

Top boxers from 93 nations are ready to fight at IBA Women's World Boxing Championships

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The new 12th edition of the IBA Women's World Boxing Championships will take place in Istanbul, Turkey on May 8-20. In total, 19 defending World Champions are registered to fight for the titles in Turkey and several more boxing stars will join this impressive competition.

Record-breaking 93 countries sent their registrations to the IBA Head office and nearly 419 boxers are planning to attend the competition. The boxers who were born between 1981 and 2002 are eligible to attend the championships.

Many of the teams organized their preparations in the Assisi training center to get used to the European environment and do sparring against strong opponents. Several developing countries such as Cape Verde, Chile, Ghana, Guinea, Haiti, Kosovo, Kuwait, Macau, Pakistan, Paraguay, Sierra Leone, Tonga and Sudan are going to make their debuts in Istanbul. Most of these countries have already competed in continental or regional competitions but the 12th edition of the IBA Women's World Boxing Championships will be their first-ever performance at the global level.

Turkey hosted the second edition of the Women's World Boxing Championships in Antalya in 2002 and the event returns to the country after 20 years. The Turkish Boxing Federation was the host of the historical first edition AIBA Women's Youth & Junior World Boxing Championships in 2011. Istanbul hosted also several international boxing events, including Bosphorus International Boxing Tournament in March 2021.

Several of the titleholders are about to arrive in Istanbul, such as Brazil's Beatriz Ferreira, Chinese Taipei's Huang Hsiao Wen, Philippines' Nesthy Petecio, and Turkey's Busenaz Surmeneli.

Ferreira is in top shape, she showed her best at the AMBC American Boxing Championships four weeks ago and won the event in the lightweight category. Huang Hsiao Wen became Chinese Taipei's first-ever medal winner for her country winning bronze in Tokyo 2020 and she is aiming for her second title in the bantamweight (54kg). Turkey's Busenaz Surmeneli had a few unexpected losses this year but she trained hard to reach her previous level and show her fantastic power in front of the home crowd.

Chinese Taipei's AIBA Women's World Champion duo from the 2018 edition Lin Yu Ting and Chen Nien Chin are also registered for the tournament. China's three champions from 2018 Li Qian, Wang Lina and three-time gold medallist Yang Xiaoli all will be there in the upcoming edition. Ireland's No.1, Kellie Harrington achieved the gold medal in New Delhi four years ago but their star suffered a hand injury just before the start of the competition.

Kazakhstan achieved four gold medals at the Astana 2016 edition and all of the boxers Nazym Kyzaibay, Dina Zholaman, Valentina Khalzova and Lazzat Kungeibayeva will fight in Istanbul. Italy's Alessia Mesiano won the featherweight (57kg) title in Astana six years ago and she returns to this category after a break. Kazakhstan's team has also another experienced boxer, a silver medallist from 2018 Zhaina Shekerbekova.

Panama's Atheyna Bylon and Bulgaria's Stanimira Petrova earned titles in the 2014 edition in Jeju and both are in top shape this year to get their best results in Istanbul. Stanimira Petrova moved back to the bantamweight (54kg) and she is unbeaten this year as her returning teammate, AIBA Women's World Boxing Championships bronze medallist Svetlana Kamenova who decided to rejoin the national team.

Philippines' Josie Gabuco and Ukraine's Maria Badulina-Bova won their weight categories in the Qinhuangdao 2012 edition and both are still active in their national team. They are going to take part in the Istanbul edition. The Ukrainians have the 2018 edition silver medallist Hanna Okhota in their squad with several young prospects.

The host Turkish team is ready to impress their home crowd in Istanbul with a strong team. Except for their star Busenaz Surmeneli, they have European Games winner and World Championships 2019 silver medallist Busenaz Cakiroglu, experienced Esra Yildiz, three-time European Champion in various age groups, Busra Isildar, as well as their veterans Elif Guneri and Sennur Demir which are also among favorites.

Italy's Irma Testa is the Vice-Chairwoman of the IBA Athletes Committee and she is her nation's hope at the upcoming championships. She is the defending EUBC European Champion and lost only one international contest in nearly three years. The tall Italian is a top favorite in the featherweight (57kg) which category could be one of the highlights of the Championships.

The Chinese team is impressive with their several new top athletes such as Hu Meiyi (50kg), Ruan Mulan (57kg), Yang Chengyu (63kg) and silver medallist from 2019, Yang Liu (66kg). All the Chinese boxers will return to the international stage after a long break but their technical and tactical skills are among the highest in the entire world.

The Indian boxers were in the top shape at the AIBA Youth World Boxing Championships 2021 and their talents won the overall team rankings in Poland one year ago. Their elite team has such stars as Nitu Ghanghas and Nikhat Zareen who both were brilliant at the Strandja Memorial Tournament this February and earned gold medals. Lovlina Borgohain claimed bronze medals in the recent major tournaments and she is aiming for her first gold in Istanbul.

