

# 52KG



The under 52 kg category at the world championships was one of the categories that was most affected by the absence of three of the top fighters in the category. **Abe Uta** who is the clear favourite for gold, if that is possible in Olympic competition has chosen her competitions very carefully leading up to the Olympics. She will come into the Olympic Games fresh and with only one colour of medal in her mind. For me she's not only the best in the category but seems to be able to win even when her opponents think that they have an answer to her technique. She adapts to every situation that her opposition can come up with and she then turns it to her advantage.



If anyone can challenge her, it has to be **Krasniqi** of Kosovo who was the Olympic champion in the 48 kg in Tokyo. On her day she always looks dynamic and is one of the strongest physically in the category. So far she hasn't found a way of beating Abe.

One fighter, I think could cause Abe problems is the new world ranked number one **Keldiyorova** of Uzbekistan who has a style of Judo that could cause problems to the defending Olympic champion. I think this could be a clash of styles that Abe might find awkward, and she will have to hold her concentration right to the very end



**Buchard** of France is one of the few outside of Japan to have beaten Abe and she could also be one of the main contenders for the Olympic title. She gained her third world medal in Abu Dhabi, but lost to the eventual champion Giuffrida in the semifinals. She is always in the medals at the major events and will always be a threat to the top fighters.

We haven't mentioned the newly crowned World champion yet who took her chance of winning a global title with both hands with a fine performance at the world championships. **Odette Giuffrida** of Italy has so much experience at the highest level and already has two Olympic medals to her credit so for her to end her career with a third Olympic medal would be a magnificent achievement



**Chelsea Giles** of Great Britain will be going for her second Olympic medal and she should be fresh going into the Olympic Games as she also opted to miss the world championships. Going for two global medals back to back is a gamble but also only opting for one is also a gamble. It's a difficult plan to make and is specific to each athlete based on their own strengths & weaknesses. Will she improve on the medal colour this time around?



This will be a really interesting category and I think that with the three strongest fighters in the category opting not to do the world championships and only concentrate on the Olympic Games was a calculated decision as all three are aiming for Olympic Glory. The newly crowned world champion, however might have something to say about it all and she is definitely going into the Olympic Games on a high.

# TECHNIQUES

to watch for in u52kg

## TACHI WAZA

- Fantastic, crowd pleasing UCHI MATA of **ABE**, as well as her Kouchi Gari
- Massive hips techniques of **KRASNIQI** such as: Koshi Guruma and Harai Goshi, paired with her physicality of her counters
- the lightning fast Morote Seoinage of **KELDIYOROVA**
- **BOUCHARD**'s drrrriving Kata Guruma that unsettles most in the category because of her capabilities of executing both left & right side.
- the predictable, yet effective ashi waza of **GUIFRIDA** and consistent Seoi Otoshi

## NE WAZA

- look out for **KELDIYOROVA**'s Juji Gatame that comes out of nowhere
- **GILES** will be all about the transition into her sankaku, osea komi waza, juji gatame - an all round great groundwork gal

## GAME PLAY

- **GUIFRIDA** as the current World Champion has a lot on the line and will be under pressure. She certainly knows the rules by knowing when to attack, where to attack and be dominate through her kumi kata.
- **ABE** - coming in from outside the top 8, shows immediately, her confidence in winning the event. She doesn't panic and waits for her time to attack, however small it may seem to us.
- **KRASNIQI** an all out attacker, will hopefully bring a better defence game to the event to better her chances against Abe.



GUIFRIDA  
Current World Champion