



MEDIA RELEASE

**For Immediate Release
February 12, 2026**

**Judo Alberta Announces KidSport Calgary & Area as Charitable Partner
for the 2026 Open National Championships**

Calgary, AB — Judo Alberta, in partnership with Judo Canada, is proud to announce KidSport Calgary & Area as the official charitable recipient of the 2026 Open National Championships, taking place May 14–17, 2026, at the iconic Olympic Oval in Calgary.

The Open Nationals will bring together Canada’s top judoka, coaches, officials, and fans for four days of elite competition, while also shining a spotlight on the importance of access to sport for children and youth in the Calgary community.

KidSport Calgary & Area provides grants to help cover the costs of sport registration fees and offers no-cost sport equipment, ensuring that all kids aged 18 and under in Calgary & Area have the opportunity to play a season of sport. The local chapter accepts applications and administers grants of up to \$500 per child, per year, supporting families who may otherwise face financial barriers to participation.

“Judo is built on values of respect, inclusion, and community, and this partnership with KidSport Calgary & Area reflects those principles,” said Kelly Thornton, President of Judo Alberta. “By aligning the 2026 Open Nationals with KidSport, we are helping ensure that more children have the opportunity to experience the physical, mental, and social benefits of sport—on and off the mat.”

As part of the partnership, KidSport Calgary & Area will have a donation bin located at the ticket area each day of the event, allowing spectators, athletes, and the broader community to drop off gently used sport equipment of any kind. All donated items will support Calgary Flames Sports Bank, helping to equip kids with the gear they need to participate.

“We are incredibly grateful to Judo Alberta and Judo Canada for choosing KidSport Calgary & Area as the charitable recipient for the 2026 Open Nationals,” said Lisa Parham, Manager of Finance and Community Impact, KidSport Calgary & Area. “This partnership not only raises awareness about the financial barriers many families face, but it also provides meaningful, tangible support that helps kids get off the sidelines and into sport.”

Judo Alberta and Judo Canada encourage all attendees to take part in the equipment drive and support KidSport’s mission throughout the championship weekend.

For more information on the 2026 Open National Championships, visit <https://judonationals.org>

For more information on KidSport Calgary & Area, or to apply for a grant, visit <https://kidsportcanada.ca/alberta/calgary>

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For further information or for interviews:

Kelly Thorton
President
Judo Alberta
780-886-9920
Kellyt4d@telus.net

Lisa Parham
Manager, Finance & Community Impact
KidSport Calgary & Area
403-993-9272
lisap@kidsportcalgary.ca