

U-18 Women Volleyballers Defeat Kazakhstan in Asian Championship



TEHRAN – Iran defeated Kazakhstan 3-1 (25-13, 23-25, 25-16, 25-13) in the 15th Asian Women's U-18 Volleyball Championship on Saturday.

Iran had defeated the Philippines 3-0 in their opening match on Sunday in Pool B at the Ratchaburi Gymnasium in Ratchaburi, Thailand and lost to defending champion Japan 3-0, Chinese Taipei 3-0 and South Korea 3-0.

Iran will face winner of South Korea and Uzbekistan in the 5th-6th place on Sunday.

The top four teams will qualify for the FIVB Volleyball Girls' U-19 World Championship.

Report: Walter Mazzarri to Lead Persepolis



TEHRAN – Former Napoli coach Walter Mazzarri has reportedly been lined up for a new job with Iranian football club Persepolis.

The 62-year-old was on the short-list for the role and Sky Sport Italia claims that the decision has now been made, handing Mazzarri the reins.

He had been in Serie A and the Champions League only this season, with an ill-fated return to Napoli from November 2023 to February 2024.

The coach was sacked after six wins, three draws and eight defeats in all competitions on the

Partenopei bench.

This will be his second coaching role abroad, as he had 41 games at English club Watford in the 2016-17 campaign.

He has also coached Livorno, Reggina, Sampdoria, Napoli, Inter, Torino and Cagliari.

Persepolis FC was only recently crowned the Persian Gulf Pro League champion, but Brazilian coach Osmar Loss Vieira decided to return home after this victory.

Mazzarri becomes the second Italian coach in Iran, as for a brief period Andrea Stramaccioni was at the helm of Esteghlal in 2019.

UEFA Euro 2024

Austria See Off Poland



BERLIN - Christoph Baumgartner and Marko Arnautovic were on target in the second half to secure Austria's first three points with a 3-1 win over Poland while wasteful France couldn't score against uninspired Dutchmen in the second round of the Euro 2024 group stage on Friday.

Austria caught a fairy-tale start at Berlin Olympia stadium after Philipp Mwene's in-swinging cross found Gernot Trauner, who nodded home the opener with only nine minutes into the clash.

Poland was shocked whereas Aus-

tria dominated possession but still Poland restored parity against the flow of the game at the half hour mark when Krzysztof Piatek latched onto a rebound to beat goalkeeper Patrick Pentz.

In the closing stage of the first half, both teams missed chances to grab the lead as Marcel Sabitzer pulled wide from promising position in the 42nd minute before Pentz neutralized Piotr Zielinski's dangerous free kick on target.

After the restart, Austria gradually took over and was rewarded for their efforts midway through the second half as Alexander Prass' square pass allowed Baumgartner to slot home the 2-1 lead from the edge of the area.

Ralf Rangnick's boys were not done with the scoring as Arnautovic sealed the deal after converting a foul play penalty in the 78th minute.

"Everybody is extremely happy. There was a lot of pressure on us. We are relieved, but we know that this is only the start and there are big challenges ahead of us," said Austria midfielder Baumgartner.

Netherlands Draw With France



In the other Group D encounter, France and the Netherlands shared the spoils following a goalless draw.

Antoine Griezmann squandered two golden opportunities with just goalkeeper Bart Verbruggen to beat whereas Xavi Simons had a goal ruled out.

After the second round, the Netherlands lead Group D, followed by France (both 4 points), Austria (3 points) and already eliminated Poland (0 points).

In Group E, Ukraine returned to winning ways after coming from behind to beat Slovakia 2-1 as Ivan Schranz's second goal of the tournament wasn't enough.

Slovakia played a powerful first half but couldn't hold their narrow lead while Ukraine grew into the game.

Mykola Shaparenko levelled the scores early in the second half before Roman Yaremchuk utilized Shaparenko long ball to net into the empty goal after rounding Slovakia goalkeeper Martin Dubravka for the win.

Iran's U-21 Hockey Team Comes Seventh

TEHRAN – Iran's defeated Singapore 2-1 on Saturday to finish in seventh place in the Men's Junior AHF Cup 2024.

Iran lost to Chinese Taipei 8-0, Oman 2-1 and China 10-1 in Pool B and shared spoils in a goalless draw against Hong Kong and also

defeated Kazakhstan 4-2 and Singapore 2-1 in the tournament, held in Singapore.

The top five teams, namely Bangladesh, China, Chinese

Taipei, Thailand and Oman qualified for the 2024 Men's Hockey Junior Asia Cup.

Bangladesh is the defending champion.

Dressel Wins 50 Meters Free Splash, Dash to Set Up Paris Title Defense



Caeleb Dressel swims Friday, June 21, 2024, in the U.S. Olympic Team Swimming Trials men's 100 meter butterfly prelims at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis.

INDIANAPOLIS (Reuters) - Seven-time Olympic champion Caeleb Dressel earned a shot at defending his 50 meters freestyle title in Paris after powering home first in the event known as the splash and dash at the U.S. Olympic trials in Indianapolis on Friday.

Dressel, who missed out on the chance to defend his 100 meters free crown after a disappointing third-place finish, would not be denied in the

50, getting to the wall first in 21.41 seconds to the roaring approval of another large crowd at Lucas Oil Stadium, home of the NFL Indianapolis Colts.

Chris Guiliano, winner of the 100 free, will also race the 50 in Paris, snatching second from Matt King by 0.001 seconds.

Regan Smith added to her Paris workload capturing a third individual event the 200 backstroke in dominating

fashion, demolishing a field that included swimmers who had recorded six of top 10 times this year.

Smith, who blitzed to the 100 backstroke world record on Tuesday and then won the 200 butterfly on Thursday, made it three wins, getting home first unchallenged in a time of two minutes, 5.16 seconds, more than a second clear of second-place finisher Phoebe Bacon.

"It's night and day difference between 2021 (Tokyo Olympics) and now," said Smith, who won three medals in Tokyo but none of them gold. "I ran out of gas a bit at the end of that last race but it's been a great week for me."

In the last final of evening, Carson Foster, winner of the 400 IM, completed the individual medley double chasing down Shaine Casas over the final freestyle leg of the 200 IM to claim top spot in 1:55.65.

Casas was denied victory by 0.18 seconds, but the sec-

ond place was enough to him a ticket to Paris and his first Olympics.

Norris on Spanish Grand Prix Pole After 'Best Ever Lap'

BARCELONA (AFP) – McLaren's Lando Norris produced a spellbinding late lap to deprive Max Verstappen of pole for the Spanish Grand Prix in qualifying on Saturday.

Lewis Hamilton will start on the second row alongside his Mercedes teammate George Russell.

Verstappen looked sure to start Sunday's 10th round of the season from the front of the grid.

But in the last throw of the top-10 shoot-out Norris denied the Red Bull ace by a mere two hundredths of a second.

"Today was the perfect lap," said Norris after only his second career pole.

"My best lap by a long way, I knew I had to do something perfect, it was probably my best lap ever."

Norris produced his minute of magic after a "stressful" day when the McLaren hospitality unit caught fire before third prac-



Italy's Jannik Sinner.

HALLE (Reuters) - World number one Jannik Sinner reached the Halle Open semi-finals on Friday after a battling to a 6-2 6-7(1) 7-6(3) win over German Jan-Lennard Struff.

The 34-year-old Struff, who upset sixth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas in the last 16, challenged the Italian as he hit 18 aces and saved 16 of 18 break points in the two-and-a-half-hour contest.

"It was a very tough match," Sinner said after his third consecutive three-set win. "I had chances in the second set and chances

in the third, but I couldn't take them.

"I just tried to accept these kind of challenges. It was very tough mentally.

"I played a lot yesterday and today. Two hours on grass is a long time. I'll try to recover for tomorrow. Hopefully I'll show some good tennis."

Sinner, playing his first tournament atop the ATP world rankings, will face China's 42nd-ranked Zhang Zhizhen who edged Christopher Eubanks of the United States 6-4 4-6 7-5.



McLaren's Lando Norris celebrates pole in Spain.

tice earlier.

"I lost my shoes. It's all been a bit messy. I like to listen to my music loud beforehand, but didn't have that this time. But it's not the end of the world. I'm not going to complain about it."

Turning back to a vintage qualifying session, Norris, whose only other pole came in Russia in 2021,

reflected: "It's been a while since Sochi, all the way back then.

"Max seemed a bit stronger today, but we made some changes," added the Briton who won his maiden Grand Prix in May in Miami.

"I'm super happy to be on pole, it's going to be tough but we're here to win!"