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ANALYSIS OF THE PARIS 2024 OLYMPIC GAMES IN COMBAT SPORTS

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ABOUT ARTICLE

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Abstract: This article presents an analysis of the results of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games in combat sports, the most prestigious competition of the four-year cycle. It discusses the successes of new champions and the failures of reigning champions in freestyle, Greco-Roman, and women's wrestling across various weight categories. The main goal is to ensure thorough preparation for future competitions and to study the training and preparation processes of the victorious athletes in order to provide worthy competition at upcoming Olympic Games.

Relevance: Since the independence of our country, increasing attention has been paid to the development and improvement of physical education and sports. Numerous decrees and resolutions have been signed to support the growth of this sector. Notably, the Presidential Decree of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-5368 dated March 5, 2018, “On measures to radically improve the system of state administration in the field of physical education and

sports,” the Resolution No. PQ-336 dated July 29, 2022, and Resolution No. PQ-5281 dated November 5, 2021, “On comprehensive preparation of Uzbek athletes for the XXXIII Summer Olympic and XVII Paralympic Games to be held in Paris, France, in 2024,” as well as several other legal documents, have played a significant role in advancing this field.

In Uzbekistan’s state policy, the further development of physical education and sports, as well as the upbringing of a healthy generation, has become a top priority. Modern sports facilities have been built, new types of sports are evolving, and competitions and tournaments of various levels are being organized, with representatives from different segments of the population actively participating. Our athletes are achieving outstanding results on the international stage. A strong legal framework for the development of the sector has been established. This includes the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Physical Education and Sports,” Presidential decrees, and government resolutions aimed at the development of wrestling and other sports disciplines.

At the XXXIII Summer Olympic Games (Paris 2024), 208 countries participated, and Uzbekistan finished 13th in the overall team ranking, achieving a historic milestone by winning 8 gold, 2 silver, and 3 bronze medals. In combat sports, Uzbekistan secured 4th place overall, following Iran, Japan, and the USA.

Notably, in combat sports:

- In the -74 kg freestyle wrestling category, Razambek Salambekovich Jamalov won a gold medal.
- In the -57 kg category, Ghulomjon Abdullayev earned a bronze medal.
- For the first time in history, Aktenge Keunimzhaeva represented Uzbekistan in the women’s wrestling -50 kg category at the Olympic Games.

The Paris 2024 Olympic Games were marked by unexpected outcomes. Several reigning Olympic champions suffered surprising defeats. For example, Yui Susaki and Helen Maroulis, both renowned champions, failed to win medals. Even Takuto Otoguro, the Tokyo 2020 Olympic champion, was unable to secure a qualification spot for Paris. Another notable case occurred in Greco-Roman wrestling, where the Rio 2016 Olympic champion was defeated in the final match by Mohammad Hadi Saravi of Iran — the Tokyo 2020 Olympic medalist and

World Champion (Oslo 2021). You can find the list of Paris 2024 Olympic champions and medalists in men's freestyle wrestling in the first table below.

Table-1

Paris 2024 Olympic Games – Results in Men's Freestyle Wrestling

| Weight Categories | Gold | Silver | Bronze |
|--------------------------|--|---|--|
| -57 Kr | ● Rei Higuchi Japan | Spencer Richard Lee United States of America | Aman Aman India |
| | | | Gulomjon Abdullaev Uzbekistan |
| -65 Kr | Kotaro Kiyooka Japan | Rahman Amouzadkhalili Iran | Islam Dudaev Albania |
| | | | Sebastian Rivera Puerto Rico |
| -74 Kr | Razambek Salambekovich Zhamalov Uzbekistan | Daichi Takatani Japan | Kyle Douglas Dake United States of America |
| | | | Chermen Valiev Albania |
| -86 Kr | Magomed Ramazanov Bulgaria | Hassan Yazdanicharati Iran | Aaron Marquel Brooks United States of America |
| | | | Dauren Kurugliev Greece |
| -97 Kr | Akhmed Tazhudinov Bahrain | Givi Matcharashvili Georgia | Magomedkhan Magomedov Azerbaijan |
| | | | Amirali Azarpira Iran |
| -125 Kr | Geno Petriashvili Georgia | Amir Hossein Zare Iran | Taha Akgül Turkey |
| | | | Giorgi Meshvildishvili Azerbaijan |

Uzbek athlete Razambek Salambekovich Zhamalov faced the following opponents at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games in the freestyle wrestling -74 kg category:

- In the qualification round, he confidently defeated Magomedkhabib Kadimagomedov (AIN), the Tokyo 2020 Olympic silver medalist, with a score of 8:0.
- In the 1/8 final, he overpowered Tajmuraz Salkazanov (SVK), a four-time European champion, with a dominant score of 11:3.
- In the quarterfinal, he narrowly beat Chermen Valiev (ALB), the U23 World Champion, with a close score of 6:5.
- In the semifinal, he secured victory over Vasiliy Rassadin (AIN), the 2019 Yakutsk World Cup winner and 2024 Asian Championship finalist (Bishkek), with a score of 8:2.
- In the final, facing Daichi Takatani (JPN), a 2023 World Championship medalist (Belgrade), Zhamalov executed a beautiful triple combination, locking the opponent's neck and legs to win by fall (tushé) ahead of time.

As a result, Razambek Salambekovich Zhamalov became the undisputed champion in the -74 kg weight category in freestyle wrestling at the Paris 2024 XXXIII Summer Olympic Games.

Ghulomjon Abdullaev's performance in the Paris 2024 Olympic Games – Freestyle Wrestling (-57 kg):

- In the 1/8 final, Ghulomjon Abdullaev defeated Aliabbas Rzazade (AZE), the 2023 European Champion, with a convincing score of 11:4.
- In the quarterfinal, he overcame Arsen Harutyunyan (ARM), a four-time European Champion, with a score of 12:5.
- In the semifinal, Abdullaev faced Spencer Lee (USA), the 2024 Pan-American Champion and 2015 Junior World Champion (El Salvador), but lost the match 14:4.

During this bout, Abdullaev attempted a double-leg takedown at 2 minutes and 32 seconds of the first period. However, the opponent defended successfully, countered, and executed a gut-wrench from the parterre position, gaining technical superiority.

As a result, Ghulomjon Abdullaev secured a bronze medal at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games in the 57 kg freestyle wrestling category.

Ghulomjon Ozodovich Abdullaev's Bronze Medal Victory at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games – Freestyle Wrestling (-57 kg): In the semifinal, after an unsuccessful second attempt at a double-leg takedown, Ghulomjon Abdullaev committed a technical and tactical error, which his opponent capitalized on. In the bronze medal match, Abdullaev faced Begzat Almaz Uulu (KGZ), a U23 World Championship medalist and U23 Asian Champion, defeating him with a confident score of 4:1. Thus, at the Paris 2024 XXXIII Summer Olympic Games, Ghulomjon Ozodovich Abdullaev secured the bronze medal in the -57 kg freestyle wrestling category, marking a significant achievement for Uzbekistan.

Jabrail Shariev's Performance at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games – Freestyle Wrestling (-86 kg):

- In the 1/8 final, Jabrail Shariev defeated Vazha Ghamkrelidze (World Championship silver medalist, Belgrade 2023) with a score of 5:1.
- In the quarterfinal, he faced Magomed Ramazanov (BUL), a Russian-born finalist of the 2020 European Championship (Rome) and 2019 World Cup winner (Yakutsk). Shariev lost this match by fall (tushé) with a score of 1:4.
- In the repechage round, he defeated Alexander Moore (CAN), a Pan-American Championship medalist.
- In the bronze medal match, he lost 0:5 to Aaron Brooks (USA), the 2023 U23 World Champion (Tirana).

As a result, Jabrail Shariev finished in 5th place in the -86 kg freestyle wrestling category at the Paris 2024 XXXIII Summer Olympic Games.

Some Highlights from the Olympic Finals: In the -65 kg weight category final, Kotaro Kiyooka (Japan) faced Rahman Amouzadkhalili (Iran), the 2022 World Champion (Belgrade). Kiyooka, a multiple-time international tournament winner, earned his Olympic spot by defeating Takuto Otoguro, the Tokyo 2020 Olympic champion, in the national trials.

In the final, Kiyooka demonstrated a highly active and aggressive wrestling style, especially excelling in parterre position. He dominated the bout and achieved a clear victory with a score of 10:3, becoming the undisputed Olympic champion in the -65 kg freestyle wrestling category.

In the -86 kg weight category final at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games,

Magomed Ramazanov (BUL), a Russian-born wrestler, 2020 European Championship finalist (Rome) and 2019 World Cup winner (Yakutsk), faced legendary Iranian wrestler Hassan Yazdanicharati, the Rio 2016 Olympic Champion, three-time World Champion, and four-time Asian Champion. During the bout, Hassan Yazdani sustained an injury to his arm, which prevented him from continuing the match. As a result, he was forced to withdraw, and Magomed Ramazanov was declared the winner, becoming the Olympic Champion in the -86 kg freestyle wrestling category.

You can find the winners and medalists in women's freestyle wrestling at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games in the second table provided above. As for Greco-Roman wrestling, in the 60 kg weight category, Islomjon Bahromov of Uzbekistan competed in the bronze medal match but lost to Se Ung Ri, the 2018 Asian Championship finalist (Bishkek). At the start of the bout, Se Ung Ri attempted a throw from the waist, which was scored 2 points, then continued his attack in parterre position, executing a gut-wrench technique three times, further increasing the lead. After the referee's whistle, both wrestlers returned to the standing position. There was a moment when Bahromov could have countered if he had managed to free his arm that was locked together with his torso — a key position to change the outcome. Following this, Uzbekistan's head coach R. Ruzikulov challenged the call, but unfortunately, the mat chairman upheld the referee's decision, confirming the awarded points as valid. As a result, the match ended with a 0:9 defeat for Bahromov, and he finished 5th in the 60 kg Greco-Roman wrestling category at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

Table-2

Results of Women's Wrestling at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games

| Weight Category | Gold | Silver | Bronze 1 |
|------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| -50 kg -53 kg | Sarah Ann Hildebrandt (USA) | Yusneylis Guzman Lopez (Cuba) | ● Yui Susaki (Japan) |

| | | | |
|------------------------------|--|---|---|
| | Akari Fujinami (Japan) | Lucia Yamiléth Yépez Guzmán (Ecuador) | Hyo Gyong Choe (North Korea) |
| -57 kg -62 kg | ● Tsugumi Sakurai (Japan) ● Sakura Motoki (Japan) | Anastasia Nichita (Moldova) Iryna Koliadenko (Ukraine) | Helen Louise Maroulis (USA) |
| | | | Grace Jacob Bullen (Norway) |
| -68 kg -76 kg | Amit Elor (USA) Yuka Kagami (Japan) | Meerim Zhumanazarova (Kyrgyzstan) Kennedy Alexis Blades (USA) | Nonoka Ozaki (Japan) |
| | | | Tatiana Renteria Renteria (Colombia) |
| Weight Category -50 kg | Gold Sarah Ann Hildebrandt (USA) | Silver Yusneylis Guzman Lopez (Cuba) | Bronze 1 |
| | | | Yui Susaki (Japan) |
| -53 kg -57 kg | Akari Fujinami (Japan) Tsugumi Sakurai (Japan) | Lucia Yamiléth Yépez Guzmán (Ecuador) Anastasia Nichita (Moldova) | Hyo Gyong Choe (North Korea) |
| | | | Helen Louise Maroulis (USA) |
| -62 kg -68 kg | Sakura Motoki (Japan) Amit Elor (USA) | Iryna Koliadenko (Ukraine) Meerim Zhumanazarova (Kyrgyzstan) | Grace Jacob Bullen (Norway) |
| | | | Nonoka Ozaki (Japan) |

| Weight Category | Gold | Silver | Bronze 1 |
|---------------------------|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| -60 kg -67 kg | Kenichiro Fumita (Japan) Saeid Esmaeili Leivesi (Iran) | Liguo Cao (China) Parviz Nasibov (Ukraine) | Zholaman Sharshenbekov (Kyrgyzstan) |
| | | | Hasrat Jafarov (Azerbaijan) |
| -77 kg -87 kg | Nao Kusaka (Japan) Semen Sergeevich Novikov (Bulgaria) | Demeu Zhadrayev (Kazakhstan) Alireza Mohmadiplani (Iran) | Akzhol Makhmudov (Kyrgyzstan) |
| | | | Turpal Ali Bisultanov (Denmark) |
| -97 kg -130 kg | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mohammad Hadi Saravi (Iran) ● Mijain Lopez Nunez (Cuba) | Artur Aleksanyan (Armenia) Yasmani Acosta Fernandez (Chile) | Gabriel Rosillo (Cuba) |
| | | | Amin Mirzazadeh (Iran) |
| Weight Category -60 kg | Gold Kenichiro Fumita (Japan) | Silver Liguo Cao (China) | Bronze 1 |
| | | | Zholaman Sharshenbekov (Kyrgyzstan) |
| -67 kg -77 kg | Saeid Esmaeili Leivesi (Iran) Nao Kusaka (Japan) | Parviz Nasibov (Ukraine) Demeu Zhadrayev (Kazakhstan) | Hasrat Jafarov (Azerbaijan) |
| | | | Akzhol Makhmudov (Kyrgyzstan) |
| -87 kg -97 kg | Semen Sergeevich Novikov (Bulgaria) Mohammad Hadi Saravi (Iran) | Alireza Mohmadiplani (Iran) Artur Aleksanyan (Armenia) | Turpal Ali Bisultanov (Denmark) |
| | | | Gabriel Rosillo (Cuba) |

Table-3

Results of Greco-Roman Wrestling at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games

Our compatriot Aram Vardanyan competed in the bronze medal match in the -77 kg Greco-Roman wrestling category at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games against Malkhas Amoyan, the 2021 World Champion (Oslo) and 2022 European Champion (Budapest). In the first period, Amoyan pushed Vardanyan out of bounds at the end of the opening minute, scoring 1 point. Due to Amoyan's activity, Vardanyan was put in parterre position, where another point was awarded to Amoyan under the rules. Amoyan capitalized on this and executed a 4-point gut-

wrench throw. In the second period, Vardanyan began aggressively and attempted to take Amoyan into parterre, but the move was not scored, as the referee ruled it involved illegal leg use. Later in the bout, Vardanyan executed a turning technique by controlling Amoyan's neck and arm, earning 2 points. After a challenge by head coach R. Ruzikulov, the score was successfully changed in Vardanyan's favor — from 2 to 4 points. Despite his active and determined performance, Vardanyan lost narrowly with a score of 5:6, and finished 5th in the -77 kg Greco-Roman category. His opponent, however, prevailed tactically, which ultimately made the difference.

In the -97 kg weight category at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, Rustam Assakalov of Uzbekistan faced Gabriel Rosillo Kindelán of Cuba, the 2023 World Champion (Belgrade), in the bronze medal match. At the beginning of the bout, Assakalov attempted one of his signature moves — a powerful chest throw using an overhead grip around the opponent's arm and neck. However, Rosillo successfully defended against the technique. During this attempt, Assakalov injured his shoulder, which prevented him from continuing the match. As a result, the victory was awarded to Gabriel Rosillo, and Assakalov had to withdraw due to injury. In a symbolic gesture signaling the end of his wrestling career, Rustam Assakalov left his wrestling shoes in the center of the mat after the match. Due to this minor technical error and injury, he concluded the Paris 2024 Olympic Games in 5th place in the -97 kg Greco-Roman category.

At the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, national teams in freestyle wrestling took the following places:

4-жадвал

| Ўрни | Жамоа | -57kg | -65kg | -74kg | -86kg | -97kg | -125kg | Total |
|------|------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|
| 1 | Iran | | 20 | 8 | 20 | 15 | 20 | 83 |
| 2 | Japan | 25 | 25 | 20 | 8 | | | 78 |
| 3 | USA | 20 | | 15 | 15 | 10 | 2 | 62 |
| 4 | Uzbekistan | 15 | | 25 | 10 | | | 50 |
| 5 | Georgia | | | | | 20 | 25 | 45 |
| 6 | Azerbaijan | | 6 | | 6 | 15 | 15 | 42 |

In conclusion, in order to further develop freestyle wrestling in our country, it is necessary to improve the scientific and methodological approach to the training process. There arises a need to develop and approve programs for the advancement of the sports reserve

training system. It would be appropriate to ensure the participation of not only local wrestlers but also high-ranking international wrestlers, as well as international-level coaches and referees, in global sports competitions. To enhance the professional skills of athletes and the qualifications of coaches, it is advisable to strengthen cooperation with foreign schools of wrestling, exchange experiences, and bring the level of domestic wrestling closer to that of leading countries in the sport. It is also necessary to systematically organize national and international competitions in combat sports, participate in international tournaments, and consistently secure licenses that grant the right to compete in the Olympic and Asian Games, increasing the number of qualified participants in each Olympic and Asian Games cycle.

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