



Faculty of  
Sport Sciences



# FACULTY OF SPORTS SCIENCES

E-BULLETIN

Future of Sports, Center of Success Istanbul Gelisim University

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# 4 March

## World Obesity Day

**Res. Asst.Fikret KAYHALAK**

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Every year on 4 March, World Obesity Day is observed worldwide with various events to raise awareness about obesity and emphasise the importance of healthy lifestyle habits. Today, obesity is recognised as a significant public health problem that threatens community health beyond being an individual health issue. According to World Health Organisation (WHO) data, obesity increases the risk of many chronic diseases, such as cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes and certain types of cancer. A sedentary lifestyle and unhealthy eating habits play a major role in increasing obesity rates. In this regard, regular physical activity and sport are of critical importance in preventing obesity and supporting healthy living. The Faculty of Sports Sciences continues its education, research, and social contribution activities with the aim of promoting an active lifestyle and raising awareness of physical activity in society. Making movement a part of life for a healthy lifestyle is one of the most powerful steps that can be taken in the fight against obesity.



# Istanbul Global University Faculty of Sports Sciences 2025– 2026 Academic Year Spring Semester Academic Council Meeting Held **Res. Asst.Fikret KAYHALAK**

The Academic Council Meeting for the Spring Semester of the 2025–2026 Academic Year at the Faculty of Sports Sciences, Istanbul Gencerbirligi University, was held with the participation of our Dean, Prof. Dr. Ali Kızılet, our Vice Deans, Prof. Dr. Yusuf Can and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Can Koç, and our academic and administrative staff. During the meeting, a general evaluation of the autumn semester was conducted, and academic goals, expectations, and plans for the spring semester were discussed with our academic staff. We hope that the new semester will be productive, successful, and academically fruitful for our faculty; we wish all our academic staff a healthy and successful spring semester. May our spring semester be auspicious.



# Istanbul Gelişim University Faculty of Sports Sciences 2026-01 Quality Commission Meeting

Held **Res. Asst.Fikret KAYHALAK**

At the meeting;

- ✦ Faculty ABİDR and BİDR Reports
- ✦ Evaluation of QDMS actions
- ✦ Determination of the Academic Advisory Meeting agenda
- ✦ Recommendations for applications to increase the quality of activities and courses at the faculty for international students were discussed and decided upon.

Concrete steps have been planned to support the sustainable development of our faculty, in line with evaluations aimed at strengthening quality assurance processes, making academic and administrative operations more effective, and increasing student satisfaction. As the Faculty of Sports Sciences, we will ensure continuity in our work in line with our participatory management approach, continuous improvement approach, and internationalisation vision.



# The 17th National Sports Sciences Student Congress will be held in Yozgat

**Res. Asst.Fikret KAYHALAK**

The 17th National Sports Sciences Student Congress, which enables students studying sports sciences to share their scientific work and contribute to their academic development, will be held between 12–14 May 2026, hosted by the Faculty of Sports Sciences at Yozgat Bozok University. Organised in collaboration with the Sports Sciences Association, the congress aims to bring together sports science students from different universities across Turkey to encourage the sharing of scientific knowledge. During the congress, students will have the opportunity to present their scientific studies on various areas of sports science and gain academic experience by meeting with academics who are experts in their field. Throughout the congress, current research, scientific presentations and academic discussions in the field of sports science will be held; participants will have the opportunity to take part in a programme rich in both scientific and social aspects. It has also been announced that students will be provided with free accommodation and meals as part of the organisation. Aiming to support the academic output of sports science students, the 17th National Sports Science Student Congress aims to create an important scientific platform for young researchers. Detailed information about the congress can be found on the organisation's social media accounts.



# The 12th International Science, Culture and Sports Congress will be held in Bosnia and Herzegovina

**Res. Asst.Fikret KAYHALAK**

The 12th International Science, Culture and Sports Congress, organised by the International Science, Culture and Sports Association, will be held in Bosnia and Herzegovina between 30 April and 3 May 2026. Aiming to strengthen international academic collaborations, the congress seeks to bring together academics, researchers and students from different countries. Participants will have the opportunity to present their scientific work and interact with international academic networks at the congress, where current research in the fields of science, culture and sport will be shared. Adopting an interdisciplinary approach, the event aims to address research from different fields and increase academic knowledge sharing. Papers will be presented as oral and poster presentations during the conference, and participants will have the opportunity to engage in scientific discussions with academics who are experts in their fields. Furthermore, the event aims to contribute to the development of international academic collaborations and the creation of new research opportunities. The abstract submission process for the conference began on 8 January 2026, and the deadline for abstract submission is 20 March 2026. The results of the paper acceptance process will be announced on 15 April 2026, and the conference programme will be published on 20 April 2026. Detailed information about the conference and the application process can be found at [www.iecses.org](http://www.iecses.org).



# The 9th International Congress on Exercise and Sport Psychology will be held in Erzurum

**Res. Asst.Fikret KAYHALAK**

The 9th International Congress on Exercise and Sport Psychology, which aims to bring together international academic studies in the field of exercise and sport psychology, will be held in Erzurum between 3–5 April 2026. Organised in collaboration with Erzurum Technical University and the Exercise and Sports Psychology Association, the congress aims to bring together academics, researchers and students working in the field of sports psychology. Held under the theme of 'The Neuropsychology of Sport and Performance,' the congress will address current topics such as the psychological dimensions of sport and exercise, performance psychology, cognitive processes, and neuropsychological approaches. During the conference, participants will have the opportunity to present their scientific studies as oral and poster presentations and learn about current research through presentations by invited speakers who are experts in their fields. The event programme will also include practical workshops, aiming to enhance participants' theoretical and practical knowledge. Open to international participation, the conference aims to increase interdisciplinary knowledge sharing in the field of sports psychology and strengthen academic collaborations. Detailed information about the conference and the application process can be found at [www.espkongre2026.com](http://www.espkongre2026.com).



# Applications for the Turkey–Kyrgyzstan Youth Exchange Programme Have Begun

**Res. Asst.Fikret KAYHALAK**

Applications are now open for the Turkey–Kyrgyzstan Youth Exchange Programme, organised under the International Exchange Programmes run by the Turkish Ministry of Youth and Sports. The programme aims to increase cultural interaction between young people from both countries and to strengthen mutual understanding and cooperation. Under the programme, young people from Turkey and Kyrgyzstan will come together and have the opportunity to participate in cultural exchanges, social events and various educational activities. The programme, which aims to enable young people to learn about different cultures, gain international experience and strengthen friendships, also aims to contribute to their personal and social development. The Turkey-Kyrgyzstan Youth Exchange Programme will take place between 12 and 17 April 2026. Applicants wishing to participate in the programme must complete their applications by 6 March 2026. Those wishing to obtain detailed information about the programme and apply can visit [genclikhizmetleri.gov.tr](http://genclikhizmetleri.gov.tr).



# The Excitement of the U18 Women's Ice Hockey World Championship in Istanbul

**Res. Asst. Ayşe Demet KARADAĞ**

Between 19 and 25 January 2026, Istanbul hosted one of the most important youth events in women's ice hockey. The U18 Women's World Championship Division II-A Group matches, included in the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) calendar, were played at the Zeytinburnu Ice Rink.



Turkey, Korea, Kazakhstan, Latvia, the Netherlands and New Zealand competed in the tournament. As this level is a critical step in the countries' journey to promotion to Division I, the matches were played at a high tempo and with great discipline.

For host nation Turkey, the value of the organisation extended beyond mere match results. Young athletes gained the opportunity to compete under genuine tournament conditions against a much faster and more physical style of play than that found in local leagues. This experience meant learning critical components of ice hockey directly on the ice, such as quick decision-making, dealing with contact, defensive positioning, special team plays (power play/penalty kill) and bench management. For the technical teams, these matches also provided an important observation ground to assess player development against an international benchmark.

Another critical outcome of this organisation for Turkey was the increased visibility of women's ice hockey. The interest in the stands, local media coverage, and young spectators following the matches in person contributed to the emergence of strong role models for girls and young athletes. From the perspective of the development of women's sport, such international events create not only a sporting impact but also a social and cultural one.

Furthermore, by successfully hosting a tournament in line with IIHF standards, Turkey clearly demonstrated its organisational capacity. The experience gained in many areas, from refereeing to the statistics team, from field operations to time management, serves as an important reference for bringing higher-level ice sports events to our country in the future.

# Simone Biles – The Symbol of Courage and Excellence in Gymnastics

**Res. Asst. Ayşe Demet KARADAĞ**

Simone Biles, one of the most talked-about names in the sporting world over the past decade, has redefined artistic gymnastics in both its technical and human dimensions. Her flawless execution of extraordinarily difficult elements, the inclusion of moves named after her in the rules, and her consistent medal haul at major championships have made her a living legend.



What sets Biles apart is not just her medals. By taking a clear stance on athlete health and mental resilience, she brought the discussion of ‘mental wellbeing’ in elite sport into the mainstream. This attitude created a powerful role model effect, particularly for young athletes: it showed that health and self-awareness are just as valuable as success.

From a technical perspective, Biles' floor routines and vault performances are studied as a unique combination of power generation, spatial awareness and body control. Coaches and sports scientists use her routines as training material; biomechanical analyses contribute to the establishment of new standards in gymnastics.

Today, Simone Biles is not only one of the most decorated gymnasts; she is also recognised as a symbol of a safe, conscious, and sustainable approach to performance within sports culture.

*Resmî Kaynaklar (IIHF)*

*Olympics profili:*

<https://olympics.com/en/athletes/simone-biles>

*FIG (Uluslararası Jimnastik Federasyonu) biyografi ve başarıları:*

[https://www.gymnastics.sport/site/athletes/bio\\_detail.php?id=25035](https://www.gymnastics.sport/site/athletes/bio_detail.php?id=25035)

*World Championships ve element kayıtları (FIG):*

<https://www.gymnastics.sport/site/records.php>

# Medal Success for Turkish Paralympic Athletes in Dubai

**Res. Asst. Bilgehan PEPE**

Turkish Paralympic athletes achieved significant results at the 2026 WPA Grand Prix event held in Dubai, drawing international attention. Competing in various categories, the athletes won medals in sprinting, throwing events and middle-distance disciplines, once again demonstrating Turkey's progress in Paralympic athletics. The tournament was particularly noteworthy for showcasing how performance analysis and adaptive training approaches can be applied at an elite level.

Experts emphasise that these achievements in Paralympic disciplines are not limited to sporting results; they also increase the motivation of individuals with disabilities to participate in sports and strengthen social awareness. It is noted that with the increase in international competitions, academic studies in the field of exercise sciences for people with disabilities in Turkey have also gained more opportunities to produce data.



Kaynak: <https://yasadikca.com/dubaide-ay-yildizli-ruzgar-paralimpik-atletlerden-madalya-yagmuru/>

# Paralympic Archery

## Quota Target

**Res. Asst.Bilgehan PEPE**

National archer Dođan Hancı is continuing his preparations for the new season with the aim of accumulating the necessary quota points to qualify for the 2028 Paralympic Games. A report published in February stated that the athlete is focusing on the international tournament calendar and aiming to climb the world rankings. Hancı, who has represented Turkey in Paralympic archery for many years, is continuing the season in a planned manner, focusing on endurance and concentration training in addition to technical training.

According to experts, individual equipment adaptations, proper training loads and regular camp processes are critical for sustainable performance in Paralympic archery. Supporting athletes with scientifically based preparation programmes contributes to increased success on the international stage.



# ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN SPORT IS ON THE TABLE!

**Res. Asst. Muhammed Ali GÖKÇE**

An international conference addressing artificial intelligence applications in physical education and sports was held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, with broad participation. Two speakers from Turkey also gave presentations online at the conference.

TASHKENT (TSA) – Hosted by the Uzbekistan State University of Physical Education and Sport, the international conference titled ‘Artificial Intelligence in Physical Education and Sport: Development Directions, Achievements and Expectations’ brought together sports science and digital technologies. At the meeting, attended by academics, coaches and researchers, the place of artificial intelligence in the present and future of sport was evaluated from multiple perspectives.

Levent Karadağ, President of the Digital Transformation Platform, and Pınar Kaçar, Vice President, participated in the conference online from Turkey. In his presentation, Karadağ discussed the role of smart sports fields and wearable technologies in monitoring athlete performance and data-driven decision-making processes. Attention was drawn to how sensors and digital infrastructure used in sports enhance training quality. Pınar Kaçar provided information about the work being carried out to prepare Turkish athletes using AI-supported training models. Kaçar emphasised that artificial intelligence strengthens the concept of personalised training in athlete development.



# Combining Multi-Sensor Data with Machine Learning for Fatigue Prediction in Football Players

**Res. Asst. Muhammed Ali GÖKÇE**

This research analysed data from university football players in China over a 12-week period (using data from multiple sensors such as GPS, heart rate monitors and survey data) with artificial intelligence-supported machine learning models, demonstrating that it could predict fatigue levels in footballers with much higher accuracy than single-sensor-based models.

Key highlights of the study:

- Models were created using machine learning techniques such as XGBoost by combining internal and external load data from different sensors.
- The performance of the model using multi-sensor data significantly outperformed approaches based on a single indicator.
- This enables more reliable and earlier prediction of players' fatigue levels, contributing to the optimisation of training programmes and injury prevention strategies.

Multi-sensor fusion outperforms single indicators for fatigue prediction in university soccer players: a machine learning approach

Xuezhu Xu\*

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# TMOK 38th Turkey Fair Play Awards: The Heart of Sport Beats for Fair Play

**Res. Asst.Onur TOPUZ**

As the competitive atmosphere of the Winter Olympics fades into the background, the Turkish National Olympic Committee (TMOK) has launched a meaningful initiative reminding us that sport is not just about medals. The nomination process for the 38th Turkey Fair Play Awards opened on 4 February 2026 and will continue until Wednesday, 18 March. This year's evaluations cover behaviours demonstrating honesty, respect and solidarity exhibited during 2025. The awards will be presented in three main categories: Sporting Conduct, Sporting Career and Sporting Promotion, with recipients receiving a 'Grand Prize', 'Certificate of Honour' or 'Letter of Commendation'. In addition, the TMOK Board of Directors may present a special Social Fair Play Award for events with a high social impact. This award mechanism in Turkey represents not only local success but also international prestige; indeed, since 1983, many names from Turkey have been recognised with World and European Fair Play awards for their achievements on this platform. Citizens wishing to nominate athletes, clubs, or organisations that embody the Fair Play philosophy can submit their applications, supported by videos and documents, via TMOK's official website to become part of this honourable tradition.



# Milano Cortina 2026: A Historic Farewell at the Summit of Winter Sports

**Res. Asst. Onur TOPUZ**

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The 25th Winter Olympic Games, hosted by Italy from 6 to 22 February 2026, went down in sporting history with a spectacular closing ceremony at the Verona Olympic Arena. These Games became a symbol of social transformation, not only for their sporting achievements but also for earning the title of 'the most gender-equal Winter Games in history' with a 47% participation rate of female athletes. On the field, Norway declared its absolute dominance by breaking the record for the most gold medals won at a single Winter Olympics, collecting 18 gold and 41 medals in total. Norwegian phenomenon Johannes Høsflot Klæbo became the first athlete to win six gold medals in a single Winter Games, winning all six races he competed in and cementing his place among the legends. Team Turkey represented the Turkish flag with eight athletes in the disciplines of alpine skiing, ski jumping, cross-country skiing and short track speed skating. Brazilian Lucas Pinheiro Braathen's gold medal in the giant slalom marked South America's first medal at the Winter Games, while the United States, defeating Canada in the ice hockey final, and host Italy, enjoying its most successful Games in history, were the other standout giants. Before the Olympic flame was extinguished ahead of its next destination, the 2030 French Alps, other memorable details included the inclusion of alpine skiing in the programme for the first time and host nation Italy breaking its own record with 10 gold medals.



# Countdown to the Milan-Cortina 2026 Paralympic Winter Games

**Res. Asst. Selim AKMAN**

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The Milano-Cortina 2026 Paralympic Winter Games, to be held in Italy between 6 and 15 March 2026, will bring together approximately 665 Paralympic athletes from around the world. The event will feature top-level competition in para alpine skiing, para snowboarding, para Nordic skiing, wheelchair curling and para ice hockey.

Held in Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo, the Games will serve as an important global showcase not only in terms of sporting achievement but also in terms of accessibility, inclusive sports policies and a sustainable organisational model. The design of the facilities according to universal design principles reinforces the role of Paralympic sports in raising social awareness.

Paralympic sports go beyond performance sport; they play a critical role in rehabilitation, social integration and equal participation. In this respect, Milano-Cortina 2026 is a powerful source of motivation for the scientific development of exercise and adaptive sports applications for people with disabilities.

For our department, this organisation serves as an important reference in the context of classification systems, adaptive training planning, and the promotion of an inclusive sports culture. The Paralympic spirit once again demonstrates that sport is an accessible and transformative force for everyone.



# The 7th Stage of the Red Bull Cliff Diving World Series was held in Antalya

**Res. Asst.Sinan DEMİRCİ**

Red Bull's height-defying event, the Red Bull Cliff Diving World Series, held its seventh stage of the year in Antalya. Taking place in Antalya, where sea, sun, history and nature intertwine, this stage stood out as one of the most critical stops in the series ahead of the season finale.

The winner of the day in the women's category was Australian Rhiannan Iffland. With her high scores in Antalya, Iffland clinched the season championship without waiting for the final stage in Sydney. Canadian athletes Molly Carlson and Simone Leathead completed the podium in the women's category.

In the men's category, the winner was British athlete Aidan Heslop. He was followed by Ukrainian Oleksiy Prygorov in second place and Italian Andrea Barnaba in third. The winning athletes received their awards from Antalya Governor Hulusi Şahin and Antalya Metropolitan Mayor Muhittin Böcek.

Kıvanç Gür represented Turkey in the Antalya stage as one of the wildcard athletes. Gür, who set a Turkish record in the 10-metre diving event between 2013 and 2024, was one of the athletes who stood out at the event. Red Bull athletes Kübra Dağlı, Bora Altıntaş, Berke Dikişçiöğlü and Ali Türkkın also participated in the event.

The visual identity of the event also featured eye-catching details. The design on the ramp where the athletes performed their jumps bore the Les Benjamins signature, while Decathlon sponsored the athletes' preparation area. Segway Ninebot provided sustainable transport support at the venue. Other sponsors of the event included Listerine, Migros, and A.O. Smith.



# The Alanya Ultra Trail Legend IS BACK!

**Res. Asst. Sinan DEMİRCİ**

**2026, 27–28 March: Bringing Runners Together with Trails Stretching from the Mediterranean to the Taurus Mountains**

Positioned at the intersection of nature and history, tradition and modern resilience, the Alanya Ultra Trail will take place in Alanya on 27–28 March 2026. Starting at sea level from Cleopatra Beach, the event features routes stretching from the Mediterranean coast to the technical and challenging slopes of the Taurus Mountains. The longest course of the race, the 68K Alanya Ultra Trail (AUT), offers participants a high-level test of physical and mental endurance with a total elevation gain of 3,905 metres.

Launched in 2017 by national athlete Ahmet Arslan, who has achieved national and international success in mountain running, the Alanya Ultra Trail quickly became one of Turkey's leading mountain running events. Changing weather and terrain conditions throughout the day allow runners to experience different 'seasons' at different altitudes, while Alanya's natural landscapes and historical routes also feature prominently as an important part of the race.

The event's 2026 motto, 'Tradition to Trail,' emphasises the region's cultural heritage. The courses, shaped by Yörük migration routes and historic caravan routes, transform the race from a purely performance-focused competition into an experience enriched by an element of 'discovery.' The race's inclusion in the international calendar, its evaluation under the UTMB Index, and its awarding of ITRA points make the event a significant target for athletes seeking to document their performance on a global scale.

With five different course options catering to runners of all levels, the stages of the Alanya Ultra Trail 2026 are planned as follows:

**68K Alanya Ultra Trail (AUT) – 3905 m+**

**42K Taurus Mountain Trail (TMT) – 2130 m+**

**27K Keykubat Mountain Run (KMR) – 1598 m+**

**18K Cleopatra Short Trail (CST) – 864 m+**

**5K Alanya Castle Run (ACR) – 375 m+ (for the first time in 2026)**

According to the race programme, on Friday, 27 March 2026, an exhibition area will be set up at Abdurrahman Alaettinoğlu Park on Cleopatra Beach, and race kits will be distributed. On Saturday, 28 March 2026, the races will start early in the morning from Cleopatra Beach and will be run on different courses throughout the day.

The organisation will be carried out with the main sponsor 23 Projects, communication sponsor Corendon Airlines, and health sponsor Başkent University Alanya Hospital, with contributions from various local stakeholders and support from official institutions. It was also announced that six participants will be gifted a helicopter experience through a raffle to be held as part of the post-race event.

Alanya Ultra Trail 2026 offers athletes a high-altitude and technical trail experience, while also standing out as a multi-layered example of sports tourism through natural beauty and cultural routes. It is expected to be one of the season's most notable events for university students and all participants interested in endurance sports.

# The Technological Era in Curling: Electronic Grips

**Res. Asst.Şevval ÖZKAN**

The electronic hog lines used in curling competitions at the Milan-Cortina 2026 Winter Olympics were well received by athletes. This new technology automatically detects hog line violations during shots, ensuring the sport is played more fairly. The hog line refers to the line that players must not cross when delivering the stone in curling. When the stones are ready, they are illuminated with a blue light; if the delivery is compliant with the rules, the light flashes green, and if the player crosses the hog line before delivering the stone, the light turns red. It makes decisions in milliseconds by interacting with magnetic strips embedded under the ice.

The technology was not used at the 2022 Beijing Games due to issues with the battery compartment; as a result, curling reverted to its traditional 'honour system' where players declare their own violations.

It is stated that this technological innovation is not contrary to the culture of curling, a sport known for its honour-based structure; on the contrary, it provides significant clarity and consistency, especially in high-level competitions, where the human eye struggles to detect instant violations. Officials emphasise that the application aims to contribute to the game being played on a more transparent and fair playing field, rather than putting athletes in a difficult position.



# Ice Skating Turns to Artificial Intelligence to Resolve Referee Disputes

**Res. Asst.Şevval ÖZKAN**

Artistic ice skating is turning to artificial intelligence (AI) and computer vision technologies to ensure greater consistency and transparency in scoring performances, following decades of judging controversies.

The International Skating Union (ISU) has been testing high-definition camera systems at competitions for the past two years. These systems track athletes' movements with the help of AI and analyse technical elements such as the number of rotations in jumps, jump height, distance covered and spin positions in real time.

The computer vision technology, consisting of six cameras placed around the rink, aims to provide technical panels with more objective data in situations that can directly affect medal results and require instant decisions, such as whether a jump was fully rotated or which edge the athlete took off from.

ISU Director General Colin Smith said, 'We are constantly evaluating where we can use technology and how we can improve the sport to ensure fair competition on the ice.' He stated that if the system proves effective, judges will be able to focus on the 'artistic aspect and human element,' while computer vision will evaluate more technical and clearly measurable elements.

Beyond refereeing, Smith noted that computer vision data could also increase viewer engagement by presenting statistics such as jump height and rotation speed in graphics during broadcasts.

While the ISU has not announced a timetable for when the technology will be used in official competition scoring, it stated that developments will be evaluated following the World Championships to be held in Prague in March.



# Research Assistant Ünal Can GÖKMEN's Work Published in a Scopus-Indexed Journal

**Res. Asst. Fikret KAYHALAK**

The study titled 'Increasing Exercise Awareness in Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities Among Sports Science Students: An Educational Application' by Research Assistant Ünal Can GÖKMEN from the Faculty of Sports Sciences at Istanbul Gelişim University has been published in the International Journal of Sport Studies for Health, which is indexed in Scopus.

The main objective of the study was to examine the awareness and attitude levels of Faculty of Sports Sciences students regarding the physical, psychological, and social importance of exercise in individuals with intellectual disabilities and to determine whether this awareness could be developed through an education-based application. The study was conducted using a single-group pre-test–post-test quasi-experimental design; participants were first administered an attitude scale, then received theoretical training on intellectual disability and the effects of exercise, and subsequently underwent a practical exercise programme through one-to-one pairing.

The findings revealed a statistically significant increase in students' attitude scores following the education and direct contact-based application process. Particularly notable improvements were observed in the positive attitude dimension; it was demonstrated that the experience-based approach contributed to reducing prejudice and strengthening an inclusive understanding of sport.

The study scientifically demonstrates that increasing practical and contact-focused content in sports science education programmes is critically important for developing disability awareness among future sports professionals. We congratulate Research Assistant Ünal Can GÖKMEN and the research team and wish them continued success.

## International Journal of Sport Studies for Health

Journal Homepage



### Increasing Exercise Awareness in Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities Among Sports Science Students: An Educational Application



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# Legendary Athletes - Hamza Yerlikaya Turkish Wrestling's 'Wrestler of the Century'

**Res. Asst. Ünal Can GÖKMEN**

Hamza Yerlikaya, one of the most important figures in Turkish sporting history, became one of the iconic athletes of Turkish wrestling's golden age thanks to his successes on the international stage.

Born in 1976, Yerlikaya made a major breakthrough by winning a gold medal at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics when he was just 20 years old, and then became an Olympic champion for the second time at the 2000 Sydney Olympics. In addition, he took his career to the top by winning numerous World and European Championships.

Hamza Yerlikaya established a clear superiority over his opponents through his technical excellence, physical endurance, and tactical intelligence in Greco-Roman wrestling, earning him the title of 'Wrestler of the Century' in the international sports community. The world championships he won at a young age brought Turkey's traditional strength in wrestling back to the world stage.

Throughout his sporting career, Yerlikaya has been a role model with his disciplined approach to training and his sense of national pride, and is considered one of the symbols of the spirit of competition and continuity in Turkish sporting culture.

Hamza Yerlikaya's achievements are not limited to individual medals; he has also been a source of inspiration for the institutional development of Turkish wrestling and the training of a new generation of athletes.

Through the values he has brought to Turkish sport and his historic achievements on the international stage, Hamza Yerlikaya has permanently etched his name into Turkish sporting history.



# The Modulating Effect of Training Load on Gut Microbiota: Reflections of Seasonal Loading on Gastrointestinal Adaptations in Athletes

**Res. Asst. Yalçın MARAŞLI**

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This study aims to investigate the effects of seasonal changes in training load on gut microbiota composition, short-chain fatty acid (SCFA) production, and gastrointestinal system functions in elite athletes. In sports science, training load is considered one of the key determinants of performance development, recovery processes, and physiological adaptations. Recent studies have revealed that exercise-induced adaptations are not limited to the cardiorespiratory and neuromuscular systems but also exert significant effects on the gastrointestinal system and gut microbiota. In this context, the gut microbiota is considered a dynamic ecosystem that plays a critical role in many physiological processes, such as energy metabolism, inflammation control, immune response, and metabolic regulation. The literature frequently emphasises that microbial diversity and metabolic activity are higher in athlete populations compared to the general population, with SCFA production capacity showing particular increases. Within the scope of the research, the stress conditions encountered by athletes during different training periods were examined and evaluated over two main periods: the high training load phase and the reduced load/recovery phase. During this process, gut microbiota composition, SCFA concentrations, gastrointestinal transit time, and indicators of athletes' nutritional quality were analysed. The findings revealed an increase in microbial diversity and metabolic activity indicators during periods of high training load. In particular, an increase in the relative abundance of certain bacterial species was observed, and significant increases in SCFA production were detected. It is thought that lactate produced in muscle tissue during intense exercise may be transported to the gut via the systemic circulation and serve as an energy substrate for certain bacterial species, thereby increasing microbial metabolic activity. In contrast, certain changes in athletes' dietary behaviour were observed during periods of low training load and rest. Although no significant differences were found in total carbohydrate and fibre intake, a decline in diet quality was determined. It was found that processed food consumption increased, fresh fruit and vegetable consumption decreased, and moderate alcohol consumption was observed during this period. Along with these dietary changes, distinct alterations in gut microbiota composition and an increase in gastrointestinal transit time were observed. It is thought that these changes in gastrointestinal transit time may reshape the dynamic structure of the microbiota ecosystem by affecting gut fermentation processes and microbial metabolite production. The research results indicate a bidirectional and load-sensitive adaptive relationship between training load and gut microbiota. The findings support the concept of the 'gut-muscle axis,' which is gaining increasing importance in the sports physiology literature. Considering the potential effects of SCFA production on energy homeostasis, inflammation control, and recovery processes, the gut microbiota may be an important biological determinant of athletic performance and athlete health.