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MEDIA RELEASE

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NZMMAF joins United World Wrestling - and makes history in Greece

The New Zealand Mixed Martial Arts Federation (NZMMAF) is proud to officially announce its new affiliation with United World Wrestling (UWW) - and to mark the milestone by sending New Zealand's first-ever U20 amateur MMA team to compete at the UWW Pankration and Amateur MMA World Championships in Loutraki, Greece.

The event, hosted by UWW from 5-9 November 2025, brings together U15, U17, and U20 athletes from around the world. It follows UWW's first-ever senior Amateur MMA World Championships held in Novi Sad, Serbia in October - the first time the organisation has formally hosted amateur MMA competition at the world level.

Last year, UWW voted to bring amateur MMA under its umbrella, creating a unified international structure for the sport alongside wrestling and Pankration — the former being an Olympic discipline. This partnership connects New Zealand's MMA community to a recognised global pathway and aligns with the sport's long-term vision of seeing mixed martial arts included in the Olympic movement.

The New Zealand U20 team is currently in Greece, proudly representing Aotearoa on the world stage. This year serves as an exhibition year, allowing athletes and coaches to gain experience under UWW competition before NZMMAF launches a full national selection process in 2026.

"It's an exciting moment for MMA in New Zealand," said Terry Hill, NZMMAF President. "To have our first team competing in Greece, where the Olympics began, under the UWW banner - that's huge. This partnership gives our athletes a recognised pathway and helps put New Zealand amateur MMA back on the global map."

NZMMAF remains focused on building safe, structured pathways for fighters, coaches, and officials - from grassroots to world level - and strengthening the integrity and development of combat sports in Aotearoa New Zealand.

ENDS

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