

# Iran Soccer Beach Team Thrashes Thailand in Asian Championship



TEHRAN — Iranian men's national beach soccer team emerged victorious over Thailand 7-2 at the Asian qualifying competitions for the 2023 Indonesia Beach World Championships (5-12 August).

The Iranian squad advanced to the semi-finals of the Asian qualifying competition underway in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, by defeating Thailand 7-2 on Thursday evening.

Amirhussein Akbari managed to find the net for the Iranian team two times while Movahhed Muhammadpour, Ali-Muhammad Mokhtari, Ali Mirshekari, Muhammad Moradi, and Mehdi Shirmuhammadi scored one goal each.

Iran will play Japan in the semifinals.

## Martinez Double as Inter Retain Coppa Italia Crown

ROME (Reuters) - Striker Lautaro Martinez scored twice as Inter Milan fought back to beat Fiorentina 2-1 and win their secured consecutive Coppa Italia title at the Stadio Olimpico.

With both teams preparing for major European finals next month and meeting for the first time in a major domestic final, Inter made nine changes from Sunday's defeat by Napoli, starting in-form striker Romelu Lukaku on the bench and Samir Handanovic replacing Andre Onana in goal.

Fiorentina took the lead after three minutes when Jonathan Ikone sent in a cross that found Nico Gonzales un-

marked at the back post, and he drilled the ball into the net.

Edin Dzeko had a clear chance to equalize halfway through the half, but he could not keep the ball down when keeper Pietro Terracciano came rushing out and sent his shot over the crossbar.

"We started badly and had the wrong approach, which is rare for us, but the lads did well to stay in the game anyway and then turn it around," Inter manager Simone Inzaghi told Mediaset.

Inter have had a successful season, retaining the Coppa Italia and Italian Supercup titles and reaching next month's Champions League final against Manchester City.



Inter Milan players celebrate with the trophy after winning the Italian Cup (Coppa Italia) final football match between Fiorentina and Inter Milan at the Stadio Olimpico in Rome, on May 24, 2023.

"We have the final two Serie A games, then Istanbul and a great season we want to keep going," Inzaghi added.

Argentine Martinez did level

with a shot from a tight angle in the 29th minute and followed up with a close-range volley high into the net eight minutes later.

## Real Beat Rayo as Bernabeu Rallies Behind Vinicius



Real Madrid's German defender Antonio Rudiger vies with Rayo Vallecano's Spanish midfielder Alvaro Garcia Rivera (right) during the Spanish league football match between Real Madrid CF and Rayo Vallecano de Madrid at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid on May 24, 2023.

MADRID (Reuters) - Goals earned Real Madrid a 2-1 win over mid-table Rayo Vallecano

in LaLiga as fans and players showed their support for Vinicius Jr who was subjected to racial abuse over the weekend.

Real's Brazilian forward Vinicius received a tribute ahead of the game after being the target of racist insults during the 1-0 loss at Valencia on Sunday.

"We are all Vinicius. Enough is enough" said a banner displayed behind one of the goals at the Santiago Bernabeu, among many other messages of support for him.

Real's players took to the pitch wearing shirts bearing Vinicius's number 20 while the captains of both teams wore armbands carrying anti-racism messages.

Dressed in street clothes and visibly agitated, Vinicius joined his team mates on the pitch for a standing ovation after all the players posed next to an official LaLiga banner "Racists, out of football".

He was not part of the Real squad for the match even though the red card he received at Valencia was overturned by the Spanish Football Federation (RFEF) on Tuesday and the subsequent suspension lifted.

A knee issue forced Vinicius to miss training ahead of the fixture, Spanish media reported, and he watched the game sitting next to Real Madrid President Florentino Perez.

## Zana Wins Giro Stage 18, Thomas Extends Lead



Team Jayco AlUla's rider Filippo Zana celebrates on the finish line as he wins the eighteenth stage of the Giro d'Italia 2023 cycling race, on May 25, 2023.

ROME (Reuters) - Italian Filippo Zana of Jayco-AlUla won a grueling stage 18 of the Giro d'Italia on Thursday after fending off Thibaut Pinot, while Geraint Thomas celebrated his 37th birthday in style by tightening his grip on the leader's maglia rosa jersey.

The 18th stage was one for the climbers on a 161-kilometer ride from Oderzo to Val di Zoldo, with Zana beating Pinot (Groupama-FDJ) to the finish line for his first Giro victory.

Warren Barguil (Arkea-Samsic) crossed the line third, well behind the top two.

"I still can't believe it. I have to thank the team because they gave me this opportunity," Italian champion Zana said.

"In the finale I played my cards right, it was an opportunity that comes around a few times in life

and I took it. To win with the tri-color jersey is special."

Pinot and Zana were part of a six-man breakaway which built up a lead of four-and-a-half minutes to the peloton with 10km to go, but the duo dropped their companions on the steep Alpine slopes as they surged to the finish line.

In the overall standings, Ineos Grenadiers rider Thomas extended his lead at the top to 29 seconds, with Primoz Roglic (Jumbo-Visma) leap-frogging Joao Almeida (UAE Team Emirates) into second.

Thomas was made to work hard, as he clung to the wheel of Roglic throughout the final stretch, while Almeida did well to remain in touch with the pair after momentarily looking like he would be left behind by his GC rivals.

## Celtics Beat Heat 110-97 in Game 5



Boston Celtics forward Jayson Tatum dunks during the first half in Game 5 of the NBA basketball Eastern Conference finals against the Miami Heat Thursday, May 25, 2023, in Boston.

BOSTON (AP) — The Boston Celtics have looked elimination in the face four times this postseason and still haven't blinked.

Derrick White had 24 points, including six 3-pointers, and the Celtics dominated the Miami Heat 110-97 on Thursday night in Game 5 to extend the Eastern Conference finals.

Marcus Smart had 23 points and five steals. Jayson Tatum and Jaylen Brown finished with 21 points apiece as the Celtics won their second straight and trimmed Miami's series lead to 3-2. The Celtics are halfway to becoming the first team in NBA history to overcome a 3-0 deficit to win a series.

"We've got to do whatever it takes to get a win," White said. Boston also survived two elimination games in the second round against the 76ers. Teams that fell behind 3-0 are 0-150 all-time in series.

"It just says that our backs are against the wall and we're sticking together and we're competing at a high level to give ourselves a chance," Celtics coach Joe Mazzulla said.

Game 6 is Saturday in Miami, where the Heat will try again to

become the second No. 8 seed to reach the NBA Finals in the current format, which dates to 1984.

"We're always going to stay positive, knowing that we can and we will win the series," the Heat's Jimmy Butler said. "We just have to close it out at home."

A day after the Florida Panthers punched the franchise's first ticket to the Stanley Cup Finals since 1996, for the second straight game the Heat were denied a spot in the NBA Finals.

"One game doesn't lead to the next game," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said. "It just doesn't matter. It's about collectively preparing and putting together a great game. We'll play much better on Saturday. That's all we just have to focus on right now."

Duncan Robinson led the Heat with 18 points. Bam Adebayo added 16 points and eight rebounds. Butler had 14 points, five rebounds and five assists, but sat out the final 9:47 of the game. Caleb Martin finished with 14 points.

It was Butler's lowest-scoring game of the playoffs. He had 16 points in Game 3, a blowout win by Miami.

## Paris to Ban Single-Use Plastic at 2024 Games

PARIS (Reuters) - Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo said on Friday the city planned to ban single-use plastic when it holds the 2024 Olympic Games as part of efforts to tackle a global plastic pollution crisis.

"We have decided to make the Olympic Games the first major event without single-use plastic," Hidalgo told a press conference at a session of the International Forum of Mayors against Plastic Pollution.

Visitors to temporary Olympics competition sites in the French capital will be admitted only without plastic bottles.

Coca-Cola, the American beverage giant and designated sponsor of the Paris Olympics,

will distribute its products in re-usable glass bottles and more than 200 soda fountains, which will be redeployed after the games.

Re-usable cups will also be used for refreshments during the Olympics marathon.

"Plastic (waste) remains a major global issue: each year, 14,000 mammals and 1.4 million seabirds are killed due to the ingestion of plastic waste," Hidalgo's office said in a statement announcing the Olympics single-use plastic ban.

Organizers of the Paris Olympics have said they want to halve the carbon footprint compared to previous Summer Games in Rio



in 2016 and London in 2012. The Tokyo Olympics last year took place behind closed doors due to the COVID pandemic.

The UN Environment Program

issued a report on May 16 saying countries could reduce plastic pollution by 80% by 2040 using existing technologies and making major policy changes.