

# Ghotbi: Iran's football family is not close-knit

**Tehran Times Sports Desk**  
**TEHRAN** — Iran's football coach Afshin Ghotbi said on Monday that Iran's football members are not united together.

Speaking at Iran's national team football camp, Ghotbi said, "In my opinion, Iran's football family is not close to-

gether. I think there is a wall between the Iranian football members keeping them far apart."

Ghotbi expressed his satisfaction with being a trainer in Iran, adding, "Thanks God I am a football coach. In Iran you cannot find a job as effective as a football coach. You don't

have enough money and facilities here but you feel love among people."

Criticizing some Iranian players, Ghotbi stated, "Without discipline you cannot be a success. Some Iranian players are not focused, for example, they come to training with three cell phones."



## Iran's Greco-Roman team becomes runner-up in Denmark

**Tehran Times Sports Desk**  
**HERNING, Denmark** — Iran's Greco-Roman team finished in second place in the 2009 FILA World Championships in Herning, Denmark.

Iran bagged one gold in 55 kg category by Hamid Sourian and three bronzes by Farshad Alizadeh in 74 kg, Habibollah Akhlaqi in 84 kg and Amir Ali Akbari in 96 kg in the tournament held at the Messecenter Herning exhibition center.

Turkey claimed the title with two gold medals and one bronze, and Azerbaijan finished in third place with one gold and two bronzes.

### Final Greco-Roman Team Standings

- 1 Turkey, 44
- 2 Iran, 39
- 3 Azerbaijan, 38
- 4 Russia, 31
- 5 Cuba, 26
- 6 Hungary, 19
- 6 Georgia, 19
- 8 Denmark, 17
- 8 Sweden, 17
- 8 Uzbekistan, 17
- 11 Armenia, 15
- 12 Belarus, 14
- 13 Germany, 13
- 14 France, 12
- 15 United States, 11
- 16 Kazakhstan, 9
- 17 Romania, 8
- 17 Korea, 8
- 19 Ukraine, 7
- 19 Finland, 7
- 21 Serbia, 6
- 21 Japan, 6
- 23 Dominican Rep., 4
- 24 Poland, 3
- 25 Bulgaria, 2
- 25 Croatia, 2
- 25 Norway, 2
- 25 Venezuela, 2
- 29 Czech Rep., 1

### NEWS IN BRIEF



#### Arsenal hit by Denilson lay-off



Arsenal midfielder Denilson has been ruled out for two months because of a fracture in his back.

The 21-year-old Brazilian picked up the injury in the Gunners' 4-2 defeat at Manchester City on 12 September.

Denilson played in 37 Premier League games last season, more than any of his team-mates, and was recently rewarded with a new, long-term contract. He has featured six times for Arsenal this season and has scored once, in the opening day 6-1 win against Everton.

When the player signed his new deal earlier this month, Gunners manager Arsene Wenger said: "Denilson's contribution to the club last season was outstanding."

(Source: BBC)

#### Great Britain expect road success



British Cycling boss David Brailsford insists GB will challenge for a world road title in the next two years despite their disappointment this week.

Great Britain return from the World Championships without a single medal. Sprinter Mark Cavendish was ill, while top hopes Bradley Wiggins, Nicole Cooke and David Millar pulled out mid-race.

"We're really serious and it's looking well to compete for that World Championship jersey in the coming years," Brailsford told BBC Sport.

(Source: BBC)

#### Liverpool without Mascherano and Benayoun



Liverpool will be without midfielders Javier Mascherano and Yossi Benayoun for Tuesday's Champions League Group E clash with Fiorentina.

Mascherano is sick and Benayoun picked up a leg injury against Hull in the 6-1 thrashing of Hull on Saturday. Mascherano's absence means winger Albert Riera is likely to start. The hosts are without suspended top-scorer Alberto Gilardino, meaning Stevan Jovetic and Adrian Mutu could start up front together.

Fiorentina coach Cesare Prandelli admitted Liverpool's free-scoring form, with 18 goals in their last six matches, has him worried.

(Source: BBC)

#### Reds could land Saudi funds



Liverpool could secure significant new investment with a private Saudi sports investment company in talks with co-owner George Gillett.

F6, who are chaired by Saudi prince Faisal bin Fahd bin Abdullah, have confirmed they are holding talks with Gillett, who holds power at Anfield alongside fellow American Tom Hicks. Hicks and Gillett have been forced to shelve plans for Liverpool's new stadium due to the ongoing global economic crisis.

And manager Rafa Benitez saw his summer transfer budget restricted with the signings of Glen Johnson and Alberto Aquilani largely financed by Xabi Alonso's departure to Real Madrid.

F6 could purchase all of Gillett's 50 per cent stake in the Merseyside outfit to take joint control alongside Hicks, with another option that they buy part of the Texan's share.

"We have not reached a final agreement yet," Gassim Hamidaddin, F6 deputy managing director, told Reuters.

(Source: Skysports)

## Safina suffers shock Tokyo defeat

World number one and defending champion Dinara Safina made a shock early exit with defeat by Taiwanese qualifier Chang Kai-chen at the Pan Pacific Open.

Safina had a first-round bye as the top seed in Tokyo but saw her poor run of form continue in her opening match.

The Russian double-faulted to drop serve when trying to close out the match in the third set and went on to lose 7-6 (7-5) 4-6 7-5.

Fifth seed Svetlana Kuznetsova lost 7-5 4-6 6-3 to Germany's Andrea Petkovic.

Maria Sharapova came through a tough battle to defeat Francesca Schiavone 4-6 7-4 6-1 and will play 12th seed Samantha Stosur next, while Venus Williams is in action against Russia's Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova.

"I thought I did a good job of hanging in there because she was playing at a high level, some of the best tennis she has played against me in all of our match-ups before," said Sharapova.

The Tokyo defeat comes as the latest blow to Safina, who has been under pressure since reaching the top of the rankings as she has yet to win a Grand Slam title, and she lost to the unheralded Petra Kvitova in the third round of the US Open in her last tournament.

"It's not an easy moment," Safina said after surrendering her

Tokyo title and then sitting in tears on the steps of the players' lounge.

"I had a lot of chances in the third set but I just let it go. The way I played the game at 5-4 was not right after her latest setback.

"It's so disappointing I didn't play the way I should have played. I never took her out of her comfort zone."

Chang, ranked 132nd, was naturally delighted after winning a marathon match in two hours and 44 minutes.

"I never came into the match thinking I was going to lose badly," said the 18-year-old. "I just wanted to play tough."

"I was jumping up and down at the end thinking about my mum. She never watches me play but she watches the live scores (on the Internet) so I was wondering what she was thinking."

Chang will face Gisela Dulko of Argentina in the third round.

Japanese veteran Ai Sugiyama, playing in her last-ever singles match, was forced to retire when trailing 6-0 2-1 to 13th seed Russian Nadia Petrova.

"I was looking forward to my final match, and I was able to bring myself mentally up to this point," said the 34-year-old. "It is very disappointing to end like this."

(Source: BBC)

## Positive Button eyes Japan chance

Brawn GP's Jenson Button declared his Singapore Grand Prix "almost perfect" after battling to fifth place to extend his championship lead by one point.

Button started 11th but finished a place ahead of Rubens Barrichello, who is 15 points behind his team-mate, with Red Bull's Sebastian Vettel 25 adrift.

"I'm very happy with the result," the Englishman said, "and I go to Japan very positive for the next race."

Button will win the title next weekend if he makes five points on Barrichello.

The 29-year-old's championship hopes had appeared to take a big blow after a Saturday qualifying session he described as "disastrous", but a typically smooth drive during the race coupled with a relatively unsuccessful day for his title rivals helped him recover.

Three races of the season remain with 30 points on offer and only Barrichello and Vettel, who finished fourth in Singapore, can now reel Button in.

Vettel's team-mate Mark Webber is out of the championship race after suffering brake failure on lap 46 at the Marina Bay circuit.

"I come away with a result which doesn't look so good on paper but it's almost like a victory to win these points," said Button.

"I gained one point on Rubens and lost one point on Sebastian so all in all it is almost the perfect race."



"Mathematically Rubens can still beat me for sure but it has taken a lot of weight off my shoulders, this, and so it is a good finish."

"My aim is to win the world championship and it is not when or where. You want it sooner rather than later but you've got to think that your aim is to win and that's exactly what my aim is."

"It is going to be three tough races."

He added: "I got stuck behind Heikki [Kovalainen] for quite a few laps of the race but when he pitted I was able to

get past him."

"I was happy to get Nakajimi off the line and that was key for me - that really made the race for me."

Team boss Ross Brawn said: "There was a recovery for us, it looked pretty grim yesterday afternoon [after qualifying]. Our main competitors have not made progress today."

Though Barrichello qualified in fifth on Saturday he was handed a mandatory five-place grid penalty to drop to 10th, before gaining one place because of a later grid penalty to BMW Sauber's Nick Heidfeld. The Brazilian fought hard to make the most of the opportunities that arose in the race and insists he will continue to push for the title.

(Source: BBC)

## Obama to fly to Copenhagen to support Chicago

**COPENHAGEN (Reuters)** — U.S. president Barack Obama will fly to Copenhagen on Friday to support Chicago's bid to stage the 2016 Summer Olympics, officials said on Monday.

A personal appearance by Obama, the first by a sitting U.S. president at an Olympic session, could potentially play a crucial role in swaying votes by International Olympic Committee (IOC) members who must choose between Chicago, Madrid, Rio de Janeiro and Tokyo.

Each of the cities will make a presentation on Friday in the Danish capital to the IOC membership who will then cast their votes the same day. The IOC has 115 members.

The contest has been seen by Olympic observers as one of the closest ever with no clear front runner and all four bids capable of succeeding.

Victory brings not only the Summer Games but enormous prestige, a public relations boost and potential economic and development benefits.

First Lady Michelle Obama will be part of the Chicago del-



egation in Copenhagen lobbying for the Windy City. Her husband will fly in early on the day of the vote and go straight from Copenhagen airport in a 24-car convoy to the Bella Convention Center where he will make an entry with his wife into the IOC session.

"President Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama symbolize the hope, opportunity and inspiration that makes Chicago great, and we are honored to have two of our city's most accomplished residents leading our delegation in Copenhagen," said Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley in a statement.

"Who better to share with members of the International Olympic Committee the commitment and enthusiasm Chicago has for the Olympic and Paralympic Movement than the President and First Lady."

The other three candidates will also be bringing their most senior officials. Brazilian president Luis Inacio Lula da Silva will be part of the Rio team, King Juan Carlos of Spain will back Madrid's bid and newly elected Japanese prime minister Yukio Hatoyama will support Tokyo.

## Brailsford upbeat after Worlds performance

Although Great Britain's best finisher was Steven Cummings in 52nd spot, GB coaches had said before the event that their focus was on "Project Rainbow Jersey" to win the title in the coming years.

However Cooke, who went into the event as defending world and Olympic champion, was unable to match her form of last year, after a season affected by illness.

And Wiggins, who had chosen to concentrate on Thursday's time trial, suffered a mechanical problem while in the hunt for a podium place.

"Nicole didn't have great form coming here so it was always going to be tough for her as defending world and Olympic champion when you haven't got great form," said Brailsford.

"She's been a great servant to us and she'll be back in the future."

"Bradley was on a good ride. He would have definitely got the bronze."

"He's right up there as one of the best time-trialists in the world and he proved that again."

Brailsford was also impressed by the showing of the under-23 men's squad, with Alex Dowsett finishing seventh in the time trial and Peter Kennaugh fourth in the road race.

"That's the third year on the trot we've been in the top four, which shows the good talent coming through to the senior ranks," added Brailsford.

(Source: BBC)