

Iran dominates Asian para taekwondo meet



● taekwondo.ir

Sports Desk

A remarkable 12 medals, half of which were golds, saw Iran dominate the Asian Para Open Taekwondo Championships, claiming both team titles in Beirut.

Maryam Abdollahpour (-47kg), Mahdiyeh Hosseini (-52kg), Roza Ebrahimi (-57kg), and Mahtab Nabavi (-57kg K41) walked away with the ultimate prize of their respective weight classes, with Leila Mirzaei (+65kg) and Romina Cham-souraki (-65kg) bagging a couple of silvers, as Iran beat Uzbekistan to the women's crown.

Abdollahpour, who defeated reigning Paralympic champion Leonor Espinoza in the final, was named the female MVP of the competitions, and Atefeh Keshavarz captured the best female coach award. In the men's event, Saeed Sadeqian (-63kg) and Hamed Haqshenas (+80kg) headlined Iran's title-winning run with two gold medals, while Mohammad-Taha Hassanpour (-58kg), Alireza Bakht (-80kg), and Mehdi Pour-Rahnama (-70kg) were the country's silver winners.

Amirmohammad Haqshenas finished his campaign with a -70kg bronze to take the Iranian men's medal count to six.

Uzbekistan followed Iran in the men's table with double golds and silvers apiece, plus four bronzes, with the Chinese Taipei finishing third, thanks to single gold.

Men's head coach Payam Khanlarkhani was also awarded with the best coach prize.

Iran Football Federation hits back at 'racist' comments against Taremi

Sports Desk

Iran Football Federation condemned the "racist" comments made by a Portuguese pundit against Porto's Iranian striker Mehdi Taremi, describing them as "absurd and disgraceful."

Speaking on Sporting TV last week, Carlos Xavier – a former player of Sporting CP – used hostile words to criticize the Iranian for the way he intends to convince the referees to blow in their whistles for a spot-kick, calling on the match official of the game featuring Porto and Arouca to show double yellow cards to "a Muslim, who did not even know how to swim when he first arrived in Portugal, but is now a good diver."

His remarks came after Porto was held to a 1-1 home draw in the Portuguese top flight, with the ref, Miguel Nogueira, pointing to the spot in the 90th minute, after a challenge on Taremi in the box, only to see his decision overturned by the VAR.

Porto was awarded a second penalty with 12 minutes into stoppage time, when Taremi was brought down in the area again, but Brazilian Galeno was denied by Arouca

keeper Ignacio De Arruabarrena.

"The Iranian Football Federation and the members of the national team condemn the absurd and disgraceful comments against the committed player Mehdi Taremi as friendship and kindness remain the global language of football," the Iranian governing body's statement read on Sunday.

Porto, meanwhile, was quick to hit back at Xavier, asking what human rights organizations – including SOS Racisme, Amnesty Portugal, European Commission against Racism, and the Commission Equality and Racial Discrimination – as well as the Portuguese government and the Ministry of Justice think of the pundit's "xenophobic, racist, and hate speech" comments, adding on X, formerly known as Twitter, on Friday: "This is too serious to go unharmed."

In a U-turn on his previous criticism, Xavier apologized to the Iranian player later on Friday, saying: "I am not the kind of person who uses a xenophobic and racist language as I have friends of all colors and religious beliefs. I have utmost respect for Taremi and the great job he has done in his national team."



Porto striker Mehdi Taremi (R) is seen in action during a 1-1 draw against Arouca in the Primeira Liga at the Estádio do Dragão, Porto, Portugal, on September 3, 2023.
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Djokovic wins US Open for record equalling 24th Grand Slam



● MIKE SEGAR/REUTERS

REUTERS – Novak Djokovic would not let Daniil Medvedev spoil his date with history a second time as he battled past the Russian 6-3 7-6(5) 6-3 to win the US Open on Sunday and equal Margaret Court's record haul of 24 Grand Slams.

Djokovic's victory, his fourth in 10 Flushing Meadows finals, capped another remarkable season after his wins at the Australian Open and Roland Garros, and he returned to the top of the world rankings on Monday.

No man has won a calendar Grand Slam in 54 years, though

Djokovic came close once again, losing in five sets to Carlos Alcaraz in the Wimbledon final. But for the moment he is savouring his 24th Slam.

"It obviously means the world to me," he said. "I'm really living my childhood dream."

"To make the history of this sport is something truly remarkable, it's hard to describe the words. "I had the childhood dream when I was seven, eight, I wanted to become the best player in the world."

As he continues to live his dream Djokovic is also staking his claim to the mantle of greatest tennis

player of all time.

At 36 Djokovic also becomes the oldest US Open men's winner in the Open Era but the Serb's Grand Slam hunger has not dimmed and he had some bad news for his younger rivals.

"Eventually one day I will leave tennis in about 23, 24 years," he joked. "Until then, I guess you'll see me a bit more."

"I don't put any number right now in my mind on how many Slams I want to win."

"I'll continue to prioritize them as my most important tournaments and where I want to play the best tennis."

Persepolis closing in on Caicedo contract

Sports Desk

Persian Gulf Pro League champion Persepolis is on the verge of signing former Lazio striker Felipe Caicedo for a reported \$600,000 fee.

The 35-year-old Ecuadorian, who has 22 goals under his belt in 68 international caps, spent last season at the Saudi Pro League side Abha Club, where he scored three in 24 appearances across all competitions.

Also an ex-player of Basel, Manchester City, Lokomotiv Moscow, and Espanyol, Caicedo played for Lazio between 2017 and 2021, bagging 28 strikes in 105 outings.

Should the deal go through, it will bring an end to the Tehran Reds' desperate summer-long search for a forward as manager Yahya Golmohammadi has only one recognized striker in Shahab Zahedi at his disposal, after parting ways with Issa Alekassir and Mehdi Abdi during the transfer window.



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