

Iranian Chess Grandmaster Beats Dutch Rival in Qatar Masters



TEHRAN— The Iranian grandmaster Parham Maghsoodloo beat his rival from Germany in the 2023 Qatar Masters Open underway in Doha, Qatar.

Maghsoodloo, with a rating of 2707, won his prominent chess player from Germany Raphael Lagunow, with a rating of 2425.

Magnus Carlsen, the world's number one chess player, Nakamura and Anish Giri are among the most famous chess players in the competition.

The Qatar Masters 2023 is a 9-round Swiss, underway in Doha, Qatar from October 11-20.

Mbappe Shines as France Qualify for Euros

PARIS (Reuters) - France's Kylian Mbappe rediscovered his touch in spectacular fashion as he grabbed a double to lead his side to a 2-1 away win against an injury-ravaged Netherlands and early qualification for Euro 2024 on Friday.

The World Cup runners-up, who will be joined in the June 14-July 14 tournament in Germany by Portugal and Belgium as one of the first three teams to qualify, kept a perfect record in Group B with six wins.

Belgium went through in Group F with a 3-2 win away to Austria, who would themselves have qualified with a victory, as Dodi Lukebakio scored twice before Romelu



Lukaku wrapped up the points after the break.

At the Johan Cruyff Arena, France were comfortable for more than 80 minutes, even if a couple of mistakes by goal-

keeper Mike Maignan could have cost them dearly.

Mbappe, who left the training camp for a day for personal reasons this week, volleyed home in the seventh minute

from Jonathan Clauss's perfect cross before pointing to the sky with both hands.

It came as a relief for Mbappe, who had not scored in his last four competitive outings.

"I'm not one to worry, and especially not about Kylian. He showed today there was nothing to worry about," said France coach Didier Deschamps.

"When he's like this obviously France have more chances to win."

Les Bleus allowed the hosts to gain a bit of confidence before the interval but Mbappe made sure there would be no comeback eight minutes into the second half.

England Beat Australia 1-0 With Watkins Winner



England's Ollie Watkins (left) controls the ball during the international friendly soccer match between England and Australia at Wembley Stadium, London, Oct 13, 2023.

LONDON (AFP) - England's Ollie Watkins marked his international return with a second-half winner as Gareth Southgate's experimental side labored

to a 1-0 friendly win against Australia at a wet Wembley Stadium on Friday.

With a key Euro 2024 qualifier against holders Italy looming

on Tuesday, the England manager used the opportunity to rest first team regulars, including captain Harry Kane, and give game time to some younger squad players.

Only three of the starting 11 had more than 10 caps, with 10 changes to the side that beat Scotland 3-1 in England's last international and Chelsea defender Levi Colwill making his debut.

Watkins, returning for the first time since March 2022, slid the ball in at the far post in the 57th minute after Jack Grealish fired across goal.

It was the Aston Villa forward's third goal for England and second in successive

matches, although 563 days apart.

"It has been a long time coming. I have been waiting a long time for the next call up. I was looking forward to it and I wasn't going to let this opportunity slip," Watkins told Channel Four television.

"It was a tough game. A lot of us haven't played together before. We got the goal and saw it out. There's obviously a lot to work on."

Southgate rang the changes after the break against opponents who could easily have been ahead in the first half, with Watkins making way for debutant Eddie Nketiah in the 73rd among a flurry of substitutions.

Martin Wins Fourth Straight Sprint at Indonesia GP

MANDALIKA, Indonesia (Reuters) - Pramac Racing's Jorge Martin won his fourth straight sprint with a spectacular showing at the Indonesia Grand Prix in Mandalika on Saturday to roar to the top of the championship standings after Ducati's Francesco Bagnaia ended in eighth.

Martin, who started on the second row in sixth place, held off a late charge by pole-sitter Luca Marini, with Marini's VR46 Racing team mate Marco Bezzecchi coming in third.

"I feel super! Starting from sixth place maybe was not the best, it's definitely not the best for tomorrow's race," Martin said.

"But I was able to overtake on this track, where normally it's so difficult. Winning was tough, because Luca was coming up really fast in the end, but leading the championship at this point feels great.

"It's a dream. I'm so, so happy to be in the front, hopefully tomorrow we can finish the weekend in the same way."

The Spaniard turned on the aggression as soon as he shot off the mark, moving into fourth place before systematically and ruthlessly barrelling past Fabio Quartararo (Yamaha), Luca Marini and Maverick Vinales (Aprilia) into first.

Martin is now top of the riders' standings for the first time in his career with 328 points, with Bagnaia (321) in second and Bezzecchi (272) in third.

VR46 Racing also had cause to celebrate, with their two riders putting in heroic performances to claim podium finishes despite having both suffered collarbone injuries in recent weeks.

"Until Wednesday morning, I didn't even know whether I start or not," said Bezzecchi, who underwent surgery earlier this month on a broken collarbone.

"It's fantastic to be here. I was a bit lucky in the race but I was very fast. After the operation, the team did an unbelievable job. I really want to thank my trainer, my doctor and my team, because they made it possible for me to come here."

World champion Bagnaia, who started in 13th after failing to qualify from Q1, finished in eighth place behind team mate Enea Bastianini.

There was some consolation for Ducati, however, as they retained the constructor's championship on Saturday.

Honda's six-times MotoGP world champion Marc Marquez, who confirmed earlier this week that he will be joining Gresini Racing for the 2024 season, crashed out in the first lap.

Aprilia's Aleix Espargaro also crashed out early in the race, also taking out Brad Binder, though the Red Bull KTM rider was able to get back on his bike and end the race in 19th.

Iran Advance to Jordan Football Tournament Final



TEHRAN — Iran defeated Jordan 3-1 on Friday to secure their place at the 2023 Jordan football tournament final.

Sardar Azmoun opened the scoring for Team Melli just six minutes into the match at the Amman International Stadium and Mehdi Taremi made it 2-0 in the 28th minute.

Yazan Al Naimat pulled a goal back in the 74th minute. Ehsan Haddad could have leveled the score but failed to convert his penalty in the 90th minute.

Mehrdad Muhammadi scored

Iran's third goal in the added time.

Earlier in the day, Qatar defeated Iraq 6-5 in the penalty shootout.

Amir Ghalenoei's side will meet Qatar in the final on Tuesday, while Jordan faces Iraq in the third-place match.

Iran has participated in the tournament as part of the preparation for the 2023 AFC Asian Cup, where the team have been drawn along with the UAE, Hong Kong and Palestine in Group C.

Ronaldo Double Helps Portugal Qualify for Euros



Cristiano Ronaldo has scored 125 goals in 202 matches for Portugal

PORTO (Sky Spots) - Two goals from Cristiano Ronaldo helped Portugal seal qualification to next summer's European Championship with three games to spare as the hosts beat Slovakia in Group J in Porto.

After Goncalo Ramos' opener Ronaldo scored a penalty before David Hancko pulled a goal back in the 69th minute.

Portugal captain Ronaldo quickly restored his side's two-goal lead

with his 125th international goal.

Stanislav Lobotka added a late second for Slovakia but Portugal held on.

It means the hosts have won all seven of their Group J qualifying fixtures and join France, Belgium and hosts Germany in securing their spot at Euro 2024.

Slovakia remain second in Group J, two points ahead of third-placed Luxembourg who they face on Monday.

Australian Trio Nominated for Asian Football Confederation Awards

HONG KONG (Reuters) - Australian duo Sam Kerr and Mathew Leckie have been nominated for the Asian Football Confederation's Player of the Year awards in the women's and men's categories respectively, with national team boss Graham Arnold named on the shortlist for best coach.

Chelsea striker Kerr headlines a three-player list for the women's award that includes Zhang Linyan from China and Japan's Saki Kumagai, who won the award the last time it was presented in 2019.

Leckie, who scored in the 1-0 win over Denmark at last year's World Cup to take Australia into the knockout rounds, has been shortlisted for the men's award, alongside Qatar's Almoez Ali and Salem Al Dawsari from Saudi Arabia.

Arnold has been nominated



Australia's Mathew Leckie celebrates scoring their first goal.

with Japan's Hajime Moriyasu, who masterminded his side's wins over Germany and Spain at the World Cup, and Saad Al Shehri, the coach of Saudi Arabia's Asian title-winning under 23 side last year.

Europe-based trio Mehdi Taremi of Iran and Porto, Brighton

and Japan winger Kaoru Mitoma and current Bayern Munich defender Kim Min-jae have been nominated for the Asian International Player of the Year award.

The awards function, set for Doha on Oct. 31, will be the first since 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.