

U20 Wrestling World Championships:

Dire Day 1 as all Iranians miss out on Greco-Roman finals

Sports Desk

Iran's bid for a fifth successive Greco-Roman team title at the U20 Wrestling World Championships got off to a dreadful start on Sunday as all four of its representatives failed to reach the final in their respective weight classes on the opening day of the competition in Bratislava, Slovakia.

An U20 Asian gold medalist in June, Ali Gharibi began his 63kg campaign with emphatic victories over Moldova's Vlad Duminica (9-0) and Egyptian Ahmed Youssef Ahmed (12-3), before defeating Armenia's Aleks Margaryan by technical superiority (12-4) to progress to the semifinals.

However, a 4-1 setback against Russia's Salim Kazmakhov sent the Iranian into the third-place contest. Kazmakhov scored a turn from par terre in the second period to lead 3-1 before being awarded a point after Iran's



challenge was unsuccessful. Gharibi's compatriot Amir-mahdi Saeidi-Nava will also have to fight for a consolation bronze after suffering a

7-1 loss to Azerbaijan's Javidan Nahmatov in the 77kg semifinals. Nahmatov needed a counter four-point action to claim

victory after the Iranian had tied the bout at 1-1 on criteria. Saeidi was looking for a duck-under to control Nahmatov, but the Azerbaijani

wrestler stepped over and threw the Iranian for four points. Saeidi was docked two points for a caution late in



L-R: Iranian Greco-Roman wrestlers Ali Gharibi, Amir-mahdi Saeidi-Nava, Amirhossein Nematzadeh, and Amirhossein Abdevali failed to reach the final bout in their respective categories at the U20 Wrestling World Championships.

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the bout, securing the victory for Nahmatov. Saeidi made quick work of Sweden's Ruben Straakeved (9-0) in the first round before defeating Russia's Nazar Berkovskii (9-4) and Ukraine's Nestor Baran (8-0) to reach the last four. Amirhossein Nematzadeh, having beaten Kazakhstan's Alikhan Tagayev by technical superiority (8-0) in the first round, fell short against lurik Petrosian in the quarterfinals, losing 5-1, but was given a second chance for a podium finish in the repechage after the Armenian wrestler advanced to the 87kg final. In 130kg, a traditional stronghold for Iran across all

age groups in recent years, Amirhossein Abdevali, who also entered the tournament as the reigning U20 Asian champion, outmuscled American Trayvn Boger 9-1 in his first bout but crashed out in the quarterfinals after a shock 6-5 loss to Egypt's Essam Anwar Hussein, who went on to lose in the semifinals. The U20 African champion stunned Abdevali with a four-pointer to take a 5-5 criteria lead. Iran lost the challenge as well, and Hussein pulled off an upset against the U20 Asian gold medalist, meaning Iran missed out on the super-heavyweight podium for the first time in a decade. The Greco-Roman event will be followed by the women's competition before the freestyle contests get underway on Friday, where Iran will chase a first team title in three years after finishing third behind the USA and Kazakhstan in the 2025 edition.

FIBA 3x3 Youth Nations League - Asia Central/East:

Iran finishes runner-up in men's, third in women's events



Iran's Mohammad Ghaffari goes up for a layup against Mongolia at the FIBA 3x3 Youth Nations League - Asia Central/East in Cangzhou, China, on Aug. 16, 2026.

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Iran secured the men's runner-up spot in the Asia Central/East division of the FIBA 3x3 Youth Nations League, while finishing third in the women's competition at the six-day event in Cangzhou, China. Having won the fourth and fifth stops, Iran settled for third place in the men's Stop 6 on Sunday to finish second in the overall standings with 470 points, trailing South Korea by 40 points. Comprising Mohammad-Mahdi Rahimi, Seyyed Mohammad Ghafari, Mohammad-Basir Mo'meni, Sarem Jafari and Argen Minasians, the Iranian team suffered a 21-20 overtime defeat to Mongolia in Pool A, but bounced back to defeat Japan 21-14 and pip China and pip China to the third spot by three points. Iran began the campaign with a runner-up finish in Stop 1, before

finishing third and fifth, respectively, in the following two stops. In the women's competition, Iran got off to an impressive start in Pool A, beating China 18-15, followed by a comfortable 21-9 win against Mongolia to advance to the Stop 6 final. A 17-10 setback against Japan, however, saw the Iranian women's team – featuring Mahla Abedi, Mahsa Karani, Farnaz Khodamardi and Shamim Nouri – finish conclude the event with 440 points. Japan finished atop the women's standings with 520 points, with China second on 510. Iran women missed out on the final in the first four stops, finishing third twice either side of back-to-back fourth-place finishes, but delivered an emphatic performance to win Stop 5, beating Japan 16-14 in overtime and Kazakhstan 21-12 before defeating the host team 20-13 in the final.

Iran to send 171 athletes to Asian Para Games

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The Iranian delegation will be represented by 171 athletes at the upcoming Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games, Ghafour Kargari, chairman of the National Paralympic Committee of Iran, announced. The fifth edition of the multi-sport event will open on October 18 at Paloma Mizuho Stadium in Nagoya, Japan. Iranian athletes will compete in 15 sports, with nine featuring both male and female participants, Kargari added. Iranians will vie for men's and women's glory in shooting, archery, athletics, powerlifting, taekwondo, table tennis, sitting volleyball, wheelchair basketball and boccia. The swimming, judo, cycling, blind football,



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goalball and wheelchair fencing events, meanwhile, will also see Iranian men in action. Japan, the host nation, has meanwhile made the competition more challenging for participating countries, including

Iran, by dropping several sports, including chess and canoeing, in which Iranian athletes won a total of six gold medals at the previous Asian Para Games in Hangzhou in 2022. Having finished fourth in the

first two editions – Guangzhou 2010 and Incheon 2014 – before finishing third in Jakarta 2018, Iran achieved its best-ever finish in the history of the Games in Hangzhou in 2022, collecting 44 golds, 46 silvers and 41 bronzes to finish runner-up in the medal table behind China. The country's most successful campaign in terms of medals, however, came in Jakarta in 2018, where Iran bagged 51 golds, 43 silvers and 42 bronzes, but ultimately settled for third place behind China and South Korea. Athletics has been Iran's most productive sport across the five editions, yielding 238 medals, including 83 golds, while swimming, archery and powerlifting have each contributed 13 gold medals.

FIBA U18 Asia Cup:

Iran to face China for group top spot

Sports Desk

The top spot in Group C and direct qualification for the quarterfinals at the FIBA U18 Asia Cup will be at stake when Iran and record 11-time champion China go head-to-head in Ahmedabad, India, today. Both teams will enter the court at Veer Savarkar Indoor Stadium on the back of successive victories in their first two outings, with China holding a slight advantage at the top of the standings on point difference. Three-time gold medalist Iran began its bid for a first title in a decade with a 94-69 victory over Qatar, with Mohammad Shamsi leading the scoring with 19 points. Amirreza Azari (16), Mohammad Kamal Khaledi (14) and Mohammad Safa Behnia (13) also reached

double figures for Ali Hassanpour's team. Iran then routed Sri Lanka 110-42 in its second game on Sunday. Kamal Khaledi contributed a game-high 23 points, while Soheil Soleimannejad and Alireza Rashidi added 15 apiece. Shamsi also enjoyed a prolific outing, recording a double-double with 12 points and 15 assists to post an efficiency rating of 29. China, meanwhile, hammered Sri Lanka 103-55 in its opener, thanks to a game-high 23 points from Yixuan Yang, before claiming a comprehensive 118-66 victory over Qatar on Sunday. The four group winners will secure automatic qualification for the quarterfinals, while the second- and third-placed teams in each group will have to go through a



Iranian shooting guard Alireza Rashidi (1) goes for a basket against Sri Lanka at the FIBA U18 Asia Cup in Ahmedabad, India, on Aug. 16, 2026.

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playoff round for a place in the last eight. The tournament also serves as the Asian qualifier for the 2027 FIBA U19 Basketball

World Cup, with the four semifinalists punching their tickets to the showpiece event in Pardubice, Czech Republic, in June next year.