Iran’s beach soccer can grow further, coach says

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TEHRAN - Ali Naderi, head coach of Iran beach soccer team, believes that the sport has immense potential in the country, and it can grow further with more support.

The beach soccer team performed well at the 2023 Nation's Cup in Saint Petersburg, Russia, winning against Senegal 5-1 and the UAE 10-0. However, they lost to Russia 4-3 and finished in second place.

The Iranian players can truly shine on the international stage if they get the right support,” said Naderi in his interview with Tehran Times.

With Russia as the World champions, Senegal as the champions of Africa, and the UAE as the host of the 2023 FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup, the tournament was high level,” said the head coach of Team Melli.

We put in a great performance in the matches against Senegal and the UAE, and even though we played our best against Russia, but the referee’s decisions went against us, resulting in our loss,” he added.

To get ready for the 2023 FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup, Iran will participate in the II Games of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in Minsk from Aug. 5 to 9. They are placed in Group B along with Belarus, the UAE, and Azerbaijan.

The younger players have been called up for the CIS competitions instead of the key players of the national team to give them the opportunity to experience big stages,” said Naderi.

Despite the Iranian federation's support for the national beach soccer team, financial challenges could cause real problem for the sport.

Iranian beach soccer clubs face challenges due to low player wages, highlighting the need for more financial support.

It's important to note that the league competitions are well-organized and have always helped us for a strong national team,” concluded Naderi.

FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup is scheduled to be held in Dubai, UAE from Feb. 15 to 25, 2024.