

# World Wushu Championships: Iran stands runner-up with 10 medals

## Sports Desk

Iran enjoyed a medal-laden run to the World Wushu Championships in Brasilia, Brazil. Having missed the 2023 edition in Fort Worth, Texas, the Iranian squad collected 10 medals – including a remarkable six golds – to finish as the runner-up to China, which bagged 16 medals, in the team standings.

Erfan Moharrami rounded off an impressive campaign for the country on Sunday with a sanda gold, thanks to a 2-0 victory over Alizhan Ablagatov of Kazakhstan in the final showpiece of the men's 70kg class.

There was further sanda medals for Iran on the final day of the competitions, as Shoja Panahi and Mohsen Mohammadseifi settled for a couple of silvers in their respective classes.

Representing the country in the men's 65kg category, Panahi fell to a 2-0 defeat against Wang Chengjin of China in the final, while Mohammadseifi missed out on a sixth gold in the world event after a 2-0 setback against



Zahra Kiani grabbed a history-making taolu gold for Iran at the World Wushu Championships.

● [iranwushufed.ir](http://iranwushufed.ir)

history books of the Iranian sport on Saturday by grabbing a maiden world taolu gold for country – courtesy of a 9.763-point performance in the qiangshu form final. 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. Soheila and Shahrbanou Mansourian as well as Sediqeh Daryaei added three sanda golds to Iran's medal haul.

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 Prapapati in the 75kg showdown.

Chinese Jin Gensheng in the 75kg showdown.

Sunday's medals came after Mahdi Moradi and Soheil Mousavi had won a gold and bronze, respectively, in the men's sanda event.

Moradi made light work of Cruz Pérez, knocking out the Mexican in the first round, to walk away with the ultimate prize the 90kg division, while Mousavi suffered a last-four setback against Li Weijin of Hong Kong to finish with a consolation

bronze in the 80kg category.

Iran's second men's bronze came in taolu contests, where Shahin Banitalebi – a gold medalist at The World Games in August – scored 9.733 points to finish third in the men's nandao event.

## Golden girls

Iranian wushu owed the major part of the success in Brasilia to its women's roster, which collected four gold medals in across the sanda and taolu competitions. Zahra Kiani etched her name into

## Wrestling World Championships: Ruthless Rahman aiming for redemption against Japanese Kiyooka



Iranian wrestler Rahman Amouzad (L) and Japanese Kotaro Kiyooka, pictured during their final bout at the Paris Olympics, will headline the freestyle 65kg contests at the upcoming World Championships in Zagreb, Croatia.

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As if freestyle wrestler Rahman Amouzad needed more motivation to chase a second world gold when the World Championships get underway in Zagreb on Saturday, the Iranian will be driven by a desire for revenge, looking to avenge last year's heartbreak against Japan's Kotaro Kiyooka at the Paris Olympics.

A world champion in 2022, Amouzad lived up to his nickname, 'Ruthless', on his way to the final showpiece in the French capital, securing three superiority victories without conceding a single point.

Fresh off emphatic wins against the 2023 and 2024 world gold medalists Ismail Musukaev and Islam Dudaev, Amouzad looked to be the ultimate favorite for the Olympic glory, only to be stunned by the low-profile Japanese who pulled off a sensational 10-3 victory at the Grand Palais Éphémère. Thirteen months on, Amouzad and Kiyooka will headline the 65kg contests in Zagreb as the number one and two seeds in the draw, meaning the two will not cross paths before the final showdown.

Joining Amouzad and Kiyooka in the 65kg mix are Russian European champion Ibragim Ibragimov, competing as a neutral athlete; Arme-

nian Vazgen Tevanyan, who won a world bronze in 2023; Russian-born Frenchman Khamzat Arsamerzouev – beaten by Ibragimov in the European final – as well as Puerto Rican Sebastian Rivera, a bronze medalist in Paris. Elsewhere in Zagreb, Iran's Amirhossein Zare' and Kamran Qasempour will also be looking to bounce back from their setbacks at major events in 2024.

Reigning world superheavyweight champion Zare', who was undone by Georgian giant Geno Petriashvili in the Olympic final, will be the wrestler to beat in the 125kg class.

Meanwhile, Qasempour – a two-time world 92kg champion – will be after glory in the new 86kg territory, having missed out on the world podium in Tirana after back-to-back losses to two wrestling greats in Russian Abdurashid Sadulaev and American David Taylor.

Having recovered from a torn ligament injury, two-time world under-23 champion Amirali Azarpira will be back in 97kg action for the first time since the Paris Games, aiming to build on his impressive Olympic bronze. However, Bahrain's Akhmed Tazhudinov, who won the gold in Paris, will be the favorite to retain his world title, with American Kyle Snyder and Georgian Givi Matcharashvili

also tipped for a place on the podium. Mohammad Nokhodi had also been sidelined with injury since winning a consolation bronze at the World Championships last October, but Iranian head coach Pejman Dorostkar was still convinced to give him a shot at a fifth world medal in the 79kg class after Fariborz Babaei Asian champion Mahdi Yousefi failed to impress throughout the Iranian team trials over the past 12 months.

Amirmohammad Yazdani will represent the country in the 70kg class, looking to improve on his two silver medals from 2021 and 2023, while two-time world bronze winner Younes Emami will be eager to bounce back from an underwhelming Olympic campaign in Paris, where he was outclassed by American Kyle Duke in the quarterfinals.

World under-23 bronze medalist Ali Mo'meni (57kg) and Ahmad Mohammadnejad Javan (61kg) – an Asian bronze medalist in March – complete the 10-man freestyle roster, as Iran will chase a first freestyle team trophy since 2013.

The Iranian team finished runner-up to the United States in 2022 and 2023, before placing third in last year's edition, which featured only four non-Olympic weight classes.

## Sharifi tips Iran for superheavyweight glory at IWF World Championships

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Iranian weightlifter Ayat Sharifi said he is optimistic about a successful super-heavyweight run for the country at the IWF World Championships, starting October 2 in Forde, Norway. Sharifi will be one of the two Iranians in the +110kg category, coming off an impressive campaign at May's Asian Championships in Jiangshan, China, where he claimed double golds in the clean & jerk and total, as well as a bronze in the snatch event.

Joining Sharifi in representing the country in the super-heavyweight class in Forde will be former Olympic silver medalist Ali Davoudi, who won triple medals – including double silvers – in last year's world event in Manama.

The two Iranians have registered a joint-third total entry record of 430kg for the upcoming World Championships, trailing Bahrain's Gor Minasyan and Armenian Varazdat Lalayan by 30 and

20 kilograms, respectively.

"We've been in the national team training camp for a long time now. Thank God, I'm in a good form and I managed to post some decent results in the Iranian league contests. I hope we can also set some good records at the World Championships," Sharifi, who recently lifted 206kg in snatch and 256kg in C&J in the league, told Mehr News Agency.

"Of course, we hadn't yet reached our peak condition during the league as we were still in the middle of intense training," added the Iranian, who believes his numbers will still be good enough for a medal at the World Championships.

"We will definitely reach the peak level of fitness that the coaching staff has planned for, before the world event gets underway.

"The world record totals are almost the same as the numbers we have already posted. The overall level of competition has dropped slightly following [Lasha] Tal-

akhadze's retirement. However, the winning totals were in this same range last year in Manama. With the totals we have achieved, we are in a good position to win a medal in Forde," Sharifi said. Sharifi is still wary of the competition from Olympic silver medalist Lalayan and Minasyan, who won four world medals between them last year.

"The World Championships have always been a tough competition. A weightlifter's mind and body must be completely prepared in every way to post big lifts. I hope the gold and silver medals in the superheavyweight division go to the Iranians.

"Of course, we face serious competitors from Armenian and Bahraini weightlifters, though Lalayan is more of a contender in the snatch event rather than clean & jerk. Given that both Ali Davoudi and I are strong in the clean & jerk, we will be able to compete with them in the total at the World Championships."



● [XINHUA](http://XINHUA)