

## **France's 19-year-old Selim Bouaita defeated his US rival in the opening day of the 1<sup>st</sup> Alexis Vastine Memorial Tournament**

The historical first edition of the Alexis Vastine Memorial Tournament began with 11 bouts in Nantes, France. India's flyweight (52kg) star Amit Panghal won the bout of the day but he had to do his very best against his young US opponent. France's 19-year-old Selim Bouaita amazed in the first day of boxing and defeated also a strong US rival.

Altogether 14 women and 29 men male are attending in the Alexis Vastine Memorial Tournament from eight different countries which represents three Confederations. United States of America and India are the non-European nations in the new international competition in France.

Alexis Vastine achieved great successes for Team France between 2004 and 2012 including bronze at the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games, gold at the 2005 Mediterranean Games and silver at the Moscow 2010 European Boxing Championships. He died in the Villa Castelli helicopter collision during the filming of a French TV reality show in 2015.

The French Boxing Association decided to launch an event in his great memory to remember his impressive results and his nice personality. Nantes is a city on the Loire River in the Upper Brittany region of Western France with long history.

### **The bout of the day**

India's Amit Panghal was silver medallist in the Yekaterinburg 2019 AIBA World Boxing Championships and claimed gold medal in the Asian Games. The 25-year-old Indian is one of the best flyweight (52kg) boxers in the world who met in the first day of boxing with United States' Anthony Herrera who is a native talent in our sport. Herrera is only 20 but he won the US National Olympic Trials one year ago and in spite of his low number of bouts, he was competitive for Panghal in the opening day of boxing. Panghal had to do his very best especially in the third round to beat his younger US opponent in Nantes where he won the bout by split decision.

### **The surprise of the day**

United States' Bruce Carrington is an experienced national team member at the featherweight (57kg) who competed at the Lima 2019 Panamerican Games and several elite international tournaments. The US boxer was the favourite against France's new elite boxer Selim Bouaita who claimed bronze medal at the Sofia 2019 EUBC European Youth Boxing Championships. The French boxer adopted the rhythm of the contest quickly and from the second round his excellent footwork delivered a success for him.

### **The round-up**

England's George Crotty is a strong marine in GB's army and a developing boxer who won the Bocskai Memorial Tournament on February 2020. The English light heavyweight (81kg) boxer had a tough opponent, Sweden's Liridon Nuha who is a real fighter and tried to catch Crotty in their contest. The English boxer was technically better in their contest and won the bout by split decision in Nantes.

France's Mourad Aliev was involved to the top national team in 2019 and he quickly won a silver medal at the European Games. The 25-year-old French super heavyweight (+91kg) boxer used his powerful jabs to destroy India's Satish Kumar's defences in another world class fight in Nantes. The 31-year-old Indian has qualified already for the Tokyo Olympic Games but this time the French was better in the exchanges.

France's Wassila Lkhadiri achieved bronze medal already in the Bucharest 2014 EUBC European Women's Boxing Championships at the age of 19. The French flyweight (51kg) boxer claimed the gold medal at the Boxam Tournament in Spain two and half weeks ago and continued her excellent winning path also in Nantes. Lkhadiri controlled two rounds against England's Tori Ellis-Willetts and won the bout unanimously.

### **Quote of the day**

***"It was a very tight fight against a good opponent and I felt myself very well during the opening bout of the Alexis Vastine Memorial Tournament. I had some difficulties in the first round but I got strong advices in the first break and I managed to win the fight. It was a wonderful feeling that I could return to the events as my last contest took place before the pandemic,"*** summarized his first experiences France's 19-year-old Selim Bouaita.

