

# Stations to the World Championships 2016

The Karate World Championships 2016 are set. Still, it was a long and labor-intensive way to reach this goal. The first talks were held long before the decision was made in Austria's favor. Since then, the preparations for this huge athletic and cultural event in the upper Austrian capital were intense and to the point. The following protocol should give you a glimpse of the progress so far.

A further boom of the interest in the Karate World Championships 2016 can be expected through the decision – after severe efforts – of incorporating Karate in the Olympic program.

**October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011**

## Karate-WC 2016 is Assigned to Austria

On October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011 at 12:30 AM George Yerolimpos, general secretary of the World Karate Federation (WKF), announces at the Equatorial Hotel Melaka (Malaysia) the Executive Committee's unanimous decision to assign the Karate-World Championships (WC) 2016 to Austria.

Austria applied for staging the world's highest-ranked Karate-tournament with the cities Vienna and Linz. Linz came out on top. "It is a historic day for the Austrian Karate-scene", exulted national coach and sports director Ewald Roth, who was also responsible for the Austrian application. The unanimous decision was for Roth particularly astonishing. Even more since the competitors Croatia, Turkey, Australia and Indonesia have a seat in the Executive Committee themselves.

**October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2011**

## General Public is Getting Informed

Back home in Austria the general public is getting informed immediately about the news of the upper Austrian capital Linz being the site for the Karate-WC 2016. At a press conference at the Linzer Promenadenhof not only the many present media representatives are informed, but also Karl Hillinger, president of the Austrian Karate Association (OeKB), and Upper Austrian Sport County Council Viktor Sigl. The latter gives thanks to Roth for the successful work for the application over the last months and points out the synergy-effect the event has with upper Austrian tourism. Hillinger appreciates the WC in Linz as a stimulus for the positive development of the OeKB and the national associations. Hans Werner Streicher, chief of the WC's organizing committee (OC) refers to the planned positioning of the tournament in Austria and its international meaning.

Also, he gives an overview on the latest state of the preparations. Streicher emphasizes the collaboration with the Kunstuniversität Linz (art university of Linz), who is going to be a partner for the OC regarding art and design over the next couple of years.

**November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2011**

## **Organizing the WC 2016 Starts**

At the „Marriott“ in Linz, the designated headquarter-hotel for the WC 2016, only one month after the decision in Malaysia, work for the big athletic event in Austria start in that day. The last couple of weeks were characterized by intensive work-talks with responsible politicians and persons of public interests at federal, state and city level regarding their support for the WC 2016 in Linz. The prospective partners are informed both by sports director and chief of the OC Hans Werner Streicher about the intentions. Following this, more than 140 ideas for the implementation of the event are developed.

**June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

## **Strategic Management Starts Running**

Approximately 30 public figures from Linz and Upper Austria gather at the “Marriott” for the first meeting of the strategic steering committee. There they discuss the current status and the further course of action. Special consideration is given to the presentation of the WC 2016 at the upcoming World Congress in November 2012 in Paris.

**November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

## **With Image Video to the World Congress**

At the Hotel Pullman in Paris not only Antonio Espinos, president of the WKF, but more than 200 participants from 100 nations meet for the World Congress. A video by director Michael Sumper, promoting the beauty of Linz and its surroundings as well as the culinary arts of the Upper Austrian regions, gathers sympathies for the venue of the WC 2016.

**December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

## **The WKF´s First Visit in Linz**

While staying in Salzburg for the Grand Final of the Karate 1 Premier League, WKF general secretary George Yerolimpos, seizes the opportunity for a short stopover in Linz. There he visits the future venues for the Karate-WC 2016, the Tips-Arena and the Design Center. Both meet his approvals.

**August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2013**

## **Communication Concept is Set Up**

The professional partner for communication is the Center for Journalism and Communication Management of the Danube University Krems. Under lead management of Prof. Dr. Michael Roither several groups of students thought intensively about communication concepts and possibilities, considering the special parameters given by Karate in Austria. The outcomes of these deep thoughts are a variety of outlines with a high quantity of suggestions and implementation proposals. In a mutual workshop the outlines are substantially compared and the best and most promising proposals are combined to compile the Communication Concept 2016.

**September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013**

## **Coordination at Management Level**

A bilateral coordination meeting at the German Open Karate 1 Premier League Tournament in Hanau (Germany) is set up with Reiner Zimbalski and Horst Kaireit, the two chiefs of the OC from Bremen 2014. Main subjects of this meeting are essential strategic questions of setting up a WC, for example the recruiting of volunteers, the ticket sale organization, hotel and transport logistics and the like. The general framework and further arrangements to present Linz and Upper Austria – including a presentation at the OeVB-Arena in Bremen – were discussed.

**November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

## **Safety First**

All relevant issues and questions regarding the safety at the WC 2016 in the Tips-Arena are discussed with representatives of the ministry of internal affairs and the city police. Furthermore the responsible organizers resolve to strive for the WC to gain a “green event”-certificate, issued by the Austrian Ecology Institute.

**November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

## **Run on WC 2016-Items in Salzburg**

At the Premier League Finals in Salzburg, where more than 900 athletes and many fans were present, the new WC 2016 info-boost was presented: info brochures and stickers, which were distributed to an enthusiastic crowd. Furthermore, the official WC 2016-shirt is offered to the public and sold very well. With a part of the earnings various organizational tasks are financed.

**March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014**

## WC in Linz is Getting Green

26 people from Vienna, Lower Austria, Upper Austria, Salzburg and Vorarlberg agreed to dedicate themselves to the preparations and realization of the Karate-WC 2016 in Linz for the next two years. Then, 2800 athletes, coaches and officials as well as tens of thousands of spectators are expected. To guarantee a smooth WC, approximately 700 volunteers are going to be held, president of the Austrian Karate Association, Karl Hillinger, explained when he presented the concept.

The concept is the basis for all internal organizational tasks and shapes the strategic framework for the city of Linz and Upper Austria. Of relative importance will be the implementation of the WC 2016 as "Green Event" and the therefore needed certification process, emphasized Hillinger. The main aspect will be the responsibility for ecological sustainability. This has to start during the phase of preparation already. Karate-do, with its implicit understanding of values offers an ideal foundation for targeting a maximum of sustainability in all extents at the arrangements for the WC 2016.

**July 30th, 2014**

## ORF Produces WC-Movie

The intense working day shooting the video will also be used to take some photos of the national team athletes and some part of the organizing team of the WC 2016. All members of this gathering are excited to see the WC-2016-video, produced by the ORF (Austrian Broadcasting Corporation). With this video the broader public should be informed about the huge event in Linz. The broadcasting team under the direction of Doris Mersits already recorded the first sequences. In those, OeKB-sport director Ewald Roth conducts the athletes through the scenes. Martial art Karate-do is displayed as its best in the forms of Kihon, Kata and Kumite. All this in the terrific atmosphere of the Budokan in Wels. In interviews at the end of the movie, the spectator gets a personal view on Karate-do by the athletes. The short film is displayed at the WKF World Congress in Bremen in November. There Linz will be officially presented as venue for the WC 2016.

**October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

## Second WKF-visit in Linz

WKF general manager Francisco Alegrete is getting all the important information about the relevant WC-locations. Especially the Tips-Arena was examined carefully. There the Generali Ladies, Austria's biggest ladies tennis tournament, was taking place. That was helpful for examining the sports hall functioning with a big event. Other points of interest were the care of the local organizers for guests from more than 130 countries. Also, the headquarter hotel Courtyard Marriott and the Design Center, where the side events and the World Congress are taking place, were examined carefully by Alegrete. Finally, there

were intense talks about the state of the preparations. The impressions taken home by the general manager are extremely positive.

**November 24th, 2014**

## **Working Visit in Bremen**

Before conducting the own Karate-WC in Linz, the Austrian OC seizes the last opportunity to observe the preparations and implementations of such an important event at the German colleagues at the WC in Bremen. Over the last couple of years a strong relation with the German organizers developed which made deep insights before and during the Karate World Championships 2014 possible.

The Austrian members of the working visit were fully integrated into the organizational structure and therefore were able to experience a WC beforehand. The Austrian OC was able to review the own concepts in numerous talks with the persons in charge in Bremen. Also, the experiences in Germany complemented the own concepts. The working days in Bremen were both temporal and substantial very challenging for every person involved. That partly was because of the meticulous documentation of all talks and insights gained. Numerous photos complete the daily summaries.

**February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

## **Operational Preparations Start**

After more than three years of groundwork the operational implementation of the plans gathered in the last years for the Karate-WC 2016 in Linz starts. At a meeting in the Budokan in Wels reports from the fields marketing, people with disabilities, green event, volunteers and security are presented and discussed. Central questions regarding the structure and process organization of the Karate-WC 2016 are debated and decision in those areas were taken.

**March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

## **New Procedures at the WC in Linz**

For the first time a bigger team from the WKF visited the two WC-organizers in Linz: general manager Alegrete, chief of tournament Esteban Perez and two responsible persons from broadcasting company inspected the designated locations. The working visit actually started on the day before in the Budokan in Wels. There the Austrian organizing team gave a detailed orientation in the strategic intentions. Also, the necessary adaptations of the organizing rules were discussed.

There will be, for instance, an independent opening and closing ceremony in Linz. Furthermore, the competitions from people with disabilities are integrated into the

tournament. After intense discussions and explanations the WKF's team was convinced of all the advantages and benefits. Hence the WKF's Executive Committee is asked by general manager Alegrete to approve the amendments.

**March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

## **Karate-WC 2016 in the Austrian National Assembly**

The Karate World Championships 2016 are being presented in the Austrian National Assembly in front of the gathered sports committee with members of all political parties. Ewald Roth, Hans Werner Streicher and Eckart Neururer, together being the executive team, are informing the delegates about Karate-do as martial art and the latest progress with the preparations for the WC in Upper Austria's capital Linz. The Austrian Minister of Sport, Gerald Klug, guarantees the compulsory funding of the sportive huge event.

**September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015**

## **WC-Innovations are Set**

Over the last couple of days comprehensive talks about the status of the arrangements for Linz 2016 were held in Madrid at the WKF's (World Karate Federations) main office.

As the home world championships in Linz require some smaller and bigger adjustments of valid regulations, those changes were discussed by the two chairmen of the WC-organization, Ewald Roth and Hans Werner Streicher with WKF's general manager Francisco Alegrete and head of the tournament Esteban Pérez. Of special help was a true to scale, fully versatile 3D-model of the TIPS-Arena which was prepared and implemented by Salmin Herac.

Further, the end of September pending question whether Karate should be included in the Olympic Summer Games 2020 in Tokyo took a very positive influence on the discussion. All present persons agree that a positive decision would mean additional impetus for the WC 2016 on the one hand, additional challenges on the other.

The crucial reforms affect the entire schedule of the world championships. There will be an opening ceremony beyond the tournament phase in Linz for the first time in the world championship's history. It takes place on the evening prior to the competitions in the TIPS-Arena. Within the framework of a big concert of the Anton-Bruckner-University orchestra with artistic supervision of the Art-University Linz and the AEC (Ars Electronica Center) the nations are welcomed with an exceptional music and light show. It will be an evening of the senses for all the people participating in the TIPS-Arena. The closing ceremony will be redesigned and revalued as well. There will not only be the handover of the banners to the next organizers (Peru, 2018), but also another firework of emotions as Rei (gratitude) to the guests and nations.

The competitions of people with physical and/or mental disabilities´ integral inclusion will be another new aspect in Linz. Thereby, Karate-do is one of the few types of sport, where entire inclusion is implemented in all areas.