

UWW Ranking Series:

Emami beats Yazdani,
seals Iranian 74kg spot in Zagreb

Sports Desk

Younes Emami defeated Amirmohammad Yazdani in an all-Iranian final at the Ulaanbaatar Open to settle the debate on the country's freestyle 74kg slot for September's Wrestling World Championships in Zagreb.

The two wrestlers were joined by Hossein Abouzari in representing Iran at the third Ranking Series event of the season, with the Zagreb ticket on the line, according to the selection path unveiled by the national governing body of the sport prior to the tournament in the Mongolian capital.

While Abouzari suffered a fall defeat against Indian Jaideep Jaideep in the quarterfinals, Emami and Yazdani, who have four world medals between them, made it to Saturday's showdown – a repeat of the final showpiece at the International Takhti Cup in Isfahan earlier in May, which Yazdani had won 7-4.

Iranian head coach Pejman Dorostkar refused to sit in any corner and his assistants did not give any instructions throughout the contest, the case in most

bouts which involves qualification for a national team. It was hardly a spectacular bout, lacking big moves and crafty scrambles. Emami took a 1-0 passivity lead at the break before executing a well-drilled defensive gameplan in the second period to secure a 4-3 victory.

While Emami did not celebrate the triumph, Yazdani failed to hold his tears back on the podium as he was awarded the silver medal. "Amirmohammad is my friend and brother," Emami said. "We train together a lot, so we're pretty familiar with each other's wrestling style. That's why this match was a bit tough."

"I had thought about it [defense] during practice and even throughout the day trying to fix my weaknesses," he said. "I used to give away points too easily, but I had improved a bit here, and I hope I can keep getting better from this point on," added the two-time world bronze medalist.

Emami is the sixth Iranian freestyle wrestler to book a place in the world event. Kamaran Qasempour defeated Abolfazl Rahmani in a domestic head-to-head in Tehran last week to se-

cure the 86kg slot, while reigning world champion Amirhossein Zare' (125kg) and Ali Mo'meni (57kg) won the Takhti Cup golds to punch the Zagreb ticket, joining Ahmad Mohamadnejad-Javan, Rahman Amouzad, and Amirhossein Firouzpour.

Mohammadnejad-Javan will be the Iranian 61kg wrestler, thanks to a gold-winning run at February's Zagreb Open, as well as an Asian bronze in March. Olympic silver winner Amouzad will chase a second world 65kg gold after domestic rivals Yassin Rezaei and Ali Khorramdel had below-par runs at the Ranking Series season-opener in February, while Firouzpour's dominant campaigns at the Asian Championships and the Zagreb Open, convinced the Iranian coaching staff to pick him for the world 92kg contests.



Iranian wrestlers Younes Emami (R) and Amirmohammad Yazdani go head-to-head in the freestyle 74kg final at the Ulaanbaatar Open in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, on May 31, 2025.

● UWW



WTT Youth Contender:

Iranian young guns leave Tashkent
with nine trophies

Sports Desk

Iranian table tennis prodigies stole the show on the final day of the WTT Youth Contender event in Tashkent, claiming five trophies.

Saturday's results took Iran's haul to nine trophies across different age classes in the four-day event.

An all-Iranian final saw Mobin Amiri come from behind to beat Arshia Lo-

restani 3-2 (11-13, 8-11, 14-12, 11-7, 11-8) in a thrilling boys' under-15 showdown at the Humo Arena. This was Lorestani's second runner-up trophy in the Uzbek capital, after he had suffered a four-game defeat against fellow-Iranian Benjamin Faraji in the under-17 final on Thursday.

Faraji, meanwhile, finished his campaign with a runner-up trophy in the

U19 boys' singles contests following a 3-2 (11-3, 11-9, 10-12, 5-11, 15-13) loss to Alan Kurmangaliyev of Kazakhstan.

Mohammadreza Neshati was the other Iranian contestant in the age group, who settled for a third-place after he lost in straight games (11-9, 11-6, 11-10) to Kurmangaliyev in the semifinals. In the girls' competitions, Setayesh Illoukhani over-

came opponents from the refugees' team and Azerbaijan to reach the semifinals, before a 3-2 (11-4, 13-11, 10-12, 8-11, 11-7) defeat against the host's Arujan Kamalova saw the Iranian girl take the third-place trophy.

This was Illoukhani's second defeat against the Uzbek opponent, who had also beaten the Iranian in straight games in the girls' under-17 final.



● irtfjr

'Always in my heart': Luis Enrique pays
tribute to late daughter after PSG triumph

THE GUARDIAN – As Paris Saint-Germain clinched their first Champions League title, Luis Enrique's thoughts turned to his late daughter. Six years ago Xana died of osteosarcoma, a rare form of bone cancer. She was nine. And at the moment when he scaled the peak of his coaching career, Luis Enrique paid tribute to the child who he said was "always in my heart".

At full-time the Paris fans unveiled a tifo depicting Luis and Xana, recreating the moment when he planted a flag in the pitch alongside her after winning the Champions League with Barcelona

in 2015. "It was very emotional with the banner from the fans for my family," Luis Enrique said. "But I always think about my daughter." As for his history-making side, Luis Enrique could reflect on a mission spectacularly accomplished, after a 5-0 win over Inter that PSG dominated from start to finish. "Since day one, I said I wanted to win important trophies," he said. "Paris had never won the Champions League. We did it for the first time. It's a great feeling to make many people happy." PSG scored two goals inside 20 minutes and completed the rout in the second half,

with the winger Désiré Doué scoring the first and third. "We had a great start to the game, dominating from the beginning," said Luis Enrique. "But I wanted them to keep pushing, scoring, to ensure we won the game." Doué, 19, was still processing a game that has elevated him into the very elite of world football. "I can't believe what happened tonight," he said. "We made history for the club, in French football, in European football. We're a great team, and we showed it."

Inter's manager, Simone Inzaghi, tried to put a brave face on his side's humilia-

tion. "This hurts," he said. "Of course the game wasn't good enough on our part." But he also insisted: "We can come out stronger from this defeat, like we did in 2023 [after losing the final to Manchester City] and then won the league the following season."

Deadly celebrations

More than 500 people were arrested by police during the celebrations in France, and two people were reported dead and 192 injured, the interior ministry said on Sunday, Reuters reported. Wild celebrations erupted across the French capital and beyond on Saturday



night, although skirmishes with police later threatened to spoil the party. The interior ministry's provisional assessment as of Sunday morning was that 559 people had been arrested, including 491 in Paris, which led to 320 people be-

ing placed in police custody, 254 of them in Paris.

The interior ministry on Sunday reported hundreds of fires, including more than 200 vehicles burned. Some 22 members of the security forces and seven firefighters were harmed.



PSG fans display a banner showing the manager, Luis Enrique, and his late daughter, Xana, after the final whistle in the UEFA Champions League final at the Allianz Arena, Munich, Germany, on May 31, 2025.

● KIRILL KUDRYAVTSEV/AFP