

Iran victorious over China in 2023 Volleyball Nations League

Sports Desk

Iran emerged victorious over China in the 2023 FIVB Volleyball Men's Nations League (VNL) Week 1 that was held in Japan.

In the first set, China beat Iran 25-23 but the Iranian players defeated the Chinese squad 25-15 in the second set, according to IRNA. Behrouz Atefi's men beat the rival 25-20 in the third set of the match.

Iranian volleyballers had their best performance in the fourth set, crushing Chinese players with a 25-14 win.

Iran started the prestigious campaign with a 3-0 loss against hosts Japan in Nagoya but delivered a great performance against Poland in its second match, though being defeated 3-2 against the world's No.1.

A sum of 16 teams have qualified for the fifth edition of the 2023 FIVB Volleyball Men's Nations League, with Tokyo 2020 gold medalists France trying to defend their title following a thrilling five-set win against the United States in Bologna, Italy, last summer.

The favorites to lift the trophy of the annual men's international volleyball tournament also include 2021 winners Brazil, two-time runners-up USA (2019, 2022), reigning world and



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European champions Italy, and Poland, the current top-ranked team in the world.

After winning the 2022 Challenger Cup, Cuba has replaced Australia to become the latest addition to the tournament. Alongside Bulgaria, Canada, People's Republic of China, the Neth-

erlands and Slovenia, they are part of the six nations that could be relegated, unlike the remaining ten "core" teams.

Since the introduction of the VNL in 2018, Russia have won the first two editions after defeating France and the United States in the

final. In 2020, the tournament didn't take place due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and when it resumed in 2021, Brazil and France secured the last two titles.

Gdańsk, Poland, will host the final round of the competition from July 6 to

23. The preliminary pool phase, consisting of 12 matches over three different weeks, is planned to be held in six cities: Ottawa (Canada), Nagoya (Japan), Rotterdam (the Netherlands), Orleans (France), Anaheim (US) and Pasay City (Philippines).

Djokovic to face Ruud in French Open final



REUTERS - Novak Djokovic took a giant leap towards claiming a men's record 23rd Grand Slam trophy with a 6-3 5-7 6-1 6-1 French Open semi-final victory over an ailing Carlos Alcaraz in a clash of titans that ended in anticlimactic fashion on Friday.

In today's title clash, the world number three will face rampant fourth seed Casper Ruud who stormed into the final for a second year running by swatting aside German 22nd seed Alexander Zverev 6-3 6-4 6-0 in a battle of big-hitters.

Nuggets move within a win of first NBA title



Caption (Aron Gordon of the Denver Nuggets dunks in the third quarter of the Nuggets' victory over the Miami Heat in game four of the NBA Finals.)

AFP - The Denver Nuggets moved within one win of their first NBA title on Friday, beating Miami 108-95 to take a 3-1 lead in the best-of-seven championship series.

Aaron Gordon starred for Denver, putting up 27 points. Nikola Jokic added 23 for the Nuggets, who can secure the championship with a home victory in game five on Monday.

Messi in Beijing leading Argentina against Australia

CNBC - Argentine superstar Lionel Messi arrived in Beijing on Saturday for a friendly match before leaving a storied European career to join Major League Soccer side Inter Miami as a free agent.

His arrival was announced in a post on the organizing International Football Invitation's official Weibo social media site with a video of players stepping off a plane, ahead of Thursday's Argentina-Australia match in the Chinese capital's recently rebuilt Workers' Stadium.



Iranian taekwondo star Nahid Kiani clinches silver in Rome Grand Prix

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Making her mark in the international arena, Iranian taekwondo athlete Nahid Kiani defeated two-time Olympic gold medalist Jade Jones from England, securing the silver medal in the Rome Grand Prix.

Kiani continued to make headlines in the world of martial arts as she recently captured a world gold medal in the -57 kg weight category, and added another feather to her cap by bagging the silver medal at the highly competitive Rome Grand Prix.

Journey to silver

After a stellar performance last week, Kiani returned to the dohyang to face off against a formidable opponent - Jade Jones of England.

Jones, a seasoned athlete, holds two Olympic gold medals under her belt. The final match in the Rome Grand Prix was an opportunity for both women to showcase their skills and dedication to the sport.

Undeterred by her competitor's impressive resume, Kiani showcased a brilliant display of strategic maneuvers and high-speed kicks.

She managed to outclass Jones in just two rounds, demonstrating her superior technical and strategic skills. Kiani's triumph over Jones attests to her strong will and the rigorous training she has undergone.

The three-day Roma 2023 World Taekwondo Grand Prix (Rome Grand Prix) which has a qualification phase for the Olympics kicked off in Italy on Friday.

Iran's Palizban wins gold at 2023 Asia Archery Cup



Sports Desk

Iranian archer Mohammad-Saleh Palizban showcased his exceptional skills and clinched the coveted gold medal, emerging triumphant at stage 3 of the prestigious Singapore 2023 Asia Cup. Demonstrating his unwavering expertise, Pal-

izban outshone his Malaysian rival, securing a narrow victory of 148-147 in the gripping men's compound final, thus claiming the illustrious gold medal at the esteemed event.

Palizban's remarkable journey to the final was paved with resounding success. In the semi-final clash, he displayed unmatched precision and technique, besting his Indian opponent with a notable score of 150-146 in the compound event, solidifying his place in the final showdown.

In this riveting display of archery prowess, Palizban's exceptional performance captivated spectators, firmly establishing him as a force to be reckoned with on the international stage.

The grand stage for this awe-inspiring competition, the 2023 Asia Archery Cup stage 3, unfolded at the Bukit Gombak ActiveSG Stadium in Singapore, spanning the exhilarating period from June 5th to June 10th.

Iran surge to 61st in FIFA Women's World Ranking

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In the latest release of the FIFA Women's World Ranking, Iran made a significant ascent, surging six places and securing the 61st position.

Meanwhile, the United States maintained their dominance at the summit, unyielding to any changes. Demonstrating their prowess, Australia remained unrivaled as the premier Asian team, firmly holding their ground at the impressive 10th spot.

Japan, an indomitable force in the realm of women's football, remained steadfast at the 11th position, asserting their status as Asia's second-highest-ranked team. On the other hand, China experienced a slight setback, dropping down a notch to claim the 14th spot.

South Korea, at the commendable 17th position, preserved their standing, while Vietnam, poised to embark on their inaugural FIFA Women's World Cup journey, exhibited progress by ascending

onespot to the 32nd rank.

Emerging as a rising force in the Asian women's football landscape, the Philippines made substantial strides, advancing three places to claim their highest-ever position at 46th in the ranking. Notably, they joined the prestigious group of six Asian teams poised to compete in the FIFA Women's World Cup. Completing the top 10 rankings for Asia were Chinese Taipei at the 37th spot, Thailand at 44th, Myanmar at 47th, and Uzbekistan at 50th.