

# Boxing News

January - June 2012 | No. 9



**READY FOR THE GAMES !!!**



# COMING IN FALL 2013 AIBA PROFESSIONAL BOXING



*We are Boxing*

## **A NEW ERA FOR BOXING**

The AIBA Professional Boxing (APB) is a new and ambitious project. It will allow AIBA to achieve its mission which is to govern the sport of boxing in all its forms including Olympic style boxing, grassroots and finally Professional Boxing.

- APB consists of Individual Ranking Competitions
- All APB boxers are affiliated to AIBA National Member Federations
- APB provides a career opportunity to compete in both Olympic-style and professional boxing under one umbrella - AIBA
- All APB boxers are eligible to compete in the Olympic Games
- The competitions will begin in the Fall of 2013

AIBA is launching the APB Program to give the maximum lifetime security and benefits to all global boxers, coaches, officials and to bring the highest quality of boxing to all fans.

[www.aiba.org](http://www.aiba.org)

## HISTORY IN THE MAKING



I would like to extend a warm welcome to all our members, boxers and the global boxing family to this new issue of Boxing News magazine, dedicated to the defining last months of the build-up to the London 2012 Olympic Games.

From 28 July to 13 August, 286 boxers from all four corners of the globe will be competing in the World's most historic and prestigious sporting competition – the Olympic Games. This edition, the XXX Olympiad, will be a watershed moment in the history of the sport of boxing with 36 women boxers being able, for the very first time, to showcase their talent and skills as they battle it out for medals in London. Boxing was the last Olympic sport not to have both men and women represented and I am delighted that this will not be the case anymore.

The London 2012 Olympic Games will be the culmination of an exciting year of qualifications. Quota places were up for grabs at eight different tournaments worldwide, with the AIBA World Boxing Championships Baku 2011, five Continental Olympic Qualifying Events, the AIBA Women's World Boxing Championships Qinhuangdao 2012, without forgetting the gifted boxers who made their mark at the World Series of Boxing inaugural season's Individual Championships. In May 2011, five WSB boxers became the very first athletes to qualify for the London 2012 Olympic Games, a groundbreaking step in the development of AIBA's professional boxing initiatives. And this is only the beginning.

In 2016, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, APB boxers will join AOB and WSB boxers in competing at the Olympic Games. In the last edition of this magazine, we were proud to announce the launch of the AIBA Professional Boxing program, AIBA's first fully professional boxing initiative. Since then, this exciting project has developed at great pace and we are now ready to start in the fall of 2013. By the end of the London 2012 Olympic Games, more than 100 boxers will have joined APB to compete at the world level. This is another example of AIBA's drive in fast-tracking the development of the sport of boxing and for the good of the boxers' careers.

We have already entered a new era for our beloved sport, we are currently re-writing history. We need all of your support to make today's hopes the reality of tomorrow.

I hope you will enjoy reading this magazine as much as you look forward to witnessing the cream of the crop take to the ring during the London 2012 Olympic Games.

Yours Boxing,

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# Boxing News

The official magazine of the International Boxing Association (AIBA)

NINTH EDITION 2012, January - June

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**Cover page photo** London 2012 Olympic Games  
Logo and Background

Printed in Korea.  
Letters, articles, photos and comments are most welcome.

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ISSN 1814-7518

# 2012 AIBA COMMISSION MEETINGS END WITH FRUITFUL RECOMMENDATIONS

**In Bangkok, Thailand from 19 to 21 January this year, in the presence of Dr Ching-Kuo Wu, AIBA President, seven AIBA Commissions met for two consecutive days of discussions before a Joint Meeting was held where each Chairperson presented their conclusions and recommendations.**

Some key decisions were then further developed and ratified before final proposals were submitted for approval by the AIBA Executive Committee Bureau, and when agreed upon, some of these were included in the AIBA Technical & Competition Rules and others implemented by the AIBA HQs Office.

Please find below the key issues discussed by each Commission.

### **AIBA ATHLETES & YOUTH COMMISSION**

Development of Education Programs, Finalisation of Ongoing Discussions on Athletes Career Programs, Roles and Duties of Athletes & Youth Commission in APB and Boxing 16 Programs, APB pension Program Development, Commission's Involvement and Assistance on AIBA Development Programs.

**Members present:** Mapu Jamias (Chairman), Flemming Nissen (Vice Chairman), Doda Khan Bhutto (Vice Chairman), Jay Kowli (Secretary), Nouredine Meziane, Mohamed Kammal Abdelsamad, Vittorio Lai, Mohamed Moustahsane, Victor Liu, Bruce Kawano.

### **AIBA COACHES COMMISSION**

Development of New AIBA Coaches Certification System, Development of APB Coaches Commission and Relationship with AIBA Coaches Commission, Development of Coaches Commission, Recommendations to AIBA Technical & Rules Commission, New Coaches Database.

**Members present:** Adam Kusior (Chairman), Bodo Andreas, Viktor Baranov, Mohamed Abdelaziz Ghonem, Abdallah Atif El-Halabi, Konstantin Koptsev, Joseph Zanders, Olim Mukhamedov.

### **AIBA MEDICAL COMMISSION**

Report from Anti-Doping Sub-Commission, Report on AIBA and WSB Injury Statistics, Development of Medical Check for WSB Boxers before the Olympic Games, Development of Training Program for Olympic R&J Workshop, Review of Updated AIBA Medical Handbook, Review of Current Medical Check Confirmation on Boxer's Record Book, Review of AIBA ITO Rules (Medical Jury Members and Medical Equipment Members), AIBA Medical Jury Management System, Development of APB Medical Commission and Relationship with AIBA Medical Commission, Ringside Workshop - Practical Session, Review of the Neuropsychological Testing.

**Members present:** Charles Butler (Chairman), Abdelhamid Khadri (Vice Chairman), David McDonagh (Secretary), Robin Goodfellow (Chairwoman Anti-Doping Sub-Commission), Abdelhakim Madani, Marcelo Nelson Rodriguez Arturo, Jerry Yu, Tarun Kumar Tamta, Juan Abundio Niemen Tondou, Laurent Creste, Angelika Fischer, Tetsuo Yamaguchi, Irek Satov, Ahmad Waqar, Alexander Neverkovich, Eesajith W. Jayasinha, Gunnar Ekman, Dilshod Kazakov.

### **AIBA REFEREEING & JUDGING COMMISSION**

Establishment of Judge Evaluation Criteria and Format and Reappraisal of Referee Evaluation Criteria, Approval of Updated R&J Manual, Enhancement of AIBA Examination Structure, Development of AIBA Professional R&J System, Future R&J Management System with the Launch of APB, Development of Daily R&J Draw Method for the London 2012 Olympic Games, Proposed Issues for T&R Commission Discussions, Proposed Issues for Medical Commission.

**Members present:** Terry Smith (Chairman), Pat Fiocco (Secretary), Waldemar Mencil, Aghajan Abiyev, Michael Moroka, Mauro Da Silva, Qingsheng Li, Wilfried Lausch, Pat McCrory, Sukku Kang, Keith Walker, Sergey Berdnik, Don DeVerges.



# AIBA COMMISSION MEETINGS

## AIBA TECHNICAL & RULES COMMISSION

New Structure of Technical & Competition Rules, Amendments of Current Technical & Competition Rules, New Guidelines for TD and ITO Examinations, Women Uniform Guidelines, New Rules for FOP Management Guidelines including Branding, Rules Changes following Launch of APB, Development of New APB Technical & Rules Commission, Review of Other Commissions' Recommendations.

**Members present:** Franco Falcinelli (Chairman), Helmut Ranze (Vice Chairman), Luiz Boselli (Secretary), Yan Yu, Walid Jarrar, Serik Konakbayev, Jae Kyu Jung, Abdelilah Oudhgi, Said Tulakov, Richard Thomas, Syed Abdul Kadir, Angel Villareal, Mukhamadali Karimov.

## AIBA WOMEN'S COMMISSION

Review of Previous Commission Meeting Recommendations and Implementation, Implementation of Women Coaches' Seminar before AIBA Women's World Boxing Championships, Review of Current Medical Check, Discussions on Women Uniform Guidelines, Development of Fitness Boxing, Development of Women Boxers' Ranking System, Status or Involvement of Women Boxing in APB and Boxing 16 Programs, Proposed Promotional Activities before and during the London 2012 Olympic Games, Development of Women TDs, ITOs and R&Js.

**Members present:** Manisha Malhotra (Chairwoman), Nieva Embuldeniya (Vice Chairwoman), Christy Halbert (Secretary), Julia Felton, Yuan Liang, Magda Sobhi, Jacqueline Mairesse, Selowati H.S. "Shelly" Miranda, Leszek Piotrowski, Natalia Karpovich.

## WSB COMMISSION

Review of Current WSB Technical & Competition Rules, Discussions on Upgrading WSB Programs in Conjunction with the Launch of APB, Review of Current WSB Officials, Enhancement of Marketing Structure, Women Boxing in WSB.

**Members present:** Humbert Furgoni (Chairman), Kishen Narsi (Vice Chairman), Hernan Salvo (Secretary), Udit Sheth, Paolo Taveggia.





# R&Js RARING TO GO AFTER SPECIAL WORKSHOP

**In order to get AIBA's elite Referees and Judges primed for the London 2012 Olympic Games, in May this year, they were all invited to converge on the city of Assisi, a small medieval Italian town, for a comprehensive week-long preparatory workshop.**

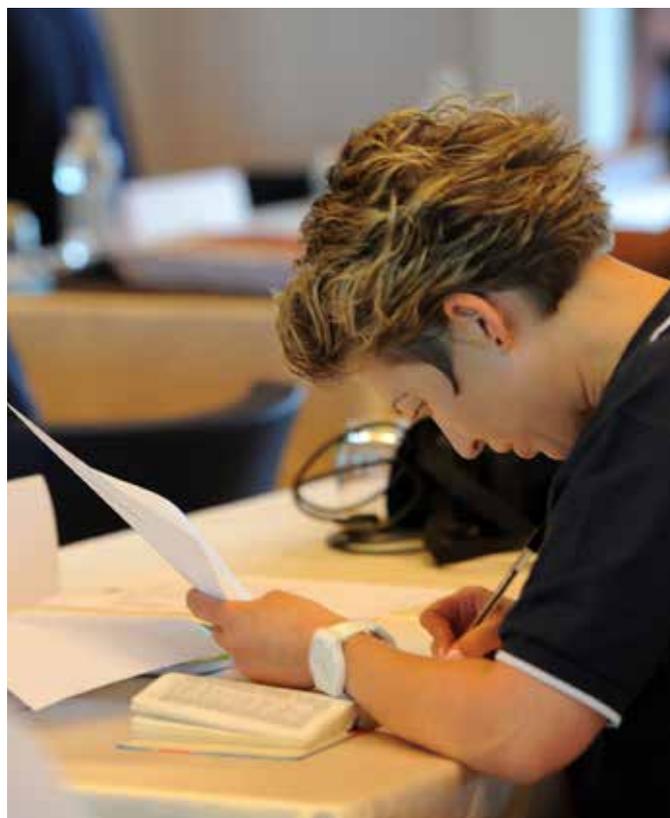
**36 participants from all around the world took in the various seminars and training programs as three instructors and one guest speaker lead proceedings. All officials were then evaluated and declared fully ready to be at the Olympic Games.**

The stated goals of the workshop were: Ethical participation at the Olympic Games, motivating the Referees & Judges to enhance their performance and leadership's skills in order to overcome any kind of pressure in the ring, emphasising their role as AIBA ambassadors and finally raising the quality and level of their practical performance.

Amongst the instructors present was Dr. Charles Butler who, as Chairman of AIBA's Medical Commission, discussed all issues related to the health of the athletes during the Olympic Games.

Franco Falcinelli, President of the Italian Boxing Federation and Technical Delegate at the London 2012 Olympic Games, also discussed the medical requirements for the qualification of boxers. The bottom line was, "Think safety not appearance, don't take any chance, the safety of the boxer is paramount. The safety of the boxer will determine whether to stop a bout".

Chairman of the R&Js Commission, Welshman Terry Smith presented the essential rules with various cases as examples. There were also practical sessions with video reviews to give all attendees the opportunity to question and exchange opinions on various situations they had encountered.



The workshop with Dr. Graham Jones explained the latest in leadership theories and techniques for Referees & Judges at all levels. Group work allowed R&Js to exchange and question themselves on their motivation, competencies and experiences. AIBA Executive Director, Mr Ho Kim then presented the golden rule of Ethics midway through the week before all attendees were invited by the Italian Boxing Federation for an evening out.

With the R&Js set to spend a lot of time together during the Olympic Games, one of the focuses of the week was team building. One exercise greatly appreciated was the friendly football game that was organised, played as Europe versus the Rest of the World, with the latter team seeming to gain the upper hand. Whatever the results, there was always great camaraderie in the group.

Assisi, in the picturesque Umbria region, welcomed the R&Js with open arms, with the city inviting them to feast on some of the best local produce during their stay.

At the end of the workshop, the participants shared feedback in order to give recommendations for future meetings. All R&Js attending the workshop were then evaluated with theoretical and practical tests to assess their ability to adapt to the competition during the London 2012 Olympic Games.



# LATEST NEWS FROM THE BOXING WORLD

### NEW PRESIDENTS FOR AIBA NATIONAL FEDERATIONS

The first half of 2012 saw quite a few changes at the helm of the world's National Boxing Federations and AIBA was pleased to welcome to the boxing family, A. Reza Ali as the President of the Indonesian Amateur Boxing Federation, Col. Jangchuck Gyeltshen as the President of the Bhutan Boxing Federation, Darius Saluga as the President of the Lithuanian Boxing Federation and Gustave Niyonizigiye as President of the Fédération Burundaise de Boxe (Burundi Boxing Federation).

Furthermore, Andrej Kostka was re-elected President of the Slovak Amateur Boxing Association, Rafael Vega Rodriguez was re-elected President of the Asociación Costarricense de Boxeo Aficionado (Costa Rican Boxing Federation) and Gervy Anthony was re-elected President of the Seychelles Amateur Boxing Association.

An appointment with a difference was that of reputable Dr Charles F Butler M.D. Ph.D., AIBA Executive Committee member and Chairman of AIBA's Medical Commission, who was elected President of USA Boxing, succeeding Harold Adonis. Dr Butler stated, "It is a great honour to be elected President of USA Boxing. This is a critical time for us. We have a great and proud tradition. Now we must support that tradition with achievement. We will provide for all the needs of our athletes and coaches in this short preparation period. Once the Olympic Games are over, we will work to increase the number of both men and women boxers in our country and work to restore Boxing to its rightful and historic place among all sports in the United States".



### AIBA EC WELCOMES TWO NEW MEMBERS

In February, AIBA appointed Gen. Boonlert Kaewprasit to the Executive Committee and in March appointed Timur Kulibayev as non-voting Vice President of the AIBA Executive Committee. "Since his election, Gen. Boonlert Kaewprasit has been active in promoting boxing in his country and has shown his commitment in supporting AIBA's global strategy of further promoting our noble sport. Under difficult circumstances, he managed to launch the Bangkok WSB Franchise which was an important step in Thailand's return to AIBA programs", stated Dr Ching-Kuo Wu, AIBA President. He then declared, "I am very happy to count on such a great boxing leader among the AIBA Executive Committee, I am convinced that Timur Kulibayev's wide knowledge of boxing will greatly contribute to the development of our beloved sport worldwide".

## TD'S ANNOUNCED FOR MAJOR CHAMPIONSHIPS

In March, the AIBA Technical Delegates for the following upcoming boxing events were announced: Tom Virgets (USA) for the AIBA Youth World Boxing Championships Bangkok 2012, Pat Fiacco (Canada) for the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games and David Francis (Wales) for the Incheon 2014 Asian Games.

## BULGARIA LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Krassimir Ininski, the President of the Bulgarian Boxing Federation, recently visited AIBA President Dr Ching-Kuo Wu in Switzerland to discuss his plans to revive the sport of

boxing in his country. He expressed his interests in hosting major boxing events, nominating Commission members and developing officials for both AIBA and the European Confederation. Most importantly, Krassimir Ininski sought an active role in the AIBA Professional Boxing Program. A few weeks after, Dr Wu, visited Ininski in Bulgaria and together they held further discussion with the President of the Republic of Bulgaria, Mr Rosen Plevneliev, the Bulgarian Prime Minister, Mr Boyko Borisov, the Minister of Sports, Mr Svilen Neykov and both the President of Bulgarian Boxing Federation and the National Olympic Committee (NOC) President, Mrs Stefka Kostadinova. The main focus of the visit centred on the AIBA Professional Boxing (APB) program and how Bulgaria can play a major role in its development.



## AIBA LENDS VOICE FOR WOMEN IN SPORT

In April, AIBA President Dr Ching-Kuo Wu, signed the agreement whereby AIBA formally adopted the Brighton Declaration on Women and Sport, in a landmark year in the development of women's boxing, and said, "The Brighton Declaration is an important document for the promotion of women's sport and AIBA is delighted to be amongst the signatories. AIBA is committed to upholding and supporting the ten principles set out in the Declaration".

## HOST CITIES FOR NEXT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS REVEALED

During the AIBA Asian Olympic Qualifying Event Astana 2012 in April, AIBA President Dr Wu met with Chamlong Boongrapue, Vice President of the Thailand Boxing Association, to sign the Host City Agreement confirming the AIBA Youth World Boxing Championships 2012 will be held in the city of Bangkok from 15-28 October this year. Immediately after that agreement was signed, Dr Wu and the President of the Kazakhstan Boxing Federation (KBF), Mr Timur Kulibayev, confirmed that Astana would be the Host City for the 2013 AIBA World Boxing Championships.

AIBA President stated: "Kazakhstan is one of the leading nations in boxing, in terms of quality of boxers and in quality of tournaments. Hosting the AIBA World Boxing Championships next year is another milestone for the country and we are also very excited about the AIBA World Boxing Academy that is currently being built near Almaty. This will be a world class facility to welcome the world's best boxer. This project was endorsed by the Federation and by the Ministry of Sports and once again demonstrates that Kazakhstan is building the foundations for the future of our sport".

## COACHES RAISING THE STAKES

In May, a Coach Task Force met in Lausanne, Switzerland as part of the continuous effort to develop the AIBA Coaches Management System. Six members of the AIBA Coaches Manual project gathered together for a week to develop guidelines, programs and instructor's manuals for the much anticipated AIBA Coaches Courses. The Task Force also discussed the AIBA Coaches Course examination procedures, the course outline, the contents for each level of the course (1-Star, 2-Star and 3-Star course) and the evaluation criteria and the procedures; material that will assist the AIBA Coaches Instructors in teaching every course in the most effective of ways.



## ON THE ROAD WITH AIBA PRESIDENT

Dr Ching-Kuo Wu received in March the Order of the Polar Star, the highest civilian award Mongolia can present to international leaders, from His Excellency Elbegdorj Tsakhia, President of the country, in a special ceremony at the Presidential Palace in Ulaanbaatar, the capital city.

While at the AIBA European Olympic Qualifying Event Trabzon 2012, AIBA President met Dr Ugur Erdener, IOC Member and President of the Turkish Archery Federation to enjoy some top class boxing action on the Turkish Black Sea coast.

In May, Dr Wu, represented the Olympic Philately, Numismatic and Memorabilia Commission of the International Olympic Committee on behalf of IOC President Dr Rogge and Chairman Mr Gerhard Heiberg at the Opening Ceremony of the 18th World Olympic Collectors Fair in Athens, Greece, attending the Olympic Flame Handover Ceremony and delivering a speech at the Opening Ceremony.

AIBA President was then also elected to be the representative of the Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF) on the International Olympic Committee Executive Board, declaring, "I have dedicated the past 30 years of my life to the development of sport and to the Olympic ideals. Today I am very proud to be able to contribute to the development and the protection all of our International Federation interests. Together with the ASOIF President, I will listen to all of you and defend your needs with dedication and with all my heart. I promise that I will do everything I can to bring our sport to the pinnacle of the Olympic movement", stated Dr Wu after his election at the General Assembly.



## APB ANNOUNCES KNOCK-OUT SIGNINGS AS BUSINESS PLAN IS APPROVED

**In June, the AIBA Professional Boxing (APB) program stated its intentions to capture the sport's top talent by signing three of the world's best boxers. Skills, showmanship and excellence will be the APB's calling card.**

In June, the AIBA Professional Boxing (APB) program stated its intentions to capture the sport's top talent by signing three of the world's best boxers. Skills, showmanship and excellence will be the APB's calling card.

"The signing of these three top ranked boxers to APB is a historic moment. I would like to extend my gratitude to their National Federations who fully supported their decisions to continue their careers with us. Without the National Federations and the coaches' support, we would not have these boxers in our programs ", said Dr Ching-Kuo Wu, AIBA President at the signing ceremony in London.

The most stellar of the boxers signed was 25-year-old Azeri Magomedrasul Medzhidov, the 2011 Super Heavyweight World Champion, who lit up the AIBA World Boxing Championships Baku 2011 with his sensational run to the final, where he went on to take the gold medal after a thrilling battle with England's Anthony Joshua. The 190cm

tall orthodox will be one of the main challengers for the gold medal at the London 2012 Olympic Games. Described by many as having the heart of a lion and absolutely no fear in the ring, he is pure boxing box office and is currently at the top of the AIBA Super Heavyweight World Ranking. He ended the WSB inaugural season as runner-up in his category, defeated in the Individual Championships by Italian Superstar Clemente Russo.

Medzhidov declared in London, "The World Series of Boxing has helped me a lot because it gave me the opportunity to try pro style boxing. Now I feel 100% ready to turn pro with APB".

The second signing was Welterweight Kazak legend Serik Sapiyev, who at 28 years of age, is already a veteran of four AIBA World Boxing Championships, having been crowned a World Champion twice in 2005 and 2007 before taking bronze in 2009 and most recently silver in 2011. The 179cm tall southpaw has delighted crowds whenever he has taken to the ring, with his fancy footwork, he relishes taking charge and dictating his bouts, always looking to pick his opponents apart with some classy combination punches. Having now matured into a good all-rounder, his presence in the APB ranks will ensure quality of the highest calibre when the season gets underway.

Asked why it took him so long to turn pro, Sapiyev declared, "There are so many stories of amateur boxers turning pros with the wrong promoters that then completely destroy their career. I really enjoyed my Olympic career and I want to finish it with a medal in London. But now I have the feeling that what AIBA is offering with APB is just the right thing. I will stay very close to my National Federation and remain under the governance of the International Boxing Association. It is a safe plan of career and every sportsman needs this".

The final signing was top ranked Light Flyweight, 23-year-old Jong-Hun Shin who won bronze at the AIBA World Boxing Championships Milan 2009 before going one better and taking the silver medal last year. He is the reigning



Asian Games Champion and is an electric performer at the highest level. There is no doubt that Shin is the rising star and poster-boy of the sport in his native South Korea with this orthodox 169cm tall fighter one of the most focused athletes in the category.

Tireless, highly effective and with an array of combination punches in his arsenal, he is the leading contender to take the gold medal at the Olympic Games this summer. Shin was keen to state, "I have been improving my skills a lot over the past three years. I went from a bronze to a silver medallist between the last two world championships and I really hope I will reach the top at the Olympic Games. I need media exposure to fully kick-start my career, I want to become a star and become famous worldwide and APB will give me this exposure".

These three signing are only the beginning for APB with several other big names to follow before and during the London 2012 Olympic Games as the competition gets serious before its launch in Fall 2013.

Back in March, further to the approval by the AIBA Extraordinary Congress of the inclusion of the AIBA Professional Boxing (APB) in the AIBA Statutes, the international consulting company KPMG was hired to develop a master business plan for both AIBA and AIBA's exclusive Marketing Company (BMA). In addition, following the Statutes, the APB Executive Board was formed with eight initial members.

Chaired by Dr Ching-Kuo Wu, AIBA President, the APB Executive Board includes Dr Abdellah Bessalem (Algeria), Mr Bekzhan Bektenov (Kazakhstan), Mr Osvaldo Bisbal (Argentina), Mr Luiz Boselli (Brazil), Mr Franco Falcinelli (Italy), Dr Humbert Furgoni (France) and Dr Tom Virgets (USA). Mr David Francis (Wales), as AIBA Treasurer and Mr Ho Kim, as AIBA Executive Director, are non-voting members.

The APB Executive Board approved the business plan which has been then ratified by the AIBA Executive Committee in

July. The plan includes the new AIBA administration and management embracing three major programs, AOB (AIBA Olympic Boxing), WSB (World Series of Boxing) and APB (AIBA Professional Boxing). It also includes the business plan for the AIBA Marketing Company, BMA (Boxing Marketing Arm).

The APB Executive Board approved the projections of the competition structure, the marketing plans, the organisational structure, the P/L projections and timelines. In addition, the Board also approved to register BMA in Switzerland and to locate its HQ Offices in Lausanne.

In a letter sent to all 194 AIBA National Federations, AIBA President, Dr Ching-Kuo Wu stated: "I would like to sincerely express my appreciation for your confidence and support on all new initiatives and efforts made to enhance the sport of boxing and our organization for the betterment of all boxers".



## AUSTRALIAN CLEAN SWEEP IN CANBERRA

**The first Continental Olympic Qualifying Event for the London 2012 Olympic Games was held in Canberra, Australia, from 21 to 25 March for boxers in the Oceania region. It was the host nation who swept the board with an amazing run on the last day of competition which resulted in the Aussie team taking the nine available quota places for the Olympic Games. In Beijing, four years ago, Australia, Papua New-Guinea and the Samoa Islands all had boxers at the Olympic Games but this summer, at the XXX Olympiad, in the British capital, the Oceania region will only have one country represented.**

Australia's Damien Duncan Hooper had already secured his quota following his run to the quarter-finals at the AIBA World Boxing Championships Baku 2011, where he lost to the eventual winner. At the 2012 AIBA Oceania Olympic Qualifying Event in Canberra, nine Australian fighters joined Hooper in securing their participation at the Olympic Games. Billy Joe Ward was the first to book his place after coming out on top in the high scoring Light Flyweight final. He was soon followed by AIBA Youth World Boxing Championships quarter-finalist Jackson Darren Woods, who was simply irresistible as he triumphed in the Flyweight category.

Experienced Aussie boxers, AIBA President's Cup bronze medallist Ibrahim Mitat Balla, Commonwealth Games bronze medallist Luke Christopher Jackson, AIBA World Boxing Championships competitor Jeffrey Christopher Horn and Oceania Champion Cameron James Hammond all were victorious in their respective weight categories to take those all important quota places for the London 2012 Olympic Games. Middleweight Jesse Wade Heinz Ross and Super Heavyweight Johan Tane Toemeel Linde were the surprise packages in Canberra along with 17-year-old AIBA Junior World Champion Jai Tapu Opetaita as they all also qualified, the latter ensuring he will be the youngest boxer at the Olympic Games.

New Zealand's top fighters, Oceania Champion Joseph Blackburn and Youth Olympic Games silver medallist Joseph Parker were unfortunately both eliminated on the first day of competition. Heavyweight David Light came close but lost in the final, just as teammates Gage Brown, Chad Milnes and Bowyn Morgan.

Papua New-Guinea had sent three boxers with teenagers Charlie Keama and Junior Kauko Raka showing great promise; they will be ones to watch in the next Olympic era. Both these talented young athletes claimed silver medals in Canberra.

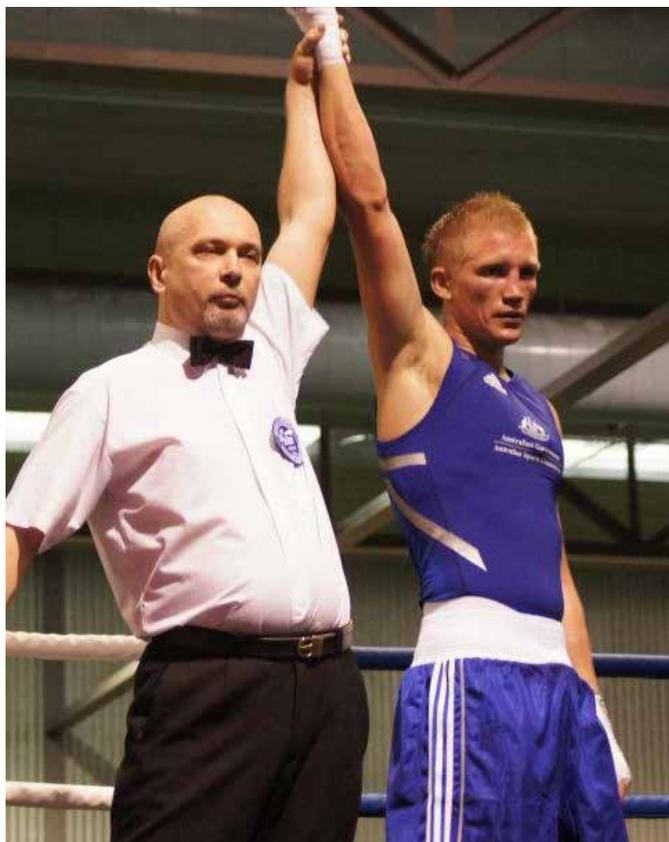


# 2012 AIBA OCEANIA OLYMPIC QUALIFYING EVENT

Tonga's Commonwealth Games bronze medallist and World Series of Boxing star Uaine Junior Fa was the top favourite in the Super Heavyweight category. He had eliminated two of his toughest rivals on his way to the final but fell at the last hurdle after his Australian opponent took gold and with it the only available quota place. Compatriot Lomalito Moala, who had looked in great shape and full of confidence after training in Cardiff as part of the AIBA Road to Dream Program, was himself defeated in the Lightweight semi-finals.

Samoa's best boxer, Pacific Islands Games winner Petelo Matagi, claimed a bronze whilst his teammate Inoma Livai achieved a valuable silver medal in Canberra. The small islands of Kiribati and Nauru also had boxers vying for quota places during the competition and proved that these talented fighters are developing well and that they could make an impact in the next Olympic era.

20-year-old Youth Olympic Games winner and AIBA World Championships quarter-finalist Damien Duncan Hooper is regarded by many as the most talented fighter from the continent with the skills and technique to make a big impact at this summer's London 2012 Olympic Games. The tough Light Heavyweight boxer will be looking to at least make it onto the podium, and in the event that he achieves this, he would become the first boxer from the region to do so since Tongan legend Paea Wolfgramm's took silver at the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games, after losing to Wladimir Klitschko in the final.



## FINAL OLYMPIC QUOTA PLACES

### LIGHT FLY (46-49KG)

Billy Joe WARD from Australia

### FLY (52KG)

Jackson Darren WOODS from Australia

### BANTAM (56KG)

Ibrahim Mitat BALLA from Australia

### LIGHT (60KG)

Luke Christopher JACKSON from Australia

### LIGHT WELTER (64KG)

Jeffrey Christopher HORN from Australia

### WELTER (69KG)

Cameron James HAMMOND from Australia

### MIDDLE (75KG)

Jesse Wade Heinz ROSS from Australia

### HEAVY (91KG)

Jai Tapu OPETAIA from Australia

### SUPER HEAVY (+91KG)

Johan Tanel Toemeel LINDE from Australia





# all punch

## AIBAG1

Aiba Licensed Boxing Gloves

Boxing Gloves «AIBA». Quality genuine cowhide leather. Velcro elastic strap closing. Padded with highly absorbent 'IMF' technology moulded foam. Colour : Blue or Red / Size : 10 oz.

adidas supplied gloves and head guards for Beijing 2008 Olympics & 2009 World Amateur Boxing Championship in Milano/Italy exclusively.



## COMPETITION LEVEL AT ALL-TIME HIGH IN ASTANA

**The Daulet Sports Complex, in the heart of the modern city of Astana, was packed each day with numerous fans to ensure an incredible atmosphere during the 2012 AIBA Asian Olympic Qualifying Event where 25 Olympic quota places were available for the boxers. The Asian continent had secured 28 places at the AIBA World Boxing Championships Baku 2011 while Kazakhstan's Kanat Abutalipov had won the World Series of Boxing Individual Championships. There was all to fight for.**

Host nation Kazakhstan has been one of the world's boxing powerhouses and a leader in the development of the sport in Asia and with six Kazak fighters having already achieved their quota places, the squad was brimming with confidence. The team had high hopes for their fighters competing on home soil. The boxers were in sublime form in Astana as they secured three gold medals and booked their places for the London 2012 Olympic Games.



The first of these gold medals went to 2008 Olympian Birzhan Zhakypov, the favourite in the Light Flyweight category, after he dominated all his opponents throughout the tournament, culminating in victory in a spectacular final against Japan's talented 18-year-old Naoya Inoue. Asian Games winner Daniyar Yeleussinov claimed the gold medal in the Light Welterweight division while Astana-based Ilyas Suleimenov was crowned champion at Flyweight.

India has heavily invested in its development program in recent years and has been reaping the rewards of late. In Astana, the boxers recorded their best ever performance in a qualifying event after taking two golds and a bronze. The extremely gifted squad had 18-year-old Shiva Thapa and Sumit Sangwan both ending top of their respective weight divisions. The country will now have seven boxers at the Olympic Games and many pundits expect them to challenge for medals in London.

Top Asian boxing nation Uzbekistan will now have six fighters present at the London 2012 Olympic Games with amongst them two-time AIBA World Champion Abbas Atoev, who claimed the gold medal in Astana. Rising star Uktamjon Rahmonov took an impressive bronze with teammate Daniyar Yeleussinov imperious in winning the Light Welterweight category.

Three Chinese boxers had qualified for the Olympic Games in Baku last year with three-time AIBA World Champion and reigning Olympic Champion Shiming Zou leading the charges. After Astana, they were joined by a further three quality boxers, Asian Champion Qiang Liu, Qiong Mai Maimaitituersun and Beijing Olympic Games silver medallist Zhilei Zhang, after each were victorious in their respective weight categories.

The Mongolian national will have four representatives at the London 2012 Olympic Games after Tuvshinbat Byamba took Welterweight gold and Tugstsogt Nyambayar took Flyweight silver in Astana. Japan has also built up a solid team and their boxers excelled in the qualification competition with Katsuaki Susa and Satoshi Shimizu each taking bronze and getting quota places for the Olympic Games.

Iran's boxers came to the fore in Astana, taking three quotas with Ali Mazaheri dominant in the Heavyweight category, taking the gold and the only Olympic spot in that weight category. Mehdi Touloutibandpi and Amin Ghasemi Pour both were rewarded with stylish displays with bronze medals and places for the London 2012 Olympic Games.

Tajikistan, just like in Beijing in 2008, will have three representatives at the Olympic Games. Rising star, 16-year-old AIBA Junior World Champion Asror Vohidov showed his sublime technique to win a bronze in Astana but with only one quota available in that weight category, he will be looking for qualification to Rio in 2016. Sobirdzhon Nazarov and Jakhon Qurbonov ended on the podium and will be present in the British capital during the summer.

Securing two quota places in Astana were Turkmenistan with Nursahat Pazziyev and Serdar Hudayberdiyev reaching those all important spots. Kyrgyzstan started well in the Kazak capital but in the end they left empty handed. Traditional Asian boxing nations Thailand, South Korea and Philippines were underwhelming and unable to reach any of the quota places.

Jordan secured its first ever Olympic quota place after Arab Games winner Ihab Mahmoud Darweesh Almatbouli advanced to the semi-finals. Neighbouring Syria also achieved a quota following Wessam Slamana's silver medal but their best boxer, Asian Games winner Mohammad Ghossoun lost his final contest in Astana and that silver in the Heavyweight class was not enough to book a place for the London 2012 Olympic Games.

There was joy and heartache during the week in Astana however with the levels of competitiveness at an all-time high; many expect the boxers from the region to make a big impact in London.



## FINAL OLYMPIC QUOTA PLACES

### **LIGHT FLY (46-49KG)**

Birzhan ZHAKYPOV from Kazakhstan

### **FLY (52KG)**

Ilyas SULEIMENOV from Kazakhstan  
Tugstsogt NYAMBAYAR from Mongolia  
Jong Chol PAK from the People's Republic of Korea  
Katsuaki SUSA from Japan

### **BANTAM (56KG)**

Shiva THAPA from India  
Wessam SLAMANA from Syria  
Satoshi SHIMIZU from Japan

### **LIGHT (60KG)**

Qiang LIU from China

### **LIGHT WELTER (64KG)**

Daniyar YELEUSSINOV from Kazakhstan  
Serdar HUDAYBERDIYEV from Turkmenistan  
Uktamjon RAHMONOV from Uzbekistan  
Mehdi TOULOUTIBANDPI from Iran

### **WELTER (69KG)**

Qiong MAI MAITITUERSUN from China  
Tuvshinbat BYAMBA from Mongolia  
Amin GHASEMI POUR from Iran

### **MIDDLE (75KG)**

Abbos ATOEV from Uzbekistan  
Nursahat PAZZIYEV from Turkmenistan  
Sobirdzhon NAZAROV from Tajikistan  
Vijender from India

### **LIGHT HEAVY (81KG)**

Sumit SANGWAN from India  
Jakhon QURBONOV from Tajikistan  
Ihab Mahmoud Darweesh ALMATBOULI from Jordan

### **HEAVY (91KG)**

Ali MAZAHERI from Iran

### **SUPER HEAVY (+91KG)**

Zhilei ZHANG from China

### **QUALIFICATIONS BY COUNTRY**

- China, India, Iran, Kazakhstan: 3
- Japan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan: 2
- Jordan, People's Republic of Korea, Syria: 1



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## TURKISH DELIGHT IN TRABZON

**Trabzon, in north-eastern Turkey, on the banks of the Black Sea, was the glorious setting for one fiercely competitive tournament where some of Europe's best performers were seeking those career-defining quota places for the London 2012 Olympic Games. European boxers had already secured 46 places for the Olympic Games at the AIBA World Boxing Championships Baku 2011 so a mere 26 spots were up for grabs in the scenic coastal city.**

197 boxers from 44 nations had entered to battle it out for the remaining 26 Olympic quota places and the spectators were treated to some sumptuous boxing throughout the week of competition, with many world class competitors present.

The Turkish team had underperformed in Baku last year but with the support of their boisterous fans, they found new levels in Trabzon, where some tremendous performances culminated in four gold medals and a total of six quota places for this summer's Olympic Games. Ferhat Pehlivan, Yakup Sener, Adem Kilicci and Beijing Olympian Bahram Muzaffer were too strong for their opponents as they each reached the top of the pile in their respective weight divisions. The world also bore witness to two emerging talents as Selcuk Eker and current European Champion Fatih Keles also ensured their presence in the British capital this summer.

Russia, Europe's most potent boxing nation, had secured six quota places following some excellent performances at the AIBA World Boxing Championships Baku 2011 and in Trabzon they were seeking the maximum number of ten. Surprisingly though, former AIBA World Champion Albert Selimov and defending European Champion Maxim Koptjakov both failed in their quests for Olympic qualification and in the end only European Super Heavyweight Champion Magomed Omarov managed to do so.

Three French boxers advanced to finals' day at the AIBA European Olympic Qualifying Event with amongst them Beijing Olympian Nordine Oubaali, who went on to be crowned Flyweight Champion. Youth Olympic Games winner Tony Victor James Yoka took a silver medal and also qualified for the Olympic Games. There was however heartbreak for rising star Chabane Fehim, who despite reaching the final, was denied a place in London this summer following his defeat to Yakup Sener. There will now be five French boxers competing at the upcoming Olympic Games.

Ukraine topped the medal ranking at the AIBA World Boxing Championships Baku 2011 after its boxers took the competition by storm. In Trabzon, the talented former European Junior Champion Pavlo Ishchenko impressed as he collected the Bantamweight gold to make it a seventh Olympic quota for his country.



# 2012 AIBA EUROPEAN OLYMPIC QUALIFYING EVENT

Super talented Joseph Ward from Ireland, the reigning AIBA Youth World Champion, was surprisingly defeated by Turkey's Bahram Muzaffer in his first fight in Trabzon. The Irish team spirit was not broken however as Welterweight Adam Patrick Nolan went on to claim gold and Patrick Barnes took bronze with both qualifying for the London 2012 Olympic Games.

The British squad secured two further quota places in Turkey with Scotland's Commonwealth Games silver medallist Josh James William Taylor making it to the Lightweight semi-finals whilst former AIBA Cadet World Champion Anthony Osezua Ojo Ogogo was rewarded for his efforts with a hard-earned place in the Middleweight decider. Great Britain will now have seven representatives in the men's boxing draw at the Olympic Games on their home soil. A nation expects.

Lithuania's Youth Olympic Games winner, 20-year-old Evaldas Petrauskas made a real breakthrough among the elite boxers in Trabzon after claiming the Lightweight gold. Bulgarian heavy-hitter Tervel Venkov Pulev then confirmed his status as an Olympic contender after taking the Heavyweight title. Azerbaijan's Magomed Abdulhamidov and Vatan Huseynli both ensured their participation at the London 2012 Olympic Games after each taking silver medals in the Lightweight and Light Heavyweight divisions respectively.

There was disappointment for Germany's Denis Makarov, Hungary's European Champion Imre Balazs Bacskai, Moldova's Beijing Olympic Games bronze medallist Veaceslav Gojan and Croatia's AIBA Youth World Champion Filip Hrgovic, who all failed to reach the Olympic quota places, demonstrating just how high the quality of fighters was during the competition.



## FINAL OLYMPIC QUOTA PLACES

### LIGHT FLY (46-49KG)

Ferhat PEHLIVAN from Turkey  
Aleksander ALEKSANDROV from Bulgaria  
Patrick BARNES from Ireland  
Manuel Fabrizio CAPPALAI from Italy

### FLY (52KG)

Nordine OUBAALI from France  
Selguk EKER from Turkey  
Salomo N'TUVE from Sweden

### BANTAM (56KG)

Pavlo ISHCENKO from Ukraine  
Magomed ABDULHAMIDOV from Azerbaijan  
Denis CEYLAN from Denmark  
Merab TURKADZE from Georgia

### LIGHT (60KG)

Evaldas PETRAUSKAS from Lithuania  
Vazgen SAFARYANTS from Belarus  
Fatih KELES from Turkey  
Josh TAYLOR from Scotland

### LIGHT WELTER (64KG)

Yakup SENNER from Turkey

### WELTER (69KG)

Adam Patrick NOLAN from Ireland  
Patrick WOJCICKI from Germany

### MIDDLE (75KG)

Adem KILICCI from Turkey  
Anthony OGOGO from England

### LIGHT HEAVY (81KG)

Bahram MUZAFFER from Turkey  
Vatan HUSEYNLI from Azerbaijan  
Mikhail DAUHALIIVETS from Belarus

### HEAVY (91KG)

Tervel PULEV from Bulgaria

### SUPER HEAVY (+91KG)

Magomed OMAROV from Russia  
Tony YOKA from France

### QUALIFICATIONS BY COUNTRY

- Turkey: 6
- Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, France, Ireland: 2
- Denmark, England, Georgia, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Russia, Scotland, Sweden, Ukraine: 1

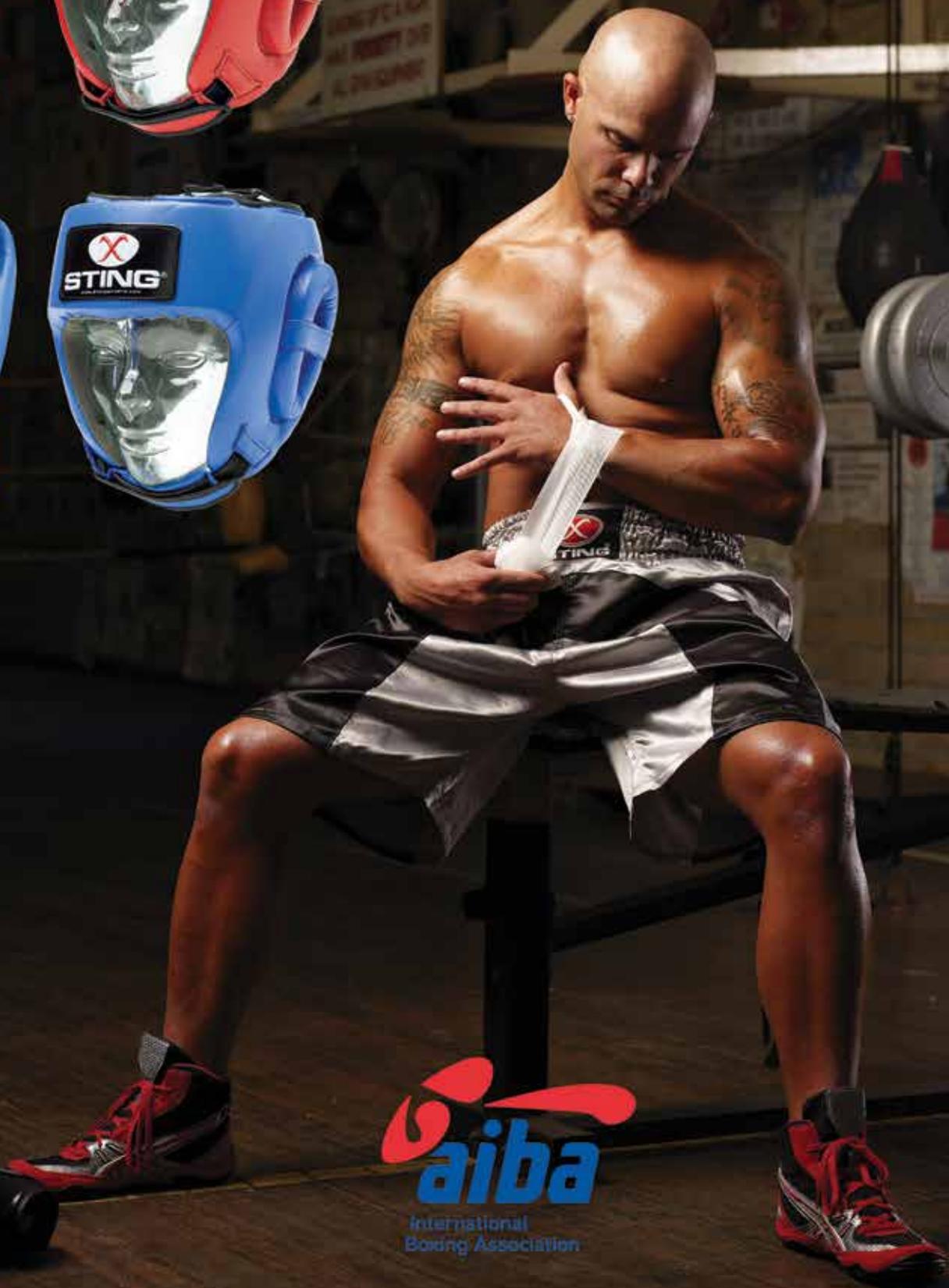


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## AFRICAN BOXING FESTIVAL IN CASABLANCA

**It was colourful and tightly contested as the best boxers in Africa battled it out in the Moroccan city of Casablanca on the Atlantic coast where it was the last opportunity for the continent's finest to get those life-changing quota places for the London 2012 Olympic Games. 154 athletes took to the ring and locked horns with 48 available places left.**

Only two Algerian athletes had ensured their participation at the Olympic Games before the qualifying event in Casablanca with Abdelhafid Benchabla and Mohamed Amine Ouadahi both having done the business in the World Series of Boxing Individual Championships.

Several talented young African boxers were invited by AIBA to take part in the Road to London Program in order to further develop their skills and amongst them Ghana's Duke Akueteh Micah and Benin's Shafiq Chitou all ensured their presence at the upcoming London 2012 Olympic Games after some excellent performances in Morocco.

Five local fighters, veteran Aboubakr Seddik Lbida, World Military Games silver medallist Abdelhak Aatakni, Beijing Olympian Mehdi Khalsi, Arab Games silver medallist Badr-Eddine Haddioui and Beijing Olympic Games quarter-finalist Mohammed Arjaoui were crowned Champions in the front of the home crowd. The host nation achieved two further Olympic quota places so will be now sending a total of seven boxers to the Olympic Games.

Six Algerians joined compatriots Benchabla and Ouadahi in qualifying, which means their squad will be the largest African delegation in London this summer. Mohamed Flissi claimed an unexpected gold medal at Light Flyweight, recording in the process a personal career highlight. The continent's best Heavyweight boxer, AIBA World Championships quarter-finalist Chouaib Bouloudinats took home the second Algerian gold medal.

Tunisia achieved two gold medals with All Africa Games winner Ahmed Mejri and team captain Yahia Elmekachari



both reaching the top of the podium in Casablanca while Light Welterweight No.1 Abderrazak Houya secured the third quota place for the country.

Domination by North Africa continued as the Egyptians earned five Olympic quota places with their head coach greatly satisfied with that number. 33-year-old Mohamed Abdelmawgoud Abouelfetouh Hikal was a lucky loser and thus qualified for his fourth Olympic Games, a record for the region.

Botswana's best boxer, All Africa Games winner Oteng Oteng proved yet again that he is one of the top African boxers at Flyweight as the 22-year-old from Gaborone claimed the gold medal to secure his country's only Olympic quota at the event. Developing African boxing nation Cameroon did not impress but did enough to acquire five Olympic licences.

Ghana's UK based 18-year-old Isaac Zion Kojo Dogboe won the Bantamweight division in Casablanca and put in memorable performances during the competition while 19-year-old Light Flyweight's Juliano Fernando Gento Maquina will be the first boxer from Mozambique at the Olympic Games since Lucas Januario's participation in 1996 in Atlanta. Mauritius' Commonwealth Games bronze medallist and All Africa Games winner Louis Richarno Colin recovered from a hand injury and will be Africa's great medal hope at the London 2012 Olympic Games.

The level of boxing on the continent has risen sharply in recent years and with it the level of knowledge and of coaching, bringing great optimism for the continent. It will not be long until these African fighters make a big impact on the World stage.



## FINAL OLYMPIC QUOTA PLACES

### LIGHT FLYWEIGHT (46-49KG)

Mohamed FLISSI from Algeria  
Abdelali DARAA from Morocco  
Thomas ESSOMBA from Cameroon  
Juliano Fernando Gento MAQUINA from Mozambique  
Tetteh SULEMANU from Ghana  
Ramy Helmy Mohamed Ibrahim ELAWADY from Egypt

### FLYWEIGHT (52KG)

Oteng OTENG from Botswana  
Benson Gicharu NJANGIRU from Kenya  
Samir BRAHIMI from Algeria  
Duke Akueteh MICAH from Ghana  
Hesham Yehia Mahmoud ABDELAAL from Egypt  
Jason Olliver LAVIGILANTE from Mauritius

### BANTAMWEIGHT (56KG)

Aboubakr Seddik LBIDA from Morocco  
Isaac Zion Kojo DOGBOE from Ghana  
Braexir Romeo LEMBOUMBA from Gabon  
Ayabonga SONJICA from South Africa  
Jonas Nghilandemwenyo MATHEUS from Namibia

### LIGHTWEIGHT (60KG)

Ahmed MEJRI from Tunisia  
Abdelkader CHADI from Algeria  
Andrique ALLISOP from Seychelles  
Yhyacinthe MEWOLI ABDON from Cameroon  
Mohamed Ramadan Mohamed ELIWA from Egypt  
Shafiq CHITOU from Benin

### LIGHT WELTERWEIGHT (64KG)

Abdelhak AATAKNI from Morocco  
Abderrazak HOUYA from Tunisia  
Serge AMBOMO from Cameroon  
Eslam Ahmed Aly MOHAMED from Egypt  
Louis Richarno COLIN from Mauritius  
Gilbert CHOOMBE from Zambia

### WELTERWEIGHT (69KG)

Mehdi KHALSI from Morocco  
Mustapha HIMA from Niger  
Ilyas ABBADI from Algeria  
Siphiwe LUSIZI from South Africa  
Selemani Salum KIDUNDA from Tanzania  
Yannick Audrey MITOUMBA MBEMY from Gabon

### MIDDLEWEIGHT (75KG)

Badr-Eddine HADDIOUI from Morocco  
Mujandjae KASUTO from Namibia  
Muideen Olalekan AKANJI from Nigeria  
Abdelmalek RAHOU from Algeria  
Mohamed Abdelmawgoud Abouelfetouh HIKAL from Egypt

### LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT (81KG)

Yahia ELMEKACHARI from Tunisia  
Ahmed BARKI from Morocco  
Christian DONFACK ADJOUFACK from Cameroon  
Lukmon Olaiwola LAWAL from Nigeria

### HEAVYWEIGHT (91KG)

Chouaib BOULOUDINATS from Algeria  
Maxwell AMPONSAH from Ghana

### SUPER HEAVYWEIGHT (+91KG)

Mohammed ARJAOUI from Morocco  
Blaise YEMMOU MENDOOU from Cameroon

### QUALIFICATIONS BY COUNTRY

- Morocco: 7
- Algeria: 6
- Cameroon, Egypt: 5
- Ghana: 4
- Tunisia: 3
- Gabon, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa: 2
- Benin, Botswana, Kenya, Mozambique, Niger, Seychelles, Tanzania, Zambia: 1

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# US AND PUERTO RICAN DOMINANCE IN AMERICAS

**Rio de Janeiro welcomed the world's last men's Olympic boxing qualifying event with 38 quota places for London 2012 up for grabs. Ecuador came away from Brazil with seven quotas whilst the USA took six. It was a sensational boxing tournament at the Maracanazinho, the venue of the 2016 Summer Olympic Games boxing event, showcasing some of the best talent around.**

172 quality boxers from 33 nations battled it out with Canada, Ecuador, Mexico and Venezuela having all entered with the maximum number of ten fighters. Argentina, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and Trinidad & Tobago had all sent nine representatives and all had high hopes of Olympic qualification. At the AIBA World Boxing Championships Baku 2011 only Cuba, Brazil, the United States and Colombia were able to secure at least one Olympic quota place and as a result there was a high number of boxers competing in Rio.

The USA re-asserted their dominance on the continent with several polished displays and their young team claimed three gold medals, which all bodes well before the big show this summer in the British capital. Middleweight No.1 Terrell Maurice Gausa, National Olympic Trials winner Marcus Browne and the experienced Michael Hunter each showing their class to be crowned Champions in Rio. Their teammates achieved three further quota places which resulted in the team having nine representatives in the men's boxing draw at the Olympic Games.

The Puerto Rican national squad was the world's youngest but it not only their future that looks bright, the present crop of fighters is truly world class. 18-year-old Panamerican Games bronze medallist Jantony Ortiz Marcano won the Light Flyweight division, 17-year-old Jeyvier Cintron Ocasio claimed the gold at Flyweight and Panamerican Youth Champion Felix Verdejo Sanchez won the Lightweight category in spectacular fashion.



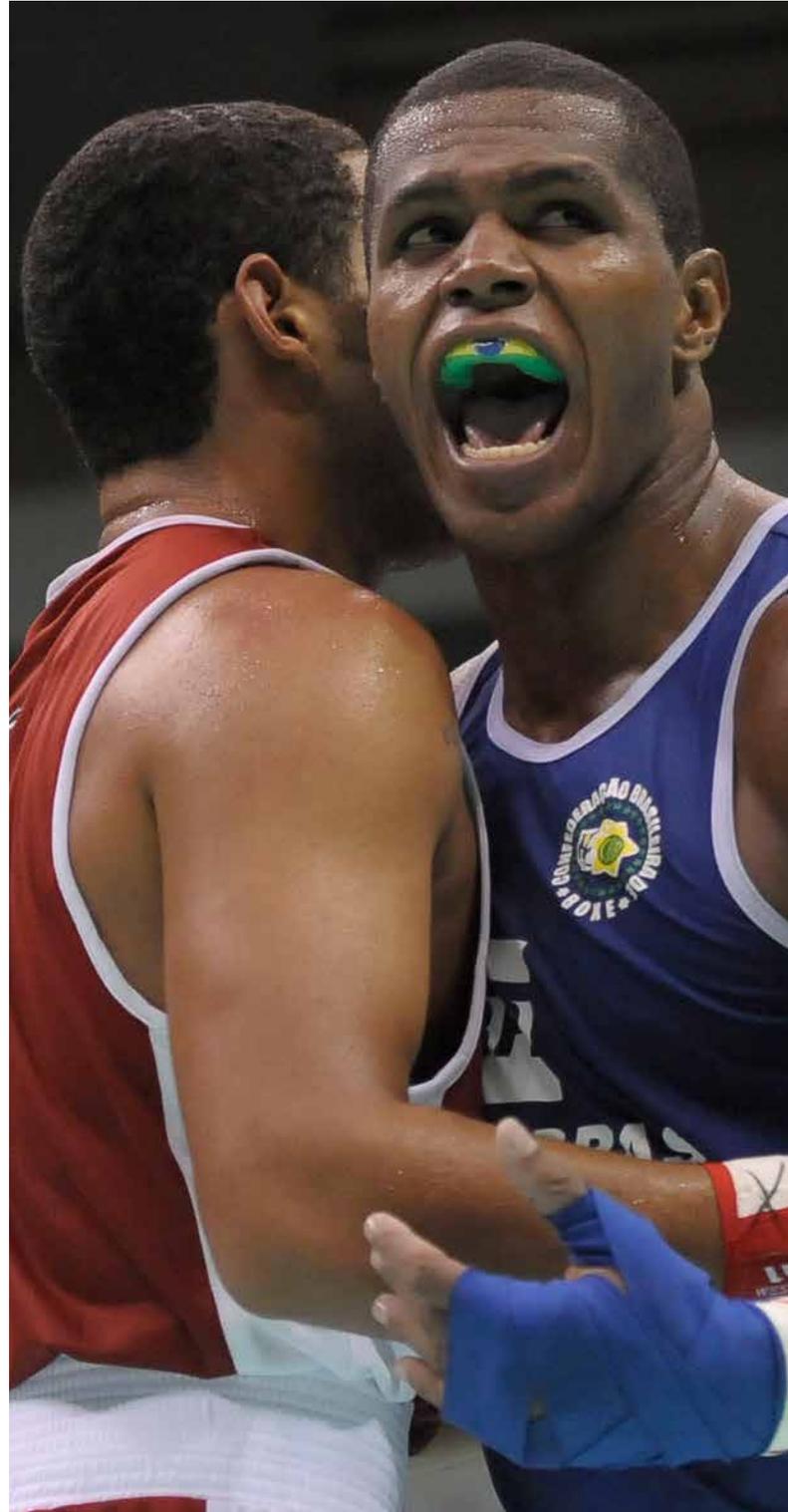
The Cuban squad achieved seven licences in Baku and their target in Rio was to achieve the maximum number of ten places. The Cuban head coach selected three world class fighters to represent the country but among them only former AIBA World Champion and Beijing Games bronze medallist Roniel Iglesias Sotolongo was able to get the Olympic quota, resulting in only eight Cubans fighting in London from 28 July to 12 August.

The most developing boxing nation in the region, Ecuador, proved that their country is on the fast track to becoming one of the continent's boxing powerhouses. The country's top favourite, Beijing Games quarter-finalist Carlos Gongora Mercado can now prepare for his second participation at the Olympic Games but the best performance in Rio was made by 19-year-old Panamerican Games winner Italo Antonio Perea Castillo who took the Super Heavyweight gold and will now be gunning to upset the current order in the king's division when the big boys battle it out in London this summer.

Brazilian team captain, two-time Olympian Myke Michel Ribeiro de Carvalho defeated his top rivals on home soil and secured the only gold medal of the host nation. Mexico's best boxer, AIBA Youth World Championships bronze medallist Oscar Rafael Valdez Fierro also showcased his great technique to eliminate his opponents and reach the top of the podium after beating Argentina's Alberto Ezequiel Melian on the last day of competition.

Trinidad & Tobago's 18-year-old Carlos Suarez, who has been training in the USA and secured a bronze medal at the US National Golden Gloves Tournament, was more than happy to win the quota in the event. Nicaragua also secured a historical spot at the Olympic Games as Osmar Bravo Amador made it to the semi-final stages of the Light Heavyweight division. Bravo will be the first Nicaraguan boxer at the Olympic since the 1992 Barcelona Games.

The American continent has always had a reputation of coming good when it matters most and with several of the top nations having extremely talented fighters in their ranks, you can be sure that many of them will not leave the British shores empty handed.



## FINAL OLYMPIC QUOTA PLACES

### LIGHT FLYWEIGHT (46-49KG)

Jantony ORTIZ MARCANO from Puerto Rico  
Carlos Eduardo QUIPO PILATAXI from Ecuador  
Carlos SUAREZ from Trinidad & Tobago

### FLYWEIGHT (52KG)

Jeyvier CINTRON OCASIO from Puerto Rico  
Juliao Miranda HENRIQUES NETO from Brazil

### BANTAMWEIGHT (56KG)

Oscar Rafael VALDEZ FIERRO from Mexico  
Alberto Ezequiel MELIAN from Argentina  
Robenilson VIEIRA DE JESUS from Brazil  
William ENCARNACION ALCANTARA from Dominican Republic

### LIGHTWEIGHT (60KG)

Felix VERDEJO SANCHEZ from Puerto Rico  
Wellington ARIAS ROMERO from Dominican Republic  
Eduar Antonio MARRIAGA CAMPO from Colombia  
Jose Carlos RAMIREZ from USA

### LIGHT WELTERWEIGHT (64KG)

Roniel IGLESIAS SOTOLONGO from Cuba  
Francisco VARGAS RAMIREZ from Puerto Rico  
Cesar Andres VILLARRAGA ALDANA from Colombia  
Jamel William HERRING from USA  
Anderson David ROJAS MINA from Ecuador

### WELTERWEIGHT (69KG)

Myke Michel RIBEIRO DE CARVALHO from Brazil  
Oscar MOLINA CASILLAS from Mexico  
Carlos Daniel SANCHEZ ESTACIO from Ecuador  
Gabriel Jose MAESTRE PEREZ from Venezuela  
Custio CLAYTON from Canada

### MIDDLEWEIGHT (75KG)

Terrell Maurice GAUSHA from USA  
Junior CASTILLO MARTINEZ from Dominican Republic  
Marlo Javier DELGADO SUAREZ from Ecuador  
Jose Alexander ESPINOZA MENA from Venezuela  
Enrique COLLAZO PELAIZ from Puerto Rico

### LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT (81KG)

Marcus Recardo BROWNE from USA  
Yamaguchi FALCAO FLORENTINO from Brazil  
Carlos GONGORA MERCADO from Ecuador  
Osmar BRAVO AMADOR from Nicaragua

### HEAVYWEIGHT (91KG)

Yamil Alberto PERALTA JARA from Argentina  
Michael S HUNTER II from USA  
Julio Cesar CASTILLO TORRES from Ecuador

### SUPER HEAVYWEIGHT (+91KG)

Ytalo Antonio PEREA CASTILLO from Ecuador  
Dominic Angelo BREAZEALE from USA  
Simon KEAN from Canada

### QUALIFICATIONS BY COUNTRY

- Ecuador: 7
- USA: 6
- Puerto Rico: 5
- Brazil: 4
- Dominican Republic: 3
- Argentina, Canada, Colombia, Mexico, Venezuela: 2
- Cuba, Nicaragua, Trinidad & Tobago: 1





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# WOMEN BREAK RECORDS IN CHINA

The 7th edition of the AIBA Women's World Boxing Championships which was held in Qinhuangdao, China, had record number of boxers and countries participating, demonstrating the huge growth in numbers taking up the sport. With women's boxing also making its debut at the London 2012 Olympic Games, this event doubled up as the qualification tournament for the Flyweight (48-51kg), Lightweight (57-60kg) and Middleweight (69-75kg) categories, bringing with it a huge media interest that marked a watershed moment in the history of the sport. Although celebrating the crowning of ten World Champions across all categories, this AIBA Women's World Boxing Championships had special significance for the three Olympic weight divisions. 305 women from 70 nations ensured a real boxing feast in China, with 48 of these athletes winning at least one contest.

Since the International Olympic Committee's decision in 2009 to include women's boxing into the Olympic program, the sport has reached a new phase in its development with a huge interest worldwide. Qinhuangdao was to be something truly special with Afghanistan, Armenia, Austria, Bolivia, Colombia, Jamaica, Nigeria, Serbia, South Africa and Uzbekistan all competing for the very first time on the world stage.

The tournament promised so much and did not disappoint as it delivered compelling drama. After the quarter-finals, 18 different nations had secured at least a bronze medal for themselves. Russia went on an incredible run with nine progressing to the last four of their respective weight categories. China and the USA had also come to the fore with both nations claiming five medallists whilst England had four representatives on the podium.



Some of the boxers really lit up the competition with some magnificent displays; none more so than Ireland's national icon, newly crowned four-time AIBA World Champion Katie Taylor, who was also awarded the best boxer trophy due to the sheer class of her performances. Her technical skills alone proving that women's boxing is truly ready to steal the show at the XXX Olympiad. The Irish national legend met her big rival in the lightweight final, Russia's two-time AIBA World Champion southpaw Sofya Ochigava, and her effective left hooks broke her rival's golden dreams as she came out on top in the battle 11:7. It was mesmerising stuff from the accomplished 26-year-old orthodox Irish fighter.

The host nation, China, secured three gold medals in front of its home crowd and ended the tournament by topping the medal ranking chart. Flyweight two-time AIBA World Champion and Asian Games winner Cancan Ren was their leading light as she defeated England's two-time AIBA World Championships silver medallist Nicola Virginia Adams to claim her third World title in style. The rivalry between Cancan and Adams will be one of the highlights of the London 2012 Olympic Games. 19-year-old AIBA Youth World Champion and Asian Champion Meiqing Yuan powered past multiple Pan-American Champion US star Franchon Crews to take the Light Heavyweight title with an impressive 18:11 victory, becoming in the process the youngest gold medallist at this edition of these AIBA Women's World Boxing Championships. Asian Champion Yunfei Li then made sure of the Heavyweight gold against Kazak southpaw Yulduz Mamatkulova, dominating each round to win the contest by a clear 21:13.

Nine out of the ten competing Russian women had advanced to the semi-finals but unfortunately for them, only two actually progressed to the finals. 22 year-old Aleksandra Kuleshova, who had moved up to Bantamweight, secured her first gold medal in a major tournament after victory over Italian veteran Terry Gordini. Sofya Ochigava also showcased her excellent array of skills in Qinhuangdao but came up against the irrepressible Katie Taylor's in the Lightweight final and had to settle for silver.



# 2012 AIBA WOMEN'S WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

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The United States of America finished the tournament ranked third and proved yet again that they had some of the toughest boxers in their squad. Despite the fact that the top Middleweight favourite, super talented 17-year-old Claessa Shields lost to eventual winner Savannah Marshall of England during the preliminaries, the strong nation secured two Olympic quotas and a total of five medals, including one gold. 24-year-old US National Champion and Pan-American Champion Tiara Brown had prevailed over Poland's cultured EU Champion Sandra Kruk for the Featherweight title

England was also one of the stand-out teams at these championships after a string of remarkable performances in China as each of their four representatives reached a podium finish. Savannah Marshall, a silver medallist at the last edition, went one better this time as she celebrated her 21st birthday with a World Title. The Hartlepool-based boxer had eliminated all the favourites, US sensation

Shields, Norway's European Champion Lotte Lien Sjøhagen, China's AIBA World Champion Jinzi Li and Russia's AIBA World Champion Nadezda Torlopova on her way to the final before overcoming the challenge of Azerbaijan's Elena Vystropova to take gold. In each of the three Olympic weight categories, Great Britain will now have a representative at London 2012 so look out for them to make headlines this summer.

The quality of boxers continually coming out of DPR Korea never ceases to amaze and dumbfound critics and once again the Asian nation made its mark. Light Welterweight No.1 Kyong Ok Pak continued her winning streak to claim her nation's historic seventh World Championships' title as her quality jabs made the difference against the talented Polish European Youth Champion Magdalena Stelmach. Flyweight Hye Song Kim ensured her quota for the Olympic Games after reaching the quarter-finals.



Ukraine's European Championships silver medallist Mariia Badulina dominated US National Champion Raquel Miller to defeat her rival 14:8 and take the Welterweight title in a riveting final. Badulina had eliminated Netherlands' top favourite Marie de Jong in the semi-finals and was full of confidence when facing Miller.

The Polish team travelled to Qinhuangdao with seven boxers and claimed two silvers and one bronze medal in the process. Former AIBA World Champion veteran Karolina Michalczuk became the first boxer from Poland to qualify for the London 2012 Olympic Games as the 35-year-old reached the Flyweight semis. Talented duo Sandra Kruk and Magdalena Stelmach each took home a silver medal.

India's five-time AIBA World Champion Chungneijang Mery Kom Hmangte was unable to continue her golden series in her new weight class but still qualified for the Olympic Games. There she will seek to set the record straight against her victor in China, England's Nicola Adams. The Indian team started the championships with several solid victories but in the end only Heavyweight Kavita was able to claim a medal.

Josie Gabuco made history after becoming the first Filipino women boxer to be crowned World Champion after overturning a 5:3 deficit in the final two rounds to take the Light Flyweight title. Tajikistan also secured its first ever medal as 19-year-old Asian Champion Mavzuna Chorjeva recorded a personal career highlight by reaching the semi-finals and qualifying for the London 2012 Olympic Games. Azerbaijan also achieved its first women's medal as Elena Vystropova took the Middleweight silver and took an Olympic quota place.

The tournament in China was a real spectacle and with the quality and skills at an all-time high, there is no doubt that women's boxing will really make its mark on the London 2012 Olympic Games.



## FINAL RESULTS

### LIGHT FLYWEIGHT 45-48KG

	<i>Last name</i>	<i>First name</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Medal</i>
1	GABUCO	Josie	PHI	Gold
2	XU	Shiqi	CHN	Silver
3	GNEVANOVA	Svetlana	RUS	Bronze
3	KYZAIBAY	Nazym	KAZ	Bronze

### FLYWEIGHT 51KG

	<i>Last name</i>	<i>First name</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Medal</i>
1	REN	Cancan	CHN	Gold
2	ADAMS	Nicola	ENG	Silver
3	MICHALCZUK	Karolina	POL	Bronze
3	SAVELYEVA	Elena	RUS	Bronze

### BANTAMWEIGHT 54KG

	<i>Last name</i>	<i>First name</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Medal</i>
1	KULESHOVA	Aleksandra	RUS	Gold
2	GORDINI	Terry	ITA	Silver
3	LIU	Kejia	CHNA	Bronze
3	CRUZ	Christina	USA	Bronze

### FEATHERWEIGHT 57KG

	<i>Last name</i>	<i>First name</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Medal</i>
1	BROWN	Tiara	USA	Gold
2	KRUK	Sandra	POL	Silver
3	STANEVA	Svetlana	BUL	Bronze
3	WHITESIDE	Lisa Jane	ENG	Bronze

### LIGHTWEIGHT 60KG

	<i>Last name</i>	<i>First name</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Medal</i>
1	TAYLOR	Katie	IRL	Gold
2	OCHIGAVA	Sofya	RUS	Silver
3	CHORIEVA	Mavzuna	TJK	Bronze
3	JONAS	Natasha	ENG	Bronze

### LIGHT WELTERWEIGHT 64KG

	<i>Last name</i>	<i>First name</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Medal</i>
1	PAK	Kyong	PRK	Gold
2	STELMACH	Magdalena	POL	Silver
3	MAYER	Mikaela	USA	Bronze
3	ABRAMOVA	Daria	RUS	Bronze

### WELTERWEIGHT 69KG

	<i>Last name</i>	<i>First name</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Medal</i>
1	BADULINA	Mariia	UKR	Gold
2	MILLER	Raquel	RUS	Silver
3	de JONG	Marie	NED	Bronze
3	POTEYEVA	Irina	RUS	Bronze

### MIDDLEWEIGHT 75KG

	<i>Last name</i>	<i>First name</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Medal</i>
1	MARSHALL	Savannah	ENG	Gold
2	VYSTROPOVA	Elena	AZE	Silver
3	TORLOPOVA	Nadezda	RUS	Bronze
3	LAURELL	Anna	SWE	Bronze

### LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT 81KG

	<i>Last name</i>	<i>First name</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Medal</i>
1	YUAN	Meiqing	CHN	Gold
2	CREWS	Franchon	USA	Silver
3	KOSOVA	Svetlana	RUS	Bronze
3	NAGY	Timea	RUS	Bronze

### HEAVYWEIGHT +81KG

	<i>Last name</i>	<i>First name</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Medal</i>
1	LI	Yunfei	CHN	Gold
2	MAMATKULOVA	Yulduz	KAZ	Silver
3	SINETSKAYA	Irina	RUS	Bronze
3		Kavita	IND	Bronze

## FINAL OLYMPIC QUOTA PLACES

### FLY (48-51 KG)

Maroua RAHALI from Tunisia  
Marlen ESPARZA from USA  
Karlha Francesca MAGLIOCCO from Venezuela  
Cancan REN from China  
Chungneijang Mery Kom HMGANTE from India  
Nicola Virginia ADAMS from England  
(Host Nation quota place)  
Karolina Anna MICHALCZUK from Poland  
Elena SAVELYEVA from Russia  
Siona FERNANDES from New Zealand

### LIGHT (57-60 KG)

Rim JOUINI from Tunisia  
Adriana DOS SANTOS ARAUJO from Brazil  
Mavzuna CHORIEVA from Tajikistan  
Saida KHASSENOVA from Kazakhstan  
Katie TAYLOR from Ireland  
Sofya OCHIGAVA from Russia  
Natasha Paula JONAS from England  
Alexis PRITCHARD from New Zealand

### MIDDLE (69-75 KG)

Edith Agu OGOKE from Nigeria  
Roseli AMARAL FEITOSA from Brazil  
Claressa Maria SHIELDS from USA  
Jinzi LI from China  
Savannah Rose Dee MARSHALL from England  
Elena VYSTROPOVA from Azerbaijan  
Nadezda TORLOPOVA from Russia  
Naomi-Lee R.M. FISCHER-RASMUSSEN from Australia

### QUALIFICATIONS BY COUNTRY

- England, Russia: 3
- Brazil, China, New Zealand, Tunisia, USA: 2
- Australia, Azerbaijan, India, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Nigeria, Poland, Tajikistan, Venezuela: 1



# THE WSB CONTINUES TO DELIGHT FANS WORLDWIDE

**After an assured first season, the WSB came back for its second campaign with a new and more explosive world format that brought together twelve knock-out teams for an adrenaline packed 73 matches and 370 bouts. A competition that had it all, big stars, heavy-hitters, fleet footed and tactically astute boxers and above all non-stop high-octane action, ended with the Italian outfit the Dolce & Gabbana Milano Thunder being crowned WSB Team Champions against the tough Dynamo Moscow.**

An innovative new approach to boxing, the WSB welcomed several new Franchises for its second season with the Leipzig Leopards from Germany, India's Venky's Mumbai Fighters and the Bangkok Elephants from Thailand all joining the party. Turkey's Istanbul Bosphorus and the Russian Dynamo Moscow team were rebranded for the new season. As opposed to the previous year, this time around the twelve teams were divided into two world groups competing in a league format, each team fighting once home and once away, with the top four teams in each group advancing to the quarter-final knock-out stages.



The season began in earnest when the WSB Draft took place at the AIBA World Boxing Championships Baku 2011 as 25 boxers were chosen by the various teams. Amongst those boxers drafted were World Champions, Youth Olympic Games Champions, World Youth Champions, World Junior Champions, Continental Champions and many National Champions. The draft was presided by Dr Ching-Kuo Wu, AIBA President and WSB Board Chairman, in front of the National Federations and the international press.

One of the teams that impressed the most in the build-up to the new season was the Venky's Mumbai Fighters who were getting ready for their debut in the competition with a rigorous training camp at the pristine state-of-the-art Balewadi Sports Complex on the outskirts of Pune. Their boxers were looking to be in top condition for 11 November when they would make their bow in the rings of the world's only team boxing event. They unveiled their power-packed team which included 17 top-class pugilists, comprised of 13 Indian and four foreign boxers. With reputed names such as Akhil Kumar, Balbir Singh, Jitender Kumar and Diwakar Prasad from India as well as Paul Koon (USA), Trent Rawlins (Australia) and Patrick Gallagher (Ireland), the camp was confident of a real successful season. Owned by SE TransStadia Pvt Ltd., which had a vast knowledge of sports infrastructure and content development, the Mumbai Fighters was a long-term project to bring boxing to the wider public in India.

The pre-season also saw some mouth-watering transfers. Dolce & Gabbana Milano Thunder team had done a lot of research in trying to optimise its pool of players and had gone big in order to give itself the best possible chance of success come the business end of the season. Having recruited Light Heavyweight Rafael Lima and Middleweight namesake Pedro Lima from the Beijing Dragons, they added the hugely talented Ludovic 'Matraque' Groguhé to their roster. The Italian outfit's capture of the strong Frenchman was a real sign of intent. William McLaughlin also joined up with the team and ensured Milano had to carry tag of early favourites.

Astana Arlans have, in many observers' view, realised the biggest transfer of this close-season after adding Abdelhafid Benchabla to their ranks. The Algerian had been an absolute monster the previous year when he fought for Pohang Poseidons, becoming the top ranked Light Heavyweight, with a record of seven wins and no losses and was crowned the undisputed WSB World Champion.

The experienced Enrico Kölling was recruited to fight for the Leipzig Leopards having moved from the Istanbul Bulls where last season he had won four of his five bouts. Irish pair Kenneth Egan and Super Heavyweight Cornelius Sheehan also joined the German Franchise on one-season deals.

After the transfers had gone through, it was time for the real action to begin as the season finally got underway. The most intriguing match of the first weekend was by far the confrontation between newcomers Venky's Mumbai Fighters and the glamorous Dolce & Gabbana Milano Thunder. It was the Italian outfit who prevailed at the Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex but it was anything but easy for the Italians as they had to wait until the last fight to take the decisive lead and win this first Group A 3:2, thanks to their Heavyweight superstar Clemente Russo.

That same weekend, the crowd was raucous and the action scintillating as the Los Angeles Matadors kicked off their campaign against the Astana Arlans at the Music Box in the heart of Hollywood, in front of a celebrity charged crowd that once again include boxing great Evander Holyfield and movie-star Jenny McCarthy. Three-time Olympian Rau'Shee "Baby Pit" Warren made the difference for the home team that night.

Showboating, KOs, devastating blows, solid defences and all round top quality entertainment then summarised the second week as Baku Fires won in Istanbul to make it two wins in two. Dynamo Moscow announced their arrival in devastating fashion and the match-up of the week between Milan and LA showcased some of the best boxing around. However it was the crushing defeat of the reigning champions Paris United by Mexico City Guerreros, with Elias Emigdio and Juan Romero leading the charges, which sent shockwaves through the competition.

The third weekend was high-octane boxing as Dolce & Gabbana Milano Thunder and Baku Fires set early WSB pace. The Italian outfit plundered their way past Astana Arlans then Baku make it two successive away victories after overcoming Paris United. Leipzig Leopards remained top of Group B after a scintillating display versus Istanbul Bosphorus while Beijing Dragons record first success of the campaign by triumphing over Mexico City Guerreros.



# WORLD SERIES OF BOXING SEASON 2

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At the midway point of the regular season, the fired up teams were bringing out their big guns in a real blockbuster weekend before the winter break. Astana Arlans put in a masterclass as they completely dominated the Venky's Mumbai Fighters in India. The so-far underwhelming defending champions Paris United finally kick-started their season with a priceless away win in Germany against the highflying Leipzig Leopards before Istanbul Bosphorus recorded their first triumph of the campaign with a performance full of verve against the Beijing Dragons, with 20-year-old Turkish orthodox Bunyamin Aydin overcoming the odds to defeat the reigning WSB Lightweight Champion Zhimin Wang by unanimous decision. Bangkok Elephants, who had missed the first four rounds of fixtures due to widespread flooding in Thailand, were given a harsh introduction to life in WSB after a heavy defeat to the Los Angeles Matadors.



Dolce & Gabbana Milano Thunder and Baku Fires continued to be the pace setters after the winter break as both recorded emphatic victories against Venky's Mumbai Fighters and Beijing Dragons respectively. Mexico City Guerreros dismantled Leipzig Leopards in Group B while the vastly improved Istanbul Bosphorus delighted their fans with a classic against Paris United. The powerful Astana Arlans were just too good for the visiting Los Angeles Matadors as Dynamo Moscow showed their ruthless streak with a win of their own against the Bangkok Elephants.

By the seventh week, there were some upsets in the competition with the Dolce & Gabbana Milano Thunder tasting defeat for the first time as Los Angeles Matadors triumphed. The Venky's Mumbai Fighters continued to struggle with Dynamo Moscow taking the win in India, The boxer who made his mark that weekend was Leipzig Leopards' 23-year-old Kevin Künzel who continued to impress in his first season, the orthodox fighter wowed the crowds at the Maritim Hotel with a sublime first round demolition of the much taller Beijing Dragons' Yunlong Shi. Künzel had looked razor sharp in each of his bouts was looking good to qualify for the Light Heavyweight Individual Championships.

In a one-off midweek fixture against the Beijing Dragons, Paris United welcomed the Chinese outfit at one of the most iconic venues of the French capital, the Salle Wagram. Situated just metres away from the Arc de Triomphe in the heart of Paris, the home of French boxing is an arena steeped in history and was the ideal setting as the classy home team put in a polished performance to delight the packed arena.

In the stand-out fixture of the eighth week, Astana Arlans delighted their home supporters with a hard-fought win against Group A leaders the Dolce & Gabbana Milano Thunder. The Venky's Mumbai Fighters moved into quarter-final contention with a quality victory over Bangkok Elephants. Baku Fires dominated Paris United and Gairbek Germakhanov became the first boxer to book his place for the WSB Individual Championships. The enthralling saga between Astana's Benchabla and Milano's Groguhé continued when the teams went head-to-head,

five excellent rounds of boxing action were served up as the intelligent Algerian Benchabla was tactically spot-on with some clever use of the jab as he took this sensational contest on points.

In the penultimate round of the regular season, Dynamo Moscow completely overwhelmed the visiting Astana Arlans to leapfrog them in the Group A table. Mexico City Guerreros turned on the style with a resounding win against the Istanbul Bosphorus. That weekend, Dynamo's 27-year-old Vazgen Safaryants was right on form as the Belarusian southpaw came through his toughest test with an enhanced reputation, as he outpointed the previous season's top ranked Lightweight Yerzhan Mussafirov. Irishman McLaughlin was another who impressed as the 26-year-old orthodox fighter smartly outmanoeuvred Anong Artwichian of the Bangkok Elephants to set his team on their way to victory.

It was a tense end to the regular season as Dynamo Moscow secured first place in Group A with a win against a full-strength Dolce & Gabbana Milano Thunder team as Baku Fires showed their steel to win away at the Mexico City Guerreros and make it a perfect ten wins out of ten. One of the big surprises was 24-year-old orthodox two-time National Ukrainian Champion Oleksandr Gvozdyk defeating Groguhé and in the process giving Moscow the vital win against Milano, impressing everyone with his speed and agility. A fast and furious first round set the tone for a riveting encounter as both boxers threw everything they had at each other Gvozdyk withstanding a strong fightback by Groguhé to win by split decision in one of the stand-out bouts of the campaign.

In the end the Los Angeles Matadors, Beijing Dragons, Istanbul Bosphorus and Bangkok Elephants missed out on quarter-final qualification, it had been tough and extremely competitive and those four teams were the ones whose WSB season was curtailed early. We also knew by now who had qualified for the WSB Individual Championships, with the Mexican pair Elias Emigdio and Juan Romero joining Germakhanov at the Finals. Baku Fires had three more representatives with Heybulla Mursalov, Ramazan Magomedau and Azamat Murtuzaliyev also in

the mix. Dynamo's Adlan Abdurashidov, who'd won his four contests ended the regular season as the top ranked Lightweight fighter, thus also qualifying for the big show. Paris United's Filip Hrgovic and Astana Arlans' Ruslan Myrsatayev would contest the Heavyweight title after the two top ranked fighters, Clemente Russo and Viktor Zuyev, both injured themselves.

In the quarter-final first leg, the match-up that really caught the imagination was the battle between the Venky's Mumbai Fighters and Baku Fires. It was a momentous occasion in India as the home team sprung a huge surprise by taking a hard-fought win. Five-time AIBA Women's World Champion Mary Kom was ringside to cheer on the locals as Jitender Kumar defeated Germakhanov, Filipino sensation Charly Suarez came out on top in the Lightweight showdown against the experienced 27-year-old Semen Grivachev and Uaine Fa, facing the tough Azeri Haji Murtuzaliyev, sent the fans into raptures with his triumph.

In the other matches, Ramzjon Ahmedov put in a performance full of verve versus fan's favourite Kennedy Katende to give Astana Arlans the victory on their home turf against the Mexico City Guerreros. In the much anticipated showdown between last year's champions Paris United and the classy Italian outfit Dolce & Gabbana Milano Thunder, two of the most exiting teams in this season's



# WORLD SERIES OF BOXING SEASON 2

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WSB competition found themselves in a real nail-biter right until the very end. On the night, it was the French team which prevailed after Hrgovic floored Michal Olas in the Heavyweight contest.

Dynamo Moscow made it into the semi-finals after clinically dispatching Leipzig Leopards with Safaryants imperious and Middleweight Aleksandr Ivanov showing his metal against the tall Dutchman Stephen Danyo. Milano joined the Russian outfit after overcoming first leg deficit to eliminate the reigning champions Paris United with the classy Miklos Varga, Pedro Lima from Brazil and 28-year-old Imre Szello making the difference.

It was getting tense between the remaining teams as all believed they had what it took to make it to the final and take the coveted WSB Team Trophy. The rivalry between Astana and Dynamo was in its third instalment during the semis, dubbed the clash of the Eastern titans, and in front of a packed crowd, it was the home team who were victorious. Thanks to Kazak heavy-hitter Mery Akshalov - who inflicted a first career WSB defeat on Safaryants - 21-year-old prospect Miras Bairkhanov and Uzbek Ramzjon Ahmedov, who boxed out of his skin, Astana took a slender advantage with them to the Russian capital. There, Tajik southpaw Anvar Yunusov was on fire, hungry for victory,

and inflicted a resounding victory on Astana's Rafikjon Sultunov before Adlan Abdurashidov kept up the intensity levels and furiously unleashed on last season's best boxer in the category, Yerzhan Mussafirov, to get the Russian outfit ahead in the tie. The season's revelation, Oleksandr Gvozdyk, went on the attack against Benchabla to claim the win and send his team through to the final.

In the other semi-final showdown, Dolce & Gabbana Milano Thunder created the sensation by winning all five bouts in the first leg in Italy against Baku Fires. It was supposed to be one of the closest matches of the season but the Italian team was in scintillating form and with the passionate crowds at the Mediolanum Forum right behind, they put in some performance to completely dominate their first encounter with the Azeri juggernaut. McLaughlin was involved in the bout of the evening at Middleweight against the savvy operator Osman Aliyev, coming back from a two round deficit with some delightful counter-punching to win a pulsating fight. With the Italian team flying high, it was left to team captain and Heavyweight superstar Clemente Russo to showcase his marvellous technique versus Haji Murtuzaliyev and give Milano a whitewash victory. With such a resounding win in the first leg, the return fixture in Baku was just a formality and Dolce & Gabbana Milan Thunder set up a mouth-watering final against the impressive Russian outfit Dynamo Moscow.

The pinnacle of the World Series of Boxing season saw Dynamo Moscow and Dolce & Gabbana Milano Thunder battling it out in a packed ExCeL arena in London - the venue of the 2012 Olympic Games - for the WSB Team Final. Huge crowds had gathered in anticipation for the competition's debut on British soil as boxing fans came out in force to witness the best of Olympic fighters taking to the ring for five sensational bouts. Bantamweights Vincenzo Picardi and Vladimir Nikitin kicked-off the action in spectacular style with the diminutive Italian making his experience count to give Milano the early advantage. Defying the odds, Branimir Stankovic's fancy footwork did the damage in the first two rounds against Abdurashidov, moving with grace and throwing devastating combinations to edge Italy's finest further ahead in the tie. It was the Ukrainian winning machine Sergiy Derevyanchenko who,



after a couple of tentative rounds, made sure of the overall victory by slowly picking his opponent Maxim Gazizov apart. The talented Gvozdyk pulled one back for Dynamo following an intelligent display versus Imre Szello but it was too little too late. With the win secured, Clemente Russo came out bruised and battered but victorious from his fight with Moscow's Vitaly Kudukhov to lift the WSB Team Trophy amid wild celebrations.

Bringing this scintillating season to a close was the WSB Individual Championships, held once more at the ExCeL London, which crowned the best boxer in each of the five weight categories with a World title. In the first bout, Gairbek Germakhanov confirmed his status as the top Bantamweight after his clever movement and stinging combinations gave him the win against the up and coming Elias Emigdio from the Mexico City Guerreros. In the Lightweight match-up, Mexico City Guerreros' Juan Romero looked at ease in the ring, calm and composed, throwing a variation of punches, confusing Adlan Abdurasidov in the early exchanges as he put the vital points on the board, but the Russian clawed his way back to draw level after six rounds. A beautiful right hand counter punch by Abdurashidov was soon followed by a stinging left hook from Romero in an electric final round but it was the speed of the Mexican that saw him take the overall victory by split decision. Derevyanchenko then made it a second WSB World Champion title in two years after coming back from being sent to the canvas in the second round by a stunning left hook from Heybulla Mursalov, to dominate each round until the final bell with a quality mix of combination punches and fancy footwork to extend his unbeaten record in the competition to thirteen wins, no losses.

The penultimate contest of the night saw two unbeaten boxers from the same Baku Fires team battling it out with top ranked 22-year-old orthodox Azamat Murtuzaliyev against the tactically astute Ramazan Magomedau. It was tentative early on but then Magomedau applied the pressure in the second, switching stance to confuse his opponent as he edged the early exchanges. At the end of the third, the younger of the two Azeri fighters pulled a muscle in his back and was unable to continue, Magomedau winning by TKO to become the 2012 WSB World Light Heavyweight Champion. Heavyweights Filip Hrgovic from Paris United and Ruslan Myrsatayev from Astana Arlans brought the roof down at the ExCeL in the final fight of the night. AIBA Youth World

Champion Hrgovic from Croatia looked in top shape coming into the bout, using his range and height advantage to great effect by throwing hard one-tvos towards his opponent. The young Hrgovic's tactics were working a treat as he kept the Kazak at arm's length by throwing straight combinations down the middle to edge it, wearing down Myrsatayev to the very end as he was declared the winner.

It was a fitting end to a spectacular WSB season and with the increase in interest and more quality boxers involved in next season, with teams from Argentina and Ukraine already pencilled in, the next campaign promises to be nothing short of spectacular.





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