NOTL boxer Mckenzie Wright loses tough bout at world championships

Kevin MacLean
The Lake Report


NOTL boxer Mckenzie Wright listens to her coaches in between rounds during her fight Tuesday at the world championships in Liverpool. WORLD BOXING PHOTO

After a decisive win in her first bout at the World Boxing Championships in Liverpool, NOTL fighter Mckenzie Wright lost a unanimous decision Tuesday to a boxer from China in the round of 16.

Wright, fighting from the red corner, was behind from the start, losing each round 10-9 on all five judges' cards.

Her second-round opponent in the 51-kilogram class, Xinyu Qi, was relentless and managed to land several key punches in the three-round match.

Wright, 35, is the reigning Canadian champion in her weight class and has been training in hopes of qualifying to represent Canada in the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games.

This was Wright's first time fighting at the world championships, which is just one of the steps along the road toward her Olympic goal.

Last Saturday, Wright made short work of Yara Alamri, of Saudi Arabia, winning a unanimous decision.

Wright has fought for Canada at numerous tournaments over the past three years.

A former kickboxer, the St. Davids resident returned to the ring in 2023 after a five-year break and has made her mark on the Canadian boxing scene, dominating her weight class.

She narrowly missed qualifying for the 2024 Paris Olympics and feels she has what it takes to represent her country in Los Angeles in 2028.

She won a bronze medal in June at the World Boxing Challenge in the Czech Republic and trains almost daily in her Olympic quest.

"With the way things ended last (Olympics) cycle, with it being that close so many times, I can't leave it like that. I have to right those wrongs," Wright told The Lake Report prior to the world championships.

"I think it would be unfair to myself to leave it like that."

She views her previous attempts to qualify for the Olympics as building years, allowing her to improve, get stronger and mature.

"The way I look at it, too, is OK, I'm older, but that means I have more experience. So, with the five-year break that was five years less damage to my body," Wright said.

"I always say, 'Yeah, I'm 35 but I'm only 30 in boxing years' " thanks to her years away from the sport.

After initially training with coach Jesse Sallows of City Boxing Club in Niagara Falls, she is now under the tutelage of Faisal Ahmadi — "Coach Sal" — from Niagara Falls, N.Y.

Wright also travels to Montreal a couple of times each month to train under Canada's national team coaches.

Looking ahead, there's the 2026 Commonwealth Games in Scotland on the horizon and then Olympic qualification starts in 2027 with the Pan American Games in Peru.

kevin@niagaranow.com

Golfers celebrate some great scores

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Sally Miller, left, and Ellen Smith whoop it up after Smith sank a long putt for a par on the third hole Tuesday in the nine-hole women's league at the NOTL Golf Club. Smith had her best round ever at the club. DEBORAH WILLIAMS

After kicking things off with a cheerful social gathering filled with fresh fruit and sweet treats, members of the Niagara-on-the-Lake nine-hole women's league wrapped up trophy play in style Tuesday — with a lively round of Bingo, Bango, Bongo.

Susan Horne was the top shooter with a total score of 38, followed by Judy Cardiff with 36 and Bonnie Lamourie with 33.

But the big winner was Ellen Smith, who sunk a 20-foot putt for par on #3, en route to carding a 47, her best score ever on the course.

The 18-hole women's league also wrapped up its trophy competition Tuesday and Maria Townley scooped the Hunter Trophy by shooting her best round of the season.

Her net score of 65 earned Townley the Hunter Trophy and she also had the best gross score with an 87.

Her round included a chip in for birdie on the tough par-5 fifth hole.

Other top shooters were: Carroll Baker (90), Lisa Allen and Yolanda Henry (91) and Susan Gagne (93).

Other low net scores were: 69 – Cheryl Yamamoto and Gagne (69), Sharron Marlow (71) and Margot Richardson and May Chang (72).

Carolyn Porter was closest to the pin on #4 and sank her putt for a birdie. Other birdies on the day went to Henry (#5) and Baker (#7).

Next week is the league's the final scramble for points toward the Vera Derbyshire Trophy, the award for golfer of the year.

Penny Green had the top gross score in the Monday business women's league, with 42.

Other winners: Theresa Dyck (longest drive on #1), Gagne (closest to the 150 on #2), Tonie Mori (closest to the pin on #4), Mary Beccario (for sinking the longest putt on #7) and Baker (closest to the pin in two on #9).

Rain forced cancellation of the Thursday men's league last week for the second week in a row, but the Tuesday Woofs league went off without a hitch.

Al Kavanagh's 1-over 37 was the best gross score while Randy Busbridge was low net winner with 31.

Dan Regan won the hidden hole with a birdie on #8 and Bill Daly was closest to the pin on #4 and finished it off with a birdie.

kevin@niagaranow.com


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Email megan@niagaranow.com