

Wrestling U17 World Championships:

**Afshar grabs gold
as Iran wins three freestyle medals****Sports Desk**

Reza Afshar walked away with the ultimate prize of the 80kg contests as Iran collected three freestyle medals across five weight classes at the Wrestling U17 World Championships in Amman, Jordan.

The Iranian prodigy claimed emphatic victories over opponents from Macedonia, Armenia, Romania, and the United States before rounding off his campaign with a win against Georgian Nikoloz Maisuradze.

Both wrestlers were put on the activity clock in a cagy showdown with Afshar taking the criteria lead in the second period before he held off the Georgian as it finished 1-1. This was a second final showpiece featuring an Iranian on Saturday after Amirabbas Alizadeh fell short against Uzbekistan's Ulugbek Rashidov in the 48kg event. Alizadeh enjoyed a decent run toward the final, defeating wrestlers from Peru, Ukraine, and the US, but Rashidov proved to be in a league of his own as he capped the decider in a minute and 47 seconds with technical superiority.

Abolfazl Mohammadnejad won a third freestyle medal for the country in Amman – a consolation bronze in the 110kg contests. The Iranian began his cam-



Reza Afshar celebrates with the Iranian flag after winning the freestyle 80kg gold medal at the Wrestling U17 World Championships in Amman, Jordan, on August 24, 2024.

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Greco-Roman crown

Saturday's results came after the Iranian Greco-Roman squad had lifted a third successive team trophy at the U17 Worlds.

Iranians won three golds and bronzes apiece to finish atop the table with 140 points, with Uzbekistan (113pts) and Azerbaijan (105pts) in the following spots.

Armin Shamsipour dominated the 48kg contests, outscoring his opponents 37-1 in four bouts – including a 10-1 triumph over Uzbekistan's Khusniddin Abdugarimov in the final.

Amir-Mahdi Saeidinava clinched a second Greco-Roman gold for Iran, thanks to a 6-2 win against Ukrainian Vladyslav Pokotylo in the 65kg showdown, while Danial Izadi defeated German Ole Ayke Stening 4-0 for the 92kg title.

Abolfazl Karami (51kg), Emadrezta Mohsennejad (80kg), and Ali-Asghar Dadbakhsh were the Irania bronze medalist in the Greco-Roman competitions.

paign with a 6-4 win against Russian Ali Bairamukov, participating as a neutral athlete, and then came out victorious against Canada's Jagroop Dhinsa (11-0)

before suffering a 4-3 loss to Yedige Kassimbek of Kazakhstan in the semifinals. Mohammadnejad managed to bounce back for a 2-1 win against India's Singh Jas-

pooran and share the third podium with Azerbaijan's Mukhamed Gantemirov. Meanwhile, American Michael Mocco introduced himself as a rising super-

heavyweight star when he cruised to the gold with four superiority wins – including a 10-0 hammering of Kassimbek in the final. Elsewhere, Iranians Ary-

an Mehralizadeh and Yassin Tayyebi finished the world championships empty-handed after defeats in the 55kg and 65kg events respectively.



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**Iranian karatekas runner-up
in Asian Cadet, Junior Championships****Sports Desk**

A total of 12 medals, including four golds, saw Iran's cadet and junior teams finish second to Japan at the Asian Championships in Manila, Philippines. Japan dominated the medal table with a remarkable 14 gold medals, as well as one silver and six bronzes, while Kazakhstan collected double golds, five silvers, and four bronze medals to finish third.

Iranian girls took credit for three of the country's four golds in the kumite competitions, as Parmis Alipour (cadet -47kg), Saghar Jandaghi (cadet -61kg), and Mahla Sedaghat (junior +66kg) walked away with the ultimate prize in their respective events.

Amir-Ali Taymouri was the sole Iranian male gold medalist in Manila, thanks to an 8-0 triumph over Jordanian Ahmed Alsauod in the cadet -63kg fi-

nal. Meanwhile, male junior participants Abolfazl Hamdamjoo (-61kg) and Vahab Shahmir (-76kg) added two kumite silvers to Iran's medal haul, with Elina Safajoo settling for a runner-up finish in the girls' junior -59kg contests after a final defeat against Nao Inada of Japan. Maryam Gorzin (female +61kg) and Mohammad Abdollahi (male -52kg) took a couple bronzes in the cadet competitions, with

Abolfazl Sadeghiseresht (kata male), and Ghazal Fat'hi Cheshmeh (female -48kg) also finishing on the third podium in the junior events.

A second kata bronze for Iran came in the boys' cadet and junior team contest, where the trio of Sina Nouri, Amirreza Mosalman, and Armin Javani recovered from a last-four defeat against Saudi Arabia to beat Hong Kong 39.3-37.3 and share the third podium with Vietnam.

Dorostkar retakes helm as Iran FS head coach**Sports Desk**

Pejman Dorostkar was reappointed as the head coach of the Iranian freestyle wrestling team on Saturday, replacing Mohsen Kaveh.

In his previous spell in charge, Dorostkar, 48, steered the country to the third place behind the Russian Wrestling Federation and Team USA at the 2021 World Championships in Oslo, before successive runner-up finishes in the next two editions in Belgrade, though the Russians were absent in the 2022 event and then their results were

deemed null and void in the team table the following year. Iranian wrestlers collected a combined 18 world medals – including six golds – during Dorostkar's 28-month stint. Former coach Kaveh, who took over from Dorostkar last December, left the job by the end of his contract last week after his five-man squad had mixed results and performances at the recently-finished Olympic Games in Paris.

Iranians left the French capital with four medals, though a first freestyle gold since Hassan Yazdani's triumph in

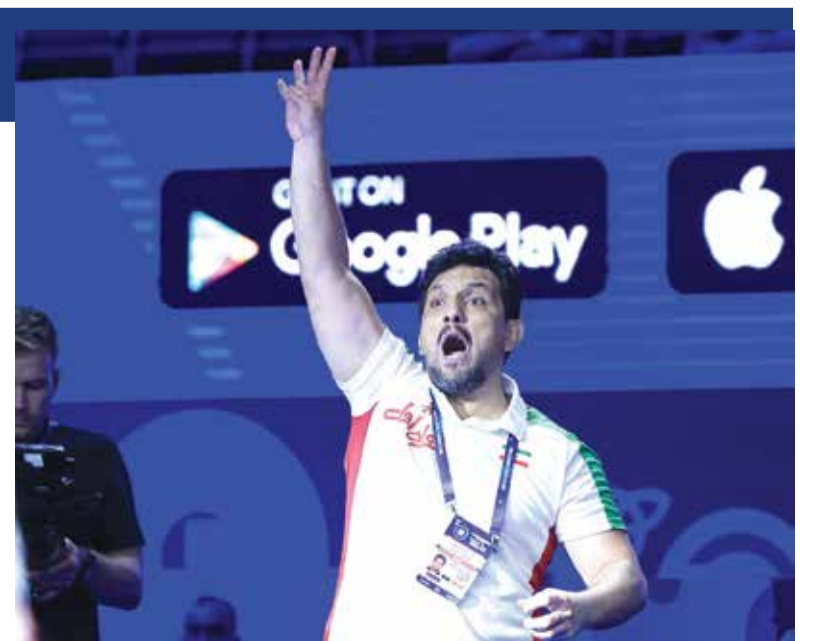
Rio 2016 proved to be elusive for the country.

Yazdani's quest for a second Olympic gold ended in vain following a 7-1 loss to Bulgaria's Magomed Ramazanov in the 86kg final – during which the Iranian sensation struggled with a recurring shoulder injury from the get-go and had to call for treatment on several occasions.

Despite an emphatic run to the 65kg final, Rahman Amouzad also settled for a runner-up finish after a 10-3 defeat against Japanese newcomer Kotaro Kiyooka. Reigning world champion

Amirhossein Zare', meanwhile, was the clear favorite to grab the superheavyweight gold in Paris but finished second to Georgian Geno Petriashvili, suffering a 10-9 loss in a thrilling 125kg final.

Young Iranian Amir-Ali Azarpira enjoyed a decent 97kg campaign as he recovered from a first-round defeat against Bahrain's Akhmed Tazhudinov to beat American great Kyle Snyder for a joint bronze, while Younes Emami left the Games empty-handed following a fall defeat against Kyle Dake of the United States in the 74kg quarterfinals.



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