

UWW Ranking Series: Iran bags seven medals, claims Greco-Roman crown at Zagreb Open

Sports Desk

Iran captured the Greco-Roman team title at the Zagreb Open on Sunday, finishing with seven medals, including three golds, at the opening United World Wrestling Ranking Series event of the season. Mohammad Hosseinvand capped Iran's campaign on Sunday by winning gold in the 55kg category. The unheralded wrestler edged his high-profile compatriot Pouya Dadmarz – the 2024 world silver medalist – on criteria (1-1) in the semifinals before defeating Uzbekistan's Ikhtiyor Botirov 2-0 in the final. Hosseinvand earned both par terre advantages in the gold-medal bout. Although neither wrestler scored, Hosseinvand defended effectively and conceded no points to secure the victory.

With the tournament also serving as the second phase of Iran's team selection process, Hosseinvand has emerged as a contender for major events later this year, including the World Championships in Manama this October. However, he still faces strong domestic competition, notably from Payam Ahmadi, who claimed U20 world gold and senior-level silver in 2024. Dadmarz rebounded from his semifinal loss to claim a bronze medal, defeating India's Lalit Lalit 5-3 in the consolation bout. Mohammadreza Mokhtari (82kg) and Mohammad-Hadi Seydi



Iran's Ali Oskou (blue) lifts Georgia's Temuri Orjonikidze during the Greco-Roman 77kg final at the Zagreb Open in Zagreb, Croatia, on February 7, 2026.

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(97kg) also earned bronze medals on the final day of competition. Mokhtari registered an impressive 3-1 victory over reigning Olympic silver medalist Demeu Zhadrayev of Uzbekistan but was edged on criteria (3-3) by Moldova's Mihail Bradu in the semifinals. He then defeated

American Beka Melelashvili by technical superiority (10-1) in the bronze-medal match. Seydi, a world junior silver medalist last year, suffered a 5-1 loss to eventual gold medalist Alex Szoke of Hungary in the round of 16. He recovered in repechage with a 4-1 win over Austria's

Daniel Gastl before securing bronze with a criteria victory (1-1) against Kazakhstan's Iussuf Matsiiev. Earlier in the tournament, Ali Oskou captured gold at 77kg on Saturday with a dominant technical superiority win (10-1) over Georgia's Temuri Orjonikidze in

the final.

Iran's Greco-Roman campaign began on Friday with Erfan Jarkani's gold medal in the 63kg division, following an 8-4 victory over India's Chetan Chetan. The result secured Jarkani – a 2024 world junior and U23 bronze medalist – a place in Iran's

squad for April's Asian Championships in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. Former world champion Meisam Dalkhani settled for bronze in the same weight class. After a 14-5 semifinal loss to Chetan, Dalkhani rebounded with an 8-0 technical superiority victory over Kazakhstan's Dastan Zarlykhanov in the third-place bout.

Iran topped the Greco-Roman team standings with 125 points, finishing five clear of Uzbekistan, which earned one gold, two silver medals, and three bronzes. Kazakhstan placed third with 108 points.

The Greco-Roman success followed a mixed freestyle showing for Iran, which finished second in the team standings with 10 medals and 180 points, 45 behind the United States.

Sina Khalili (70kg) and Mohammad-Mobin Azimi (92kg) claimed Iran's freestyle gold medals, while Olympic and world champion Hassan Yazdani endured a disappointing debut at 97kg, suffering a technical superiority loss (13-3) to American Stephen Buchanan in the final.

Peyman Nemati (65kg) won silver, while Milad Valizadeh (57kg), Reza Momeni (61kg), Ali-Akbar Fazli (74kg), Adel Panahian (79kg), Ali Savadkouhi (86kg), and Mohammad Janmohammadi (125kg) each earned bronze medals. The UWW Ranking Series resumes with the Muhamet Malo tournament in Tirana, Albania, on February 25.

Asian Indoor Athletics Championships: Dastarbandan takes 800m bronze as Iran finishes with four medals



Iran's Toktam Dastarbandan (R) poses with her women's 800m bronze alongside Chinese gold medalist Wu Hongjiao (C) and Uzbekistan's Sabokhat Samjonova at the Asian Indoor Athletics Championships in Tianjin, China, on February 8, 2026.

LI RAN/XINHUA

Iranian middle-distance runner Toktam Dastarbandan claimed a bronze medal in the women's 800m final as Iran concluded its Asian Indoor Athletics Championships campaign with four medals in Tianjin, China, on Sunday. Dastarbandan clocked 2:09.576 in the final and narrowly missed silver, finishing just one millisecond behind sec-

ond-placed Sabokhat Samjonova of Uzbekistan. China's Wu Hongjiao won gold in 2:08.56. Dastarbandan's bronze proved to be Iran's only medal on the final day of competition. Sobhan Ahmadi finished fourth in the men's 800m final, while Amirfarzam Safari and Hossein Nouri placed sixth and seventh, respectively, in the men's 1500m. Nouri, however, left China with a medal after secur-

ing bronze in the men's 3000m on Saturday. Hassan Ajami, meanwhile, narrowly missed the podium in the men's shot put, finishing fourth with a best throw of 19.39 meters. The Iranian, who was only handed a place in the final after a Chinese sprinter was forced out through injury, registered a career-best 47.59 seconds, finishing behind Qatar's Bassem Hemeida (47.27 seconds) and China's Chiyu Zheng (47.34 seconds).

Persian Gulf Pro League wrap-up: Persepolis undone at Malavan, misses out on top spot

Sports Desk

Persepolis missed the chance to go top of the Persian Gulf Pro League table after suffering a 1-0 away defeat to Malavan FC at the Sirous Qayeqran Stadium on Sunday.

A win would have given the Tehran Reds a two-point lead over Tractor, Esteghlal and Sepahan, but a third defeat in five matches left Osmar Vieira's side fourth in the standings on 34 points. Mohammad-Javad Mohammadi scored the decisive goal for the hosts in the 79th minute, sending Persepolis goalkeeper Payam Niazmand the wrong way from the penalty spot after Malavan midfielder Farhan Jafari was brought down in the area by Soroush Rafiei.

The victory lifted Malavan to seventh place on 28 points. Elsewhere, Golgohar Sirjan saw its seven-game unbeaten league run ended with a 3-1 defeat away to Foolad Khuzestan in Ahvaz. Amir Jafari gave Golgohar an early lead in the fifth minute, but the match swung in the first half through goals from Ehsan Mahrouqi and Mohammadreza Soleimani. Abolfazl Razzaqpour sealed the win



Malavan Farhan Jafari (88) is fouled by Persepolis captain Soroush Rafiei in the penalty area during a Persian Gulf Pro League game at the Sirous Qayeqran Stadium, Bandar Anzali, Iran, on February 8, 2026.

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eight minutes from time with a low finish from inside the box. Earlier in the round, Haitian international Duckens Nazon struck a 96th-minute winner as Esteghlal edged 10-man Shams Azar 3-2 at home on Thursday, despite surrendering a two-goal lead late in the match.

In Yazd, Reza Dehqan and Paraguayan fullback Mario Otazu scored late in each half as Chadormalou beat Paykan 2-0 at home to climb to sixth on 29 points.

Paykan stayed 11th with 22 points. Earlier in the round, Haitian international Duckens Nazon struck a 96th-minute winner as Esteghlal edged 10-man Shams Azar 3-2 at home on Thursday, despite surrendering a two-goal lead late in the match.

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36th-minute header earned Sepahan a hard-fought 1-0 home victory over Khaybar, ending a five-match winless league run for Moharram Navidkia's side. Iralco defeated nine-man Zob Ahan 1-0 in Arak on Saturday thanks to Sasan Hosseini's 79th-minute strike. The same scoreline was recorded in Rafsanjan, where Mes lost at home to Esteghlal Khuzestan and remained rock-bottom of the 16-team table.