

U20 Wrestling World Championships:

Solace in Samokov as Iran crowned Greco-Roman champion

Sports Desk

Iranian wrestling ultimately found relief by winning a fourth consecutive Greco-Roman title at the U20 World Championships, having endured an under-par freestyle campaign by its own standards in Samokov, Bulgaria.

Iran claimed a single gold medal across 10 weight classes but still managed to finish atop the team table with 117 points, with Armenia (98pts) and Azerbaijan (90pts) in the following spots.

Ahoura Bouveiri was the only Iranian finalist on the final day of the competitions, but had to settle for silver after a decisive 10-1 loss to Georgian Anri Putkaradze in the 77kg showdown. Abolfazl Fat'hi won the fourth Greco-Roman medal for Iran later on Sunday by bagging a consolation bronze in the 130kg event.

The Iranian superheavyweight bounced back from a last-four setback (5-4) against Russian Ali Iliasov, who competed as a neutral athlete, to hammer Belarusian Viachaslau Fedaryna 9-1 and share the third podium with Ivan Yankovskiy of Ukraine, while Iliasov went on to make a quick work of Turkey's Cemal Yusuf Bakır (9-0) in the final.

Sunday's results came after Iran had won a gold and a silver on the preceding night in Samokov. Iranian Payam Ahmadi defeated Azerbaijan's Turan Dashdamirov 5-3 to walk away with the ultimate prize in the 55kg class. In a thrilling showdown – featuring two 2023 world under-17



Iranian Greco-Roman wrestler Payam Ahmadi (blue) is seen in action during a victory over Azerbaijan's Turan Dashdamirov in the 55kg final at the U20 World Championships in Samokov, Bulgaria, on August 23, 2025.
● KADIR CALISKAN/UWW

champions – Ahmadi needed an acrobatic summersault to avoid conceding points in the final minute and hold on for the victory. Ahmadi escaped a par terre position with ease in the first period and then scored a take-down and turned the Azerbai-

jani wrestler using a high gut-wrench for a 4-1 lead. The second period saw Ahmadi on the aggressive and he tried a bodylock but Dashdamirov blocked it with an overarm and flipped Ahmadi for two points. Ahmadi now led 4-3 and Dash-

damirov needed two points for a win with 2:40 remaining. Dashdamirov failed to find an opening until the last 15 seconds when he did a fireman carry but Ahmadi landed on his feet. Dashdamirov was awarded two points but Iran challenged

and the points were removed as there was no danger position. Two-time Asian U20 champion Mohammad-Hadi Seydi, meanwhile, suffered a 5-3 defeat against Ukrainian Yehor Yakushenko to finish with a silver in the 97kg contests.

Yakushenko had the first par terre position and lifted Seydi and then completed a correct throw for two points to lead 3-0. Seydi managed to close out the first period with a stepout and cut the deficit to 3-1.

The Iranian had his chance to score in the second period from par terre but Yakushenko was solid in his defense and did not give up any points. Seydi tried a few attacks in the final seconds but Yakushenko got two more points for a go-behind in the final second to win a second world junior title in a row.

Earlier in Samokov, Iran had to settle for a third-place finish in the freestyle competitions – a lowest spot for the country, which had lifted three team trophies over the previous four editions, since 2019. Mahdi Yousefi was the sole Iranian freestyle gold medalist, thanks to a thrilling 8-6 win against American William Henckel in the 79kg final, while Ahoura Khateri (61kg) and Abolfazl Mohammadnejad (125kg) added a couple of silvers to the country's medal haul. Ebrahim Elahi (70kg) and Abolfazl Rahmani (86kg) bagged a consolation bronze in their respective events, as Iran collected 111 points. The United States tallied 185 points to secure back-to-back freestyle titles, dominating with seven medals, including a remarkable five golds, with Kazakhstan scooping one gold, one silver, and double bronzes to beat Iran to the runner-up spot by a single point.

FIVB Men's U21 World Championship:

Iran routs Canada to extend perfect run

Sports Desk

Iranian boys came out victorious against Canada in straight sets (25-20, 25-14, 25-22) on Monday to maintain their perfect start at the FIVB Men's U21 World Championship in Jiangmen, China.

Outside-hitter Ariyan Mahmoudinejad chipped in a game-high 14 points, with middle-blocker Shayan Mehrabi contributing 11 as Iran celebrated a fourth successive win in Pool B.

"Canadian players were physically strong and very tall, which makes them a strong defensive team. That could have been a problem for us if we didn't have

a proper offensive gameplan, but our players did a great job today," said Iran head coach Gholamreza Mo'menimoqaddam after the game.

"The players targeted the specific areas we had identified through our analysis. They were also exceptional in both defending and serving," added Mo'menimoqaddam.

The top spot of the group table will be at stake when Iran and Poland go head-to-head at the Jiangmen Sports Center today. Poland also claimed a fourth win in a row by beating Kazakhstan 3-0 (25-21, 25-21, 25-22) later on Monday.

"Poland is a very tactical side. Their players have had a full year of playing together in the Polish league, so it won't be an easy game against them at all. We'll still go out there to fight for victory and progress to the last 16 as the group winner," said the Iranian, who is on a remarkable 24-game unbeaten run at the helm, during which the country claimed back-to-back Asian under-20 titles either side of the world U21 crown in 2023 in Manama.

Iran began its title defense in Jiangmen with a 3-1 win against Kazakhstan and then eased past Puerto Rico in straight sets, be-

fore edging out South Korea in a five-set thriller on Saturday – in a repeat of last year's Asian under-20 final, which Iran had won in straight sets.

Mo'menimoqaddam, however, is wary of the different caliber of tests awaiting his boys in Jiangmen.

"All the teams here are strong. I'd say at least six teams are fighting for a place on the podium, and that makes things difficult for everyone," said the Iranian.

"Italy, France, Poland, Ukraine, and Japan have all been exceptional and will fancy their chances of reaching the semifinals.



Iranian outside-hitter Ariyan Mahmoudinejad (8) hits a spike during a straight-set victory over Canada at the FIVB Men's U21 World Championship in Jiangmen, China, on August 25, 2025.
● FIVB

"From this point on, the matches will only get tougher and more tactical and the team that proves

to be physically, tactically, and technically better will ultimately come out on top."



● taekwondo.ir

Iran names taekwondo rosters for global showdowns

Sports Desk

Iranian Taekwondo Federation named the men's and women's squads for the upcoming two major events.

Six Iranian girls will represent the country at the WT World Championships – starting October 24 in Wuxi, China – with six others vying for glory at the sixth edition of the Islamic Solidarity Games, when the multi-sport event kicks

off in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on November 7.

Nahid Kiani, who won a historic Olympic silver in Paris last summer, and Mobina Nematzadeh – a bronze winner in the Games – will headline the Iranian women's roster in Wuxi.

Iranian duo will be joined by Saiedeh Nasiri, Mahla Momenzadeh, Kowsar Asaseh, and Nastaran Valizadeh.

Saina Karimi, Rozhan Goudarzi,

Hasti Mohammadi, Yalda Valinejad, Fatemeh Eskandarnia, and two-time Asian silver winner Melika Mirhosseini will compete across different weight classes in Riyadh.

Meanwhile, Arian Salimi will make a first international appearance since grabbing the Olympic gold last year at the World Championships, and will be joined by Mehran Barkhordari, who will be looking to build on last year's

silver-winning campaign in Paris. Mahdi Razmian, Abolfazl Zandi, Mahdi Hajmoussaei, Mohammad-Sadeq Dehqani, Amir-Sina Bakhtiari, and Mohammad-Hosseini Yazdani complete the Iranian men's squad for the visit to Wuxi. Amir Nasir-Ahmadi, Ali-Asghar Ali Moradian, Hamed Asghari, Ali Khoshravesh, Amirreza Sadeqian, and Ali Najafi will be the six Iranian male practitioners at the Islamic Solidarity Games.