

U23 Wrestling World Championships:

Mohammadnejad extends Iran's superheavyweight supremacy

Sports Desk

The superheavyweight category remained Iran's territory as Abolfazl Mohammadnejad cruised to the freestyle 125kg gold at the U23 Wrestling World Championships in Novi Sad.

Elsewhere on the penultimate day of the competition, Sina Khalili settled for silver in the 70kg class, while Milad Valizadeh (57kg) and Mahdi Yousefi (79kg) each claimed a bronze in their respective divisions.

An under-20 world silver medalist in August, Mohammadnejad was in a league of his own this time, scoring a total of 25 points while conceding only two across three bouts before outclassing Azerbaijan's Khetag Karsanov by technical superiority (11-0) in the final showpiece.

Mohammadnejad's triumph marked Iran's fourth major gold in the superheavyweight class in 40 days.

Amirhossein Zare' (freestyle) and Amin Mirzazadeh (Greco-Roman) defended their titles in September's Senior World Championships, while Fardin Hedayati captured a second consecutive Greco-Roman gold at the U23 Worlds earlier in Novi Sad.

"I faced some tough opponents here. I won a world cadet bronze last year and then had to settle for the junior silver [in August], so I gave



Iranian freestyle wrestler Abolfazl Mohammadnejad celebrates after his victory in the 125kg final at the U23 World Championships in Novi Sad, Serbia, on October 26, 2025.

● IAWFIR

Daudov, who competed as a neutral athlete.

Sunday's medals came after Mobin Azimi had grabbed the ultimate prize in the 92kg event on the preceding night.

Azimi scored three stepout points to defeat Russian Takhir Khaniev – competing as a neutral athlete – 5-3 in the final, adding the under-23 crown to his 2023 world junior gold medal.

Iran has already lifted the Greco-Roman team trophy in Novi Sad.

Hassan Rangraz's 10-man squad bagged six medals, including triple golds, 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.

everything I had to win the gold medal here," Mohammadnejad said after the final bout.

On how he has benefitted from training with Zare' in the national team camps, Mohammadnejad said: "Amirhossein has definitely been a great help. He has been guiding me since my teenage

years. We review techniques together in the senior team camps and he even gave me tips on one of the opponents I faced here."

Former U17 world champion Khalili, meanwhile, produced impressive performances to reach the final, but eventually fell to a 9-4 defeat against Kanan Heyba-

tov of Azerbaijan, adding the silver to the Asian senior bronze he won in March.

Asian senior silver medalist Valizadeh recovered from a last-eight setback (11-5) against American Luke Lilledahl to outmuscle China's Liao Honghang (10-0) and Russian Aiandai Ondar (10-1) to

finish with a bronze.

Reigning Asian senior and world junior champion Yousefi got off to a losing start to his under-23 title defense, suffering a 7-0 defeat to American Levi Haines, but recovered in repechage to finish with a consolation bronze – thanks to a 13-3 win against Russian Davud



Olympiacos striker Mahdi Taremi (r) celebrates his goal with Ayoub El Kaabi during a 2-0 victory over AEK Athens in the Greek Super League in Athens, Greece, on October 26, 2025.

● olympiacos.org

Sports Desk

Iran international striker Mahdi Taremi scored his first goal in six appearances across all competitions to help Olympiacos defeat its familiar foe AEK 2-0 in an Athens derby at the Greek Super

Taremi back among the goals as Olympiacos beats AEK in Athens derby

League on Sunday.

Making his first top-flight start since leaving Inter for The Legend in August, Taremi found the net with a smashing header from a Daniel Podence set-piece to double the home side's lead in the 67th minute at the Karaiskakis Stadium.

This was Taremi's fifth goal in nine games in the Olympiacos colors.

The Iranian came off the bench to score twice on his club debut during a 5-0 win over Panserraikos on the opening day of the new league season, and netted another double to lead Olympiacos to a 2-1 victory over Asteras Aktor in the domestic cup on September 24.

Prolific Moroccan Ayoub El Kaabi gave Olympiacos from the spot in the 33rd minute, after Costinha's cross was headed by Taremi onto the raised arm of Domagoj Vida.

"I'm delighted that I scored. It was a fantastic night for the entire team. I don't think I was the man of the match, but I'm happy I was able to help the team," Taremi told Cosmote TV after the game.

On forming a front duo with El Kaabi, Taremi said: "Playing alongside him is a real pleasure; he's an intelligent and experienced striker who always knows exactly what to do on the pitch. The manager's decision to play us together up front was excel-

lent, and I'm glad that it paid off." Olympiacos head coach José Luis Mendilibar, meanwhile, was full of praise for Taremi, though he believes there is more to come from the Iranian once he reaches peak form.

"Taremi helped a lot because he won the penalty and scored a goal – he was decisive and important. He can offer even more, though, because I believe he's not yet in his best physical condition, because he didn't have a full preseason. He's not ready to play 90 minutes yet, but I'm sure he'll be able to give us a lot more in the future," said the Spaniard.

Asked if Olympiacos fans would see a Taremi-El Kaabi partner-

ship again, Mendilibar said: "The season is still in the early stages, and we have many matches ahead, so yes, we might see it again because they complement each other well. But we'll take things one match at a time."

"For a coach, the sweetest dream before a derby must be a 4-4-2 with both strikers scoring. The plan wasn't actually to play in a 4-4-2 – it was a 4-2-3-1. It may have looked like a 4-4-2 because Taremi played a bit deeper."

The victory saw defending champion Olympiacos move three points clear of its archrival in the league table, standing second with 19 points – one point adrift of PAOK, which defeated Volos 3-0 at home.

World Taekwondo Championships:

Barkhordari, Nasiri finish empty-handed with Iran's woes continuing in Wuxi

Sports Desk

Iran endured another disappointing day at the World Taekwondo Championships in Wuxi, China, as Mehran Barkhordari and Saeideh Nasiri crashed out in their respective divisions on Monday.

An Olympic silver medalist in Paris last year, Barkhordari delivered strong performances – including a 2-1 victory over two-time Asian champion Jasurbek Jaysunov of Uzbekistan – to reach the quarterfinals in the men's -80kg event, only to

fall 2-0 (2-2, 8-7) to China's Xiang Qizhang, surrendering a 4-1 lead with 30 seconds remaining in the second round.

Making her World Championships debut, Nasiri secured back-to-back straight-round wins against Ana Belo of Timor-Leste and Azerbaijan's Minaya Akbarova in the women's -46kg category, before her run ended in the round of 16 against Costa Rican Jaycee Bassett, representing the World Taekwondo team. Mahdi Hajimousaei remains the only Iranian to have won a medal in Wuxi, settling for silver in

the men's -63kg class after an injury forced him to withdraw midway through final against Tunisia's Mohamed Khalil Jendoubi on Saturday.

The first day of the competition had seen Olympic champion Arjan Salimi and Nahid Kiani – a silver winner in Paris – suffer last-16 exits 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.

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 exit 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.



Iran's Mehran Barkhordari, pictured at the Paris Olympics, suffered a last-eight exit in the men's -80kg class at the World Taekwondo Championships in Wuxi, China.

● IRNA