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11 July 2019

## Double gold for Turkey's women

Napoli, 11 July – The fifth competition day of taekwondo at the Palazzetto dello Sports centre had a packed schedule as the women were competing in two weight categories 57-62kg and 67-73kg, while men tested their skills in the 68-74kg category. The gold medals in both women's divisions were won by Turkey and Amirmohammad Bakhshikalhori from Iran won the men's event.

Team spirit abounded inside the arena, with delegations cheering on their teammates from only a few metres away from the tatami. Thanks to the round shape of the arena, everyone had an excellent view and could observe all that was taking place on all three mats.

The competition traditionally started with preliminary rounds in the morning. The women's round of 16 in the under 73kg delivered a spectacular battle. Just five seconds before the end of the third round, Yanna Schneider from Germany managed to level her score to the ten points of Dohee Yoon from South Korea. Having led that battle in points, Yoon used those last three seconds to score one more point and moved to the quarterfinals.

In the women's under 62kg quarterfinals, Barbara Dias Novaes from Brazil was losing by one point when only five seconds were left. An exchange of rapid strikes in the last two seconds changed the situation and helped Barbara advance to the semifinals.

The battle between Russia's Iuliia Turutina and Mexico's Anel Vaitiare Felix Perez was extraordinary. Both athletes were rather reserved in the first two rounds waiting for the opponent to attack. The third round became more aggressive even as the 1-1 score forced one more round. Even in the fourth additional session, there was no clear winner and a review of the number of attacks made by both athletes finally decided that Turutina deserved a place in the semifinals.

The men's quarterfinal match between Victor Asp from Norway and Ke Ren from China was riveting too. Within just five seconds, both athletes leaped to more than ten points after a series of rapid shots. Towards the end, Ren knew he was losing and went big on the offensive. Asp responded with immediate counter-attacks and increased his advantage. He advanced to the

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semifinals to fight against Soufiane Elasbi from Morocco and then to the final, against Bakhshikalhori of Iran. He ran out of steam, and luck, in the final.

Later Asp explained, "I was a bit tired. I think if the fight had been earlier, I would have had more energy and done better."

It was an interesting semifinal between France's Marie-Paule Ble and Turkey's Nafia Kus in the under 73kg category. As both were even at the end of three rounds, a decisive kick to the trunk in the additional fourth round helped Kus move to the final battle.

Bronze medallist Marie-Paule Ble said, "I am very disappointed about having lost this match. Sadly, I was injured in this competition. I tried to do my best, but I did not succeed. I am happy though about taking the third place before going on a holiday."

Nafia Kus fought Dohee Yoon from South Korea for the gold medal. While no points were scored in the first three rounds, an accurate strike from Kus was enough to seal gold.

"I am so happy about this medal," she said. "My next target is to become an Olympic champion."

Russia's Luliia Turutina who lost to Turkey's Irem Yaman in the under 62kg category final later said "I can't say I feel very happy about winning the silver medal because my aim was to take gold. I think I made a mistake in the first round as my standing position was not very comfortable."

She hopes to achieve better results with her team as she says team spirit makes people stronger. Irem Yaman on the other hand, was very happy about her victory. "It is my second time this year that I have become a champion of at a world level." She has previously won two World Championships, in 2015 and 2019. "The most important thing for me is to become an Olympic champion next year."

There will be two more days of action in taekwondo. On 12 July, the last round of individual fights will take place featuring men in weight categories 80-87kg and 58-63kg. Women will compete in the weight category under 53kg. On Saturday the competition will conclude with the teams' Kyorugi.

## Results

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## **Men -74kg**

Gold: Amirmohammad Bakhshikalhori (IRI)

Silver: Victor Asp (NOR)

Bronze: Soufiane Elasbi (MAR)

Bronze: Júlio Ferreira (POR)

## **Women -73kg**

Gold: Nafia Kuş (TUR)

Silver: Dohee Yoon (KOR)

Bronze: Marie-Paule Ble (FRA)

Bronze: Melika Mirhosseini Vakili (IRI)

## **Women -62kg**

Gold: Irem Yaman (TUR)

Silver: Iuliia Turutina (RUS)

Bronze: Bruna Vuletić (CRO)

Bronze: Bárbara Dias Novaes (BRA)

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## The International University Sports Federation – FISU

Founded in 1949, FISU stands for Fédération Internationale du Sport Universitaire (International University Sports Federation). FISU was formed within university institutions in order to promote sports values and sports practice in harmony with the university spirit. Promoting sports values means encouraging friendship, fraternity, fair-play, perseverance, integrity and cooperation amongst students, who one day may have responsibilities and key positions in politics, economy, culture and industry.

With FISU's motto being 'Today's Stars, Tomorrow's Leaders', all FISU events include educational and cultural aspects, bringing together sport and academia from all over the world to celebrate with a spirit of friendship and sportsmanship. FISU cooperates in developing its events and programmes with all major international sports and educational organisations. As major outcomes of those collaborations, in 2015, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) proclaimed the International Day of University Sport to be celebrated annually on 20 September – an event that has seen huge growth in its first few years.

FISU is composed of 174 Member Associations (National University Sports Federations). The FISU General Assembly elects the members of the FISU Executive Committee, its board of directors. A total of 14 permanent committees advise the Executive Committee in their specialised areas. For the daily administration of FISU, the FISU Executive Committee relies on the Secretary General, who is assisted by the FISU staff. FISU's headquarters are in Lausanne, Switzerland.

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