

# Iran beaten by Brazil in futsal friendly



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## Sports Desk

Iran suffered a 5-2 defeat against world champion Brazil in a first outing in futsal friendly tournament in Curitiba, Brazil, on Thursday. Charuto gave the host a seventh-minute lead, only to see his goal canceled out by Salar Aqapour's superb finish a minute later.

Arthur restored the lead for the Selecao from the second spot in the 17th minute, and young Brazilian Neguinho doubled the advantage as it finished 3-1 at halftime.

The home side started the second half on the front foot but it was Vahid Shamsaei's side which found the net against the run of play, with prolific Hossein Tayyebi scoring on a rebound, though it proved to be a costly strike for the Asian powerhouse as Aqapour was substituted after being injured in the buildup to the goal.

Marcelo restored the two-goal cushion with a sizzling strike in the 25th minute, and there was further misery for Shamsaei's men after Tayyebi received his marching order for a second booking three minutes later.

Iranian keeper Saeid Momeni pulled off a string of saves to keep his side in the contest, but Charuto netted his second of the night with five minutes left on the clock as Shamsaei's side got off to losing start in the tournament.

A second match for Iran will come against Greenland today.

Greenland was beaten 5-4 by Afghanistan in their opening game earlier on Thursday.

## Iranian duo among IWUF annual winners

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Two Iranian wushu practitioners picked up the prize in their respective categories in the IWUF Athlete of the Year 2024.

The winners were decided through a voting by the wushu fans on the official website of the international governing body of the sport.

Iranian girl Zahra Kiani was

named the Female Talou Athlete of the Year, after grabbing a maiden talou gold for the country in last September's Asian Wushu Championships in Macao, China.

A two-time silver medalist at the Asian Games, Kiani scored 9.686 points to beat opponents from Hong Kong and Vietnam to the ultimate prize in the women's jianshu form.

Meanwhile, Amirhesam Mo-

hammad was voted the Sanda Rising Star of the Year.

The Iranian prodigy defeated Genea Elyos Silaban of Indonesia in the final showpiece to walk away with the gold medal in the boys' junior 52kg contests to help the country win the sanda team title at the 9th World Junior Wushu Championships in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, last September.



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## Iran drops to 68th in FIFA Women's Ranking



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Iranian women dropped by one spot to sit 68th in the latest FIFA World Ranking – released on Thursday.

A total of 1381.9 points saw the Iranian national team stand 12th among the AFC member states, with Japan (2001.9pts), North Korea (1944.23), and Australia (1845.91) – a semifinalist at the 2023 World Cup on home soil – completing

the top three in the continent.

Iran played Puerto Rico – 81st in the latest ranking – in a friendly double-header on the Caribbean island in late February, losing the first game 2-0 before sharing the spoils in a 1-1 draw.

China, South Korea, Vietnam, the Philippines, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, Uzbekistan, and Myanmar followed the top three in the AFC list.

USA retained the top spot in

ranking with 2069.06 points, with the chasing pack, reigning world champion Spain (2020.6), Germany (2014.73), and England (2008.98) remaining unchanged. Japan moved up by three spots to sit fifth – overtaking Sweden, Canada, and Brazil – thanks to three successive victories over USA (2-1), Colombia (4-1), and Australia (4-0) in a title-winning run at the 2025 SheBelieves Cup in the United States.

## Chelsea's 2024 squad most expensive ever in Europe, says UEFA report

REUTERS – Chelsea's squad at the end of the 2024 financial year was the most expensive ever assembled in Europe in terms of transfer fees, according to a report released by governing body UEFA.

The "European Club Finance and Investment Landscape" report said Chelsea spent 1.656 billion euros (\$1.79 billion) on combined transfer costs.

That comfortably surpassed the value of Manchester United's squad in 2023, which cost 1.42 billion euros to assemble, and the 1.33 billion euros spent by Real Madrid, which was the highest squad cost in 2020.

Chelsea have signed 41 players since Todd Boehly and Clear-

lake Capital bought the club in 2022, but the west London club's big-money transfers have not translated to significant on-field success, as Chelsea finished sixth in the Premier League last season and are currently fifth.

According to the report which analyses all of Europe's top divisions, Real Madrid (1,073 million euros), Manchester City (854 million euros), Paris St Germain (808 million euros), Manchester United (771 million euros) and Bayern Munich (765 million euros) had the highest revenues in 2023.

The Premier League had nine teams among the top-20 earning clubs, with an average revenue of 357 million euros and approxi-

mate aggregate revenue of 7.15 billion euros.

Spain's LaLiga was second with revenues of 3.7 billion euros, with Germany's Bundesliga (3.6 billion euros), Italy's Serie A (2.9 billion euros) and France's Ligue 1 (2.4 billion euros) rounding out the top five.

The top 20 clubs have been relatively stable across the last decade, with all of the current top 20 featuring in the top 25 in 2014. English clubs reported just over 7.1 billion euros of revenue in 2023, but the size of the top clubs meant the mean club revenue (357 million euros) is considerably higher than the median (10-11th) club revenue of 245 million euros.

"This 'typical' median English club revenue has 60% more reve-

nue than the typical German club and three times the revenue of the typical club in Italy and Spain, principally due to the large TV revenue distributions enjoyed by all top division clubs in England," the report said.

Europe's 700-plus top-division clubs recorded aggregate revenue of 26.8 billion euros in 2023, with England's 20 top-flight clubs reporting almost double the revenue (97% more) than either the second and third highest leagues in 2023, Spain and Germany.

England and Germany have by far the largest attendance figures, which is reflected in their median gate revenues of 29.1 million euros and 23.7 million euros, respectively.



HANNAH MCKAY/REUTERS

Arsenal (153 million), Manchester United (129), Tottenham (123), and Liverpool (108) were among the

eight European clubs that reported more than 100 million euros in gate revenue in 2023.