

Purkashian becomes chess Grandmaster

Tehran Times Sports Desk

TEHRAN — Iran's woman chess player Atusa Purkashian became Grandmaster after a good performance in the 38th Chess Olympiad in Dresden 2008.

Purkashian competed with the four Grandmasters and the five International Masters, earning eight points from 11 matches.

The Olympiad took place from November 12th to 25th, 2008, at the Congress Hall in Dresden, Saxony, Germany. 156 teams from 152 countries participated, with most of the top players present.

The title Grandmaster is awarded to excellent chess masters by the world chess organization FIDE. Apart from "World Champion", Grandmaster is the highest title a chess player can attain.

Dobriskey slams 'Russian seven'

LONDON (BBC) — British 1500m star Lisa Dobriskey has backed her sport's move to give longer bans to the seven Russians caught cheating before the Beijing Games.

World athletics' governing body has appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport against the bans handed to the seven by their national federation.

The Russian federation backdated the bans to get their athletes back for next year's world championships.

"I would definitely be angry if they were able to run," said Dobriskey.

"I'd feel cheated if I had to line up against any of them in Berlin next year.

"And I speak for the majority of women's 1500m runners because it has caused quite a big stir, and not only in our event but in athletics in general."

The seven women, who include double world 1500m champion Tatyana Tomashova and 1500m indoor world record-holder Yelena Soboleva, were provisionally suspended in July, shortly before this summer's Olympics, after being found guilty of tampering with their urine samples.

They need to be punished and be seen to be punished

The suspensions followed a year-long investigation by the sport's governing body, the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF), after it had grown suspicious they were being tipped off ahead of "no-notice, out-of-competition" tests and then manipulating their samples.

A trap was sprung at last year's world championships in Osaka when DNA in samples taken from the seven did not match the DNA in their earlier samples. Five of the women were in Russia's team for Beijing.

Having denied claims of systematic doping, the All Russian Athletics Federation (ARAF) caused consternation last month when it finally announced details of the bans it was dishing out.

The athletes were given the mandatory two-year bans but those suspensions were backdated to the time of those first out-of-competition tests, April and May of 2007. This meant they would be eligible to compete in Berlin in August.

The IAAF, however, wants those sanctions to start no earlier than the day the athletes were provisionally suspended. It also wants the Lausanne-based arbitration body to extend the bans beyond the mandatory two-year minimum.

"It is unacceptable that these athletes, who have committed serious and deliberate breaches of our anti-doping rules, would receive an effective ban of approximately nine to 10 months and see them eligible to compete in the summer of 2009," said IAAF president Lamine Diack.

Tomashova, European champion in 2006, was tipped for gold in Beijing "What is more, I consider the circumstances surrounding these cases warrants the IAAF to seek extended bans."

Former Iran striker recalls Melbourne's event

Tehran Times Sports desk

TEHRAN — Former Iran striker Khodadad Azizi is reminded of a goal that eliminated Terry Venables' side from the France 1998 World Cup qualifiers.

Australia football team was held to a 2-2 draw against Iran on November 28, 1997, and failed to book a berth in the World Cup due to goal difference.

Khodadad Azizi scored Iran's second goal at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in front of an astonished crowd gathered to celebrate their qualification for the World Cup.

"I always remember that goal. I am proud of scoring the vital goal which made Iranians so happy. Honestly, I have to say keeper Ahmad Reza Abedzadeh played the biggest role in that match. He disappointed the Australians so many times. Also, thank God for helping us take advantage of our rare chances," said Azizi.



Late goals send Milan through in UEFA Cup



LONDON (Reuters) — Late goals from Ronaldinho and Filippo Inzaghi salvaged a 2-2 draw for AC Milan against English FA Cup winners Portsmouth and took the seven times European champions into the last 32 of the UEFA Cup on Thursday.

Milan were trailing 2-0 until Brazilian Ronaldinho curled in a superb freekick after 84 minutes and then Inzaghi, who had hit the woodwork three times, showed fine control to slot home the equalizer in the second minute of stoppage time.

Carlo Ancelotti's side top Group E with seven points from three matches and are guaranteed a place in the knockout phase with a game to spare.

Former winners CSKA Moscow, Manchester City and Ligue 1 strugglers St Etienne joined Milan as the first four teams to qualify for the last 32.

Portsmouth, roared on by the majority of a fervent 20,000 crowd shoe-horned into the south coast club's Fratton Park home, had stunned Milan with second-half goals from Younes Kaboul and Nwankwo Kanu.

Kaboul powerfully headed home Glenn Johnson's inviting cross after

62 minutes and 11 minutes later Nigeria striker Kanu, whose FA Cup final winner in May secured Portsmouth's place in Europe, hooked in another Johnson cross from close range.

Ancelotti sent on Ronaldinho and Pato for Kaka and Andriy Shevchenko and it was the former who got Milan back into the game with an unstoppable swirling freekick past David James.

With time running out, a hopeful ball into the danger area was taken down with aplomb by Inzaghi who then found the bottom corner of the net.

"They have some fantastic players... if you switch off, even for a minute, they punish you," Portsmouth manager Tony Adams told Channel Five television.

CSKA, the 2005 champions, made it three wins from three in Group H after a 2-1 home success over Poland's Lech Poznan.

First-half goals by Alan Dzagoyev and Russian international Yuri Zhirkov put CSKA, runners-up to unfashionable Rubin Kazan in the Russian championship that ended this month, in control before Semir Stiliz pulled one back after the break.

Manchester City's 2-0 win in Gelsenkirchen over Schalke 04 ensures the Premier League team will be one of the three sides to qualify from Group A after a 2-2 draw between Paris St Germain and Racing Santander in the other game in the group.

Making light of injured Brazilian striker Robinho's absence, City's Zimbabwe forward Benjani Mwaruware tapped in at the far post in the 32nd minute after Daniel Sturridge's low drive across goal had cut through a host of defenders.

Ireland midfielder Stephen Ireland doubled City's advantage midway through the second half when he poked in Benjani's deflected flick.

St Etienne got the point they needed to qualify in a 1-1 draw at Club

Bruges in Group G. The French side sacked coach Laurent Roussey earlier this month and prop up Ligue 1.

Turkish champions Galatasaray wasted the chance to guarantee their passage from Group B after Brazilian midfielder Edmar's goal nine minutes from time gave Ukraine's Metalist Kharkiv a late win at the Ali Sami Yen stadium.

The 2000 UEFA Cup winners, who have six points from three matches, should still go through. Only once since the group stage format was introduced in 2004/05 has six points not been enough to qualify, with Rangers missing out that season.

In the same group, Greek champions Olympiakos Piraeus routed visitors Benfica 5-1 with Brazilian under-21

striker Diogo grabbing two goals.

Twice UEFA Cup winners Tottenham Hotspur are poised to qualify after a second win from three games in Group D.

Spurs continued their resurgence under manager Harry Redknapp, making it seven victories from nine matches in all competitions since he took charge, with a 1-0 win at NEC Nijmegen.

Jamie O'Hara got the only goal from close range after 14 minutes, following up after Fraizer Campbell struck the bar.

The top three in each of the eight groups progress to the knockout phase and will be joined in the last 32 by the eight clubs who finish third in the Champions League group stage.

The final is in Istanbul on May 20.

Saeid Arian, neurosurgeon:

Spinal Injuries Can Be Avoided through Observing Rules, Proper Education



Golestan Province suffers lack of neurosurgeon and spinal specialists. Dr. Saeid Arian has been in positive cooperation with the medical treatment network of the province during recent years.

In an interview with him, he has spoken about issues related to his profession and problems in this regard.

Q: Considering your ten years of activity in the region, how do you evaluate the healthcare condition currently in Golestan Province?

As you mentioned, I have been working for ten years in the region and relying on the assist of God, I have succeeded to cure many patients and save their lives.

Q: Taking the lack of sufficient surgical equipment in medical

treatment centers, how do you manage to carry out successful operations?

Firstly, relying on God and secondly through applying the cutting edge knowledge and breakthroughs in this field of medicine. Fortunately, my surgical operations have prevented patients from departing to other cities and this issue has reduced their treatment costs.

Q: What about deficits and shortages?

Certainly there are shortages and deficits in this field, but through support of the related officials, the conditions are far better than the past. I request the local and provincial authorities to provide us with advanced devices for surgery.

Q: Who are the major spinal in-

juries patients?

Unfortunately, most of those who are suffering from spinal injuries are the low income strata of the society mainly motorcyclists and workers.

Q: As a young but experienced physician, what do you recommend to people?

I strictly advice motorcyclists to use crash helmets and observe traffic rules in order to prevent from any spinal injuries. I also recommend workers to observe safety regulations in order to prevent from any defect on their spinal cord.

In conclusion, I would like to acknowledge officials of the healthcare and medical treatment department of the province who support us.

Jimenez acclaims team mate Larrazabal

SHENZHEN, China (Reuters) — Miguel Angel Jimenez hailed his young team mate Pablo Larrazabal as a breath of fresh air for Spanish golf after they took a four-shot lead halfway through the \$5.5 million World Cup of Golf on Friday.

The two Spaniards played some dazzling golf to take apart the Olazabal course at Mission Hills with a nine-under-par 63 in the second round foursomes.

Larrazabal, 25, burst on to the scene by winning the French Open as a qualifier in June, reminding Jimenez of the emergence of Spanish greats Seve Ballesteros, Sergio Garcia and Jose Maria Olazabal.

"He brings a fresh breath to the tour and to the Spanish," said 44-year-old Jimenez, who turned professional the year before his team mate was born.

"When people come in with this age and at the beginning of the tour, they come in with this kind of condition.

"He's playing very well, he's hitting the ball very solid, and he hits very, very good irons on the greens.

"The only thing is to keep this illusion and the good things, they will come in the future.

"He has a very, very big future, and I like playing with a guy like him, it's nice because it's always nice to have a fresh eye."