

# Modern trends in the development of competitive activities in aikido in Russia

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## Abstract

**Objective of the study** was to identify trends in the development of aikido in Russia based on the analysis of the results of competitive activity.

**Methods and structure of the study.** The work was carried out as part of the research activities of the National Aikido Council of Russia. Representatives of the Regional Public Organization "Belgorod Interstyle Aikido Federation" and teachers of "Belgorod State National Research University" took part in it. An analysis was made of the protocols of the Russian Aikido Championships and competitions for the Aikido Cup in 2020-2022.

**Results of the study and their discussion.** All-Russian aikido competitions are held in the following competitive disciplines for both men and women: kihon-waza (doubles), jui-waza (doubles), jui-waza (group category). The hypothesis is considered that in recent years, more and more young athletes under the age of 21 have been winning competitions. As the study showed, the winners and prize-winners of aikido competitions among women are indeed becoming more and more young athletes, but the bulk of the participants in the competitions are women about 30 years old. Tendencies for rejuvenation of all participants of the competition were not revealed. In men, the bulk of the participants in the competition are on average 10 years older than in women, however, younger winners and prize-winners also appear there. The number of regions participating in competitions has decreased markedly due to the changing conditions for playing sports.

**Keywords:** aikido, competitions, athletes, trends, Russia.

**Introduction.** Morihei Ueshiba, the creator of aikido, did not think about transforming it into a new type of competition [5]. Having appeared in Russia, Japanese aikido became very popular and received comprehensive development [2-4]. At present, it has been transformed into volumes of aikido and is already making its own history in Russian sports [1]. Competitions are the most important attribute of any sport, including aikido. They demonstrate the level of its development, sports achievements, the result for a certain period of development and new trends. Therefore, the analysis of the results of the All-Russian competitions in aikido in order to identify new trends in competitive activity seems to be relevant.

**Objective of the study** was to identify trends in the development of aikido in Russia based on the analysis of the results of competitive activity.

**Methods and structure of the study.** The article analyzed the protocols of competitions in Russia in aikido among women and men. The attention of the study was directed to the age of the participants in the competitions, trends in its dynamics, as well as to the geography of the regions participating in the competitions. Athletes' ages have been studied in order to try to determine when is the optimal period for achieving maximum results in aikido, as well as to identify the typical age period among the main body of practitioners.

The protocols of the competitions of participants and winners of the Russian Aikido Championships (2020, 2021) and Russian Cups (2021, 2022) have been studied. These competitions have become the main aikido competitions in Russia, given the current epidemiological and international situation. It was for these competitions that athletes and coaches pre-



pared most responsibly, and therefore the indicators of these competitions are the main ones in past seasons. In a comparative analysis, methods of mathematical statistics were used, in particular, the identification of significant differences according to the Student's t-test between the age data of the participants in the competition. In addition, a survey of coaches and observation was used. For comparison, data on the age of the participants in the competition, winners and prize-winners, and the first best 10 results were taken from the protocols. The places taken in the competitions of women and men were compared, then they were correlated with the age of the participants in the competition.

**Results of the study and their discussion.** One of the trends noted by coaches and judges during the period of the aikido competitions in Russia under consideration was the rejuvenation of the winners and prize-winners of the most important competitions over a three-year period. First of all, it concerns women's competitions. This trend is typical for many sports, but the assertion of such a trend requires evidence. In table. 1 compares the age indicators of women who took the first three places in the Championships and Cups of Russia in aikido for 2020-2022.

As you can see, at the Russian Championship 2020, due to the age-old athlete who took third place in the discipline of kihon-waza, as well as athletes aged 27, the age indicators were the highest for the period under review. At the Russian Championship in 2021, the youngest participants in the competition (aged 19 to 26 years) became the winners. In the same year, athletes of almost the same age (from 19 to 31 years old) won the Russian Cup. However, in 2022, the age level of the winning athletes again slightly increased (up to 32 years). When comparing the age of the first 10 best athletes of different competitions and different years of their holding, no significant differences between

groups of women were found at  $p < 0.05$ . Therefore, there are no grounds to believe that a steady, reliable rejuvenation of participants and winners of aikido competitions in Russia is really taking place in Russia.

According to Table 2, male aikido winners are noticeably older than female aikido practitioners. Particularly stands out is the composition of the winners of 49-50-year-old athletes at the 2021 Russian Championship and the Russian Aikido Cup of the same year. But in the 2022 Cup of Russia, the average age of the winners of the competition has dropped sharply to 20-30 years. And this is already a trend. It is very noticeable and probably has a historical significance (probably there is a change of generations of leading athletes, because out of 9 prizes 6 were won by aikido-kas aged 19-22).

At the same time, an attempt to identify significant differences between the first 10 best male participants in the jui-waza discipline, who performed at the Russian Championship in 2021 and the first 10 best participants in the same discipline at the Russian Cup in 2022, did not give the expected results. Significant differences at  $p < 0.5$  between the indicated groups were not found.

In another hypothesis, it was assumed that there should be significant differences between the age indicators of female and male athletes, but the calculations showed that there are none either. This is explained by the following circumstance: the winners and prize-winners of the competition differ significantly from the rest of the mass of athletes in many cases - in each group there is a large variability of values. At the same time, the appearance of younger winners among men and women can be regarded as a signal indicating the beginning of a change in traditional leaders of the competition and intensification of competition in subsequent competitions. This is an important con-

**Table 1.** Comparison of the age of winners and prize-winners of the Aikido competition among women at the championships of Russia (ChR) of 2020-2021 and Russian Cups (RC) 2021-2022

Competitive discipline	Discipline code	Возраст (лет)											
		2020 - RCh			2021 - RCh			2021 - RC			2022 - RC		
Kihon-waza - doubles	0700011811Ya	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III
		27	20	46	19	26	19	26	19	19	19	27	22
		M= 31			M= 21			M= 21			M= 22		
Jui-waza - doubles	0700021811Ya	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III
		20	27	20	19	19	19	19	21	31	19	20	32
		M= 22			M= 19			M= 23			M= 23		
Jui-waza - group category	0700031811Ya	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III
		25	20	27	22	20	25	21	19	19	20	19	32
		M= 24			M= 22			M= 20			M= 23		



**Table 2.** Comparison of the age of winners and prize-winners of aikido competitions among men at the Russian Championships 2020-2021 and Russian Cups 2021-2022

Competitive discipline	Discipline code	Age (years)											
		2020- RCh			2021- RCh			2021- RC			2022- RC		
Kihon-waza - doubles	0700011811Ya	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III
		48	23	30	49	44	38	50	19	42	33	20	38
		M= 33			M= 43			M= 37			M= 30		
Jui-waza - doubles	0700021811Ya	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III
		39	42	20	49	50	37	50	21	19	19	22	19
		M= 33			M= 45			M= 30			M=20		
Jui-waza - group category	0700031811Ya	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III
		48	32	24	34	34	23	50	19	42	19	19	41
		M= 34			M= 30			M= 37			M= 26		

clusion for all coaches working in the field of sports aikido. Another trend concerns the development of aikido in the regions of Russia. This factor shows the geography of the development of the sport, the intensity of its functioning in different regions of the Russian Federation. Table 3 presents the first 10 regions of Russia that participated in the above competitions.

Table 3 shows how the geography of the regions participating in the main competitions is gradually narrowing, among which the regions of the central part of Russia remain mainly. This is probably due to the consequences of the pandemic and the tense international situation. At the same time, I would like to hope

that the most reliable regions will remain active and new entities will join them in the coming years, which will contribute to the further development of aikido in Russia.

**Conclusions.** The study of the results of all -Russian Aikido competitions showed that athletes under the age of 22 began to win the competitions more and more often in competitions. Of the 9 possible awards, women aged 19-21 were won in 2020 at the Aikido championship of 4 medals, in 2021 6 medals, at the Russian Cup in Aikido in 2021, out of 9 awards, they won 7 medals, in 2022, 5 medals. However, the bulk of competing athletes is about 30 years old. When

**Table 3.** Comparison of regions leading in the Russian Championships 2020-2021 and Russian Cups 2021-2022 (in competitions among men - the first 10 places)

Competitive discipline	Subjects of the Russian Federation			
	2020- RCh	2021- RCh	2021- RC	2022- RC
Kihon-waza - doubles	Orenburg region, Kursk region, Tula region, Belgorod region, North Ossetia, Ulyanovsk region, Samara region, Moscow, Moscow region	Orenburg region, Moscow, Belgorod region, Kamchatka region, Sverdlovsk region, Kursk region, Tula region.	Moscow, Tula region, Kursk region	Tula region, Belgorod region, Kursk region, St. Petersburg
Jui-waza - doubles	Primorsky Territory, St. Petersburg, Tula Region, Kamchatka Territory, Orenburg Region, Belgorod region, Moscow, Kursk region, Saratov region, Kaliningrad region	Orenburg region, Moscow, Kamchatka region, Belgorod region, Tula region.	Moscow, Tula region, Kursk region, St. Petersburg, Oryol region.	St. Petersburg, Tula region, Belgorod region, Kursk region
Jui-waza - group category	Orenburg region, Moscow, Kursk region, Kamchatka region, Saratov region, St. Petersburg, Belgorod region,	Moscow, Krasnodar region, Moscow region, Ulyanovsk region, Republic of Mari El, Republic of Tatarstan	Moscow, Tula region	St. Petersburg, Tula Region, Belgorod Region, Kursk Region, Primorsky Territory



comparing the best athletes for 2020-2022. In Russia, there have been no reliable rejuvenation of participants and winners of all-Russian Aikido competitions among women that have not yet been revealed in Russia, which have not been identified in Russia.

Men among the winners of the Aikido competitions many athletes are older than women. The winners of the competition are men 30 years old and older, sometimes even at 50 years old. Since 2022, athletes of 19-20 years begin to win the competitions, which indicates the beginning of the change of sports generation.

The average age of the participants and winners of the All-Russian competitions in Aikido, as well as outlined age trends in this direction should be taken into account by trainers and other aikido specialists in Russia.

Analysis of the championships of Russia and Cups of Russia in Aikido shows that in 2020-2022. The geography of the regions participating in competitions has narrowed. The most active are the subjects located in the central part of Russia. It is necessary to make efforts to involve new Russian regions in competitive activities in Aikido, as well as develop international ties with foreign centers and specialists in Aikido friendly countries to preserve and strengthen competitive motivation among Russian athletes.

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