

# Special Olympics Judo

2020



by James Mulroy

***Special Olympics***



# Introductions



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# Judo – The Sport



**Judo** is one of the most participated sports in the world and is practiced by millions of people spanning over 200 countries and territories worldwide. Created by Professor Jigoro Kana of Japan in 1882, judo has developed in to an educational, social, mental and physically enhancing global sport.

The objective of the sport is to subdue your opponent on to their backs, simple!. From a standing position this is achieved by breaking the balance of your opponent and applying a throwing technique. From a ground position, grappling skills are used to pin down your opponent for a set period of time or force a submission.

Judo is an Olympic sport, Paralympic sport and a Special Olympic sport, making it an incredibly diverse and inclusive activity, suitable for all ages, genders, abilities and disabilities.

The word JUDO when translated means “The Gentle Way”

# Special Olympic Judo History



**Judo** made its debut as a demonstration event at the Special Olympics World Summer Games in Ireland in 2003. At this inaugural event over 80 athletes from 9 countries competed for the prestigious title of Special Olympic World Champion.



Ireland 2003

Although this was the first major judo competition, SO judo had already started in Europe/Eurasia in Andorra, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Israel and Netherlands.

The development of special needs judo had already began across Europe thanks to the efforts and cooperation of Tomas Rundqvist (Sweden), Ben van der Eng (Netherlands), Roy Court (Wales) and Marita Kokkonen (Finland).

It was the vision and dedication of this group with the help of SO European Sports director Marius Damentko, that resulted in the successful inclusion of Judo in the Special Olympic Sports Programme.

# Special Olympic Judo Participation



Since 2003 judo has grown amongst Special Olympic nations throughout the world at an amazing rate and now tops over 19,000 participants, spanning 45 countries.

Here's how it progressed,

|               |              |                |
|---------------|--------------|----------------|
| • 2002        | 7 Countries  | 1285 Players   |
| • 2005 – 2007 | 30 Countries | 9,043 Players  |
| • 2008 – 2010 | 35 Countries | 10,993 Players |
| • 2011 – 2013 | 41 Countries | 12,642 Players |
| • 2014 – 2017 | 42 Countries | 18,130 Players |
| • 2019        | 45 Countries | 19,093 Players |





# Special Olympic World Games



World Games are the pinnacle for competing Special Olympic athletes around the world and Judo has been represented at 5 Special Olympic World Games so far.

- 2003 Dublin, Ireland 9 Nations 80 athletes
- 2007 Shanghai, China 19 Nations 130 athletes
- 2011 Athens, Greece 25 Nations 126 athletes
- 2015 Los Angeles, USA 22 Nations 101 athletes
- 2019 Abu Dhabi, UAE 25 Nations 132 athletes



# Special Olympic World Games



*Some pictures for you to enjoy*





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# Special Olympic Adapted Rules



*“Normal where possible – adapted where necessary”*

In SO judo, as in a lot of adapted sports, standard contest and play rules have been modified and adapted for safety and ease of understanding of the athletes.

Some of the techniques in judo, if mis-applied, could cause injury and for this reason they have been prohibited or modified. This ensures that all SO judo players can enjoy a positive and fun experience when training and in contest.

To ensure we always keep the athlete at the centre of everything we do, rules and regulations are constantly reviewed and updated when necessary. For this reason, adaptive/SO judo has one of the lowest instances of injury at major competitions.

The latest Special Olympic judo rules and changes can be found [here](#)



# Benefits for SO Athletes

*“Inclusive Fitness Benefits Everyone”*

It is well documented that people with intellectual disabilities are less active than the general population. This is not due to their disability, but the lack of access to fitness education and opportunities that fit their needs.

At Special Olympics, the mission is to provide sports opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities all year round.

The real and proven benefits of SO judo is; increased activity, mental and physical fitness, improved social interaction, self esteem, confidence and enhanced balance and co-ordination.

Regular participation in SO judo, or any of the other SO sports, reduces the risk of obesity, osteoporosis, high blood pressure, and diabetes for our athletes.

# Future Developments



*“Progress, by definition, always moves forward”*

What does the future hold for SO judo?

- The ambition now is to increase further the participation of judo in existing SO judo nations and to increase the number of nations offering judo as an alternative and/or complimentary sport.
- As we are now in a new four year cycle, plans are already under way for the 2023 World Summer Games, which will be held in Berlin, Germany.
- At the Berlin Games we are excited with the possibility of offering, for the very first time, Unified Judo in the form of Kata. *(unified is where one of the athletes is an SO athlete and the other mainstream)*



*"There is no such thing as a stupid question"*

*Thank You*

Thank you for your viewing this presentation, if you have any questions please contact  
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