



WKF UPDATE

PREMIER LEAGUE &
SERIES A EVENTS



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Presented by



KARATE1
SERIES A



ATHENS

The Karate 1-Series A, introduced in 2019, brings together elite athletes from around the world to compete in exclusive international tournaments and improve their rankings. The 2023 season features five events, starting in Athens (Greece) and continuing in Konya (Turkey), Richmond-Vancouver (Canada), Larnaca (Cyprus) and finishing in Matosinhos (Portugal). Registration is restricted to athletes ranked from position 33 onwards, however, each division is limited to a maximum of 96 competitors. The top 32 ranked athletes cannot compete.

In 2023, Athens welcomed 1,035 athletes from 73 nations, with the host nation of Greece providing an additional 81 competitors. The city last hosted a Karate1 event in 2012, marking the first full year of the Karate1 Premier League. Given the large pool of athletes in Series A events, the competition follows a simple knockout format to determine who takes home the gold medal.



Female Kata

Mirisa Ohuchi (Japan) claimed her first Series A gold medal with a win over teammate Haya Horiba (Japan). The score was 44.3 to 42.2.

The 21-year-old has been competing on the circuit since 2018.



@karategallery_

Male Kata

Male Kata was another Japanese show-down as Aoi Funada (Japan) edged Yuto Akiyoshi (Japan) 44.4 to 42.4.

Funada also claimed the gold medal for the Series A in Jakarta at the end of last year.



Male Kumite -60KG

Hiromu Hashimoto (Japan) showed off his superior distance taking a convincing 8-1 victory over Italy's Carmine Luciano.

This was also Hashimoto's first medal in a Series A championship.



Female Kumite -50KG

Catarina Rodrigues of Portugal caused one of the big upsets of the day as she defeated Sara Tsutsumi of Japan in Female Kumite -50kg.

The 2020 U21 EKF Championships runner-up edged Tsutsumi in the final 3-3, winning with *senshu* (first-point advantage). This is Rodrigues' first medal in the Series A circuit.



Female Kumite -55KG

Preventing another gold for Japan was Italian karate-ka Syria Mancinelli, who defeated Shima Airi 4-0.

Mancinelli has had no luck competing in the -61kg division for the last 4 years; the change in weight seems to have worked for her.



Male Kumite -67KG

Yugo Kozaki got Japan's dominance back on track with a decisive 6-2 victory over Joaquim Mendes from Portugal.

Mendes claimed *senshu* (first-point advantage) within the first minute, however Kozaki's counter jab punch proved too much for Mendes over the rest of the match.



Male Kumite -75KG

Abdelkarim Asaas of Morocco beat local hopeful Theocharis Giannakos (Greece) following a slim 2-1 triumph in the final.

Unfortunately the entire match was not completed as Giannakos was forced to withdraw half-way through the fight due to injury.



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Female Kumite -61KG

Konstantina Chrysopoulou took another gold off Japan after beating Sarara Shimada 3-1 in the final.

Chrysopoulou was the equal youngest winner of the day being only 18 years of age!



@mk_lionseries



Female Kumite -68KG

Another young athlete to win the gold was 19-year-old Tsubasa Kama from Japan.

Kama triumphed over Mia Greta Zorko of Croatia with a 2-0 win, thanks to her superior anticipation skills.

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Male Kumite -84KG

Junya Eto (Japan) clashed with local hopeful Konstantinos Mastrogiannis (Greece) in a tense, tactical final.

Scores were 0-0 until Eto scored an impressive head kick in the last minute leaving too little time for Mastrogiannis to complete his comeback.

The match ended 3-1.



Male Kumite +84KG

The all-Bosnian final of Male Kumite +84kg was taken by Anes Bostandzic (AO-blue) who beat teammate Sandro Kresic (AKA-red) 4-0.

Bostandzic, the other 18-year-old winner of the day, also earned himself a bronze medal at the Junior World Championships last year.

@karategallery_

Female Kumite +68KG

Last year's European bronze medallist, Kyriaki Kydonaki (Greece), impressed once again with a convincing win over Kelara Madani (USA) in a final ending 4-0.

She started the match with the strategy of being the more aggressive fighter and maintained that approach even after earning an early lead.



@karategallery_



KARATE1 PREMIER LEAGUE

CAIRO

The Karate1 Premier League, launched in 2011, is the 'Best of the Best' in the world of karate comprising of four prestigious 3-day tournaments that take place globally. The 2023 season will kick off in Cairo (Egypt), followed by Rabat (Morocco), Fukuoka (Japan), and concluding in Dublin (Ireland). Only the top 32 ranked karate athletes from around the world will be eligible to participate, having earned their spots through their performance in continental championships and Series A tournaments.

This year's event marks the second time Cairo has been selected to host the Karate1 Premier League, the first being in 2021. The competition saw a significant increase in participation, with 382 athletes from 58 nations competing, compared to 218 athletes from 46 nations in 2021. The tournament consisted of a pool stage, where athletes engaged in round-robin style matches, and a final elimination stage to determine the gold medal winner.

In addition to the tournament, the Grand Winner for each category for 2022 was announced, recognizing the premier league athlete with the highest achievements from the previous year (seen below).



Female Kata

Japan's Kiyou Shimizu added another gold to her collection in Female Kata after defeating Grace Lau Mo Sheung of Hong Kong by 44.20 to 43.70.



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Male Kata

Damian Quintero of Spain won his first Karate1 Premier League gold since 2021.

The final of the category was a roller-coaster of emotions with both competitors finishing with a score of 44.10 and Quintero claiming gold due to the tie-breaking criteria.



@gokhantn

CAIRO
2023

KARATE1
PREMIER LEAGUE

Male Kumite -60KG

Kaisar Alpysbay of Kazakhstan beat Mohamed Gaber of Egypt in a match ending 3-1.

Alpysbay is no stranger to the pressure of a premier league final, he is currently rank 2 in the -60kg category.

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Female Kumite -50KG

Reem Ahmed Salama started the gold medal count for Egypt in the first kumite final of the day.

The current continental champion triumphed over Yorgelis Salazar of Venezuela 9-4.

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Female Kumite -55KG



Anna Protsenko (Ukraine; AO-blue) defeated local hopeful Salma Hassan (Egypt; AKA-red) in the Female Kumite -55kg final, winning by *hantei* (decision) after the match ended scoreless 0-0.

This was the first of 3 gold medals Ukraine claimed over the host nation Egypt.

@wfk

Male Kumite -67KG



World and Olympic champion Steven Da Costa of France won his 12th Karate1 Premier League triumph, edging past Dionysios Xenos of Greece via *hantei* (decision) after the match ended 1-1.

This match showed how the new rules around *hantei* make for a more dramatic final result when the head referee was called to settle a 2-2 dispute between the initial call of the judges.



Male Kumite -75KG

Extending the impressive performance of local karatekas, Abdalla Hesham Abdelgawad took out Egypt's second gold. The representative of the host nation put his kicks on display defeating Daniele De Vivo of Italy by an impressive 6-0.

@gokhantn



Female Kumite -61KG

Oleksandra Sholohova of Ukraine (AO-blue) caused an upset by defeating Noursin Aly of Egypt (AKA-red) 1-0. Sholohova scored a counter *gyaku zuki* (reverse punch) to the head with only 22 seconds remaining.

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Female Kumite -68KG

Elena Quirici of Switzerland exacted revenge on division rival Silvia Semeraro of Italy, defeating her 2-0 in a highly technical bout.

The last time these two met, the result went the other way with Semeraro winning 1-0 to get into the final of K1-Matosinhos last year.

@gokhantnr



Male Kumite -84KG

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Valerii Chobotar rounded off the Ukrainian victories by defeating Matteo Fiore of Italy 1-0 in Male Kumite -84kg.

This is only Chobotar's second premier league gold, his first coming from the K1-premier league in Rabat, Morocco during the 2019 season.



Male Kumite +84KG

The host nation's list of gold medalists was completed by Taha Tarek Mahmoud (AKA-red), who defeated Babacar Seck Sakho of Spain (AO-blue), 7-4.

Mahmoud is the youngest current number 1 ranked athlete being only 22 years old.

@gokhantn



Female +68KG

Ayumi Uekusa (Japan) executed a dominant performance beating Sofya Berultseva (Kazakhstan) 7-1.

Her reverse punches were without fault, scoring 3 to the body, and 1 to the head.

@gokhantn

Photo Credits:

Gökhan Taner | @gokhantnr



Karate Gallery | @karategallery_



Martin Kremser | @mk_lionseriesi



Upcoming Events

10-12 March | Karate 1-Series A,
Konya (Turkey)

22-26 March | European Senior
Championships, Guadalajara (Spain)

14-16 April | Karate 1-Series A,
Richmond-Vancouver (Canada)



Keep an eye out on YouTube:
World Karate Federation