

JJIF TECHNICAL CONGRESS

January 29, 2005

Hotel SOFIA PRINCESS, Sofia – Bulgaria

Bulgaria is living a moment of intense participation in Ju-Jitsu international activity. After November's election of General Secretary Rossitsa Stateva, Bulgaria also appears on the JJIF calendar for 2005's Summer Camp (July 31- August 6).

Only recently (January 29) the JJIF Technical Congress took place in Sofia, hosting 13 countries.

The event was important to focus on critical issues and come up with constructive proposals. The most recent matter of debate concerned the recent World Championship in Madrid mined by too many problematic incidents, but many other topics were already on the agenda. The Sport and Referee Directors began by highlighting the results of their committee's discussions, and the main issues and conclusions were recorded.

The main issues addressed were:

1. Referee passports – It was decided that every referee should have a passport to reveal his/her status – continental or world referee and his participation in Union or JJIF tournaments. The passport would therefore become an instrument to evaluate whether the referee has been sufficiently active on the mat, or not.

2. Referee Refreshment courses – It was also unanimously approved that a 1-day refreshment courses should be held before each European, World Championship, or the World Games and that the attendance of such courses on behalf of the personnel intending to referee in the forthcoming competition should be obligatory.

3. Selection of referees - The Referee committee explained that in the current each country selects and sends the referees to the competitions, whereas in future there should be a data base from which all nominations of tournament referees should be selected. JJIF will then make a recommendation to the countries to indicate which referees should participate in a tournament.

4. Greater cooperation between the Referee and the Technical Committees.

All those present agreed that this is necessary. A proposal was made that the JJIF Referee Committee, comprising 4 persons, should also include 1 assistant from the JJEU (Roel van Ravens) and 1 assistant from the JJPAU (Michael Piaser). The idea will be suggested to the Board for further consideration.

The Technical Committee also addressed topics of every-day practice:

1. Fighting system

Against a proposal of concentrating all authority in the hands of a sole mat referee (only person who would be allowed to make the signs, and assign points) the referees declared that in the speed of a fight it is difficult for one man to judge from different angles, and to see what is happening; some things may be missed from a single view point and the scores would not correctly reflect the proper outcome of the match. The side referees must remain. It was, nevertheless, decided that these ideas could be tested.

2. Duo System

It was generally agreed that the duo system is currently very stiff, with little contact. In the future realistic reactions should be evaluated most – judging real-life effectiveness. In order to judge the realism it was agreed that coaches and referees should work together. They should watch video recordings in order to find out the correct solutions and come to the proper conclusions. More tests could be made at the summer camp, focusing with greater attention on the criteria.

3. Colour of the Gi

The proposal to give athletes a free choice of Gi was ruled out, whereas it was unanimously decided to introduce a second colour (also for gloves). Unlike other martial arts the competition attire would thus contemplate white and black.

Consequently the referee handcuffs should also be changed, as so the belts, the scoreboards, etc.

4. Injury Time

After 20 seconds, if the injured competitor should not be able to stand up, the referee should systematically call for the medical staff. However, to reduce the arrest of all competition a proposal was made to reduce the current three minutes of the time-out to one minute alone.

5. It was noted that 60 % of the matches are irreversibly influenced by technical penalties. The proposal to remove passivity all together was supported unanimously. Forbidden acts should be the only ones to lead to disqualification; two “Chui” = “Hansokumake” whereas two “Shido” should no longer be upgraded to a “Chui”; Furthermore, the fight should not be continuously interrupted (as “shido” only brings more points to the opponent).

6. Medical

As the current competition rules do not specifically deal with knockouts. It was agreed that if a competitor has a concussion during a match he should be taken out of the tournament immediately.

7. New competition ideas were proposed: before the next World Championship in Rotterdam, it was suggested to test a competition with two 3-minute rounds. The formula has already been successfully tried in the Netherlands and it was accepted that it could well be tried at international level.

The Bulgarian JJ Federation presented a proposal regarding the practical application of self-defence techniques. No questions or objections were raised.

8. A decision was made that at the Summer Camp in Bulgaria all countries should bring samples of materials (tatami, gloves, protectors, etc.) so that products of various companies could be tested and the best ones recommended to the Board.

9. Straight punch to the head – the recurring issue was again debated. Is it dangerous? Should the gloves be bigger? Would it not be more realistic?

This dangerous introduction met an almost equal number of votes for and against. This is why, it was decided that those in favour could test it at the next camp.

10. Policy for the Youth (under 21)

An argument for such a policy and active work among the youth was strongly defended. Coaches should start official competitions. The German Federation shared their experience for having a special programme for youth competitors. It was pointed out that JJIF needed world-wide rules for these competitors; all-the-more, there was a ready-made framework.

It was generally accepted, with only one vote against, that this step should be initiated at once.

11. About the Dan's system

It was unanimously agreed that there should be a more thorough explanation at the next summer camp, working very careful with the newcomers. Examples should be offered so that a proper training can be guaranteed, and the main guidelines should be widely available through the JJIF web-site. The drawings presented by the Sport Director to summarize the system were unanimously approved as the ideal guidelines for all new beginners.

12. New idea about a Coach Committee

The presentation, made by Bert van Haren, from the Netherlands, was very well done. The idea being to achieve a closer inter-relation between coaches and referees, making them one team.

13. Referees

Just like every nation chooses its own referees; then likely continental referees must in the future be recommended by their national federations; then one should have at least a 2 year-training at national level; the exam should be organized on a week-end basis, at an easy-to-arrive location. This should then be followed by another 2-year practice period (at least 3 continental refereeing experiences) before getting the license for a continental referee. It was underlined that there should be a clear distinction between national, continental and world referees; as continental referees clearly cannot referee international championships.

14. Others

The following suggestions were made and opinions expressed:

- To work out a procedure for protests; all protests to be given in writing, plus 50 Euro, not subject to refund if the protest is not accepted.
- The guarantee money for the World Games – to be returned immediately afterwards, differently to what previously communicated;
- For the summer camp – to invite also young competitors and handicapped;
- If there is a difference of 14 points, the match is to finish immediately
- All new proposals that will be tested, to be introduced after the World Games; no immediate changes will be made at present and a time-frame should be devised for each proposal and its testing individually.

The JJIF President, Paul Hoglund, concluded thanking the Bulgarian JJ Federation and its dynamic President, Tomo Borissoff, as well as his competent staff for the very good organization of the congress.

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