

Iran to play in five friendlies before FIVB World Championship



● FIVB

Sports Desk

The Iranian national volleyball team will play five warmup games in preparation for the FIVB Men's World Championship, which will begin in the Philippines on September 12. Iran will visit Doha on August 26 to face Egypt and Qatar, twice, before leaving for Manila, where Roberto Piazza's men are scheduled to play Slovenia and Germany on Sept. 9-10, the national governing body of the sport confirmed.

Iran was scheduled to participate in a four-team tournament in Russia before heading to Manila, but the preparation plan was changed after the Cuba and Belarus withdrew from the event.

Iran will make an eighth appearance at the flagship international volleyball event, starting with a game against Egypt in Pool A on September 14.

The Asian powerhouse will face another African test in Tunisia two days later, followed by a final group game against the host at the SM Mall of Asia Are-

na in Pasey on September 18. The top two in each of the eight groups will progress to the round of 16.

The World Championship will be a second major tournament for Iran under Italian Piazza, who will be looking to build on a decent run of results by his team at the preliminary round of the Volleyball Nations League last month.

Despite failing to secure a first VNL last-eight spot since 2022, Piazza's team definitely did enough to win over Iranian fans again with some brilliant performances and results in the preliminary phase – following a dire run of results over the past couple of years that saw Team Melli finish in the bottom three of the VNL table on two occasions and miss out on a berth for Paris Olympics last summer.

In fact, an eighth-place finish, courtesy of six wins in 12 outings, would have been enough for Iran to progress, had China – second from bottom in the preliminary table – not automatically qualified as the host of the VNL Finals.

Chengdu 2025 World Games:

Iran's Lesani settles for roller-skating bronze

Sports Desk

The roller-skating event of the Chengdu 2025 World Games was hardly a memorable one for Iran after the country managed to win only a single bronze medal across the men's and women's competitions.

Reza Lesani, who won a bronze at the Asian Roller Skating Championship in July, came out on top in successive races against Mohammad Savari in an all-Iranian third-place contest to finish behind gold winner Zhang Hao and his fellow-Chinese Fu Yu in the men's inline freestyle speed slalom.

Iranian girls Romina Salek and Taraneh Ahmadi, meanwhile, finished their campaign empty-handed on in the women's speed slalom event.

Former world-record holder Salek, who bagged a precious

gold medal at June's Hero Battle Cup in Milan, missed out on the podium after a 2-1 loss to Wen Jingjing of China.

Asian silver medalist Ahmadi had to settle for a joint-fifth spot after she suffered an early exit against Salek in the quarterfinals.

Liu Chiao-hsi of the Chinese Taipei, who beat Ahmadi to the gold at the Asian Championship last month, repeated her success by defeating China's Zhu Siyi in the final.

Lesani's bronze added a seventh medal to Iran's haul at The World Games.

Iranian karateka Sara Bahmanyar grabbed the women's kumite -50kg gold, while Shahin Banitalebi (men's nanquan-nangun) and Yasaman Baqerzadeh (women's 70kg) walked away with the ultimate prize in their respective events at the wushu competitions.

A sole silver medal for the country also came in wushu as Mohammadreza Rigi fell to a final defeat against Egyptian Alhussein Wahdan in the men's sanda 85kg showdown.

Soheila Mansourian (women's sanda 60kg) and Saleh Abazari (men's kumite +84kg) were the other Iranian bronze medalists in Chengdu.

Featuring 34 sports and 60 disciplines that are not contested at the Olympic Games, the 12th edition of The World Games will conclude with closing ceremony today.



Reza Lesani celebrates with the Iranian flag after winning the men's bronze medal at the inline freestyle speed slalom event of The World Games in Chengdu, China, on Aug. 16, 2025.

● XIE JIANFEI/XINHUA



Qolizadeh to be sidelined for three months with groin injury



● PAWEŁ JASKOLKA/PRESSFOCUS

Sports Desk

Lech Poznan's Iranian winger Ali Qolizadeh is expected to be out of action for three months following surgery on his torn groin muscle on Friday.

The Iranian international suffered the injury during a training session with his club last week.

The news came as a shock for the Polish top-flight champion, which has already had to cope with the absence of several key players – including Swedish winger Patrik Walemark and Polish fullback Robert Gumny – in the early stages of the new season.

Having joined Lech Poznan from Royal Charleroi S.C. for a then-club record fee in July 2023, the 29-year-old Iranian enjoyed a prolific campaign last season, bagging eight goals – while providing teammates with six assists – in 34 games in all competitions, as the Polish club lifted a ninth Ekstraklasa league trophy in May.

WTT Youth Contender Amman 2025:

Iranians collect double trophies in U17 boys' event

Sports Desk

Young Iranian table tennis players Faraz Shakiba and Mobin Amiri claimed a couple of trophies at the latest WTT Youth Contender event in Amman, Jordan. Representing the country in the U17 boys singles contests, Shakiba came from behind to beat India's Abhi-

nandh Pradhivadhi 3-2 (8-11, 7-11, 11-7, 12-10, 16-14) in a thrilling last-four clash at the Orthodox Club Hall, but eventually settled for a runner-up finish after a 3-1 (11-8, 5-11, 12-10, 11-8) loss to Li Ki Ho of Hong Kong in the final showpiece. Amiri, meanwhile, finished joint third alongside Pradhivadhi, following a straight-game setback (11-9, 11-9, 11-9) against the Hong Kong player.



Iran's Faraz Shakiba won a runner-up trophy in the U17 boys singles contests at the WTT Youth Contender event in Amman, Jordan.

● WTT

