

# U23 Wrestling World Championships: Iran completes clean sweep of Greco-Roman team titles

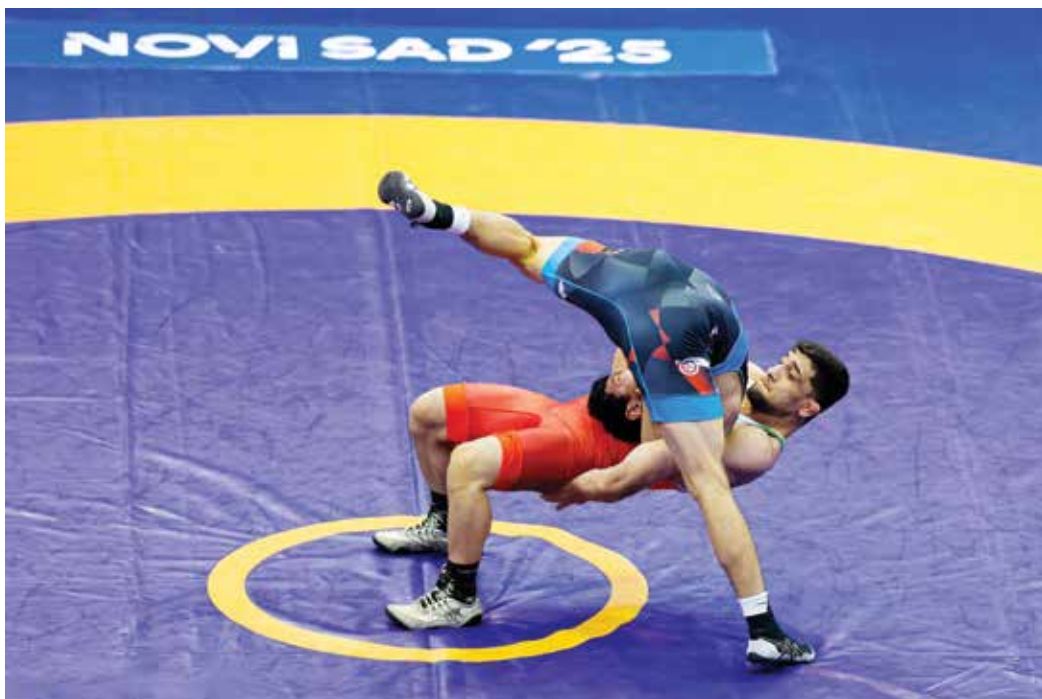
## Sports Desk

Iran cemented its dominance in Greco-Roman wrestling on Thursday by cruising to the title at the U23 World Championships in Novi Sad, Serbia, to complete a clean sweep of four trophies across all age groups in a calendar year.

The Iranian 10-man squad collected three gold medals, one silver and two bronzes to finish atop the standings with 143 points – 47 clear of second-placed Ukraine – marking the country's fourth Greco-Roman crown – second in a row – at the competition since its inception in 2017.

On the final day of the Greco-Roman event, Sajjad Abbaspour had to settle for a silver medal in the 60kg division, while Abolfazl Mohammadi finished with a consolation bronze in the 82kg class. Abbaspour enjoyed an impressive run the final showpiece but was by far the second best against Koto Gomi, who made quick work of the Iranian with technical superiority (9-0) and became only the fifth Japanese to win a world gold in eight under-23 editions.

Gomi got the first point when



Iranian Greco-Roman wrestler Iman Mohammadi (red) is seen in action during his victory over Uzbekistan's Abror Atabaev in the 72kg final at the U23 World Championships in Novi Sad, Serbia, on October 22, 2025.

● IAWFIR

khaidze 10-3 for a joint bronze alongside Omar Satayev of Kazakhstan.

Moldova's Alexandrin Guțu overcame Abiidev on criteria (1-1) to capture his third world U23 gold in a row.

On Wednesday, former Asian senior champion Iman Mohammadi defeated Uzbekistan's Abror Atabaev 5-1 in the 72kg final to claim his second U23 gold, adding to his 63kg title from 2022.

Mohammadi was awarded the par terre in the first period and he hit a front headlock which was scored two and one more point was awarded for a stepout. But Iran challenged, claiming four points on the throw, which was confirmed on review but the stepout point was removed as it was a push.

After the challenge, Mohammadi led 5-0 and when Atabaev was given par terre in the second pe-

riod, Mohammadi defended that position with ease and went on to win the gold medal.

Gholamreza Farrokhi – a gold medalist on his debut at the Senior Worlds in September – and defending world under-23 champion Fardin Hedayati claimed the ultimate prize in emphatic fashion at 87kg and 130kg respectively.

Farrokhi, an 82kg gold medalist at the Senior Worlds in Zagreb, moved up to 87kg in Novi Sad but had no troubles in switching weights, scoring 44 points, while conceding only one, across five bouts.

Hedayati, meanwhile, celebrated his 21st birthday in style by routing American Razmik Kurdyan 8-0 with 23 seconds left before the break in the final. The Iranian, who has not lost an international bout since his final loss at the U20 Worlds in 2022, was again in a league of his own in the superheavyweight event, outscoring his opponents 30-0 across four bouts.

Ahmadreza Mohsennejad was the other Iranian bronze winner in the competition, thanks to a 7-1 victory over Hleb Makaranka of Belarus in the 67kg category.

## World Taekwondo Championships: Olympic medalists Salimi, Kiani crash out on Day 1



Iran's Arian Salimi, pictured in the 2024 Paris Olympics, suffered a second-round exit in the men's -87kg event at the World Taekwondo Championships in Wuxi, China.

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## Sports Desk

Iran got off to a disappointing start at the World Taekwondo Championships in Wuxi, China, as Olympic medalists Arain Salimi and Nahid Kiani were knocked out in the last-16 round of their respective weight classes on Friday.

A men's +80kg gold medalist at the Paris Olympics last year, Salimi began his campaign with a 2-0 victory over Cuba's Yoikel Goicochea but was stunned 2-1 by Ukraine's Andrii Harbar – bronze medalist in July's World Uni-

versity Games – in his bout.

Meanwhile, last year's world -53kg champion Kiani, who won a historic women's silver medal in Paris, began with a 2-1 victory over Darya Kostenevych of Ukraine before a 2-1 setback against American four-time Grand Prix medalist Faith Dillon saw the Iranian girl finish empty-handed in the -57kg event.

Iran's Mahla Mo'menzadeh and Mahdi Hajimousaei will be in action on the second day of the World Championships, vying for glory in the women's -49kg and

men's -63kg contests respectively.

Former world silver medalist Mo'menzadeh will face Botswana's Karabo Kula in the first round, with the winner taking on Mah Teninba Fofana of France.

Reigning Asian champion Hajimousaei will square off against Briton Jamie McIntosh, with winner facing Albanian Ernest Merdanaj or Poland's Dominik Papierowski.

Featuring 989 male and female contestants, the 27th edition of the World Championships will continue in Wuxi until Thursday.

wrestling. He managed to body lock Gomi, but as he tried to force the Japanese toward the mat, Gomi tossed him using the momentum for four points to clinch the victory. Iran challenged the call only to lose it as Gomi capped off his campaign with a fourth successive superi-

ority win.

Mohmadi, meanwhile, bounced back from a first-round setback (4-3) against Ukraine's Ruslan Abiidev to defeat China's Maimaiti Abudoushalamu (9-1) and American Beka Melelashvili (13-4) in emphatic fashion before beating Georgia's Data Ch-

## Asian Youth Games: Iranians collect six poomsae medals

## Sports Desk

Iranians grabbed six poomsae medals, including triple golds, at the Asian Youth Games in Bahrain.

Zeinab Shahriari defeated Filipino Kristien Aguila in the final showpiece to capture the gold in the girls' individual recognized poomsae event, and then teamed up with Behdad Naqiei for the ultimate prize in the mixed pair event. Naqiei also enjoyed a double gold-winning campaign in the Games, claiming the boys' individual prize, thanks to a final victory over Gao Zixuan of China.

In the freestyle poomsae contests, Mohammad-Amin Habibzadeh and Sana Shaygan settled for bronze medals in the boys' and girls' events respectively, and also finished third in the mixed pair category.

Thursday's medals took Iran's haul to 14 medals in Bahrain. The Iranian boys' and girls' kabaddi teams suffered fi-



Behdad Naqiei (L) and Zeinab Shahriari pose with the Iranian flag after winning the mixed pair recognized gold in the poomsae contests at the Asian Youth Games in Bahrain on October 23, 2025.

● IRNA

nal defeats against India in the two finals, while Mehrab Mokarrami (-83kg) and Yousef Baghchiqi (-65kg) also finished with a silver in the boys' kurash competition.

Setayesh Jalaloddin (-52kg) and Mahsa Barzegar (-70kg) added two girls' kurash bronzes to the country's medal count, with Kamand Karamzad (mixed martial arts, girls' -50kg) and Alire-

za Mortazi (pencak silat, boys' 59kg-63kg) also among the bronze medalists.

The third edition of the multi-sport event will continue until Friday.

## Iranian Aliakbari defeats American Johnson in ACA 194

## Sports Desk

Iranian mixed martial arts fighter Amir Aliakbari celebrated a second successive victory on his return to the Absolute Championship Akhmat organization, defeating American Tony Johnson at the ACA 194 event in Dubai, UAE, on Thursday.

The Iranian came out victorious by unanimous decision (50-45, 50-45, 49-46) to take his record to 16-4. The former world Greco-Roman wrestling champion had beaten Russian fighter Salimgerey "Tank"

Rasulov in his first bout back in the Russian organization in August.

"After two successive wins, I now deserve a shot at the heavyweight championship belt against whoever the next champion is," Aliakbari said in a post-fight interview.

Meanwhile, Armenian MMA fighter Zhora Ayvazyan (16-1) made a brilliant debut in the ACA league, securing a technical knockout victory over Brazilian Denis Silva (20-9) in the second round.

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