

# WORLDWIDE

THE MONTHLY VOICE OF GLOBAL KICKBOXING

YOUNG ATHLETES. ONE GLOBAL COMMUNITY.

# THE NEXT GENERATION

Jesolo welcomes the world's young kickboxers.  
Shared values. A place on the world stage.

## INSIDE THE ISSUE

The next generation.  
The people behind the sport.

## PLUS

Women in sport. Continental news.  
The next chapter for kickboxing.

SEPTEMBER 2026

# A WORLD IN MOTION.

The people, events and progress shaping global kickboxing.

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ONE WAKO. ONE CHAMPION. ONE BRAND GLOBALLY.

ROY BAKER

WAKO PRESIDENT

# ONE GLOBAL COMMUNITY.

Young athletes. Shared values.  
A global community.



For the WAKO family, September was all about young athletes, international cooperation, and the long-term development of the sport. From European university competitions to the Youth World Championships in Jesolo, and from the development of the Safe Combat program to the 2029 World Games, this period was marked by numerous important milestones.

“Yet, while we celebrate our heritage, we must also turn our gaze to the horizon – towards a future illuminated by new possibilities within the Olympic Movement. The inclusion and recognition of kickboxing at this level signals not only our growing stature, but also the responsibility we bear to uphold and advance the highest standards in sport.”

[EXPLORE THE WAKO BRAND AND MANUAL](#)

ROY BAKER

President, WAKO

WAKO

THE NEXT GENERATION



# THE FUTURE STARTS HERE.

Children, Cadets and Juniors.  
One global stage.

18-27 SEPTEMBER 2026 / JESOLO, ITALY

**4,874**

ENTRIES

**3,700**

ATHLETES

**79**

NATIONS

## BEYOND THE MEDALS

# MORE THAN MEDALS.

The young athletes arrive with dreams and ambitions – and leave with medals, results, experiences and new friendships.

## RESPECT AND HONOUR

Along the way they discover the values that lie at the heart of WAKO and will guide them throughout their sporting journey. They learn every year Respect, appreciating different cultures and traditions, and Honour, remembering those who helped pave the way before them.

## EXCELLENCE AND DISCIPLINE

They discover that Excellence comes from the commitment to improve every day, while Discipline teaches them focus, responsibility and self-mastery, which are qualities that extend far beyond sport.

## MEET THE YOUNG ATHLETES



## UNITY

They experience Unity by becoming part of a global kickboxing community, where athletes, coaches, clubs and federations come together across borders and continents.

## INCLUSION

They see that Inclusion means that everyone has a place in our sport, with Para-Kickboxing and athletes from so many different backgrounds showing the strength that comes from diversity.

## WATCH THE CHAMPIONSHIP STORY

## VALUES THAT LAST

Respect. Honour.  
Excellence. Discipline.  
Unity. Inclusion.



JESOLO / ITALY

# THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE MOMENT.

Behind every athlete's journey are coaches who guide and inspire, and officials who uphold fairness and the spirit of competition. Alongside the athletes, they form the dedicated community that makes kickboxing possible and helps our sport continue to grow.

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CONTINENTS

One global community.

[THE COMMUNITY BEHIND THE CHAMPIONSHIPS](#)[WATCH THE JESOLO HIGHLIGHTS](#)

The WAKO World Youth Championships featured the Children, Cadets, and Juniors age groups across all major WAKO disciplines. The event attracted 4874 entries and 3700 athletes from at least 79 nations spanning five continents.

SEPTEMBER / ASIA

# RISING FIGHTERS.

JEDDAH / SAUDI ARABIA

Jeddah took center stage as the Makkah Region Clubs and Centers Championship brought together local kickboxers for three days of intense competition. 9 Teams, 33 Athletes across different age groups, weight divisions, and kickboxing disciplines showcased their skills, determination, and competitive spirit throughout the event.



## India: Seniors, Masters and Para & Inclusive

The competition was held in India, Indore from 08-12.09.2026

The championship brought together top athletes across the country competing in senior and master age categories. It ran alongside the 1st WAKO Para & Inclusive National Championships, held on 11-12 September 2026 in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, with participation from 12 regional organisations and 52 Para athletes competing under the official WAKO Para Kickboxing Rules.

## Riyadh / 10-12 September

8 Teams, 27 Entries, 27 Athletes. The competition marks the first title of the season on home soil, and staged across all four disciplines of the sport: Point Fighting, Kick Light, Low Kick and K1, all under the technical regulations of the WAKO.

## Abu Dhabi / 11-13 September

A domestic championship with 30 Teams, 226 Entries, 161 Athletes organized by the UAE Muay Thai and Kickboxing Federation, in Abu Dhabi/UAE



# SPORT AND EDUCATION.

TIRANA / 13-17 SEPTEMBER

One of the first major European events in September was the European Universities Combat Sports Championships in Tirana.

The kickboxing competition, held from September 13 to 17, brought together 248 student-athletes from 18 European countries across four disciplines: Point Fighting, Kick Light, Full Contact, and K1 Style. Competitors took to both the ring and tatami, combining high-level sporting competition with their university studies.

WAKO Europe played a key role in organizing the event, with WAKO Europe President Espen Lund attending as a VIP guest.

The competition also provided a link between kickboxing and the university sports community, reflecting the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) emphasis on supporting athletes in their education and promoting the dual-career model. The approach recognizes that athletes can pursue sporting excellence while preparing for professional careers beyond competition.

The EUSA flag has been passed to the next host, the Spanish Universities Organization.

WATCH THE TIRANA CHAMPIONSHIPS

248

STUDENT-ATHLETES

18 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES



UNIVERSITY KICKBOXING MEDALS

## PREPARATION AND PROGRESS

# BUILDING MOMENTUM.

Training. Competition. A shared identity.

## Hungary / Tata 4–6 September

Two weeks before the World Championships, the junior national team spent three days at the training camp in Tata. This is the first time that talented athletes from all disciplines have trained together at the Olympic training camp in the preparation for the competition in Italy.

## Germany / Gräfenhausen 11–13 September

WAKO National Ranking Tournament (also known as the Hessencup), in which athletes earn important points toward the German rankings. The matches were held both on the tatami (LK, KL) and in the ring (FC, K-1).

## Bulgaria / Stara Zagora 11–13 September

Two related kickboxing tournaments were held back-to-back in Stara Zagora, Bulgaria from September 11–13, 2026.

In K-1 Style, which featured standard ring categories.

Kids K-1 Style, specifically dedicated to younger youth divisions.

## Finland / Espoo 5–9 September

Running alongside the national championships, the venue also hosted the 2026 Finland Open Cup, which was a direct qualification and selection event. Winning a national title or placing on the podium there helped Finnish junior athletes secure their spots on the official national team travel roster to fly out to the World Championships.

MANUS TROPHY

THE NEXT GENERATION

WAKO EUROPE'S NEW BRAND

ONE GLOBAL BRAND

WAKO Europe's new design is fully aligned with the WAKO global brand.

PAN AMERICA / SEPTEMBER

# THE AMERICAS, TOGETHER.

National competition.  
Continental ambition.



GUATEMALA / 5-6 SEPTEMBER

GUATEMALA / NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

## The decisive F4 stage.

On September 5 and 6, the Domo Polideportivo hosted the decisive F4 Stage, bringing together the country's top athletes as they competed for positions in the national rankings and sought qualification for the Pan American stage.

With the stakes at their highest, every bout, point, and victory carried added significance, as athletes fought for the opportunity to represent Guatemala at the continent's major international competitions.

5-6 SEPTEMBER 2026 / DOMO POLIDEPORTIVO



23-30 SEPTEMBER / EUROPEAN WEEK OF SPORT

# TIME TO MOVE.

Launched in 2015, the European Week of Sport is an annual European Commission initiative held from September 23 to 30. At its heart is the #BeActive campaign, which aims to address physical inactivity and encourage people of all ages and fitness levels to incorporate more movement into their daily lives.

WAKO made its contribution by hosting the World Kickboxing Championships for Children, Cadets and Juniors.

[WAKO'S #BEACTIVE STORY](#)

## ROAD TO OLYMPIC KICKBOXING

# THE WORLD STAGE AWAITS.

## The World Games / Karlsruhe 2029

The International World Games Association (IWGA) has confirmed the full sports programme for the 2029 World Games in Karlsruhe, Germany, and kickboxing is once again included in the official programme.

WAKO kickboxing will be represented by the Point Fighting and K1 disciplines, just as at the 2025 World Games in Chengdu. The 2029 event will take place from July 19–29.

This is a highly significant development for WAKO: The World Games represent one of the most important global platforms for the international development of the sport of kickboxing and its journey towards the Olympic Movement.

THE FULL WORLD GAMES SPORTS PROGRAMME**19–29 JULY 2029**

POINT FIGHTING / K1

## EUROPEAN GAMES / ISTANBUL 2027

## The next continental stage.

The next European Games will take place from 16 to 27 June 2027 in Istanbul, Türkiye. This year's Continental Championships serve as qualifying events for the European Games. Qualified athletes will participate through their National Olympic Committees submitted by the national federation's. Therefore, national federations should get in touch with their respective NOCs to initiate preliminary discussions regarding participation.

EUROPEAN GAMES QUALIFICATION

## KICKBOXING AT THE EUROPEAN GAMES 2027





# A MILESTONE ON THE WORLD STAGE.

The European Games are the continent's premier multi-sport event for elite athletes and are held every four years.

In 2021, the European Olympic Committees (EOC) announced the inclusion of kickboxing in the official programme of the European Games 2023 in Poland. This was a major step forward for the sport of kickboxing. The disciplines Point Fighting, Full Contact and Light Contact were included in the programme.

The kickboxing competition was held from 30 June to 2 July 2023 at the Myślenice Arena in Poland.

WAKO Europe was represented by its President at the time, István Király and its Competition Manager, Srdjan Bugarcic.

The participation of WAKO in the 3rd European Games Kraków-Malopolska 2023 represented a significant milestone in the development and international recognition of kickboxing, and provided WAKO and its athletes with an important opportunity to showcase the sport of kickboxing at this major multi-sport event.

Overall, WAKO's participation in the Kraków-Małopolska 2023 European Games is regarded as an important step in the development and positioning of kickboxing within the European sports movement. The successful delivery of the competition demonstrated WAKO's organisational capabilities and provided valuable experience for the future participation of kickboxing in major multi-sport events.



Former WAKO Europe President István Király with the European Olympic Committee President Spyros Capralos on the 3rd European Games in Kraków Małopolska 2023

# ONE COMMON GOAL.

ISTVÁN KIRÁLY / FORMER WAKO EUROPE PRESIDENT

“For me, however, its importance went far beyond the competition itself. It was the first tangible proof of what WAKO Europe could achieve through genuine unity and solidarity: our member federations, their presidents and leadership, athletes, coaches and officials all worked together towards one common goal. That collective effort made WAKO’s successful participation in the European Games possible and demonstrated not only the quality of our athletes and our sport, but also the strength of our European kickboxing community. The European Games 2023 therefore remain a milestone in WAKO’s history — an achievement created together, and one that all of us can be proud of.”

[READ THE EUROPEAN GAMES REFLECTION](#)



# WOMEN LEADING IN SPORT.

## Tomouhi Excellence

The Tomouhi Excellence program, a collaboration between EFE-Saudi Arabia and the Saudi Kickboxing Federation, supported female referees in strengthening their technical knowledge and practical officiating skills. The initiative also expanded their career development prospects by providing access to online courses offered by eCornell.

[READ THE PROGRAMME STORY](#)

## Zakopane / 17–20 September

One of the key events in WAKO's women's sport programme for September is the Women in Sport Integration Camp, which took place from 17 to 20 September in Zakopane, Poland.

The programme was initiated by the Polish Kickboxing Federation's Women in Sport Commission, and its aim is to promote women's participation, build community, share knowledge and strengthen the role of women in sport.

### TRAINING LED BY CHAMPIONS

Iwona Nieroda-Zdziebko – six-time WAKO and WAKO PRO World Champion, currently Vice President of the Polish Kickboxing Association.

Martyna Domińczak – four-time WAKO World Champion

## ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY

# EVERY ATHLETE BELONGS.

A place to compete. A platform to shine.



National Para & Inclusive Championships / Indore, India

# 9

ATHLETES

# 4

TEAMS / POINT FIGHTING

The medals were awarded by her Excellency Mona Abuamara, the Palestinian Ambassador to Italy.

The WAKO World Youth Kickboxing Championship held in Jesolo marks a milestone, as the WAKO Youth Para & Inclusive World Championships were taking place at the exact same time and in the same venue in the Palazzo del Turismo Hall as the elite athletes' championship. This highlights WAKO's dedication to inclusivity and offers athletes with disabilities a safe platform to showcase their talent and determination. In the Point Fighting competition, nine athletes from four teams competed against one another.

[EXPLORE PARA AND INCLUSIVE KICKBOXING](#)

## SAFE SPORT

# SAFER SPORT.



Education. Certification. Accountability.

## 01

### Research

mapping safeguarding practices through reviews, best practice analysis

## 02

### E-learning

Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) to promote practical knowledge

## 03

### Club certification

recognition combat sports and martial arts clubs with Safe Combat Labels

## WAKO Europe's role

WAKO Europe is participating in the development of the Safeguarding Code and the creation of the related education and training system. WAKO Europe helped establish a Club Certification System under which clubs can receive the SAFE COMBAT Label if they meet the safeguarding requirements.

# 82

## CLUBS WITH THE SAFE COMBAT LABEL

Obtaining the SAFE Combat Label provides a range of benefits for combat sports and martial arts clubs. Safeguarding is a continuous journey of learning, improvement, and accountability.

WADA ATHLETE COUNCIL

# AN ATHLETE'S VOICE.

Dr. Guillermina Barat was nominated by WAKO for the WADA Athlete Council election.

This appointment is not only a recognition of her career and expertise, but also of the serious and persistent work carried out by WAKO and WAKO Argentina to advance kickboxing.

[READ THE PAN AMERICA REPORT](#)[WAKO'S ATHLETE COUNCIL UPDATE](#)[DR. GUILLERMINA BARAT / ARGENTINA](#)

FOCUS ON DEVELOPMENT / 1 SEPTEMBER

## Optimizing Athlete Performance Hormetic Stimuli

1 September, 2026 | 15:00–16:00 CET with Dr. Guillermina Barat, MD, a WAKO World and PanAm Champion, with a postgraduate degree in sports nutrition and an MSc in clinical psychoneuroimmunology. For Spanish speaking WAKO members.



JESOLO / GENERAL ASSEMBLY

# TOGETHER, STRONGER.

## WAKO Ordinary General Assembly

WAKO held its Ordinary General Assembly during the WAKO World Championships in Jesolo, attended by the President, Vice Presidents, the members of the Board of Directors and member delegates. The Report of Activities for the previous year was unanimously approved, along with a number of other important decisions on the agenda.

## Special gifts

Riccardo Bergamini and Roy Baker presented special gifts to National Federation Presidents and WAKO Board Members


[READ THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY REPORT](#)

[CELEBRATING THE WAKO COMMUNITY](#)



# 700+

COACHES IN JESOLO

The Coaches Conference in Jesolo brought together more than 700 coaches from around the world, making it the largest event of its kind ever held. The conference provided an important opportunity for coaches to exchange knowledge, share experiences, and further develop their skills.

## Green Spirit

FederKombat and GREEN SPIRIT introduced the Green Spirit programme at the Youth Championships. A unique “Medal of Growth”, made from eco-friendly, plantable materials was created for all referees at the World Championships.



### THE COACHES CONFERENCE

### A MORE SUSTAINABLE SPORT

#### NEW DAN GRADES

DAN grades were officially presented to: Nikos Memmos (GRE), Andres Garcia Gandara (GUA), Jose Jorge Santiago (GUA), Zsolt Moradi (HUN), Krisztian Jaroszkiewicz (HUN), Gabor Juhasz (HUN) and Zoltan Dancso (HUN).

#### DAN RECOGNITION



WAKO DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

# LEARNING. DEVELOPING.

The knowledge and systems supporting the sport.



2 SEPTEMBER / WAKO &amp; RSportZ

## New registration procedures

On 2 September, a WAKO / RSportZ webinar was held online, focusing on the new registration procedures.

Digitalisation is playing an increasingly important role in the organisation of WAKO events, athlete registration and event administration. The use of the RSportZ system, in particular, supports greater efficiency and transparency in the management of international competitions.

The September webinar was part of WAKO's ongoing efforts to further develop and improve its professional and administrative processes.

## Anti-doping for coaches

During the World Kickboxing Championships in Jesolo, Uliana Mashkova (UKR) held an anti-doping seminar for WAKO Coaches.

[WATCH THE JESOLO SEMINAR](#)

8 SEPTEMBER / MEDICAL EDUCATION

## Concussion and return to training

Online Training on 08 September, 3 pm, with Dr. Gianlorenzo Daniele Physician, consultant in sports and exercise medicine. Member of WAKO Medical, Health and Anti-Doping Committee and of WAKO Para- and Inclusive Committee

[THE WORLD GAMES CONNECT](#)

## Stronger media plans

WAKO media committee attended session of The World Games Connect Workshop, which is already in its second edition. The Workshop aims to connect the International Federations participating in The World Games and support them in developing more structured media plans for the event.

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS / 2026

# WHAT'S NEXT.



OCT

**10–12****Panamerican Continental Cup**

Espírito Santo, Brazil

OCT

**13–16****Uzbekistan Kickboxing World Cup**

Tashkent, Uzbekistan

OCT

**22–25****North American Century Cup**

Markham, Canada

NOV

**06–15****WAKO European Championships**

Skopje, North Macedonia

NOV

**23–30****CISM Military Kickboxing Cup**

Antalya, Türkiye

DEC

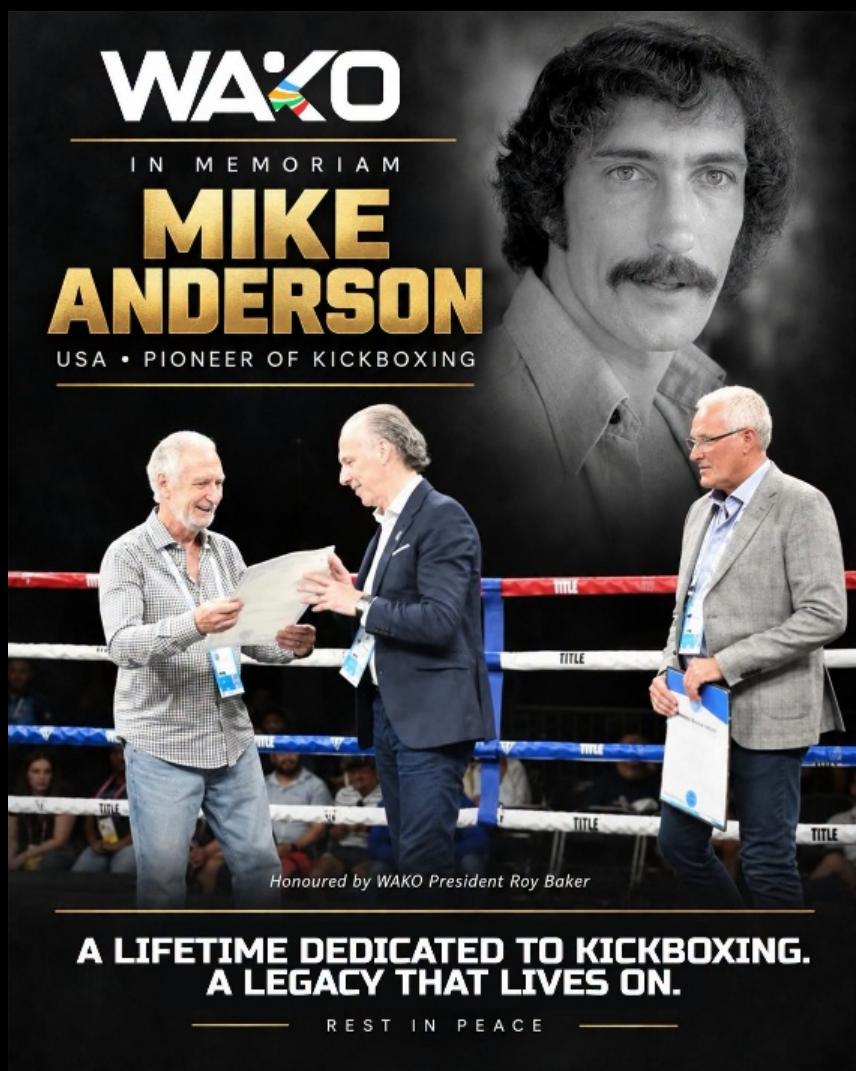
**02–07****African Continental Cup**

Cairo, Egypt

**WAKO EVENT UPDATES**

Draws and running orders, straight to your phone.

[FOLLOW ON WHATSAPP](#)



## MIKE ANDERSON.

10TH DAN / USA

A lifetime  
dedicated to  
kickboxing.

Mike Anderson, 10 DAN (USA), passed away during the Jesolo WAKO World Championships.

In 1976 Anderson co-founded the first international organization for amateur kickboxing: World Martial Arts Association in Paris. In 1977 he made history, and established with Georg F. Brückner the WAKO.

“His contribution will never be forgotten.”

ROY BAKER

[READ WAKO'S TRIBUTE](#)

# WAKO

ONE WAKO. ONE CHAMPION.



# SEE YOU IN SKOPJE.

6-15 NOVEMBER 2026

WAKO European Championships  
Skopje, North Macedonia