

# FIFA Futsal Women's World Cup: Iran's Tavassoli vows fightback after opening-day defeat to Brazil

## Sports Desk

Iran goalkeeper Farzaneh Tavassoli promised her team would bounce back from the opening-day defeat to Brazil at the FIFA Futsal Women's World Cup in the Philippines. The Asian powerhouse endured a tough start in Group D of the inaugural event, losing 4-1 to eight-time Copa América champion Brazil on Sunday. Brazil applied early pressure, with Debora Vanin's shot deflecting off Tavassoli and onto the post before Elham Anajfeh produced a superb diving challenge to prevent Taty from finishing into an empty net. Iran registered its first shot on target in the seventh minute, when Mahsa Kamali's powerful long-range effort was tipped away by Bianca. Brazil's persistence paid off in the 15th minute as Emily picked out Ana Luiza with a fine pass, the latter lifting the ball past Tavassoli for the opener.

The South Americans doubled their lead two minutes later, this time Ana Luiza turning provider with a back-heel for Vanin to strike home. Iran's task became more difficult a minute after the interval when Ana Luiza teed up Emily to smash a shot high into the top corner. Emily added another in the 24th minute before Kamali pulled one back a minute later. Despite the defeat, Tavassoli believes her team has what it takes to progress to the quarterfinals. "We gave it our all, and I'm glad I made a couple of good saves to help the team stay in the match," the Iranian skipper said. "We will try to be the best version of ourselves for the next two games. We will go onto the court with high motivation and focus to deliver a better performance than we did today." The two-time Asian champion will take on Panama on Wednesday and hopes to still be in contention for a top-two finish

when facing Italy – who demolished Panama 17-0 earlier in the day – next Sunday. "I can only promise that in the next two matches, we will fight with all our strength and focus to advance to the next round. Our team has the necessary capacity and motivation, and we are confident that we can achieve good results," Tavassoli added. Meanwhile, Iran head coach Shahrzad Mozaffar was pleased with how her players "went toe-to-toe" with the South American heavyweight. "We have to accept that Brazil is the best team in the world, and they have played many friendlies in their preparation for this tournament. Facing a team of this caliber was a valuable opportunity for us to gauge our level and identify our strengths and weaknesses," she said. "My players demonstrated with motivation, commitment, and remarkable unity that they can



● FFIRI

compete with the world's best teams. Every player on the court gave their all, and a fighting spir-

it and team camaraderie were completely evident. We will have precise planning

for our next two games, and we see every match as a lesson and an experience."

## 25th Summer Deaflympics:

# Siahvashi wins freestyle gold as Iran secures wrestling team titles



## Sports Desk

Mohammad Siahvashi headlined Iran's medal hunt at the Tokyo Summer Deaflympics on Monday, capturing the 57kg freestyle wrestling gold. The Iranian defeated opponents from Bulgaria and Armenia before overcoming Kazakhstan's Gabit Yeszhanov 7-2 in the final showdown.



Freestyle wrestler Mohammad Siahvashi celebrates with the Iranian flag after winning the 57kg gold medal at the Summer Deaflympics in Tokyo, Japan, on November 24, 2025.

● MNA

Siahvashi's triumph capped an emphatic wrestling campaign for the country, which secured both the freestyle and Greco-Roman team titles at the multi-sport event. Meanwhile, Kayvan Rostamabadi (65kg), Abolfazl Zohrevand (74kg), and Mohammad Qamarpour (125kg) settled for silver in their respective weight classes, while Erfan Sattari bagged a consolation bronze in the 97kg event, as Iran added five medals to the six won in Greco-Roman competition. Meysam Dezfuli (87kg) and Abuzar Rabizadeh (97kg) were Iran's Greco-Roman gold medalists on Saturday,

with Mahdi Bakhshi securing silver in the 67kg class. Sadeq Abolvafaei (60kg), Mohammad Zaratpisheh (77kg), and Mohammadreza Sha'bani suffered semifinal setbacks to finish with joint bronze medals. Elsewhere, Milad Sadeqzadeh took Iran's medal tally to 30 after claiming bronze in karate with an 8-0 victory over his Malaysian opponent in the men's -60kg event. Sara Adria also secured a kumite bronze following a narrow 7-6 defeat to Japan's Ryo Ogura in the women's -61kg semifinals. Zahra Zoleikani and Mahdi Poursmaeil delivered dou-

ble gold for Iran in taekwondo on Sunday, triumphing in the women's -57kg and men's -58kg divisions respectively. Iran is represented by 83 athletes – including 19 women – competing in football, freestyle and Greco-Roman wrestling, athletics, karate, taekwondo, shooting, judo, bowling, badminton, table tennis, swimming, and beach volleyball at the 25th edition of the Summer Deaflympics. Iran achieved its best medals-table finish at the previous edition in Caxias do Sul, Brazil, placing fourth with 14 golds, 12 silvers, and 14 bronzes.

## Iran confirms women's roster for World Handball Championship

## Sports Desk

French head coach Ana Seabra has unveiled Iran's 16-woman squad for the upcoming IHF Women's World Handball Championship, which will kick off on Wednesday in Germany and the Netherlands. Fatemeh Khalili, Zahra Afshari, Mina Vatanparast, Sanaz Rajabi, Hanieh Karimi, Fatemeh Merrikhi, Hediye Hafez, Setareh Rahmani, Mojgan Qahremani, Nastaran Godarzi, Hadiseh Noruzi,

Atiyeh Shahsavari, Arezou Kiani Ara, Bahar Izadgasht, Aseman Badvi, and Leila Hosseini will represent the country at the 27th edition of the sport's flagship international event. Iran will open its Group B campaign against Switzerland in the Dutch city of 's-Hertogenbosch on Thursday, before facing Hungary on Saturday and Senegal on Monday. The top three teams in the group will advance to the main-round phase, while

the bottom side will compete for 25th–32nd places in the President's Cup. Iran, which finished fourth at the Asian Championship last year to secure its berth at the tournament, will be making its third appearance at the competition. The team enters the event fresh off a historic bronze medal at the recently concluded Islamic Solidarity Games in Riyadh, where Seabra's side defeated Uzbekistan 29-25 in the third-place match.



● IRNA

## AFC Women's Champions League: Khatoon hammered by Wuhan Jiangda, crashes out in group stage

## Sports Desk

Bam Khatoon suffered an early exit from the AFC Women's Champions League after a 4-0 defeat against defending champion Wuhan Jiangda in Group B on Sunday. Even a one-goal defeat would have been enough for the Iranian champion to progress to the quarterfinals of the Asian elite clubs' competition for a second year in a row, but Sunday's setback in Wuhan saw Marziyeh Jafari's side finish bottom of the group table with three points. The group host topped the standings with seven points, three ahead of PFC Nasaf of Uzbekistan and India's East Bengal FC. Wuhan Jiangda forced Bam Khatoon onto the back foot from the start with Dai Chenying's close-range effort in the fourth minute before Deng



Bam Khatoon's Sara Didar (8) is seen in action against Wuhan Jiangda during a Group B game at the AFC Women's Champions League in Wuhan, China, on November 23, 2025.

● AFC

Mengye narrowly missed the target 10 minutes later. Bam Khatoon goalkeeper Raha Yazdani kept her team in the game with a series of superb stops – denying Dai Chenying again in the 15th minute and producing two solid saves to stop Kim Hye-ri and Song Fei's efforts from distance. The breakthrough finally came in first half stoppage time when Wuhan Jiangda capitalized on with Mavis Owusu rising highest to nod home a pre-

cise cross from Song Fei, which slipped the clutches of Yazdani. Wuhan Jiangda nearly doubled their advantage just before the half-time whistle, with Deng Mengye denied from point-blank range by another excellent save from Yazdani. Bam Khatoon fell further behind in the 50th minute when Song Fei delivered a pin-point cross to Owusu, who applied a composed finish into the bottom right corner. The Iranian side tried to respond through Mona Hamou-

di, who forced Wuhan Jiangda keeper Ding Xuan into a save but the momentum never shifted as it conceded again five minutes later. Song Fei was again the orchestrator, delivering a cross from the left for Deng Mengye to power home a header into an unattended net after Yazdani had come off her line in an attempt to clear the danger. Wuhan Jiangda added a fourth in the 88th minute after Deng Mengye struck the bar with a headed attempt with the rebound falling kindly for Zhao Jingyi to slot home from close range to seal the victory.