

Article by WTF – 16 Feb 2007
Int'l Electronic Protector Taekwondo Tourney Slated for
March 4-5 in Chuncheon, Korea



An international taekwondo tournament using electronic protectors is scheduled for March 4-5 this year in Chuncheon, Korea.

The WTF-promoted Electronic Protector International Taekwondo Championships, to be held at the Hoban Gymnasium in downtown Chuncheon, Gangwon Province, is expected to draw about 200 athletes and officials from about 20 countries.

Countries that have already confirmed their participation in the so-called electronic protector test event are Australia, Azerbaijan, China, Chinese Taipei, Egypt, France, Greece, Iran, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Philippines, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Turkey, Vietnam and Korea.

The electronic protector taekwondo event is very important for the WTF as it will determine, after the test event, whether to use the electronic protector system at the upcoming 2007 World Taekwondo Championships and the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. The 2007 World Taekwondo Championships are scheduled for May 18-22 in Beijing.

Athletes will compete in four male and four female Olympic categories on a single-elimination tournament format.

The WTF will provide athletes with electronic body and head protectors produced by Korea's LaJUST.

The opening ceremony of the electronic protector event is scheduled at 4 p.m. on March 4, which will feature a demonstration of taekwondo practitioners with a disability and a display of competition uniforms for taekwondo poomsae.

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Given the importance of the event, the two-day championships will be broadcast live across the nation at least for two hours a day.

The WTF signed a recognition contract with LaJUST as the official supplier of electronic protectors on Sept. 11, 2006.

The development of electronic protector systems by LaJUST dates back to 1982, when it established a research institute, EIDSS (Electronic Impact and Detection Scoring System), in New Heaven, Connecticut, the United States. LaJUST succeeded in producing its first electronic protector system, FP-1, in 1984. In 2004, it produced its latest sixth electronic protector system.

The WTF has devoted much of its time and energy over the last two years to the development of an electronic protector system to help ensure fairer judgment and refereeing at taekwondo competitions.

The WTF strongly believes that the use of electronic protectors would greatly help enhance the image of taekwondo and the WTF, as they could reduce possible controversies arising from judgment and refereeing at taekwondo competitions.

The WTF's ad-hoc Reform Committee, which was created in November 2004 and concluded its operations in February 2005, recommended a highly effective and accurate electronic protector to be a valuable addition to the sport of taekwondo by helping make judgment more objective.

The WTF, accordingly, set up an ad-hoc Committee on Electronic Protectors in July 2005, and organized its first demonstration of electronic protectors drawing three companies - Korea's LaJUST, ATM of Austria and Impact Measurement, a joint venture between the United States and Korea.

After the demonstration, the WTF commissioned the Korea Institute of Sports and Science to produce a report on basic specifications of electronic protectors and the KISS announced its specifications.

The WTF held its second demonstration of electronic protectors on March 25, which drew four companies - LaJUST, adidas (ATM), True Score, formerly Impact Measurement, and Daedo International of Spain.

Of the four participants, LaJUST was the only company that passed the "acceptable" level of the basic technical requirements in four categories to be applied to taekwondo competitions. The four categories are accuracy of the sense-impact, differentiation of valid impact and invalid impact, consecutive impacts, and calibration.

According to the KISS report to the WTF, LaJUST also passed the laboratory tests, which involved transmission system, safety on electricity and electronics and endurance of materials.

On Jan. 12, 2007, the WTF held its third demonstration attracting two companies - adidas of Germany and Daedo International. Adidas presented its electronic protector system engineered by ATM.