

Qatar hold Iran in friendly as Thailand 2020 looms

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TEHRAN – Qatar U23 football team came from 2-0 down to draw 2-2 with Iran U23 on Saturday as part of preparation for the 2020 AFC U23 Championship.

In a friendly match held in Doha, Reza Shekari gave the Persians the lead in the 28th minute from the penalty spot and Mehdi Ghaedi extended Iran's lead six minutes later.

Qatar turned the 2-0 deficit to draw 2-2 with visiting Iran. Abdulrasheed Umaru Ibrahim scored twice for Qatar in the 83rd and 90th minutes.

along with defending champions Uzbekistan, China and South Korea.

The competition will be held in Thailand from Jan. 8 to 26.

The top three teams qualify for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics in July, although should Japan emerge as one of them, the fourth-placed side will advance.

Iran have not been in the Olympics since the 1976 games in Munich.

Hamid Estili's team will start the campaign on Jan. 9 with a match against Uzbekistan.