

## Iran, Third at Asian Skiing Event

**TEHRAN, March 18**--Iran finished third at the 15th Asian Youth Skiing Championships in the Japanese city of Nagano Friday.

Morteza Savesh-Shemshaki, head of the Iranian team, told IRNA his side took one silver and two bronze medals as well as two fourth and one sixth titles.

According to the official, the host country Japan celebrated the title and South Korea finished runner-up.

Thirty-five skiers from 10 countries competed in the two-day event.

## Blatter: Time Up for Soccer's Racists

**ZURICH, Switzerland, March 18**--Football clubs, national associations and regional confederations would no longer be allowed to drag their heels over racism, FIFA president Sepp Blatter vowed on Friday.

On Thursday, at an executive committee meeting, world soccer's governing body announced draconian punishments for incidents of racism and 24 hours later Blatter said they would be in force immediately, reported Reuters.

He also confirmed the sanctions would be used to punish offending nations at this year's World Cup finals in Germany.

"I can tell you the new rules for racism are immediately applicable," Blatter told reporters on Friday.

"From now on they are valid so it's the end of non-compliance with what our society is asking football to do."

The tough stance on an issue France and Juventus defender Lilian Thuram describes as "a plague" has been welcomed throughout the game.

According to the statement released by FIFA on Thursday, clubs whose supporters commit "acts

of racism or discrimination in football" will now face sanctions ranging from match suspensions and the deduction of points to relegation or elimination from competitions.

Confederations and national associations will be compelled to incorporate the measures and infringements could lead to a two-year exclusion from international soccer, FIFA said.

Racism has reared its ugly head in football in recent years.

England players were abused during an international in Spain, while last month Cameroon striker Samuel Eto'o threatened to leave the pitch after being racially taunted by the home fans during Barcelona's match at Real Zaragoza.

Football Against Racism in Europe (FARE) backed FIFA's move.

"This is a significant development and should mean a harmonization of the disciplinary sanctions that clubs face," director Piara Power told FARE's website.

"We hope FAs will stop fining players and clubs insulting amounts for the worst types of mass racism."

## Persepolis Trounce Malavan

**TEHRAN, March 18**--Persepolis came from one goal down to trounce the home team Malavan 3-1 in the 26th week of the fifth Iran

Pro League in Takhti Stadium in Bandar Anzali, northern Gilan province, Friday.

Malavan had a dream start as Mohammad

Gholami took the lead from penalty spot after five minutes, IRNA said.

But Persepolis defender Shays Rezaei, who conceded the penalty,

leveled the match on 16 minutes with a powerful drive from close range.

The visitor made it 2-1 through the advancing defender Ali Ansarian,

who headed home a trademark long throw from striker Ali Alizadeh one minute later.

Alizadeh celebrated

the third in the 21st minute, poking home a Mehrzad Ma'danchi cross.

Some 15,000 fans watched the match in a cold day.

Persepolis is in eighth place with 35 points and Malavan in the 12th spot on 29.

Meanwhile, National skipper Ali Daei found the net after the restart to help the home team Saba Battery snatch a 1-0 win over relegation-zone Shahid Qandi in Shahid Derakhshan Stadium, west of the capital.

The veteran striker upset his former manager Majid Jalali as he grabbed the winner after 70 minutes of the 26th week game of the fifth Iran Pro League.

Top marksman Fereydoun Fazli hit two to inspire Esteghal of southern city of Ahvaz into a 2-1 home victory over Fajr-e Sepassi in the 26th week of the fifth Iran Pro League in Takhti Stadium in Shoushtar.

**SELANGOR, Malaysia, March 18**--Italian

Giancarlo Fisichella seized the third pole position of his career here when he clocked the fastest time in qualifying for Sunday's Malaysian Grand Prix.

The 33-year-old Renault driver narrowly outpaced 25-year-old Briton Jenson Button, driving a Honda, to top the times Saturday with a best lap of one minute and 33.840 seconds. Button clocked 1:33.986.

Rising star Nico Rosberg of Germany, the 20-year-old son of former champion Keke Rosberg of Finland, was third fastest for Williams ahead of seven-times champion Michael Schumacher of Germany, in a Ferrari, reported AFP.

Australian Mark Webber in the second Williams was fifth, Colombian Juan Pablo Montoya sixth for McLaren Mercedes and Finn Kimi Raikkonen, in another McLaren, was seventh.

Defending world champion Spaniard Fernando Alonso was eighth for Renault on a day when engine problems hit the Ferrari team and others.



Italian Formula One driver Giancarlo Fisichella of Renault steers his car during the qualifying session at the Sepang race track ahead of the Malaysian Grand Prix in Sepang, Saturday. (AFP Photo)

temperature 37 when the session started with humidity at 46 percent.

The first session saw the "elimination" of American Scott Speed, Italian Vitantonio Liuzzi, Dutchman Christijan Albers, Portugal's Tiago Monteiro and the Japanese pair Takuma Sato and Yuji Ide.

Respectively, this group took the bottom six places on the grid, from 17th to 22nd.

Shortly before the session began, it was confirmed that both German Schumacher and his former Ferrari team-mate Brazilian Rubens Barrichello, now at Honda, had required engine changes.

In addition to these two, Felipe Massa and Briton David Coulthard were also using new power-units, making four drivers in all, the Brazilian having been required to change his engine for a second time on Saturday.

The qualifying session began again in searing heat and high humidity. The track temperature was 48 degrees Celsius (119 Fahrenheit) and the air

## Australia End Gold Drought

**MELBOURNE, Australia, March 18**--Emma Snowsill and Brad Kahlefeldt powered away on the final run at the Commonwealth Games on Saturday to give Australia their first two triathlon gold medals.

So often a force at world titles, Australia had never won a Commonwealth or Olympic gold medal but Snowsill and Kahlefeldt put in commanding performances in front of their home crowd in the grueling

event. The diminutive Snowsill fought off a strong challenge from New Zealanders, with Sam Warriner winning silver. Andrea Hewitt outspurred fellow Kiwi Debbie Tanner to take bronze on the Line, reported Reuters.

Snowsill, the 2003 and 2005 world champion, kept in touch with the leaders during the 1.5 km swim and 40 km bike legs, but came into her own as she surged to

the front about a third of the way into the closing 10 km run along Melbourne's foreshore.

"By far this is my biggest and most memorable win. I've won world championships and major events before but they've all been overseas," Snowsill told reporters. "To win this here in Melbourne is just amazing."

"I honestly can't believe it, it's still sinking in," the 24-year-old Snowsill said.

## Dementieva, Sharapova In Pacific Life Final

**INDIAN WELLS, USA, March 18**--Fourth seed Elena Dementieva upset top seed Justine Henin Hardenne 2-6 7-5 7-5 to reach the Pacific Life Open final on Friday.

Dementieva will face third seed Maria Sharapova, who beat Martina Hingis 6-3 6-3, in the semifinal.

On the men's side, second seed Rafael Nadal

crushed Cypriot Marcos Baghdatis 7-5 6-0 and American James Blake overwhelmed Igor Andreev of Russia 6-1 6-4 in the quarterfinals.

Henin came into the match with a 7-1 winning record over Dementieva and cruised through the first set and a half before the wheels came off with the score at 2-5.

A notoriously slow

starter Dementieva suddenly found her game, running down ball after ball and rarely making errors, Reuters said.

She broke Henin twice to get back to 5-5 and then wore her bewildered opponent down to take the set.

Henin had her right knee wrapped in between sets and regained momentum in the third set.

**MELBOURNE, Australia, March 18**--

Top seed Malaysia became the first country into the badminton mixed team quarterfinals Saturday where they were joined by Sri Lanka, England and India The

mighty Malaysians have looked an accomplished outfit throughout the three days of preliminary rounds and will face either

Australia or New Zealand for a place in the semis after beating the Sri Lankans 5-0 to top their pool, AFP said.

Like the Malaysians, Sri Lanka face the prospect of a tricky encounter with either host nation Australia or New Zealand, who play later Saturday to decide who tops their group.

Defending champions

England and India also made the last eight, and play each other in a highly anticipated clash Saturday evening to find out who takes on the winner of the Singapore-Canada match.

If England lose and Singapore win, their quarterfinal meeting will be a repeat of the final four years ago in which the English humbled the Singaporeans.

## Malaysia, Sri Lanka Into Badminton Quarters

## Call for Paper and Registration Form

**7th International Conference on Coastal, Ports and Marine Structures, ICOPMAS 2006 November 27-29, 2006, Tehran, Iran**

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