

Iran comes 2nd in World Taekwondo Championship

Tehran Times Sports Desk
COPENHAGEN — Iran claimed the second place of the 2009 World Taekwondo Championship on Sunday night.

In the event held in Denmark, Iran

finished second with 55 points behind South Korea which scored 61 points. Spain finished in third place with 42 points while Turkey came fourth with 41 points.

Mohammad Baqeri-Motamed in



-68 kg won Iran's sole gold medal in the event. The other Iranian athlete Reza Naderian bagged silver in -63 kg. Meysam Baqeri, Yusef Karami and Hossein Tajik claimed bronzes. "Iran was the team that deserved

to win the championship the most. However, some individual mistakes as well as officiating problems prevented us from winning the title," Iran's taekwondo head coach said. "Iran was the only country which

claimed five medals. I am proud of my team," Reza Mehmandoust added.

A total of 928 athletes, including 558 men from 142 countries, took part in the largest ever WTF Championships.

Iranian football teams invited to Italian tournaments

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TEHRAN — Iran's Under-15 and Under-16 football teams have been invited to take part in two Italian tournaments.

Iran's U-15 football team will participate in the games which will be held in April 2010 to honor the memory of Franco Gallini, founder of the association "Via di Natale."

The Iranian U-16 football team is to participate in the Torneo delle Nazioni which is slated for May 2010 in Italy as well.

Ferguson charged over referee remarks

LONDON (AFP) — Alex Ferguson was charged Monday with improper conduct by the Football Association (FA) for publicly labelling referee Alan Wiley "unfit".

The Manchester United manager made his comments after the Premier League champions were held to a 2-2 draw by Sunderland at Old Trafford on October 3.

Ferguson apologized for the remarks but that didn't stop the FA from pressing charges against the Scot which could lead to a possible touchline ban and fine.

Ferguson accused Wiley of not being "fit enough for a game of that standard" and of "walking up the pitch for the second goal needing a rest".

The FA said Monday in a statement: "Manchester United manager Sir Alex Ferguson has been charged with improper conduct.

"The charge relates to media comments made by Ferguson about referee Alan Wiley following United's match against Sunderland at Old Trafford on October 3. He has until November 3 to respond to the charge."

Ferguson, in his apology, said: "I apologize to Mr Wiley for any personal embarrassment my comments may have caused and to the FA for going public with my views.

"In retrospect I accept that they could be deemed as expressing those views in an inappropriate form. It was never my intention to bring the focus of intense media interest on Mr Wiley and I will apologize to him personally when I return from an overseas trip during the international break," he said.

Ferguson's outburst outraged leading English referees and now retired former top official Jeff Winter, blasted it as "a cowardly attack."

"Every game Alan Wiley takes charge of now where he makes a decision which upsets some fans is going to result in chants of 'You're not fit to referee', he's going to be known as the 'unfit ref,'" Winter told the Guardian newspaper.

"Sir Alex won't care though. He's a knight of the realm and he thinks he's untouchable, bullet proof," added Winter, who dubbed Sir Alex "a bully".

At 49, Wiley is one of the oldest referees officiating at the top level in England. His supporters say his fitness, like that of other officials, is subjected to weekly monitoring and an annual assessment.

NEWS IN BRIEF



Wickmayer bags Linz title



Third seed Yanina Wickmayer secured a 6-3 6-4 final victory over unseeded Czech teenager Petra Kvitova at the WTA Generali Ladies Open in Linz, Austria.

The 19-year-old Belgian dominated throughout to win in straight sets against the less experienced Kvitova, whose serve let her down. Despite firing down five aces, Kvitova won only 53 percent of service points and allowed Wickmayer to break four times in nine attempts.

After holding off a break point in the opening game, world number 24 Wickmayer broke to lead 2-0 when Kvitova made the first of her three double-faults.

(Source: Skysports)

'Maradona's behaviour is unacceptable'



Diego Maradona's behaviour after the match against Uruguay topped the headlines for days. Dutch legend Johan Cruyff states that Maradona's behaviour is out of order.

"I'm glad Argentina managed to qualify for the World Cup but I'm not pleased with national coach Maradona's behaviour," Cruyff said in Dutch paper De Telegraaf.

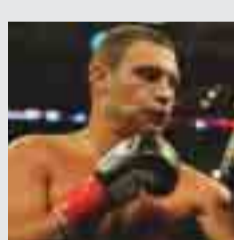
"The way he presented himself towards the press after Uruguay-Argentina is unacceptable. People like him form an example for everyone, especially for the youth.

"Then you can't behave the way Maradona did."

Argentina secured a ticket for the World Cup by beating Uruguay (0-1). After the game, Maradona hit out at some journalists.

(Source: Soccerway)

Klitschko to face Johnson



Vitali Klitschko will make the third defense of his WBC heavyweight title against American Kevin Johnson in Berne, Switzerland.

The Ukrainian, whose brother Vladimir holds the IBF, IBO and WBO titles, will meet undefeated Johnson at the PostFinance-Arena in December.

Klitschko retained his WBC title with a 10th-round TKO over previously unbeaten challenger Chris Arreola in September. It was the 38-year-old's third victory since making a comeback last year following an injury-induced retirement in 2005.

"I feel fully fit. I cannot wait to get back into the ring," he said.

(Source: Skysports)

Gerrard return boosts Liverpool



Liverpool captain Steven Gerrard is fit to play against Lyon in Tuesday's Champions League Group E clash but striker Fernando Torres misses out.

Midfielder Gerrard sat out Saturday's controversial 1-0 Premier League defeat to Sunderland with a groin injury but returned to training on Monday.

"It's important as we have had injury problems. Having Gerrard fit is a big boost for us," said boss Rafa Benitez. Spanish international Torres is still recovering from an abdominal problem.

(Source: BBC)

European World Cup play-off draw

The Republic of Ireland will play 1998 champions France in the play-offs for the World Cup finals. The French will have the advantage of playing the second leg on home soil.

Portugal, meanwhile, will face Bosnia-Herzegovina and it is Greece-Ukraine and Russia-Slovenia.

France and Ireland were in the same qualifying group for the 2006 World Cup. There was just one goal in the two games between the sides as Thierry Henry scored a 68th-minute winner at Lansdowne Road in Dublin.

Portugal may be relieved to be drawn against a nation with no experience of previously qualifying for a finals, especially



as neighbors Spain found it easy to play against them in scoring five goals last week.

Russia, who came close to being drawn against neighbors Ukraine, will face Slovenia who reached the finals in 2002. Slovenia conceded just four goals in qualifying, only bettered by Netherlands, which will make them a tough opponent.

And Greece, European Champions in 2004, will play Andriy Shevchenko's Ukraine for a place on the plane to South Africa.

Ties to be played on November 14 and 18. (Source: Soccernet)

Button savors dream world title

Jenson Button celebrated fulfilling a boyhood dream after his bold drive in Brazil earned him a maiden world title.

The 29-year-old recovered from 14th to finish fifth in Sao Paulo to succeed compatriot Lewis Hamilton and become Britain's 10th world champion.

"After the last few races, this one makes up for it. It was awesome," the jubilant Brawn driver told BBC Sport.

"I jumped into a kart 21 years ago and I loved winning. I never expected to be world champion in F1 but I've done it."

Button admitted he "felt sick" after qualifying on Saturday when he failed to make it into the top-10 shootout and closest title rival Rubens Barrichello claimed pole.

But Button drove a superb race, executing several daring overtaking manoeuvres, while Barrichello slipped back to third before a puncture finally ruined his hopes of closing the gap on his Brawn team-mate.

"I think that drive was worthy of a world champion," said Button.

It came after what the Englishman described as a "stressful few races" in which Barrichello and Red Bull's Sebastian Vettel had chipped away at his championship lead.

"I dreamt on Friday night that qualifying was going to be terrible, and it was," Button said after the win. "I also dreamt Friday night that I would be world champion this weekend."

His Brawn team also secured the one point they needed to seal the constructors' championship.

"I am so pleased for all the guys. We have come through strongly and we are going to have quite a good few days," Button said.

"The last few months have been very stressful. I try not to show it because that is a sign of weakness, but it has been hard - but we have done it."

Button has suffered criticism throughout his career, first that he did not take his job seriously enough, then that it took him too long to win his first race - which he did in Hungary in 2006 after 113 attempts.

And in the second half of this season he has been accused of backing into the world title after slipping away from the form that won him six of the first seven races.

But Button said: "None of it matters, because I'm sat here as world champion and that is something you can never take away. I've had an up and down season, but I've come out on top and I'm world champion. I don't need to say anything."

As Button celebrated his title win, Red Bull's Mark Webber revelled in the second race victory of his career after a masterful race at the Autodromo Jose Carlos Pace.

The Australian said there was no question that Button, who won six of the first seven races of the season, deserved his maiden world championship.



"JB is consistent and I have said that throughout this year," he said.

"Unfortunately, he was also blisteringly quick at the start of the year as well."

"A lot of other drivers, including us [Webber and Vettel] and Rubens had a shopping list of excuses as to why we were not getting the results, but at the end of the day we were not, JB was."

"Other teams arrived, particularly Lewis [Hamilton] and Kimi [Raikkonen], in the middle and the back part of the season, and that made it hard for him to close the deal out but he is a deserved champion."

Barrichello, meanwhile, suffered disappointment at his home grand prix for the 17th time, but paid a warm tribute to his Brawn team - who he is likely to leave at the end of the season - and the new world champion.

"People put a flower on my coffin at the start of the season," he said.

"I was back, driving a fantastic car and I was so, so up for it. It was a great car to drive all year."

"I am pleased for Jenson, as a friend, and as a great champion, and if I didn't win, he should have won it, so well done to him."

"Jenson deserved to do it, but he won it on the first six races, and I think the second half of the championship was mine."

He added: "It is a hell of a team that deserves to win and we will have a great night tonight. I feel part of this, especially the constructors' championship."

Brawn team principal Ross Brawn, who helped Michael Schumacher win his seven drivers' titles when he was at Benetton and then Ferrari, said Button's performance in Brazil was "the drive of a world champion".

"He's a fantastic racer. Today he had a great race; he knew what he had to do," said Brawn.

"We've lost a little bit of pace in the car over the last few races and he's stuck with it and he's deserved everything he's got."

In claiming the title, Button follows in the footsteps of the likes of Damon Hill and Jackie Stewart.

"It's a very happy story," said Hill. "Jenson's a lovely guy and he's the world champion with the winning smile."

"He got accused of not taking it seriously but I think he showed everyone how serious he is inside."

Stewart, winner in 1969, 1971 and 1973, added his praise for the skill demonstrated by Button in Brazil.

"It was a very clever race," said Stewart. "Through the debris of the other accidents he passed people, which is not characteristic of current Formula 1."

"He paced himself correctly - he wasn't going to win the race, it was obvious - but at the same time he did it in a calculated, smooth and careful fashion."

"At the end of the day that's how you win world championships."

"He kept his dignity, kept his style and came through."

(Source: BBC)