

UNSW Judo News

JUNE 2010

AUCKLAND INTERNATIONAL OPEN 2010

Auckland turned on a sparkling weekend on 1-2 May for the Auckland international Open. UNSW was well represented, although original numbers were down due to injuries and other commitments. As it turned out, our results exceeded even the most optimistic expectations – the group returning with five gold medals.

We had a few misgivings at the start, when the New Zealand organisers informed us that our two youngest entrants Vlad Kulikov and Karen DaSilva, both just 13, would have to fight in the "cadets" category. This meant they would be fighting opponents considerably older and more experienced. We needn't have been concerned...



Karen wins cadet women 63kg

Then it was Vlad's turn. In a very strong cadet 60kg category, he started off well with a terrific haraigoshi for ippon. After that things got tougher, as he dropped his next fight and had to come back through the repechage. This he did very well, with two more hard-fought wins, until he was in the bronze medal fight. Unfortunately it wasn't quite to be, and he lost a desperate struggle to end in fifth place.

In the junior men and women, we had Maxine backing up in the older division, plus Kel Locke-Sodhi in the junior mens 73kg. Maxine found the going tough here, and couldn't repeat her earlier form, finishing without a win. Kel (below) on the other hand was unstoppable, starting off a little slowly, but winning all his fights by ippon with good variety.



Maxine takes her 57kg gold medal

Our two young ladies, Karen and Maxine Germes, started the day off in style – both of them showing excellent judo and fighting spirit to easily win their respective categories. Karen's seoi was unstoppable, and Maxine finally got her left taiotoshi working properly. All their fights were won by ippon. Karen then backed up in the cadet women open, with the same result...three fights – three ippon wins, the final being over a girl twenty kg heavier - and a second gold medal.



Then it was the senior men and women. In the latter we only had Sonya Chervonsky. Electing to fight in the heavier weight category of 57kg, Sonya was a class above her opponents and emerged an easy winner.



Sonya - women 57kg champion

Harry Grech fought aggressively and with maturity to take two good wins, first over a New Zealander, and then against a New Caledonian, in a very strong 90kg category. Harry finished in seventh place.

Backing up in the senior men 73kg, Kel put on another impressive display, winning his first fight, then losing his second, and having to fight back through the repechage. He made it all the way to the bronze playoff, winning two more fights using both newaza and tachiwaza. Unfortunately there he ran into vastly experienced Pieter Broom of New Zealand, and had to settle for fifth place.

So – a very good outing for our guys...wrapping up the day with an excellent dinner down by Auckland harbour.

Warren Rosser wins Australian University Sport Service Award !

The 2009 AUS Service to sports award recognises individuals who have demonstrated outstanding continuous commitment and support to University sport over an extended period of time. In a rather belated expression of appreciation, Warren received this award at a dinner on 10 May.

Warren has been the driving force and inspiration for the UNSW judo club for well over twenty years. Many athletes owe their competitive success not only to his personal coaching, but to his sheer doggedness in keeping the club alive through many turbulent times. The club has produced eight Olympians since 1980.

The kids' judo program was Warren's brainchild, and he has seen it develop from very small beginnings to the biggest junior club in the country.

Countless club members over the years owe Warren a debt of gratitude. Well done!



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NATIONAL TEAM COMPETES IN BRAZIL

Excellent results for Kylie Koenig



The magnificent stadium for Grand Slam Rio

The quest for Olympic selection points began in earnest on 1st May, and shortly after that date an Australian team headed for Brazil, where two key events would take place – the Grand Slam in Rio on 22-23 May, followed by a World Cup in Sao Paulo on 29-30 May. The team was just about the strongest we could field, including almost all our number one ranked athletes. The team included Kylie Koenig and Janelle Shepherd from UNSW, with JB as manager/coach.

As might be expected, the competition was fierce, and of an incredibly high standard – virtually all the top world athletes were there. The Aussies struggled for results, with only Kylie Koenig getting a win in Rio. Kylie dominated her fight against a Colombian girl, but then faced Olympic medalist Urska Zolnir (Slovenia) and was put out. Several of the other Aussie team fought well against top ten fighters, but with no luck.

Following the Grand Slam, there was a training camp in Rio, where our team was able to get some valuable practice against the world's best. This was an excellent opportunity for the team to bring up their intensity levels before the World Cup the next weekend in Sao Paulo.

It was in Sao Paulo that Kylie turned on one of the best displays of her career, fighting her heart out, and just missing out on a bronze medal. Make no mistake, this was a top-level event and Kylie's wins over Colombian, Brazilian and Russian opponents puts her right up there in competitive ability. In her second round fight, she had to battle not only her Brazilian opponent, but the home town crowd, and some incredibly biased refereeing.



Kylie (L) squares off vs Choconta COL in Rio

Kylie dropped her next fight to World no2 Claudia Malzahn (GER) but came back in the repechage to put away world no 12 Russian Labazina with a fantastic tomoeage in just 35 seconds. The bronze medal match was a gruelling affair against yet another Russian, Koval, with Kylie just losing out, and having to settle for fifth.

Unfortunately her wins were once again to be the team's only successes in the tournament. UNSW teammate Janelle Shepherd fought well against another top-ranked Brazilian, but also fell foul of questionable refereeing. There were some other strong individual performances from Brent Iverson, Emily Bensted and Margi Corfios, who also showed they can be competitive at this level.



The Aussie girls with coach JB after the Rio training camp. Rear - Steph Grant, Kylie, Janelle. Front Margi Corfios, Hannah Trotter, Emily Bensted



World Cup venue Sao Paulo

While the team's results, except for Kylie were disappointing, they came away with valuable experience, so essential for competing at this level.

NATIONAL TALENT IDENTIFICATION AND DEVELOPMENT CAMP

Thirty of the country's best young athletes gathered at the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra from 12-18 April for the NTID selection camp. From the camp, and results at the 2010 Nationals, the best 20 will be chosen to be part of the NTID squad for 2010-11. UNSW had two members of the camp – Kel Locke-Sodhi and Kevin DaSilva. Both our boys had a good camp, trained hard, and showed they will be well in contention when the squad is selected.

The camp was judged by the coaches to be the highest standard yet, with all the young athletes showing good technical skills and intense fighting spirit.

National NTID Co-ordinator Daniel Kelly admits that his job of picking the top 20 will be very tough this year.



UNSW PEOPLE...and events

With the selection race for the London Olympics well and truly on, the club's elite athletes are embarking on an ambitious and demanding program.

Sonya Chervonsky has taken up her IJF scholarship and is currently training in Paris with the French squad. She will be joined soon by the other Aussie scholarship holder, Mark Anthony of Victoria.

Janelle Shepherd and Kylie Koenig (seen below) have now competed in Brazil and will head for Venezuela and El Salvador soon for more! There they will compete in two more World Cups. 2010 is shaping up as a busy year.



Kevin DaSilva gets his 1st Dan. Recently emerging as one of the country's leading 60kg fighters, Kevin was recently successful at a grading for his first dan black belt. Currently ranked in the top three nationally in both senior and junior men, Kevin is looking hoping for a good showing in the Nationals to boost his Junior Worlds selection prospects. Maybe Kevin's success will spur some of our other brown belts...

Lots of things happening around the club these days...apart from overseas trips and the busy State squad training schedule we have a number of new members and visitors...

Tatyana Minkovskaya. Tatyana has been living in Australia for some time, and has now decided to get back into judo, where she hopes to make a contribution through coaching. Tatyana has an impressive competition record, including wins in Grand Prix and World Cup events, and several Russian Championships. She had been coaching at National level in Russia before coming to Sydney, and we hope to see a lot more of her.



Jean-Claude Raphael (below) Former Olympic rep from Mauritius now training at the club. Jean-Claude was a very successful competitor for Mauritius during the 1990's, and placed ninth in the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. He has excellent technical skills, and is proving to be a good training partner for our top senior men. In the future he is interested in contributing to judo in NSW as a coach.



James O'Donnell and Sophie Daniels from England. The couple are now living and working in Sydney, and are welcome additions to our training group. Sophie is still recovering from a knee injury and we hope she can resume full training soon.



Also returning to training after injury (football is a dangerous sport!) is **Bastien Vevault**. It's good to see him on the mat again.

There were about thirty youngsters at the successful kids' yellow belt grading on Saturday 5 June. (One of them was Tatyana's son Dimitry, and another Kylie's eldest, Ryan - more dynasties developing...) Full report on the results in our next issue.

NATIONAL ELITE TRAINING CAMP - AIS CANBERRA

Immediately following the NTID camp, the AIS was host to around thirty of our top athletes. Shortly after the camp, the Australian team headed overseas for some important competitions in Brazil.

Once again, UNSW was well represented, with Sonya Chervonsky, Kylie Koenig, Janelle Shepherd, Nikola Pejic and Jovan Pejic all selected to participate. In addition Harry Grech, who is starting to make his mark in competitions, attended the camp at his own expense to take advantage of the tough training opportunity.

The camp was held under the supervision of National Elite Coaching Director Peter Herrmann, with training sessions conducted by National coaches John Buckley and Tom Hill. Hitoshi Kimura also acted as assistant coach in support. The heavy training program included early morning running, and two judo sessions daily. Additional sessions in strength and conditioning were also conducted by AIS specialists.

The UNSW team performed strongly, with our three girls clearly the strongest trainers among the women's contingent, and the boys also giving a good account of themselves.



The UNSW group at the national elite training camp - (L-R) John Buckley, Sonya Chervonsky, Harry Grech, Janelle Shepherd, Nikol Pejic, Kylie Koenig, Jovan Pejic, Hitoshi Kimura

More Pics... from Brazil



Aussie team in Rio



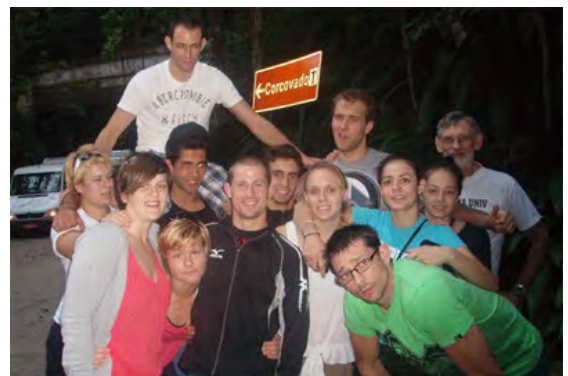
Big numbers at Rio training camp



Copacabana beach



Rio by night - spectacular



Time to relax

...and from Auckland



Team dinner in Auckland



The girls ready to relax

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