

Iran to go all out for GR glory in Asian Games: Report



Mohammadreza Geraii is expected to be part of the Iranian Greco-Roman squad at the Hangzhou Asian Games.

● iwjir

Sport Desk

The Iranian Wrestling Federation has picked the Greco-Roman team for the upcoming Asian Games in Hangzhou, China, ISNA reported.

For four members of the team the wrestling event in the Far East – starting October 4 – will come 10 days after their campaigns at the World Championships conclude in Belgrade, Serbia, but the Iranian federation has still decided to take a full-strength squad to the Games.

The Tokyo Olympic champion, Mohammadreza Geraii, who will be chasing a third successive world medal in the Serbian capital, is willing to represent the country in the 67kg weight class in Hangzhou, ISNA wrote, though he could be replaced by Saeed Esmaeili due to the tough weight loss process in the buildup to the Games.

Superheavyweight wrestler Amin Mirzazadeh, looking to improve on last year's world final defeat, will be the favorite to walk away with the ultimate prize in the 130kg contests in Hangzhou, while Mohammad-Hadi Saravi, the Iranian 97kg contestant in the Wrestling Worlds, will hope to add the Games gold to his impressive medal haul, which includes the Tokyo Olympic bronze and the 2021 world gold in Oslo.

Also an Iranian representative in Belgrade, Nasser Alizadeh will take part in the 87kg competitions on the back of three successive gold-winning campaigns at the Asian Championships – the last of which came in April.

Meysam Dalkhani – a world gold medalist in 2021 – made his return from a long-time injury to win the gold in February's Ranking Series event in Alexandria, Egypt, and despite missing out on a place in the Iranian team in Belgrade, will be eyeing the coveted 60kg gold in October.

Two-time world junior champion and a double Asian gold medalist Amin Kavianejad (77kg) will complete the country's Greco-Roman lineup for the Asian Games.

FIVB U19 World Championship: Iran left heartbroken by France in the final

The final setback still capped a glittering display in the international age-group events for Iran in 2023, following a second world under-21 crown, coupled with the top spot at the inaugural Asian U16 Championship, in July.



France's Amir Tizi-Oualou (3) sets up his teammate during a 3-1 victory over Iran in the final at the FIVB Boys' U19 World Championship in San Juan, Argentina, on August 11, 2023.

● FIVB

Sport Desk

Iran's brave run at the FIVB Boys' U19 World Championship came to a disappointing finish after a 3-1 defeat against France in the final showdown in San Juan, Argentina.

Mohammad Vakili's boys recovered from a first-set 25-22 loss to win the second 25-16 before France took the next two sets 25-18 and 25-21 for a maiden world youth crown.

For the two-time champion Iran, meanwhile, it was a third silver medal in the history of the competition and still an improved finish on the previous edition, where the Asian side settled for a

third bronze on home soil two years ago.

The runner-up spot also capped a glittering display in the international age-group events for Iran in 2023, following a second world under-21 crown, coupled with the top spot at the inaugural Asian U16 Championship, in July.

Outside-hitter Mathis Henno, who went on to pick up the tournament's Most Valuable Player award, contributed with a game-high 18 points for France, with his teammates Joris Seddik and Adrien Roure scoring 16 and 15 points respectively.

Mohammadreza Alejalil

chipped in 14 points for Iran, while Armin Qelichniazi (11), and Taha Behboudnia (10) also finished in double figures.

The French blockers made the difference throughout the contest as the European team registered 18 kill blocks against eight for Iran. France also outserved Iran with six aces – all into Henno's name – against Iran's five, though Vakili's side did slightly better in offense with 47 successful spikes against 46, and in precision with 21 unforced errors against 26 for France.

Iranian head coach Vakili, for whom it was a sixth

participation in the world youth event, hailed the tournament as a "top-notch competition", adding: "The final showpiece against France was one of the best games that I've ever been a part of. The fans' presence added to the excitement of the match."

"We dominated our opponents en route to the final and gave it our best shot today but I have to say France was the superior team," admitted the Iranian.

"They did much better than us with blocking and that's what ultimately cost us the title. I'm still glad we have introduced a group of fine players for the future of the

Iranian volleyball," Vakili added.

There was a bit of consolation for the Iranian boys in the awarding ceremony as Qelichniazi was named the joint Best Middle Blocker of the tournament – alongside France's Seddik – while Morteza Tabatabaei was rewarded with the Best Libero prize.

Henno, who shared the Best Outside-Hitter award with South Korean Lee Woo-jin, and Seddik were joined in the Dream Team by French teammates Thomas Pujol (Best Opposite) and Amir Tizi-Oualou (France). Earlier on Friday, South Korea defeated USA 3-1 (25-

18, 25-19, 21-25, 25-23) in the bronze medal contest, while Bulgaria – runner-up to Poland in 2021 – also came out on top in four sets against Belgium for the fifth place.

Three successive victories over South Korea, Puerto Rico, and Colombia had seen Iran win Pool C without conceding a single set. The Iranians then had to come from behind twice to beat Serbia in a five-set thriller in the knockout phase, before a straight-set victory over Belgium sent Iran into the last-four game against South Korea, which finished with a 3-1 win for Vakili's team.

Kane seals Bayern move to end record-breaking Tottenham career

BBC – England captain Harry Kane has joined German champions Bayern Munich on a four-year deal, ending his record-breaking career at Tottenham.

The 30-year-old striker, who has signed a deal worth more than 110m euros (€95m), leaves Premier League Spurs as their all-time top scorer with 280 goals in 435 appearances. In a social media post he said he "felt this was the time to leave" Spurs. Kane's future had been uncertain all summer because he only had one year left on his contract at Spurs.

He has won the Premier League Golden Boot three times – in 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2020-21 – and with 213 goals from 320 games in the English top flight, needed just 48 more

to break Alan Shearer's Premier League scoring record.

Kane, who is England's all-time leading scorer with 58 international goals, has never won a major trophy with club or country.

"I'm very happy to be a part of FC Bayern now. Bayern is one of the biggest clubs in the world, and I've always said that I want to compete and prove myself at the highest level during my career," said Kane, who will wear the number nine shirt at Bayern.

"This club is defined by its winning mentality – it feels very good to be here."

Bayern Munich claimed their 33rd Bundesliga title last season – and 11th in a row – and have won the Champions League six times and German Cup on 20 occasions. Bayern chief executive

Jan-Christian Dreesen said their pursuit had been "a long process" but that Kane was their "absolute dream player right from the start".

"He is a perfect fit for us and the club's DNA in terms of both football and character," he added.

"World-class centre forwards have always been an important factor when FC Bayern has celebrated its greatest triumphs, and we're convinced that Harry Kane will continue this success story.

"Our fans can look forward to one of the best goal scorers of our time."

Club president Herbert Hainer said the transfer required "tenacity, bite and perseverance", adding: "Kane will not only strengthen FC Bayern, but also be a real asset to the entire Bundesliga."



Harry Kane poses with Bayern Munich's No. 9 shirt after signing for the German club in Munich, Germany, on August 12, 2023.

● fcbayern.com

