

## Asian U18 Volleyball Championship: Iran undone by China in the final

### Sports Desk

Iran had to settle for a runner-up finish in the Asian U18 Volleyball Championship after a five-set defeat against China in Riffa, Bahrain.

Fresh from a straight-set victory over defending champion Japan in the semifinals, Adel Gholami's boys got off to flying start in Sunday's showdown to win the first set 25-23 before the Chinese bounced back to come out on top in the second and third sets by 25-17 and 25-19 scorelines.

Iran still managed to force the contest into the decider thanks to a fourth-set 25-20 win, but China clinched a 15-10 triumph in the tie-breaker to repeat the five-set win against its opponent earlier in the group phase a win a maid-

en title in 15 editions of the competition.

This was a second successive silver medal for Iran, which remains the most decorated under-18 team in the continent with seven trophies.

Gholami said "a virus swept through the Iranian camp in recent days, which is why some players could not unleash their best in the final."

"My players still deserve credit for the decent performance, but the Chinese were better than us in many aspects of the game, namely attack and reception. This China team was truly the best I've seen from the country in the age-group competitions over the past 20 years," added the former Iranian middle blocker.

The result came after the Iranian under-20 side had

beaten South Korea in straight sets in Surabaya, Indonesia, last Tuesday for a record-extending eighth Asian crown.

Earlier on Sunday, Pakistan walked away with a first-ever medal in the competition following a stunning 3-0 (25-13, 25-21, 25-17) victory over Japan.

There was some consolation for the Iranian boys as three members of the team were among the winners of the individual awards.

Mohammad-Amin Rahimi shared the best outside-hitter award with China's Yu Xiang, while Mohammad-Nima Bateni was named the joint best middle blocker - alongside Jabran Jabran of Pakistan - and Mohammad-Amin Arabayramoahmadi picked up the prize for best libero.



● MOHAMMAD-JAVAD AMINI/volleyball.ir



● YJC

## Iranian ref Baqeri to make taekwondo history in Paris

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Ma'soumeh Baqeri will make history when the taekwondo event of the Paris Olympics get underway on Wednesday as she will be the first Iranian female referee of the sport to ever officiate in the Games.

Baqeri, who holds a master's degree in biochemistry, was picked for the

sporting extravaganza by the international taekwondo governing body following consistent appearances in major global tournaments, including last year's WT Grand Slam Champions Series in Wuxi, China, where she was named as the Best Referee. Baqeri will be among a group of 26 refs (13 men and 13 women) in Paris. Her fellow-Iranian female

referee Marjan Taymouri has also been selected for the taekwondo competitions of the upcoming Paralympic Games - starting August 29 in the French capital's Grand Palais.

Iran will be represented by four athletes in the taekwondo contests of Olympics.

A gold medalist in last year's World Championships, Nahid Kiani will be

looking to become only the second Iranian girl to claim a medal in the 128-year history of the Games - following Rio 2016 bronze medalist Kimia Alizadeh - when taking part in Thursday's -57kg event, while Mobina Ne'matzadeh (women's -49kg), Mehran Barkhrodari (men's -80kg), and Arian Salimi (men's 80kg) will also fancy their chances of Olympic glory.



### Paris Olympics:

## Lyles edges out Thompson to win sensational 100m gold

BBC - US sprint star Noah Lyles won the Olympic 100m title by five-thousandths of a second from Jamaica's Kishane Thompson in a dramatic photo finish at Paris 2024.

Showman Lyles overhauled his rivals in the second half of the race to triumph by the finest of margins in a personal best 9.79 seconds.

That was the same time as Olympic debutant Thompson, who led for most of the race.

The United States' former world champion Fred Kerley took bronze in 9.81, edging out South Africa's Akani Simbine for the podium.

All eight finalists finished within 0.12secs of Lyles in a remarkable race.

In the end it was Lyles, an athlete who thrives on the sport's grandest stages and who won three golds at last year's World Championships, who sprinted away in celebration once the official result appeared on the big screen.

### Tennis

REUTERS - Novak Djokovic described beating Carlos Alcaraz to claim the Olympic singles gold medal at the fifth

attempt as the biggest achievement of his career on Sunday.

The 37-year-old Serb ended an eight-month trophy drought with a vintage display to win 7-6(3) 7-6(2) and complete his career Golden Slam in memorable fashion, not dropping a set in six matches at Roland Garros.

He is the oldest man to win the Olympic singles title since tennis returned to the Games in 1988 and remarkably he did it 21 days after being pummeled by Alcaraz in the Wimbledon final and two months after undergoing knee surgery.

"I won the bronze in my first Olympic Games (2008) and ever since then failed to win the medal and played three out of four Olympic Games in semi-finals and couldn't overcome that obstacle," Djokovic, proudly wearing his medal, told reporters.

"And then now at age 37, with a 21-year-old that is probably the best player in the world right now, winning Roland Garros and Wimbledon back-to-back and playing incredible tennis.

"When I take everything into consideration, this probably

is the biggest sporting success I've ever had in my career."

### Badminton

People across Taiwan on Sunday celebrated their men's doubles badminton gold medal victory over Chinese opponents that sparked scenes of jubilation while also exposing deeper geopolitical divides between the two sides.

Wang Chi-Lin and Lee Yang of Taiwan, the reigning champions from the 2021 Tokyo Olympics, won a three-game thriller against China's Liang Weikeng and Wang Chang.

In cities across Taiwan, from Wang's home in the capital Taipei to southern Kaohsiung, and Lee's hometown on the island of Kinmen just off the coast of China, public screens were set up that lured thousands of fans.

The island competes as 'Chinese Taipei' rather than as Taiwan, to avoid objections from China, which claims the island as its own territory.

### Swimming

Iron-man Bobby Finke and the U.S. women's medley relay team shattered world records



● AMERICAN SPRINTER NOAH LYLES (LANE SEVEN) CROSSES THE FINISH LINE TO WIN THE MEN'S 100M GOLD MEDAL AT THE PARIS OLYMPICS IN STADE DE FRANCE, SAINT-DENIS, FRANCE, ON AUGUST 4, 2024.  
● DAVID J. PHILLIP/AP

in golden performances as the Olympic swim meet ended in exhilarating fashion on Sunday with the Americans on top again.

Floridian Finke took down Sun Yang's 12-year 1,500m world record as he retained the gold medal in the lung-busting event before the American women

smashed their previous world mark for gold in the medley relay. The golds saw the Americans finish with eight at the top of the swimming medal table, one more than second-placed Australia.

It was by no means an American shut-out, though, with the U.S. men's medley relay team

suffering their first defeat ever at Olympics meets dating back to the 1960 Rome Games.

China, anchored by the human missile Pan Zhanle, took the gold ahead of the U.S. team, whose talisman Caeleb Dressel took his first minor medal from a previously uniform set of nine golds.