

World Wushu Championships: Historic taolu triumph as Iranian women grab four golds



Sports Desk

Iranian women stole the show on the penultimate day of World Wushu Championships, collecting four gold medals in Brasilia, Brazil.

Zahra Kiani etched her name into history books on Saturday by grabbing a maiden taolu gold for Iran at the world event.

Representing the country in the women's qiangshu contest, Kiani scored 9.763 points to walk away with the ultimate prize, with Indonesian Patricia Geraldine (9.756) and Dương Thúy Vi (9.746) of Vietnam settling for silver and bronze, respectively.

This was Kiani's second history-making campaign in a year after she had won Iran's first individual talou gold at the Asian Championships last September.

Meanwhile, Soheila and Shahrbanou Mansourian as well as Sediqeh Daryaei added three sanda golds to Iran's medal haul in women's competitions. Daryaei came out victorious (2-0) against Turkey's Sudenaz Gulay in the 65kg final, while Soheila Mansourian defeated China's Ruiping Chen in straight rounds to win the 70kg gold.

Shahrbanou Mansourian bagged a sixth world gold medal in her illustrious career, thanks to a 2-0 victory over Indian Shivani Prajapati in the 75kg showdown.

Soheil Mousavi suffered a last-four setback against Li Weijin of Hong Kong to finish his campaign with a consolation bronze in the men's 80kg category.

Iranians enjoyed further glory in the men's sanda contests on Saturday, as Shoja Panahi (65kg), Erfan Moharrami

(70kg), and Mohsen Mohammad-Seifi progressed to the final showpiece of their respective events.

Saturday's medals came after Iran had collected a sanda gold and taolu bronze earlier in the capital.

Mahdi Moradi made quick work of Cruz Pérez, knocking out the Mexican in the first round, on Friday to claim the men's 90kg gold.

Shahin Banitalebi – a gold medalist at The World Games in August – scored 9.733 points to finish third in the men's nandao event, with Hong Kong's Lau Chi Lung (9.763) and his compatriot Deng Longteng (9.740) collecting the gold and silver, respectively.

Iran's Sediqeh Daryaei celebrates after winning the women's sanda 65kg gold at the World Wushu Championships in Brasilia, Brazil, on September 6, 2025.
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AKF Cadet, Junior & U21 Championships: Iranians notch up 22 medals, finish runner-up to Japan

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A remarkable 22 medals, including seven golds, across different age classes saw Iran finish runner-up to Japan at the AKF Cadet, Junior & U21 Championships Shaoguan, China. Japan collected 12 golds, two silvers, and five bronzes to claim the team trophy, with Kazakhstan in the third place with four golds, three silvers, and 10 bronze medals.

On Sunday, Yalda Naqibei-ranvand, Mehrnegar Ahmadi, and Hannaneh Salehi (+68kg) rounded off their dominant campaigns with a gold medal in the women's kumite under-21 category, while Hossein Vafa (-67kg) defeated Kyrgyzstan's Erlan Akylbek Uulu 9-3 to walk away with the ultimate prize in the men's U21 contests.

Naqibeiranvand overcame Taipei opponent Chan Hsin-Yu (5-0) in the -50kg final, while Ahmadi beat Kazakhstan's Aizhan Bakirova 2-1 for the -61kg gold, with Salehi outclassing Begimai Orozalieva of Kyrgyzstan 6-1 in the +68kg showdown.

Meanwhile, Mohammad-Javad Safari (men's -75kg), Abolfazl Hamdamjou (men's -60kg), and Fatemeh Zahra Saeidi (wom-

en's -55kg) added three silvers to Iran's medal haul in the under-21 class, with Mahan Mirzaei winning a bronze in the men's +84kg division.

Sunday's medals came after the Iranians had bagged six junior medals on the preceding night in Shaoguan.

Ghazal Fat'hi was the sole Iranian gold medalist in the junior contests, courtesy of a 4-0 victory over Ho Cheok In of Macau in the women's -48kg final.

There was, however, final disappointments for the Iranians in the men's junior competitions, as Mohammad Abdollahi (-61kg), Arya Yousefi (-68kg), and Mi'aad Shafei (+76kg) had to settle for the silver in their respective weight classes.

Abdollahi fell to an 11-3 loss to Kazakhstan's Turar Kalpakbay, while Yousefi suffered a 5-1 loss to the host's Liu Jiachen, with Shafei beaten 1-0 by Begzod Zoirov of Uzbekistan.

Iran's fourth silver medal on Sunday came in the men's individual kata event, where Amirreza Mosalman fell short against Japan's Takeru Hamazawa in the final.

Zahra Rezazadeh, meanwhile, finished her campaign with a consolation bronze in

the women's -53kg division, bouncing back from a setback against Japanese Miko Shishido opponent to beat Nepal's Sonam Sherpa and share the third podium with Ssu Chia-Ying of Chinese Taipei.

Iran had also won eight medals – including double women's kumite golds – in the youth class.

Setayesh Qaneiefard defeated Malaysian Lalitaanjali Ravindran 3-0 in the -54kg final, with Setayesh Afshar coming out on top against Thailand's Chonlada Nisangkat 4-2 in the +61kg showpiece.

Arshia Mo'alemi (-63kg) and Faryar Bahadori (-70kg), meanwhile, settled for a couple of silver medals in the boys' kumite competitions, with Ava Farmani (-47kg) and Dina Karimi (-61kg) finishing with a bronze in the women's draw.

Iran also bagged two team kata bronzes in the combined cadet and junior event. Amirreza Chamani, Amirali Mirzazadeh, Matin Farimand, and Ata Farimand teamed up for a third-place finish in the boys' contest. The quadruple of Dina Safari, Fatemeh Sehatbakhsh, Hannaneh Nourollahzadeh, and Kowsar Ranjbar took the bronze in the girls' contest.

Esteghlal signs former Barca striker El Haddadi

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Esteghlal signed former Barcelona striker Munir El Haddadi, the Persian Gulf Pro League club announced on Saturday.

The 30-year-old Morocco international joined the Tehran Blues as a free agent from CD Leganés, having scored seven goals in 29 appearances across all competitions for the LaLiga outfit last season.

The ex-Barcelona youth player made 56 appearances across two spells for Blaugrana's senior team between 2014 and 2018, finding the net on 12 occasions, while contributing with 10 assists.

Also a former player of Sevilla, Getafe, Valencia, Alavés, and Las Palmas, El Haddadi has 47 goals and 21 assists under his belt in 267 appearances in the Spanish top flight. The Moroccan has been capped 11 times for the national team, scoring twice, but has not received an international call-up since September 2022.

Esteghlal, which has Portuguese Ricardo Sa Pinto back on the bench as the head coach, is desperate to improve on the below-par ninth-place finish in the Iranian league last season.

The Capital Blues got off to a slow start in the summer transfer window, but their activity in the market gathered pace over the past 30 days as the club made marquee signings in Albanian international winger Jasir Asani last, former Real Madrid and Sporting CP goalkeeper Antonio Adán, and Malian winger Mousa Djenebo, as well as Iranian under-23 striker Saeid Saharkhizan. Esteghlal walked away with a massive 1-0 away victory over Tractor on the opening day of the new season, but had to overcome a two-goal deficit to share the points with Zob Ahan in a 3-3 draw at home before the international break.

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AFC U23 Asian Cup qualifiers: Taheri on hat-trick as Iran hit six past Guam

AFC – Five second-half goals steered Iran to a comfortable 6-0 win over Guam in their penultimate Group I clash in the AFC U23 Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2026 Qualifiers at the Al Nahyan Stadium in Abu Dhabi on Saturday.

Iran will play the United Arab Emirates – themselves 2-0 winners against Hong Kong, China – on Tuesday in what will be a top-of-the-table clash.

The top team in the group will win direct qualification for next year's finals, with the second team hopping to progress as one of four best runners-up in 11 preliminary groups.

Despite dominating ball possession from the start, the Central Asian side only opened accounts in the 42nd minute through Alireza Safari.

Guam, who had no shots on target in the first half, conceded a second goal a minute after the restart when Krasa Taheri

put the ball past keeper Josiah Jones.

Taheri, who came on at the start of the second half, fired home Iran's third in the 74th minute and completed his hat-trick five

minutes later.

Saeid Saharkhizan put his name on the scoresheet in the 84th minute, with captain Mohammad Javad Hosseini completing the scoring in the 90th minute.



Iranian players celebrate a goal during a 6-0 victory over Guam in the AFC U23 Asian Cup qualifiers in Abu Dhabi, UAE, on September 6, 2025.
● AFC



● WKF