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KYGM 10th Thematic Winter Camps Held in Erzurum

Res. Asst.Fikret KAYHALAK

The Winter Sports Camp, organised as part of the 10th Thematic Winter Camps by the Directorate General of Student Loans and Dormitories (KYGM), was successfully completed in Erzurum between 26 and 30 January 2026. The camp programme addressed winter sports from both academic and practical perspectives, bringing young people together with expert academics and practitioners in the field. As part of the camp, Ali Kızılet, Dean of the Faculty of Sports Sciences at Istanbul Gelişim University, addressed participants on 27 January 2026 with a presentation entitled 'Coach and Athlete Communication'. The session addressed the importance of effective communication in coach-athlete relationships, motivation processes, and their decisive role in performance, using scientific and practical examples. The presentation emphasised that establishing healthy communication in sports environments directly affects not only athletic success but also athletes' psychological well-being and long-term development. Participants gained valuable insights into how theoretical knowledge can be reflected in field applications. The Winter Sports Camp held in Erzurum attracted significant interest with its structure that combines academic knowledge with practical application, while increasing young people's awareness of winter sports. The programme was regarded as an important organisation contributing to the development of qualified human resources in the field of sports sciences.

International Academic Cooperation Initiative as Part of a Visit to China by Istanbul Gelişim University

Res. Asst.Fikret KAYHALAK

Istanbul Gelişim University has taken another significant step towards strengthening academic collaborations in line with its internationalisation vision. Mustafa Can Koç, Vice Dean of the Faculty of Sports Sciences at Istanbul Gelişim University, paid an official visit to the People's Republic of China at the invitation of Prof. Dr. Hüseyin Gümüş, Education Counsellor at the Embassy of the Republic of Turkey in Beijing.

During the visit, Associate Professor Koç participated in the 5th Belt and Road International Cooperation Forum and the Culture and Friendship Night for Diplomats. He held academic cooperation talks with three different universities in China, making important contacts aimed at expanding Istanbul Gelişim University's global academic network.

Language and Academic Cooperation with Beijing Language and Culture University

The first visit within the scope of the China contacts was to Beijing Language and Culture University. The discussions covered the establishment of a Confucius Institute within the university, the opening of a Chinese language programme at the School of Foreign Languages, and the development of academic cooperation. As a result of the discussions, an agreement was reached on the preparation of a Chinese-Turkish Sports Terminology Dictionary.

International Academic Cooperation Initiative as Part of a Visit to China by Istanbul Gelişim University

Res. Asst.Fikret KAYHALAK

Sichuan University Sister University and Preliminary Protocol During the contacts made with Sichuan University within the scope of the Belt and Road International Global Cooperation Forum, a strong will was expressed to establish a sister university relationship between the two universities. A preliminary protocol covering cooperation in many areas, including student and faculty exchange programmes, joint scientific research and projects, was signed.

Comprehensive Academic Cooperation Process with Tianjin Sport University During the visit to China, Associate Professor Dr. Mustafa Can Koç and the delegation from the Education Advisory Office of the Embassy in Beijing visited Tianjin Sport University. During the visit, the university's Sports Rehabilitation Laboratory and Digital Physical Performance Laboratory were inspected; comprehensive information was exchanged, particularly on current research conducted in the areas of rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities, sports sciences, and exercise for special groups. During the meetings, concrete projects for jointly organising international conferences and symposiums were discussed.

Reception by Ambassador Selçuk Ünal As part of his contacts in China, Ambassador Selçuk Ünal of the Republic of Turkey in Beijing received Associate Professor Dr. Mustafa Can Koç at the Embassy. During the meeting, evaluations were made regarding Istanbul Gelişim University's academic expansion in China, internationalisation goals in higher education, and strengthening educational diplomacy between the two countries. Internationalisation Vision Resolutely Pursued These visits took Istanbul Gelişim University's academic relations with Asian universities to a new level. İstanbul Gelişim University continues to steadfastly pursue its goal of becoming a globally competitive and innovative university by developing international collaborations in student and academic exchange, joint education programmes, scientific research, and sports sciences.

Professor Yusuf Can Appointed to the Coordination Board of Application and Research Centres

Res. Asst.Fikret KAYHALAK

Our Faculty Vice Dean, Prof. Dr. Yusuf Can, has been appointed to the position of Member of the Coordination Board established within the University's Application and Research Centres Coordination Office.

We believe that our professor, who has made significant contributions to our university and faculty through his academic and administrative work, will provide valuable contributions to strengthening coordination between the Application and Research Centres in this new role.

We congratulate Prof. Dr. Yusuf Can and wish him every success in his new role.

Great Pride for Istanbul Gelişim University at the Turkish Weightlifting Championships

Res. Asst.Fikret KAYHALAK

The Weightlifting Senior Individual Turkey Championship, held at the Tokat Ali Yücel Sports Hall between 27 January and 1 February, witnessed significant achievements by students from the Faculty of Sports Sciences at Istanbul Gelişim University.

Our Sports Management Department students successfully represented our university with the rankings they achieved in different weight categories:

58 kg – Rahime Köç → 2nd in Turkey
53 kg – Burcu Alıcı → 1st in Turkey
53 kg – Duygu Alıcı → 3rd in Turkey

These achievements by our students are a concrete demonstration of the importance our Faculty of Sports Sciences places on sport and athletes.

We congratulate our athletes and wish them continued success.

Great Pride for Istanbul Gelişim University at the Turkish Wrestling Championship

Res. Asst.Fikret KAYHALAK

The U23 Freestyle Wrestling Turkish Championship, held at the Trabzon Ortahisar Beşirli Sports Hall, took place with the participation of 103 clubs and 460 athletes from across Turkey. The young athletes put up a great fight in the final matches of the championship.

Ahmet Yağan, a student at the Department of Exercise and Sports Sciences, Faculty of Sports Sciences, Istanbul Gelişim University, who competed in the 86-kilogram category, demonstrated outstanding performance and became the Turkish Champion.

We congratulate our student Ahmet Yağan on this significant achievement and wish him continued success in his sporting and academic life.

Issues Facing Disabled Athletes and Proposed Solutions on the Agenda of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey

Res. Asst.Bilgehan PEPE

The Turkish Grand National Assembly Commission for the Investigation of Issues Concerning Persons with Disabilities convened to address the opportunities for persons with disabilities to participate in sports and the challenges encountered in the field of sports. The commission meeting discussed access to sports for athletes with disabilities, the physical suitability of sports facilities, and existing support mechanisms.

Federation representatives attending the meeting shared their assessments of structural problems encountered in the field and their proposed solutions with commission members. Particular attention was drawn to increasing training opportunities, developing branch diversity, and strengthening institutional cooperation.

The Commission is expected to develop policy recommendations aimed at increasing the participation of persons with disabilities in sports and to compile a report on its work in this area based on the assessments made.

Disabled Individuals Become Paralympic Athletes Through TÜBİTAK Project

Res. Asst.Bilgehan PEPE

As part of a TÜBİTAK 1001-supported scientific project conducted in Kayseri, comprehensive medical and functional assessments were carried out on individuals with physical disabilities. During the project, the individuals' physical abilities, sporting potential and criteria for referral to suitable sports were examined by specialist teams.

As a result of the assessments, 32 physically disabled individuals were directed to Paralympic sports disciplines and gained licensed athlete status. Participants were included in regular training processes in various Paralympic disciplines, primarily athletics. It was stated that the project provided significant gains in terms of rehabilitation, quality of life, and social integration, in addition to increasing the participation of disabled individuals in sports.

It was noted that this scientifically based application serves as an exemplary model for the early referral and talent discovery of individuals with disabilities, and it was emphasised that the expansion of similar projects to different provinces would make a significant contribution to the development of Paralympic sports.

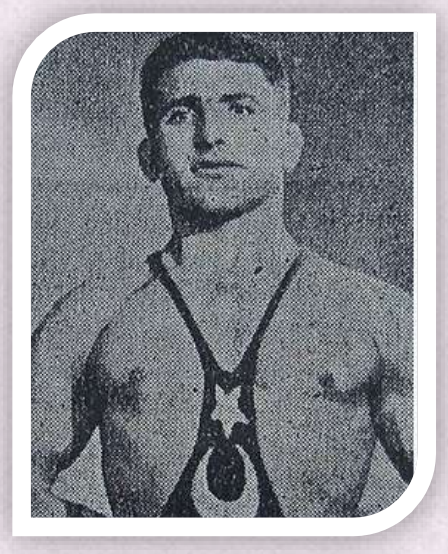
Artificial Intelligence Transformation in the Sports Industry: Performance, Ethics and Domestic Technologies Come Together on the Same Ground

Res. Asst.Muhammed Ali GÖKÇE

By 2025, artificial intelligence (AI) will be spearheading a multi-dimensional transformation process in the sports industry, encompassing not only on-field performance but also management, ethical oversight and technological entrepreneurship. Systems based on machine learning, big data analytics and visual processing offer a wide range of applications, from analysing athletes' performance data to predicting injury risks, developing match tactics and engaging with the media and fans. Experts point out that these technologies make the decision-making processes of coaches and technical teams more scientific and predictable. The artificial intelligence market in the sports industry is expected to show rapid growth in the coming years. The impact of artificial intelligence in sport is not limited to performance-focused applications. AI-based systems are also ushering in a new era in the fight against ethical issues such as match-fixing and match manipulation, which threaten the integrity of sport. Guidelines published by the International Centre for Sport Security (ICSS) and ACTA recommend the use of AI-supported early warning and monitoring systems to protect the principles of fair play. Real-time data analysis enables the detection of unusual betting patterns and suspicious match patterns, allowing relevant authorities to intervene quickly. This global transformation process is finding concrete expression in Turkey through the support of local initiatives in the field of sports technology. The BİGG SPOR Awards 2025 programme, run in collaboration with TÜBİTAK and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, encourages innovative projects such as artificial intelligence-based sports analytics, sensor and health technologies, and VR/AR-supported training systems. Successful ventures within the programme are offered not only awards but also investment, mentoring and commercialisation opportunities. The aim is to ensure the sustainable development of AI-focused sports technologies within the ecosystem. Ultimately, artificial intelligence is creating a comprehensive transformation in the sports industry, centred on performance optimisation, ethical oversight, and domestic technology production. These developments point to the construction of a more data-driven, transparent, and innovative structure in the future of sports.

The First Olympic Champion in Turkish Sports History: Yaşar Erkan

Res. Asst.Onur TOPUZ



Yaşar Erkan (30 April 1911 – 18 May 1986) holds a special place in Turkish sporting history as the athlete who won Turkey's first Olympic gold medal in the men's Greco-Roman wrestling featherweight category. With this achievement at the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games, Erkan also became the first Olympic champion in the history of the Republic of Turkey.

The son of an oil wrestler, Yaşar Erkan moved to Istanbul with his family from the village of İspidi in the Refahiye district of Erzincan when he was just four years old.

Erkan began his wrestling career at the Kumkapı Wrestling Club, quickly drawing attention with his talent and discipline. His father, Ali Efendi, a well-known wrestler in his village, played an important role in Erkan's decision to pursue the sport.

Erkan was selected for the Turkish National Wrestling Team in 1933 and won a gold medal at the Balkan Wrestling Championships that same year. He repeated this success in 1934 and 1935, winning the Balkan championship three times in a row. The gold medal he won at the 1936 Berlin Olympics was not only an individual achievement but also went down in history as one of the first major victories of the young Republic of Turkey in the international sporting arena.

Following his Olympic victory, a telegram sent by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk praised Erkan's achievement with the words: "You are young, but you have done something important for the country. Your name is now part of Turkish sporting history. Long live Yaşar!‘ Atatürk also changed the athlete's surname from “Naçar” to ’Erkan,‘ meaning ’leading member of society," and gifted him a house.

In addition to his sporting career, Yaşar Erkan worked as a tailor and contributed to the development of Turkish wrestling as an exemplary figure. Erkan passed away on 18 May 1986 and is buried in the Merkezefendi Cemetery in Zeytinburnu, Istanbul.

Yaşar Erkan has left a lasting mark on Turkish sports history not only through the medals he won but also as one of the symbolic figures of the Republic's sports policies.

Long-Term Alcohol Consumption Associated with a Sharp Increase in Rectal Cancer

Res. Asst.Onur TOPUZ

According to a new study, heavy alcohol consumption over many years is associated with a significant increase in the risk of colorectal cancer, particularly rectal cancer. In a study that followed adults in the US for approximately 20 years, it was found that individuals who consumed heavy amounts of alcohol throughout their lives had a much higher risk of cancer compared to light drinkers. In contrast, it was determined that cancer risk did not increase in individuals who had stopped drinking alcohol, and that cancer precursor lesions were less common. The findings suggest that quitting alcohol may reduce cancer risk in the long term.

Among current alcohol users, individuals who consume an average of ≥14 drinks per week over their lifetime are classified as 'heavy drinkers'. Compared to individuals who consume <1 drink per week over their lifetime, heavy drinkers have been found to have a 25% higher risk of colorectal cancer. The risk of rectal cancer is even more pronounced, showing an increase of approximately 95%. When researchers examined alcohol consumption habits throughout adulthood, they found that individuals who consumed alcohol heavily over many years had a 91% higher risk of colorectal cancer compared to those who consistently consumed low amounts of alcohol. In contrast, no increase in colorectal cancer risk was observed among former drinkers. Additionally, benign colorectal tumours (adenomas) with the potential to become cancerous were less common in this group.

Preparations for the Winter Paralympics Continue

Res.Asst. Selim AKMAN

The 2026 Milan-Cortina Paralympic Winter Games will be held in the Italian cities of Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo from 6 to 15 March 2026. A total of 79 medal events will be held in six different Paralympic winter sports during the organisation.
Athletes from around the world will compete in alpine skiing, biathlon, cross-country skiing, ice hockey, snowboarding and wheelchair curling. The event is expected to make a significant contribution to promoting Paralympic winter sports on a global scale.

While Milano-Cortina 2026 aims to give new impetus to the development of the Paralympic movement with its accessibility standards, sustainable organisational approach and inclusive sports policies, the Games also serve as an important international platform where athletes with disabilities can showcase their top-level performances.

IGU Students Achieve Impressive Results at the Wushu Turkey Championship

Res. Asst.Selim AKMAN

The Wushu Turkey Championship once again demonstrated the rising momentum of Istanbul Gelişim University in the field of sports, with the achievements of its students. The outstanding performances of male and female athletes in different categories reinforced İGÜ's sporting representation at the national level.

IGU athletes who achieved podium finishes in the Wushu Sanda, Taichi Quan and Taijijian Quan disciplines during the championship demonstrated not only their individual success but also the quality of the university's sports education and performance infrastructure.

At this important event, İbrahim Sarıdemir, a student in the Department of Exercise and Sports Sciences for People with Disabilities, achieved second place in Turkey with his impressive performance in the Wushu Sanda 75 kg category. Sarıdemir, who stood out throughout the tournament with his disciplined competition and technical proficiency, successfully represented his university with the rank he achieved.

İstanbul Gelişim University continues to steadfastly maintain its academic and practical strength in the field of sports sciences through the successes of its student athletes in national and international events.

Illuminated Night Walk in Florya Atatürk Forest: An Event for ‘Renewal with Nature’ in the City

Res. Asst.Sinan DEMİRCİ

The ‘Illuminated Night Walk’, which aims to connect participants with nature amidst the pace of city life, brought participants together on the forest's illuminated trail; the event emphasised ‘mental relaxation’ while promoting physical activity.

According to the municipality's statement, the walk took place along a route through the forest throughout the night. Participants blended into the tranquil atmosphere of nature as they walked step by step along the illuminated trail; this approach particularly reinforced the idea of ‘taking a breather, even if only briefly, without leaving the city.’

One of the noteworthy aspects of the event was the ‘social break’ concept: participants were served hot filter coffee during/after the walk, and a short rest break encouraged interaction within the group. Such breaks are considered small but effective details that ‘sustain participation’ in recreational activities.

Elon Musk's AI Grok 5 Challenges League of Legends Champion T1!

Res. Asst.Şevval ÖZKAN

Elon Musk has challenged T1, one of the best professional teams in League of Legends (LoL), to a match using artificial intelligence (AI). Musk wants to test whether his own AI model, Grok 5, will be able to compete with humans in LoL by 2026.

Since launching Grok, Musk has been directing it towards game development, plans to establish his own AI game studio, and believes that AI will be able to create a game entirely on its own by 2029.

Elon Musk wants to see if Grok can beat T1 in LoL Elon Musk: 'Let's see if Grok 5 can beat the best human team in League of Legends by 2026, with some limitations,' he challenged on X.

What does the challenge entail?

Musk claims that Grok 5 can play LoL by only viewing the screen and with human-like reaction times. It is said to be designed to perceive the game like a normal player, without accessing codes or APIs. This differs from previously adapted AI systems: the goal here is to compete on equal terms with humans in strategy, adaptation, and team coordination.

T1 Responds

South Korea-based esports team T1 accepted the challenge by responding with 'We're ready' on social media. This team includes Faker, one of the most famous players in LoL history, and the announcement of this potential match has attracted significant interest in the e-sports world. The challenge immediately went viral and caught the attention of former professional e-sports players and Riot Games (the developer of LoL).

T1's acceptance is a start, but the official match date or organisational details have not yet been announced.

Performance Measurement in Baseball is Now Smarter with the Full Swing KIT Launch Monitor

Res. Asst.Şevval ÖZKAN

Full Swing, a sports technology company renowned for its expertise in golf technologies, has made a strong entry into the baseball world with its innovative product, the KIT Launch Monitor. This device, which makes performance measurement data-driven, aims to make players' training processes more efficient and scientific.

The KIT Launch Monitor can be used without requiring additional sensors, thanks to its portable design and easy setup. The device measures 12 different performance metrics with each swing, providing players with instant feedback. Hitting data includes swing speed (mph), exit velocity (mph), launch angle (degrees), direction (degrees), distance (feet) and spin rate (rpm), while pitching performance measurements include velocity (mph) and spin rate (rpm).

The collected data is supported by high-resolution video recordings and 3D graphics, enabling both players and coaches to perform more accurate analyses. This allows athletes to evaluate their performance instantly, while coaches can create data-driven training programmes. KIT stands out as a technological development tool for schools, clubs, and team organisations.

One of the device's notable features is its ability to measure both hitting and throwing data through a single system. Furthermore, all data can be stored and shared via a phone or tablet application, enabling long-term tracking of player development. The KIT Launch Monitor is suitable for both indoor and outdoor use.

Priced at approximately $6,499, KIT is marketed as a more accessible performance analysis solution compared to its competitors, considering its versatile features.

The Legendary Athlete Naim Süleymanoğlu

Res. Asst.Ünal Can GÖKMEN

One of the most distinguished figures in Turkish sporting history, Naim Süleymanoğlu occupies an exceptional position not only due to his international achievements but also because of his transformative impact on how Turkish sport is perceived globally. His extraordinary performances in weightlifting significantly enhanced Turkey's representation in individual sports on the world stage.

Throughout his career, Süleymanoğlu won gold medals at three Olympic Games (Seoul 1988, Barcelona 1992, Atlanta 1996), securing his place among the rare athletes in weightlifting history to achieve this feat. Furthermore, the world and Olympic records he broke demonstrate not only his physical superiority but also the decisive role of systematic training, biomechanical efficiency, and mental resilience in sport. His ability to lift weights exceeding three times his own body weight is considered an exceptional performance example even in sports science literature.

Naim Süleymanoğlu's impact on Turkish sporting history goes far beyond his medal count. From the late 1980s onwards, he played a decisive role in increasing public interest in weightlifting and Olympic sports in general in Turkey, contributing to a rethinking of athlete training systems. In this context, Süleymanoğlu is considered one of the first concrete examples of the role model concept in individual sports in Turkey.

From an academic perspective, Süleymanoğlu's career offers an important field of study in terms of talent selection, early age guidance, training load planning, and long-term athlete development models. The continuity of his successes clearly demonstrates that his performance was not random but the product of a scientifically based preparation process. In this respect, Naim Süleymanoğlu serves as a case study in coaching education programmes in the context of performance development and elite athlete management.

He is not merely a ‘legendary athlete’ in Turkish sporting history; he is a historical figure who strengthened Turkey's claim in Olympic sports, contributed to the transformation of sporting culture, and highlighted the importance of a scientific approach to training. His legacy continues to be a source of inspiration for today's athletes and aspiring coaches.

New Protocol for Brain Health in English Football

Res. Asst.Ayşe Demet Karadağ

A significant development has taken place in England aimed at protecting the long-term brain health of footballers. The Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) has taken a pioneering step by announcing a comprehensive prevention protocol to reduce footballers' risk of CTE (chronic traumatic encephalopathy).

Under the protocol, it is recommended that professionals and players in training sessions do not exceed 10 headers per week, and heading is completely banned for children under 12 years of age.

The initiative was shaped by previous research indicating higher risks to brain health among former footballers. This decision aims to ensure younger players and amateurs are more consciously protected against long-term injury risks.

Source: British soccer union wants fewer headers for pros, and none for kids, to protect players' brains — AP News

High-Tech Performance and Injury Prevention Screening Begins in Dortmund

Res. Asst.Ayşe Demet Karadağ

German Bundesliga team Borussia Dortmund has begun working with a new technology that tracks athletes' internal physiological state to more accurately analyse performance and injury risk.

The club has established a long-term partnership with Biolyz, an Austria-based health technology company, to implement a high-frequency saliva biomarker test tailored to players.

This method provides regular information about players' stress, inflammation, recovery and metabolic states, enabling the technical team to manage players' training load and injury risk more effectively.

Source: Biolyz Partners with Borussia Dortmund to Bring High-Frequency Saliva Biomarker Testing to Elite Football — Fitt.co
https://insider.fitt.co/press-release/biolyz-partners-with-borussia-dortmund-to-bring-high-frequency-saliva-biomarker-testing-to-elite-football/

The Keto Diet:
It May Have a Hidden Cost When Losing Weight

Res. Asst.Yalçın MARAŞLI

A new experimental study on the long-term effects of the ketogenic diet, which has been widely used in recent years for weight loss and metabolic health, has revealed some noteworthy findings. Known for its high fat and very low carbohydrate content, the ketogenic diet aims to induce ketosis by directing the body to use fat instead of carbohydrates for energy production. Initially developed to treat certain neurological disorders such as epilepsy, this dietary model is now widely adopted by the general population.

Research Methodology

In the study, mice were divided into four different dietary groups: Typical high-fat Western diet Low-fat, high-carbohydrate diet Traditional ketogenic diet Protein-matched low-fat diet The experimental animals were fed these diets for nine months or longer, and their metabolic indicators were monitored regularly.

Key Findings

According to the study results, the ketogenic diet limited weight gain compared to the high-fat Western diet. However, it was determined that most of the weight gained came from fat tissue and that muscle mass was not preserved. Furthermore, fatty liver disease developed in mice on the ketogenic diet. This effect was reported to be more pronounced in male mice and was accompanied by serious impairments in liver function. Female mice did not exhibit the same level of liver steatosis.

The study also highlighted adverse outcomes related to blood sugar control. Although blood sugar and insulin levels remained low during the ketogenic diet, it was found that blood sugar levels rose higher and for longer periods when carbohydrate intake resumed. It was suggested that this could be related to the pancreas being unable to secrete sufficient insulin.

Assessment in Terms of Human Health

Although the researchers emphasised that the findings obtained in mice cannot be directly generalised to humans, they draw attention to the potential risks of the ketogenic diet on long-term metabolic health. It is stated that caution is required, particularly in terms of liver health and glucose metabolism.

Expert Warning

The authors of the study emphasise that individuals considering a ketogenic diet should consult a healthcare professional. It is stated that long-term and uncontrolled dieting can have adverse effects on metabolic balance.