

LEO 'GRANIT' KRAFT (Germany/Belarus) YOUNGEST WORLD CHAMPION IN CHESSBOXING HISTORY!

On Saturday, November 28, 2009, a crowd of 2000 at the Ivan Yarygin Palace of Sport in Krasnoyarsk Siberia, witnessed a fiercely fought battle in the light heavyweight division, between the 2 most talented chessboxers the world has ever seen. On paper experts knew this would be the highest quality fight ever organised by the World Chess Boxing Organisation in co-operation with the Siberian Chess Boxing Organisation.

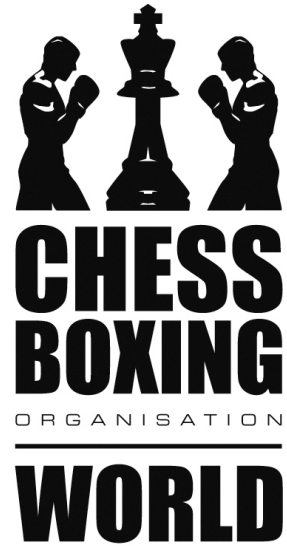
Nikolay 'the Chairman' Sazhin, a 21 year old math student from Krasnoyarsk, has an amateur boxing record encompassing 95 bouts with 85 victories and his chess Elo rating is 2005. Leo Kraft, only 17 years old, comes originally from Gomel in Belarus but has been adopted by the German Chess Boxing Organisation (GCBO). He has an impressive record of 50 amateur boxing bouts and 45 wins. He recently placed 5th at the European junior boxing championships in Bulgaria and will compete in the World junior championships next year. His chess Elo Rating is 1997.

Kraft, playing with the white pieces, aimed for the Spanish opening but Sazhin forced him into the Greenfield defense within the 1st chess round. In the second round Leo Kraft started fiercely and overwhelmed Sazhin with a Mike Tyson style of boxing. In the 3rd round Kraft castled long, which was the signal for both players to go for a direct kings attack. Sazhin was quicker and Kraft was forced to defend his king. The Chairman also got the upperhand in boxing, demonstrating his world champion qualities. In the 5th and 7th (both chess) rounds Sazhin attempted checkmate on the board but this used too much time of his chessclock. Leo Kraft skillfully defended his king. In the 6th round Kraft once again put Sazhin under pressure with fierce combinations of hooks and uppercuts. In the 8th round with only one minute left on the chess timer, Sazhin knew he had to knockout his younger opponent. Backed by the excited local crowd he attacked his younger opponent with all he had, but after 3 minutes Kraft was still standing. The bell rang and Nikolay Sazhin laid down his own king and surrendered. Leo 'Granit' Kraft is the new chessboxing world champion in the light-heavyweight division!

After the fight, Vladimir Makarov, head of the SCBO, pointed out that Sazhin had a knee injury just three days before the fight which definitely influenced his ability. After Iepe Rubingh, president of the WCBO confirmed this, both parties agreed on a rematch in 2010.

For further information: www.wcbo.org, www.si.wcbo.org

The basic idea in chessboxing is to combine the #1 thinking sport and the #1 fighting sport into a hybrid that demands the most of its competitors - both mentally and physically. In a chessboxing fight two opponents play alternating rounds of chess and boxing. A contest consists of 11 rounds, 6 rounds of chess (4 minutes each) and 5 rounds of boxing (3 minutes each). The contest starts with a round of chess, followed by a boxing round. In a maximum of 11 rounds the contest is either won by checkmate or K.O. Dutchman Iepe Rubingh invented chessboxing in 2003. In the same year he founded the World Chess Boxing Organisation. Since then chessboxing has become a serious sport in numerous countries such as USA, Great Britain, Germany, France and Russia.



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