

**WHO** WINS  
MEDALS  
AT THE **JUDO**  
**OLYMPICS?**



*The Rule of  
The Golden Eight*

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## **1. Abstract**

In this article I will demonstrate the importance of the top 8 seeding position for an athlete to win a medal at the Judo Olympics. In support of my findings, I will provide the necessary data and lay out my scientific approach.

The statistical analysis based on the contest sheets and medal tables of the 2012 London and Rio 2016 Olympics results in the following numbers:

- Top 8-seeded athletes had a 40.6% chance to win a medal.
- Non-top 8-seeded athletes had a 3.8% chance to win a medal.
- A top 8-seeded player had a 10.69 times bigger chance to win a medal than a non-top 8 seeded player.

My main conclusion is that a top 8 seeding position is essential for winning a medal at Olympic Games.

This is why I introduce the “Rule of the Golden Eight” which states that it is essential for a Judoka to be seeded in the top 8 in order to have a realistic chance to win a medal.

## **2. Introduction**

In September 2011 my family and I were invited to the wedding of a good friend of mine. On that occasion I met a fellow Judo coach, who told me that her athlete had just qualified for the 2012 London Olympics. I was very happy for her and her athlete as they had worked hard towards this goal over the years.

I asked her if they were going to participate in more tournaments in order to get a better seeding position at the Games. She said that they had decided to opt for an ideal preparation instead and that they also wanted to avoid the risk of injury through further tournament participation.

I remember thinking that a better seeding position might be a risk worth taking.

11 months later, at the Olympic Games, her athlete was seeded against a top 8 player and, unfortunately, lost a tight match and was eliminated in the first round.

At the time no one had evidence of the importance of a good seeding position at the Olympics. Today, two Olympic Games later, we have the numbers.

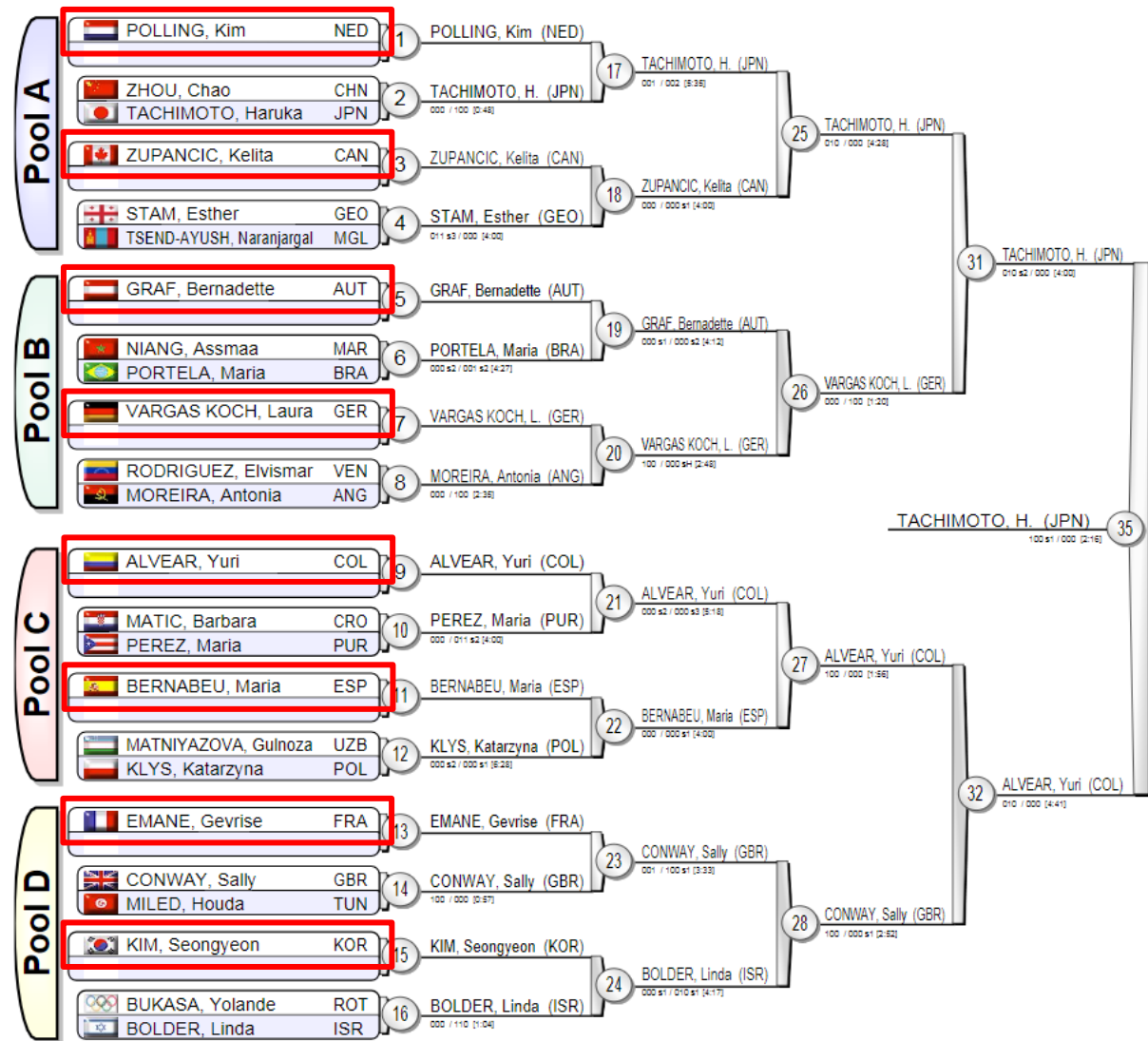
In this article, therefore, I will show the impact the seeding position has on an athlete's chances of winning a medal at the Olympic Games.

### 3. Methodology

This chapter describes how the central conclusions in this article were made.

#### 3.1 How to define a top 8 seeded player

The following illustration show the top 8 seeded players (red rectangles) on a typical contest sheet of an international tournament:



Source: [www.ippon.org](http://www.ippon.org)

#### 3.2 How to evaluate how many top 8 seeded players won a medal

In the medal table illustrated below an athlete is categorized as top 8 if she was in one of the above position.

In this example Yuri Alvear (COL) and Laura Vargas Koch (GER) were top 8 seeded, where Haruka Tachimoto (JPN) and Sally Conway (GBR) were not:

Category: -70 kg Women	Nation	Top 8
1. Haruka Tachimoto	JPN	No
2. Yuri Alvear	COL	Yes
3. Laura Vargas Koch	GER	Yes
3. Sally Conway	GBR	No

### 3.3 Calculations

The chapter explains the different values and how they were calculated.

#### 3.3.1 Win rate

The following table illustrates the win rate of top 8 seeded and non-top 8 seeded players in the -70kg women's category:

Category: -70 kg Women		Nation	Top 8
1.	Haruka Tachimoto	JPN	No
2.	Yuri Alvear	COL	Yes
3.	Laura Vargas Koch	GER	Yes
3.	Sally Conway	GBR	No

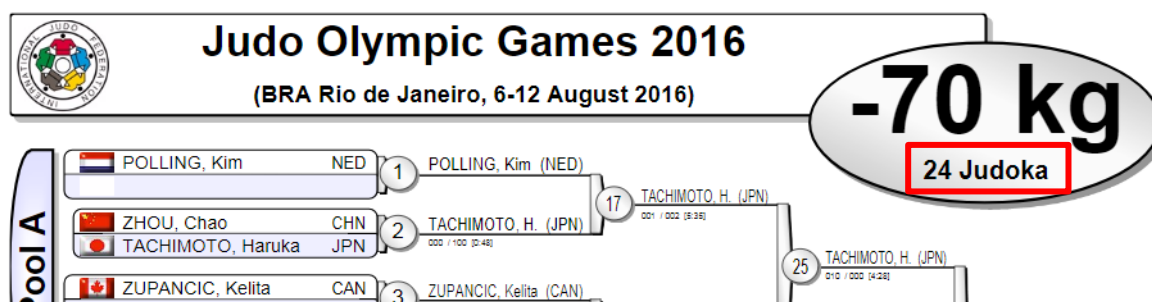
Statistics	
Participants	24
Top 8 medals	2
Top 8 medal rate	25 %
Non-Top 8 medal rate	12.5 %

The "win rate" defines the statistical chance of an athlete in either group (top 8 or non-top 8) to win a medal in that category.

In this example an athlete in the top 8 seed had a 25% chance to win a medal, a non-top 8 seeded player only had a 12.5% chance to win a medal.

#### 3.3.2 Formulas

**Participants:** represents the total amount of participants per category, these numbers were extracted from the official contest sheets:



Source: [www.ippon.org](http://www.ippon.org)

**Top 8 medals:** represents the total of medals won by players that were in the top 8 seeds.

**Top 8 medal rate:** represents the winning rate of athletes seeded in the top 8.

Formula used:

$$\frac{100 * \text{Top}_8\_Medals}{8}$$

Example above:

$$\frac{100 * 2}{8} = 25\%$$

**Non-Top 8 medal rate:** represents the winning rate of athletes not seeded in the top 8.

Formula used:

$$\frac{100 * (4 - \text{Top}_8\_Medals)}{\text{Participants} - 8}$$

Example above:

$$\frac{100 * (4 - 2)}{24 - 8} = 12.5\%$$



## 4. Results

### 4.1 The detailed statistics

#### 4.1.1 London Games 2012 - Men

Category: -60 kg Men		Nation	Top 8
1.	Galstyan, Arsen	RUS	Yes
2.	Hiraoka, Hiroaki	JPN	Yes
3.	Kitadai, Felipe	BRA	No
3.	Sobirov, Rishod	UZB	Yes

Statistics	
Participants	37
Top 8 medals	3
Top 8 medal rate	37.5 %
Non-Top 8 medal rate	3.45 %

Category: -66 kg Men		Nation	Top 8
1.	Shavdatuashvili, Lasha	GEO	No
2.	Ungvari, Miklos	HUN	No
3.	Ebinuma, Masashi	JPN	Yes
3.	Cho, Jun-Ho	KOR	Yes

Statistics	
Participants	36
Top 8 medals	2
Top 8 medal rate	25 %
Non-Top 8 medal rate	7.14 %

Category: -73 kg Men		Nation	Top 8
1.	Isaev, Mansur	RUS	Yes
2.	Nakaya, Riki	JPN	Yes
3.	Sainjargal, Nyam-Ochir	MGL	Yes
3.	Legrand, Ugo	FRA	Yes

Statistics	
Participants	34
Top 8 medals	4
Top 8 medal rate	50 %
Non-Top 8 medal rate	0.0 %

Category: -81 kg Men		Nation	Top 8
1.	Kim, Jae-Bum	KOR	Yes
2.	Bischof, Ole	GER	Yes
3.	Nifontov, Ivan	RUS	Yes
3.	Valois-Fortier, Antoine	CAN	No

Statistics	
Participants	34
Top 8 medals	3
Top 8 medal rate	37.5 %
Non-Top 8 medal rate	3.85 %

Category: -90 kg Men		Nation	Top 8
1.	Song, Dae-Nam	KOR	No
2.	Gonzalez, Asley	CUB	Yes
3.	Iliadis, Ilias	GRE	Yes
3.	Nishiyama, Masashi	JPN	Yes

Statistics	
Participants	30
Top 8 medals	3
Top 8 medal rate	37.5 %
Non-Top 8 medal rate	4.55 %

Category: -100 kg Men		Nation	Top 8
1.	Khaibulaev, Tagir	RUS	Yes
2.	Naidan, Tuvshinbayar	MGL	Yes
3.	Peters, Dimitri	GER	No
3.	Grol, Henk	NED	Yes

Statistics	
Participants	30
Top 8 medals	3
Top 8 medal rate	37.5 %
Non-Top 8 medal rate	4.55 %

Category: +100 kg Men		Nation	Top 8
1.	Riner, Teddy	FRA	Yes
2.	Mikheylin, Alexander	RUS	Yes
3.	Toelzer, Andreas	GER	Yes
3.	Silva, Rafael	BRA	Yes

Statistics	
Participants	32
Top 8 medals	4
Top 8 medal rate	50 %
Non-Top 8 medal rate	0.0 %

## 5. About the author

Cédric Roserens, 47 years old, from Switzerland.

- 1. Dan
- 25 years of experience in competitive Judo coaching
  - At cadet, junior and senior levels.
  - At regional, national and international level (European Cup up to Grand Prix)
  - Former personal coach of Lena Göldi (Olympian, Vice-European Champion and Winner of the Tournoi de Paris)
- Professional Coaching Degree Swiss Olympic (Coach in Competitive Sports with Federal Diploma of Professional Education and Training)
- Author of the Kumikata Bible (see [thekumikatabible.com](http://thekumikatabible.com))

## 6. Literature cited

The fighting tables were retrieved from the following sources of the *eju.net* website:

London Olympics 2012

<http://www.eju.net/results/?mode=showResult&id=999&q=london>

Rio Olympics 2016

<http://www.eju.net/results/?mode=showResult&id=2547&q=rio>