

Arsenal removed 'mental block' with City win, claims Ramsdale



Arsenal keeper Aaron Ramsdale saves from Rodri to help Arsenal beat Manchester City in the shootout and win the Community Shield at the Wembley Stadium, London, Britain, on August 6, 2023.

● MICHAEL REGAN/
GETTY IMAGES

THE GUARDIAN – Aaron Ramsdale hailed the removal of a “mental block” after Arsenal ended their long losing run against Manchester City with a shootout win in the Community Shield. Arsenal had lost all three meetings with last season’s title rivals but snatched victory from the jaws of defeat when Leandro Trossard cancelled out Cole Palmer’s goal in the 11th minute of added time. Ramsdale was pivotal to their 4-1 shootout win, saving from Rodri, and said the psychological barrier that has dogged them has now disappeared.

“For us it’s a statement,” he said. “It’s a marker to know we can go and beat Man City in a big game when it matters. I’m not sure what it will be like this season but that mental block is gone. We’re ready to push on now.” Trossard’s strike was heavily deflected off Manuel Akanji but Ramsdale embraced the stroke of fortune. “We’ve been working hard for two years,” he told ITV. “We haven’t had luck, which was probably needed in previous seasons. We’ve stuck at it. It’s worked today.”

Mikel Arteta welcomed Ramsdale’s sentiment. “If Aaron feels it this way, great,” he said. “It’s [about] what the players feel when they are there and they are convinced they can beat any team. We knew the challenge, especially because of their maturity and how often they play finals, but today we showed a real resilience and determination to win and fight the game.” Pep Guardiola expressed dissatisfaction about the amount of time added to the 90 minutes. Trossard was afforded his scoring opportunity because of treatment given to Thomas Partey and Kyle Walker for a clash of heads during the additional period. Guardiola felt the eight minutes initially signalled was excessive and questioned the new rules that seek to offset time-wasting by adding lost minutes to the end of a half. “We have to get used to it,” he said. “I had the feeling that there didn’t happen much to [merit] eight minutes but it’s a question for the international board [IFAB]. Now games will be 100 minutes, that’s for sure. And if there are seven goals, tomorrow morning I’m still here playing.”

Wrestling U17 Worlds: Freestyle crown seals title double for Iran



Iran’s Ahoura Khateri celebrates his 11-0 victory over Armenian Gor Buniatyan in the freestyle 45kg final at the Wrestling U17 World Championships in Istanbul, Turkey, on August 6, 2023.

● UWW



Sport Desk

A total of six medals, including a couple of golds, across 10 weight classes saw Iran claim the freestyle title at the Wrestling U17 World Championships – days after the country had been crowned the Greco-Roman champion in Istanbul, Turkey.

Having missed out on a podium finish in the previous two editions of the freestyle event, Iran topped the table with 156 points – 30 clear of last year’s champion USA – with Japan in third on 106 points.

Ahoura Khateri was in a league of his own in the 45kg weight division as he picked up where he had left off in the Asian U17 Championships in June, which saw the Iranian prodigy storm to the gold without conceding a single point.

Khateri again rounded off a dominant run in Istanbul in emphatic fashion, out-muscling Armenia’s Gor Buniatyan 11-0 in the final showpiece.

The young gun secured a leg lace and rolled the Armenian out of bounds to open the scoring before taking a 6-0 lead into the break.

Khateri then secured wrist control, ducked under and grabbed the waistlock to score in the second period and walk away with the ultimate prize.

Khateri’s triumph proved to be the sole victory for Iran in three gold medal show-downs on the final day of the competitions.

Sajjad Pirdayeh defeated opponents from the Czech Republic, Puerto Rico, Kyrgyzstan, and Azerbaijan for a place in the 60kg final, only to suffer a 4-1 defeat against Akito Maehara of Japan – a second major silver for the Iranian after his runner-up finish in the Asian Championships.

Abolfazl Hosseini also had to settle for a silver medal in the 71kg contests.

Stepping into the event as the Asian champion, Hosseini eased passed the Japanese and Turkmenistan’s

wrestlers before running riot against Russian Islam Kazharov, participating as a neutral athlete, in the semi-finals.

However, a 4-1 setback against American Ladarion Lockett brought Hosseini’s campaign to a disappointing end.

Tohid Nouri, meanwhile, capped the 92kg event with a consolation bronze as he bounced back from an 11-0 defeat against Georgian Sandro Kurashvili in the last-eight round to outpower Genki Hoki of Japan 12-2 and share the third podium with Kazakhstan’s Samir Dursunov.

Kurashvili went on to come out victorious (10-0) against the host’s Eyyup Cetin for the gold.

Sunday’s results came a day after the Iranians had bagged a gold and a bronze medal in the freestyle contests.

Also a reigning Asian gold medalist, Sina Khalili made a quick work of Russian Magomed Alibakharchiev

in the 65kg final, using his speed and strength for successive takedowns en route to a 10-0 victory.

Sam Sayyar recovered from a semifinal loss to American Paul Kenny to defeat Turkmenistan’s Azymbardi Ashyrgulyyev 10-0 and stand on the third podium of the 48kg class – alongside Joseph Bachmann of Puerto Rico – while Kenny edged Japanese Yamato Furusawa for the coveted gold.

Four Iranians left Istanbul empty-handed but their results played a decisive role in the overall standings.

Amir-Mohammad Navazi (51kg) and Amir-Reza Teymourizad (55kg) finished fifth in their respective classes, earning 10 points apiece for the country, while seventh places for Abolfazl Rahmani (80kg) and Abolfazl Mohammadnejad (110kg) added another 16 points to the squad’s tally.

The freestyle crown followed a second successive Greco-Roman title for Iran in the U17 Worlds.

The Iranian squad collected one gold and silver apiece as well as double bronze medals to gather 113 points and beat Azerbaijan, which won two golds, to the winner’s trophy by five, while Georgia stood third with 96 points.

Payam Ahmadi defeated Asian champion Shakhzod Ruziokhunov of Uzbekistan 4-0 to claim the 48kg gold, while Ahmadreza Mohammadian took the 71kg silver after a 6-5 loss to Greek wrestler Arionas Kollitopoulos.

Alireza Amiri (45kg) and Amirhossein Abdevali (110kg) added double bronzes to Iran’s medal haul in Istanbul.

The team of the Individual Neutral Athletes, represented by the Russian wrestlers, won two golds, three silvers, and five bronzes in the Greco-Roman competitions – coupled with one gold, one silver, and five bronzes in the freestyle contests – though their results was null and void in the medals table.

Mbappe barred from PSG’s first team training amid contract stand-off

BBC – Kylian Mbappe did not train with the Paris St-Germain first-team squad when they stepped up preparations on Monday for the start of the Ligue 1 season.

Mbappe has been in a contract stand-off with PSG amid a desire to join Real Madrid.

The club’s all-time leading goalscorer is refusing to sign a year’s extension to his contract which ends next summer.

PSG therefore want to sell the France forward now and secure a transfer fee rather than let him go for nothing.

As a result, Mbappe was left

out of PSG’s touring squad for their pre-season trip to Asia.

He subsequently refused to meet with representatives of Al-Hilal, who made a world record offer to bring him to the Saudi Pro League.

PSG begin their French title defence at home to Lorient on Saturday and it is understood Mbappe will train with the ‘loft’ group rather than the ‘A’ training group, which is players who could feature for the first team.

PSG sources say their most recent attempt to broker a solution to the situation was to offer Mbappe a guaranteed sale clause in

his contract for the end of this season. This offer was rejected.

After years of underachievement at Champions League level with their ‘galactico’ model of signing superstar players, PSG are now going down a different path and are understood to be close to completing a deal for Benfica’s Goncalo Ramos. The 22-year-old scored a hat-trick for Portugal at last year’s World Cup in Qatar and has attracted interest from numerous top European clubs.

PSG are expected to pay 80m euros (£69m) for the forward.



● GONZALO FUENTES/REUTERS