

UNSW Judo News

September 2008

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OLYMPIC GAMES REPORT

Pekli, Shepherd shine for Aussies



After four long years of preparation, it comes down to just seven days of competition to decide who will wear the mantle of Olympic champions.

Taking place in the first week of competition, the judo events were held in the University of Science and Technology Beijing. From an Aussie point of view, the big question was whether we could repeat the great results in Athens, with four top-ten placings.

Competition Day 1: 48/60kg

Dumitru (ROU) was lucky to take the semifinal vs Tani (JPN), getting there with a third dubious penalty against the legend. She put the final beyond doubt with a fine Osotogari v Bermoy (CUB). Tani came back to take bronze, but surely this means the end of a legend. Choi (KOR) always looked as though he would take gold – which he duly did. Five fights, five ippons! In the final he smashed Paischer (AUT) with a huge pickup. Paischer took the loss very well in a nice display of true sportsmanship. For the Aussies, **Matt D'Aquino** started ok v GRE, but had a pickup turned against him for ippon. **Tiffany Day** was simply outclassed by ARG, who went on to take a surprise bronze.



Matt D'Aquino in action v Greece

Competition Day 2: 52/66kg

Xian (CHN) took gold in 52's as expected, giving the crowd plenty to cheer about. Silver to An (PRK) In the 66's the title went to Uchishiba (JPN), a repeat of his Athens win.

Aussie **Kristie-Ann Ryder** started well against Heylen (BEL), looking sharp until launched with a teeth-rattling footsweep for ippon. Heylen then lost to Nakamura (JPN), so no repechage for Rocket. The bronze medals went to Nakamura (JPN) and Haddad (ALG).

In the men, **Steven Brown** did well for about three minutes, then seemed to lose concentration and went down to ALG. No repechage. Double world champ Derly (BRA) looked out of form and departed early. In the final, Uchishiba made quick work of an injured Darbelet (FRA).

Overall this was a better day of judo than day 1 – less wrestling style on show, and more positive

Competition Day 3: 57/73kg

In a repeat of their Worlds final last year, Mammadli (AZE) and Wang (KOR) fought out the gold. This time it was to be Mammadli victorious with a tremendous pickup.



Dennis Iverson (above) had a terrible lead-up to the Games, suffering a repeat of a back injury, and was barely able to move. He fought bravely against Huysuz (TUR) until caught on the ground and held.

Maria Pekli can consider herself very unlucky not to have been in the final. In her semi-final vs Quintavalle (ITA) Maria looked to be far the stronger fighter. The Italian however went on to take the gold medal, defeating Gravenstein (NED) in a hard battle. Maria's run of doubtful decisions continued in the bronze medal match v Quadros (BRA), losing in golden score. Maria deserved better in her final Olympics.



Maria throws ITA - but no score

Competition Day 4 63/81kg

On a great day of judo, the stars were undoubtedly Tanimoto (JPN) and Bischof (GER) for their gold medal wins in 63 and 81 respectively. Tanimoto was just on fire all day, a class above the rest, and absolutely smashed arch-rival Decosse (FRA) with the best Uchimata you will ever see. A joy to watch.

Skilful Bischof (GER) was unspectacular in 81kg, but was never really in trouble to take gold. Camilo (BRA), Elmont (NED) Neto (POR) and Gontiuk (UKR) were the pick of the rest. Kim (KOR) sneaked past Neto and Elmont to make the final.

Catherine Arlove couldn't handle tall and rangy ex-World Champion Krukower (ARG) and was thrown for ippon after a couple of minutes. **Mark Anthony** (below R) fought tenaciously v Valles (COL), but his inexperience and nerves showed and he did not really fire as we know he can. He was eventually thrown for ippon with haraima-kikomi, but will be the much better for the experience.



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OLYMPICS Continued...

Competition Day 5: 70/90kg

It was gold to world champ Tsirekidze (GEO) in the 90kg, and 2004 champ Ueno (JPN) successfully defended her title in 70kg. Biggest surprise was the two African athletes on 90kg podium – Benikhlef (ALG) silver, Mesbah (EGY) bronze. The 90kg final was not pretty, but typically very tough, a single penalty deciding the bout.

The record will show that **Daniel Kelly** lost in the first round, but that does not do him justice. In fact he was desperately unlucky not to beat Izumi (JPN), Athens silver medal and 2005 World Champ – should have had him penalised at least twice. Lost at end of Golden Score! Izumi had nothing left, and lost to BLR, so no repechage for Daniel.

No Aussie women today. Ueno, like Tanimoto,



Daniel Kelly (blue) takes it to Izumi

was just too good, and demolished Hernandez (CUB) in the final with a very un-Japanese leg grab for upon.

This was another good display of judo. Some fantastic early fights between former champions Iliadis (GRE) and Huizinga (NED) – Huizinga wins with a massive L uchimata. Then Huizinga v Aschwanden (SUI) – ippon to Aschwanden with Uchimata gaeshi.

Competition Day 6: 78/100kg

Yang (CHN) was strong all day to take the 78kg gold. She has a great ipponseoi, which troubled everyone, and won the final a bit controversially over Castillo (CUB) with CUB first givena koka in GS, then seeing it cancelled. At the end a split flag decision to CHN.

The 100kg was won by Naidan (MGL) - their first ever gold. He beat Suzuki (JPN) first up with MGA for ippon, then never looked back. Suzuki was nowhere, and was smashed by GER in repechage too. Grol (NED) looked very strong and explosive – and a bit unlucky not to be in the final.

Matt Celotti (below, white) fought hard v wily Despaigne (CUB), conceding only a yuko.



In the women, **Steph Grant** was a bit disappointing in her match v CAN. The Canadian girl was very beatable, but Steph didn't look confident at all.

Unfortunately the Men's category was rather static, with a return to lots of wrestling style grappling. 2007 World Champ Correa (BRA) did not look impressive, and 2007 silver medallist Cousins (GBR) went out in the first round.

Competition Day 7: +78/+100kg

To round off the judo competition Ishii (JPN) and Tong (CHN) were the clear stars, taking gold with strong performances. The +78 final was especially exciting – Tsukada (JPN) looked to have Tong's measure, aggressive and bustling, getting a score of yuko. Then with 8 seconds to go Tong scores ippon with seoi to take gold! Unbelievable!

Ishii looking a bit like Suzuki, a left-handed fighter, was too fast and explosive for his opponents. The tough and wily Tangriev (UZB) fought his way to the final, but had no answer to Ishii. Riner (FRA) and Brayson (CUB) took bronze.



Semir Pepic (above L) didn't look comfortable at all v KAZ. It was a lacklustre performance, with few attacks, and Semir penalised for passivity.

On the other hand **Janelle Shepherd** looked terrific – she was all over Torrenti (ITA) in her first fight, almost scoring several times, and chasing newaza. A clear winner.



Then (above) v Koeppen (GER), multiple world medallist, she was too fast and skilful – waza-ari and yuko with two fine seoi,

keeping up pressure for her best ever win. Unfortunately that was as far as she went, losing to the experienced Cuban, and then EGY, who at 158kg was just too big – crushed down and held.

In these categories, it was clear that some of the old guard are now looking very tired – Van der Geest (NED), Tmenov (RUS), Bryant (GBR) Donguzashvili (RUS) - all just shadows of the former selves.

And so it was over. There were many more surprises than usual, with the emergence of several new judo powerhouses from Africa, notably Algeria and Egypt. And we saw some incredibly tough fighters from several obscure Asian countries - UZB, KAZ, TJK. The poor showing from some countries with high expectations will cause some soul-searching - BRA, RUS, GER, ITA, GEO, AUT, HUN, GBR, POR, ESP.

Then there was host country China – determined to put on the biggest show ever. There were fantastic facilities, no expense was spared, innumerable volunteers - often too many in fact! Very much out to impress. Yet a lot of it was “veneer” – with the darker side of the country not far below the surface... unsmiling police and soldiers everywhere, intrusive security presence, local citizens kept away from visitors, screens hiding those things we weren't supposed to see. And of course you could actually see the air!

While the competition was spectacular, the venue lacked atmosphere most days. Certainly it didn't compare with Sydney and Athens, and only came alive when CHN won finals. Patriotic but not savvy!

The Aussies We could not match our Athens results, coming away with just two top-ten placings...still not bad! Maria Pekli – in her last Olympics, was unlucky not to take a medal. She should have been in the final, then should have taken bronze. Janelle Shepherd emerged as our new young star. Very competitive, with two excellent wins propelling her into the quarter finals. Daniel Kelly was the only man to shine, and was also very unlucky not to have done better. Young Mark Anthony showed enough to vindicate his potential.

So - what were the Games like?? Certainly different. The overall atmosphere was perhaps best summed up by a UK journalist...

“For all their slick management and the great sporting display, it should be said that China's Games were spectacularly, creepily humourless. There was not one iota of good natured fun-poking in the national media, not a single comedy montage on the 18 state TV channels dedicated to reverential coverage of China's big moment. Nothing was allowed to interfere with the official line.”

For list of medallists, and more photos, see back page...

UNSW PEOPLE...and events

German Open 2008

As part of their Olympic preparation, the Australian team spent two weeks at Tokai University in Japan, then travelled to Europe for the German Open and training camp. Big news for us was the fine showing of **Janelle Shepherd**, who took bronze in the women's +78kg. Along the way, she had an ippon win over 2007 world bronze medalist Uilenhoed from Netherlands. A great confidence booster, as Janelle showed she is capable of mixing it with the very best. A taste of what was to come in Beijing... In the men's divisions, **Semir Pepic** also had a couple of good wins to take 7th place in +100kg.

Kyu Grades 6 July

Adam Abbate was our sole rep, competing in the 4/3 kyu over 80kg. Adam won his first fight with a strong counter. Unfortunately he injured ribs in his win, and was unable to fight properly, losing his second fight. 2nd place. **Stefan McGeorge** won all four fights convincingly, all by ippon to take 1st in 2/1 kyu over 80kg.

Maurency's last Session.

There was a good turnout for Rob's last session on 16 July, before he and the family headed off to England. Of course, the technical content was on seoinage (what else?).



Illawarra Juniors 17 August

A good turnout of youngsters were there for the competition. UNSW was well represented, and there were some good performances, especially by some of our newer competitors.

Senior Club Grading 26 July

Congratulations to Stefan Heap, Hong Wang, Lupco Blazeski, Matt Vines, Josh Dzarir, Daniel Ahn, and Chris Gregory, who were all promoted to 5th kyu (yellow belt) and to Heidi Ho, who received her 4th kyu (orange belt)

Welcome Yuki Takagi

Yuki is our latest Japanese visitor. He is already making a lot of friends at the club, and is helping Warren with his junior classes. A skilful lightweight, he is also proving a great training partner for our members.

Gemma Chadwick to return...again!

Latest news is that Gemma is coming back to Oz! This will be her third time here - maybe she will stay a bit longer this time?? She will arrive in November.

US and Canada Trip

As this issue is printed, **Kylie Koenig** and **Daniel Waldmann** are preparing to go to the America for the US Open. Accompanied by coach JB, Kylie will also go on to Montreal for the Rendezvous Canada tournament.

BBR Dinner 30 August

This year's BBR dinner was enlarged by many of the participants attending the inaugural OJU Kata seminar. As always, it was a lively and sociable affair. BBR President welcomed the distinguished Kodokan coaches conducting the seminar, and members of the Australian Olympic team returned from Beijing. UNSW was well represented, and was rewarded as **Janelle Shepherd** took out the prestigious "Jim Robinson" award as the outstanding NSW judoka of the past year. Coach JB also received an award for service to judo in this State.



JB and Janelle show off their trophies



Maurency looks relaxed as the group sends him off to bring Seoinage to the UK

UNSW AUG Team

Club President **Stefanie Brown** will lead our Uni Games team to Melbourne for this year's frivolities. Other team members are: Stefan Heap, Lupco Blazeski, Alysha, Sjarif, Heidi Ho, William Lim, Horng Yaw Wong.

STATE TEAMS CHAMPIONSHIPS

A poor turnout from the club, matched somewhat by a small overall entry list. As the largest club in NSW, it was very disappointing to find that we could only muster one junior boys team, one womens (albeit with only two fighters) and had only two senior men on hand - not enough to form our own entry!

The few who did turn up flew the club's colours well. In the junior boys, also with only two members, there was Liam Matthews-Peat and Daniel Ferdman, making his competition debut. Both boys fought well against older and vastly more experienced opponents. Liam had a moral win in one fight, but a draw was the result as the minimum score for a win on the day was waza-ari. Daniel fought hard in all his fights, and will be the better for the exposure.

In one of the more interesting clashes of the day, our womens team of laisa Laveti and Kylie Koenig faced Sydney Uni, who had recruited two visiting Japanese girls. The match was a bit of an anti-climax, with Kylie scoring waza-ari

with her trademark yokotomoe, and finishing it off with a holding, then Laisa showing no mercy with a smashing osotogari for ippon.



Kylie and Laisa celebrate their win

In order to get some fights, our two men, Roman Sulovsky and Daniel Waldmann formed a composite team with Illawarra International - and came away with second place! With no weight categories, there were several uneven fights, but both our

guys contributed strongly to the team's result, gaining some valuable points towards their dan grading along the way. The final went to Zenbu A team, 3 wins to 1, and one draw.



Daniel (L) and Roman (R) with their teammates

Not a bad outcome, but WHERE ARE OUR FIGHTERS??!

THE BACK PAGE

FULL OLYMPIC GAMES MEDALS - and MORE PICS

Men		Women	
60	1 Choi KOR 2 Paischer AUT 3 Hookes NED, Sobirov UZB	48	1 Dumitru ROU 2 Bermoy CUB 3 Tani JPN, Paretto ARG
66	1 Uchishiba JPN 2 Darbelet FRA 3 Arencibia CUB, Pak PRK	52	1 Xian CHN 2 An PRK 3 Haddad ALG, Nakamura JPN
73	1 Mammadli AZE 2 Wang KOR 3 Guilherme BRA, Boquiev TJK	57	1 Quintavalle ITA 2 Gravenstein NED 3 Quadros BRA, Harel FRA 5 <i>Maria Pekli AUS</i>
81	1 Bischof GER 2 Kim KOR 3 Camilo BRA, Gontiuk UKR	63	1 Tanimoto JPN 2 Decosse FRA 3 Willeboordse NED, Won PRK
90	1 Tsirekidze GEO 2 Benikhlef ALG 3 Mesbah EGY, Aschwanden SUI	70	1 Ueno JPN 2 Hernandez CUB 3 Rousey USA, Bosch NED
100	1 Naidan MGL 2 Zhikteyev KAZ 3 Miraliyev AZE, Grol NED	78	1 Yang CHN 2 Castillo CUB 3 Jeong KOR, Possamai FRA
+100	1 Ishii JPN 2 Tangriev UZB 3 Riner FRA, Brayson CUB	+78	1 Tong CHN 2 Tsukada JPN 3 Polavder SOL, Ortiz CUB 9 <i>Janelle Shepherd AUS</i>



The Olympic Flame is lit



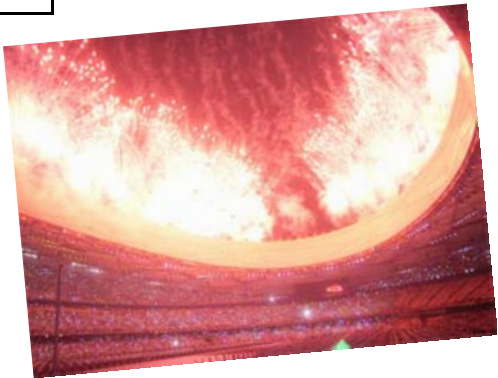
The "bird's nest" sparkles on opening night



JB with Semir and Jan Gregor (SVK)



With legendary Yasuhiro Yamashita outside the judo venue



8pm 08.08.08



Janelle works over Torrenti (ITA)...



..and is dwarfed by Ramadan (EGY)



A rare sight - blue sky over Beijing

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