

U-18 Basketball Team Defeats Palestine in West Asia Opener



TEHRAN - Iran's U-18 boys' national basketball team on Tuesday kicked off their West Asia Championship campaign with a hard-fought victory over Palestine.

The young Iranian tall men secured a 97-87 win to secure their first points of the tournament.

Led by head coach Ali Towfigh, the 14-player roster includes Amir-Reza Azari, Alireza Rashidi, Muhammad-Yashar Kamal-Khaledi, Mani Manouchehri, Amir-Muhammad Jafarkhani, Kiasha Taheri, Soheil Soleimannejad, Ali Dorostkar, Muhammad-Saleh Pakgozar, Hossein Ranjbar, Mohammad Shamsi, Amir-Mehdi Pourshahsavari, Arya Abshirin, and Kianmehr Kouchaki.

Iran's upcoming schedule and results at the West Asia Championship are as follows:

Iran 97 - 87 Palestine

Wednesday, July 8: Iran vs. Iraq (14:00)

Thursday, July 9: Iran vs. Syria (14:00)

Friday, July 10: Iran vs. Jordan (20:00)

Saturday, July 11: Iran vs. Lebanon (14:00)

The U-18 Boys' West Asia Basketball Championship is being held in Jordan from July 7 to 11. The top teams from the tournament will book their tickets to the FIBA U-18 Asia Cup.

National Sitting Volleyball Targets World Championship in China

TEHRAN - The head coach of Iran's men's national sitting volleyball team stated that despite a complete lack of international warm-up matches over the past year, the team is fully determined to reach the finals at the World Championships in Hangzhou, China, to lock in an early qualification spot for the Los Angeles Paralympics.

Speaking on the competitive landscape ahead of the tournament, head coach Hadi Rezaei emphasized the high-caliber nature of the upcoming event. "The World Championships are naturally at an elite level because the top two teams secure their direct path to the Los Angeles Paralympics," Rezaei explained. "The world's premier powerhouses, including Egypt, Brazil, Bosnia, Germany, and Kazakhstan, will

be our primary rivals in this tournament."

Rezaei candidly addressed the preparation hurdles the team faced leading up to the competition. "While it is true that we have not had any quality international friendly or warm-up matches over the past year, our national athletes have pushed through highly intensive and productive training camps. We possess the necessary readiness to advance to the finals and secure that Paralympic spot."

The head coach pointed out a major bureaucratic setback that shifted the sport's global standings. "For over 35 years, Iran proudly held the undisputed world number-one ranking. However, due to recent administrative failures that resulted in our non-attendance at

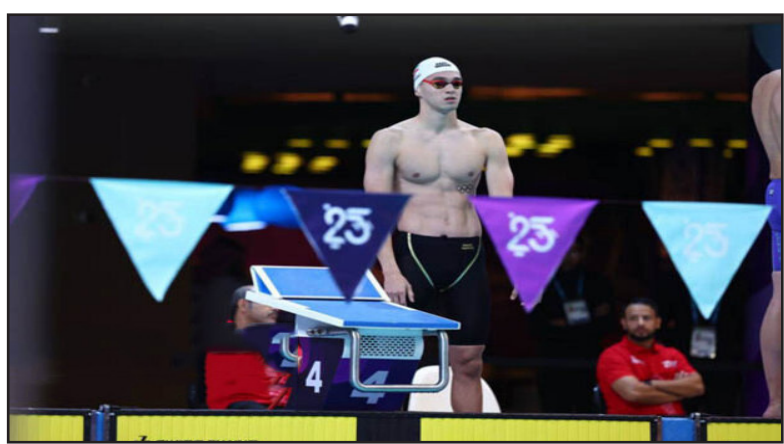


certain World and Asian championship tournaments, that top spot was officially handed over to Egypt. Now, our absolute priority is to capture the championship title and win the Los Angeles Paralympic quota."

When asked whether standing on the highest podium in Hangzhou would instantly restore Iran to its historic pole

position in the world rankings, Rezaei clarified the technical point system. "This tournament awards 1,000 ranking points. Due to our accumulated absence, even if we win the gold medal, we cannot immediately reclaim the world number-one spot—unless Egypt finishes third or lower in the final standings."

Samyar Abdoli Among Top Swimmers in European Open



TEHRAN - Samyar Abdoli, who is preparing to participate in the Asian Games, was among the top six swimmers in the European Open.

European Open.

Iranian national swimmer Samyar Abdoli finished in sixth place in the 50-meter freestyle at the European Swimming Trials hosted by Eindhoven, Netherlands.

Abdoli crossed the finish line in 22.57 seconds, placing sixth among the top swimmers in the competition.

This Iranian swimming legionnaire, who is currently in his training camp in Germany, is testing his technical abili-

ties by participating in prestigious European competitions on the path to a successful participation in the Nagoya Asian Games.

Abdoli entered the water in these competitions while his preparation program is being implemented with the support of the Aquatics Federation, and participating in international competitions is part of this swimmer's preparation for the most important upcoming event in Iranian swimming.

Haddadifar Names 27-Man Squad for Training Camp

TEHRAN - Iran's U-20 football team head coach Gaseem Haddadifar has named 27 players for the Turkish training camp.

The Iranian youth national football team's training camp for the AFC U-20 Cup qualifiers will be held from July 7 to 10, 2026, and the team will leave for Ankara, Turkey on Thursday, July 8 for the camp.

The 27-player roster includes: Muhammad Mehdi Janina, Amir Mehdi Maghsoudi, Muhammad Akbari, Abolfazl Khalilian, Ilia Hezegi, Ramin

Azizi, Abolfazl Tigh-Nour and Erfan Yousefzadeh, Ali Mastani and Morteza Farkhani, Mehdi Cheshm-Barah, Mhammad Parsa Khodadadi, Mhammad Ali Sahneh, Muhammad Reza Abbasi, Wassam Saki, Muhammad Amin Hosseini and Karrar Nemari, Mahan Alipour, Mehrdad Agha Mohammadi and Ali Jellokhani, Benjamin Alipour, Mahan Beheshti, Arian Moali, Abolfazl Kazemi, Erfan Khodadadian, Amir Muhammad Karimi and Amir Mehdi Yahyaei



Asian U-20 Wrestling Championships: Iran Claim Runners-Up Trophy in Thailand



TEHRAN - The Iranian U-20 Men's Freestyle Wrestling team concluded its continental campaign at the Asian Championships by securing the runners-up trophy, pocketing a total of 8 medals—3 gold, 2 silver, and 3 bronze medals.

In the final team standings, Kazakhstan claimed the top spot with 170 points, followed by Iran in second with 164 points, and India in third with 152 points. The remaining top ten slots were filled by Uzbekistan (121 points), Japan (104 points), Mongolia (90 points), Turkmenistan (89 points), Kyrgyzstan (82 points), China (75 points), and South Korea (35 points).

Standing atop the podium for Iran were Sobhan Esmi (79kg), Abolfazl Shamsipour (86kg), and Abolfazl Muhammadnejad (125kg), who all captured gold medals. Amirreza Teymorizad (65kg) and Muhammad Mehdi Mamivand (74kg) claimed silver, while Ali Asghar Soltani (61kg), Sajjad Pirdayeh (70kg), and Amirhossein Khakpa (92kg) earned bronze medals.

Reviewing the individual campaigns, Erfan Siri faced an early exit in the 57 kg category after losing 6-0 in the opening round to Kyrgyzstan's Temirbekov, who subsequently lost his next bout to a Mongolian opponent, thereby ending Siri's hopes in the repechage. In the 61 kg category, Ali Asghar Soltani opened with an 11-0 shutout against Sri Lanka's Jayasundera, followed by a commanding 13-3 victory over China's Anchao Lu to reach the semifinals. Despite battling an ankle injury, he competed but fell 10-0 to Kazakhstan's Bekas-sil Assambek, later rebounding sharply in the bronze medal match to crush Turkmenistan's Ashyrgulyev 11-1 for a third-place finish.

Iran's first silver came in the 65 kg division, where Amirreza Teymorizad launched his run with back-to-back 10-0 technical superiority wins over South Korea's Go and Tajikistan's Muhammadjan Saidov, before outpointing Japan's Eita Shimoda 10-4 in the semifinals; however, he lost 12-5 via a fall to Kyrgyzstan's Isa Isakov in the final. In the 70 kg class, Sajjad Pirdayeh fell 6-3 in his opening bout to Kazakhstan's Seidakhmet but

entered the repechage after the Kazakh wrestler reached the finals. Pirdayeh blanked China's Wang 10-0 and went on to defeat Japan's Sukegawa 5-2 for the bronze medal.

In the 74 kg category, Muhammad Mehdi Mamivand enjoyed a flawless run to the finals, securing consecutive technical superiority wins over Turkmenistan's Azimberdiev (10-0), China's Tao Shen (11-0), and Uzbekistan's Farukhbek Jumanazarov (10-0), though a highly contested 4-4 draw in the final saw him lose on criteria to Kazakhstan's Silbekov, walking away with silver. Meanwhile, Sobhan Esmi dominantly secured Iran's first gold in the 79 kg division by dispatching Japan's Mizusaki (10-0) and Mongolia's Javkhlinkhoo (10-0), before defeating Turkmenistan's Watan Annamyradov 12-1 in the semifinals and outperforming India's Saurabh Yadav 15-10 in a high-scoring gold medal match.

The gold rush continued in the 86 kg class as Abolfazl Shamsipour started strong by edging out India's Dalal 3-1, followed by a 12-2 victory over Safoev of Kyrgyzstan. After winning a 6-5 semifinal thriller against Askhab Khajiyev of Kazakhstan, Shamsipour secured the gold medal by defeating Turkmenistan's Alp Arslan Begenjov 9-2 in the final. In the 92 kg division, Amirhossein Khakpa received a first-round bye and shut out India's Nikhil 10-0. He suffered a narrow 4-2 defeat to Turkmenistan's Dovletgeldi Myradov in the semifinals but bounced back brilliantly in the third-place match, defeating China's Bi Erdihan Erlan 10-0 for the bronze.

The remaining heavyweights saw mixed fortunes; in the 97 kg category, Danial Tavakoli dropped a close 8-5 decision to India's Lucky in the first round and was eliminated after the Indian wrestler lost his subsequent match to a Chinese opponent. Finally, in the 125 kg heavyweight class, Abolfazl Muhammadnejad secured Iran's third gold after a first-round bye, shutting out Mongolia's Narantulga Dharma-bazar 10-0 and crushing Kazakhstan's Reza Izakhar 12-2 in the semifinals, before executing a disciplined tactical performance to defeat India's Ronak 3-0 to capture the heavyweight title.