

Tomoya Tsuboi and Sewon Okazawa achieved historical gold medals for Japan at AIBA World Boxing Championships

## **Description**

The first part of the finals was held at the AIBA World Boxing Championships in Belgrade, Serbia today. The finals of the flyweight (51kg), featherweight (57kg), light welterweight (63.5kg), light middleweight (71kg), light heavyweight (80kg) and heavyweight (92kg) took place at the Stark Arena on Day 11. Japan has never earned any gold medal in the history of the AIBA World Boxing Championships but this Friday their Tomoya Tsuboi and Sewon Okazawa both claimed the titles.

### **Kazakhstan's Temirtas Zhussupov is the first winner in Belgrade**

Asian final was held in the minimumweight (48kg) at the AIBA World Boxing Championships which opened the day of the finals. The Asians have strong traditions in the smallest weight category, and a boxer from Kazakhstan and a representative of the Thailand Boxing Federation advanced to the final. Generally, this is a weight class of the next generation, many of the previous champions won medals as young talents but in Belgrade, two veterans competed for the gold medal.

Kazakhstan's 33-year-old Temirtas Zhussupov started his path at the international events in 2009. The Kazakh boxer met with Thailand Boxing Federation's Wuttichai Yurachai who is 29-year-old. Both boxers tried to land quick punches in the first round and began the final in the same high rhythm. Following the equal first round, Zhussupov opened the second with quick shots and he found the right distance against the experienced Thai. Zhussupov had the massive advantage after six minutes, therefore, Yurachai gave up all tactical positions and tried to land decisive and stronger punches. Zhussupov's footwork was uncomfortable for Yurachai and the Kazakh controlled the third round well enough to win the first title of the AIBA World Boxing Championships.

"My opponent was so quick and strong but I could do my actions faster. My best round was the second when I felt the distance."

Temirtas Zhussupov (KAZ)

## **Tomoya Tsuboi claimed a historical gold medal for Japan**

The second final of the AIBA World Boxing Championships was also held between two Asian boxers, Kazakhstan's super talented Makhmud Sabyrkhan and Japan's Tomoya Tsuboi who marched to the title contest of the bantamweight (54kg). Sabyrkhan won the Puerto Princesa 2017 ASBC Asian Junior Boxing Championships, the Bangkok 2018 ASBC Asian Youth Boxing Championships and the Ulaanbaatar 2019 ASBC Asian Youth Boxing Championships. His Japanese opponent, Tomoya Tsuboi has six years of international experience and previously he eliminated France's taller Billal Bennama in the semi-finals.

The five-years younger Sabyrkhan started the final with amazing motivation and used tricky movements before the attacks. Tsuboi was patient and waited for the best moments but received punches from Sabyrkhan when he opened his defense. Both boxers increased their tempo in the second round and their contest became more spectacular in Belgrade. Tsuboi's double shots from a longer range were impressive in the second round, therefore, Sabyrkhan had to move ahead in the third round of their final. Despite Sabyrkhan's amazing technical skills, Tsuboi was more punctual in the second part of the final to take the gold medal for Japan. Tsuboi's success means Japan earned its first-ever gold medal in the history of the AIBA Men's Elite World Boxing Championships.

"I trained so hard after my losses in the previous years to be a champion. I am the first from Japan, fantastic feeling. Thanks for my coaches to Yuji and Hirokuni to work for me a successful tactic."

Tomoya Tsuboi (JPN)

## **Sofiane Oumiha won his second world title after 2017**

Two of the world's most technician lightweight (60kg) boxers advanced to the finals in Belgrade. Uzbekistan's Abdumalik Khalokov and France's Sofiane Oumiha met each other for the very first time. Both boxers had the same style of boxing which is based on patience, footwork and amazing counter-punches, therefore, their bout was one of the most awaited on the eleventh competition day.

Khalokov is a counter-puncher but this time he moved forward and tried to keep control from the first seconds. The Uzbek boxer was enough fast to reach the French boxer who played his own game in their amazing technical final. Khalokov switched his stance several times in the first round but Oumiha's counter-punches guaranteed his advantage

after three minutes. The seven-years-old French had excellent defense in the bout and his tactic was smarter today. Oumiha kept control and his best strategy until the final gong to beat one of the best hopes of the world, Abdumalik Khalokov.

“It is amazing that I could win my second title at the AIBA World Boxing Championships. It was a real final and I think I am now a former Soviet Union specialist, I have a good record against them. Abdumalik Khalokov is an outstanding boxer, he tried to be Sofiane Oumiha today, but in my game I was more comfortable. It was a real final and I enjoyed it so much.”

Sofiane Oumiha (FRA)

### **Japan's second gold medal was achieved by Sewon Okazawa**

Japan's ASBC Asian Boxing Championships silver medallist Sewon Okazawa eliminated his main rival, Kazakhstan's Abilaikhan Zhussupov in the semi-finals of the welterweight (67kg) and met with a young US boxer, Omari Jones who walked over to the finals. Okazawa looked still fresh in his sixth bout in Belgrade and he tried to follow his teammate, Tomoya Tsuboi to make a perfect day for Japan. The US welterweight (67kg) boxer was taller than the Japanese and he moved forward more to catch the quick Okazawa.

The Japanese boxer, who has got strong roots in Ghana, had superb defensive skills but Jones also had great knowledge from boxing despite his lack of international experience. Okazawa was more confident from the middle of the second round but Jones finished the period with some nice shots. The final verdict depended on their performance in the third round when Okazawa worked enough from a longer distance to win Japan's second gold medal on Friday. The country showed the best-ever performance.

“It was a really tough fight, my US opponent is so strong, I could not catch him easily today. I had an injury of my left shoulder and it hurt, therefore, I tried to manage this bout with my right hand. I am so happy that I could win Japan's second gold after Tomoya Tsuboi. My teammate was amazing today.”

Sewon Okazawa (JPN)

### **Cuba's Yoennis Hernandez made an impressive international debut in Belgrade**

RBF Team's biggest talent in our sport, Dzhambulat Bizhamov, claimed the gold medal at

the Budapest 2018 AIBA Youth World Boxing Championships and twice in the EUBC European Youth Boxing Championships. His final opponent, Cuba's Yoenlis Hernandez Martinez joined the elite national team at the end of 2019 but he impressed at the previous stages of the event.

Bizhamov, who is a two-time Russian Elite National Champion despite his age of 20, is a powerful puncher and his jabs caught the Cuban in the first minute. Hernandez landed uppercuts in the middle of the first round and he fully adopted the high rhythm of the bout still in the opening period. Bizhamov pushed the 24-year-old Cuban to the corner in the second round but Hernandez had a good defense to handle dangerous situation. The Cuban overcame Bizhamov in the attacks in the middle and he had the strong advantage before the final round. The Cuban middleweight (75kg) boxer is a newcomer on the international stage but his skills were enough to win the title of the AIBA World Boxing Championships.

"I worked hard in recent years to be involved in the Cuban national team. The hard work paid off today and I tried to be patient in the final." Yoenlis Hernandez (CUB)

### **Azerbaijan's Loren Alfonso Dominguez won the narrowest final of the day**

Brazil's boxing life developed amazingly in the recent decade and the South American country is one of the top nations in the world. Their boxer Keno Machado had an impressive youth career, he won big championships in 2018, and in the recent three years he competed in the elite level with great enthusiasm. The 21-year-old Brazilian had to do hard work in the final of the new cruiserweight (86kg) against Azerbaijan's Loren Alfonso Dominguez who is the titleholder from the European Games.

The ex-Cuban Azeri boxer was patient in the first round and their final became a great 'chess game' in this weight class which was introduced in this Championships first. Machado showed better performance in the second round but it was hard to catch the quick Alfonso with powerful punches. Machado was Brazil's first finalist since Robson Conceicao's silver in 2013 but he reached the same result due to Alfonso's effective counter-attacks.

"I am World Champion, I can't believe it. I worked a lot and this new weight class is perfect for me but to accomplish my dream is fantastic. Machado was a

hard rival, he has such great technical skills and hard to beat him.”

Loren Alfonso Dominguez (AZE)

### **Mark Petrovskii is the new champion of the super heavyweight**

RBF Team’s Mark Petrovskii is only 22 super heavyweight (+92kg) fighter but he won National Championships in September and received the right to attend the AIBA World Boxing Championships. The Russian eliminated one of the favorites, Germany’s Nelvie Tiafack and met in the final with Armenia’s Davit Chaloyan who returned to the national team after three years of break.

The smaller Russian starred the final with aggressive attacks and he looked more active than his Armenian opponent in the opening minute. Chaloyan tried to use his longer hands more effectively at the end of the first round and the Kyrgyz referee counted Petrovskii. The 24-year-old Armenian worked hard in the second round and stopped most of the Russian attacks but Petrovskii performed excellent at the end. Both boxers were tired but gave everything for the final round when the Armenian boxer’s jabs and Petrovskii’s hooks were strong. This crucial battle was won by RBF Team’s Mark Petrovskii by a split decision as the last bout of the first day of the finals.

<https://www.aiba.org/blog/tomoya-tsuboi-and-sewon-okazawa-achieved-historical-gold-medals-for-japan-at-aiba-world-boxing-championships/>