

## HISTORY

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### 25 years of activity by the OYAMA Sports Club in Rzeszow

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#### Abstract

**Background.** *Oyama Karate* is a full contact style of karate that originated in 1983, and based on Japanese *Kyokushin*. The creator of this style was Shigeru Oyama, co-founder of the World *Kyokushinkai* Organization (01.10.1963). The beginnings of *Oyama Karate* in Poland date to 29<sup>th</sup> September 1991. The *Oyama Sports Club* in Rzeszow (KSOR) was created as the *Oyama Karate Club* in Rzeszow in 1993. The club's activities prioritised recreational trainings for children, young people and adults, as well as professional trainings for competitors. Currently the club trains approximately 500 people, including 200 children.

**Problem.** The goal of this article is to investigate and describe the circumstances of the creation of the *Oyama Sports Club* in Rzeszow, and its activity in the period between 1993 and 2007.

**Methods.** The article contains qualitative analysis of the sources and materials gathered during research in libraries and archives. The main source of information was the private archive of Patrycjusz Mostek – the chairman of KSOR. The secondary main sources are oral interviews with the first vice-chairman of the club Krystian Niemiec, as well as club contestants Klaudia Bajrasz and Patryk Kosturek.

**Results.** The material collected facilitated the recreation of the historical background to the events preceding the founding of the organisation, and attention was drawn to the sporting achievements of practitioners training in the club.

**Conclusions.** The Club's contestants were distinguished as the best in the country multiple times. The club has been placed in the top 10 best clubs in Poland a number of times. Owing to the diligence and enormous enthusiasm of the club's instructors, the group of sport masters is still increasing.

#### Introduction

The creator of this style was Shigeru Oyama. He left the organisation in 1983, creating his own style. He was a half-brother and the best student of Masutatsu Oyama [Lorden 2003: 47; Lind 1996: 531-532], a man with an eventful biography and one of the last great karate warriors. Shigeru continued his teacher's work, travelling the world and popularising fighting style and lifestyle based on Japanese karate. He combined on one hand contemporary science accomplishments in sport, psychology and pedagogy with Japanese tradition on the other. He enriched the fighting style with fast leg movement, elements of traditional and Thai boxing. Shigeru visited Poland multiple times, conducting black belt exams and training seminars for karate practitioners during his stays. In years of 1994 [Cuprys *et al.* 2013: 19], 2001 and 2002 KSOR's competitors had the honour to pass master exams with Shigeru Oyama [Idzik-Maciej].

Masutatsu Oyama also referred to supportive effect of moral strength of karate-*do*: “Nonetheless, no matter what a rival's strength is, the victory will always fall to the one who fights for the right cause. I am sure of it” [Oyama 1979: 59]. Oyama believed that “Eastern Martial Arts are deeply connected with spiritual union and maturity, because in this case mental and training efficiency are more important than the talent itself” [Oyama 1979: 100]. *Oyama karate* was greatly approved by psychologists and social pedagogues due to its beneficial influence of lowering aggression and counteracting the violence, especially in case of young people [Trulson 1986: 1131–1140].

The beginnings of *Oyama Karate* development in Poland is connected with the day of 29<sup>th</sup> September 1991 when sensei Jan Dyduch declared to the Great Master Shigeru Oyama joining to World *Oyama Karate* Organization. *Oyama karate* as a sport discipline has been legalized in Poland with the directive no 6, position 40 of Physical Culture and Tourism's Chairman from

26.02 1992. On 8<sup>th</sup> April 1992 the Association of *Oyama Karate* in Poland has been registered, with its headquarters based in Krakow. It gathered all practitioners of *Oyama Karate* in Poland, training in sport clubs, private karate schools, the Association of Popularizing Physical Culture's agencies, as well as in specialist sections. The association officially became a part of the World *Oyama Karate* Organization in 1992. At the same time Jan Dydych from Krakow became the World *Oyama Karate* Organization's (later referred to as WOKO) representative in Poland [Piorko 2015: 20].

At the moment, *Oyama Karate* operates in over 100 biggest locations in the country. The clubs are members of the Polish and the World *Oyama Karate* Federation. The main activity of the associations is organising international training seminars and conducting master exams [Leonczyk 2014: 12]. Approximately 30 organizations sponsor the activity of associations, clubs, sections and individual enthusiasts [cf. Litwiniuk, Cynarski 2003].

The beginnings of KSOR should be dated to 1978 when a student of Rzeszow University of Technology (further referred to as PRz), a karate enthusiast Jerzy Swiderski (having 6 *kyu* training grades, at that time) began to solitarily train in the gym of the Ikar dorm. After passing 5 *kyu* (the green belt at that time) in 1979 he started training with a group of PRz students in a small gym at the university. By the end of 1979, 60 people attended trainings, including the later leading competitors Wieslaw Kisiel and Grzegorz Slys. In 1980 the karatekas' headquarters was the Primary School (referred later to as SP) No 4, where approximately 100 people were training, including Miroslaw Holda, Jerzy Fila, Jacek Lelkowski and Boguslaw Cibor. In the spring 1980 the first display of section was organised in the Walter hall. Due to the increasing numbers of trainees, 150 in year of 1981, two groups were created – advanced trained by Jerzy Swiderski and beginners led by Krystian Niemiec. The trainings took place in the Vocational School of Casting. The group was joined by Janusz Mickowski, Ryszard Szela, Dariusz Lonc and Andrzej Gladysz. In 1982 trainings were organised in, among others, WSK Community Centre, SP no 18 and PRz. The group started to operate as the Academic Sports Association of PRz. Wieslaw Kisiel and Jerzy Swiderski, the contestants of the section, participated in the first competition of 4<sup>th</sup> Wawel Dragon's Cup Tournament [interview with Mostek 2018].

In 1982 the contact with shisan Leslaw Samitowski, one of the most famous and accomplished people in Polish and World *Karate Kyokushin*, was made. In the past he was a trainer of Polish and USA national squads in *Karate Kyokushin* [Grzywacz, Krupa 2001: 2]. Thanks to cooperation with sensei L. Samitowski, the club was developing more and more resiliently, organizing seminars, exams, groupings, competitions, trainings with other associations as well as integration events.

In July 1983 the practitioners of the section J. Swiderski, K. Niemiec and J. Melkowski broadened their skills, passing the exam for instructors' grades. On 30<sup>th</sup> July 1985, on the basis of the Academic Sport Association PRz, Rzeszow *Kyokushin* Club was created, which main activity was *kyokushin karate* as well as other martial arts. The first chairman of the club was Jerzy Bajera [Niemiec 2013: 9].

In spite of lacking the spectacular sport successes, the section was developing intensely. The contestants of the section, apart from students, were pupils, also adults and children.

Years preceding 1993 were the period of slow but systematic dissolution of Rzeszow *Karate Kyokushin* Club. One of the reasons was J. Swiderski leaving the club. The administration of the section was taken over by instructors: Wlodzimierz Cuprys, Piotr Kozak, Tomasz Polak and Pawel Kardys [Niemiec 2013: 18]. A year later it was proposed to the section's members to create the organisation under the patronage of Shigeru Oyama [interview with Mostek, 2018]. The *Oyama Karate* Club in Rzeszow, governed by the *Oyama* association Polish Karate Federation, based in Krakow [Archive of RKOK records, Decision no 02/93] was created by the decision of Voivodeship's Office in Rzeszow on 08.11.1993 r. [Archive of Voivodeship's Office in Rzeszow Records, decision 125/29/93].

On 08.11.1993 the foundation meeting of Rzeszow KSOK (referred further to as RKSOK) took place, when the statute was passed and the Foundation Committee was chosen, including: Wlodzimierz Cuprys – chairman, Tomasz Polak – vice chairman, Piotr Kozak – treasurer, Pawel Kardys – member and Leszek Bedrejczuk – member [Protocol of RKSOK Foundation Meeting]. RKSOK was registered as Physical Culture Association, Public Benefit Organization on 08.11.1993. The enterprise received a tax number and a National Business Registry Number, on top of that, it patented its original logo (picture 1.).



Picture 1. Logo of Rzeszow Sports Club *Oyama Karate*.

The resolution of 14.12.1993 made Wlodzimierz Cuprys a chairman, Krystian Niemiec a vice chairman,

Tomasz Polak a treasurer, Piotr Kozak and Piotr Kucz-menda members [Archive of RKOK records, Resolution no. 01/93].

The activity of the club was based on the statute, which aimed at voluntarily gathering of the members around the rules of karate – do and sport ethos; popularisation of pro-health forms of physical activity, physical culture and sport as well as creating organisational and substantive conditions for propagating it on the territory of Poland among children, the youth and adults, moreover counteracting health risks and social pathology.

The club reaches its goals through formulating and executing development plans of pro-health forms of physical activity, training of contestant, instructors and arbiters, organizing of the exams on student level, supporting and popularizing physical culture as well as organising sport events [Statute of KSOR, Mostek's private archive].

In 1999 the changes in the club's board occurred: Piotr Kozak – chairman, Tomasz Kozak – vice-chairman, Anna Sasiadek – treasurer, Pawel Kloda and Marcin Kozak – members. In the period discussed, there were 2 sections operating in Rzeszow: junior group gathering 16 people and senior group of 18 people. The training staff consisted of instructor Piotr Kozak and instructor Tomasz Kozak. Moreover, the club had long-distance sections: in Babica, Sedziszow Malopolski, Bratkowice and Dabrowa [Kruczek 2017].

With the inquiry conducted, it has to be stated that no data concerning the beginning years of the club's activity until 2007 has been collected. According to current activists, the materials have been destroyed.

On 18<sup>th</sup> April 2007 Piotr Kozak resigned from being the chairman of the club. During the reporting-electing meeting, Patrycjusz Mostek was elected as a new chairman. The remaining functions were still the responsibility of Tomasz Kozak and Anna Sasiadek [AKT RKOK's archive].

Together with the reorganisation of the club's structures on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2008, the name has been changed to Rzeszow Oyama Karate Club (referred further to as: RKOK). Rzeszow City Council (Physical Culture and Sport Division) was the supervisory authority. The board has been registered as authorised representatives. The means of representing the company was defined as "making statements concerning financial rights and duties is the right of the chairman or vice chairman – each of them independently [krs.infoveriti.pl 2018]. The board consisted of: chairman Patrycjusz Mostek, vice chairman Tomasz Kozak and treasurer Anna Sasiadek. Patrycjusz Mostek served as the chairman until 2017, while the Board staff was changing slightly.

The club's priority was recreational trainings for children, youth and adults, as well as professional trainings for competitors. In 2008 the club organised *kyu* level exams. The exam included the test of technical skills,

formal formations – kata and the basic knowledge of Japanese language. The contestants of the club took also part in Polish and foreign championships.

What is more, the aim of the club's activity was also popularizing *oyama karate* and other martial arts through extracurricular forms of physical education and various form of sport and recreational activities. The Oyama Karate Club in Rzeszow has been extending its activity by cooperation with Rzeszow City Council, realising public tasks. One of them was *Supporting of Training and Sport Competition of Disabled Children and Youth, The Purchase of Representation Uniforms and a Tournament Mat as a Form of Supporting the Accomplishment of the Task*. In addition, the realisation of the following task has been commissioned: *3<sup>rd</sup> Polish Open Karate Tournament of Junior Karate* [Substantive Report of Rzeszow Oyama Karate Club's Activity 2009].

In 2010 Rzeszow City Council, Health Division, commissioned the realisation of the following task to RKOK: *Executing OYAMA karate activities for children and youth as well as organization of Rzeszow Cup of Oyama Karate for the youngest trainees as a part of "organizing sport activities and accompanying events, among others, tournaments, competitions, rallies, etc. for children and youth as alternative ways of spending free time"*. On top of that, the realisation of another task was commissioned: *Executing of Oyama Karate activities for children and youth in Wolka Podlesna and organisation of St. Nicholas' Day Cup in Oyama Karate* as a part of "propagating of physical culture and sport among children and youth, emphasising karate activities" [Substantive Report of Rzeszow Oyama Karate Club's Activity, 2010]. In 2011 the name changed to Rzeszow Sports Oyama Club (further referred to as: KSOR).

Between 2011 and 2012 the club organised the sport event *Executing of Oyama Karate activities for children and youth on the territory of Rzeszow* [Substantive Report of Rzeszow Oyama Karate Club's Activity, 2011–2012].

KSOR, in spite of trainings, focused also on organisation of events for club members, promoting healthy, family leisure. In 2013, among others, a sleigh party in Zabajka and summer play centre were organised. Also, it organised cyclical event *Children Oyama Karate League for children* as well as Rzeszow Cup of Oyama Karate for children. During the year, contestants took part in a few shows and participated in sport camps as a part of partnership with Oyama Clubs in Jaslo and Lublin [Substantive Report of Rzeszow Oyama Karate Club's Activity 2013].

One of the goals set by the club in 2014 was developing of club members' interests. In January a 2-day-long winter play camp was organised, that included dancing activities, first aid training, team games and computer games. In July Rzeszow Sport-Leisure Oyama Karate Wegry-Vergesztes was organised. Aiming to popularize karate, familiarizing young sportsmen with the basis of sport fighting, the club organised shows and lessons for

a football summer camp, as well as shows included in the grant project *Get to know your close neighbour*. As a part of raising qualifications in Sankt Petersburg in May, Iwona Strek, Rafał Swider and Patryk Kosturek passed the exam for 1<sup>st</sup> *dan* level during International Training Seminar OYAMA IKF [IKF-International Karate Federation] [Substantive Report of Rzeszow Oyama Karate Club's Activity 2014].

The inauguration of the club's activity in 2015 was an annual organization of winter play centre, as well as the beginning of cooperation with the Active Rehabilitation Foundation (further referred to as FAR). As a part of FAR's project the trainings for children moving on the wheelchairs were organised. In order to promote karate, and to recruit the youngest contestants, meetings in the kindergarten and SP no 8 in Rzeszow took place. Also, 6<sup>th</sup> sport-leisure camp in Jaroslawiec by the Baltic Sea was organised.

In accordance with assumptions of statutory activity in 2016, Oyama club conducted numerous trainings

and shows for children and youth of Podkarpackie Voivodeship's kindergartens and schools. These operations resulted in the creation of new training groups. In addition, exams for student of *kyu* levels were conducted, testing at the same time the knowledge of *dojo* etiquette and condition of young trainees [Oyama 1973: 360]. The club was also the organiser of training seminars of banausic techniques for instructors and people belonging to advanced groups, as well as the Oyama Karate Child League of Health Promotion [Substantive Report of Rzeszow Oyama Karate Club's Activity 2016].

In order to extend the offer promoting a healthy lifestyle, activities adjusted to mainly female needs were created, organizing FIT FIGHT activities, including in their conception elements of cross-training mixed with kickboxing and self-defence techniques [Interview with Bajrasz 2018].

In 2017 KSOR was the organizer of: the photography contest for children "My sport room" and the event "Training with parents", on the occasion of Mother's and

**Table 1.** Medallists of Polish Championship and international championship of KSOR in 2013

Place	Name and surname	Competition	Contest
3	Mateusz Kosturek		Slovak Open K-1/Slovakia
1	Iwona Strek	<i>Kata</i>	4 <sup>th</sup> Open Oyama Karate Europe Championship/ Belarus
2	Rafał Swider	<i>Kobudo</i>	
3	Mateusz Kosturek	K-1	Scandinavia Tournament in Kickboxing /Oslo
2	Patryk Kosturek		
2	Patryk Kosturek	Kick Light	
1	Iwona Strek	<i>Kata</i>	19 <sup>th</sup> Polish Championship in Oyama Karate/ Lask
1	Rafał Swider		
3	Rafał Swider	<i>Kobudo</i>	
1	Agnieszka Zawadzka		
2	Agnieszka Zawadzka	<i>Kata</i>	
1	Gabriela Sudol		
3	Patryk Kosturek		
2	Aleksandra Mazur		
3	Mateusz Motyl		
3	Mateusz Motyl	Light contact	18 <sup>th</sup> Polish Championship in Oyama Karate in Kumite/ Moszczenica
3	Gabriela Sudol		
2	Marek Porebski	Knockdown	
3	Patryk Kosturek	Semi knockdown	
1	Mateusz Kosturek	Kickboxing	Polish Championship in Junior and Youth Kickboxing/ Ostrowiec Swietokrzyski
1	Adrian Pacak	K-1	Polish Championship of Youth and Junior Juniors/ Minsk Mazowiecki
2	Patryk Kosturek		
3	Maciej Wisz		
3	Patryk Kosturek		Polish Championship of seniors, juniors and women K-1 Rules/Swiebodzice
3	Mateusz Kosturek		
1	Iwona Lachcik		Southern Polish Championship in Oyama Karate/ Wieliczka
1	Patryk Kosturek		
2	Jakub Mendrala		
3	Denis Marszał		
3	Marcin Musiał		
3	Cyprian Cierpich		

Source: Authors' own study based on KSOR's report of 2013.

**Table 2.** Medallists of international contests and Polish Championship of KSOR in 2014

Place	Name and surname	Competition	Contest
3	Patryk Kosturek	Kickboxing	International Championship in Kickboxing/Croatia
3	Patryk Kosturek	K-1	Slovak Open/Banska Bystrzyca
2	Patryk Kosturek	Full Contact	
1	Paweł Kmic	Demo <i>kumite</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> Polish Open Championship/Lublin
1	Jan Winiarski		
2	Kacper Pociask	Light contact	
3	Jakub Depa	Open	
3	Maja Wozniak		
3	Denis Marszał		
3	Natalia Orzech	Semi Knockdown	
3	Cyprian Cierpich		
3	Maciej Nedza	Open	
1	Gabriela Sudol		20 <sup>th</sup> Polish Championship in <i>Oyama Karate</i> in Kata/ Tychy
1	Rafal Swider	<i>Kata</i>	
3	Rafal Swider	<i>Kobudo</i>	
1	Iwona Strek		
1	Klaudia Bajrasz	<i>Kobudo</i>	
2	Patryk Kosturek		
3	Mateusz Kosturek		
2	Tomasz Sloma		Polish Championship <i>Oyama Karate</i> of Seniors in Knockdown/ Andrychow
3	Marcin Musial		
3	Jakub Depa	Open	
2	Mateusz Kosturek	Knockdown	

Source: Authors' own study based on KSOR's report of 2014.

Father's Day. Moreover, the club conducted shows of martial arts and Rzeszow Cup Tournament. Between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> July young adepts of fighting school took part in 8<sup>th</sup> Rzeszow's *Oyama* Sport-Leisure Summer Camp in Susiec.

The club supported also charity events: "Noble Gift" and "St. Nicholas' Gift for hospice from Rzeszow Sports *Oyama* Club".

**Photo 1.** Iwona Mostek

Source: Private archive of Klaudia Bajrasz

## Sport Activity

The members of the club, from the very first years of its existence, paid a lot of attention to improving sport level, which has its results in Polish and international contests.

The trainers of the club raised their qualifications and strived to sport mastery, passing their knowledge

**Photo 2.** Mateusz and Patryk Kosturek

Source: Private archive of Klaudia Bajrasz

**Table 3.** Medallists of international contests and Polish Championship of KSOR in 2015

Place	Name and surname	Competition	Contest
2	Klaudia Bajrasz	<i>Kata</i>	Europe Open Cup/Poland
2	Jakub Depa	Semi-knockdown	
1	Klaudia Bajrasz	<i>Kobudo</i>	21 <sup>st</sup> Polish Championship in <i>Oyama Karate in Kata/ Kolo</i>
2	Rafal Swider	<i>Kata</i>	
2	Gabriela Sudol		
1	Maja Wozniak	Light contact	Polish Championship of Eastern <i>Oyama Karate in Kumitel/ Rzeszow</i>
1	Jakub Depa	Semi-Knockdown	
2	Natalia Orzech		
2	Aleksandra Mazur		
2	Jan Winiarski	Light contact	
2	Aleksandra Depa		
3	Paweł Kmic		
3	Denis Marszał		
3	Tomasz Sloma		
3	Lucja Pukala		
3	Szymon Tobiasz		
3	Maciej Malinowski		
3	Gabriela Sudol		
3	Iwona Lachcik		
3	Przemysław Roczek	Knockdown	20 <sup>th</sup> Polish Open Championship of Polish Karate Federation in <i>Oyama Karate/Poland</i>
2	Maja Wozniak		
3	Aleksandra Depa		

Source: Authors' own study based on KSOR's report of 2015.

**Table 4.** Medallists of international contests and Polish Championship of KSOR in 2016

Place	Name and surname	Competition	Contest
2	Mateusz Kosturek	<i>Kata</i>	European <i>Kyokunshinkan</i> Tezuka Group Open Championship
3	Mateusz Kosturek	<i>Kobudo</i>	2016/Walbrzych
2	Gabriela Sudol		
1	Paulina Sulkowska	Open	
2	Aleksandra Depa		
3	Krystian Wolowiec		
2	Jakub Depa	Semi Knockdown	
3	Gabriela Sudol		
1	Gabriela Sudol	<i>Kata</i>	Polish Championship of Cetral <i>Oyama Karate in Kata/ Chojnice</i>
1	Jakub Depa		
3	Szymon Lasek		
1	Mateusz Kosturek	<i>Kobudo</i>	22 <sup>nd</sup> Polish Championship in <i>Oyama Karate in Kata and Kobudo/ Olkusz</i>
3	Mateusz Kosturek	<i>Kata</i>	
1	Patryk Kosturek		
1	Gabriela Sudol		
1	Paulina Sulkowska		
1	Maja Wozniak	Open	21 <sup>st</sup> Polish Championship in <i>Oyama Karate/Rzeszow</i>
1	Jakub Depa		
3	Patryk Kosturek	Knockdown	
3	Mateusz Kosturek		
2	Aleksandra Depa	Light contact	
3	Jan Winiarski	Light contact	
3	Tomasz Sloma		

Source: Authors' own study based on KSOR's report of 2016.

**Table 5.** Medallists of international contests and Polish Championship of KSOR in 2017

Place	Name and surname	Competition	Contest
2	Rafal Swider	<i>Kata</i>	Europe Championship of <i>Kata</i> /Estonia
3	Mateusz Kosturek		
3	Jakub Depa		
1	Patryk Kosturek	<i>Kumite</i>	
2	Klaudia Bajrasz		
3	Jakub Depa		
1	Paulina Sulkowska	<i>Kata</i>	23 <sup>rd</sup> Polish Championship in <i>Oyama Karate</i> /Turek
1	Klaudia Bajrasz	<i>Kobudo</i>	
1	Patryk Kosturek		
2	Klaudia Bajrasz	<i>Kata</i>	
2	Patryk Kosturek		
2	Gabriela Sudol		
3	Jan Winiarski		
3	Zuzanna Jozefacka		
3	Rafal Swider	<i>Kobudo</i>	
3	Mateusz Kosturek	<i>Kata</i>	22 <sup>nd</sup> Polish Championship in <i>Oyama Karate</i> /Olkusz
1	Mateusz Kosturek	<i>Kobudo</i>	
3	Mateusz Kosturek	<i>Knockdown</i>	21 <sup>st</sup> Polish Senior Championship in <i>Oyama Karate</i> / Rzeszow
2	Mateusz Kosturek	<i>Kata</i>	European <i>Kyokunshinkan</i> Tezuka Group Open Championship/ Waibrzych
3	Mateusz Kosturek	<i>Kodubo</i>	
2	Kamila Mlynarczyk		Eastern Polish Open Championship of <i>Oyama Karate</i> / Radom
2	Paulina Sulkowska		
3	Malwina Wozniak		
2	Maciej Malinowski		
3	Aleksandra Depa		
3	Szymon Tobiasz		
2	Kalina Kokoszka	Semi	
2	Tomasz Sloma	Knockdown	
2	Klaudia Rozanska		
1	Mateusz Kosturek	Knockdown	22 <sup>nd</sup> Polish Junior and Senior Championship in <i>Oyama Karate</i> / Andrychow
1	Patryk Kosturek		
2	Maja Wozniak	Light contact	
2	Aleksandra Kuczmanda		
2	Jakub Depa	Semi Knockdown	
1	Rafal Swider	<i>Kumite</i>	

Source: Authors' own study based on KSOR's report of 2017.

and skills to young adepts. According to W.J. Cynarski, the trainer has to behave immaculately, have a proper moral stance, be dutiful, disciplined, poised, well-mannered and have skills of creating harmonious relations in a group [Cynarski 2000: 48]. Through observation of trainees and their behaviour during the trainings and contests, trainers work on elimination of their weak points [Cynarski 2000: 48].

The training staff of the *Oyama Karate* Sports Club consists of: trainer Krystian Niemiec (4 *dan*), Pawel Kardys (3 *dan*) – karate instructor and trainer of professional kickboxing squad, Slawomir Idzik (2 *dan*) – trainer of 2<sup>nd</sup> karate class, self-defence instructor, Kamil Karp (1 *dan*) – karate and fitness instructor, Mateusz Kosturek (1 *dan*) – karate instructor, Patryk Kosturek (1 *dan*) – assistant karate instructor, Iwona Mostek (1 *dan*) – trainer of

2<sup>nd</sup> karate class, instructor of personal training, trainer of professional junior squad in *kumite*, Rafal Swider (1 *dan*) – trainer of 2<sup>nd</sup> karate class and Lukasz Rydzik – kickboxing instructor, assistant karate instructor [interview with Niemiec 2018].

Contestants of the club in years between 1996 and 2012 took place in 23 competitions of Polish Championship and Polish Cup level, winning altogether 39 gold, 19 silver and 26 bronze medals.

In 2013 the contestant of KSOR participated in numerous competitions, both on Polish arena and abroad. Medal achievements of competitors in the highest ranking competition – the Europe Championship – as well as international competition in 2013 are shown in table 1.

In the Europe Championship the highest achievements belonged to Iwona Streck and Rafal Swider, who

**Table 6.** Medallists of international contests and Polish Championship of KSOR in 1995 - 2011

Place	Name and surname	Competition	Contest	Date
2	Pawel Kardys	Knockdown	5th Europe Open Championship in <i>Kyokushin Karate</i> – Holland	25.03.1995
3	Piotr Kozak	Knockdown	6th Europe Open Championship in <i>Kyokushin Karate</i> – Holland	14.04.1996
1	Piotr Kozak	Knockdown	International Karate Championship “The Ultimate Challenge” – Birmingham	01.05.1999
1	Natalia Smolarz	Semi-knockdown	1 <sup>st</sup> Open Championship of Brandenburg in Karate – Germany	19.04.2008
1	Klaudia Bajrasz			
1	Mateusz Witek			
1	Natalia Smolarz	Semi-knockdown	Europe Open Cup of IKF <i>Oyama</i> – Poland	16-17.05. 2009
3	Mateusz Kosturek	<i>Kata</i>		
3	Natalia Smolarz			
1	Agnieszka Kaszuba			
3	Mateusz Kosturek	<i>Kobudo Kata</i>		
3	Swider Rafal			
2	Mateusz Kosturek	Semi-knockdown	2 <sup>nd</sup> Open Championship of Brandenburg in Karate – Germany	17.10.2009
1	Natalia Smolarz			
3	Agnieszka Kaszuba			
3	Mateusz Witek			
3	Mateusz Kosturek	Semi-knockdown	Europe Open Cup of IKF <i>Oyama</i> – Estonia	14-15.05. 2011
1	Mateusz Kosturek	<i>Kata</i>		
3	Patryk Kosturek			
3	Klaudia Bajrasz			
1	Mateusz Kosturek	<i>Kobudo Kata</i>		
3	Patryk Kosturek			

Source: Authors’ own study based on KSOR’s report of period 1995-2011.

won consecutively first and second place. Iwona Strek was declared the best contestant of 19<sup>th</sup> Polish Championship. The competitors of the club in the Polish Championship in 2013 won 9 gold, 8 silver and 15 bronze medals. Patryk Kosturek stood on the podium the most often.

Medal achievements of the competitors in Polish Championship and international contests in 2014 are shown in the table 2.

Club’s competitors took part in international championships in Croatia and Slovakia in 2014, where amazing results were achieved by Patryk Kosturek winning 1 silver and 3 bronze medals.

In 2014 in 3 editions of Polish Championship the contestants won 6 gold, 4 silver and 10 bronze medals.

In 2015 the competitors of the club participated in many prestigious contests, and their best results are shown in table 3.

Klaudia Bajrasz and Jakub Depa were the run-ups of Open Europe Cup. The Club’s contestants took part in 4 editions of Polish Championship, winning 4 gold, 6 silver and 3 bronze medals.

In 2016 the trainings were taking place in 9 divisions on the territory of the Podkarpackie Voivodeship. The contestants of the *Oyama* Club took part in a prestigious contest European *Kyokunshinkan* Tezuka Group Open Championship, as well as in 3 editions of the Polish Championship. Their medal results are presented in table 4.



**Photo 3.** Klaudia Bajrasz with master Shigeru Oyama During black belt exam in 2002

Source: Private archive of Klaudia Bajrasz

In the official ranking of Polish *Oyama Karate Federation* for 2016, out of 29 Polish clubs, KSOR gained 6<sup>th</sup> place. Mateusz Kosturek was distinguished for his outstanding achievements in the senior category [interview with Bajrasz 2018].

In 2017 sportsmen took part in Europe Championship in Estonia, as well as in 6 editions of the Polish Championship. Their medal achievements are shown in table 5.

During the Polish Championship in Turek, Paulina Sulkowska, Klaudia Bajrasz and Patryk Kosturek won the first places. Patryk Kosturek also won the first place in the Europe Championship in Kata in Estonia. In the ranking of Polish *Oyama Karate Federation* for 2017 KSOR gained 6<sup>th</sup> place and Mateusz Kosturek was distinguished for his outstanding achievements in the senior category.

The below table (table 6) shows the greatest successes of KSOR sportsmen in international championship between 1995 and 2011.

## Discussion

In the rankings of 56 clubs belonging to Polish *Oyama Karate Federation*, the *Oyama Karate Sports Club* in Rzeszow in the recent times has been placed in the first 10 outstanding clubs in the country. In 2017 it landed 3<sup>rd</sup> place, outrunning for example, Krakow *Oyama Club* and Malopolska Karate Klub (in Andrychow). It should be stated that the club's activity basing particularly on sport trainings, is going in the right direction. The progress in sport achievements of its members is visible, as well as in the mastering of skills and training qualifications of the staff.

While comparing the activity of the Rzeszow *Oyama* to other, leading *Oyama* clubs in Poland: Piotrkow *Oyama Karate Club WASHI* (Piotrkow Trybunalski), Silesia Karate Club Goliat (Katowice) the conclusion can be drawn that looking n a perspective, the club has a chance to gain even higher sport level, both on Polish and international arenas.

## Conclusion

The *Oyama Karate Sports Club* in Rzeszow has been operating in Rzeszow since 1993. In this time, hundreds of people attended trainings, including a large amount of children. The role of martial arts in lives of Rzeszow inhabitants is significant and equally important with other social organisations dealing with sport and tourism. Martial arts, especially *Oyama Karate* style begun by KSOK, enabled young people to spend their free time in a new way.

In order to popularize and promote martial arts, the trainers annually organised shows and meetings for

kindergarten pupils and students of the Podkarpackie Voivodeship's schools. In order to respond to children and youths' needs, winter play camps were organised, that included not only karate practice, but also games and contemporary dancing. One of the club's aims was to promote a family leisure. The club was not indifferent to the less favourable people, taking part in many charity events.

The superior activity of the club was the sport one. Since the very beginnings of its operation, there were successes on both Polish and international arena. The contestants were distinguished as the best in the country multiple times. The club has been placed in the first 10 best clubs in Poland a few times. Owing to diligence and enormous enthusiasm of club's instructors, the group of sport masters is still increasing.

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