

# Wrestling World Championships: Iran grabs triple Greco-Roman medals, claims historic double

## Sports Desk

Iran claimed a first men's team title double at the Wrestling World Championships after bagging three Greco-Roman medals, including double golds, on Day 7 of the competition in Zagreb, Croatia.

Gholamreza Farrokhi stole the show in the 82kg event by walking away with the ultimate prize on his debut at the Wrestling Worlds, while Olympic bronze medalist Amin Mirzazadeh retained his 130kg title.

Meanwhile, teenage sensation Payam Ahmadi had to settle for silver after a 9-7 setback against Georgia's Vakhtang Lolua in the 55kg showdown.

A world under-20 champion in August, Ahmadi, who was only named in the Iranian squad a week before the event, will still have every reason to be proud of his campaign in the Croatian capital after delivering a series of brave performance, including a last-four victory over Azerbaijan's four-time world champion Eldaniz Azizli, on his way to the final showpiece.

Later on Friday, Farrokhi, who won the Zagreb Open Ranking Series gold in February at the same arena, showed no nerves in blanking Gela Bolkvadze in a second final featuring Iranian and Georgian wrestlers.

Farrokhi went straight to work in the final and was awarded with the first par terre position,



Gholamreza Farrokhi celebrates with the Iranian flag after winning the Greco-Roman 82kg gold at the Wrestling World Championships in Zagreb, Croatia, on September 19, 2025.

● KOSTADIN ANDONOV/UWW

from which he scored two points from a correct throw to lead 3-0. A stepout just before the break extended the lead to 4-0.

There were no points or positions in the second period, and Farrokhi was happy to defend the four-point lead and claim the gold medal.

"Winning a medal in my very first World Championships felt like a dream," Farrokhi said. "I had always thought about it and even dreamed of this belt. I was able to put on my best performances and win the gold medal."

Farrokhi, who had to beat world champion Mohammadali Geraei to make the Iran team, gave up only a single point in five matches at the tournament while scoring 37.

"I managed to win all my matches while giving up only one point," he said. "Geraei is not only one of Iran's greatest champions, but also a close friend of mine. In the qualifiers I was able to beat him. As for the future, it depends on the coaches' decisions, but for now I'll stay at 82kg."

Mirzazadeh, meanwhile, continued his dominance in the super-heavyweight class, surviving an early scare to beat Darius Vitek of Hungary in the final.

A gasp went through Arena Zagreb when Vitek scored a take-down after Mirzazadeh lost his balance after a throw and he quickly gained control. But Mirzazadeh reversed the positions

and got one point to make it 2-1. Mirzazadeh then added two stepouts in the first period to take the lead and go into the break leading 3-2. There were no more surprises in the match as Mirzazadeh scored a takedown soon after the whistle in the second period. Two turns were enough to give him a 7-2 lead which he defended to win the gold medal.

"Winning this gold and standing on top of the world's heavyweight podium makes me really proud," Mirzazadeh said. "I just hope my people are happy, too, because their joy is my joy." Mirzazadeh brushed aside the opening takedown that Vitek scored on him, saying, "I think

that's the nature of wrestling and these things happen. I'm glad I was able to wrestle well and come out on top."

With his second world gold medal, Mirzazadeh has clearly set himself apart from the field at 130kg. The real challenge can come domestically from multiple age-group world champion Fardin Hedayati, but Mirzazadeh is determined to rule the weight class for a long time.

"I'll keep giving it my all to improve every year, to raise my level, and to represent my country again and again," he said. "My goal is to bring home world and Olympic gold medals and make my people proud."



Iran's Amin Mirzazadeh(n) has his hand raised as the winner after the Greco-Roman 130kg final at the Wrestling World Championships in Zagreb, Croatia, on September 19, 2025.

● KADIR CALISKAN/UWW

Elsewhere, world U20 champion Alireza Abdevali, also a debutant at the Senior World Championships, was unlucky to miss out on the podium in the 77kg class after suffering a 6-3 loss to Turkey's Ahmet Yilmaz in the bronze-medal contest.

Earlier in the day, Iranian Paralympic champion Mohammad-Hadi Saravi safely negotiated the minefield that was the draw of the stacked 97kg division, advancing to the final to earn a shot at capturing a second world title.

Saravi defeated Kiryl Maskevich of Belarus, who competed as a neutral athlete, 3-1 in the semi-finals.

## Persian Gulf Pro League:

# Insipid Persepolis held by Chadormalou, Golgohar goes top



Persepolis captain Omid A'alishah (2) is seen in action against Chadormalou's Ali Taheran during a goalless draw at the Persian Gulf Pro League in Tehran, Iran, on September 19, 2025.

● MOHAMMADREZA BOLANDI/ISNA

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Persepolis was held to a goalless stalemate by Chadormalou at the Persian Gulf Pro League on Friday, while Golgohar Sirjan claimed a massive away victory over Malavan FC to go top of the Iranian top-flight table.

At Tehran's Takhti Stadium, serving as Chadormalou's home venue, the Capital Reds were kept at bay by the minnow opponents' disciplined backline throughout the 90 minutes, failing to create any clear-cut chances aside from a couple of late, desperate

attempts.

The result means Persepolis, fourth in the table with six points, has now settled for three draws in four games of the new season, with its sole victory coming against Sepahan in the so-called 'Iranian Clasico' in Isfahan.

Next for Persepolis and head coach Vahid Hashemian, who faced jeers from sections of the crowd by the final whistle, is a home game against Malavan on Thursday. Third-placed Chadormalou, also on six points, will visit Paykan on Saturday.

Elsewhere on Friday, Mahdi Tikdari

converted from the spot in the 27th minute, before new signing Morteza Asadi came off the bench to find the net deep into stoppage time on his Golgohar debut, to seal a 2-0 win for Mahdi Tartar's men at the Sirous Qayegran Stadium. The result moved the visitors atop the table with seven points. Golgohar will play Yahya Golmohammadi's Foolad Khuzestan at home on Friday.

Having suffered two defeats in the previous three outings, Foolad celebrated a first victory of the new campaign, edging out Khaybar 1-0 at the Foolad Arena, thanks to Argentine Gustavo Blanco's second-half strike.

Iralco also got off the mark for the new season after three successive defeats, defeating Esteghlal Khuzestan 2-0 at home, courtesy of first-half goals from Yassin Jorjani and Abbas Kahrizi.

Newly-promoted Fajr Sepasi continued its impressive start to the campaign with a 1-0 home win against Zob Ahan. Sina Shah-Abbasi scored the sole goal of the game three minutes into the second half at Shiraz's Paris Stadium as Pirouz Qorbani's side remained unbeaten in four games.

Mes Rafsanjan shared the spoils with Shams Azar at home.

Esteghlal will be looking to bounce back from Wednesday's 7-1 humiliation against the UAE's Al Wasl in the AFC Champions League Two when hosting Paykan at Tehran's Shahr-e Qods Stadium today.

Defending champion Tractor will play away to Sepahan, with the home side chasing a first win of the campaign.

## AFC Futsal Asian Cup qualifiers:

# Iran hammer Bangladesh in Group G opener

AFC - Defending champions Iran began their AFC Futsal Asian Cup Indonesia 2026 Qualifiers campaign with an impressive 12-0 win against Bangladesh in Group G, also featuring the United Arab Emirates and host Malaysia, in Kuantan on Saturday. Bangladesh offered stiff resistance to 13-time champions Iran in the opening minutes with goalkeeper Jahid Rabbi deflecting Masoud Yousef's shot onto the bar before blocking Ali Khalilvand's attempt.

Iran's persistent pressure bore fruit in the 10th minute, Hossein Sabzi capitalising on a mistake from Srabon Shakil to score and was quickly followed by the second thanks to a near post flick from Hossein Tayebi. Tayebi made it 3-0 a minute later, smashing a high ball into the roof of the net from an acute angle with Mohammadhossein Bazayr adding

another as Bangladesh struggled to cope with Iran's power.

Yousef then squeezed a low shot home in the 16th minute before Behrooz Azimi fired home four minutes later for Iran to take a commanding 6-0 lead into the break.

Iran maintained their intensity after the interval with Bazayr rifling in an unstoppable shot in the 21st minute after space opened up for him on the edge of the semi-circle.

Amihossein Gholami then smacked an effort against the bar as Bangladesh held Iran at bay until the 32nd minute when Mohammadhossein Derakhshani teed up Khalilvand to strike home.

Iran wrapped up an outstanding performance with further goals from Saied Momeni (35th), Tayebi (37th), Mahdi Karimi (37th) and Gholami (38th).



Iranian players celebrate a goal during a 12-0 victory over Bangladesh in the AFC Futsal Asian Cup qualifiers in Kuantan, Malaysia, on September 20, 2025.

● AFC