

Taremi set to miss Serie A start with muscle injury



Sports Desk

New Inter signing Mahdi Taremi has been dealt a blow in his bid to find his way into the starting XI after a muscle injury during the preseason.

Having signed a three-year deal with the Nerazzurri last month as a free agent from Porto, the 32-year-old Iranian has suffered a muscle strain in his left thigh and is expected to be sidelined for 10-15 days, the Italian champion confirmed.

Inter will begin its Serie A title defense away to Genoa on August 17.

Lautaro Martinez and Marcus Thuram are likely to be head coach Simone Inzaghi's first choice for the frontline partnership again in the upcoming campaign, with Taremi serving in a backup role, but the Iranian had made the most of extended vacations for the Argentine and the Frenchman – due to their involvement in Copa America and Euro 2024 – by scoring three in five preseason friendlies.

Taremi, who missed Friday's 1-1 draw against Pisa, will hope to be fit for Inter's second league fixture at home against Lecce on Aug. 24.

inter.it

Morais, new-look Sepahan eyeing ACL Elite berth



Sports Desk

The Persian Gulf Pro League season is 11 days away but for Sepahan, the new campaign starts with a game in the preliminary round of the inaugural AFC Champions League Elite on Tuesday.

Portuguese head coach Jose Morais will be eager to make his mark in his third season in charge of the Sepahan bench, starting with a game against UAE Pro League club Shabab Al Ahli in Isfahan's Naqsh-e Jahan Stadium. The winner of the tie will play away to Al Gharafa of Qatar on August 13 for a place in the league stage of the rebranded competition. Runner-up in 2007, Sepahan earned the spot in the round thanks to a fifth domestic cup triumph in June, while the visitors finished second in the Emirati league table last term to be handed a shot at Asian glory.

The two sides have met twice in the continent's most prestigious club event, with both games coming in the group phase of 2014 edition, when Shabab registered a win and a draw against the Iranian opponent.

The game could see Iran international Sardar Azmoun return to his boyhood club for his first Shabab Al Ahli appearance, after the prolific striker joined the Emirati outfit on a three-year contract from Bayer Leverkusen last week.

Rejuvenated Sepahan

Sepahan can't wait to see what their new-look side will have to offer in the new campaign – following a busy summer transfer window, during which the club has managed to secure the services of some of the hottest assets in the market to fill the void caused by the departure of several key players in the squad.

Shahriar Moghanlou, the leading marksman of the Iranian league for the past two terms, left the club to embark on a new chapter in his career with Ittihad Kalba in the UAE, while integral fullbacks Ramin Rezaeian, who registered 14 goals and 12 assists last season, and Milad Zakipour will play for Esteghlal in the upcoming campaign.

Winger Farshad Ahmadzadeh and midfielder Omid Nourafkan also parted ways with Sepahan, but in Javad Aqaeipour, Mahdi Limouchi, and Mohammad-Mahdi Mohebbi, the club has signed three of the most sought-after frontline talents in the Iranian league.

Meanwhile, young Iranian defenders Mohammad-Amin Hazbavi, Saleh Hardani, and Hossein Goudarzi, as well as Tajikistan international Vahdat Hanonov will be marquee additions to the Sepahan backline.



Paris Olympics:

Golden swimmer Marchand sends France into raptures

REUTERS – French swimmer Leon Marchand brought the host nation to a standstill once again on Friday with his fourth gold of the Paris Olympics, while Australian Kaylee McKeown wrote history of her own as the first woman to retain both backstroke titles. Marchand did it in style, roared to the rafters by a rapturous crowd as he joined American greats Michael Phelps and Mark Spitz as the only male swimmers to have won four individual titles at a single Games.

Emphasising his status as the hottest property in the pool, the 22-year-old shattered the 200 metres individual medley Olympic record of one minute 54.23 seconds set by Phelps at the 2008 Beijing Games and replaced it with a new best of 1:54.06.

It is the fourth such record set by the poster boy of the Paris Games, who has taken the burden of expectation and shaped it into another source of strength, in as many finals in the La Defense Arena.

Around the city, and at other venues, crowds celebrated and burst into the national anthem.

At the Stade de France, scene of France's momentous 1998 World Cup soccer triumph and venue for the track and field events, the decathlon 400m had to be delayed due to the noise from the stands.

"Four gold medals is not what I thought I could possibly do," the



French swimmer Leon Marchand is in action in the men's 200m individual medley final at the Paris Olympics on August 2, 2024. MARKO DJURICA/RUTERS

Frenchman said. "I was trying to win one at first. I had four chances of doing it."

Athletics

World record holder Joshua Cheptegei claimed the 10,000 metres title he so desperately wanted on Friday when he found a late surge to win a fantastic race and take the Games' first track gold.

The 27-year-old Ugandan, who took silver in Tokyo and gold over 5,000m, produced a devas-

tating last 600 metres to come home in 26:43.14 minutes – knocking 18 seconds off Kenenisa Bekele's 2008 Olympic record. Berihu Aregawi, part of a three-pronged Ethiopian front-running group almost from the start, finished strongly for silver in 26:43.44 and Grant Fisher took a superb bronze in 26:43.46 – only the United States' fourth medal over the distance since the event was added to the Games in 1912. "My collection for this run is really complete. I'm so excited,"

Cheptegei told reporters.

"Barely 16 years ago when I was watching the great Kenenisa Bekele win in Beijing, it was something that grew in my heart. "I said, 'one day I want to be Olympic champion'. It is the most special day. I can't describe the feeling. I've wanted this for a long time. When I took silver in Tokyo I was so disappointed. I just wanted to win the 10,000m."

Shooting

South Korea's Yang Ji-in won the

gold in the women's 25 metres pistol event at the Paris Olympics on Saturday.

France's Camille Jedrzejewski won the silver, while Hungary's Veronika Major took bronze. Yang and Jedrzejewski were tied on 37 points, forcing a shoot-off in which the Korean prevailed 4-1 at the Chateauroux Shooting Centre. Major also won her bronze via shoot-off, denying India's Manu Bhaker a third medal at the Paris Games.

Football

France set up a men's football semi-final with Egypt after beating Argentina 1-0 in a hostile quarter-final marred by ugly scenes at the final whistle.

Players and coaches from both sides clashed on the pitch at the end as the hosts booked their last-four spot.

France will face Egypt in Monday's semi-final after the Pharaohs beat Paraguay 5-4 on penalties following a 1-1 draw.

Meanwhile, Fermin Lopez scored twice as Spain defeated Japan 3-0 in Lyon to move into the semi-finals.

Abel Ruiz's late tap-in sealed victory for the European side, who will now play Morocco in Marseille on Monday.

Morocco dominated from start to finish at Parc des Princes as they thrashed the United States 4-0 to reach the competition's last four for the first time.

Marchand joined American greats Michael Phelps and Mark Spitz as the only male swimmers to have won four individual titles at a single Games. The 22-year-old shattered the 200m individual medley Olympic record set by Phelps in 2008 and replaced it with a new best of 1:54.06.