

Iranian Judokas Claim Title in IBSA World Games



Iranian visually-challenged judoka Vahid Nouri (2nd L) poses with his gold medal during IBSA World Games in Birmingham, the United Kingdom, on August 24, 2023.

TEHRAN - Visually-challenged Iranian judo practitioners have put a tremendous end to their campaign at the 2023 International Blind Sports Federation (IBSA) World Games in the United Kingdom, claiming the top podium place at the high-status tournament.

Vahid Nouri collected the gold medal after overcoming his Turkish rival Ibrahim Bolukbasi in the final competition of the J2 over 90-kilogram weight category at the Symphony Hall of Birmingham on Thursday evening.

Earlier in the day, Moussa Gholami overpowered Arthur Cavalcante da Silva, a representative from Brazil, in the last contest of the J1 minus 90-kilogram class, and snatched a gold medal for the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Moreover, Vahid Jeddi defeated Feruz Sayidov of Uzbekistan in the title clash of the J2 minus 73-kilogram weight category and was awarded a gold medal.

Nathan Petit of France and Kazakhstan's Olzhas Orazalyuli won the bronze medals.

Iranian athlete Meysam Banitaba could also earn a third-place finish in the J1 minus 60-kilogram division, and pocketed a bronze medal.

The 2023 IBSA World Games opened in the United Kingdom on August 14, and will run through August 27.

The sporting event has reportedly brought together more than 1250 competitors with visual impairment from 70 nations.

Persepolis to Face Al-Nassr in Asian Champions League Opener



TEHRAN (Dispatches) - Iran's Persepolis will kick off their Asian Champions League group stage challenge in Tehran against Saudi's Al-Nassr and their star Cristiano Ronaldo next month while title holders Urawa Red Diamonds will take on Chinese champions Wuhan Three Towns.

Japan's Urawa, who had to defeat Hong Kong's Lee Man in a playoff to secure their place in Thursday's draw in Kuala Lumpur, will also face 2021 runners-up Pohang Steelers from South Korea and Vietnam's Hanoi FC in Group J.

Al-Nassr also had to qualify through the playoffs and, after a late 4-2 win over Shabab Al-Ahli of the United Arab Emirates, the Luis Castro coached outfit will also play Qatar's Al-Duhail and FC Istiklol from Tajikistan in Group E.

Four-time winners Al-Hilal, who signed Neymar from Paris Saint-Germain last week, will start their challenge in Group D against Navbahor of Uzbekistan before taking on Iran's FC Nassaji Mazandaran and Mumbai City from India.

The group phase of the continental competition will kick off on Sept. 18 and sees clubs divided into five groups each in the western and eastern regions.

Winners of the 10 groups will advance to the knockout rounds alongside the three best runners-up in the western and eastern halves of the draw.

The knockout rounds will commence on Feb. 12 with the final, played between the best club from their respective sides of the continent, to be held over two home-and-away legs on May 11 and 18.

Asian Champions League Group Stage Draw:

Group A: Pakhtakor (UZB), Al-Fayha (KSA), Ahal FC (TKM), Al-Ain (UAE)

Group B: Al-Sadd (QAT), FC Nasaf (UZB), Al-Faisaly (JOR), Sharjah FC (UAE)

Group C: Al-Ittihad (KSA), Sepahan (IRN), Air Force Club (IRQ), AGMK FC (UZB)

Group D: Al-Hilal (KSA), FC Nassaji Mazandaran (IRN), Mumbai City (IND), Navbahor (UZB)

Group E: Persepolis (IRN), Al-Duhail (QAT), FC Istiklol (TJK), Al-Nassr (KSA)

Group F: Jeonbuk Motors (KOR), Bangkok United (THA), Lion City Sailors (SIN), Kitchee (HKG)

Group G: Yokohama F Marinos (JPN), Shandong Taishan (CHN), Kaya FC-Iloilo (PHI), Incheon United (KOR)

Group H: Buriram United (THA), Ventforet Kofu (JPN), Melbourne City (AUS), Zhejiang FC (CHN)

Group I: Ulsan Hyundai (KOR), Kawasaki Frontale (JPN), Johor Darul Ta'zim (MAS), BG Pathum United (THA)

Group J: Wuhan Three Towns (CHN), Pohang Steelers (KOR), Hanoi FC (VIE), Urawa Red Diamonds (JPN)

Para Powerlifters Shine at World Championships

TEHRAN- Iranian powerlifters have scooped eight medals on the first day of the 2023 International Blind Sports Federation (IBSA) World Games in Birmingham, England.

The national powerlifting team finished the day with one gold, six silver, and one bronze medal.

Javad Ghane, competing in the 56 kg weight class, won a gold medal in the bench press and a silver medal in the deadlift. In the

60 kg weight class, Rasoul Nasiri earned two silver medals in both the bench press and deadlift divisions.

Mehdi Baharzadeh won a silver medal in the bench press and a bronze medal in the deadlift in the 75 kg weight class and Ahad Javaheri took home two silver medals in both the bench press and deadlift events of the 82.5 kg weight class.

The 2023 IBSA World Games is



Iranian powerlifter Rasoul Nasiri competing in the bench press at the 2023 International Blind and Visually Impaired Powerlifting World Championships in Rasht, Iran.

Bonmati, Carmona, Kerr Shortlisted for UEFA Women's Player of Year



ZURICH (AFP) - Two Spanish Women's World Cup winners, Aitana Bonmati and Olga Carmona, and Chelsea's Australian striker

Sam Kerr were on Friday named on the three-player shortlist for UEFA's women's player of the year award.

Bonmati, who plays for European champions Barcelona, captained Spain at the World Cup and was named player of the tournament. Carmona, of Real Madrid, scored the only goal in the final against England.

Kerr, a semifinalist with host country Australia, was Chelsea's top scorer as they won the English Super League and lost to Barcelona in the Champions League semifinal.

The trio were chosen in a vote by coaches of clubs who played in last season's Champions League group stages, coaches of the 55 UEFA-affiliated countries and a panel of European journal-

ists. England and Manchester United goalkeeper Mary Earps just missed out as the fourth-highest vote getter.

The winner will be announced on August 31 in Monaco at the draw for the men's Champions League group stage.

Spain and Barcelona striker Alexia Putellas has won the past two years.

The three finalists for the coaching award are Barcelona's Jonatan Giraldez and the two World Cup final coaches, Jorge Vilda of Spain, and Dutchwoman Sarina Wiegman who led England.

Lyles Clocks Fastest Time in Semis After Cart Crash

BUDAPEST (Reuters) - American Noah Lyles continued his quest for double sprint gold at the World Athletics Championships, cruising into the men's 200 metres final despite a freak cart crash that delayed the start of his race.

Four days after winning the 100 meters, Lyles, twice world 200m champion, ran 19.76 seconds to record the fastest time in Thursday's semi-finals.

Lyles' heat was delayed by 30 minutes after the golf cart transporting him and the other runners from the warmup track to the stadium crashed into another cart.

Heats two and three were run before the first heat as Jamaican



Noah Lyles of the U.S. crosses the finish line to win heat 1

Andrew Hudson received medical treatment for glass in his eye. Hudson, fifth in the first heat,

was initially not listed among the finalists before officials added him back in after deciding on a

nine-runner race. "I feel like it all happened in slow motion," Hudson said. "Unfortunately, I was sitting on the side where another buggy crashed into us, I was directly impacted. They got most of the glass out. My eye is pretty blurry right now."

"It is my first world championships so it's going to be memorable. . . Maybe I'd better walk next time."

American Kenny Bednarek, the Olympic silver medallist, ran 19.96 for the second fastest time, edging Letsile Tebogo of Botswana, the 100m silver medallist who crossed in 19.97. Bednarek glanced across at Tebogo just before the finish line.

Sardar Azmoun Joins AS Roma

TEHRAN - Iranian striker Sardar Azmoun is scheduled to play for AS Roma, Iranian media outlets have reported.

After the negotiations between Roma and Bayer Leverkusen, both sides finally agreed that Sardar Azmoun, the Iranian striker of Bayer Leverkusen, would go to

Roma on loan. Sardar Azmoun confirmed the reports in an interview with ISNA.

Earlier, media outlets reported that Roma is looking to sign a center-forward this summer and they are close to sealing a move for Bayer Leverkusen's Iranian striker Sardar Azmoun.

Sweden Top Women's Rankings, World Champions Spain Second

LONDON (Reuters) - Sweden have knocked the United States off the top of the FIFA women's rankings for the first time in more than six years while Spain also moved above the U.S. after winning their first World Cup last weekend.

Spain climbed from sixth to second, demoting the U.S. to

third, while runners-up England and quarter-finalists France remained fourth and fifth in the latest rankings published on Friday.

Sweden, who were third before the World Cup, joined Germany as the only other team to have led the rankings after beating tournament co-hosts Australia to win bronze.

Verstappen Tops Opening Practice at Home Dutch Grand Prix

ZANDVOORT (AFP) - Max Verstappen began his home Dutch Grand Prix weekend in familiar fashion, topping the times in Friday's first practice at Zandvoort.

The Red Bull double world champion and runaway series

leader is on a quest to draw level with Sebastian Vettel's record of nine straight wins and he was fastest by almost three hundredths of a second from Fernando Alonso's upgraded Aston Martin.

The Mercedes of Lewis Hamilton came next as a trio of champions dominated at the tricky, twisty circuit carved out of coastal dunes near Amsterdam.

The old-school track punishes the slightest error and caught out

Nico Hulkenberg, 24 hours after the German had signed a new deal to keep him at Haas in 2024.

His accident triggered the first red flag of the weekend as Formula One returned after its summer break for this 13th round of

a championship utterly dominated by Red Bull and Verstappen.

Kevin Magnussen, also celebrating a contract extension with Haas for next season, was first to set a time.

But the Dane was soon bettered

by Verstappen, the home hero reeling off a series of quickest laps.

The last one to venture out on the track was Lance Stroll, who missed Thursday's media day with an infection.