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WORLD KARATE CONFEDERATION

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1st European Championships 1998 in Bratislava, Slovakia

On 6th and 7th June 1998 the 1st WKC European Championships were held in the capital of Slovakia, Bratislava. On 4th and 5th June a technical and referee seminar was conducted by the senior referees Messrs. B. **Hinschberger**, G. **Reifenauer** and WKC Vice-President C. **Henke** and the technical advisors Messrs. E. **Codrington** (Wado Ryu), Y. **Ishimi** (Shito Ryu), T. **Ogawa** (Goju Ryu), H. **Ochi** (Shotokan). All official referees and coaches participated at this two day event and trained together with the masters. The four masters gave also training lessons to the Slovakian karateka.

The championships were held in the big ice-stadium in the city center. 20 European federations participated at this event. The local organisation was perfect! High officials attended the tournament:

Dr. Ivan **Gašparavic**, President of the Slovakian Parliament,
Prof. Augustín **Húska**, Vice-President of the Slovakian Parliament,
Mgr. Gustáv **Krajci**, Minister of Interior of the Slovak Government,
Ing. Ján **Odzgan**, Vice-Mayor of Bratislava.

They presented the medals to the winners.

During the championships the WKC board awarded the 8th Dan to Master Takeji **Ogawa**, technical advisor for Goju Ryu. After the championships the Slovakian federation invited all participants and officials to a big farewell party with live music. Special memorial gifts were presented to many foreign guests. At mid-night the Slovakian Karateka cheered the founder of the Slovakian karate, Master Ladislav **Klementis**, on occasion of his 50th birthday. Ing. Klementis is a founder member of WKC and also the Director for Goju Ryu in WKC.

Mr. Paul G. **Höglund**, President of the Swedish Budo Federation, attended the president's meeting and the first day of competition as guest of honour.

Mr. Karl **Neveceral**, longtime president of the Austrian Karate Federation, attended the championships as guest of honour.

Dr. Giacomo Spartaco **Bertoletti**, president of the World Jiu Jitsu Federation and editor of the Italian Budo magazine „Samurai“, attended the championships as guest of honour.

The outstanding athlete of the championships was the 18 year old kumite fighter in Shobu Ippon, D. **Formiriakov**, from the Chouvasian karate federation (Couvashian Republic, Russia) who won the gold medal in that category. He performed an excellent karate like in the „old days“.

The category of the kata shiai for the „old boys“ over 40 years was a great success. It showed that the youngsters can still learn a lot of the excellence of the performance of the so called „old“ boys.