

Seventeen European finalists at the Commonwealth Games

Description

After the rest day, the semi-finals were held at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, England in three sessions. Out of the 32 finalists in the event, Europe has 17 boxers in action who will compete for the titles on Sunday.

The Commonwealth Games is one of the top multisport events next to the Olympic Games and European Games and after four years of break, the competition returned to the agenda. Altogether 231 boxers from 55 out of the 72 participating NOCs are competing in the boxing event of the new Commonwealth Games from all of the five Confederations. The finals of the Commonwealth Games will be held in Birmingham on August 7.

The bout of the day

Northern Ireland amazed in the semi-finals of the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham with their impressive performance. Six out of their seven semi-finalists advanced to the gold medal bouts which is the success of their coaching staff, local environment, number of talents, and their attitude. Six out of their finalist boxers have done great job but one of their aces, the two-time Commonwealth Games silver medallist Michaela Walsh proved that for her only the gold medal is acceptable in this event. The 29-year-old featherweight (57kg) boxer was quicker than South Africa's zonal champion Phiwokuhle Sibusisiwe Mnguni and controlled of the three rounds.

The surprise of the day

Scotland's Samuel Hickey lost to England's Lewis Richardson in the semi-finals of the EUBC European Men's Elite Boxing Championships in Yerevan two months ago but he had a different game plan this time. The Scottish boxer was more aggressive this time on their middleweight (75kg) re-match and knew the English star's weak points. Hickey, who achieved a silver already at the 2016 EUBC European Junior Boxing Championships, shocked the older Richardson with his effectiveness. Four out of the five judges favoured the Scotsman after three minutes but Hickey could still increase his tempo and stopped Richardson causing a sensation in the eighth day of boxing. Hickey made a revenge, and he is the first Scottish finalist in Birmingham who will now meet with Australia's 19-year-old Callum Peters.

The Round-Up

England's Demie-Jade Resztan achieved a silver medal at the 2019 EUBC European Women's Elite Boxing Championships which was her first major career highlight. She was quarter-finalist at the IBA Women's World Boxing Championships in Istanbul and the English girl proved impressive quarter-final performance in Birmingham. Resztan began the first round in absolutely different rhythm in comparison to her opponent, Botswana's Lethabo Modukanele and took the immediate lead on the scorecards. The Canadian referee counted the African boxer once in the first round and Resztan's dominance continued in the second. The English girl is small at the minimumweight (48kg) but she has all of the skills to beat top rivals too. After two rounds of massive advantage, Resztan moved more on feet in the third and did not make any risks which means she can box for the title with India's Nitu Ghanghas.

England's second boxer in action in the semi-finals was Kieran MacDonald, the silver medallist of the flyweight (51kg) from the recent EUBC European Men's Elite Boxing Championships. He had the strong height advantage against Wales' Jake Dodd who tried to put under pressure the 25-year-old English boy. MacDonald kept the Welsh talent on long in the first round and Dodd made more risks in the second but the English counter-attacked him effectively. The Welsh boxer was not able to block these jabs which came from longer distance and after the third round, the Kyrgyz referee stopped their semi-final. MacDonald will now meet for the gold medal with India's 2018 silver medallist, the Asian Games winner Amit Panghal.

Wales' Rosie Eccles achieved a silver medal at the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games and she worked hard in the recent four years to be a champion in Birmingham. The Welsh light middleweight (70kg) boxer eliminated the top favourite, India's Olympic

Games bronze medallist Lovlina Borgohain in the quarter-finals and she had a relatively easier opponent in the semi-finals, Northern Ireland's Eireann Nugent. Eccles was more experienced than the returning opponent and her second round amazed all of the experts in the venue. The Welsh girl had 20:17 advantage in all of the five judges' scorecards and she dominated the third round too. Eccles was brilliant in this semi-final and she will be boxing for the gold medal with Australia's veteran Kaye Scott.

Scotland's Sean Lazzerini competed already at the 2015 EUBC European Youth Boxing Championships and he participated in several top events in the previous years. He moved back to the light heavyweight (80kg) and this decision paid off at the Commonwealth Games where he marched to the semi-finals. He had a strong African rival in the last four, Tanzania's Yusuf Chagalawe who is a surprise medallist in Birmingham. The Scottish boxer was technically better in the first round, tried to block Chagalawe's attacks and he had the advantage on four scorecards. The 25-year-old Scotsman had more difficult job what he expected prior the contest but he managed to win that semi-final by split decision.

Seven boxers from Northern Ireland advanced to the semi-finals at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham. Their boxers were hungry for the further successes, and Carly McNaul had another strong performance among their girls. The 2018 silver medallist dominated all of the three rounds against Uganda's Teddy Nakimuli and she will now meet for the gold with India's IBA Women's World Champion Nikhat Zareen at the light flyweight (50kg). Her teammate, the EUBC European Men's Elite Boxing Championships silver medallist Dylan Eagleson is a teenage star who had a tough battle against Scotland's Matthew McHale and became the second Irish finalist.

The quotes of the day

"I lost to Richardson in the European Championships, and I just followed that my coaches said before the bout. These paid off today but there is one more bout left, the most important as I am here for the gold medal," added Scotland's 22-year-old Samuel Hickey.

"I boxed very well today. I stuck to the game plan and felt in control at all times. My opponent was very tough but I am pleased to be in my second Commonwealth Games final," said Wales' Rosie Eccles after the session.

