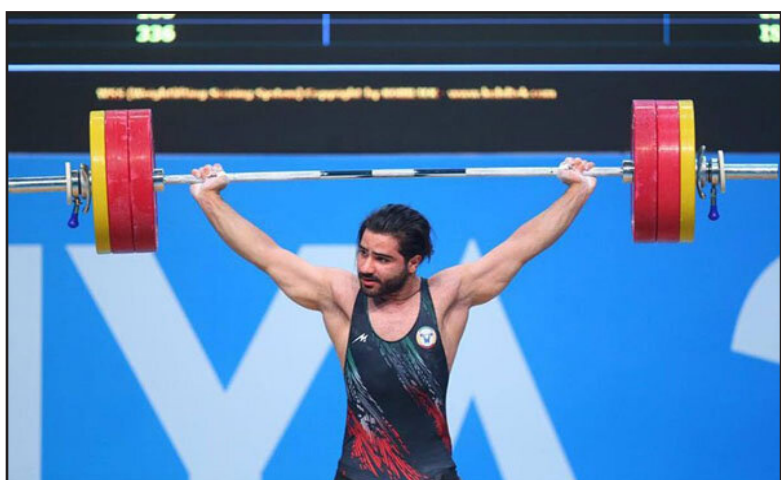


Mostafa Javadi Wins Bronze in Asian Weightlifting Championships



TEHRAN – Iranian weightlifter Mostafa Javadi bagged two bronze medals in the 89 kg weight category of the Asian Weightlifting Championships in South Korea.

Javadi lifted 205kg in the clean and jerk to bring a bronze medal home.

In the snatch, the Iranian athlete lifted 159 and grabbed bronze in total with 364 kg.

Also, Kianoush Rostami ranked eighth in the Asian Weightlifting

Championships.

The Asian Weightlifting Championships is underway in Jinju, Republic of Korea from May 5 to 13.

The continental championship is the second qualifying event for the Paris Olympic Games after the World Weightlifting Championships 2022.

Iran has sent 10 male and five female weightlifters to the 2023 Asian Weightlifting Championships.

Iran, Saudi Arabia Likely to Play Friendly in September



TEHRAN – Iran and Saudi Arabia's national football teams will most likely face each other in a friendly match in September.

President of Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran Mehdi Taj had held a meeting with President of the Saudi Federation Yaser Al-Mashal about 10 days ago, in which the two sides discussed the expansion of soccer relations between the two countries, IRNA news Agency reported on Wednesday.

day.

In the meeting, the two soccer officials negotiated for organizing a friendly match between Iranian and Saudi Arabian national football teams, said the report.

Based on initial talks, the friendly match could be held in September in Saudi Arabia or the UAE, it added.

The report said that Iran's U-17 team traveled to the UAE on Wednesday to hold two friendly matches against Saudi rivals.

Madrid, City Draw 1-1 in Champions League Semifinals

MADRID (AP) — Real Madrid's Vinicius Junior and Manchester City's Erling Haaland were relaxed and laughing as they embraced after the final whistle at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium.

They both seemed satisfied following an even first leg that ended in a 1-1 draw and left the Champions League semifinal wide open going into next week's return match in Manchester.

Vinicius and Kevin de Bruyne scored with long-range strikes in a match in which Madrid's defense successfully kept Haaland — the Champions League's leading scorer — from being decisive.

Madrid beat City in last year's semifinals and went on to win a record-extending 14th Champions League title while the English club again fell short of European success.

"Both teams played well. It's a good draw," Madrid goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois said. "There's everything to play for next week."

City controlled possession but couldn't translate it into significant scoring opportunities. Haaland wasted a few chances



Manchester City's Erling Haaland, top center, is challenged by Real Madrid's Nacho during the Champions League semifinal first leg soccer match between Real Madrid and Manchester City at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid, Spain, Tuesday, May 9, 2023.

early but wasn't much of a threat throughout the game at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium.

The Norwegian came into the match having scored 12 of City's 26 goals in the Champions League this season and was five short of Cristiano Ronaldo's single-season record of 17 for Madrid in 2013-14.

Vinicius created problems for the City defense and opened the scoring in with a shot into the top

corner in the 36th minute for his seventh Champions League goal this season. The Brazil forward picked up a pass by Eduardo Camavinga and used one touch to set up his right-footed shot from outside the area.

City struggled to come close to Madrid's goal but De Bruyne found the net in the 67th with a powerful one-timer from outside the area after Madrid lost possession because of a poor pass across

the field by Camavinga.

Madrid complained that it was not awarded a corner in the build-up of City's goal.

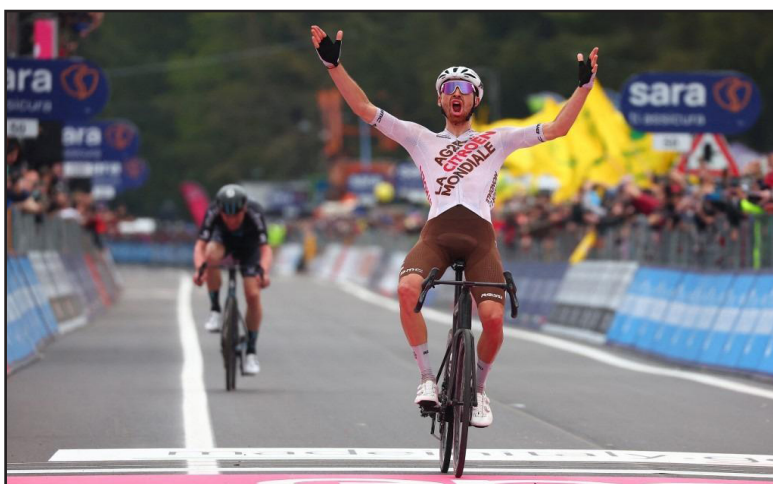
"It was a shame that we conceded that goal," Madrid midfielder Luka Modric said. "I think we deserved more. They had more possession but didn't create a lot of chances. It's still 50-50 and we will go into the second match with confidence."

Haaland had not yet joined City when it lost 6-5 on aggregate to Madrid in last year's semifinals. Vinicius, Rodrygo and Karim Benzema combined for all of Madrid's goals that time.

Madrid is making its 11th semifinal appearance in 13 seasons and is trying to win its sixth title in 10 years. City played in its first Champions League final two seasons ago, losing to Chelsea.

Madrid, which won the Copa del Rey title this past weekend, is virtually out of contention in the Spanish league and can fully focus on the semifinal against City. The English side remains in the middle of a tight title race in the Premier League.

Paret-Peintre Wins Stage 4 of Giro d'Italia



AG2R Citroen Team's French rider Aurelien Paret-Peintre celebrates as he crosses the finish line to win the fourth stage of the Giro d'Italia 2023 cycling race, 175 km between Venosa and Lago Laceno, on May 9, 2023.

ROME (AFP) - After an action-packed start to the stage, a seven-man group including Paret-Peintre and Leknessund (Team DSM) engineered a breakaway at the 79-km mark and gradually built a lead which was over five minutes at one point of the 175-km ride from Venosa to Lago Laceno.

The duo of Paret-Peintre and Leknessund expertly charged ahead of their pursuers on a steep climb close to the finish to cross the line comfortably, while Toms Skujins (Trek-Segafredo) pipped Vincenzo Albanese (Eolo-Kometa) by millimeters to third.

"My main objective this year was the Giro. I trained a lot for this day, for these weeks," Paret-Peintre said. "We knew today was the day for a breakaway, so we came here to take a stage victory. I knew I was faster than Leknessund, so we collaborated until the end. And he took the maglia rosa, so everyone is happy I think."

Leknessund's rise into the lead was part of a shake-up

in the overall standings, with the Norwegian now 28 seconds ahead of Evenepoel in second, while Frenchman Paret-Peintre moved up to third. It was no surprise, however, that Evenepoel and his Soudal-Quick-Step team relinquished the jersey as they will bide their time and the Belgian will still be among the favorites to claim overall victory.

"I came here to go for stages. That was also the goal for today, but I realised that the pink was also possible," Leknessund said.

"Obviously I went for the stage and also knew that pink was possible. My legs were hurting so much, but it's super special to be in the pink. "Only Knut Knudsen from Norway had it before me but looking at who had the Maglia Rosa in the past few days and the impact of this jersey it's a great day in my career."

Portugal's Joao Almeida and Primoz Roglic of Slovenia are fourth and fifth.

Nuggets Beat Suns 118-102 to Regain Series Lead

DENVER (AP) — Nikola Jokic had a triple-double after making up with Suns owner Mat Ishbia and Michael Porter Jr. sank five 3-pointers to help the Denver Nuggets beat Phoenix 118-102 on Tuesday night for a 3-2 series lead.

Joker had 29 points, 13 rebounds and 12 assists for his 10th career playoff triple-double, breaking a tie with Wilt Chamberlain for most by a center in NBA history.

"To be honest, I just like to win the game, so whatever it takes," said Jokic, who was coming off a career-best 53-point performance in Game 4.

Game 6 is Thursday night in Phoenix.

"If we play the way we did today," Jokic said, "we're going to have a chance" to close out the series and advance to the Western Conference Finals for the first time since the NBA bubble in 2020.

The Suns are confident they can shake this one off just like they did in bouncing back from two losses in Denver last week.

"Yeah. I've been in here a couple of times now," Phoenix star Devin Booker said. "I love it. Every game has its own character. Every game is its own movie, its own different preparation and everything to go with it. We're

going watch over film, see how we can be better for Game 6."

The home team has won every game in the series. If that holds true again, the decisive winner-take-all clash will come Sunday back in Denver, where the top-seeded Nuggets own the NBA's best home record at 40-7, including 6-0 in the playoffs.

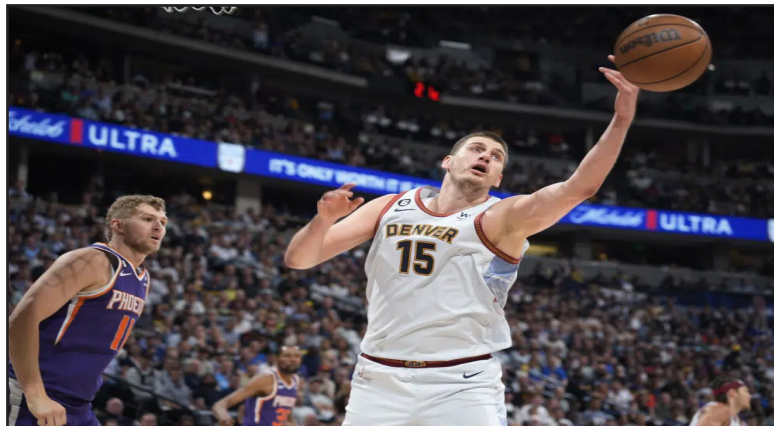
Nuggets coach Michael Malone devised a five-point plan for the Nuggets to regain control of the series after losing two in Phoenix: patch up their transition defense, slow down Booker, get more from his bench, unleash MPJ and knock down open 3s.

Check, check, check, check and check.

Porter bounced back from a quiet night in Game 4 with 19 points on 5-of-8 shooting from long range. Denver outscored Phoenix 31-23 in fast-break points; Booker scored 28 points but missed 11 of 19 shots; Bruce Brown boosted the Nuggets' bench with 25 points and the Nuggets sank 13 of 27 from long range.

Jamal Murray added 19 points for Denver, and Kevin Durant chipped in 26 points for Phoenix but also had an uncharacteristic five turnovers.

The Nuggets turned a three-point halftime lead into a 91-74 cushion with a dominant third



Denver Nuggets center Nikola Jokic, right, reaches for a rebound as Phoenix Suns center Jock Landale watches during the second half of Game 5 of an NBA Western Conference basketball semifinal playoff series Tuesday, May 9, 2023, in Denver.

quarter in which Jokic made seven of eight shots for 17 points and Booker was just 1-for-8 for 3 points.

The chippiness of the series reached a new level in the final minute of the third quarter when Nuggets swingman Brown antagonized the Suns as they huddled up on the court and Durant gave Jokic a forearm shiver. A double technical was assessed on Durant and Brown.

Durant called the dust-up "absolutely nothing, it wasn't anything serious. They were excited, they were up big and we were trying to draw up some stuff. So, it was nothing."

So, no need for a hug and a handshake next time they play.

Before this game, Jokic shared a warm pregame embrace — and the basketball — with Ishbia 48 hours after their kerfuffle over a loose ball in Phoenix in Game 4 resulted in a technical foul and a \$25,000 fine for the Nuggets big man.

The NBA had stickers placed on the first several rows of seats — including Ishbia's — reminding spectators, especially those close to the action, of its fan code of conduct policy and a reminder that violations could result in ejection and revocation of tickets.