

World Taekwondo Junior Championships: Girls glorious as Iran wins four medals on Day 5



Iran's Ghazal Houshmand (red) is seen in action Yang Xiruo of China in the women's -42kg final at the World Taekwondo Junior Championships in Chuncheon, South Korea, on October 5, 2024.
● WORLD TAEKWONDO



Iran's Hana Zarrinkamar (red) takes on South Korean Lim Yerim in the women's -68kg final at the World Taekwondo Junior Championships in Chuncheon, South Korea, on October 5, 2024.
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Sports Desk

Iranians continued their impressive run at the World Taekwondo Junior Championships, collecting four more medals, including two golds, on Saturday in Chuncheon, South Korea. Hana Zarrinkamar opened the account for the country on the fifth day of the competitions by coming out victorious in straight rounds (11-6, 13-0) over the host's Lim Yerim in the

women's -68kg final.

Ghazal Houshmand clinched a fourth women's gold for Iran when she defeated Yang Xiruo of China in two rounds for the -42kg crown.

In the men's draw, Ali-Akbar Ebrahimi dominated opponents from Portugal, the United Kingdom, Uzbekistan, Bosnian & Herzegovina, and Azerbaijan, not conceding a single round, to reach the -73kg final, only to suffer a 2-1 defeat against South

Korean Park Jae won and take the silver.

Amin-Mohammad Ahmadvand took a bronze medal in his maiden appearance in the championships after a loss to Croatian Oscar Kovacic in the -78kg semifinals.

Saturday's results took Iran's medal haul to a remarkable seven gold medals, as well as two silvers and bronzes apiece across the men's and women's event.

Mahdi Razmian had won a fifth gold medal for Iran on the preceding night in Chuncheon, thanks to an emphatic victory over Spanish Agenjo Trigos, who had not dropped a single round en route to the final, in the men's -48kg showdown. Razmian needed three rounds in three of his bouts earlier in the day – including the last-four victory over Kazakhstan's Temirzhan Taskyn – but showed no signs of the fatigue

against the Spaniard, controlling the first round to win 6-1 before a commanding 12-2 triumph in the second saw the Iranian walk away with the ultimate prize.

On Thursday, Sina Mohtarami pulled off a thrilling 2-1 win (18-7, 9-11, 14-12) against Nurali Makhmut of Kazakhstan for the men's -55kg gold, while Saghar Moradi settled for a silver after a loss to Tunisian Masghouni Wafa in the women's -63kg

weight class.

Amirmohammad Nasir-Ahmadi finished his campaign with a consolation bronze in the men's -51kg contests.

Amirmohammad Ashrafi (men's +78kg), Parnian Nouri (women's -52kg), and Aynaz Nasiri (women's -59kg) had grabbed three gold medals for Iran earlier in Chuncheon.

The 14th edition of the World Junior Championships will come to an end today.

Iranian wrestlers ready to rumble in World Championships

Sports Desk

Iranian Greco-Roman and freestyle squads will be looking to build on the country's decent Olympic campaign when the Wrestling World Championships – featuring non-Olympic weight categories – get underway in Tirana, Albania, on October 28.

Represented by 11 wrestlers, Iran collected a total of eight medals, including two Greco-Roman golds, in the sporting extravaganza in Paris – the most won by any country across the two men's competitions, although Japan secured more gold medals (4).

Pejman Dorostkar is back at the helm of the Iranian freestyle team for a second stint, having guided his men to a third-place finish in the 2021 World Championships, followed by 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 declared null and void in the team table last year. Two-time world champion



Iranian freestyle 92kg wrestler Kamran Qasempour is seen in a training session in Tehran on October 3, 2024.
● IAWF

Kamran Qasempour will spearhead the freestyle four-man squad in the Albania capital, making his long-awaited return to the mat in the 92kg contests – the familiar territory for

the 27-year-old, who stood behind Amir-Ali Azarpira in the pecking order for the Iranian 97kg slot in Paris. Standing between Qasempour and a third

world gold medal in four years will be two of the sport's greatest in recent years in Russian sensation Abdurashid Sadulaev and American David Taylor, who have won a remark-

able 11 world and Olympic gold medals between them in the 97kg and 86kg weight classes.

Reza Mo'meni will be the Iranian wrestler in the 61kg class, with his previous international appearance coming in the 2022 FS World Cup, where he won a bout and lost two. Amirmohammad Yazdani will be eager to grab a first world gold medal when taking part in the 70kg contests, having settled for two silvers in 2021 and 2023, while Mohammad Nakhodi, a winner of two world silvers and a bronze, will be among the favorites in the 79kg category.

Geraei eyeing glory

Mohammadreza Geraei is keen to make a flying start to the new chapter of his career in the Greco-Roman 72kg competitions. The 28-year-old was once tipped to dominate the 67kg class for years following his back-to-back Olympic and world crowns in 2021, but his form diminished over the following two years, as he settled for the world silver in 2022 before laboring

to the bronze in the 2023 edition.

He then missed the opportunity to defend his Olympic title after comprehensive defeats against Saeid Esmaeili in the Iranian trials and when the young prodigy took the Games by storm to win the gold, Geraei, who had been clearly struggling with significant weight losses before each tournament, was persuaded to move up to the 72kg division.

Geraei's older brother, Mohammad-Ali, will also have to gear up for a new challenge in the 82kg contests as he will be looking to improve on his world bronzes in the 71kg and 77kg categories.

A former world junior and under-23 champion, Iman Mohammadi will chase a first world medal in the seniors' competitions in the 63kg event to add to his gold and bronze in the Asian Championships. Pouya Dadmarz, meanwhile, will be after a second successive world medal in the 55kg class following his impressive bronze-winning campaign in Belgrade.