

U23 Wrestling World Championships: Iran's Azimi strikes gold in freestyle 92kg

Sports Desk

Mohammad-Mobin Azimi claimed the first freestyle gold medal for Iran at the U23 Wrestling World Championships in Novi Sad, Serbia, on Saturday. The young Iranian scored three stepout points to defeat Russian Takhir Khaniev – competing as a neutral athlete – 5-3 in the 92kg final, adding the under-23 crown to his 2023 world junior gold medal.

"It was a tough battle against a very strong opponent. Fortunately, the gameplan from my coaching staff worked perfectly and help me win the final," Azimi said after his final victory.

"I really wanted this medal. I had already won a world under-20 gold and I'm glad to have added this one to my achievements," added the Iranian, who also won a 97kg bronze medal at the Asian Senior Championships in March.

Azimi said he would now set his sights on capturing the ultimate prize at the Senior Worlds, adding: "I think my junior and under-23 titles have laid the groundwork to achieve that goal."

Azimi enjoyed an emphatic run toward the final showpiece, starting his campaign with a 7-1 victory over Uzbekistan's Sherzod Poyonov, before outmus-



cling Sadig Mustafazadeh 8-0 in the last 16. The Iranian then cruised to superiority wins against American Joshua Joseph Bar (13-3) and Ivan

Chornohuz (12-1) of Ukraine to set a final clash with Khaniev. Mohammad Bakhshi was the other Iranian in action across the two freestyle events on Sat-

urday, but finished empty-handed in the 74kg category. Bakhshi came out on top against France's Seyfulla Itaev (5-0) and Uzbek wrestler Jafar Chuliboyev

(11-4), before suffering a 11-0 loss to reigning world senior champion Yoshinosuke Aoyagi in the quarterfinals. The Iranian was denied a second chance for



Iranian wrestler Mohammad-Mobin Azimi (L) has his hand raised as the winner after his victory in the freestyle 92kg final at the U23 World Championships in Novi Sad, Serbia, on October 25, 2025.

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a medal in repechage after the Japanese was stunned 7-4 by American Mitchell Mesenbrink, who went on to claim the gold medal.

Having already claimed five world team titles across different age groups in 2025 – including the senior double last month – is aiming to cap a glittering international season by completing a clean sweep of the men's under-23 trophies for the second year in a row.

The Iranian 10-man squad bagged six medals, including triple golds, in the Greco-Roman event in Novi Sad last week, finishing atop the standings in with 143 points – 47 clear of second-placed Ukraine.

Iman Mohammadi (72kg), Gholamreza Farrokhi (87kg), and Fardin Hedayati (130kg) were the Iranian Greco-Roman gold medalists, while Sajjad Abbaspour settled for silver in 60kg.

Ahmadreza Mohsennejad (67kg) and Abolfazl Mohmadi (82kg), meanwhile, finished with consolation bronzes in their respective divisions.

World Taekwondo Championships: Injured Hajimousaei settles for silver after unfinished final

Sports Desk

Iran's Mahdi Hajimousaei had to settle for silver at the World Taekwondo Championships in Wuxi, China, after an injury forced him to withdraw midway through the men's -63kg final against Tunisia's Mohamed Khalil Jendoubi on Saturday.

The Iranian was leading 1-0 with just 30 seconds remaining in the first period when a punch to the neck from the Tunisian sent him to the canvas. He was unable to recover and continue the bout. Despite the final disappointment, 20-year-old Hajimousaei enjoyed an impressive campaign in Wuxi, overcoming third-seed Norwegian Kristian Borgen in straight rounds in the quarterfinals before producing

a sublime performance to beat South Korea's Jun Jang – a former world champion and Tokyo Olympic bronze medalist – for a place in the final. Jendoubi, meanwhile, added the ultimate prize to his 2022 world bronze, as well as his Olympic silver and bronze medals.

Iran, which saw all four of its representatives medal at last year's Paris Olympics, has endured a dire campaign in Wuxi, with six of the country's seven contestants so far coming away empty-handed in their respective divisions.

On Sunday, Mohammad-Hossein Yazdani impressed with a second-round victory over former world champion Park Woo-hyeok of South Korea in the men's -87kg but fell to a last-eight defeat in three rounds against

Italy's Olympic bronze medalist Simone Alessio.

Mahdi Razmian's campaign in the men's -54kg ended in the second round after a defeat against Jordan's Jaafar Al-Daoud, while Melika Mirhosseini also crashed out in the second round, losing to China's Zhou Zeqi in the women's -73kg category.

The first day of the competition had seen Olympic Champion Arian Salimi and Nahid Kiani – a silver winner in Paris – suffer last-16 setbacks in the men's +87kg and women's -57kg classes respectively.

Mahla Momenzadeh, meanwhile, failed to add to her 2019 world silver, falling to Mah Teninba Fofana of France in the second round in the women's -49kg on Saturday.



Iran's Mahdi Hajimousaei (blue) is seen in action against Albania's Ernest Merdanaj at the World Taekwondo Championships in Wuxi, China, on October 25, 2025.

● WORLD TAEKWONDO

Asian Youth Games: Iranian girls rout Hong Kong, head into volleyball last four

Sports Desk

Iran secured a place in the girls' volleyball semifinals at the Asian



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Youth Games in Bahrain thanks to a straight-set victory (25-14, 25-13, 25-18) over Hong Kong on Sunday.

This was Iran's fifth consecutive win at the multi-sport event.

The Iranian under-18 side defeated Qatar and the host country, both in straight sets, in the preliminary round before overcoming the Chinese Taipei (3-1) and Indonesia (3-0) in the 1-8 classification group phase.

Elsewhere in the Games on Sunday, Amirreza Azari contributed 10 points the Iranian 3x3 basketball team beat Kazakhstan 21-6 to seal a spot in the boys' quarterfinals. Meanwhile, Iranians collected three bronze medals in the muaythai contests.

Sevda Aqaei scored 8.16 points to finish third in the girls' wai kru 14-15 final.

Amirabbas Saghari also finished with the bronze in the boys' wai kru 14-15 category, courtesy of 8.40-point performance in the final, while Taha Sharifi tallied 8.20 points for a joint bronze in the 16-17 category. On Saturday, Iranian U17 boys hammered Saudi Arabia 14-0 to progress to the futsal semifinals with one game to spare in the group stage.

Hosseinreza Yousefi stole the show with six goals, with Ali Ahmadi and Mohammad Karami contributing with two goals apiece, as Mohammad Sanei's team celebrated a second successive Group B win at the Khalifa Sports City Hall – following Friday's 5-1 victory over Kyrgyzstan.

Iran learns handball draw in Islamic Solidarity Games

Sports Desk

Iran was drawn against Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and Maldives in Group A of the men's handball event at the upcoming Islamic Solidarity Games – starting November 7 in Riyadh.

The handball competition at the sixth edition of the multi-

sport event will kick off on November 13, with Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Iraq in Group B of the men's event.

In the women's draw, Iran will face Turkey, Guinea, and Maldives in Group A.

Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Qatar, and Azerbaijan complete the lineup in Group B.



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