



## **History and Development of Oceania Kung Fu/Wushu**

*Edited by Glen Keith & Walt Missingham*

### **Inaugural Meeting**

The Oceania Wushu Federation (OWUF) was jointly founded between the New Zealand and Australian Kung-Fu Wushu Federations. The Inaugural Meeting and celebration dinner took place at the Yangtze Restaurant 160 Willis Street, Wellington New Zealand on 5 June 1998. Guest of Honour at the meeting was Mr Wu Shaozu, President of the International Wushu Federation, Minister of State Sports Administration of China and President of the Chinese Olympic Committee. Representing New Zealand at the meeting was Mr Glen Keith, OWUF President and representing Australia was Mr Barry Page on behalf of Mr Walt Missingham, OWUF Senior Vice President. Also present at the meeting was Mr Peter Yu, past OWUF Secretary General and special guests Mr Kenneth Liu, Madam Shi Mei Lin and Jennifer King of Asia-NZ Foundation.

### **Historical Event**

OWUF became the 4th International Wushu Federation (IWUF) continental wushu federation to be established, which enabled the IWUF to apply for recognition to the International Olympic Committee. Because of this, the Inauguration of OWUF was deemed by China and wushu enthusiasts around the world as a "Historical Event". The other three continental federations already established were Asia, Europe and Pan-America. The last continental body to form was Africa. Fiji Islands, Guam and New Caledonia have also become members of the International Wushu Federation bringing the number of Oceania countries to five. Vanuatu is still a provisional member of IWUF.

## **First Steps**

During the 3rd IWUF Congress at the World Wushu Championships in Baltimore USA on Friday 18 August 1995, Glen Keith, President of the 'New Zealand Chinese Martial Arts-International Wushu Council (later renamed to the New Zealand Kung-Fu Wushu Federation) presented a jointly drafted 'Document of Intent' on behalf of Australia and New Zealand to the Congress, The 'Document of Intent', proposing the formation of the Oceania Wushu Federation, was warmly received with great applause from all present due to the strong cooperation and good will demonstrated between New Zealand and Australia.

During the 4th IWUF Congress at the World Wushu Championships in Rome Italy in November 1997, all the IWUF member associations reached agreement that the IWUF should apply for the recognition of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) so that Wushu will achieve further development in the world. It was noted that only if the IWUF has four continental member federations, would it be eligible to submit its application to the IOC. The IWUF Executive decided at that time to make the founding of the Oceania Wushu Federation (OWF) a key priority, and entrusted its member associations of Australia and New Zealand to take the lead to establish the OWF.

## **Name - OWF vs OWUF**

The reason for adopting the acronym OWUF instead of OWF is in line with the same reason that the International Wushu Federation adopted IWUF instead of IWF. The acronym IWF belongs to the International Wrestling Federation and International Weightlifting Federation. Likewise, the acronym OWF belongs to the Oceania Wrestling Federation and Oceania Weightlifting Federation. To avoid confusion and potential copy write issues, the letter 'U' has been added. The term 'WU' is also significant in that it is a fundamental Daoist philosophical concept. The European Wushu Federation also has the acronym EWuF.

## **Wushu Development**

The OWUF was jointly founded between the New Zealand and Australian Kung-Fu Wushu Federations, with the Inaugural Meeting in Wellington New Zealand on 5 June 1998. Significant Oceania Championships that have contributed to OWUF development are detailed below, which include four (4) different kinds of events:

1. Oceania Wushu Championships 2005, 2007, 2009, 2012
2. Australasian Wushu Championships 2010 and 2011
3. South Pacific Kung Fu Wushu and Sanda Championships 2013
4. Oceania Invitational Wushu Championships 2014.

## **Oceania Wushu Championships - 2005, 2007, 2009, 2012**

OWUF has held 4 Oceania Wushu Championships in 2005, 2007, 2009 and 2012.

The 1st event was jointly hosted in 2005 between the Australian Kung-Fu Wushu Federation (AKWF) and the New Zealand Kung-Fu Wushu Federation. The AKWF hosted the Taolu and NZKWF the Sanda.

The 2nd event was hosted in 2007 by the Australian Kung-Fu Wushu Federation on 16th September 2007 in Victoria Australia, which included just Taolu events.

The 3rd event was hosted in 2009 by the New Zealand Kung-Fu Wushu Federation on 29th August in Porirua, which included both Taolu and Sanda events.

The 4th event was hosted in 2012 by Kung Fu Wushu Australia (KWA) on 2nd September 2012 at the Hall of Legends, The State Sports Centre, Olympic Blvd, Sydney Olympic Park, Homebush Bay, NSW, which included both Taolu and Sanda events.

To blend with the International Wushu Federation's bi-annual World Wushu Championships, the cycle of Oceania Wushu Championships was changed to every two years commencing 2010. This means key Oceania events are always in the off-year.

## **Australasian Kung Fu Wushu Championships 2010 and 2011**

OWUF has held 2 Australasian Kung Fu Wushu Championships in 2010 and 2011.

The Kung Fu Wushu Australia hosted the 1st Australasian Kung Fu Wushu Championships on 24 October 2010 at the Hall of Legends, State Sports Centre, Olympic Boulevard, Homebush Sydney. The event, which included traditional and modern wushu was a huge success involving Australia and New Zealand.

Kung Fu Wushu Australia hosted the 2nd Australasian Kung Fu Wushu Championships on 28 May 2011 at the Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre Show Court in Victoria. The event, which included traditional and modern wushu was a huge success involving Australia and New Zealand.

## **South Pacific Kung Fu Wushu and Sanda Championships 2013**

OWUF held 1 South Pacific Kung Fu Wushu and Sanda Championship in 2013

Kung Fu Wushu Australia hosted the 1st South Pacific Kung Fu Wushu and Sanda Championship in Sydney Australia on 15th September 2013. The event was hosted by Kung Fu Wushu New South Wales.

## **Oceania Invitational Wushu Championships 2014**

OWUF held 1 Oceania Invitational Wushu Championship in 2014.

The New Zealand Kung-Fu Wushu Federation hosted the 1st Oceania Invitational Wushu Championships on 29th September 2014 in Auckland New Zealand. The event was also open to invited countries outside the Oceania region. The competition was a great success and enjoyed by a record number of competitors from New Zealand and Australia. It was also encouraging to see a record number of Junior Wushu Taolu Athletes, many of which were 10yrs and under.

## **Pacific Games 2011 - Pacific Mini Games 2013**

In February 2010 Glen Keith approached Mr Vidhya Lakhan, President of the Pacific Games Council in Suva, Fiji to explore the possibility of Wushu as a demonstration sport at the next Pacific Games in Nouméa New Caledonia 2011 and/or the Pacific Mini Games in Wallis and Futuna 2013. Mr. Lakhan advised that “demonstration” sports are not permitted in the Pacific Games.

Mr. Lakhan commented that the Pacific Games Council was pleased to read of the work OWUF is undertaking to develop Wushu in the Pacific Islands. He further advised that whilst the program of a maximum 28 sports has already been set for the Pacific Games, there was a process to follow for a new sport to be added to the Pacific Games Council Constitution, for consideration for inclusion in future editions of the Pacific Games, refer:

Article 22.3 of the Pacific Games Council Constitution states: “For any sport to be added, at least six (6) PGAs must sign the letter of application, all of whom must be engaged in regular annual competition in that sport”.

PGAs are member Pacific Games Associations, of which there are 22: American Samoa, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji Islands, French Polynesia, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, Niue, Northern Mariana Islands, Norfolk Island, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Wallis and Futuna.

New Zealand and Australia are not currently eligible to be member Pacific Games Associations. Contact details for each member PGA can be found at [www.pacificgamescouncil.com](http://www.pacificgamescouncil.com)

The PGAs that could potentially form this group are Fiji Islands, Guam, New Caledonia, Vanuatu, Tonga, Samoa, Papua New Guinea. Fiji Islands, Guam and New Caledonia are current IWUF members with Vanuatu being a provisional IWUF member.

## Oceania Development 2015 – 2017

In November 2015, at the 13th IWUF Congress at the World Wushu Championships in Jakarta Indonesia, Glen Keith resigned his position as President of OWUF. Walt Missingham was subsequently confirmed as the new President of OWUF. Walt commented at the time: *“after 18 years at the helm of Oceania Wushu Glen can look back on an impressive range of accomplishments, Glen has provided a solid foundation that I can only hope we can add to.”*

Since that time a number of positive steps have been taken. These include:

- The establishment of a new company to manage kungfu/wushu in Oceania.
- The new company ‘Oceania Kung Fu Wushu Federation Limited’ (OKWF) reflects an increased ‘corporatized’ approach to management together with the new name that includes ‘kung fu’ which is essential if our ‘brand’ is to get the recognition it needs to grow in Oceania.
- The establishment of a secretariat that handles the legal work, provides marketing support, government liaison, press releases and email accounts, as required, for each OKWF member or ‘member in preparation’.
- A new website <http://oceaniakungfuwushu.com> that has provisions for all OKWF members to have their own internet presence at no cost
- A YouTube promotional video for Oceania: <https://youtu.be/cSn7fTic0qk>
- A new generic ‘Oceania Kung Fu Wushu’ promotional brochure that can be adapted to any country in Oceania
- During 2017 the roll out of a 12 month plan to establish and secure membership for representative associations in: Vanuatu, PNG, Solomon Islands, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, New Caledonia and Norfolk Islands.

## PACIFIC GAMES CHANGES

In the 2015 Pacific Games, held in Port Moresby, Australia and New Zealand were invited to enter teams in four of the 28 sports at the Games. In 2019 Australia and New Zealand have been invited to enter teams in 8 of the 26 sports at that Games. It is thought that this positive change in attitude towards Australia and New Zealand will ultimately lead to the full acceptance of Australia and New Zealand as eligible Pacific Games countries in all sports.

In December 2017 at the Pacific Games Congress our request to commence the case for recognition has been accepted. Accordingly the first documents that will lead to the recognition of kung fu/wushu as a recognised Pacific Games sport at the Pacific Games Congress on or before the 9<sup>th</sup> of December in Vanuatu.

Following this preliminary presentation our formal application for recognition as an optional sport will be made at the Pacific Games Council AGM to be held in Samoa in June 2018.