FIBA World Cup Asian qualifiers:

Jamshidi rues offensive shortcomings as Iran falls to Australia

Sports Desk

Veteran forward Mohammad Jamshidi urged Iran to improve its offensive performance after the national team suffered an 84-67 defeat to Australia in the second round of the FIBA Basketball World Cup 2027 Asian qualifiers in Seremban, Malaysia, on Friday.

Maxwell Mackinnon led the way with a game-high 30 points, shooting an ultra-efficient 11-of-15 from the field and a blistering 8-of-10 from beyond the arc in 26:05 on the floor, as Australia extended its perfect qualifying run to 9-0 to secure its place in next year's showpiece in Qatar.

Tom Wilson delivered a near triple-double, finishing with 13 points, seven rebounds, and nine assists in 27:42. Jack White added 12 points, eight rebounds, and four assists in 28:07, while David Okwera anchored the interior with 10 rebounds, four points, and one block.

Mohammad Amini stood out for Iran with 15 points, five rebounds, one assist, and a game-high six steals in 23:47.

Matin Aqajanpour (15 points), Seyyed Mahdi Jafari (11), and Jamshidi (10) also reached double figures, but their efforts did little to prevent a third successive defeat in the second round as Iran dropped to fifth in Group E, level on 14 points with third-place Philippines and fourth-place Jordan.

"First of all, congratulations to Australia. They played a good game and, as our head coach also said, started with more passion, energy and effort. That was reflected in the rebounding statistics, with Australia getting 16 more rebounds than us," Jamshidi said after the game.

"If you want to beat Australia, you have to be much better offensively. Scoring 67 points is not enough to beat this team. We have good shooters such as Behnam [Yakhchali], Matin, Mobin [Sheikhi] and others, but we couldn't create the necessary space for them."

The 35-year-old admitted that several Iranian players had an off night and urged his teammates to put the defeat behind them and turn their attention to the next assignment against the Philippines.

Iran head coach Sotirios Manolopoulos, meanwhile, said Australia fully deserved its victory, describing the Boomers as the strongest team in the group, not merely because of their results but also their overall quality.

He lamented Iran's poor first-half display while taking encouragement from the team's improved performance after the break.



Australia's Jacob Holt (21) dunks during his team's victory over Iran in the FIBA World Cup Asian qualifiers in Seremban, Malaysia, on November 27, 2026.
FIBA

"I think if we hadn't had such a disastrous first half and everything had gone according to plan, we might have had a better chance in the second half," the Greek coach said.

"We played much better after the break. Our players, including Mohammad Jamshidi, did a good job of creating space and opportunities, and we had plenty of open looks at the basket, which we converted successfully."

Manolopoulos also praised Iran's defensive improvement in the second half, noting that his players recorded more steals than their opponents.

"I am satisfied and happy with our performance in the second half. But when you play against a team like Australia, you cannot start a game like that. Our slow start hurt us," he added.

"I cannot say that we would definitely have won, but with a better start, we certainly would have had a greater chance."

Iran's best stretch came in the final quarter, when it pieced together an 11-0 run to trim the deficit to 13 points at 75-62. Amini and Jamshidi each scored four points during that burst, with Amini adding a rebound and Jamshidi contributing a free throw and a board. However, the damage had already been done.

Having suffered a 68-56 loss to the Philippines in the previous window in August, Iran will look to avenge that setback when the two teams square off again today at Seremban's Karisma Arena, which serves as Iran's home venue for the fifth window of the qualifiers.

Elsewhere in the group, Kevin Quiambao and Kai Sotto scored 18 points apiece as the Philippines cruised to a 97-58 victory over Syria at Karisma Arena later on Friday.

Meanwhile, Mojave King stole the spotlight for New Zealand, finishing with 19 points, five rebounds, and three assists in 23:45 of action as the Tall Blacks tightened their grip on the runner-up spot in the group.

World Para Taekwondo Grand Prix Final:

Iranians round off international season with three medals



Iran's Amirmohammad Haqiqatshenas (L) is seen in action against Mexico's Juan Diego Garcia Lopez in the men's K44 -70kg final at the World Para Taekwondo Grand Prix Final in Astana, Kazakhstan, on November 27, 2026.
WORLD TAEKWONDO

Sports Desk

Iranians enjoyed a prolific run at the one-day World Para Taekwondo Grand Prix Final in Astana, Kazakhstan, collecting a gold, a silver, and a bronze medal on Friday.

Amirmohammad Haqiqatshenas led the way for the country, claiming the top prize in the men's -70kg category after winning all three of his bouts. A World Championships gold medalist last week, the Iranian picked up where he had left off in Muju, South Korea, opening his campaign with a straight-round victory over Uzbekistan's Javokhir Alikulov before defeating Valter Sedano Delfino de Oliveira by the same scoreline to set up a final clash against Mexico's Juan Diego Garcia Lopez. The semifinal victory also repeated his last-four triumph over the Brazilian in Muju.

In a rematch of last week's final in Muju, the Iranian emerged victorious in straight rounds against the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic champion to claim his third successive gold medal at a major event in just over a month, having also triumphed at October's Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games.

In the women's -57kg category, Maryam Abdollahpour and Zahra Rahimi also made their way to the semifinals after winning their respective quarterfinal bouts.

Also a world champion in Muju, Abdollahpour defeated Silvana Cardoso Fernandes – a winner of three successive Para Grand Prix series titles this season – in straight rounds to secure a second consecutive victory over the high-profile Brazilian in less than a week.

The 19-year-old prodigy then advanced to the final following the disqualification of China's Yuji Li in their semifinal bout after the Chinese athlete struck her in the face.

However, Abdollahpour was unable to compete in the final due to injury and had to settle for silver behind Brazil's Maria Eduarda Machado Stumpf.

Rahimi, meanwhile, beat Turkey's Gamze Ozcan 2-0 but fell to Stumpf in the last four, missing out on a place in the final.

The Paris Paralympic silver medalist, who also won silver at the Asian Para Games and the World Championships, still managed to finish her campaign with a consolation bronze after Li withdrew from their third-place contest.

Offering an important pathway to earn points for the Los Angeles 2028 Paralympics, the season finale brought together 80 contestants from 26 countries in the K44 sport class at the Zhaksylyk Ushkempirov Martial Arts Palace.

Iran targets further shooting quotas, podium finish at LA28

Sports Desk

Iran's national pistol shooting coach Maryam Soltani has set her sights on securing three to four quota places for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics and challenging for a medal, following Hanieh Rostamian's achievement in securing the country's first Olympic berth.

Rostamian missed out on the podium in the women's 10m air pistol competition at the ISSF World Championships in Doha, Qatar, earlier in November, finishing fourth, but still managed to secure an Olympic quota place after two Chinese shooters occupied the top two positions.

Soltani described Rostamian's qualification as the beginning of Iran's Olympic campaign, expressing confidence that the team could build on its performance at the recent World Championships in Qatar.

"The level of competition was very high," Soltani told Mehr News Agency. "Some teams had even rested their first-choice shooters at [October's] World Cup in Cairo to be at full strength for this event. Fortunately, our team also delivered a decent performance, with all three of our pistol representatives – Hanieh Rostamian, Vahid Golkhandan, and Samieh Yasi – performing very well and meeting international standards."

"Rostamian lit the first Olympic qualification beacon for Iranian shooting with her outstanding performance. Her fourth-place finish in a final featuring the world's top stars was a significant achievement. We are grateful that this important quota place has been secured for Iran," she added.

Rostamian and Golkhandan went on to reach the 10m air pistol mixed team final the following day, where they claimed a valuable silver medal.

Outlining the team's ambitions for LA28, Soltani said Iran was targeting three to four Olympic quota places in pistol events, provided its preparations and international assignments went according to plan.

Asked whether Iran was also targeting a second Olympic shooting medal, following Javad Foroughi's historic men's 10m air pistol triumph at Tokyo 2020, Soltani was unequivocal.

"Of course, we are thinking about an Olympic medal. We have talented and experienced shooters such as Hanieh Rostamian and Vahid Golkhandan. Samieh Yasi, despite having less experience, has also demonstrated her ability at major competitions," she said.

"Hopefully, we will also secure quota places for our male shooters, which would give us a chance of winning a medal in the mixed team event. The new federation president's technical approach and comprehensive plans for preparing the team make us very optimistic."



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