



Report on the first Combat Sports Special Interest Group meeting at the 28th Annual Congress of the European College of Sport Science, and call for action

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Received: 04/09/2023; Accepted: 06/09/2023; Published: 07/09/2023

REVIEW

Abstract

This short report describes the process of creating the Combat Sports Special Interest Group (CSSIG), its first meeting at the 28th Annual Congress of the European College of Sport Science (ECSS, Paris 4-7 July, 2023), and to make a call for action for the next events. The first contact between the group that proposed the creation of the CSSIG was made after a session of the Annual Congress of the ECSS held in 2022, but the idea and format of the proposal was initiated in January 2023. After its approval the CSSIG set the topics for the first meeting. During the 2023 edition the ECSS event had eight special interest groups, including the CSSIG. The first meeting of the CSSIG included the presentation of its goals, and two short presentations: one related to combat sports athletes' health, and the other on testing and training monitoring of judo athletes. The aim of the CSSIG is to establish a sustainable network fostering evidence-based research and practice of combat sports, in order to: (a) promote health and safety of combat sports participants, (b) enhance their performance, and (c) improve training and competition practices. Thus, this report is also a call for action for the next events.

Keywords: Martial arts; combat sports; conference; science; education; training.

Informe sobre la primera reunión del Combat Sports Special Interest Group en el 28th Annual Congress of the European College of Sport Science y llamada a la acción

Resumen

Este breve informe describe el proceso de creación del Combat Sports Special Interest Group (CSSIG), su primera reunión en el 28th Annual Congress of the European College of Sport Science (ECSS, París, 4 al 7 de julio de 2023), y realiza una llamada a la acción para los próximos eventos. El primer contacto entre el grupo que propuso la creación de la CSSIG se realizó tras una sesión del Congreso Anual de la ECSS celebrada en 2022, pero la idea y el formato de la propuesta se inició en enero de 2023. Tras su aprobación, el CSSIG fijó los temas para su primera reunión. Durante la edición de 2023 del ECSS, el evento contó con ocho grupos de interés especial, entre ellos el CSSIG. La primera reunión del CSSIG incluyó la presentación de sus objetivos y dos presentaciones breves: una relacionada con la salud de los deportistas de combate y otra sobre la evaluación y seguimiento del entrenamiento de los

Relatório sobre a primeira reunião do Combat Sports Special Interest Group no 28th Annual Congress of the European College of Sport Science e chamado à ação

Resumo

Este breve relatório descreve o processo de criação do Combat Sports Special Interest Group (CSSIG), sua primeira reunião no 28th Annual Congress of the European College of Sport Science (ECSS, Paris, de 4 a 7 de julho de 2023), e para fazer uma convocação para ação para os próximos eventos. O primeiro contato entre o grupo que propôs a criação da CSSIG foi feito após uma sessão do Congresso Anual da ECSS realizada em 2022, mas a ideia e o formato da proposta foram iniciados em janeiro de 2023. Após a sua aprovação, o CSSIG definiu os temas para o primeiro encontro. Durante a edição de 2023 o evento do ECSS contou com oito grupos de interesses especiais, incluindo o CSSIG. A primeira reunião do CSSIG contou com a apresentação de seus objetivos, além de duas breves apresentações: uma relacionada à saúde dos atletas de esportes de combate e outra sobre testes e

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Funding: The authors received no funding for this work.

deportistas de judo. El objetivo del CSSIG es establecer una red sostenible que fomente la investigación y la práctica de los deportes de combate basada en la evidencia, con el fin de: (a) promover la salud y la seguridad de los participantes en deportes de combate, (b) mejorar su rendimiento, y (c) mejorar las prácticas de entrenamiento y competición. Así, este informe es también una llamada a la acción para los próximos eventos.

Palabras clave: Artes marciales; deportes de combate; conferencia; ciencia; educación; entrenamiento.

monitoramento de treinamento de atletas de judô. O objetivo do CSSIG é estabelecer uma rede sustentável que promova a investigação e a prática de esportes de combate baseada em evidência, a fim de: (a) promover a saúde e a segurança dos praticantes de esportes de combate, (b) melhorar o seu desempenho, e (c) melhorar as práticas de treinamento e competição. Assim, este relatório é também um chamado à ação para os próximos eventos.

Palavras-chave: Artes marciais; esportes de combate; conferência; ciência; educação; treinamento.

1. Introduction

Sport Science is a relatively new Science discipline, but has developed fast in the last decades, with researchers developing a large knowledge base on the effects of physical activity and sports participation on a wide range of physiological, psychological and sociological variables (Barlett & Drust, 2021). Martial arts and combat sports have been practiced for thousands of years and are now widely popular. This is evident in the competitive arena, where Olympic and non-Olympic combat sports are practiced by thousands of athletes of a wide age range, and also in recreational sports, where millions of people worldwide practice combat sports to improve their fitness and health. This high participation resulted in an increase in scientific research in the area of martial arts and combat sports, by a growing number of sport scientists all over the world (Franchini et al., 2018).

The European College of Science (ECSS) is an organization with a vision to lead the promotion and application of world-class, multi- and interdisciplinary science in sport, exercise, physical activity and health. The core missions of the ECSS include the dissemination of high quality, innovative research within a large group of experienced and younger scientists. One of the means to achieve this is the organization of the Special Interest Groups (SIG). Up to 2022, the ECSS had seven SIG, which were directed to broader topics such as Elite Sport Performance, Sports Nutrition, Wearable Technology, and Environmental Physiology, among others (ECSS, 2022). The organization of special interest groups helps fellow scientists to exchange knowledge and experience and to finally advance their area, and is a common practice in other main organizations related to sport and exercise research, such as the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) and the National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA). These last two organizations are based in the USA, and have SIG focusing both on general and sport-specific topics, with the NSCA having most of its SIG focusing on sports. Not surprisingly, considering the popularity of combat sports in recent year, both the ACSM and the NSCA have combat sports SIG (NSCA, 2023), which hold their meetings during the respective annual conferences. Therefore, the organization of Combat Sports SIG (CSSIG) in Europe seems to be both relevant and necessary in order to gather researchers interested in this topic and to foster research and scientific cooperation, within Europe, as well as between scientists from all over the world.

2. The European College of Sport Science Combat Sports Special Interest Group and its first meeting

The proposal to create the CSSIG was made in September 2022, by a Fellow of the ECSS, after discussing the process with the authors of the present text, and the proposal was approved in January 2023. The first meeting was then scheduled to occur during the 28th Annual Congress of the ECSS, in Paris, on July 5th. The session attracted 29 researchers interested in the group, and consisted of a brief presentation of the goals of the CSSIG by Dr. Bogdanis, and two 10-min presentations by Dr. Franchini (Judo athletes's evaluation and training monitoring) and Dr. Stavrinou (Protecting combat sports athlete's health), with time for interaction among those present. The main aim of the CSSIG is to establish a sustainable network fostering evidence-based research and practice of combat sports, in order to: (a) promote the health and safety of combat sports participants, (b) enhance their performance, and (c) improve training and competition practices. To achieve these goals, it is important that those who participated in the first meeting and the readers of the *Revista de Artes Marciales Asiáticas* spread out the existence of this group, and send suggestions to the next meetings to be conducted in the following Annual Congresses of the ECSS. It is important to note that 21 more researchers joined the group after the ECSS Congress, increasing the number of members to 50. We



hope that in the next ECSS meeting in Glasgow the attendees of the group will increase and that we will exchange knowledge and experience in this exciting field of Sport Science.

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