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Boxing Officials From CIS Get Booted

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LONDON — A Turkmen boxing referee and an Azeri technical official were expelled from the London Olympics after a night of controversy plunged the sport back into the mire.

The focus Sunday should have been on the female boxers, who are competing in the Olympic Games for the first time.

But instead, the International Amateur Boxing Association, or AIBA, had to deal with the type of scandal that dogged it almost a decade ago.

Turkmen referee Ishanguly Meretnyyazov and Azeri international technical official Aghajan Abiyev were sent home effective immediately, while a second referee, Frank Scharmach of Germany, was suspended.

"I deeply regret that we had to make these decisions," AIBA president Wu Ching-Kuo said in a statement. "However, our main concern has been and will always be the protection of the integrity and fair play of our competitions. I will take all possible steps to reinforce this."

He later said in an interview: "There is only one truth, and we always get to the truth."

Meretnyyazov failed to stop a men's bantamweight bout Wednesday despite six knockdowns of Azerbaijan's Magomed Abdulhamidov in the final round.

Japan's Satoshi Shimizu, who went into the last round of the bout against the Azeri trailing by seven points, lost the contest by five when all three rounds were scored.

AIBA later overturned the verdict, saying Meretnyyazov should have given Abdulhamidov at least three standing counts, which would have resulted in the contest being stopped.

Abiyev was expelled for breaking his contract by communicating with his country's team, AIBA said. Code 7 of the contract says technical officials are forbidden from communicating with anybody about any competition, especially persons from their own country or national federation.

Scharmach was suspended for being too quick to warn Iran's Ali Mazaheri for persistent holding, the third of which resulted in the heavyweight fighter being disqualified in the second round of his bout.

There were more complaints Thursday, when Ukraine's Olympic committee said it was considering taking a case to the Court of Arbitration for Sport after middleweight Evhen Khytrov lost a tight contest to Briton Anthony Ogogo.

The International Olympic Committee restored ties with AIBA in 2006 after freezing some funds to the association over controversial scoring decisions at the 2004 Athens Games.

At the time, the IOC expressed concerns over the scoring process and the selection of judges and froze more than $1 million in payments to AIBA.

The boxing tournament in Athens was marred by several controversial scores, which angered spectators and fans.

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