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## Diagnosics and Correction of Pre-Competition Psychological Readiness of Judoists of Different Qualifications

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*The paper contains experimental materials on diagnostics and correction of pre-competition psychological readiness of judoists of different qualifications. The diagnostics of pre-competition psychological readiness is carried out during the whole pre-competition mesocycle – at the beginning and at the end of every micro cycle. The results of the diagnostics underlie the development of individual contents of correctional work for every sportsman.*

*The contents of the correctional work can have substantial differences depending on the sport qualifications of a judoist and the completeness of separate components of his/her mental preparation.*

*In order to verify the effectiveness of the developed contents of correctional work we have carried out three pedagogical experiments with judo sportsmen of different sport qualifications. The correctional work has been done with judo sportsmen of different sport qualifications during these three competition periods; it allowed us to achieve the completeness of each structural component of mental preparation, which in its turn contributed to the achievement of optimal pre-competition psychological state of judoists; adequate reactions during the fight; improvement of the judoists' performance.*

*Keywords: correction, psychological readiness, judo sportsmen, judoists, qualification.*

**Topicality:** Success of sportsmen in competitions requires not only a high level of physical, technical and tactical readiness, but also it requires the maximum of mental efforts, which underlie the psychological readiness of the sportsman. It is worth of note that it is the mental factor that plays crucial role in intensive fights. A number of authors (Alekseev, 2004; Babushkin, 1998; Bisembaev, 1990; Bobrovsky,

2005; Venglarsky, 1981; Vyatkin, 1981; Kardanov, 1998; Odintsov, 2006; Poleva, 2006; Rodionov, 2004; Sirotnin, 1996; Alschuler, 1970; Butt, 1987, etc.) point out the main significance of the psychological readiness for the accomplishment of assigned tasks in competitions and emphasize the necessity for creation of the pre-competition mental preparation for a sportsman. In order to solve these problems scholars offer different

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means and methods (Antipin, 2007; Bleer, 1988; Babushkin, 2007; Buntsen et al., 1998; Volkov, 1994; Eganov, 1988; Pugachev, 1989; Smolentseva, 2003; Butt, 1987; Csikszentmihalyi, 1989; Charms, 1984; Unestahl, 1996, etc.). Here special attention is paid to the support of stable sport motivation (Antipin, 2007; Bobrovsky, 2005; Apter, 1982; Arkes, 1982, etc.).

During the pre-competition training of wrestlers of various specializations (Vengarsky, 1981; Shuliki et al., 2006; Eganov, 1988; Igumenov et al., 2004; Koblev, 1990; Levitskiy, 2003; Pahomovich, 1993; Piloyan, 1999; Plotnikov, 2004; Potrebich, 1988; Sirotin, 1989; Semenov, 1994, etc.) most of time is devoted to physical and technical preparation, individualization of the training process, and scant attention is paid to the psychological readiness of a sportsman. Babushkin (6) assumes that a pre-competition mesocycle should focus 20 % of its attention on the psychological readiness of a sportsman at the stage of primary sport specialization, 30 % at the stage of advanced sport specialization and 50 % at the stage of sport proficiency. However special literature (Eganov, 1988; Kardanov, 1998; Levitskiy, 2003; Pahomovich, 1993; Plotnikov, 2004; Poleva, 2006, etc.) lacks for such recommendations.

The psychological readiness of a sportsman for a competition is an integral personal structure, which includes a number of psychological characteristics reflecting the sportsman's inner state in general (motivation, needs, emotions, reflection, motoricity). At the pre-competition stage a sportsman should attain the psychological readiness. But to attain this sportsman should be aware of its components underlying main changes in the training process: recreation activities for a sportsman, changes in the intensively of physical exercises and the like.

The psychological support of pre-competition readiness should include

comprehensive diagnostics of the constituents of the mental readiness and its correction so that the sportsman attains the optimum inner state for better performance. The curricula of sports schools, textbooks on wrestling and psychology and special literature pay no attention to the psychological preparation of sportsmen based on the results of diagnostics of psychological readiness in a certain type of sports. Hence, coaches pay little attention to this problem.

We have conducted theoretical analysis of the current state of the problem of psychological readiness of wrestlers for competitions and have attained results from our observations on sportsmen's behavior at the pre-competition stage and during the competition. It allowed us to formulate a **contradiction**: between the existing need to manage the psychological preparation of judo sportsmen based on the results of diagnostics of psychological readiness at the pre-competition stage with the focus on formation of a high level of psychological readiness for a competition and lack of attention to this problem in the theory of physical education and sports training, and in the theory and methodology of judo wrestling.

We assume that keeping in mind the dynamics of the state of psychological readiness of a sportsman in a pre-competition mesocycle serves as one of the necessary prerequisites for the providing of psychological preparation of judoists for a competition. Psychological support for the preparation of a sportsman for a competition should be based on the monitoring of changes in the psychological readiness of a certain sportsman at the stage of immediate preparation for a competition and his/her deviations from assigned parameters. Here we need to know factors, which produce impact on the dynamics of psychological readiness of a certain sportsman. We need to know personal indicators of this state at the stage of immediate preparation for a competition.

**Tasks of the research:** 1) to determine the level of pre-competition psychological readiness of judo sportsmen of different qualifications; 2) to test the efficacy of methods aimed to correct the psychological readiness of judo sportsmen in pre-competition mesocycle.

**Research methodology and structure.** When correcting pre-competition psychological readiness of judo sportsmen we should take into account the initial level of each of the constituents, which comprise the psychological readiness: needs and motivations, reflection, emotions, sensorimotor behavior. In order to diagnose the pre-competition psychological readiness we recommend the method of Babushkin and Smolentseva (7), which we apply in our research and practical work.

When diagnosing needs and motivations of the psychological readiness we give scrutiny to the following aspects: a sportsman's need for the achievement of high results in a certain competition; a sportsman's sport motivation oriented to competition; a sportsman's competitive motivation oriented to the attainment of success.

When diagnosing reflection we consider the following: 1) confidence of successful performance at the upcoming competition; 2) perception of competitors' abilities; 3) a sportsman's desire to take part in the competition; 4) subjective perception of the sportsman's abilities by other people (coach, team leader); 5) personal significance of participation in the upcoming competition for the sportsman.

When diagnosing emotions we pay attention to the following: 1) anxiety as an inner state; 2) vegetative coefficient via M. Lüscher test; 3) ability to control your own emotional state; 4) emotional state. The diagnostics of the stated aspects should be done at the pre-competition stage after every training exercise with the exception of abilities to psychological regulation (to be examined at the beginning of the pre-

competition preparation and after every micro-cycle).

When diagnosing sensorimotor behavior we examine the following: 1) measured tapping test; 2) the accuracy of repeating of a given effort (20 kg) with the use of a handheld dynamometer.

**Research results.** In order to examine the psychological readiness of judoists of different sport qualifications we have undertaken research of three groups of judo sportsmen: the first group (30 people), who have reached juvenile grade; the second group (30 people), who have reached adult grade (1,2,3); the third group (20 people), who have reached the grade of sub-master and master of sports. The psychological readiness rates for a competition were defined: at the beginning of the pre-competition mesocycle; after the warming-up micro-cycle (the second sample); after the intensive training micro-cycle (the third sample); after the recovery (recreational) micro-cycle one day before the competition (the third sample). Now we carefully examine the rates of every structural component of the psychological readiness of judo sportsmen of different sport qualifications (Table 1).

#### **The first group of judo sportsmen (juvenile grade)**

*Needs and motivations.* Bearing in mind that the level of readiness of this component lays between 7 to 9 points, and the selected level corresponds to its low value, it can possibly be improved through special psychological preparation of sportsmen. After the warming-up micro-cycle there was a decline ( $P < 0,05$ ) in motivation of juvenile judo sportsmen with a subsequent increase after the intensified and recovery micro-cycles ( $P < 0,05$ ). Orientation of sport motivation reflected its training specificity. Success attainment motivation and striving after high results in the upcoming competition had a low level of expression.

Table 1. The dynamics of psychological readiness of judoists of different qualifications at the pre-competition stage ( $\bar{x} \pm m$ ), points

Groups of judo wrestlers, components of the psychological readiness	Stages of examination				P between 1 and 4
	At the beginning of the pre-competition period of training	After the warming-up micro-cycle	After the intensified-training micro-cycle	After the recreational (recovery) micro-cycle	
<i>First group</i>					
Motivational	5,5±0,1	5,0± 0,15*	5,6±0,12*	5,8± 0,13	>0,05
Emotional	7,0 ±0,23	6,3± 0,2	5,5± 0,12	6,5± 0,21*	<0,05
Reflectory	8,5± 0,2	8,8 ±0,23	7,8 ±0,2*	9,2±0,24*	<0,05
Sensorimotor	3,0 ±0,08	3,7±0,07*	3,6±0,07	3,5± 0,09	<0,05
<i>Second group</i>					
Motivational	5,3 ±0,1	5,6± 0,5	5,9 ±0,1	5,7± 0,1	>0,05
Emotional	7,6± 0,13	6,4 ±0,2*	6,3± 0,18	6,6 ±0,2	<0,05
Reflectory	8,4± 0,2	7,8± 0,24*	8,5 ±0,25*	7,9 ±0,27*	<0,05
Sensorimotor	5,3± 0,1	4,4± 0,09*	4,9±0,08*	5,2 ±0,08	>0,05
<i>Third group</i>					
Motivational	6,3 ± 0,2	6,4 ±0,2	6,6 ± 0,23	6,7± 0,24	>0,05
Emotional	7,21± 0,21	9,0 ±0,32*	8,3± 0,25*	9,4± 0,25*	<0,05
Reflectory	9,6 ± 0,32	10,2± 0,34*	10,1± 0,35	10,5± 0,3	<0,05
Sensorimotor	5,5 ± 0,14	5,7± 0,12	5,6 ±0,12	5,7± 0,11	>0,05

Note: \* – credibility of a difference with the preceding index, when  $P < 0,05$

When scrutinizing *the emotional component* of the psychological readiness of judoists, we should point out its higher dynamics in comparison to needs and motivations. After the warming-up micro-cycle the emotional component stays at the middle level of readiness. After the intensified training cycle it faces a substantial decline ( $P < 0,05$ ), which apparently is imposed by more intensive physical exercise. After the recovery micro-cycle the emotional component rate substantially increases ( $P < 0,05$ ). By the beginning of a competition constituents of the emotional component do not reach the necessary (high) level of readiness for the competition.

*The sensorimotor (motional) component* stays at a medium level of readiness. Its noticeable increase ( $P < 0,05$ ) can be seen after the warming-up micro-cycle, and after that no changes were detected.

*The reflectory component* of a sportsman readiness includes two constituents – an attitude to an upcoming competition and personal importance of participation in the competition for the sportsman. Relaxation of the attitude to the upcoming competition was detected after the intensified training micro-cycle, and there was an increase ( $P < 0,05$ ) of this rate after the recovery micro-cycle. In the process of pre-competition training judoists demonstrate adequate self-assessment in correlation with one's personal abilities. However when approaching the competition, when sportsmen become aware of their competitors, bearing this new information in mind sportsmen evaluate their future and the attitude to the upcoming competition increases. Apparently sportsmen feel physically, technically, psychologically prepared for the competition. However there is a decrease of importance of participation in the competition for a sportsman. Thus, at the beginning of the pre-

competition training of a sportsman the importance of participation was 60,2 points (low level), whereas by the end of the pre-competition training it considerably decreased ( $P < 0,05$ ) to 45 points. Perhaps, this had some impact on the attitude to the competition.

### **The second group of judo sportsmen (3,2,1 adult grades)**

*Motivations and needs* have a relatively low level of expression – medium (maximum is 9 points) during the whole pre-competition training period. From one competitive stage to another we detect an increase of this component.

*The emotional component* also stays at the medium level of expression (9 points is maximum) during the whole pre-competition training period. There is a decrease after the warming-up cycle and its subsequent stabilization. Meanwhile some of this component's constituents get worse, the others get better. It is worth to mention the conservatism of the ability to psychological self-regulation, since few things can be done with this constituent within such a short period of time. Hyper reactivity as a response to the pre-competition exercises expresses itself through situational anxiety and emotional state.

*The sensorimotor component* has a high level of expression (5-6 points). Its considerable decrease can be detected after the warming-up micro-cycle with the subsequent increase to the initial level.

*The reflectory component* has a medium level of expression (high 13-15 points). During the process of training it decreases after the warming-up and recovery micro-cycles. Apparently, when the competition approaches sportsmen realize their insufficient level of readiness for fight with future competitors, which reflected itself in a decrease of attitude to the upcoming competition and a decrease of its personal importance for the sportsman.

### **The third group of judo sportsmen (sub-master and master of sports)**

The formation of *needs and motivations* stays at a medium level, approaching its high level. During the process of pre-competition training it stays stable and the striving after successful performance in the competition increases.

*The emotional component* of readiness features dynamism of the pre-competition training: an increase after the warming-up and intensified training micro-cycles and a decrease after the recovery micro-cycle. High intensity of physical and psychological exercises during the pre-competition training seems to have considerable impact here, which requires its timely recovery activities and exercise corrections. All constituents of the emotional component (except for the ability to self-regulation) feature a high level of dynamism.

*The sensorimotor component* has a high level of expression and does not change drastically during the pre-competition training period. Highly qualified sportsmen feature a high level of motion regulations when compared to lowly qualified sportsmen (the first group).

*The reflectory component* of the psychological readiness has a middle level of expression (maximum is 15 points) and do not feature considerable dynamism. In comparison to the initial state (before pre-competition training starts) it experiences an increase and subsequent stabilization.

In order to solve the second task – to examine the effectiveness of our correction technologies (32, 33, 34) of the pre-competition psychological readiness of judo sportsmen of different qualifications we have undertaken three pedagogical experiments. The first pedagogical experiment was done by A.N. Sokolov under our supervision with juvenile judo sportsmen at the stage of primary sport specialization. The second pedagogical experiment was done my

A.P. Shumilin with judo sportsmen at the stage of advanced sport specialization. The third pedagogical experiment was undertaken by A. I. Chikurov with highly qualified judoists under the supervision of A.P. Shumilin.

Two groups of judo sportsmen took part in each experiment – a control group and an experimental group (10-15 people in each group). Each sportsman was tested for optimal performance of the psychological readiness for a competition; we oriented to these features during the psychological correction of readiness. In the course of experiment its participants were trained and took part in three competitions.

Before the beginning of training of judo sportsmen for each competition we estimated the level of personal psychological readiness, estimated the extent of formation of main components of psychological readiness for a competition (the first sample). We conducted individual training with sportsmen of experimental groups in order to form the psychological readiness for a competition. The contents of this work are stated in our previous works (6, 32, 33, 34). Here we present a short summary of this methodology.

*The stage of primary sport specialization.* The correction of pre-competition psychological readiness of juvenile judoists at this stage includes work in the following directions: 1) the formation of psychological structure of competitive activities; 2) the analysis of efficacy of competitive activities; 3) the satisfaction of relevant needs; 4) estimation of dominant and relevant pre-competition psychological states of sportsmen; 5) the planning of ratios of types of training for sportsmen at the pre-competition stage; 6) teaching sportsmen the main skills of psychological self-regulation; 7) the formation of cognitive resource for juvenile sportsmen for better performance in competitions.

*The stage of advanced sport specialization.* The correction of pre-competition psychological

readiness of judo sportsmen at this stage is undertaken in the following aspects: 1) the development and improvement of the psychological structure of competitive activities; 2) estimation of dominant and relevant pre-competition psychological states of sportsmen, estimation of relevant factors; 3) the improvement of psychological self-regulation skills; 4) the development of individual training programs for the attaining of psychological readiness of judoists in competition; 5) the planning of ratios of types of training for sportsmen at the pre-competition stage; 6) the correction of the orientation of training exercises depending on the results of a sportsman diagnostics; 7) ability to provide recovery after training and competitions; 8) the formation of individual style of competitive activities; 9) modeling of competitive situations; 10) the enrichment of cognitive resource for juvenile judo sportsmen and its realization in competitions.

*The stage of sport proficiency.* The correction of pre-competition psychological readiness of highly qualified judoists includes work in the following directions: 1) the diagnostics and correction of psychological readiness of judo sportsmen for a competition; 2) the improvement and preserving of skills of psychological self-regulation; 3) ability to provide recovery after training and maintaining of sport motivation; 4) the planning of ratios of types of training for judoists; 5) the correction of the orientation of training exercises depending on the results of a sportsman diagnostics; 6) the improvement of an individual style of competitive activities of sportsmen; 7) the realization of cognitive resource by a sportsman in competitions.

Since all the experimental groups featured similar tendencies in the formation of psychological readiness, we give just one table in order to illustrate results of the research of highly qualified judoists (Table 2).

The experiment with judoists at the stage of primary sport specialization showed a possibility of an increase in the level of formation of psychological readiness of juvenile judoists 29,2 points (beginning of the experiment) to 40,8 points (end of the experiment).

Before the pedagogical experiment the efficacy coefficient of competitive activities of judoists in the control and experimental groups was 0,24 and 0,26. By the end of the pedagogical experiment in the experimental group it reached 0,57, and 0,28 in the control group.

Results of the pedagogical experiment at the stage of advanced sport specialization display positive tendencies in psychological readiness of sportsmen from 30,4 points at the beginning of the experiment to 40,7 points at the end of the experiment.

The improvement of psychological readiness of judo sportsmen in the experimental group is detected during its training before each competition, which contributes to more

successful performance in competitions. Before the experiment the coefficient of competitive activity of judoists in control and experimental groups was 0,34 and 0,36. After the experiment the ratio became 0,54 (the experimental group) to 0,38 (in the control group).

Results of the experiment with highly qualified judoists also display the improvement of psychological readiness in the process of pre-competition training and the improvement of effectiveness of competitive activities.

The improvement of psychological readiness of judoists in the experimental group was confirmed during pre-competition training before each competition (Table 2, vertical line). Meanwhile there was a noticeable increase of the level of psychological readiness in the whole course of the pedagogical experiment – from the first competition to the third competition, from 31,2 points (beginning of the experiment) to 40,5 points (end of the experiment). The efficacy coefficient of competitive activities in

Table 2. The dynamics of psychological readiness of judoists of high qualification at the pre-competition stage ( $x \pm m$ ), points

Stages, micro-cycles	Control group	Experimental group	P
First competition:			
1) the beginning	30,7± 0,9	31,2 ± 0,93	>0,05
2) warming up	28,4± 0,85	32,5 ± 0,94	<0,05
3) intensified	29,4 ± 0,93	35,3 ± 1,14	<0,05
4) recovery	31,4± 0,82	38,3 ± 1,24	<0,01
P between 1 and 4	>0,05	<0,01	
Second competition:			
1) the beginning	31,3± 0,82	33,4 ± 1,34	>0,05
2) warming up	32,4± 0,86	37,7 ± 1,35	<0,05
3) intensified	30,4± 0,92	35,8 ± 1,55	<0,05
4) recovery	32,5± 0,74	39,4 ± 1,34	<0,01
P between 1 and 4	>0,05	<0,01	
Third competition:			
1) the beginning	32,1± 0,91	36,7± 1,35	<0,05
2) warming up	30,3 ± 0,93	37,3 ± 1,36	<0,01
3) intensified	31,4± 0,87	39,3 ± 1,4	<0,01
4) recovery	32,6 ± 0,92	40,5± 1,41	<0,01
P between 1 and 4	>0,05	<0,05	

the experimental group increased from 0,35 to 0,53.

**Results:** During the pre-competition training of judo sportsmen special attention should be paid to the initial level of psychological readiness and its dynamics in the pre-competition mesocycle.

When detecting the psychological readiness of juvenile judo sportsmen for a competition in the course of pre-competition training four components should be highlighted: motivation and needs, emotions, reflection, sensorimotor (motional) behavior, and based on the achieved results individual training of every sportsman is carried out.

The proposed contents and methodology of psychological correction of judoists' readiness for a competition have passed experimental testing in the process of training and participation of sportsmen in three competitions.

The pre-competition stage (within three micro-cycles) revealed a level of psychological readiness for each sportsman: 1) at the beginning of the pre-competition training; 2) after the warming-up micro-cycle; 3) after the intensified training micro-cycle; 4) after the recovery micro-

cycle (one day before the competition). Some (most dynamic constituent of the component) were detected after each training class.

Results of the diagnostics of psychological readiness of each sportsman underlie practical recommendations on correction of detected deviations of the components of psychological readiness.

The correctional work with judoists at the pre-competition stage allowed us to achieve a correspondence between the expression of components of psychological readiness and assigned parameters, which subsequently contributed to achievement of the optimum pre-competition state by most of sportsmen and contributed to the improvement of efficacy of competitive activities of judoists.

These three pedagogical experiments of judo sportsmen of different qualifications proved high efficacy of our methods, which is reflected in an increase of the level of formation of all components of psychological readiness of judo sportsmen and the effectiveness of their competitive activities, which allows us to recommend it for practical use in judo and other wrestling sports training.

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## **Диагностика и коррекция предсоревновательной психологической подготовленности дзюдоистов различной квалификации**

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*В статье представлены экспериментальные материалы диагностики и коррекции предсоревновательной психологической подготовленности дзюдоистов различной квалификации. Диагностика предсоревновательной психологической подготовленности проводится на протяжении всего предсоревновательного мезоцикла – в начале и после окончания каждого микроцикла. Полученные результаты диагностики служат основой для разработки индивидуального содержания коррекционной работы для каждого спортсмена. Содержание коррекционной работы имеет существенные отличия в зависимости от спортивной квалификации дзюдоиста и сформированности отдельных компонентов психологической подготовленности. Для проверки эффективности разработанного содержания коррекционной работы было проведено три педагогических эксперимента с дзюдоистами различной спортивной квалификации. Проведение коррекционной работы с дзюдоистами различной квалификации в течение трех соревновательных этапов позволило добиться желаемой сформированности каждого структурного компонента психологической подготовленности. Это, в свою очередь, способствовало созданию оптимального предстартового состояния дзюдоистов; адекватному реагированию в процессе ведения схватки, повышению результативности соревновательной деятельности дзюдоистов.*

*Ключевые слова: коррекция, психологическая подготовленность, дзюдоисты, квалификация.*

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