



DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF KURASH SPORT

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Abstract

Brief information about the types of wrestling and their development and progress.

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Introduction

The task of training highly qualified athletes and wrestlers today is considered an honorable duty of every coach. The contribution of our country's athletes is invaluable in ensuring that the flag of Uzbekistan waves proudly across the international sports arenas of the world.

In preparing our athletes for competitions, special attention must be paid not only to their technical preparation but also to their moral, aesthetic, and psychological readiness, as well as to fostering national pride and instilling the ideas of national independence in the minds of our youth. A sportsman is often compared to an "ambassador of peace"—a messenger who carries the spirit of harmony.

Therefore, these ambassadors of peace must embody the qualities befitting such a title, and coaches must diligently work during the training process to cultivate these characteristics. In doing so, it would be appropriate to draw upon lessons from our history, the bravery demonstrated by our ancestors, and the wise counsel left behind by our great scholars. We hope that Uzbek athletes will continue to excel in all sports and achieve victory at global arenas and the Olympic Games, further elevating the honor and reputation of our nation and people.

The people of Uzbekistan have every reason to take pride in their national sports. Thanks to the care and support of the country's leadership in developing physical education and sports, our national sports are steadily growing and becoming



increasingly popular. As our President has emphasized, nothing introduces a nation to the world as quickly as sport.

Wrestling, considered one of the forms of hand-to-hand combat, has an ancient history. Images of wrestling competitions have been found on a silver dish and pottery discovered in the ruins of the ancient city of Varakhsha near Bukhara. Likewise, murals depicting hunting, horseback riding, archery, and wrestling contests can be seen on the walls of the palace in Panjakent.

The ancient Greek historian Herodotus wrote that our ancestors—the Saka, Massagetae, and Turkic tribes—held wrestling competitions during Navruz and other folk celebrations. In addition, the heroes of “Shahnameh,” “Alpomish,” and “Gorogly” were also described as strong wrestlers in folk epics. The Zoroastrian “Avesta” and the ancient Indian “Mahabharata” also mention that the Saka, Massagetae, and Turkic tribes practiced wrestling techniques in battles against “evil forces.”

The hand-to-hand combat methods of Turkic peoples—modern Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Karakalpaks, Turkmens, and others—emerged from the lifestyle, environment, and traditions of these various nations and tribes. These methods fostered physical strength, agility, endurance, courage, and bravery. Before developing their rich culture, the ancient ancestors of the Uzbek people endured great challenges and demonstrated exceptional bravery; such conditions required individuals to be strong and physically resilient.

Wars between tribes, military campaigns, and battles against invaders demanded that men be physically strong, courageous, and skilled fighters. Conflicts between tribes were often resolved by selecting champions to wrestle—matches that became known as “Kurash.” Over time, national wrestling techniques played an important role in training brave warriors. In the history of our ancestors, wrestling techniques were among the earliest forms of physical exercise to develop. Wrestling was not only a form of combat but also a popular form of entertainment. Wrestling techniques developed and evolved based on the lifestyle, living conditions, and customs of each region. In the eastern part of Central Asia, the **belt-wrestling** style known as the **Fergana style** emerged, whereas tribes in the northern and southern regions developed the **International (Bukhara) style**. Both styles served as means of physical development and military training.



The fact that the wrestling styles of Central Asian peoples share a common historical path and that Turkic traditions and customs are similar is strongly reflected in these wrestling methods. The Bukhara style of Uzbek wrestling closely resembles the Kazakh and Kyrgyz “Kures” and the Turkmen “Guresh.” The Fergana style is also very similar to the wrestling traditions of the Uyghurs and Karluks.

The development and popularization of wrestling styles were greatly influenced by the peaceful coexistence of different peoples and the blending of their traditions and customs. Additionally, the passage of the **Great Silk Road** through Central Asia contributed significantly to the spread and popularization of physical exercises and hand-to-hand combat styles. As a result, wrestling traditions similar to the Fergana style were formed among the Mongols and Koreans.

Wrestling techniques, having ancient origins, are today practiced throughout Asia and in several European countries. Eastern scholars wrote extensively about these techniques, their history, variations, and famous wrestlers. In the “Baburnama,” the Timurid ruler and commander Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur described an episode from his military campaign where wrestlers competed in the camp: the boatman-wrestler Dost Yosin of Lahore wrestled with a competitor named Khayr and defeated him with difficulty.

Babur highly praised the famous wrestler Muhammad Abu Said, calling him an incomparable champion. He also wrote that some of his contemporaries possessed such strength that they could bring down a horse with a single strike.

In Ibn Sina’s “Canon of Medicine,” wrestling methods are described as follows: “There are several types of wrestling. In one type, each wrestler grabs the opponent’s belt and pulls toward himself while trying to escape from his opponent’s grip. The other type involves holding without letting go. In another, one wrestler grabs the other with both arms, pulls him tightly, and turns him sideways; the right arm should pass underneath. Wrestlers sometimes stand upright, sometimes bend. Wrestling includes countering blows with the chest, bending an opponent forward by grabbing the neck, entangling the legs to trip, or using the feet to perform techniques applied by skilled wrestlers.”



Since the early 20th century, our wrestlers have participated in international competitions. They earned victories over all competitors in foreign and European wrestling arenas and were recognized as unmatched champions.

The land of Uzbekistan has long been the homeland of great scholars, heroes, and wrestlers. Our people are distinguished from others by their national pride, honor, hospitality, and generosity. Since the independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan, our nation has gained the right to choose its own path of development. Many skilled athletes have achieved victories in international competitions, raising our flag high while the national anthem played, showing the world the true identity of the Uzbek people.

Today, the growing popularity of Uzbek wrestling, the revival of national values, and the realization of the ancient dreams of our ancestors are all signs of progress.

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