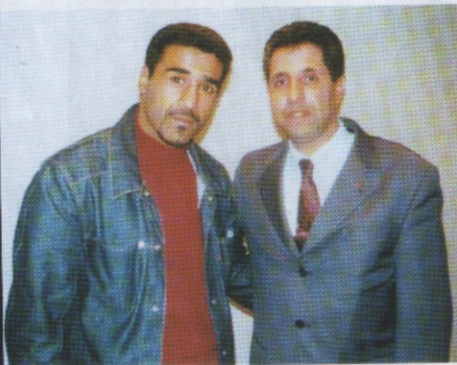


EVERYONE'S FOR MADNI TARIK

The Moroccan champion edges an excellent Fabio Perreca in his home ring to the delight of his fans. In the preliminaries, the Moroccan team beats Italy 3-1. Last January 12, in his hometown of Casablanca, Madni Tarik, the 22-year-old Moroccan who won the WAKO world championship in the 60 kg class in Caorle, defeated Fabio Perreca (by only one point on my personal card) to win the world 62.3 kg title. Tarik now wears the crown that belonged to Andrea Quarisa who died tragically last year, but not without some complaint from the Perreca brothers (Fabio and Giorgio) who felt they were somewhat robbed. But let's start at the beginning. In Italy there is an association for Moroccans living in Savona and Imperia which wanted to promote



President Abdelkrim El Hilali with former full contact world champ Kalid Rahilou, now boxing champ.

The super featherweight world title bout, Fabio Perreca and Madni Tarik in the ring during the national anthems. The two opponents face to face for 12 rounds. The Moroccan prevailed by a narrow margin.



this event in Casablanca. Among the components of this association is the vice-president, Mohammed Mhasser, who is a kickboxing fanatic to the point where he would sell his brother's car to get enough money to start a promotion. The bureaucratic red tape in Morocco is a formidable obstacle for such an undertaking and without the help of El Hilali Dris, the founder of the Moroccan Boxing Federation, I'm sure the event would never have happened. Anyway, Mohammed realized his dream and found himself serving both as promoter and referee of a professional world championship match between Madni Tarik and Rome's Fabio Perreca.

The under card was a team competition between Italy and Morocco. The Italian team consisted of Biagio Tralli, 63 kg, Gianni Laterza, 81 kg, and Alessio Rondelli, 86 kg full contact. The only low-kick fighter was Stefano Paone, 75 kg. The 5 round team matches started with Laterza (pupil of Donato Milano who was also coach of the team) who did well in the first two rounds, but in the third a glancing blow opened a cut on his eyebrow and the doctor stopped the fight. Next up was Biagio Tralli against El Khaz Bouchaib, a dynamic fighter with excellent technique. Tralli was very good at letting his opponent take the initiative, avoid the attack and then counter attack, but in the third and fourth rounds the Moroccan accelerated the pace and forced Biagio to take a count. The Italian lost the match on points and Morocco was now ahead 2-0. It was now Alessio Rondelli's turn (at the European championships he was 3rd in the 81 kg class) against Erramadi Mohammed. Rondelli, a last minute replacement for another fighter,

needed little more than a minute to land a powerful right hook which knocked the Moroccan down for the full count. Italy needed a victory by Stefano Paone in the 75 kg low-kick to earn a tie, but Behamou Abdessalam landed a punch that rocked the Italian and forced him to give up. The team competition, therefore, finished 3-1 in favor of Morocco but Italy had been impressive on the technical level. In the featured match, Fabio Perreca, 31 years old and a former WKA world champion met Madni Tarik. Perreca, a solid boxer with good kicking ability, always stays calm in the ring and knows what to do, especially when he keeps his distance. Tarik is a spectacular fighter with his spinning and jump kicks. In my opinion, he was superior to Fabio with his kicks while Perreca had an advantage in punching. Perreca started slowly and the Moroccan used his legs to take the lead in the early rounds. Then Perreca came alive, blocking kicks and countering with punches. He dropped off in the 5th thru 8th rounds and I thought he had run out of gas, but he came back strong at the end. Both fighters performed very well but the decision went to the Moroccan. Perreca was very disappointed and I think he deserves a rematch in Italy.