

Danish Wrestling Federation



**DANMARKS
BRYDEFORBUND**

His Royal Highness Crown Prince of Denmark
IOC member

Objection to The IOC Executive Boards recommendation to remove wrestling from 2020 Olympic Games

Danish Wrestling Federation reaches out to His Royal Highness because of Your position as IOC member and “our local” IOC representative.

On February 12th in Lausanne the IOC Executive Board surprisingly and unexpectedly proposed to cut wrestling from the list of 26 core sports at the 2020 Olympic Games.

Parallel to the international wrestling community, we were tremendously shocked at the IOC proposal. As His Royal Highness is well aware of the news broke headlines in Denmark and attracted the attention of almost every media in Denmark. For several weeks we have done our utmost effort to shine light upon our beloved sport and show our great disappointment over this recommendation, thereby advocating wrestling’s rightful place at the Olympic Games.

Danish wrestling has a glorified history with established clubs dating back to 1888. In 1893 Denmark’s oldest existing wrestling club was founded. Even though Denmark today is not considered a great wrestling nation, it has nevertheless been an alternating participating part of the Olympic Wrestling scene since 1908. This has so far generated a substantial amount of medals to Denmark and representation at the last 3 consecutive Olympic Games.

Today, Denmark has an extensive elite program with a special focus on our Team2020, which is a group of promising young talents showing the stamina, skills and potential to work towards participation at the 2020 Olympic Games.

International wrestling has a long and solid history as an Olympic sport dating back to 708 BC. In ancient Greece wrestling was considered fine and divine art and represented the most prestigious sport for young men. In modern time wrestling has been a constant part of the Olympic Games since the beginning in 1896 in Athens with the exception of 1900. Thereby proving its worth as an integral part of the Olympic movement as one of the founders of both ancient and modern Olympic Game.

Today FILA has over 180 nations included and many of these nations have this sport as a national sport. At the 2012 Olympics in London 344 wrestlers from 71 countries participated and among Olympic sports, wrestling had one of the highest varieties of nations which won Olympic medals than almost every other sport.

At every cycle in the recently held Olympic Games in London the entire venue were sold out, with even more eager wrestling enthusiasts without tickets standing outside in the hopes to capture some of the magical atmosphere of the venue.

Over the latest years international wrestling has undergone quite noticeable changes to accommodate IOC's continuous demands for a spectator friendly sport. Amongst several changes was the inclusion and acknowledgement of female wrestling at the Athens Games in 2004.

We acknowledge the need for even more structural changes to make this sport even more appealing to the general masses. We are very much open for dialogue on this matter.

Wrestling is internationally appealing with great popularity, transcending race, gender, weight and economical/ cultural/political background, thereby unifying nations across political and cultures borders to create moments without precedence.

Since expensive equipment and great funds is not required to engage in wrestling everybody can take part in it, independent of funding thereby contributing to a breakdown of social barriers. Economical interests have little influence on wrestling, therefore making the physical surroundings the sole necessary factor for wrestling to function. This makes the average wrestler quite humble in its approach to this sport.

The Olympic Games in particular marks a highlight and culmination in every wrestler's athletic career since Olympic medals and glory is more important than economical interests. This grand stage is without comparison a wrestler's greatest opportunity to shine, introduce and showcase our highly treasured sport to the world.

With this opportunity in great jeopardy of disappearing, we in the Danish Wrestling Federation find it detrimental to international wrestling and Danish wrestling in particular, since media attention and funding is greatly generated through this grand event.

Danish Wrestling Federation therefore request His Royal Highness to consider the tragic scenario when wrestling, one of the core founders of this great movement called the Olympic Games, is no longer an active part.

We find wrestling to be an important and essential part of the original Olympic Spirit and kindly encourage His Royal Highness to assist in revoking the recommendations of the IOC Executive Board and thereby saving wrestling, since the Olympics will never be the same without it.

We would be very grateful for Your kind support.

Best Regards



Palle Nielsen, President