

# Iran Advance to Main Round of World Handball Championship



TEHRAN – Iran beat Burundi 46-24 to advance to the 2023 IHF Youth World Championship main round in Croatia.

In the group H, Iran and Sweden shared the spoils in a 26-26 draw.

Then, the Iranian players emerged victorious over Faroe Islands 29-27.

After 13 years of absence, the Islamic Republic of Iran return to the IHF Men's Youth (U19) World Championship.

In the round of 16, Iran's national team will face the winner of the match between German or Saudi teams in Group G.

Iran booked a place in the ongoing world championship in Croatia after becoming vice champion in Asia.

This is the first time, the Iranian team have reached the quarterfinal of the world championships. They took part in the first three tournaments of this competition where they placed in rankings between eight and twelve.

Led by Majid Rahimizadeh, the Iranian squad finished runner-up at the 2022 Asian Men's Youth Handball Championship in Bahrain.

## Denmark Win Men's Pursuit Gold at Cycling Worlds

GLASGOW (Reuters) -- Denmark reclaimed their world title in men's team pursuit as they defeated Olympic champions Italy in the final at the UCI World Championships in Glasgow.

In a repeat of the gold-medal battle at the Tokyo Games in 2021 which Italy won in a world record time, Denmark exacted revenge as they reeled in the Azzuri to win comfortably.

The Danish quartet of Lasse Leth, Niklas Larsen, Rasmus Pedersen, Carl-Frederik Bevert trailed narrowly for the first half of the 16 laps around the Chris Hoy Velodrome.

But a massive acceleration took them ahead and unlike in Tokyo, when Filippo Ganna powered Italy to gold in thrilling fashion,

Italy could find no storming finish.

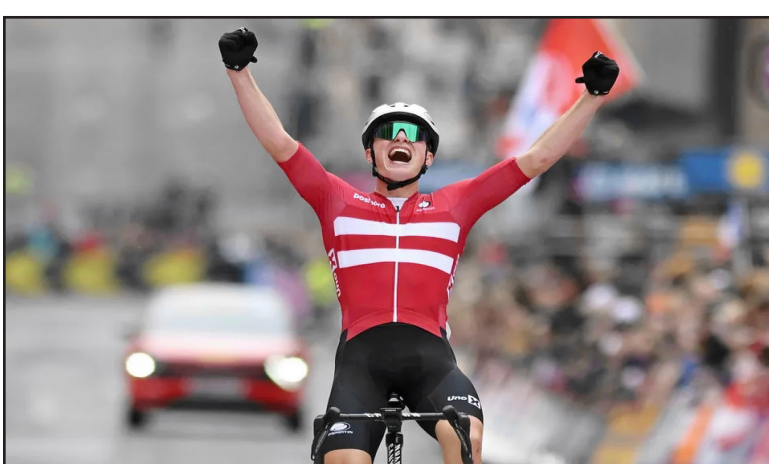
Denmark also won the title in 2020 and were favorites going into the Olympics.

New Zealand thrashed Australia to win the bronze.

Away from the velodrome there was a stunning British win in the men's mountain bike downhill event at Fort William as Charlie Hatton produced a daredevil ride to snatch gold on a rain-soaked course.

Hatton, who has never even won a World Cup race, blasted down the course in 4:26.747 and then had to sit and watch 14 riders try to better his time.

One by one they failed with only Austria's Andreas Kolb coming close, but having to settle



Albert Philipsen of Denmark celebrates at finish line after winning the men's junior road race at the UCI Glasgow 2023 Cycling World Championships.

for silver, 0.59 seconds slower. Austria's Valentina Holl won the women's title.

On Sunday, the focus would

turn to the road with the much-anticipated men's elite road race, which finished with 10 twisty circuits of Glasgow's city center.

## Archibald Leads Britain to Women's Cycling Title



Austria's Valentina Holl celebrates after winning gold in the Women's Elite Final during day three of the 2023 UCI Cycling World Championships at the Ben Nevis Range, Fort William, Scotland, Aug. 5, 2023.

GLASGOW (Reuters) -- Britain's Katie Archibald helped deliver an emotional victory in the women's team pursuit at her home velodrome as her quartet overpowered New Zealand for gold at the UCI World Cycling Championships in Glasgow.

Archibald, a stalwart of the British pursuit team for a decade, Elinor Barker, Josie Knight and Anna Morris did not put a wheel out of place as they delivered Britain's first women's world title in the blue-riband track event since 2014.

The 29-year-old Archibald took a huge turn on the front midway through the 16 laps to help pull Britain into the lead and Knight drove it home as the crowd roared them on.

Britain's margin of more than four seconds underlined their dominance during the competition after they beat France earlier.

Archibald, took up track cycling at the Glasgow velodrome as an 18-year-old, is a two-time Olympic champion and now has five world golds. But few of her triumphs could have meant as much.

A year ago she suffered tragedy when her partner, fellow cyclist Rab Wardell, died of a cardiac arrest, while earlier in 2022 Archibald suffered serious injuries after being struck by a car while training, bursting both of her ankles.

"It's all coming out now to be

honest," Archibald told fellow British track great Chris Hoy, who the velodrome is named after, of the emotions she was feeling.

"We have always seen ourselves as the best in the world (in team pursuit) but not been here on the top step since 2014."

Barker, who has returned to the saddle after giving birth to son Nico in March last year, goes back a long way with Archibald. The two were team mates in Cali, Colombia, in 2014 when Britain's domination of team pursuit was total.

"She's unbelievable. It's really hard to kind of summarize the year she's had and how she feels about it and how we feel, but just the fact she is here, it's insane, I really don't know how she does it to be honest," the six-time world champion said.

France took the bronze medal.

## Dutch End South Korea's Historic Run in World Cup



SYDNEY (AFP) -- The Netherlands secured a spot in the Women's World Cup quarterfinals by ending South Africa's historic run with a 2-0 win in Sydney on Sunday, ahead of a blockbuster last-16 showdown between holders the United States and Sweden.

The Dutch, runners-up in 2019, will now face Spain in the last eight but they suffered some anxious moments in front of 40,000 fans in Sydney and had goalkeeper Daphne van Donkelaar to thank for making several important saves in the first half.

Jill Roord scored after nine minutes to put the Dutch on their way against a team that sits 45 places below them in the world rankings and was featuring in the knockout rounds for the first time.

South Africa goalkeeper Kaylin Swart then made a mess of an innocuous Lineth Beerensteyn shot midway through the second half to gift the Dutch a second.

The African champions will be kicking themselves after having numerous chances in the opening 45 minutes, almost all of them falling to their livewire captain Thembi Kgatana.

Midfielder Roord nodded in the opener from close range following a corner for her fourth goal of the tournament.

The Netherlands then stood firm before adding their second goal on 68 minutes when Swart's blunder let Beerensteyn's tame effort slip through her hands.

The Dutch will now return to New Zealand for Friday's last-eight game in Wellington against Spain, who outclassed Switzerland 5-1 on Saturday.

The USA go into their meeting with Sweden in Melbourne, which kicks off at 0900 GMT, looking to improve on some lackluster performances in the group stage as they chase an unprecedented third consecutive World Cup title.

After Germany's shock group-phase exit, the top-rated Americans and Sweden, third on the FIFA list, are the two highest-ranked teams left standing.

The winners will go through to a quarterfinal against Japan in Auckland on Friday.

Japan have been the sensation of the tournament so far and the 2011 champions eased into the last eight with a 3-1 win over Norway on Saturday in Wellington.

Monday's action sees European champions England take on Nigeria in Brisbane before co-hosts Australia face Denmark in Sydney.

Nigeria breezed through what was dubbed the "group of death" at the Women's World Cup, but a victory over England on Monday and a berth in the quarter-finals would be one of most significant accomplishments in his team's history, coach Randy Waldrum said.

"It would be a huge win," Waldrum told reporters on Sunday, a day ahead of Nigeria's last-16 match with the Lionesses.

## Rubio Takes Break From Basketball Over Mental Health



MADRID (Reuters) -- Ricky Rubio of the NBA's Cleveland Cavaliers said he will take a break from basketball so he can focus on his mental health, a move that comes shortly before his Spanish national teammates defend their FIBA World Cup title.

Rubio, who was expected to be part of the Spanish squad that will be competing in the World Cup that begins on Aug. 25 in the Philippines, Japan, and Indonesia, was named the most valuable player of the 2019 edition.

"I have decided to stop my professional activity to take care of my mental health," Rubio said in a statement released by the Spanish Basketball Federation, or FEB.

"I want to thank all the support I have received from the FEB to understand my decision. Today #LaFamilia makes more sense than ever. Thank you.

"I would ask that my privacy be

respected so that I can face these moments and be able to give more information when the time is right."

The 32-year-old Rubio, who was selected fifth overall in the 2009 NBA Draft, missed the bulk of the last two seasons while recovering from an ACL injury.

Rubio returned to action in January and averaged 5.2 points, 3.5 assists per game with the Cavaliers. For his career, Rubio has averaged 10.8 points and 7.4 assists.

"We were informed today by Ricky and his representation that he has decided to step away from his illustrious basketball career to focus on his mental health at this time," the Cavaliers said in a statement.

"We understand how difficult of a decision this was for him and will balance providing whatever support we can while simultaneously respecting Ricky's request for privacy."

## Pre-Olympics Test Race in Paris Canceled Due to Pollution

PARIS (AFP) -- The pre-Olympics swimming test competition due to take place Sunday in the Seine in Paris had been cancelled due to pollution of the river, the international swimming federation said after analysis of the latest water samples.

Following recent heavy rainfall, "water quality in the Seine has remained below acceptable standards for safeguarding swimmers' health," World Aquatics said in a statement on Sunday.

"Based on this weekend, it is clear that further work is needed with Paris 2024 and local

authorities to ensure robust contingency plans are in place for next year."

Friday's training had already been cancelled and the women's race was postponed from Saturday to Sunday in the hope the water quality would improve.

Heavy rains for the past week in Paris have caused sewers to overflow, polluting the Seine.

"World Aquatics is disappointed that water quality in the Seine has resulted in the cancellation of the World Aquatics Open Water Swimming World Cup, but the health of our ath-

letes must always be our top priority," said World Aquatics president Husain Al Musallam.

The federation said it "understands that further infrastructure projects will be completed to significantly improve water quality in the Seine in the lead-up to next year's Olympic Games".

"World Aquatics remains excited at the prospect of city-center Olympic racing for the world's best open water swimmers next summer," it said.

The events are also a prelude to the future return of swim-

ming in the Seine promised by Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo from 2025 on three sites where swimming has been prohibited since 1923.

Olympic open water swimming has frequently been hit by pollution concerns.

At the end of the test event in 2019 ahead of the Tokyo Olympics, swimmers protested against the quality of the water in Tokyo Bay.

At the Rio Olympics in 2016, the prospect of swimming in Guanabara Bay, also very polluted, also made headlines.