

## Iran edged by Netherlands: 2023 VNL

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TEHRAN – Iran suffered a narrow defeat to the Netherlands in Week 2 of the 2023 Volleyball Nations League (VNL) on Saturday.

The Persians lost to the hosts 3-2 (16-25, 25-16, 21-25, 25-17, 15-10) in Rotterdam.

The Dutch captain Nimir Abdel-Aziz led the match with 27 points, while Amin Esmailnejad scored 21 points for Iran.

Behrouz Ataei's men are scheduled to meet France on July 4 in Anaheim, the U. and will also meet Bulgaria (July 6), Argentina (July 8) and Cuba (July 9).

The VNL Preliminary Phase will feature three weeks of competition, with each of the 16 teams playing 12 matches.

The eight best-ranked national teams in the Preliminary Phase will qualify for the Final Phase, which will be held in Gdańsk, Poland, from July 19-23 – host country Poland are already guaranteed a spot.