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**Fernandez's Gold rockets Spain atop of the medal standings as ISSF World Cup Nicosia comes to an end**

*373 athletes from 61 countries competed in the first ISSF Shotgun World Cup Stage of the year in Nicosia, Cyprus, which was closed by today's Trap Men Final won by Spain's Alberto Fernandez*

The Spanish team finished atop of the medal standings of the first ISSF Shotgun World Cup Stage of the year, with 1 Gold, 1 Silver and 2 Bronze medals. The United States of America closed the competition in second with 1 Gold, 1 Silver and 1 Bronze, while teams Italy, Lebanon and Ukraine, ended up in third with an equal tally of 1 Gold medal each.

The competition took place at the Cyprus Olympic Shooting Range of Nicosia, starting from the 17th of March, and was officially closed today after the last match, the Trap Men Final. 373 athletes coming from 61 countries competed in the five Olympic Shotgun events here in these days, giving their best in the last chance to secure Minimum Qualification Scores before Rio 2016.

The victory of the 2010 World and European Champion Alberto Fernandez of Spain at today's Trap Men final rocketed the Spanish team atop of the table.

Madrid's champion beat his teammate Antonio Bailon of Granada in an all-Spanish gold medal match. 15 targets were not enough to separate them, as they tied with 11 hits, and had to continue shooting for the brightest medal in a tiebreaker. After they both hit the first shoot-off clay, Bailon missed his second target, letting Fernandez to climb atop of the podium.

The 32-year old shooter, ranked 7th in the world, had already won four world cup medals in his career, including two golds.. Bailon (31), currently ranked 66th, had only won one world cup stage, two years ago, in Gabala.

Today's tuned into a great test ahead of the Olympics: Spain has only one Rio 2016 Quota place in the Trap Men event, claimed by the same Fernandez last year. The Quota is assigned to the country, and it's then the coach who decides who is going to compete at the Games.

"The decision is taken: Alberto will go to Rio," confirmed the Spain's head coach Jose Luis Perez, following today's medal ceremony.

"It hasn't been an easy match. The weather did not help us, with a lot of wind blowing during the final. It has been tough, and I feel really proud and a bit lucky that I made it," said Fernandez, commenting his day. "I will be going to the next ISSF World Cup in Rio de Janeiro, which is an Olympic test event. It will be a very important match for me, as I want to get ready for the Games."

Following the two Spanish athletes, it was the reigning Olympic Champion Giovanni Cernogoraz (CRO) who secured the Bronze medal, beating Turkey's Yavuz Ilnam by 13 to 12 hits.

The ISSF World Cup Series will now move on to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. There, a combined Rifle, Pistol and Shotgun World Cup stage will be held from the 13th through the 25th of April, serving as an Olympic test event ahead of Rio 2016.

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**Notes for the editors:**

The International Shooting Sport Federation is the governing body of the Olympic Shooting events, and it has over 160 affiliated National Federations worldwide. Shooting is an Olympic sport since the very first edition of the modern Olympic Games, Athens 1896. Find out more about the International Shooting Sport Federation at [www.issf-sports.org](http://www.issf-sports.org).

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