

Main event is official while three fighters miss weight for BRAVE CF 53

Nurzhan Akishev will take on Tae Kyun Kim in the main event of the evening



Tae Kyun Kim



Lucas Martins



Nurzhan Akishev



Brad Katona

Olzhas Eskaraev, Ernis Abdilakim Uulu, and Maksat Zholdosh miss weight

AFP | London

The stage is set for BRAVE Combat Federation's return to Almaty, Kazakhstan tomorrow night, August 21st after the gallant warriors competing on the main card of BRAVE CF 53 got their clearance to strut their wares in front of a worldwide audience during the official weigh-ins yesterday morning.

All eyes are on the headlining bout. Ranked as the No. 5 featherweight in Central Asia, Nurzhan "Bizon" Akishev is scheduled to lock horns with unbeaten South Korean standout Tae Kyun "Ares" Kim in a main event.

Akishev stepped on the scales at 66.2 kilograms, while Kim was slightly lighter than the hometown favorite as he weighed 65.85 kilograms.

The 28-year-old Kazakh grappling maestro holds a stellar professional record of 11-3 with eight victories by submission and two via knockout, and prior to his promotional debut this past January, he was riding high on a four-fight winning streak.

Akishev eyes redemption after losing to Roman Bogatov via unanimous decision at BRAVE CF 46. However, the man standing in his re-entry to the winner's circle is Kim, who has been on a roll with three consecutive victories under the organization's banner.

A possible shot at the vacant BRAVE CF Featherweight World Championship could be on the horizon if either one of them will be able to secure the decisive win. A blue-chip recruit is likewise slated to make his maiden appearance at BRAVE CF 53 as Vasiliy Takhtay (73 KG) faces fellow newcomer Roger Sampaio (72.9 KG) in a catchweight contest.

Meanwhile, Asu "Zulfikar" Almabaev

(57 KG) will have his big break on the global stage as he dukes it out against Ukraine's Aleksander Doskalchu (57.05 KG) in a three-round flyweight encounter.

On the other hand, Azat "Kazakh" Maksim (57.1 KG) seeks to carry over his regional success to BRAVE CF by taking on fellow flyweight Flavio "Flavinho" de Queiroz (56.75 KG).

Olzhas Eskaraev, Ernis Abdilakim Uulu, and Maksat Zholdosh missed weight, and will be penalized accordingly. The bouts against Lucas "Mineiro", Aktore Batyrbek, and Sanjarbek Erkinov, respectively, will go on as scheduled otherwise.

BRAVE CF 53 Main Card

Featherweight: Nurzhan Akishev (66.2 KG) vs Tae Kyun Kim (65.85 KG)

Catchweight 73kg: Vasiliy Takhtay (73 KG) vs Roger Sampaio (72.9 KG)

Flyweight: Asu Almabaev (57 KG) vs Aleksander Doskalchuk (57.05 KG)

Catchweight 74kg: Olzhas Eskaraev (75.2 KG)* vs Lucas Martins (73.8 KG)

Bantamweight: Brad Katona (61.45 KG) vs Bair Shtepin (61.6 KG)

Flyweight: Azat Maksim (57.15 KG) vs Flavio de Queiroz (56.75 KG)

Catchweight 68kg: Ilyar Askhanov (67.9 KG) vs Akhmed Magomedov (67.8 KG)

*Missed weight

Octagon Prelims

Catchweight 59kg: Damir Tolenov (58.75 KG) vs Nurbek Bolotbekov (58.65 KG)

Flyweight: Aktore Batyrbek (57 KG) vs Ernis Abdilakim Uulu (58.25 KG)*

Light Heavyweight: Karim Ruzbakiev (93.4 KG) vs Kodirkhon Ganiev (92.9 KG)

Welterweight: Bauyrzhan Kuanysbayev (77.3 KG) vs Fakhridin Mardiev (77.1 KG)

Catchweight 59kg: Alisher Gabdullin (58.95 KG) vs Bekzat Saparov (59 KG)

Heavyweight: Islambek Baktybekuulu (115.2 KG) vs Zhasur Mirzamukhamedov (118.1 KG)

Super Lightweight: Maksat Zholdosh (77 KG)* vs Sanjarbek Erkinov (74.9 KG)

*Missed weight

Naruto shows up, Kim-Akishev Main Event's staredown quickly escalates

TDT | Manama

Ahead of fight night tomorrow, the BRAVE CF 53 Ceremonial Weigh-ins took place this Friday (20) in Almaty, Kazakhstan, and had a wide range of emotions, from a laid-back and charismatic Naruto cosplay to a near-brawl between the two main eventers.

Stars of the main event of the evening, Tae Kyun Kim and Nurzhan Akishev almost started their fight one day before the scheduled date -- and outside of the cage. The two went forehead-to-forehead in a very intense moment and had to be separated by BRAVE CF color commentator Phil Campbell.

On the other hand, the co-main eventers Vasiliy Takhtay and Roger Sampaio's face-off went on in a much friendlier tone. Takhtay brought costumes from the Japanese anime Naruto, which he later revealed to be his son's favorite show, and they both stood face-to-face while dressing like the characters.

Kazakhstan's Olzhas Eskaraev missed the weight by 1.2kg but his bout against Lu-



Tae Kyun Kim and Nurzhan Akishev during the staredown

cas "Mineiro" Martins will remain on the card, with Eskaraev being fined for missing the 74kg-catchweight mark. Other two fighters didn't make weight and met similar fates, with no bouts cancelled for the groundbreaking show.

BRAVE CF 53 will be hosted in association with leading Kazakhstani promotion Octagon

League, and features athletes from eight nations, highlighting the international aspect of the fastest-growing MMA organization in the world.

The show will be available live and free through bravecfv.com or locally through our broadcast partners. For more on that, visit BRAVE CF's Instagram page @bravemmaf.

Nuno waits on Kane as Ndombele is cast aside

AFP | London

Tottenham manager Nuno Espirito Santo refused to say whether Harry Kane will play for the first time this season at Wolves on Sunday as the stand-off over the England captain's future continues.

Kane is keen to leave his boyhood club for a move to Premier League champions Manchester City before the end of the transfer window.

City are reportedly willing to break the Premier League transfer record for the second time this month after splashing £100 million (\$137 million) on Jack Grealish.

Kane missed Spurs' 1-0 win over City to open their Premier



Dele Alli and Nuno Espirito Santo during pre-season work

League season last weekend and a shock 1-0 defeat to Pacos de Ferreira in the Europa Conference League on Thursday.

However, the 28-year-old has trained all week with his teammates.

"It is a day-by-day situation," said Nuno at his pre-match press conference ahead of his return to old club Wolves.

"He trained today, trained good. He'll train tomorrow and we'll make a decision."

"I'm so sorry to keep saying the same thing, but this is how we work."

Another player who is yet to feature this season is Tangy Ndombele with Tottenham's own record signing seemingly not part of Nuno's plans.

The French midfielder, who joined from Lyon for two years ago for over £50 million, did not even play a single minute of action in pre-season.

"He was not part of the squad in the Conference League because he was not part of the list," added Nuno.

"I will be honest with you, Tangy is not going to be involved on Sunday."

Chelsea's Havertz to auction boots for Germany flood relief



Kai Havertz

Reuters | London

Chelsea's Kai Havertz is to auction off the specially-designed boots he will wear in Sunday's Premier League match against Arsenal in a bid to raise funds for those affected by flooding in his native Germany.

Some 189 people lost their lives in severe floods that pummelled western Germany in mid-July, with houses and their occupants swept away in the Ahr valley, in the state of Rhineland Palatinate, the worst-affected area.

The 22-year-old Havertz has designed a bespoke pair of Nike Phantom boots that he will wear when Chelsea face Arsenal at their London rivals' Emirates Stadium.

He will then auction the boots and one of his signed match shirts, with all proceeds going to Red Cross Germany.

"I was so shocked when I first saw the images, it's difficult to comprehend what the people must be going through right now, but I knew I had to do something," said Havertz yesterday.

"I'm in a hugely privileged situation and I hope by starting this campaign supporting the Red Cross Germany I can inspire others to give what they can to help."

It is a day-by-day situation. He trained today, trained good. He'll train tomorrow and we'll make a decision. I'm so sorry to keep saying the same thing, but this is how we work

NUNO ESPIRITO SANTO