

Chinese dominate eSports at Asian Indoor Games

27 September 2017



Members of the Chinese eSports team compete in the eSports tournament at the Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games in Turkmenistan's capital Ashgabat on September 25, 2017

China proved it had most of the best young eSports players by dominating the four events held at the 5th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games.

Although video games were downgraded to an exhibition sport in the Turkmenistan capital after being a fully fledged medal sport for the previous decade, medals were presented to the winners of each of the four competitions - King of Fighters, Starcraft II, Hearthstone and Dota2.

None of the medals counted on the official table, but in a telling sign of how important the Olympic Council of Asia regards the booming sport, that is being backed by Chinese ecommerce giant Alisports, the OCA president himself, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah, personally presented the medals himself.

Regarded as one of the most powerful and influential men in world sport because of his senior roles within the Olympics and international football,

the Kuwaiti believes sports officials need to give more recognition to non-traditional sports, even when the naysayers query whether it's a proper sport.

"I know there are positives and negatives, but now with our partner Alibaba, we can develop esports," he told a news conference during the Games.

"Now we have a partner in this type of business, I hope we can deliver a better situation for esports in the future.

"We cannot ignore the youth.

"They are a part of our society and we have to work with them to create a good road map for their hobbies and future."

Ten National Olympic Committees featuring 56 competitors competed in the three day event with China triumphing in all but one of them.

Players had to go through regional qualifying events to secure spots with hundreds of spectators turning up to watch the final live on big screens at Ashgabat's main indoor stadium and thousands more downstreaming the live action from around the world.

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