



**MASTER
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2009 World Masters Tournaments

It's been quite a while since the last newsletter, and, as I'm sure you are all aware there have been some major off-the-mat activities affecting the ever-growing calendar of masters' judo events in this time. Undoubtedly the most significant of these is the IJF's decision to bring a world championship masters competition under its umbrella following 10 hugely successful years of WMJA tournaments.

From the relatively humble beginnings of the first couple of WMJA World Masters tournaments which attracted around 300 competitors, the WMJA has seen its' championships grow into truly global events with nearly every major judo nation involved. It is the WMJA's success in attracting such huge numbers (1200+ in Brussels, 2008) and quality of competitors that must surely have spurred the IJF to fully commit to a world masters championships.

The IJF are going ahead with their first World Masters Championships in Sindelfingen, Germany in May albeit independently of the WMJA which, in my opinion, is a shame. For the IJF to tap in to the 10 years of expertise generated by the WMJA in organising a masters' world championship would surely have been of great benefit to all.

However, for those who saw this move as the possible demise of the WMJA, fear not! Masters competitors will now have two opportunities a year to take part in mass participation global events with the announcement that the WMJA will be holding their World Master Athlete Judo Championships in Atlanta, Georgia, USA, August 19th - August 23rd, 2009 at the Georgia International Convention Center.

2000 Convention Center Concourse

College Park

Atlanta Georgia, USA

(5 minutes from the airport)

www.gicc.com/

For those who have participated in WMJA events in the past, you will know what a unique judo event this is. Liz Roach and her team provide an inofficiously, down-to-earth, family feel to the championships, something which should continue to exist on the judo calendar. With this in mind I think the two events will complement each other very well.

Brussels 2008

The 2008 WMJA World Championships in Brussels certainly lived up to or even exceeded expectations. A record-breaking entry of around 1200 ensured some top-quality judo and continued the year-on-year trend of improved levels of participation and standards.

The usual masters strongholds of France, Russia and Germany were well represented but it was very encouraging to see a quality contingent from Mongolia as well as good sized squads from "the other side of the world" namely Australia and New Zealand. From its humble beginnings in Canada in 1999 the World Masters Judo Championships has certainly become a major global judo event in every aspect.

It was noticeable in 2008 that quite a number of previous world masters champions failed to make the rostrum this time, in some case going out in the first couple of rounds. I think this just goes to demonstrate how the quality of our championship is continually rising. Therefore, our congratulations and admiration must go out to the likes of Farhad Rajabli, Terry Watt, Astrid Krombach, Joyce Malley who added further titles to the those they had won in previous years

For the full set of results go to www.masterathlete.com/2008Results_new.htm

To view some highlights of the championships then try this YouTube link from Brazil's Fred Guerra

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CBiLYCYE9js>

European Masters Championships 2008

These were held in Prague, Czech Republic in November and attracted its usual large entry. For full results go to the results page of the EJU website www.ejudo.com/result.php

From Mr Kano to masters participants!

Thanks to Liz Roach for forwarding the following quote from judo's founder. Liz says, "These are the words of Jigoro Kano - I believe that long before the first masters' competitions took place that he already had them in mind. 'Judo is beneficial to both young and old, and age is no disqualification for becoming skillful. It is erroneous to think that judo is only for the mature young man. There can be found in judo a curriculum suitable to both very young bodies that are yet developed and for the elderly who wish to retain their flexibility. With proper practice the old will become healthier and the weak become stronger.'" "

Bruno Carmeni – honoured guest at the Beijing Paralympics

Italy's Bruno Carmeni, 8th dan, led a distinguished career as an international judoka during the 1960's; seven Italian national titles, European silver medallist in 1963 and a competitor in the first Olympic Judo Tournament in Tokyo in 1964. Following his retirement from shiai, Bruno directed his expertise towards the technical side of judo, initially as national team coach and later as an EJU referee and also as part of the Italian National Grade and Qualification Commission. More recently, Bruno has been active on the World Masters Judo scene winning a number of World Championship medals.

If this was not enough, Bruno has written nearly 20 judo books and countless technical papers many of which are in his specialist field of visually impaired and paralympic judo. Bruno has made a significant impact in this area of judo particularly in the last 20 years where he has been very active internationally. He has been an international technical delegate at each of the last five Paralympics Game

In recognition of his outstanding work during his 20 year term as International President for Judo within the International Blind Sports Association and for his promotion of judo around the world, the President of the International Paralympics Committee, Sir Philip Craven, invited Bruno to be his honoured guest at the 2008 Paralympics in Beijing.

Congratulations Bruno on this great honour, one which is very well deserved following your outstanding contribution to our sport for so many years.

Forthcoming events

Looking for an event or two to sharpen up for Atlanta?

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| 21 st March | 6th Open International Saxony Masters, Germany |
| 21 st March | Ocean State International, USA |
| 28 th March | 11 th Hungarian Open Masters Judo Championship, Budapest |
| 24 th – 25 th April | 6th European Masters of Tours, France |
| 26 th April | Brussels Belgium Judo Masters |

All of these events have downloadable entry forms available from the WMJA website so be sure to check there first.

Your comments are welcome!

Please don't forget to send in your event information, articles and comments on masters' judo to info@masterathlete.com or to me directly at pg_sawyer@hotmail.com. As always, I look forward to your correspondence.

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