivers said Harden was patient and knew when

to attack and when to pass.

Rivers said having a week to prepare for the likelihood Embiid would be out was key.

Jayson Tatum led the Celtics with 39 points and 11 rebounds. Jaylen Brown added 23 points and Malcolm Brogdon finished with 20.

Harden previously scored 45 points for the Houston Rockets in a Western Conference Finals win over Golden State on May 25, 2015.

Trailing 117-115, the Celtics had one final chance and got the ball to Tatum, but he lost the ball to Paul Reed, who was fouled and hit a pair of free throws.

The game was tied at 87-all entering the back-and-forth final period.

Tatum gave the Celtics their final lead, 115-114, on a pair of free throws with 26.1 seconds left.

Before that, Boston took the shot clock down before Maxey intercepted a pass by Brogdon and drove in for a layup to put the 76ers in front, 114-113.

Boston led 108-107 when Harden was called for an offensive foul on



Philadelphia 76ers guard James Harden (1) shoots against Boston Celtics guard Malcolm Brogdon, right, during the first half of Game 1 in the NBA basketball Eastern Conference semifinals playoff series, Monday, May 1, 2023, in Boston.

Horford. On the ensuing possession, Horford found Marcus Smart, who was fouled on a layup. He completed the three-point play to make it 111-107.

Harden led the attack early for Philadelphia, hitting his first five attempts, including two 3s. Brown

started 6 for 6 from the field for a Boston team that thrived without Embiid protecting the rim, going on an 11-0 run at one point.

Boston shot 74% for the half but took only a 66-63 lead into halftime after the 76ers went 11 for 19 (55%) from the 3-point line.

Eight Russian Judokas Barred From World Championships After Ukraine's Boycott



LONDON (Reuters) -The International Judo Federation on Tuesday barred eight members of Russia's world championships squad

following Ukraine's boycott over the presence of Russian athletes it argued were active soldiers. Judo's governing body the

IJF said ahead of the May 7-14 championships in Qatar that it had "commissioned independent background checks on the athletes and delegates to ensure both their place of employment and any social media interactions regarding pro-war propaganda".

As a result of those checks, "eight members of the delegation were rejected".

The IJF added that it will "continue to monitor the situation and conduct further investigations to ensure that all athletes are participating ethically and in accordance with the rules and regulations of the sport and the judo values."

Judokas from Russia and Belarus were given the green light to compete in Doha by the IJF on the proviso they do so as individual neutral athletes.

But when it announced it was boycotting the championships in Qatar, the Ukrainian judo federation alleged that "the majority of the (Russian) team are athletes who are active servicemen of the armed forces of the Russian Federation".

The International Olympic Committee last month recommended allowing athletes from Russia and Belarus, who have been banned from international competition, to compete as individual neutrals.

Medvedev Upset by Karatsev in Madrid; Khachanov Advances

MADRID (AP) — Daniil Medvedev's impressive run this season took a hit after a straight-set loss to qualifier Aslan Karatsev in the fourth round of the Madrid Open on Tuesday.

The 121st-ranked Karatsev dominated in a 7-6 (1), 6-4 win over the second-seeded Medvedev for his first victory against a top-10 opponent since 2021.

Medvedev entered the match with a tour-leading 33-4 record this year. The 29-year-old Karatsev is a former No. 14 in the world and has won three tour titles, the last in Sydney last year. "I'm feeling great, playing well," Karatsev said. "I just have

to focus every match, so I will be prepared for the next one."

The Russian will next play either Taylor Fritz or Zhang Zhizhen in the quarterfinals.

Another Russian advancing to the last eight was Karen Khachanov, who beat doubles partner Andrey Rublev 7-6 (8), 6-4 after saving two set points in the tiebreaker and breaking serve early in the second set.

Knocking out the fifth-ranked Rublev sealed Khachanov's first win against a top-10 opponent on clay since 2019.

The Russians also met in Monte Carlo three weeks ago, when Rublev won on his way to capturing his maiden Masters 1000 title.



Daniil Medvedev, of Russia, returns the ball against Aslan Karatsev of Russia during their match at the Madrid Open tennis tournament in Madrid, Spain, Tuesday, May 2, 2023.

FIFA President Infantino to Visit Iran



FIFA President Gianni Infantino

TEHRAN – The Islamic Republic of Iran Football Federation (IRIFF) head Mehdi Taj said on Tuesday that FIFA President Gianni Infantino will visit Iran in future to follow up on related issues.

Mehdi Taj made the remarks after the 8th Central Asian Football Association (CAFA) Congress where he had a meeting with FIFA president Gianni Infantino and Salman bin Ibrahim Al Khalifa president of the Asian Football Confederation.

"After the CAFA assembly,

I had separate meetings with the president of FIFA and the president of the Asian Football Confederation. The main focus of the discussion in both meetings was the issue of solving the problem of transferring the financial resources of Iranian football. New solutions were examined, which I hope will provide new opportunities for Iran's football," Taj said.

"According to the plan, the president of FIFA will visit our country in the future to follow up on related issues," he further added.

FIFA Warns Europe of Women's World Cup Broadcast Blackout



GENEVA (AP) — Publicly criticizing broadcasters for offering too little to screen the Women's World Cup has not worked out yet for FIFA president Gianni Infantino, who is now threatening a blackout in major European markets.

A public standoff that started last October was intensified by Infantino late Monday when he warned five key countries – England, France, Germany, Italy, Spain – in a statement less than three months before the tournament starts in Australia and New Zealand.

"To be very clear, it is our moral and legal obligation not to undersell the FIFA Women's World Cup," Infantino said of the July 20-Aug. 20 tournament.

"Therefore, should the offers continue not to be fair (towards women and women's football), we will be forced not to broadcast the FIFA Women's World Cup into the 'Big 5' European countries," he said.

Europe is FIFA's most lucrative broadcast market with \$1.06 billion in broadcast revenue for the 2019-22 commercial cycle, mostly tied to the men's World Cup in Qatar.

FIFA reported total financial re-

serves close to \$4 billion at the end of 2022 with \$3.43 billion in broadcast revenue from total income of \$7.57 billion in the past four years.

Infantino first aired the Women's World Cup broadcasting issue seven months ago, when in Auckland for the official draw for the 32-team tournament. He said then that offers as low as 1% of the equivalent TV rights price paid for the men's World Cup were "not acceptable."

In March, for world soccer's annual meeting held in Rwanda, Infantino reported no progress with TV broadcasters while also announcing a more than three-fold increase in team prize money to \$110 million for the tournament.

Infantino has been clearly ruffled that player-led criticism of FIFA for not offering equal prize money is amplified by media he believes is undervaluing women's soccer. The Women's World Cup has standalone broadcast and sponsor deals rather than being bundled with the men's tournament.

The FIFA leader suggested on Monday "public broadcasters in particular have a duty to promote and invest in women's sport."