

King Thomas rules again

• **Partey nets triple crowns at awards gala**

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Allotey schools Gorsh to win WBO Africa title

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• Thomas Partey and Doris Boaduwaah (left) were the big winners at the awards gala

Opoku's heroics seal Kotoko's 10th FA Cup triumph

• Porcupine Warriors return to Africa



Story: Prince Dornu-Leiku

Kwame Opoku emerged the hero in the most dramatic of circumstances as Kumasi Asante Kotoko edged Golden Kick FC 2-1 to lift the 2024/25 MTN FA Cup at the University of Ghana Stadium yesterday, thanks to a last-gasp and highly controversial penalty decision that has left football fans talking.

Victory yesterday ensured Coach Abdul Karim Zito's side will return to continental football next season via the CAF Confederation Cup.

With the final poised at 1-1 and heading

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Voice of Graphic SPORTS

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A knockout night that redefined Ghanaian boxing's future

On a rain-kissed evening beneath the bright lights of Bukom Boxing Arena last Saturday, something extraordinary unfolded — not merely a night of high-stakes combat, but a pivotal moment in the renaissance of Ghanaian boxing. Dubbed the Battle of the Beasts, the event delivered thrilling action and crowned new champions, but its greatest victory was what it represented: a bold new chapter for boxing in Ghana, driven by innovation, international vision, and meaningful partnerships.

While Theophilus Kpakpo Allotey's masterful win over rival Daniel Gorsh for the WBO Africa bantamweight title stole the sporting headlines, and American powerhouse Andrew Tabiti's explosive knockout of Ghana's Jacob Dickson brought global attention, the real story lies beyond the ropes.

At the heart of this groundbreaking night was

Legacy Rise Sports, the brainchild of the dynamic Sharaf Mahama — son of President John Dramani Mahama — working in tandem with former world champion Amir Khan's UK-based AK Promotions. Together, they pulled off a feat few believed possible: staging a world-class boxing event in Accra, broadcast live to millions across the globe via DAZN, one of the world's leading sports streaming platforms.

It was a production that combined Ghanaian grit with international gloss — a dazzling fusion of sport, entertainment, and spectacle. The crowd was a blend of boxing royalty, business moguls, top politicians, and A-list celebrities.

From Anthony Joshua's ringside appearance to live performances by award-winning artistes like King Promise, the event struck a cultural chord that extended far beyond the ring. It showed that boxing, when well packaged, can transcend sport to become a lifestyle experience — the kind that attracts A-list celebrities, deep-pocketed executives, and a broader audience beyond the die-hard faithful of Bukom.

That point was driven home by one of the night's most emotional moments: the presentation of a commemorative WBC belt to the legendary Azumah Nelson. The tribute, as part of the WBC's "Year of Africa" initiative, was a poignant reminder of Ghana's rich boxing heritage. It was also a clear call to action — that the sport must not live in nostalgia alone, but build upon that legacy with structure, innovation, and smart investment.

To do so, Ghana must cultivate more forward-looking promoters and sports business leaders in the mould of Sharaf Mahama — visionaries who understand that the sport's survival and global competitiveness depend on its ability to attract corporate sponsorships, international media rights, and star power. Legacy Rise Sports, in collaboration with DAZN and AK Promotions, has laid the foundation. The challenge now is for stakeholders — from the Ghana Boxing Authority to gym owners and corporate Ghana — to rise to the occasion.

Boxing thrives on passion, but passion alone is not enough. The sport needs to be branded and sold. It must appeal to both the hustler in Bukom and the mogul in East Legon. If the Battle of the Beasts proved anything, it is that Ghanaian boxing has the talent, the storylines, and the spectacle. What it now needs is sustained vision and commercial savvy to turn one brilliant night into a lasting movement.

The 'Battle of the Beasts' was not just an ordinary boxing event; it was a blueprint. A model for how Ghana can unlock its full potential in the fight game — through strategic partnerships, innovation, and a belief that our stories, when well-packaged, deserve the global spotlight. If we are serious about restoring the glory of Ghanaian boxing, then this must be the standard — and Sharaf Mahama must not be the exception, but the spark that inspires a new generation of boxing promoters and sports entrepreneurs.

Maca, 18-year-old sensation turned boxing pro

BRIGHTON fighter Adam Maca made his professional debut last Saturday, just three weeks after turning 18.

By the age of 25, Maca plans to be an undisputed world champion cruising around in a carbon black Bugatti.

The teenager is clearly brimming with confidence and, while most teenagers his age might be getting ready for a big summer holiday after their final exams, Maca is preparing to fight under the lights of the most iconic venue in boxing, Madison Square Garden.

"It hasn't kicked in yet. Maybe when I'm making my way ringside it'll feel more real," Maca tells BBC Sport.

"I've had 80 fights as an amateur. A lot of kids my age are just touching 30, 40. I've boxed in every competition there is."

"Since I was a little boy I wanted to be a professional boxer. Your heart's not in it [at amateur level], I just always wanted to turn pro so when I turned 18 I knew I would."

Maca is signed with Eddie Hearn's Matchroom and fought on the undercard of Richardson Hitchens' world title defence against George Kambosos Jr.

The Englishman, born to a Albanian father and a British-Yemeni mother, became hooked on the sport when his mum brought him to a boxing gym aged five.

"I was doing loads of sports at the time. But when I started sparring at about nine I just fell in love with it," he says.

"The first time I got punched I thought 'I have to get him back'. I used to get angry when I'd get hit. You have to learn to take one and land two in a minute."

Maca caught the eye of Matchroom because of his remarkable amateur record. He has seven titles in the junior ranks, including five national titles.

He also won a silver medal at the IBA World Junior Championships representing Albania in 2023.

While he was earmarked to be



• Adam Maca reflects before his pro debut

a potential Olympian, he has long had his sights on linking up with Hearn - even cornering him at an event with fellow future Matchroom fighter and

heavyweight Leo Atang. "We didn't get ringside [tickets] back then," Maca jokes. "We spoke to Eddie and said we wanted to sign with him one day.

He said, 'come to me when you're a bit older, boys'. And now here we are."

Like Maca, Atang will make his professional bow as an 18-year-old. He fights on Jack Catterall's undercard in Manchester in July.

Maca faced Rafael Castillo last Saturday. The New Yorker is exactly twice Maca's age but should be a soft introduction to the paid ranks, with a 2-6 record and only eight bouts under his belt since 2017.

Maca believes he is a "come forward fighter". He regularly travels a three-hour round trip from Chatham to Brighton to train under Dan Wolegeda, the coach who guided Moses Itauma at the start of his career.

Despite not yet stepping in the ring as a pro, Maca has already been tipped for stardom. By himself, his promoter, his team and his family.

"My mum and sisters gas me up all the time. It's confidence as well. When you're in with top kids and you're knocking them out, that's where it all comes from," Maca says.

It may be a lot of pressure for young shoulders, but after outlining what he wants to achieve by the time he's 25, Maca is taking the expectations in his stride.

"There's nothing that scares me," he says. —BBC