

IBA Chief Chris Roberts Attends BKB 43 in Farnworth

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International Boxing Association (IBA) Secretary General and Chief Executive Officer Chris Roberts OBE made a notable appearance at Bare Knuckle Boxing (BKB) 43 in Farnworth, Bolton, UK, highlighting the growing recognition of the sport on a global stage.

Chris Roberts OBE, Secretary General and Chief Executive Officer of the International Boxing Association (IBA), made a high-profile appearance at Bare Knuckle Boxing (BKB) 43 in Farnworth, Bolton, UK. His attendance marked a notable milestone for the fast-growing

sport, which continues to gain momentum and legitimacy across the global combat sports landscape.

Bare Knuckle Boxing, once considered underground and unregulated, has in recent years emerged as a more structured and recognized discipline, thanks to the efforts of promoters, athletes, and supporters. BKB 43, held at the historic Town Hall in Farnworth, attracted an energetic crowd and featured several intense matchups, showcasing both technical skill and the raw appeal of bare-knuckle fighting.

The presence of Chris Roberts OBE at the event did not go unnoticed. With a long-standing background in boxing governance and military leadership, Roberts brings credibility and influence to the sport. His attendance at BKB 43 suggests that the IBA, the leading global organization for amateur boxing, may be paying closer attention to the evolution of bare-knuckle formats.

Speaking briefly during the event, Roberts praised the professionalism of the BKB organizers and the passion of the athletes. “It’s clear that bare-knuckle boxing is growing in popularity. Events like these, when done safely and professionally, show how far the sport has come,” he noted.

While the IBA has not made any formal commitments regarding the sanctioning or oversight of bare-knuckle boxing, Roberts’ visit hints at possible future discussions. As combat sports diversify, more organizations are looking at how to align emerging styles with existing safety standards, athlete welfare programs, and regulatory practices.

For the BKB community, having a high-ranking figure from the International Boxing Association attend their flagship event is both a sign of validation and an opportunity. It opens the door for constructive dialogue between traditional boxing authorities and bare-knuckle promoters, potentially leading to greater support, recognition, and perhaps one day international regulation.

BKB 43 itself was a successful night, marked by intense bouts and a respectful crowd. Fighters delivered spirited performances, while the organizers ensured smooth execution and crowd safety throughout the evening.

As bare-knuckle boxing continues to carve out its place within the world of combat sports, the presence of Chris Roberts OBE at BKB 43 sends a clear message: the sport is no longer

on the fringes. With growing interest from global boxing leaders, BKB may soon find itself in more mainstream athletic conversations.

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