

Iranian Volleyballers Learn Fate at Champion League

TEHRAN – The draw for the 1st Asian Volleyball Confederation (AVC) Men’s and Women’s Volleyball Champions League has been completed, and the Iranian teams have learned their opponents.

The event will be the first edition of the newly-rebranded AVC Men’s and Women’s Volleyball Champions League, Tehran Times reported.

The men’s competition is scheduled to be held from 11 to 18 May in Japan.

Pools:

Pool A: Suntory Sunbirds Osaka (Japan), Queensland Pirates (Australia), FK Aktobe (Kazakhstan)

Pool B: Osaka Bluteon (Japan), Shanghai Bright (China), Cignal



HD Spikers (Philippines)

Pool C: Champions of Iran, Taichung Bank (Chinese Taipei), Na-

khon Ratchasima QminC (Thailand)

Pool D: Al Rayyan (Qatar), Sport

Center (Vietnam), champions of Bahrain

The women’s competition is scheduled to be held in the Philippines from 20 to 27 April.

Pools:

Pool A: Creamline (Philippines), Zhetysu (Kazakhstan), Al Naser Club (Jordan)

Pool B: Petro Gazz (Philippines), Taipower (Chinese Taipei), Hip Hing (Hong Kong)

Pool C: Baic Motor (China), VTV Binh Dien Long An (Vietnam), champions of Iran

Pool D: Nakhon Ratchasima QminC (Thailand), PLDT High Speed Hitters (Philippines), Australia Queensland Pirates (Australia)

Haliburton’s Stunning 4-Point Play Gives Pacers a 115-114 Win Over Bucks



Indiana Pacers guard Tyrese Haliburton (0) dunks while playing the Milwaukee Bucks.

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Tyrese Haliburton made a fade-away 3-pointer while being fouled and completed the four-point play with 3.4 seconds left, and the Indiana Pacers stunned Giannis Antetokounmpo and the Milwaukee Bucks 115-114 on Tuesday night.

Haliburton ran along the left sideline, took an inbounds pass from Andrew Nembhard and launched a 3 while falling out of bounds, absorbing contact by Antetokounmpo, and the ball found the net with Haliburton sprawled on the floor in the corner.

After Haliburton made the free throw for a one-point lead, Antetokounmpo raced up the court and got off a clean 3-point

try, but the shot fell short at the buzzer, and the Pacers drew even with the fourth-place Bucks in the Eastern Conference standings.

Haliburton, who had missed the last three games with a hip injury, finished with 14 points and 10 assists. Pascal Siakam led Indiana with 25 points and 12 rebounds, and Bennedict Mahturin added 17 points.

Brook Lopez scored a team-high 23 points and Antetokounmpo had 19 points and 17 rebounds.

Indiana led 103-93 with 8:08 remaining, but Milwaukee responded with a 10-0 run and tied it on a 3-pointer by Gary Trent Jr. Neither team led by more than five after that.

Motsepe Re-Elected as Leader of African Football



President of the Confederation of African Football Patrice Motsepe talks to media.

PARIS (Reuters) - South African mining magnate Patrice Motsepe was re-elected unopposed as Confederation of African Football president at the organisation’s congress in Cairo on Wednesday while four-time African Footballer of the Year Samuel Eto’o won a place on the executive committee.

The 63-year-old Motsepe, whose family trust owns one of the continent’s biggest clubs Mamelodi Sundowns, will serve a second four-year term after being first elected in 2021 when his candidature was also unopposed and heavily backed by FIFA president Gianni Infantino.

Eto’o, president of the Cameroon Football Federation, was elected unopposed as a representative for the central African region on the executive committee less than a week after winning an appeal to stand for the post.

He was excluded by CAF’s governance committee in January but appealed his case to the Court of Arbitration for Sport, who ruled in his favour.

Former World Cup footballer Eto’o had been twice banned last year.

In September, FIFA banned him from attending the national team’s matches for six months for violating disciplinary regulations, after

allegedly verbally abusing match officials at the Under-20 Women’s World Cup in Colombia.

Earlier in the year, CAF banned Eto’o after an inquiry into purported breaches of its ethical and integrity standards when he took up a role as ambassador for a betting company. The ban and a \$200,000 fine were later lifted on appeal.

There were five others elected unopposed with Mustapha Ishola Raji of Liberia retaining his seat for another four years, while Bestine Kazadi Ditabala (female representative from the Democratic Republic of Congo), Wallace Karia (Tanzania), Kurt Simeon-Okraku (Ghana) and Sadi Walid (Algeria) are new to the committee.

Elvis Chetty of the Seychelles lost his place when Feizal Sidat (Mozambique) and Samir Sobha of Mauritius were voted in to represent southern Africa on the CAF executive committee.

There was also a vote to decide the six African representatives on the FIFA Council with Hany Abo Rida of Egypt, a member since 2009, and Fouzi Lekjaa of Morocco retaining their places.

Kanizat Ibrahim (Comoros), Hamidou Djibrilla Hima (Niger), Ahmed Yahya (Mauritania) and Souleymane Waberi (Djibouti) were elected for the first time.

PSG Knock Liverpool Out of Champions League



PSG’s goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma saves a penalty from Liverpool’s Curtis Jones .

LIVERPOOL (Reuters) - Paris St Germain beat Liverpool 4-1 in a penalty shootout to advance to the Champions League quarterfinals after winning a rip-roaring last-16 second-leg match at Anfield 1-0 on Tuesday thanks to a goal from livewire Ousmane Dembele.

After the tie had finished 1-1 on aggregate, PSG goal-

keeper Gianluigi Donnarumma saved spot kicks from Darwin Nunez and Curtis Jones, while the visitors, who have never won the Champions League, converted all of their efforts.

Ligue 1 leaders PSG will meet either Aston Villa or Club Brugge in the quarters, with Villa taking a 3-1 lead into Wednesday’s second leg.

Dembele stunned the Anfield crowd with his 12th-minute goal against the run of play. Ibrahima Konate slid in to block Bradley Barcola’s effort but pushed the ball away from goalkeeper Alisson in the process, and Dembele needed only to knock it into an empty net.

The goal was the earliest Premier League-leading Liverpool had conceded at Anfield in the Champions League since September 2017 against Sevilla.

Arne Slot’s team played considerably better than a week earlier -- when they needed a last-gasp goal from substitute Harvey Elliott after the Parisians had dominated -- and Reds talisman Mohamed Salah had a shot blocked on the goal line by Nuno Mendes in the game’s first few minutes.

Donnarumma was forced into making an early diving save to keep out a shot from Konate, but both sides spurned chances in a nervy game that had fans on the edge of their seats.

Swiatek, Medvedev Book Spots in Indian Wells Quartersy

March 11 (Reuters) - Twice champion Iga Swiatek thrashed Czech Karolina Muchova 6-1 6-1 to reach the Indian Wells quarter-finals on Tuesday before men’s fifth seed Daniil Medvedev moved into the last eight with a 6-4 6-0 win over American Tommy Paul.

For Swiatek, victory continued her relentless march through the Californian desert tournament, where the Polish second seed has dropped only six games in her three matches.

In another late-starting match after several rain delays throughout the day, Medvedev needed only 12 minutes to claim the opening four games and recovered from a brief dip during the roller-coaster opening set to ease through.

A double break in the second set gave the Russian the momentum he needed to close out the victory and book a match-up with Arthur Fils, who got past Marcos Giron 6-2 2-6 6-3.

After waiting through a rain delay earlier, Swiatek took immediate hold of the momentum, sprinting through the first four games and not dropping a first-serve point



Holger Rune (DEN) hits a shot as he defeated Stefanos Tsitsipas (not pictured) in his fourth round match at the BNP Paribas Open at Indian Well Tennis Garden.

in the opening set.

Muchova, who enjoyed an inspired run to the U.S. Open semi-final last year after recovering from wrist surgery, was unable to find her level in the second set as the mistakes piled up.

“Sometimes matches can be pretty weird,” Swiatek said.

“It’s enough for one player to not feel perfect and the other to feel great. Then suddenly the difference is much bigger than it usually is.

“We practised last week and we had a pretty similar level. It’s tennis. Things like that can happen. But for sure

I used my opportunities and I used to my chances and I was pretty focused and composed.

“It’s not easy, but I can imagine that it looks like it.”

Swiatek could face a more stern test when she meets Olympic champion Zheng Qinwen of China, who beat Ukrainian Marta Kostyuk 6-3 6-2 to close out the night session on the main court.

Kostyuk’s compatriot Elina Svitolina had earlier stunned fourth seed Jessica Pegula 5-7 6-1 6-2 in a match that was stalled for three hours.

Svitolina, the 23rd seed, will

make her first quarter-final appearance in six years when she takes on Mirra Andreeva, who thumped 2023 champion Elena Rybakina 6-1 6-2 in a little over an hour.

Ninth seed Andreeva is on track for back-to-back Masters trophies after her run to the Dubai title.

Holger Rune, the 12th seed, secured a 6-4 6-4 victory over Stefanos Tsitsipas to end the Greek’s seven-match winning streak.

The Dane delivered the shot of the tournament to stave off a break point in the second set, producing an arcing ‘twener from behind the baseline, sending the ball to the opposite baseline that an outstretched Tsitsipas was unable to retrieve.

“I stayed very committed on my game plan and mentally I was very good. That made the difference, how composed I could start. Because Stef is back in shape I think it is fair to say. It was a cool battle,” said Rune.

Rune next meets Dutchman Tallon Griekspoor, who defeated Japanese qualifier Yosuke Watanuki 7-6(4) 6-1 earlier to reach his first Masters 1000 quarter-final.