

U17 World Wrestling Championships:

Iran misses out on gold as freestyle title remains elusive

Sports Desk

The Iranian freestyle squad had to settle for a runner-up finish behind the United States for a second year running at the U17 World Wrestling Championships, following a goldless run across 10 weight classes in Athens, Greece.

A medal haul of five silvers and double bronzes saw Iran collect 150 points – four adrift of Team USA, which bagged four golds, one silver, and two bronzes.

Kazakhstan, meanwhile, pipped Azerbaijan by one point to finish third with 91 points.

Parsa Tahmasbi and Arsham Vahabian fell short against American opponents in the final showpiece of their respective events on the final day, though a victory for Amirali Alizadeh against Russian David Dzebisov – competing as a neutral athlete – in the 92kg final would have still propelled Iran to 155 points and the team title.

Dzebisov, however, had other ideas and scored the first takedown to lead 2-0 before Alizadeh bounced back in the second period to make it 2-2 and lead on criteria.

The Iranian was then caught in a tangle with Dzebisov who managed to finish on top and score two points before a desperate Alizadeh gave away another two points in the closing stages and lost 6-2. Tahmasbi, meanwhile, was undone by American Keegan Bassett inside the first period of the



Iranian wrestler Mohammadparsa Karami (R) is seen in action against Ukraine's Artur Kostjuk in the freestyle 80kg final at the U17 World Championships in Athens, Greece, on August 2, 2025.

● UWW

with Amirhossein Naqdalipour making a quick work of Georgian Murtaz Bagdavadze, securing a superiority win (11-0) in the first period, to finish with a consolation bronze in the 110kg category.

Sina Ordou (51kg) and Mohammadreza Barari (55kg) left the Greek capital empty-handed.

Earlier at the U17 Worlds, Iran had lifted a fourth successive team trophy in the Greco-Roman competitions. Represented by nine wrestlers after Abolfazl Shiri (65kg) was denied an entry visa by the host country, Iran had only two finalists across 10 classes but still managed to pip Uzbekistan to the team title. Amirsam Mohammadi won the 92kg gold and Yazdan Delrouz took the 110kg silver, with Mohammadhossein Kazemi (71kg), Amirmohammad Hajivand (48kg), Abolfazl Zare' (60kg), and Amirreza Tahmasbpour (55kg) collecting four bronzes as Iran stood atop the table with 125 points. Uzbekistan impressed with four gold medals but had to settle for a runner-up finish with 118 points. Kazakhstan finished third with 113 points, with Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan – tied on 100 points – in fourth and fifth, respectively.

45kg showdown.

Bassett got the first takedown to lead 2-0 and then a turn made it 4-0 before the American got another takedown and kept Tahmasbi's back on the mat to secure a fall victory.

In a second Iranian-American final on Sunday, Vahabian suf-

fered a 9-2 loss to Jayden James, which saw the US leapfrog Iran in the team table for the first time throughout the freestyle competitions.

Elsewhere on the final day, Iranian Arian Mehralizadeh missed out on a podium-finish in the 60kg contest after a comprehen-

sive defeat (9-0) against Kazakhstan's Bekassyl Assambek. Sunday's results came after Iran had bagged four medals on the preceding night in the freestyle event.

Sina Boustani fell to a superiority defeat (12-1) against American Ariaiah Mills in the 48kg final,

while Mohammadparsa Karami settled for the 80kg silver following a 3-1 setback against Ukraine's Artur Kostjuk.

In the 65kg division, Morteza Hajmollamohammadi rallied from behind with seconds left to beat Indian Gourav Punia on criteria (8-8) for the 65kg bronze,

Coach Gholami vows 'more to come' from Iranian U19 volleyball team



● SEPIDEH ABDOLHAY/volleyball.ir

Sports Desk

Iran head coach Adel Gholami said volleyball fans will hear much more about his young players in the future, despite a mixed campaign by his team at the FIVB Boys' U19 World Championships in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Iran suffered a 3-2 loss (23-25, 25-23, 15-25, 25-21, 15-10) to Spain on Sunday to settle for a fourth-place finish in the Uzbek capital and miss out on a top-three spot at the biennial competition for only a second time over the past decade.

"It was a close game. We reached the hotel around midnight after yesterday's game against France and then had to be back at the venue at 12 p.m. today, so the players didn't have much time to rest and perhaps their fatigue played a part in the defeat," Gholami said after the game.

Gholami, however, believes his

boys "still did a great job" in Tashkent, praising them for "working hard to achieve this feat."

"They are exceptional young talents and I am sure you will hear much more about this group of players in the future," said Gholami, who also his team to a runner-up finish behind China at the Asian U18 Championship last year. "They already have a professional mindset – with brilliant skills in different aspects of the game such as technique, tactics, and adaptability. They're also very intelligent and there is much more to come from all of them," added the former Iran international middle-blocker.

"You'll see them all play at the senior level soon, and I'm sure they will be a joy to work with because they know all about the volleyball basics – their foundation is already solid."

Sunday's defeat was a second

setback for Iran against Spain in Tashkent, following a 3-2 loss on the opening day.

Gholami's boys recovered from the first-day defeat to beat Poland, which ultimately won the silver, in five sets and then walked away with comfortable straight-set wins against Egypt and Tunisia. A 3-1 loss to Italy on the final day of the group phase saw Iran finish third in the six-team Pool C and land Belgium in the round of 16. Iran overcame Belgium in four sets before defeating surprise package Finland – the only team with a perfect record in the group stage – 3-1 to set a last-four date with defending champion France in a repeat of the 2023 final. However, Iran's bid for a first world under-19 title since 2017 ended in vain after France recovered from a first-set defeat to win 3-1 (14-25, 25-14, 25-22, 25-19) on Saturday.

American Lyles clocks world's fastest 200m this year

REUTERS – Noah Lyles surged past Keny Bednarek to win a heated 200-metre race in a world-leading time at the USA Track and Field Championships on Sunday, turning to stare down Bednarek as the sprint rivals crossed the finish line. Lyles, the three-times world champion in the event, trailed coming off the bend but stormed to the front to cross in 19.63 seconds, the fastest time in the world this season in a huge statement

ahead of next month's World Championships in Tokyo.

Bednarek, winner of Friday's 100m, finished in 19.67, and then shoved Lyles in the back after they crossed. Lyles turned angrily with arms raised before the two exchanged words and finally shook hands.

"It was a pretty difficult championship," said Lyles, who has been hampered with an ankle injury this season. "I've

been tired. It's been rough, coming out here when you're not 100 percent." Lyles had not needed to compete in Eugene, Oregon to qualify for Tokyo, as he already had a bye in both the 100m and 200m as the reigning champion.

Their anger spilled into their trackside NBC interview. "If you've got a problem, I expect a call," Bednarek said. Lyles replied: "You know what, you're right... Let's talk after this."



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