

Beat: Sports

## MOHANNAD ALI FATIMA AKIF EMERGE AS THE 2020AFRICAN FREESTYLE FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS

FROM MOROCCO EMERGED AS THE MEN

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**USPA NEWS** - Ali, 20, is the 2019 Egyptian Freestyle Football Champion, while Akif, 19, is the reigning Women's Arabian Freestyle Football Champion. The month-long virtual freestyle football championship tagged Freestyle UNLOCKED Africa 2020 came to a power-packed finish on Sunday, August 2, 2020 with the finals of the 3rd African Freestyle Football Championship. After several dramatic freestyle football battles, Mohannad Hosam Ali from Egypt and Fatimaezzahra "Fatima" Akif from Morocco emerged as the Men and Women Champions of Africa for 2020. Ali, 20, is the 2019 Egyptian Freestyle Football Champion, while Akif, 19, is the reigning Women's Arabian Freestyle Football Champion. Feet "N" Tricks International, the largest promoter of freestyle football in Africa, hosted the games, which began on Wednesday, July 1, 2020 and received 152 entries from 21 countries participating in the first-of-its-kind online games. Valentine Ozigbo, the Chairman of Feet "N" Tricks International, while speaking at the finals of the championship expressed his pride at the rapid growth of freestyle football on the continent since the inception of the tournament in 2017.

Valentine Ozigbo, the Chairman of Feet "N" Tricks International, while speaking at the finals of the championship expressed his pride at the rapid growth of freestyle football on the continent since the inception of the tournament in 2017. "When we started this project a few years ago, it was all about passion for an art-form that deserved to be given a front seat in the world of sports," the respected business leader said. "Today, we have just held the third successful continental championships, that is in addition to four Nigerian tournaments. "This year's statistics " 152 contestants, 21 countries, and increase in women participation - is a testament to the fact that freestyle football is not just the fastest-growing type of football, but it has taken firm roots in Africa. MTN, the headline sponsor of the championship, celebrated the winners and promised to keep supporting initiatives geared towards youth development across Africa.

"The quality of participation we have seen in this year's edition of the African Freestyle Football Championship is another testament to the quality of talent that abounds in Africa, and it is truly inspiring," said Rahul De, Chief Marketing Officer, MTN Nigeria. "We are glad to be part of this initiative and will not relent in our support for developmental programmes for the youth in Africa. Congratulations to all the participants and especially Mohannad and Fatima for emerging champions in the male and female categories," Mr De added. Eight professional freestylers from 6 countries - Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Sudan, Morocco, and Nigeria " competed at the keenly contested men and women's finals of the virtual games which were aired live on HipTV and streamed live on PlusTV's Youtube and Instagram channels as well as Feet "N" Tricks' YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram channels. While speaking to freestyle football fans after the event, Mr Ozigbo expressed his satisfaction with the quality of play at the finals and reiterated his desire to ensure that the World Freestyle Football Championship is hosted in Nigeria or any other country in Africa in the near future.

"Thanks to all our sponsors. MTN, who is our headline sponsor this year, my foundation, Valentine Chineto Ozigbo Foundation, and Eko Disco. Also thanks to our broadcast partners, PlusTV Africa and HipTV. Thanks to all our other media partners who supported this competition" Mr Ozigbo said. The African Freestyle Football Championships, Mohannad Hosam Ali (Egypt) and Fatima Akif (Morocco) take home the grand prize of \$1,000 each. Second-placed winners, Yousef Ayman Riesco (Egypt) and Lubna Omar (Sudan) each go home with \$750, while Ayoub Haouas (Tunisia) and Evelyn Okafor (Nigeria) who both placed 3rd win \$500 each. The 4th placed winners, Samir Saidi (Algeria) and Yasmine Rais (Morocco), take home \$250 each. Riesco, 30, is a former Super Ball World Champion and 6-time Egyptian National Champion. Ayoub, 30, is the reigning champion of the Online Arabs Freestyle Championship. Okafor, 21, is the 2019 Women's African Freestyle Football Champion. A panel of international judges - Lukasz Chwieduk from Poland, U.S.A's Caitlyn Schrepfer, Yo Katsuyama of Japan and South African duo Kamal "Kamilio" Ranchod and Chris Njokwana " determined the winner through the process of elimination in live battles. The final was hosted by Nigerian street dance king, Poco Lee. A variety of musical, dance, and entertainers also featured on the show. Freestyle UNLOCKED Africa 2020 was held in partnership with the World Freestyle Football Association, WFFA with telecommunication giant, MTN is the headline sponsor. Source: Feet 'N' Tricks International.

ABOUT FEET N TRICKS INTERNATIONAL-----

Feet “n’ Tricks International Limited (www.FeetAndTricks.com) is the official host for freestyle football competitions in Africa. The company is strongly committed to growing awareness and participation in the art form that is freestyle football. The company has hosted successful annual championships since 2017. Freestyle Unlocked Africa 2020 is the 4th edition of the championships. The events are held in partnership with the World Freestyle Football Association, the world body governing the sport. SOURCE Feet 'N' Tricks International

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