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Baku awarded 2020 European Karate Championships

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By **Duncan Mackay**



Baku has added another event to its portfolio after being awarded the 2020 European Karate Championships.

The event will be the 55th edition of the Championships since they were first held in Paris in 1966.

The decision to award Azerbaijan's capital was taken by the Congress of the European Karate Federation following a presentation from Yashar Bashirov, President of the Azerbaijan Karate Federation.

He was supported by Dmitry Chigenev, the manager of karate competitions of the first European Games in Baku later this year.



Yashar Bashirov (left), President of the Azerbaijan Karate Federation, and Dmitry Chigenev (right), manager of karate at Baku 2015, celebrate being awarded the 2020 European Championships with Antonio Espinos, head of the World and European Karate Federations ©Azerbaijan Karate Federation

Karate is one of only five sports or disciplines on the programme at Baku 2015 which are not part of the Olympics and is due to be held in the Crystal Hall, the venue built for the Eurovision Song Contest.

Bashirov told Congress that Azerbaijan is fast gaining a reputation for hosting major events.

"Proof of this is, the forthcoming first European Games and Islamic Games to be held in 2017," he said.

Baku is also due to host a Formula One Grand Prix race from next year and will stage matches during the 2020 UEFA Championships.



Aliyev Niyazi (right) won the gold medal in the men's kumite under 67kg at the European Karate Championships in Istanbul ©Anadolu Agency/Getty Images

This will be the first time that the Championships have been held in Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan won four medals at the 50th edition of the European Karate Championships, which concluded in Istanbul on Sunday (March 22).

This included gold medals for Aliyev Niyazi and Aghayev Rafael in the men's kumite under 67 kilogram and under 75kg categories respectively.

Next year's Championships are due to be held in France, 2017 in Turkey and 2018 in Serbia.

The 2019 event still has to be awarded.

Contact the writer of this story at duncan.mackay@insidethgames.biz

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About the author



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Duncan Mackay is the editor of insidethgames.biz. Awards include British Sports Writer of the Year in 2004, British News Story of the Year in 2004, British Sports Internet Reporter of the Year in 2009. Mackay is one of Britain's best-connected journalists and during the 16 years he worked at The Guardian and The Observer he regularly broke a number of major exclusive stories, including the news that British sprinter Dwain Chambers had tested positive for banned performance enhancing drugs.

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