

## Persian Gulf Pro League:

## Tractor clinches maiden trophy with two games to spare

## Sports Desk

Tractor routed Shams Azar 4-0 on Friday to secure a first title at the Persian Gulf Pro League with two games to go.

The away victory, coupled with second-placed Sepahan's 2-1 home defeat against Golgozar Sirjan, saw Tractor extend its lead on top of the table to eight points.

Tractor started right on the front foot at Qazvin's Sardar Azadegan Stadium, with Croatian striker Domagoj Drozdek putting the visitors in front with just two minutes into the game.

Prolific winger Amirhossein Hosseinzadeh bagged his 11th goal of the season seven minutes later, before Drozdek netted his second of the afternoon on the half-hour mark.

Brazilian Ricardo Alves rounded off the emphatic win with a penalty four minutes from normal time as Tractor took its tally to 64 points.

This was Tractor's ninth win in 11 league outings since Dragan Skocic's men were last beaten in the league – against Persepolis (2-0) on January 26 – securing only a third major trophy in the history of the club, following the domestic cup triumphs in 2014 and 2020.

Thousands of Tractor fans poured into the streets of Tabriz after the

final whistle and celebrated until the early hours of Saturday after their team ended their long wait for the league crown, following three runner-up finishes since winning promotion back to the top flight in 2009.

In the simultaneous fixture at Isfahan's Naqsh-e Jahan Stadium, Sepahan's slim hopes for a sixth Pro League crown – first in a decade – were shattered by only a second defeat of the season.

Amirmohammad Razzaqinia's point-blank header gave Golgozar the lead in the 27th minute. Things went from bad to worse for Sepahan deep into first-half added time, after Iranian international fullback Aria Yousefi was shown a straight red for a harsh challenge on Abolfazl Razzaqpour.

Golgozar skipper Mahdi Tikdari doubled the visitors' lead in the 70th minute, before Mohammad-Mahdi Mohebbi pulled one back for the home side five minutes later, though it proved too little too late.

Sepahan's defeat tightened the race for a runner-up finish and a spot in next year's AFC Champions League Elite, as it came after Persepolis had beaten Mes Rafsanjan 3-0 on the preceding night to close the gap on the second spot to two points.

Ali Alipour bagged a first-half dou-

ble, with Turkish striker Serdar Dursun also finding the net to give the Tehran Reds, who missed out on the title for only a second time in nine years, something to fight for until the end of the season.

The defeat kept Mes third from bottom in the table, though it still remains on course to start next season in the top-flight league after the two relegation-zone clubs Nassaji Mazandaran and Havadar shared the spoils in a goalless draw in Qaemshahr.

The draw confirmed Havadar's relegation, with Nassaji five points adrift of safety before Thursday's visit to Tractor.

Elsewhere, Chadormalou played to a 1-1 draw against fourth-placed Foolad Khuzestan at home, while it finished goalless between Esteghlal Khuzestan and Khaybar in Ahvaz.

Meanwhile, Malavan and Zob Ahan shared the points in a six-goal thriller in Bandar Anzali, and Esteghlal hammered Iralco 5-1 at the Azadi Stadium in Mojtaba Jabbari's second game as the interim coach on the Blues bench.



Tractor head coach Dragan Skocic celebrates after his team defeated Shams Azar 4-0 to secure the Persian Gulf Pro League title in Qazvin, Iran, on May 2, 2025.

● AHMADREZA EBADI/FOOTBALL360.IR



## World Youth &amp; Junior Weightlifting Championships:

## Iranian girl Hosseini wins double medals

## Sports Desk

Iranian girl Alma Hosseini notched up a couple of medals on Day 3 of the IWF World Youth & Junior Championships in Lima, Peru.

Representing the country in Friday's youth 64kg contests, Hosseini, 17, tallied 86kg to miss out on the snatch podium, finishing fourth behind Albanian Carja Enkileda (98kg), Nauru's Crystie Nottle Femliyi (92kg) and Russian Valeriia Drevnovskaia (86kg), who participated as a neutral athlete.

Hosseini, however, delivered a much-improved performance in the clean & jerk, starting with a successful 108kg lift before raising 111kg above her head with the second attempt.

The Iranian fell short against the 116kg weight but her second effort was still enough to secure the C&J

silver for the teenager.

Enkileda won her second gold of the afternoon with 115kg, while Femliyi finished on 110kg to take the bronze. An 86-111-197 record clinched the total bronze for Hosseini, who finished behind Enkileda (213kg) and Femliyi (202kg).

Hosseini's impressive display saw her better all three national records of her class by four, 10, and 14 kilograms in the snatch, clean & jerk, and total categories, respectively.

"I had done much better in the back-stage and I'm sure I would have won more colorful medals if I had repeated my warm-up lifts on the stage," Hosseini said, adding: "This was my last year in the youth age group and I just hope to win more medals when I take part in the junior class next year."

Iran head coach Elham Hosseini

praised Alma's fighting spirit, while acknowledging the challenges she faced.

"Alma showed incredible determination and fought hard, though she couldn't quite match the personal bests she'd achieved in training, but there was a good reason for that.

"We had a long journey to Lima, and our sleeping schedules were completely disrupted. Alma's competition started at 3 AM Iran time, and she hadn't fully adjusted to the time difference. For an athlete, that kind of disruption is extremely tough to overcome," said the Iranian coach.

Hosseini's medals were the first for an Iranian girl since Yekta Jamali had won maiden female medals for the country in the 2021 world youth event in Jeddah, collecting C&J and total silvers plus a snatch bronze in the 81kg weight class.



Iranian weightlifter Alma Hosseini (c) poses with her medals at the IWF World Youth & Junior Championships in Lima, Peru, on May 2, 2025.

● IWFR

## Iranian Basketball Super League Finals:

## Shahrdari routs Tabiat to close in on title

## Sports Desk

Shahrdari Gorgan defeated defending champion Tabiat Eslamshahr 100-73 in Game 2 of the Iranian Basketball Super League Finals in Tehran on Friday.

Iranian international guard Amirhossein Yazarloo contributed with 22 points, plus four rebounds and steals apiece for the visiting side as Shahrdari took a comprehensive 2-0 lead in the best-of-five series.

Beaten 3-2 by Tabiat in last year's Finals, Shahrdari can clinch the title

with a victory in its own backyard when the series go to Gorgan for Game 3 on Monday.

"My players gave it their all and were awarded for their efforts," Shahrdari head coach Saleh Makhdoomi said after the game, adding: "Tabiat is a great team with great players and coaching staff. The series are far from finished and we will still have to play with the same determination in the next game to lift the trophy."

Shahrdari had won the first game of the finals 81-78 on Wednesday

– also staged at Tehran's Mahmoud Mashhoun Arena.

Having finished fourth in the regular season standings, Shahrdari eased past Golnour Isfahan 3-0 in the first round of the playoffs, before coming from behind to beat Kaleh 3-1 in the best-of-five semifinal series.

Tabiat, meanwhile, finished runner-up to Kaleh in the 11-team table and went on to beat Payesh Part Shahrud for a last-four spot.

Mehran Shahintab's men won the semifinal series 3-1 against Payesh Naft Abadan.



● FATEMEH MIRAHMADI/MNA