Passion in Motion: Supporting Rare Disease Day in Romania

In an effort to bring light and hope into the lives of those affected by rare diseases, an innovative project has taken root in the heart of the Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu (BJJ) community in Romania. Under the motto "Rolling for Rare," this project was initiated by the Children's Joy Association for Dystonia together with the Iguana Fight Team Association of contact Sports, aiming to unite forces to support the cause of rare diseases through art and sport.

Sporting and awareness activities were made possible at a camp organised at Cheile Grădiștei, an important tourist destination in Romania. Here, passionate Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu athletes not only from Romania but also from other corners of the world, such as England (London) and Germany (Berlin), gathered to improve their skills in the art of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, supporting the Children's Joy Association's initiative for Rare Disease Day. In this energetic and determined atmosphere, messages of solidarity and awareness were passionately conveyed.

Through videos and photos distributed on social media, members of the Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu community shed light on this important day. Their messages travelled from Cheile Grădiștei to people's homes around the world, contributing to the popularisation and awareness of rare diseases. Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu is not just a sport but also a strong community dedicated to health, respect and personal improvement. Within this community, BJJ enthusiasts use their skills and passion to support causes that truly matter. Through the "Rolling for Rare" project, they aim to combine their love for BJJ with efforts to raise awareness and support for rare diseases.

During Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu fights, qualities such as physical and mental resilience, adaptability, determination, and community support are developed. The analogy between improving these qualities in sports and fighting against rare diseases shows us that the efforts and qualities needed to overcome obstacles are universal, whether physical or emotional.

A second extraordinary initiative took place at the MC Gym Motion sports hall, a concept that combines sports activities with recovery. Here, an art and sports exhibition dedicated to Rare Disease Day brought together a selection of paintings created by local artists and children, each expressing a unique story about the life and experience of those affected by rare diseases.

The exhibition served as a centre for awareness and education about rare diseases, providing participants with detailed information and informative materials about rare conditions, treatments and support resources. To intensify the impact of the event, messages, photographs, and videos were distributed during the exhibition period. Furthermore, sports practitioners who came to train in the sports hall had the opportunity to visit it over a 30-day period for awareness and popularisation.

This art and sports exhibition dedicated to Rare Disease Day represents an effort to bring these often overlooked conditions to the forefront and to encourage empathy and support in our community. By getting involved in this noble cause, members of the sports community and combat sports have shown not only their sporting skills but also their generosity and compassion, demonstrating that together we can make a significant difference in raising awareness of Rare Disease Day.

Our association is a national member of the National Alliance for Rare Diseases but also a member of Dystonia Europe

Through our activism within these organisations, we can contribute to raising awareness about these diseases, improving access to treatments and enhancing the quality of life for individuals affected.