

Iran beats Netherlands for historic world wheelchair basketball bronze



● IWBF

Sports Desk

Iran grabbed a historic bronze medal at the IWBF Wheelchair Basketball World Championships in Dubai, the UAE, thanks to a 72-54 victory over the Netherlands on Tuesday. Morteza Abedi contributed 19 points, 18 rebounds, and three assists to a maiden medal for Iran at the competition, while Omid Hadi-Azhar also finished on 19 points, while registering eight rebounds and 11 assists. Hakim Mansouri and Mohammad-Hassan Sayyari chipped in 11 points apiece for the Asian side, which fell to a 64-44 defeat against the Great Britain in the semifinals. Dutchman Mendel Op Den Orth scored a game-high 24 points, followed by teammate Robin Poggenwisch, who had 21 points, as well as eight rebounds and nine assists. Iran got off to a flying start to the game in Dubai WTC Court 1 – winning the first period 25-15 – and never looked back through the

contest as Mohammadreza Dastyar's men went into halftime with a 42-31 lead. Iran, which had been beaten by Australia in the third-place match in the previous edition in 2018, increased the gap to 16 points in the third quarter, before a 14-12 triumph in the final period sealed the historic triumph for the country. Dastyar's team had a slow start to its campaign in Dubai and suffered back-to-back defeats against Team GB (90-59) and USA (82-74) – the two men's finalists on Tuesday – before an 83-41 win against Iraq saw the Iranians progress to the knockout phase as the third team in Group D. Iran beat France 89-79 in the last-16 round and then came out on top against Germany with a 70-68 scoreline for a place in the semifinals. The 14th edition of the quadrennial event was initially scheduled for November last year but was moved to the new date to avoid clashing with the FIFA World Cup in Qatar.

Injured Qassempour a doubt for Wrestling World Championships

Sports Desk

Iranian freestyle wrestler Kamran Qassempour will face a race against time to be fit for September's Wrestling World Championships after limping off with a groin injury during a training session on Monday. The Iranian, who has been the dominant force of the 92kg weight class for the past two years with back-to-back world golds, will also miss the upcoming Ranking Series event – starting July 13 in Budapest. This was the same injury that forced Qassempour out of the Kaba Uulu Kozhomkul & Raatbek Sanatbaev Ranking Series tournament in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, earlier in June. Mohsen Kaveh, the head of the Iranian national teams, said an MRI scan will determine the timeline for Qassempour's return "within the coming days", adding: "We'll do all we can to make sure he will be a part of the team at World Championships." Kaveh named Mobin Azimi and Amirhossein Firouzpour as the two alternatives for the

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Iranian singlet at the World Championships in Belgrade in case Qassempour does not recover in time for the event.

Azimi stole the headlines in May's Takhti Cup in Urmia, northwest Iran, by marching to the 92kg gold – thanks to a victory over Mohammad-Javad Ebrahimi in the final – while Firouzpour – an Asian champion and world U23 gold medalist in 2022 – was part of the Iranian team that won the silver in last December's FS World Cup in the United States.

The two Iranians will join the six-man squad for the Ranking Series tournament in the Hungarian capital, as the wrestlers with the best result in each of the four weight divisions will be handed a berth at the World Championships.

Ahmad Mohammad-Javan and Milad Valizadeh will represent Iran in the 57kg category in Budapest, with Amir-Mohammad Yazdani – a world silver winner in 2021 – and Mohammad Bakhshi taking part in the 72kg contests.

Mohammad Nokhodi and Ali Savadkouhi will also decide who will be the Iranian 79kg wrestler in Belgrade.

Nokhodi had to settle for a silver in the last two editions of the World Championships after successive defeats against legendary American Jordan Burroughs, before Savadkouhi claimed a first victory in 15 attempts for the Iranian wrestlers against the seven-time world and Olympic champion at the FS World Cup.

Reza Atri (61kg) – a world silver winner last year – reigning world champion Rahman Amouzad (65kg), Younes Emami (74kg), eight-time world and Olympic medalist Hassan Yazdani (86kg), Mojtaba Goleij (97kg), and Amirhossein Zare' (125kg) – a Tokyo Olympic bronze winner and world champion in 2021, who took the bronze last year – have already secured their spots in the World Championships.

Iran settles for Asian team saber silver



● IRNA

Sports Desk

Iran bagged the silver medal of the men's team saber contests at the Asian Fencing Championships in Wuxi, China, on Tuesday.

Having beaten Japan in the semifinals earlier in the day, the Iranian four-man team – comprising Farzad Baher, Mohammad Fotouhi, Ali Pakdaman, and Mohammad Rahbari – suffered a 45-28 defeat against reigning world and Olympic champion South Korea in the final showpiece.

Tokyo Olympic bronze medalist Kim Jung-hwan was joined by Gu Bon-gil, Kim Jun-ho, and

Oh Sang-uk in the South Korean team.

China and Japan took the joint bronze medals.

This was a fourth Asian silver in five years for the Iranian saber team, which had to share the third podium with Hong Kong last year in Seoul.

Tuesday's result came after Pakdaman and Rahbari had won the individual gold and bronze medals in Wuxi respectively. Pakdaman edged Kim Jun-ho – a world bronze winner in 2018 – 15-14 in a thrilling final.

Beaten by the South Korean in the last-four contest, Rahbari stood alongside Low Ho Tin of Hong Kong on the third podium.

Tuesday's silver – fourth in five years for the country – came after Ali Pakdaman had won the individual saber gold in Wuxi, while Mohammad Rahbari took the joint bronze.