

Brazilian Jujitsu Conquers United Arab Emirates

Contributed by Isaura Daniel
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Brazilian fighter Carlos Santos, Carlão, is organizing the first national jujitsu championship in the United Arab Emirates. Carlão, who is a black belt and three times jujitsu world champion, works at Abu Dhabi Combat Club, an academy belonging to sheikh Tahnoon bin Zaid, son of Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan.

He was sent to the Arab country by academy Brazilian Top Team, based in the city of Rio de Janeiro, to help spread the sport in the Emirates.

The championship is going to take place on December 17 in Abu Dhabi Combat Club and will have around 150 participants.

"We already have 80 enrolled, and there is still over one month before the championship," stated Carlão.

Jujitsu started spreading throughout the country after sheikh Tahnoon began practicing with Brazilian Nelson Monteiro, around seven years ago, while studying in San Diego, in the United States.

"The sheikh fell in love with the sport," explained Carlão.

The academy was opened in Abu Dhabi five years ago. At the beginning it was Monteiro himself, who has now returned to Brazil, who taught the sport.

Carlão travelled to the country to teach for the first time around three years ago, and from then on he has constantly been travelling between Brazil and the Emirates.

He has spent the last five months in the Arab country.

"I do not know how long I am going to be here," stated the fighter.

At present Carlão is the only Brazilian jujitsu teacher at the academy, but Brazilian Top Team has already sent six professionals to work in the country in the last three years.

According to Carlão, in the country, the sport is mainly turned to upper middle class people.

"There are many company directors practicing jujitsu here," he said.

He explains, however, that academy students include people from the Emirates, Palestine, and the United States.

A large part of the country population is made up of foreigners. The country citizens may go to the academy for free, but foreigners pay US\$ 150.

If it depends on the athlete's plans, the sport will grow even more in the Emirates.

Carlão wants to organize the first Brazilian jujitsu championship in Asia next year, and in two year's time also wants to take the jujitsu world championship to Abu Dhabi.

The championship normally takes place in Brazil.

A few days ago the Brazilian met one of the best-known boxing managers in the world, American Don King, who has shown interest in participating in the organization of jujitsu championships.

King is going to open two offices in the Emirates, one in Dubai and another in Abu Dhabi.

The championship to take place in December will include participants ranging from the white to purple belts.

The sport classifies athletes in the following colours: white, blue, purple, brown, and black, according to their performance.

Brazilian Jujitsu

Despite having originated in Japan, the Brazilians created their own way of fighting jujitsu.

This is so true that the sport is currently known internationally, and also in the Emirates, as Brazilian jujitsu.

Brazilian fighter Carlão was world champion in 1996, 1998 and 2000, and also won the European Championship, in Portugal, in January this year.

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