

How the NISSEN CUP came to being

In 1956 the US Olympic Committee asked the Swiss Kurt Bächler, who worked in Los Angeles at the time, to train the American gymnasts in a training camp in Los Angeles. There he met George Nissen, the manufacturer of trampolines. He offered Bächler a job of introducing trampolining and mini-trampolining to Europe. On 3rd January 1957 Kurt Bächler flew to Cedar Rapids/Iowa, to NISSEN CORPORATION. He was to prepare a demo and information tour of Europe. He was to lecture on basic trampolining to improve the rather wild trampolining competitions. He was asked to give some thought on how to improve competitive trampolining as far as safety and style was concerned - in line with gymnastics. Of course he also had to master the active sport of trampolining himself.

During the first half of 1957, Bächler, George Nissen and former American Champion in trampolining Frank LaDue (currently living in Switzerland) started their tour of demos, information and coaching in Europe. At first Kurt Bächler traveled back and forth between Europe and the US every 3-4 months. With incredibly hard work, doing 3-4 demos daily in national physical education colleges, institutes and universities, linguist Bächler toured Europe. Basic training as well as competition aspects were taught and improved upon. In 1958 the first NISSEN CUP took place in Wasen (Emmental) in Switzerland.

At first the various moves were divided into A, B and C moves as for gymnastics. Marks for style were also given similar criteria to gymnastics. A set and a voluntary routine were required for the preliminary rounds and the 6 best performers qualified for the finals.

The first medal winners of the first few NISSEN CUPS were:

1958	1. Suter Martin	CH	1959	1. Käch Thomas	CH
	2. Käch Thomas	CH		2. Ay Willi	D
	3. Marty Ernst	CH		3. Geiser Alb.	CH
1960	1. Ay Willi	D	1961	1. Schillinger R.	D
	2. Bächler Kurt	CH		2. Bächler Kurt	CH
	3. Käch Thomas	CH		3. Käch Thomas	CH
1962	1. Schlindwein H.	D	1963	1. Haertle A.	D
	2. Willig W.	D		2. Schlindwein H.	D
	3. Netherton Ch.	GB		3. Bächler Kurt	CH

As trampolining started to improve and the difficulties increased too, the hall in Wasen was not sufficiently high any more. So the NISSEN CUP moved on to Grenchen, Bern, Ins etc.

At first there were only about 100 male trampolinist who took part in 5 different categories, A little later the ladies joined this event. As the number of participants continued to increase, the competition was limited to categories int. B and int A - and this is still the case to date.

Later on, the American Bob Bollinger introduced difficulty values; these were calculated by special difficulty judges, and added to the marks for style.

Today, the NISSEN CUP is not only the oldest, most frequently organized international trampoline competition, but is also be most well-known trampoline event after the World and European Championships.

Practically all federations, who are members of the international trampoline federation FIT (found in 1965) have participated in the NISSEN CUP.

The winners were frequently identical with World and European Champions. The NISSEN CUP was often used as selection competition for World Championships or continental championships.

The NISSEN CUP is a "fixed" part of the international competition calendar. The timing of the event - the last weekend in August - is well known throughout the world and cannot be left out as event of the international scene.

August 1993, Kurt Bächler