

Belgium, Iran and Trinidad & Tobago earned their first-ever medals at the AIBA World Boxing Championships

Description

28 boxers advanced to the semi-finals at the AIBA World Boxing Championships in Belgrade. Boxers in the minimumweight (48kg), bantamweight (54kg), lightweight (60kg), welterweight (67kg), middleweight (75kg), cruiserweight (86kg) and super heavyweight (+92kg) guaranteed at least a bronze medal for their countries. Belgium, Iran and Trinidad & Tobago achieved their first-ever medals in the history of the event.

Temirtas Zhussupov became the first medalist of the Championships after re-match

Uzbekistan's Nodirjon Mirzakhmedov won the last two editions of the ASBC Asian Boxing Championships in the smallest weight class. The 27-year-old experienced boxer met with a veteran Kazakh, Temirtas Zhussupov, who is also the 2013 ASBC Asian Champion. The Uzbek boxer defeated Zhussupov in the quarter-finals of the Governor Cup in Russia by a split decision this April. The Kazakh used his best strategy, worked from a longer range and came closer to land jabs. That helped Zhussupov to take advantage after the first round and his strategy worked better today against the attacking Uzbek. Zhussupov has done revenge after his previous loss and became the first boxer at the AIBA World Boxing Championships who advanced to the semi-finals.

"I am Kazakhstan's first medalist at the AIBA World Boxing Championships which is a great honour for me. I lost to Mirzakhmedov last time and I was so motivated to beat him today."

Temirtas Zhussupov (KAZ)

Georgia's best-ever competition day at the AIBA World Boxing Championships

Georgia's Sakhil Alakhverdovi achieved the gold medal at the 2017 EUBC Youth European Boxing Championships and he also reached the podiums in the U22 competitions. The 22-year-old Georgian used his longer reach against Kyrgyzstan's Mirlan Turkbay Uulu and took the lead on the scorecards after the first round. Alakhverdovi was highly confident

after the advantage and he claimed Georgia's first medal since Otar Eranosyan's bronze in 2017.

Following his amazing performance, Lasha Guruli exceeded all of the expectations when he defeated Cuba's Kevin Hayler Brown in the quarter-finals of the welterweight (67kg) making a remarkable day for all Georgians.

Thailand Boxing Federation returned to the medal table after 2015

Thailand Boxing Federation's Wuttichai Yurachai moved back to the minimumweight (48kg) in the recent year and he wanted to compete in the international events once again. The 29-year-old Cologne Boxing World Cup winner had a tough quarter-final contest against Japan's hope Kazuma Aratake on the 9th competition day. The Japanese boxer was injured in the contest and Wuttichai Yurachai became Thailand Boxing Federation's first medalist since 2015.

"It is a fantastic comeback after my early elimination at the 2019 AIBA World Boxing Championships. I worked hard on my development in the training centre and I am so happy now."

Wuttichai Yurachai (TBF)

France's duo Sofiane Oumiha and Billal Bennama took their second AIBA medals

France's Billal Bennama earned a bronze medal at the 2019 AIBA World Boxing Championships at the age of 21. He arrived in Belgrade as one of the favourites. He moved up to the bantamweight (54kg) but he is still taller than any of his rivals such as Kyrgyzstan's Sanzhar Seidakmatov. The French was more experienced and his footwork decided their contest which means Bennama earned his second medal after 2019.

"My opponent was smaller and I used my distance well. I had to be very careful as my Kyrgyz opponent was very strong and I tried to avoid his dangerous hooks. I could win my second medal at the AIBA World Boxing Championships, this is a fantastic feeling now."

Billal Bennama (FRA)

Sofiane Oumiha was the second French boxer in action today who arrived in Belgrade to repeat his gold medal after the Hamburg 2017 edition. He had the strongest possible

rival, Kazakhstan's Samatali Toltayev in the quarter-finals but he could keep the safest distance from the first round. The Kazakh had strong attempts to catch the quick French but Oumiha had the experience to handle it and his decision to move back to the lightweight (60kg) appeared to be right.

"I was so happy to hear that Billal won the medal earlier than me so my job was easy to follow him on the way to the semi-finals. My today's rival was faster than the previous ones but I used my own tactic and succeeded. I returned to the podium after Hamburg but my objective is the gold medal here."

Sofiane Oumiha (FRA)

Khalokov continued his winning path in Belgrade

Uzbekistan's AIBA Youth World Champion Abdumalik Khalokov is one of the biggest talents in the world who turned 21 this year and lost only one bout in the recent two years. He defeated the RBF Team's Vsevolod Shumkov during his career and he was confident in today's quarter-final during their re-match. He knew the perfect tactic against the talented rival and he did not let Shumkov go closer. That effort was the key moment in their contest. The Uzbek's counter-punches impressed the fans and Shumkov was not able to find anything against the super-fast Khalokov.

"I met with this boxer twice during my career and I won both of these contests. However, Shumkov was better today than in our previous bouts. My coaches told me to calm down, be careful and use my distance today. Sometimes I could not follow their instructions but they showed me the right was in the breaks. I am now medalist in Belgrade but for me only the gold is the target."

Abdumalik Khalokov (UZB)

Iran's first-ever AIBA medalist is Daniyal Shahbakhsh

Iran sent ten boxers to the AIBA World Boxing Championships and among them their current number one, Daniyal Shakhbakhsh who advanced today to the quarter-finals. Their ASBC Asian Boxing Championships silver medallist is only 21-year-old but he progressed so quickly and he used his relatively good draw to reach his career highlight. Shahbakhsh used his best tactics against Lithuania's well-experienced powerful Edgaras Skurdelis who had already 300 contests since 2005. The Iranian was slightly better in

their quarter-final and achieved his nation's historical medal in Belgrade.

"I started my road on the international stage in 2018 and I learnt always something during these events. To be the first Iranian medalist at the AIBA World Boxing Championships is amazing, I started to cry already in the ring."

Daniyal Shahbakhsh (IRI)

Salvatore Cavallaro earned Italy's first medal since 2013

The Italians arrived with eleven boxers to the AIBA World Boxing Championships and among them, three advanced to the quarter-finals. Their middleweight (75kg) hope, Salvatore Cavallaro has ten years of experience on the international stage and in spite of his injuries in the recent months, he was in top shape during his quarter-final against Kazakhstan's newcomer Nurkanat Raiys. The smaller Italian tried to be quicker in the exchanges than the younger Kazakh and he was really good at the footwork. Domenico Valentino, Clemente Russo and Roberto Cammarelle were Italy's last medallists at the Almaty 2013 AIBA World Boxing Championships therefore Cavallaro filled that eight-year gap with his guaranteed medal.

"This is fantastic that I could follow such Italian stars and I am medallist at the AIBA World Boxing Championships. I wanted to compete at this event so much and luckily my recover was successful and quick after the injury."

Salvatore Cavallaro (ITA)

Victor Schelstraete from Belgium made history for his country

Belgium joined the boxing business back in 2015 after one tough decade but the country moved forward step by step. Their most experienced national team member, Victor Schelstraete moved down to the new cruiserweight (86kg) which is perfectly fit for his physical condition and height. His English quarter-final opponent, Conner Tudsbury used aggressive attacks in the first round but Schelstraete adopted his rhythm and from the beginning of the second one, he was able to use his strategy well. Belgium has never claimed any medals in the history of the AIBA World Boxing Championships since 1974 but Schelstraete made that big step.

“I have no words for this result. I am the first ever Belgian boxer who earned medal at the AIBA World Boxing Championships. My English opponent was very strong today and I tried to land more punches. I am still hungry, let's go the finals.”

Victor Schelstraete (BEL)

Trinidad & Tobago gained its first medal

Trinidad & Tobago competed in several AIBA World Boxing Championships in recent decades but the country won only a few contests in these appearances. Their super heavyweight (+92kg) boxer Nigel Paul began the sport only in 2015 but after a few international events, he claimed medals in the American continental championships. Paul had a strong preparation for this AIBA World Boxing Championships and gave everything for his quarter-final against Turkey's strong Berat Acar. Nigel Paul used his weight and height advantages in this crucial quarter-final bout and earned a fantastic medal for Trinidad & Tobago.

“I am not able to say anything now, not so easy. This is so emotional moment for me. I just wanted to be remembered in my country and I made this result.”

Nigel Paul (TTO)

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