

KarateNow

Notizie, interviste, gare e risultati del Karate Olimpico

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The interview with the Turkish champion of the Olympic category -67 kg Eray Şamdan one step away from Tokyo “I will do everything to win the qualification”



INTERVIEW
by Rossella Zoccali

Eray Şamdan, at the age of twenty-two, is definitely a “rising star” in world karate. The athlete of the Turkish national team had started 2020 by winning the “Premier League” stage in Paris in the -60kg category. Unfortunately for him he had to give third place in the “Tokyo Standings” ranking to the Italian Angelo Crescenzo, for two unfavorable episodes, the defeat in the first round in Dubai (he had equalized the match 1 to 1) and the defeat in the semifinal with Crescenzo at the “Premier League” in Salzburg. In March 2020, in the sports world and beyond, the incredible for the “Covid-19” emergency happened and the WKF, previously, canceled the races of Rabat and the European championship of Baku, decreeing, in a

rash and hasty way, on March 18, 2020, the top 40 qualified for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics. Bewilderment and discontent for all those athletes who were on the margins of the “qualification” and saw themselves stuck and sent home after almost three years of competitions around the world. Sixty days later, the same WKF, perhaps “beaten” by the IOC for the rash decision, made another incredible mistake, canceled the qualification of the forty athletes, reopened the “Tokyo Standings” ranking, instituted the two races previously canceled and destroyed the dream of most qualified athletes who, in the meantime, had already entered into contracts with sponsors and started new training programs. In the category of the Turkish champion Eray Şamdan, -67 kg, the Kazakh Darkhan Assadilov (-60 kg) with 10,387.5 points and the French Steven Dacosta (-67 kg) with 8,940 points remain unreachable. The



Eray Şamdan at the age of 5

Italian Angelo Crescenzo (-60 kg) with 8,850 points also come into play and the Brazilian Vinicius Figuera (-67 kg) with 6,832.5 points. The two former qualifiers are pressed, respectively, by Eray Şamdan (-60 kg) with 7,912.5 points and the Egyptian Ali Elsawy (-67 kg) with 6,472.5 points. Even the Japanese Naoto Sago with 4,447.5

points. could be overtaken by compatriot Hiroto Shinohara with 4,275 points.

FEATURES

Eray Şamdan, right guard, technically complete, surprising execution speed and precision. From 14 September 2018 to 28 February 2020, he participated in 21 “Premier League” and “Serie A” matches, winning 15 medals, 4 gold, 4 silver and 7 bronze. The KarateNow editorial team thanks Eray Şamdan for his availability.

THE INTERVIEW

R: How old did you start practicing karate?

E: I started at the age of 5. My father, Adnan Şamdan, who was also the coach of the Turkish national team, was my first Karate Master.

R: Have you practiced any other sport besides karate?

E: At the age of five I practiced a year of artistic gymnastics.

R: What is the first race



Eray Şamdan in mawashi geri

you won?

E: My first victory was at the age of 10 in the race in my city, Kocaeli.

R: What are your hobbies? Do you like animals?

E: I follow football games with my friends. I really like animals, especially snakes.

R: What is the race you remember with greatest emotion?

E: Of course when I became a junior world champion in 2015 in Indonesia. That race was very important to me because I made my first dream come true.

R: You came one step away from qualifying in the “Tokyo Standings” ranking, then everything stopped.

E: Yes, I went very close to qualifying. Unfortunately it went as everyone knows. I am still confident. I continue to work hard and dream. Now remain the two races that the WKF will have to organize in 2021. I will do

everything to win the qualification.

R: Are the Olympic categories, three male and three female, inadequate, or would it have been better to compete in the international categories?

E: I would see better 5 male categories and 5 female categories. But for now we only have 3 categories and we must be satisfied.

R: Are there a few 10 athletes in each category, or was 16 qualified athletes better?

E: I would prefer 16 athletes per category, I think the Olympic games would be more ambitious and fun.

R: How are you doing your workouts during this “coronavirus” period?

E: In this period of world pandemic I stay at home. The Turkish national team has adapted with online training, we follow the coach training program.



Adnan Şamdan e Eray Şamdan