

## HISTORY

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### Eastern martial arts in the Bielsko-Biala voivodeship between 1975 and 1998

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#### Abstract

**The Background.** Between 1975 and 1998 the Bielsko-Biala voivodeship existed in southern Poland with its capital in Bielsko-Biala. It was established on 1 June 1975 following the introduction of a new administrative division in Poland. The area of the voivodeship was 3704 km<sup>2</sup>. It was divided into 18 towns and 59 communes, and it consisted of the present-day districts of Wadowice and Zywiec entirely, parts of Bielsko-Biala, Cieszyn, Oswiecim and Sucha Beskidzka, and a small part of the district of Chrzanow.

**Problem.** The author's intention was to discuss three sports disciplines as examples of the processes and to present the multifaceted activities that were reflected in the Bielsko-Biala voivodeship during the period under discussion.

**Methods.** The main method used in the paper was an analysis of sources obtained from the State Archive in Katowice, using information obtained from chronicles, magazines, newspapers and publications, as well as reports from and memories of inhabitants of the Podbeskidzie region. The problematic layout was adopted in the study.

**Results.** The study complements the existing knowledge of the history of physical activities in the period from 1975 to 1998, in particular concerning the activities of Far East Sports (*judo, karate Kyokushin and kick-boxing*) clubs and organizations in the Podbeskidzie area.

**Conclusions.** The main objective of those in charge of physical culture in Bielsko-Biala was to supplement the weak human resources and base facilities as quickly as possible. These objectives were to be met by plans to promote physical culture through the improvement of youth sport, the organization of instructor courses and the care of the so-called leading disciplines. In the case of the Bielsko-Biala voivodeship, these included football, Nordic skiing, *biathlon, weightlifting, boxing, judo, Kyokushin karate, kick-boxing* (slightly later: in 1993 – section in Jaworz), *archery and chess*. At the time, it was the headquarters of physical culture management – the *Główny Komitet Kultury Fizycznej i Turystyki* [the Main Committee of Physical Culture and Tourism] (and its equivalents) – that decided which disciplines to include.

#### Introduction

When the Bielsko-Biala voivodeship was established, the employment level in qualified sport of the training-instructor staff was as follows: 56 trainers and 192 instructors. This was a quantitatively insufficient state. On average, there were 23 athletes per one trainer. The shortage of training staff was particularly observed in skiing, volleyball, cycling and tobogganing. At the same time, the level of training staff employed in sport was in many cases insufficient. At that time, out of 248 trainers, only 21 had higher education, including completed master's studies in physical education and related disciplines.

Due to the fact that this number was not sufficient in relation to the existing sections of sports clubs, *Wojewodzka Federacja Sportu* [Regional Sports Federation] established in 1976 conducted intensive training for sports instructors in particular sports disciplines and sent instructors to central training courses for trainers. As a result of this activity, the number of trainers was constantly increasing and on the eve of political changes in 1989, there were 135 trainers and 436 instructors employed in club sports sections (268 sections – number of trainers: 11,304).

In the study we have focused our attention only on three selected issues concerning sport disciplines, in particular the Far East combat sports, i.e. *judo, Kyokushin karate and kick-boxing*.

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A significant role in the field of physical culture management in Podbeskidzie in the discussed period was played by the establishment of *Wydział Kultury Fizycznej i Turystyki* [Department of Physical Culture and Tourism] at the Voivodeship Office in Bielsko-Biala and the units directly and indirectly subordinate to it: *Wojewodzka Federacja Sportu* [Regional Sports Federation], regional sports associations, *Wojewodzkie Zrzeszenie "Ludowe Zespoły Sportowe"* [Regional Association of "Folk Sports Teams"], *Zrzeszenie Sportowe Spółdzielczości Pracy "Start"* [Sports Association of the "Start" Cooperatives] and *Towarzystwo Krzewienia Kultury Fizycznej* [Society for the Promotion of Physical Culture]. They were very active in their work for the benefit of physical culture, supporting the activities of lower-level entities.

Before we proceed to a more detailed discussion of the issues mentioned above, it should be noted that the author's intention was to collect data constituting the basis for learning about and recreating the past of physical culture. In accordance with the principles of historical research methodology, the main methods used in the preparation of the collected research material were: induction-deductive method, description, secondary analysis and empirical analysis of statistical data.

In the following publication the comparative method was also used to verify the facts in the source materials. The mixed system was adopted: superior-factual, subordinate-institutional (maintaining chronological order), which allowed to achieve the intended goal on the basis of the query of sources which were subjected to empirical verification. The analysis of documents made it possible to obtain valuable information.

### **Genesis and origin of such martial arts as judo, karate *Kyokushin*, as well as kick-boxing and the activities of these disciplines in the Podbeskidzie region**

Judo – the style of combat, which became an Olympic discipline, and is an ennobled version of *jujutsu*, where certain specific rules and principles of fight are introduced. The tricks dangerous to the opponent have been removed, new ones added, especially in the group of throws, and the fight in the educational sense has been built up, creating a whole philosophy of *judo*. In a short period of time, apart from the sports and self-defense aspects, *judo* became a carrier of a new, true modern educational system for children and young people.

A different system of fighting is best described by the Japanese word "do", which means "way". In comparison with the name of a specific art it is understood as an access to something, a cognitive system, a way of learning with the preservation of the whole ceremony cultivated for centuries with the knowledge of the secrets of a given discipline. It is a lonely path whose journey

provides inner peace, certainty, self-discipline, knowledge of one's own personality.

The successes of Bielsko-Biala judokas contributed significantly to the popularization of this discipline in Podbeskidzie. It was a big contribution of the coach of Bielsko-Biala's "Gwardia" ("Guards") Mieczysław Malczewski who conducted classes in various age groups in Bielsko-Biala. In the case of the Sports Club (hereinafter: KS) "Gwardia" belonging to the federation associating officers and employees of the Ministry of the Interior in Bielsko-Biala, it was a special period. First of all, it took a long time to create their own club, working for many years on the account of the Katowice "Gwardia". Finally, the Bielsko-Biala athletes did not like the role of the "poor relative" any more and on 5 October 1978 they founded the "Gwardia" Sports Club. The independent club started to function only three years later (in 1981) [cf. Swider 2018].

The main argument for creating a club was the excellent results already achieved by Bielsko-Biala judokas. The boys from Bielsko-Biala and the surrounding area won for the Katowice "Guards" over thirty medals in various competitions, mainly Polish championships, but not only. Andrzej Grzegorzek and Krzysztof Kurczyna also won trophies and medals during such prestigious events as the Youth European Championships. The decade of the Bielska "Guards", i.e. from 1981 to 1991, abounded in the greatest sporting successes of Beskid judokas: participation in Olympic Games and World Championships, medals in the European Championships and World Cup, trophies won in the Goodwill Games and many other prestigious international events, as well as many medals won during the Polish Championships in various age categories, winning the Polish Cup and the Polish vice-championship team of the country of seniors, and successes of juniors in *spartakiads*. Among the most deserving athletes were, among others: Andrzej Basik, Henryk Hamerlik, Andrzej Grzegorzek, Krzysztof Kurczyna, Piotr Mrozek, less than 18-year-old Dariusz Ochala, Bronisław Saczka, Bogusław Tyl and many others. The following female athletes deserve a distinction: Mariola Giza, Jolanta Hauka, Anna Herczynska, Lucyna Moczek, and Maria Mikolajek.

Since 1991, the Bielsko-Biala "Guards" have trained about three hundred athletes (in several age categories). The classes were conducted by five trainers: Wiesław Gorny (in Bielsko-Biala), Leszek Kopec (in Bielsko-Biala), Janusz Matera (in Piszczowice), Bronisław Saczka (in Komorowice) and Bogusław Tyl (in Brenna). Mieczysław Malczewski, who, apart from seniors, dealt with a group of children and young people aged 10-15 selected through a special recruitment process in many schools, was in charge of all the training work [cf. Litwiniuk, Wieleba, Cynarski 2008].

The coach Mieczysław Malczewski was well aware that after the departure of the leaders Andrzej Basik and

Krzysztof Kurczyną in 1990, a certain gap arose, which will have to be filled by the youth. Although in the mid-1990s they were successful in Poland and abroad, they were not as spectacular as those of their predecessors. Hence, it was decided to work with young people from scratch.

The *judo* section at KS "Piaś" Cieszyn existed from April 1981. But the beginnings of *judo* in Cieszyn date back to January 1959 when Zygmunt Musiol came to Cieszyn. Before that, he had lived in the United States, New Zealand and the Far East. In 1948, in Derby (England), he won a bronze *judo* belt, which was the highest academic degree of initiation at that time. In the mid-1970s, the *judo* section was taken over by the "Celmy" factory center of *Towarzystwo Krzewienia Kultury Fizycznej* (hereinafter: TKKF) [Sports Promotion Association]. About 30 athletes practiced there and Jerzy Pilch led the training. At that time there was also the *judo* section of *Akademicki Związek Sportowy* [Academic Sports Union] (hereinafter: AZS) at the branch of the University of Silesia in Cieszyn. Ernest Mazalik was the best student *judoka* [cf. Inoue 1998].

Celmy's center of the TKKF took care of the *judo* section until 1980. Later, due to the decision of the "Solidarity" activists, the company's sports financing was discontinued. The first "Solidarity" organization before martial law aimed at abandoning the practice of employing sportsmen and sportswomen in fictional company jobs, moving towards separating amateur and professional sports. Jerzy Pilch's trainees were taken in by "Piaś" Cieszyn Sports Society (hereinafter: TS) which gave the old ice rink pavilion at the disposal of *judokas*. However, the facility was seriously devastated. With the help of the club and the players it was brought to usability.

Since 1987, about 70 *judokas*, including three seniors (Jacek Drogowski, Andrzej Nawiesniak and Jan Stasiuk) have been practicing in the section. The greatest hope were juniors and youngsters who more and more often won the tournaments of the southern macro-region (Silesia), and even qualified for the finals of national tournaments. From time to time they also took part in foreign tournaments in Romania and East Germany. In 1987 Roman Pilch competed in the National Youth *Spartakiada* in Elbląg, taking a decent 9th position in the country. In this group of juniors such names as Piotr Kaczmarzyk, Jarosław Martynek, Przemysław Pieczka, Tadeusz Rusin, Tadeusz Suchy and Sebastian Wisniewski deserve a special mention [cf. Adam 2008, 2011: 40-47].

The group of young people was strong. The youngest ones fought successfully in the provincial school league, losing only slightly to such a significant team as the Bielsko-Biala "Gwardia". Among the youngest, the best results were achieved, among others, by Krzysztof Błaszczyk, Rafał Granica, Piotr Kareta, Mateusz Michalek, Artur Marekwica, Ireneusz Pancer, Wojciech Pilch, Piotr

Sznepka, and Ireneusz Siedlok. KS "Piaś" Cieszyn created good conditions for athletes practicing this sport. The section received sufficient funds for training activities, as well as for the purchase of equipment.

The forerunner of the youngest *judo* section of the TS "Hejnal" was Zbigniew Warchal who from 1976 conducted classes in this sport with young people at the TKKF "Sielanka" in Kety. His systematic training work, joined in 1980 by Edward Adamus and Józef Hilger, made the section very popular in the local community, and its competitors, taking part in shows and tournaments, aroused the interest of the local audience [cf. Masliak, Mameshina 2018].

On 27 August 1984, the *Judo* Section was registered in the Polish Judo Association, which allowed its players to take part in all the competitions organized by that association. The first trainer of the newly created section was Ryszard Mencil, and the manager was Edward Adamus who obtained the qualifications of a *judo* instructor and began classes with the youngest adepts.

Since the beginning of the section's existence, its management has attached great importance to educational activities. In order to satisfy the efforts of each athlete and honor his/her achievements, cyclical meetings of the club authorities with the athletes, their families, school management were organized, during which successes were remembered and small gifts were given. The role of the closest ones was particularly appreciated, as they financed trips to competitions and tournaments in Poland and abroad, they sought sponsors and created an atmosphere of great support during fights [cf. Corcoran, Farkas 1993].

Many parents brought children from the outskirts of Kety and neighboring communities to the training sessions. They often participated in training activities, observing the progress of their children. The parents' involvement in the sports and educational activities conducted by the club made the *judo* section the most family section in the "Hejnal". *Judo* was often practiced by whole families, e.g. Katarzyna and Łukasz Banas, Wojciech and Maciej Boryslawski, Krzysztof and Patryk Janik, Marzena and Marcin Mitoraj, Robert and Jacek Szłapa, Stefan and Marcin Tondryk, Artur, Jacek and Bartłomiej Urbanski and others.

Since 1986, the *judo* section has been the organizer of annual regional youth team tournaments in the city on the occasion of the anniversary of the liberation of Kety and the 1st of May Labor Day. In the same year, the first achievements appeared. Paweł Plonka was appointed by the District Judo Association for a two-week sports camp in Hungary for obtaining very good sporting results [cf. Klinger-Klingerstorff 1951].

In 1988, in the Polish Junior and Younger Junior Championships in Bielsko-Biala, Izabela Dymitrowicz took the 1st place and Anna Grzesło the 3<sup>rd</sup> place. These two athletes were called up to represent the Bielsko

Voivodeship for competitions in the USSR, where they were under the care of Ryszard Mencel.

Increasingly better achievements and numerous fight shows for the inhabitants of Kety and the surrounding area encouraged young people to practice this discipline. At the end of the 80's of the last century the section consisted of about 80 competitors, and since then it has been developing more and more dynamically.

Since 1994, TS “Hejnal” conducted a plebiscite for the best athlete of the year and awarded the titles of “Athlete and Trainer of the Year”. So far they have been awarded to the following judokas: Dawid Grabski, Grzegorz Harezlak, Krzysztof Janik, Agnieszka Lizon and Izabela Mleczo. On the other hand, the title of the trainer was awarded several times to Ryszard Mencel. The best contestants were invited to annual meetings with the city authorities, organized by the mayor of the municipality of Kety [cf. Brousse, Matsumoto 1999].

Kyokushin karate was one of the most popular sports disciplines in the Bielsko-Biala region. The popularity of this sport in the Podbeskidzie region was undoubtedly influenced by American films depicting legendary heroes, such as Bruce Lee, overcoming the forces of evil using a new fighting technique. There were several training centers for young *karate* students in Bielsko-Biala, Cieszyn, Oswiecim, Wadowice and Zywiec.

*Kyokushin karate*, among numerous schools of combat and self-defense, was recognized around the world as all-encompassing, which is associated with the sublime nature of this system, which is based on the most effective technical elements, scientific training methodology and is enriched with relaxing and concentrating “Zen” exercises.

In *karate* it is used to define the names and understand the Japanese language. The term *karate* originally meant Chinese martial arts and was created by analogy to *Okinawa-te* (Okinawa hands) as “Chinese hands” (*kara-te*). Presently, *karate* means fighting with “empty” hands, without the use of any tools. The name of the *Kyokushinkai karate* section is translated as: “mastery” (*kyoku*), “truth” (*shin*), “association” (*kai*). In *Kyokushin* style, 70% of attacks are made with legs, and kicks are five times stronger than hits with hands. There are many styles. In general, you can divide *karate* into a contact one and that in which there is no contact with your partner. *Kyokushin karate* is a style of a direct confrontation with the opponent. Korean *Young-Ichoi* (*Masutatsu Oyama*) created the style.

The beginnings of *karate* in the Bielsko region are connected with 1975 when in Bielsko-Biala and its surroundings several informal groups dealing with this sport were established. The first successes came very quickly. Already in 1975, the first *Kyokushinkai karate* group was formed at the Primary School No. 1 in Oswiecim under the leadership of *sempai* Roman Gawel. In 1977 in Bielsko-Biala there was a TKKF “Samurai” center specializing

in popularizing *Kyokushinkai karate* style among young people and adults. Permanent *karate* practice teams meeting in the Primary School No. 14 consisted of 270 people. The best *karatekas* of “Samuraj” were very successful in national competitions. In April 1987 the representation of “Samurai” took the second place in the Polish *Karate Kyokushinkai* Championship in Lodz. There were 150 competitors from 50 clubs. There were also individual successes. 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the heavy category was taken by Tadeusz Jarominek, 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the open category was taken by Krzysztof Konieczny, 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the open category of women was taken by Anna Zuziak, and her husband Mirosław Zuziak 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the middle category [cf. Jakhel, Pieter 2013].

“Samuraj” contestants won as a team in the same year at the provincial *karate* tournament in Oswiecim and at “Bodybuilding debuts” in Zywiec (bodybuilding was also in the center of interest of the “Samuraj” Center).

In the 1980s, the fashion for *karate* became increasingly popular. New sections were created throughout the country, in which various varieties of this Japanese combat sport were practiced. Also in the voivodeship of Bielsko-Biala this discipline was becoming more and more popular. This was evident in 1983 in Andrychów. It was there, in the sports hall of the Beskid, that the “Beskid Cup” Second National *Kyokushin Karate* Tournament – Wadowice 83’ took place. Most of the audience was young people, but there were also people at the so-called “third age”. The event was attended by 70 competitors from twelve leading *karate* centers in Poland. In the open category, Mirosław Zuziak (Bielsko-Biala) won the 2<sup>nd</sup> place, while in the heavy category, Mieczysław Zabior (Wadowice) won the 3<sup>rd</sup> place. The team’s decisive victory was won by the representation of Krakow, before Gliwice, Zielona Gora, Bielsko-Biala and Wadowice.

Among the top national teams there were also competitors from “*Tori*” *Bielski Klub Dalekowschodnich Sportowcow Walki* [Bielsko-Biala Club of the Far-East Martial Arts] (hereinafter: *BKDSW*). The most distinguished athletes of this club were Krzysztof Konieczny, Adam Lacz, Jerzy Pietraszko and Mirosław Zuziak. And Ryszard Krol was the coach of the Bielsko-Biala *karatekas* [cf. Channon 2013].

In the competitions of 16 and 17 May 1992 in Włocławek during the Polish Championships of Seniors in *Kyokushin karate*, in which there were 162 competitors from 60 centers, Mirosław Zuziak, former vice-champion of Europe, the holder of the second dan, won the championship title for the third time in his career, winning in the middleweight category up to 80 kg. He easily defeated M. Słazak from Katowice in the finals. It was the seventh medal of this competitor that he won at the Polish Championships in the category of individual fights. Another athlete from Bielsko-Biala, Krzysztof Konieczny, fighting in the heaviest category, eventually took the

third place, winning the bronze medal. The team of the club from Bielsko, which has been winning medals in this competition for several years, ranked second behind the athletes from Katowice. It is worth mentioning that in 1989, Mirosław Zuziak, a *karateka* of the Bielsko club, a Polish champion in the *Kyokushin* style, won in the sports plebiscite of "Kronika Beskidzka" in the individual classification (839 points). For winning the plebiscite Mirosław Zuziak received the Cup of the Chairman of the Voivodeship National Council in Bielsko-Biala [cf. Cynarski, 2014a].

*Karate* has become an increasingly fashionable sport also in Cieszyn. The TKKF *Kyokushin-karate* center was registered here in May 1981. However, its history began in 1980, when the invincible Bruce Lee showed off on cinema screens. At that time *karate* gained a little less supporters than rock bands. The initiators of the organized *karate* in Cieszyn were Mirosław Ciupka and Bogdan Kubica. Over 100 young men practicing in various school sports gyms in Cieszyn were taken over by the TKKF "Celmy" factory center. After a year, an independent statutory center was established. So far, over 600 people have learned the basic secrets of this Asiatic sport. Not all of them, however, withstood the hardships of exercise and studied the philosophy of *karate*. Many, after a few classes, did not return to the classrooms. The most persistent ones received high *kyu* training levels. The acquired *kyu* allowed them to participate in local competitions (from 5 *kyu*) and national championships (at least 4 *kyu*) [cf. Lee 2003].

Between 1987 and 1989 in the center there were about 100 people practicing in two sections: beginners and advanced. The instructional classes were conducted by 1 Dan Bogdan Kubica. *Karatekas* practiced in the ZSRT gym in Cieszyn. It was made available free of charge by the school management. At least 10 athletes got 2 and 3 *kyu*. The team was made up of Jozef Branny, Antoni Fiedor, Jacek Gryzłó, Henryk Macura and Krzysztof Stoszek. The athletes have already had their first successes and successful starts, among others in national competitions, in the Beskidy Tournament and in the championships of Silesia. The greatest successes were recorded by Antoni Fiedor. In the last XIV Polish Championships in Lodz he won a bronze medal in the lightweight category (up to 70 kg). A record number of competitors (50) competed in this weight category. In the team scoring, the center was classified on the 6<sup>th</sup> place out of 52 participating clubs.

Antoni Fiedor also won the lightweight category in 1986 in the nationwide "Beskidy Cup" *karate* tournament in Wadowice. In the team scoring the Center team won second place.

In 1985, a group of leading activists of the TKKF *karate* Center in Oswiecim established the Oswiecim-based *Karate* and Far East Combat Sports Club (one of the first *karate* clubs in Poland, with president Jozef Gora (now a *ju-jutsu* expert). Mariusz Pawlus and

Andrzej Zajac (European champion of '96 in *kick-boxing*, now *London Shootfighters* coach) began their adventure with contact *Kyokushin karate* in the club with the instructor Tadeusz Bednarczyk in 1988 [cf. Piorko-Pawliniski 2009].

Tomasz Najduk 1 dan began his career from winning the title of Silesia Champion in *Kyokushin karate* in 1989. In 1990 the Polish champion is called up to the national team in *Kyokushin karate*, in 1991 he wins the 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the international *Kyokushin* tournament in Hungary, in 1992 in the open Lithuanian championship he wins the 1<sup>st</sup> place and in the same year he wins the 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the open Slavic States Cup in Moscow. In 1993, he moved permanently from Oswiecim to Katowice where he has represented the *Kyokushin karate* club in Katowice since then.

In the 1990s, the Oswiecim *Karate* Club organized nationwide *Kyokushin* tournaments, including the Cup of the President of Oswiecim, and in the open Cup of Slavic States in Moscow in 1992 Poland was represented by three athletes, including two from the Oswiecim club, Zbigniew Zielinski and Tomasz Najdych, who took the third place. Tadeusz Bednarczyk was the president of the Oswiecim club then. An important event was the fact that on June 4, 1994, after the exam, the Grand Master Shigeru Oyama personally tied a black belt (the symbol of the championship) on Tadeusz Bednarczyk. *Sensei* Bednarczyk was one of the few ones who met this distinction.

In 1996-1997, the Club organized nationwide *knock-down Oyama karate* tournaments and the *Oyama karate kata* Oswiecim Championships. In later years, the championships were held seven times.

Bogdan Czaplá was the initiator of the TKKF "Zen" *Kyokushin karate* center in Wadowice in 1978. In 1980, the "Zen" TKKF Center in Wadowice opened its *Kyokushin* branches in the Podbeskidzie region in such places as Andrychow, Sucha Beskidzka, Kalwaria and Kety. *Kyokushin* center in Wadowice, headed by Bogdan Czaplá, has become one of the most dynamically operating *Kyokushin karate* centers in the south of Poland. Since 1980, numerous regional tournaments and annual nationwide *Kyokushin* tournaments under the name of "Beskidy Cup" have been organized, enjoying great popularity in the environment. The tournaments were attended by the most prominent *karate* athletes such as K. Borowiec, Byczek, M. Drozdowski, Gwizdz, K. Keska, M. Niedzialka, W. Roj, M. Zuziak, Ewa Zebala and many many others. Besides the tournaments, numerous training camps were organized.

In 1988 a *Seitendo* was founded in the USA by *soke Edward Badiang*. He made first contacts with Bogdan Czaplá. In the same year Bogdan Czaplá left for the camp in Austria. There he was learning about *karate* fighting systems enriched with throwing techniques, levers, weapon-based fights, full contact etc., which at that time was not practiced in *Kyokushin* in Poland. After his return he

introduced these elements in his *dojo* [cf. Skorska 2003; Sieber, Cynarski 2013].

In 1990 an international training camp took place in Brenna. Dr Josef Linder was the main trainer, at that time he was a representative of the *International Okinawan Martial Arts Union (hereinafter: IOMAU) Juko-Kai & Seidokan in Europe*. In 1990 a representative office of IOMAU was established in Poland. Dr Krzysztof Kondratowicz, Ryszard Krol and Bogdan Czapla became the representatives of this organization in Poland. Since the establishment of IOMAU, there has been a series of intensive training courses. Bogdan Czapla went to numerous camps in Austria, Germany and Hungary. In Poland, both in Bielsko-Biala and Wadowice, trainings with the participation of Dr J. Linder took place. The scope of *Juko-kai Seidokan* training included *karate*, self-defense, fighting with weapons (knife, sword, *bo* and others).

In 1993 Bogdan Czapla attended a training in the USA. Upon his return and after obtaining powers of attorney and licenses to represent *Seitendo* in Poland, Bogdan Czapla established the Polish *Center for Seitendo Karate*. In 1994, *Soke Edward Badiang* stayed in Poland and lead a series of trainings in Warsaw and Wadowice. Since 1994, new *seitendo* centers have been established in Podbeskidzie, Silesia and Zagłębie, Pomerania and central Poland. Mainly *Kyokushin* karatekas were the managers of the centers.

In 1998 the Polish *Seitendo* Federation was established as a Physical Culture Association. The Polish Federation of *Seitendo karate*, acting under the authority of the Office of Physical Culture and Sport, organized instructor courses in the Podbeskidzie region. In Wadowice many training camps and sports competitions took place. The *Seitendo* team took part in many international tournaments, achieving many successes (Denmark, Germany, Hungary, India, Slovakia, Czech Republic). *Seitendo* athletes successfully take part in *taekwondo*, *kick-boxing* and *full contact* tournaments (Denmark, Hungary, India). It is impossible not to mention *Sensei* Jadwiga Widlarz, the winner of many tournaments in Poland (since 2000 in the Canadian representation).

*Karate* has its roots in ancient China and Japan and is a martial art. The work consists in perfecting oneself, i.e. shaping one's physical fitness with simultaneous will-power exercises and subjugation of the psyche. *Karate* shapes character, developing patience and entrepreneurship. This sport makes people noble and sensitive to pain [cf. Cynarski, Momola 2005; Cynarski, Niewczas 2017].

*Kick-boxing* is a sporting discipline (combat sport) in which you fight with both boxing punches and kicks. In the strict sense of the term, *kick-boxing* refers to disciplines developed by the Japanese (*Japanese kick-boxing*) and the Americans (*American kick-boxing*) in the 1960s and 1970s [Cynarski, Ziemiński 2010].

In the early days of *kick-boxing* there were two trends of this sport: Japanese and American one. In the Biels-

ko-Biala voivodeship, the history of the “Beskid-Dragon” Association dates back to 1993 when the *kick-boxing* section in Jaworze was established. Initially, the section offered classes with school youth and was a typical recreational section. From 1996 trainings were conducted in Bielsko-Biala, at Primary School No. 20, at 17 Lenartowicza Street. Only in later years, when in 2002 KS was established in Jaworze, and in 2005 it was transformed into “Beskid-Dragon” *kick-boxing* association, the players were (and still have been) successful. In the Bielsko-Biala region, the history of *kick-boxing* is inseparably connected with the professional athlete Dariusz Jung, the “Champion from Oswiecim”. Since 1994, he has enjoyed significant successes in this sport on the national and international arena [cf. Haines 1968].

He did not look like a strong man. He weighed only 53 kilograms at 166 cm tall. Only an exemplary straight figure and a specific way of moving around revealed that he was a professional athlete.

Dariusz Jung, at that time a 23-year-old Oswiecim resident from the Dwory district, was a professional *kick-boxing* world champion in the IKKC federation classification. He won the title in his hometown of Oswiecim on October 15, 1994, during the World *kick-boxing* Gala which took place on the ice rink of “Unia”, during which he defeated the British Mark Higway in a fight of the day. Dariusz Jung did not give any chances to his rival. In the battle contracted for 12 rounds, after the first reconnaissance battle, in the second one he immediately forced the opponent to the corner and there he hit him in the jaw with both strong and instant straight right [cf. Ziemiński 2001, 2006; Wikipedia 2019].

After receiving this blow, the Brit was unable to continue the fight. As a sign of victory, Jung did a split in the ring for nearly 3,000 cheering fans. And then less happy moments came. Shortly after winning the title of “Champion of Oswiecim” he went for a short time to France, where the semi-finals of the European Championship in *savate*, a French version of *kick-boxing*, took place. Jung's first fight in this tournament was with a local *Savate* World Champion and it was a lost fight. The decision of the judges was not unanimous (1:2), but the fact remains a fact, and in the balance of fights of the Oswiecim *kick-boxer* there had to be included a defeat [cf. Cynarski, Ziemiński 2010].

Fortunately, the French defeat did not break down Dariusz Jung, nor did it change his sports plans in any way. First, however, as soon as he returned from abroad, he appeared at a session of the City Council in Oswiecim, during which he demonstrated the belt of the world champion and thanked the counselors for the financial help the city authorities gave in organizing the October *kick-boxing* gala. This competition and the victorious fight against Higway made him a true professional, thanks to which he gained, above all, a sponsor and the right conditions for training. *Finally, I don't need*

to borrow money to come to the training – says Dariusz Jung – I have practically everything to be able to further develop, that is equipment, nutrients, monthly salary.

A group of great trainers took care of the Oswiecim athlete. Among them was Andrzej Palacz from Warsaw who years ago honed Marek Piotrowski's great talent in the team (heavyweight). At the same time, he served as a vice-president of the *kick-boxing* association, and had already prepared Dariusz Jung for the fight against highway. At that time, a few weeks before the master fight, the Oswiecim athlete went to Warsaw to improve his skills under the guidance of a distinguished trainer. Andrzej Palacz had enough time to meet his new trainee. His words were all the more credible when he assured us that Dariusz Jung was able to achieve no less success than Marek Piotrowski because he was a hard-working and consistent fighter, and probably better technically trained than his older and more famous colleague. The guardians of the Oswiecim athlete made plans for his further starts, he also trained hard himself. The sports exam was supposed to be a fight with the American *Rico Bronckington* for the professional championship of the most prestigious *kick-boxing* federation (ISKK). He wanted to win the titles in turn in all *kick-boxing* federations. Dariusz Jung fought the so-called prestigious professional fight with the Czech champion, 23-year-old *Dan Mitcherling*. The fans of Oswiecim announced that their favorite athlete would wipe out another rival from the ring. The skeptics repeated, however, that in *kick-boxing*, as in other combat sports, it is difficult to say anything about the future. Dariusz Jung himself said: *At this level kick-boxing is a sport for real men. There is no mercy here. If you go into the ring, it's only to win, to hit your opponent. And the best thing to do is to knock out if only an opportunity arises. I know that my rival thinks identically. He certainly won't waste his chance, so I can't wait.*

Faced with the brutalization of everyday life, social demand for personal self-defense skills grew. New clubs and sections (in the Bielsko-Biala region it began very late 1993-2004) were created, attracting more and more people [cf. Lemmans 1994].

The trainings were supposed to satisfy the basic human needs of getting rid of the feeling of fear in everyday life and the need to experience strong impressions and discharge energy in a safe way. For many young people, this was often the main form of participation in physical culture with the aim of maintaining and strengthening health, body beauty and the harmonious development of the overall performance of the organism as a whole. However, in the social environment there were some old stereotypes that unfairly assessed the influence of practicing *kick-boxing* on the personality of the trainee Wikipedia (2019), <http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kickboxing> (access: August 19).

## Discussion

Based on the analysis of the research results contained in the publication, it can be stated that the eastern martial arts in the Bielsko-Biala voivodeship between 1975 and 1998 did not develop dynamically, which was determined by many complex factors: economic, social and political as well.

One could discuss and reflect on the successes of the Bielsko-Biala judokas associated in the "Gwardia" Sports Club in Bielsko-Biala for a long time. In the years 1978-1981, the Bielsko-Biala's *judokas* already achieved excellent results, which are mentioned in the publication. It was quite a credit to Mieczyslaw Malczewski the coach of the Bielsko-Biala's "Guards".

As far as sports discipline is concerned: *Kyokushin karate* in the Bielsko-Biala voivodeship, among numerous difficulties, has been developing better and better since 1975. First, this sport was practiced in schools by youth, then in the Promotion of Physical Culture centers, and a little later in sports clubs. It is worth noting that in the 1990s the Oswiecim *Karate Club* organized nationwide tournaments achieving significant results.

As the youngest sports discipline, *kick-boxing* in the Bielsko-Biala voivodeship dates back to 1993. As already mentioned, this type of sport was practiced initially in schools, and later, between 1993 and 2004, *kick-boxing* Clubs were established in the Podbeskidzie region. Despite difficulties, in terms of trainers and complex political, economic and social factors, social demand for personal learning of self-defense skills increased [cf. Hamasaki 2014].

It is worth noting that first between 1975 and 1989, with a small break in the period of the first "Solidarity" movement activity (1980-1981), physical culture was treated as one of the tools of an omnipotent, totalitarian state to control society, especially the youth. Then, however, after 1989, the introduction of democracy, pluralism and market economy, physical culture was included in the category of "unprofitable" fields, marginalizing its significance at the expense of the health of the society, especially the young population. All these processes were also reflected in the Bielsko-Biala voivodeship.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, it will be justified to recall that the greatest successes were achieved by the Beskidy Judokas in the "Gwardia" Sports Club in Bielsko-Biala from 1981 to 1991 (participation in the Olympic Games and World Championships, medals in the European Championships and World Cup, trophies won at the Goodwill Games and many other prestigious international events). The athletes of the *judo* section of the TS "Hejnal" club in Kety in 1989-1998 also enjoyed medal successes. During

the Polish Championships in *judo* in 1992 Jacek Urbanski won the gold medal, and in 1993 Piotr Ludwiczak also won gold during the Polish Championships in Wrocław. *Kyokushin karate* and *kick-boxing* sports disciplines were practiced in the Bielsko-Biala voivodeship in several centers: Bielsko-Biala, Cieszyn, Oswiecim, Wadowice and Zywiec. In the 1980s and 1990s, athletes from Bielsko-Biala clubs had significant successes in national tournaments and city championships, including the ones of the city of Oswiecim.

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## Wschodnie sztuki walki w województwie bielskim w latach 1975–1998

**Słowa kluczowe:** kluby, organizacje, Podbeskidzie, sukces, sztuki walki, zawodnicy

### Abstrakt

Tłó. W latach 1975-1998 istniało w południowej Polsce województwo bielskie ze stolicą w Bielsku-Białej. Zostało utworzone 1 czerwca 1975 r., w wyniku wprowadzenia w Polsce nowego podziału administracyjnego. Obszar województwa wynosił 3704 km<sup>2</sup>. Dzieliło się na 18 miast i 59 gmin, a w jego skład w całości wchodziły obecne powiaty: wadowicki i żywiecki, częściowo bielski, cieszyński, oświęcimski i suski oraz skrawek powiatu chrzanowskiego.

Problem. Zamierzeniem autora było wykazanie na przykładzie trzech dyscyplin sportowych procesów oraz przedstawienie wielopłaszczyznowej działalności, które miały swe odbicie w województwie bielskim w omawianym okresie.

Metody. Główna metoda, jaką zastosowano w publikacji, polegała na: analizie źródeł uzyskanych w Archiwum Państwowym w Katowicach, oraz na podstawie informacji uzyskanych z kronik, czasopism, dzienników beskidzkich oraz publikacji, a także protokołów oraz wspomnień z relacji mieszkańców Podbeskidzia. W opracowaniu przyjęto układ problemowy. Wyniki. Opracowanie uzupełnia istniejącą wiedzę z zakresu historii fizycznej w okresie 1975-1998, w szczególności dotyczącą działalności klubów sportowych i organizacji sportów dalekowschodnich (*judo, karate Kyokushin i kick-boxingu*) na terenie Podbeskidzia.

Wnioski. Głównym celem władz bielskiej kultury fizycznej było szybkie uzupełnienie słabego zaplecza kadrowego i bazowego. Celom tym miały służyć plany upowszechniania kultury fizycznej przez poprawę sportu młodzieżowego, organizację kursów instruktorskich i opiekę nad tzw. dyscyplinami wiodącymi. W przypadku województwa bielskiego były to m.in. piłka nożna, narciarstwo klasyczne, *biathlon, podnoszenie ciężarów, boks, judo, karate Kyokushin, kick-boxing* (nieco później: w 1993 r. – sekcja w Jaworzcu), *lucznictwo i szachy*. W ówczesnych realiach to centrala zarządzania kulturą fizyczną, czyli Główny Komitet Kultury Fizycznej i Turystyki (i jego odpowiedniki) decydowały o tych dyscyplinach.