Faraji Secures Historic World Championships Bronze for Iran



TEHRAN– **Iran's Benyamin Faraji and his Kazakh partner, Alan Kurmangaliyev, have secured a historic bronze medal in the doubles event at the World Youth Table Tennis Championships, marking the first time an Iranian player has reached the podium in this category at the competition.**

Their campaign came to an end in the semifinals after they suffered a 3–0 defeat to South Korea. The Korean pair took the first two games 11-6 before wrapping up the match with an 11-5 win in the third to advance to the final.

Before reaching the last four, Faraji and Kurmangaliyev had beaten their counterparts from India and Poland in two hard-fought matches, winning both 3-2.

Their victories secured them a place among the tournament's top four pairs and guaranteed them a bronze medal.

China also advanced to the final after overcoming France in the other semifinal, setting up a title clash with South Korea.

The historic medal represents Iran's maiden podium finish in the doubles competition at the World Youth Table Tennis Championships.

The Iranian youth team was coached by Miad Makif, head coach of the national youth squad, while Ali Haddadgar accompanied the delegation as its head.

The ITTF World Youth Championships 2026 are being held at Ata Sporları Merkezi in Istanbul, Turkey, from November 21 to 28.

Iranian Tennis Player Withdraws From Match Against Israeli Opponent



TEHRAN — **Ali Yazdani, an Iranian tennis player, withdrew from the men's doubles quarterfinals of the ITF World Tennis Tour in Antalya, Türkiye, to avoid playing an opponent from the Israeli regime.**

Yazdani, who partnered with Russian player Egor Khotchenkov, had reached the quarterfinals on Thursday and was considered among the leading contenders for the doubles title following the pair's strong performances earlier in the competition.

However, after being scheduled to face an Austrian-Israeli pair in the quarterfinals on Friday, Yazdani withdrew from the match, resulting in the duo's exit from the tournament.

Para-Taekwondo Grand Prix: Iranian Athletes Claim Medals

TEHRAN - **Iran's Para-Taekwondo athletes have concluded their participation in the Para-Taekwondo Grand Prix finals by securing one gold, one silver, and one bronze medal in Astana, Kazakhstan.**



In the -70kg category, Amir Muhammad Haghighat-Shenas defeated Alikulov from Uzbekistan in two consecutive rounds during the quarterfinals won a gold medal. He then advanced to the final by defeating Delfino from Brazil in the semi-finals. In Final bout, he defeated Garcia Lopez from Mexico with scores of 6–2 and 18–5 to claim the gold medal.

In the -57kg category, Maryam Abdollahpour—much like in the World Championship final—defeated Fernandez Cardoso from Brazil in two rounds. She subsequently secured a 2–1 victory over Li Yujie from China to advance to the final match. Abdollahpour, who had won the world championship gold just last week, was forced to withdraw from the remainder of the competition due to an injury sustained from a foul by his Chinese opponent, ultimately settling for the silver medal.

Zahra Rahimi, Iran's other representative in this weight class, first defeated Turkey's Gamze Özcan in two rounds, but subsequently lost 2–0 to Brazil's Machado in the semifinals. She then faced China's Li Yuji in the bronze medal match.

Beach Soccer Team Advances Into Asian Cup Final



TEHRAN – **Iran national beach soccer team demolished Lebanon 10-2 in the semi-finals of the AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup Thailand 2026 on Friday to face Japan in the final.**

Four-time champions Iran will meet Japan who defeated Oman 6-1 on Friday in the semifinal stage to reach the final.

Mahdi Shirmuhammadei set the tone for Iran in the second minute, sweeping the ball wide past the left post then heading over two minutes later. At the other end, captain Mohammad Merhi saw his shot fly over the bar off a corner as Lebanon soaked up the pressure to move upwards, Davoud Baghdadabadi found Iran's opener in the sixth minute, directing Ali Nazem's lob with a confident overhead kick from close range past Ali Hallal.

Muhammadali Mokhtari went around Hallal in the ninth minute to put the ball into an empty net and Muhammad Masoumizadeh added another a minute later after intercepting a poor goal kick by Hallal and firing between the keeper's legs, the-afc.com reported.

Goal number four dropped when Nazem's attempt hit his opposing number Sameh Jalal in the chest and bounced in, Ali Mirshekari then headed in off Nazem's cross before Mahmoud Matar bundled the ball into his own net after fumbling Movahed Muhammadpour's bicycle kick.

Lebanon pulled one back in the 16th minute, Haitham Fattal picking up Matar's pass to place the ball beyond a lunging Mohammed Dastan, but that was as far as they got, Masoumizadeh finding the net again by snatching Mohamad Ossman's poor back pass to second-choice keeper Mohamed Choker and slotting home.

Reza Dayeri secured goal number eight with a superb volley that landed in the bottom left corner in the 23rd minute, Dastan then tipping over his counterpart Choker' s goal kick five minutes later to prevent Lebanon adding a second. The Central Asian side wrapped up their emphatic win with Masoumizadeh securing his hat-trick in the 31st minute and a free-kick by Mohammadpour (35th) before Dastan mishandled Hallal's kick to gift Lebanon a second consolation goal.

Vafaei Advances to Main Draw of UK Championship Snooker Qualifiers



TEHRAN - **Hussein Vafaei defeated his Belgian opponent in the fourth round of the UK Championship snooker qualifiers, securing his spot in the tournament's main draw.**

The UK Championship snooker qualifiers continued in England with the matches of the fourth round.

Vafaei faced Belgian player Ben Mertens, defeating him to advance through this round on Thursday.

The Iranian professional snooker player won the match 6–3, earning a place in the main draw—a field of 32 competitors—where he is set to face Judd Trump.

Due to his world ranking, the Iranian representative was exempted from the first two rounds of the UK Championship qualifiers, beginning his campaign in the third round. In that round, Vafaei defeated Ishpreet Singh Chadha of India with a score of 6–5.

Vafaei previously delivered an impressive performance at the 2023 UK Championship, where he managed to reach the semi-finals.

Basketballers Fail to Beat Australia in FIBA World Cup Qualifier

TEHRAN – Iran's basketball team fall short against Australia in the 2027 FIBA World Cup qualifier on Friday.

Max Mackinnon poured in 30 points as Australia officially punched its ticket to next year's Fiba Basketball World Cup in Qatar with an 84-67 win over a gritty Iran.

Mackinnon, the Brisbane Bullets sharpshooter, buried 8-of-10 three-pointers at Karisma Arena in Seremban, Malaysia on Friday night.

Mackinnon scored 21 points after halftime and was the clear difference between the teams in their World Cup Asian Qualifier.

Australia moved to a 9-0 record in Group E with relative comfort, despite not being at its sizzling best.

Iran's forwards Muhammad Amini and Matin Aghajanpour had 15 points each for Iran.

Amini also pinched six steals, as the Boomers coughed up 17 turnovers to Iran's six, but won the rebound count 44-28.

Australia were sluggish out of the blocks, trailing 10-12 early, before finishing the opening quarter strongly, Dan Grida's baseline dunk giving them an 18-14 lead.



Iran won the final term 23-21 as Australia became sloppy down the stretch, but the result was never in doubt.