

U-16 Girls Team Crowned West Asian Basketball Champions



TEHRAN - The Iranian girls' under-16 basketball team has secured its first-ever title in the West Asian Championship by defeating

Lebanon 41-38 in the final.

In addition to winning the West Asian Championship, the team also earned a spot in the U-16

Asia Cup, a milestone as it will be their debut appearance in that continental tournament.

In their final group-stage match

in July, the Iranian team lost to Lebanon 47-37.

They had previously won their group-stage games against Jordan and Syria.

The West Asian under-16 girls' championship was held in Lebanon, featuring the participation of teams from Iran, Jordan, Syria, and the host nation, Lebanon.

In recent years, Iran has been investing more in women's sports, creating national leagues, training academies, and youth teams, empowering young female athletes within its cultural and religious frameworks.

Iran's Women's national sports teams have participated in several regional and international tournaments in recent years and are gaining competitive strength.

Former Iranian Football Federation President Dariush Mostafavi Dies at 81

TEHARN - Dariush Mostafavi, a former president of the Iranian Football Federation, passed away at the age of 81.

A prominent figure in Iranian football, Mostafavi had a distinguished playing career with Persepolis, Esteghlal, and the national team.

Following the 1979 Islamic Revolution, he served as the federation's secretary general for several

years before taking over as president.

Under his leadership, Iran's national team qualified for the 1998 FIFA World Cup in France, the country's first appearance at the tournament since the Revolution.

Mostafavi was widely respected for his lifelong commitment to the development of Iranian football, both on and off the field.



Report: Esteghlal Eye Karim Ansarifard



TEHRAN - The Esteghlal football club have reportedly set their sights on signing Karim Ansarifard.

Last week, Esteghlal completed the signing of Persepolis forward Issa Alekasir but was compelled to cancel the deal due to fans' objec-

tions.

Now, media reports suggest that Esteghlal are planning to sign Aris forward Ansarifard.

The 35-year-old striker represented Iran from 2009 to 2024, scoring 30 goals in 104 appearances.

Tractor Goalkeeper Beiranvand Handed Four-Month Suspension

TEHRAN - The Appeals Committee of Iran's Football Federation has issued its final ruling in the contractual dispute between Persepolis FC and national team goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand.

Beiranvand, currently with Tractor FC, has been suspended for four months and fined 27.4 billion tomans (over \$300,000) for unilaterally terminating his contract with Persepolis last year.



The verdict comes more than 13 months after the initial com-

plaint was filed. Beiranvand's abrupt contract termination

sparked legal proceedings that have now ended with one of the most significant financial penalties imposed on a player in Iranian football history.

The suspension bars Beiranvand from participating in all official matches with Tractor FC during this period.

This decision could have a considerable impact on both his club and potential involvement with the national team in upcoming fixtures.

Uzbek Defender Eshmurodov on Sepahan's Radar

TEHRAN - Uzbekistan international center-back Umar Eshmurodov has been linked with a move to Iran's Sepahan football club.

The 32-year-old player currently plays in Nasaf.

Eshmurodov has been a mem-

ber of the Uzbekistan national football team since 2020.

Under the management of Moharram Navidkia, Sepahan will face Al Duhail in the 2025-26 AFC Champions League Elite Play-off.



U-19 Volleyballers Beat Finland 3-1



TEHRAN - Iran defeated Finland 3-1 (30-28, 21-25, 25-16, 25-20) to book a spot in the semifinals of the 2025 FIVB Volleyball Boys' U-19 World Championship at Yunnusobod Hall in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Finland showed heart early, pushing Iran to extra points in the first set and leveling the match in the second, but the Asian powerhouse took full control in the final two frames with strong net defense and consistent attacking. Amir Naderi Noreyni led Iran with 19 points, while Mohammad Amin Rahimi and Muhammad Nima Bateni added 15 and 14, respectively. Vikot Viljamaa scored 16 for Finland in the loss.

Poland and Spain will also lock horns in another semifinal stage match.

France also advanced to the final four after a 3-1 (25-22, 21-25, 32-30, 25-18) win over Italy in one of the most tightly contested matches of the day.

Both teams delivered high-quality volleyball, but France pulled ahead with 10 service aces, including seven from Andrej Jukanovic. He finished with 23 points, while Noa Dufflos Rossi added 23 more from the attack line. Italy's Manuel Zlatanov matched their output with 23 points, though his teammates struggled to match France's depth. Uzbekistan hosts the Championship from 24 July to 3 August in

Tashkent, with preparations supported by the FIVB Volleyball Empowerment program through 12 months of coaching support, event equipment, and three knowledge transfer programs.

The World Championship marks an important moment for Uzbekistan volleyball. The Empowerment program provides the foundation for the country's efforts to develop talent and strengthen its presence in international competition.

Bednarek, Jefferson-Wooden Win 100 Titles at U.S. Championships



Kenny Bednarek reacts after winning the 100m in 9.79 during the USATF Championships at Hayward Field.

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Kenny Bednarek stormed to the men's 100 meters title at the USA Track and Field Championships on Friday in a personal best time of 9.79, while Melissa Jefferson-Wooden clocked the joint fifth-fastest time in history to take the women's crown.

Paris Olympics 200 silver medalist Bednarek edged out Courtney Lindsey (9.82) and T'Mars McCallum (9.83) in Eugene, Oregon, with all three set to join defending champion Noah Lyles at the world championships in Tokyo in September.

Lyles had pulled out of the semis to focus on the 200.

"I would say it's about damn time," Bednarek said. "I've been second for a very long time. I always knew that I had the ability to win it but I just had to believe in myself. And this year I really started living up to my expectations."

Jefferson-Wooden clocked 10.65 in the women's 100, with Kayla White (10.84) and Aleia Hobbs (10.92) rounding out the top three. "I've been dreaming of days like this," Jefferson-Wooden said.

"And it's finally starting to come true.

"Right now, the sky's the limit. We're just going to keep working towards bigger and better things.

Jefferson-Wooden said she had grown so much since winning her first national title in 2022.

"I've learned a lot. I've made changes. I made sacrifices," the 24-year-old said.

"Being the U.S. champion today, even though I still hold 2022 really near and dear to my heart, being in this moment right now just makes me happy. I didn't lose sight of what I always wanted to become.

"I want to be the greatest to ever do it."

Reigning world champion Sha'Carri Richardson withdrew from the semifinals. Reports on Friday said she had been arrested for domestic violence at a Seattle airport four days before the start of the championships.

Reuters has contacted Port of Seattle Police Department, Richardson's agent and USA Track & Field for comment.

The meet runs from July 31 to August 3 at Hayward Field.