



IJF VETERANS COMMISSION REPORT

**“Not every judoka will be champion.
But every judoka will be a veteran.”**



The 10th edition of veteran world championships organized last year in Cancun Mexico is a milestone for veteran activity.

If the commission setup 17 year ago during EJU management of Mr. Marius Vizer and continued with the IJF veteran world championships, show that the veteran judoka community will develop further these events.

To remind the last two years of Veteran Judo activity, we must to review the World Championships from OLBIA Italy, which had 1.200 participants and was a mixed with Kata world championships and a family program where competitors was joined by own families. This event was almost on an IJF standard which was improved in Cancun Mexico, where more than 860 competitors line up during a triple event of IJF under “JUDO Festival” name.

During these two years more than 120 national events was organized and almost all continents have own veterans' championships. These events was followed online and on social media by 500.000 visitors/year.

Behind the statistics is a fact: the veteran judoka events became a standard event in all calendars and these competitors are ready to spend annual more than 3.000 USD from own or family budget just to enjoy the feeling of the fight and the spirit of the judo.

As we hit the first milestone which is about to build a regular worldwide competition system, now is the time to go in deep and to use the benefits which is given by the veteran community and use it for the regular judo activity.

There are more than 150.000 judoka which practice the judo from 30 to 80 years. They now split in Kata, Ne-Waza and Shiai events. From these competitors 15.000 participate to small local events and 5.000 participate to continental and world championships.

But the main value is in their know-how, years of competition experience, many of them are still active in clubs as coach or assistants, may are managers and can mix the value of judo with financial background.

In the meantime all veteran judoka are good social models, by their health, spirit and they can advise new generation to continue this path of education

Of course, we must to show the problems of this activity which is not real supported by many federations for some personal ego, or just considering additional work. But these federation don't count the fact that the veterans will go further with or without the federation support, because the veteran activity is free for every judoka and is included in the project “judo for all”.



Loosing these peoples, we lose the investment that every federation, club made in every judoka during the young age, and maybe if just 5% will come back in the sport hall to help the community, the active judo family will grow with hundred thousand of new supporters.

If we look to the organizer countries, we have good examples how they transform an event in a profit. Because a veteran event mean 2.500.000 USD budget spent by competitors for travel, hotels, family members and in the end with a good event management it means a profit for organizers.

The perspective for veteran sport is growing. The real consumer for the sport al the mature peoples which finished the pro-competition period and they setup a family, income. They are the real consumer for sport equipment for own children, they support the cost of the club, travels, and contribute direct to development as indirect using the web, the traffic and the TV transmission and advertising.

These former pro-judokas will become buyers of the marketing. They are in the meantime the best advertiser for judo. If we lose them, their children will choose our competitors sports and we lose the message that we build in their personality.

IJF did start to develop new reintegration programs for veterans, will develop the quality of the events and will transform in a real judo show connected to the family's value in the future. These events have the biggest participation numbers as statistics, with 1.200-1.500 participants to a world championship.

I ask in the end all federations to review their internal policy and give just some logistic support for the veterans, stay together and find common goals and skills to develop further this wonderful sport.

Chairman of the Commission: BONDOR Andrei, WEISSER Denis.

Members of the Commission: FERLAND Donald, COMMANAY Laurent, FLORI Miklos, MURPHY Kevin, DANGA LOUM Omar, NAKAMURA Isamu, MOORSHEAD Susie.