

Beat: Sports

Riyad Al-Azzawi wins the World Kickboxing Championship Cup among his in Iraq

A sports dream comes true in Baghdad

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USPA NEWS - In the presence of a large public who cheered Iraq, the national champion Riyadh Al-Azzawi won the World Kickboxing Championship for the seventh time in a row on Friday, November 24th. The championship, which was held for the first time in Iraq and the Arab world, took place in the "Stadium of the people" in Baghdad.

16 players from different nationalities and competing in various weight categories, came from all over the world to take part in this championship which opened with the national anthem followed by a minute of silence in mourning of the souls of the Iraqi martyrs.

The championship, which began with the audience cheering for the Iraqi champion Amin Kilani who lost to his opponent Sefket Kirkizas from Turkey in the 71 kg weight category, was filled with musical numbers by artists such as artist Nasr Al-Bahar, Ahmed Al-Iraqi, Kaed Helmi, and Ahmad Jawad, which contributed to break the fighting and competitive atmosphere.

The arena then witnessed several rounds of fighting between the world champions including the confrontation between Iraqi champion Akram Hassan and his Irish rival Ian Mc Carthy in the 70 kg weight category. Hassan's victory over his opponent ignited the stadium which resounded with the public's cheering.

The championship was attended by a number of sports and political personalities most notably its official sponsor and Secretary-General of the Iraqi National Congress, Aras Habib Kareem, the President of the Muay Thai and Thai Boxing Arab Union, Mr. Sami Qabalawi, who flew from Lebanon to attend the event, the Executive Director of the Iraqi Olympic Committee, Mr. Jazaer Al Sahlani, the Interior Ministry Spokesman, Dr. Saad Maan, as well as a number of leaders from the National Congress.

In the round before the last two, the fans, cheering the six-time Iraqi world champion Riad Al-Azzawi who confronted his Latvian rival Staislas Thomasfx, filled the stadium with one voice that shouted "Iraq "I Iraq!" After a minute and nineteen seconds, Al-Azzawi knocked out his opponent thus becoming the world champion for the seventh time in a row.

"I congratulate you on the success of this tournament and I congratulate all the winners, especially the Iraqi champions Akram Hassan and Riyadh Al-Azzawi who won his seventh title," said the Secretary-General of the National Congress and the official sponsor of the tournament, who preferred to sit next to the arena to cheer the athletes and share the joy of the champion Riyadh Al-Azzawi.

The seven-time world champion, Riyadh Al-Azzawi, said: "I dedicate this victory to our heroes in the Iraqi troops and security forces and to all Iraqis. I also thank the organizers of the tournament, which coincided with our victory over terrorism." Al-Azzawi also thanked Habib for sponsoring the championship and achieving his dream of boxing on his own land among his family and public.

The competition witnessed 9 rounds of fights which results were as follows:

1) Colin Chu v Djony Fernandez (KGP)
Colin Chu wins TKO round 3

2) Yussef Hassan vs Leigh Hendley (KGP)
Leigh Hendley wins points

3) Amine Alilnaky v Servket (MTGP)
Sevket wins points

4) Ryan Sheehan v Jamie Whelan (KGP world Title defence)
Jamie Whelan wins KO round 2

5) Yussef Bougar v Carlton Lieu (MTGP world Title defence)
Carlton wins points

6) Elson Patrick vs Naqqash Khan (KGP)
Naqqash Khan win extra round points

7) Stav v Riyadh (wkn , ISKA , KGP world titles)
Riyadh wins KO round 2

8) Sean Clancy v Charlie Peters. (MTGP world title defence)
Charlie wins KO round 1

9) Akram Hassan vs Eoin McCarthy
Akram wins KO round 1

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