

## IWF World Championships:

## Iran's Davoudi vows to bounce back after injury-hit campaign

## Sports Desk

Iran's Ali Davoudi vowed to come back stronger after a shoulder injury saw the superheavyweight weightlifter settle for a single bronze medal at the IWF World Championships in Førde, Norway, on Saturday. The former Olympic silver medalist clearly struggled with the injury throughout the men's +110kg contest but still managed a 196kg lift, which placed him behind familiar rivals Varazdat Lalayan of Armenia (211kg) and Bahrain's Gor Minasyan (205kg) in the snatch.

However, that proved to be his only successful attempt of the afternoon, as he bombed out in the clean and jerk, finishing 15th in the overall standings. Lalayan (211-250-461) and Minasyan (205-242-447) completed a triple one-two, while South Korea's Song Yeong-hwan bagged the C&J and total bronzes.

"I did not perform well today. I am not looking for excuses, but I had this severe pain in my shoulder, which made it impossible for me to win a medal in the to-

tal," said Davoudi, who won the total and C&J silver, plus the snatch bronze in last year's World Championships in Manama. "I can only apologize to all the people of Iran for my poor performance.

"We worked extremely hard over the past year, and I thank everyone who supported me. I really don't know why this shoulder pain won't let go of me. I also had to cut seven to eight kilograms in the last few days. I will make amends for this failure in the future," added the Iranian. Meanwhile, Iran head coach Behdad Salimi praised Davoudi for his "tremendous effort" despite the injury setback. "He had to receive an injection in his shoulder last week to compete here. Under different circumstances, a weightlifter of his caliber would not have let his Bahraini and South Korean opponents walk away with medals today," added Salimi, who is a former world and Olympic superheavyweight champion.

Despite the final-day setback, the Iranian team ended its eight-year drought at the World Championships by lifting the men's trophy for only the second time in the history of the sport's flagship inter-



Iranian weightlifter Ali Davoudi prepares for a lift in the men's +110kg event at the IWF World Championships in Førde, Norway, on Oct. 11, 2025.  
● IWF

national event.

Salimi was a member of team, winning two medals, when Iran first won the men's title in Anaheim, the United States – courtesy of five golds, four silvers, and five bronzes.

In Førde, the Iranian eight-man squad

collected 387 points – thanks to one gold, four silvers, and one bronze medal

– to finish atop the men's standings, with North Korea (354) and the United States (318) in the following spots.

Alireza Moeini and Ali A'alipour bagged a gold and double silvers between them in the men's 94kg event.

It was an all-Iranian one-two in the snatch, with Moeini walking away with the ultimate prize thanks to a 182kg lift – becoming Iran's first world record holder since Sohrab Moradi – while A'alipour took the silver with 176kg.

Moeini then posted a 391kg tally to finish runner-up to Bulgarian sensation Karlos Nasar on the total podium.

Iranian prodigy Alireza Nasiri also enjoyed a memorable campaign in the 110kg class on Friday, winning double silver medals.

Nasiri recovered from a seventh-place finish in the snatch to shatter the junior world record with a 231kg effort and secure the C&J silver, before a total tally of 415kg – also a new high in the junior division – saw the 20-year-old Iranian pip former world and Olympic champion Ruslan Nurudinov of Uzbekistan to the runner-up place.



● WANA

## Iran's Choopan stands runner-up at Mr. Olympia 2025

## Sports Desk

Iranian bodybuilding sensation Hadi Choopan had to settle for his third consecutive runner-up finish in the Men's Open competition at the Mr. Olympia event in Las Vegas, as American Derek Lunsford walked away with his second Sandow Trophy in three years on Saturday.

Lunsford's stunning victory earned

him \$600,000 of prize money, completing his remarkable 2025 campaign that included wins at the Arnold Classic and Pittsburg Pro.

Choopan received \$200,000, while there was a bit of consolation for the 'Persian Wolf' as the 2022 winner was voted the People's Champion at the 61st edition of the event.

Andrew Jacked stood third, with his fellow Nigerian Samson Dauda – last

year's winner – and Martin Fitzwater in the fourth and fifth spots respectively.

Nick Walker, Brandon Curry, Tonio Burton completed the top eight in the Men's Open competition.

Behrouz Tabani was the other Iranian at the Mr. Olympia 2025 Open contest but missed out on place in Saturday's final four judging on his debut at the most prestigious bodybuilding event.

## Asian Aquatics Championships:

## Shootout heartbreak as Iran settles for water polo silver

## Sports Desk

Iranian water polo national team settled for the men's silver medal at the Asian Aquatics Championships after suffering a shootout loss to China in Saturday's final in Ahmedabad, India. The two sides shared the spoils in a thrilling 11-11 draw before China came out victorious 5-4 in the shootout showdown to walk away with the ultimate prize.

This was Iran's second shootout heartbreak against China at a major tournament in seven months, following the last-four setback in March's Asian Water Polo Championships in the Chinese city of Zhaoqing.

The Iranian team will still have every reason to be proud of its impressive campaign in Ahmedabad.

Mahdi Panamtaash's men began the event with a 14-9 win against China in their Group A opener, and then went on to breeze past Hong Kong (22-10) and Uzbekistan (28-7) to progress to the knockouts as the group winner.

Iran hammered Thailand 21-6 in the quarterfinals, before edging



● IRSF

out Japan – Asian champion in March – 19-18 for a place in the final showpiece.

Hamed Karimi, Amirhossein Amirian, Amirreza Jalilipour, Mahdi Barzegari, Amir Aqa-ei-Karim, Farbod Behzad-Sabouri, Ashkan Iranpour, Farbod Borqei, Amin Qavidel, Alireza Mehri, Arman Shams, Mersad Ahham, Mahdi Yazdankhah, Mehrab Golestanirad, and Erfan Sadrnia were the members of the Iranian team in Ahmedabad. Saturday's medal marked Iran's second major silver medal in

the continent after a runner-up finish to China at the 2023 Asian Water Polo Championship in Singapore. Iran also won the Asian Championship bronze in 1984 and 1995, while grabbing the gold on home soil at the 1974 Asian Games in Tehran, as well as the 2018 bronze in Jakarta. Earlier on Saturday, Kazakhstan defeated Japan 16-14 in the third-place contest.

China completed a clean sweep of water polo golds, thanks to a 22-17 win against Japan in the women's final.

## WTT Youth Contender Tunis II 2025:

## Lorestani wins U15 title as Iranian boys bag double trophies

## Sports Desk

The final day of the WTT Youth Contender event in Tunis saw Iran's Arshia Lorestani win the U15 boys' singles title.

The Iranian prodigy defeated Russian Zakhar Varfolomeev, competing as a neutral athlete, in straight games (11-8, 11-2, 11-4) to claim the third trophy for the country across the four-day event.

Lorestani beat Russian Aleksei Marchuk and Tunisian Moemen Sghaier without dropping a single game to progress to knockouts as the Group 1 winner.

The Iranian then came out victorious (3-1) against Liam Bouchoir of France in the round of 16, before marching to a straight-game win (11-5, 11-8, 11-9) against Egypt's Asser Sameh for a place in the semi-finals.

A thrilling 3-2 victory over Russian Evgenii Dosov sent Lorestani into the final.

Elsewhere at the Multidisciplinary Hall of Rades, Nikan Shirvani settled for a runner-up trophy in the U11 boys' singles competition, relinquish-



Arshia Lorestani (L) poses with the Iranian flag after winning the U15 boys' singles trophy at the WTT Youth Contender event in Tunis, Tunisia, on October 11, 2025.  
● IRTTF

ing a two-game lead to suffer a 3-2 setback (9-11, 6-11, 11-8, 11-8, 11-9) against Iraq's Andya Mohammed in the final.

This was Shirvani's second trophy in the Tunisian capital, following a third-place finish in the under-13 age class.

Shirvani dominated Group 2, completing a clean sweep of three 3-0 wins – against Algerian Nail Chaichi and the host duo Yaakoub Marnissi and

Ahmed Halaoua – to advance to the quarterfinals.

The Iranian was given a bye in the last eight, before defeating Aleksandr Melnikov 3-0 (11-7, 11-7, 11-8) in the semifinals.