

# UNSW Judo News

## WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS 2010 SPECIAL EDITION

### JAPANESE JUDOKA DOMINATE PREMIER EVENT



Glittering WC opening ceremony at Yoyogi National Gymnasium, Tokyo

It was an historical occasion, with the World Championships coming back to Tokyo for first time since 1958, and back to Japan since Osaka in 2003. The weather was unseasonably hot – luckily the venue, Yoyogi National Gymnasium, was comfortably air conditioned.

As a spectacle, the presentation of the event did not quite match either Osaka, or even Rotterdam in 2009, but the judo itself soon took over and made everything else irrelevant.

History was also made in both the number of competing countries (111) and athletes (847) – make no mistake, this was a big event in every sense of the word! The men's 73kg category had a staggering 82 entries, and in 81kg there were 79! Many athletes had to win six gruelling fights for their medals.

The size of the competition made for very busy days – trial weigh-ins from 6am, official at 7am, quick breakfasts and then off to the venue. Preliminary contests began at 10am, and the finals went well into the evening. Barely time for dinner before we did it all again...

**Highlights** No-one could really have predicted Japan's emphatic return to domination of the sport it still calls its own – when the dust settled, the host country had won ten of the

sixteen gold medals on offer, plus four silver and nine bronze...well ahead of the second placed nation, France (2 Gold, 1 Silver, 3 Bronze). No doubt the introduction of the new rules last year has helped Japanese judoka, demanding a return to traditional skills. Then perhaps there was the psychological advantage of competing on their home tatami...but who would ever have thought they would be so dominant? The Japanese

women took six of the eight gold medals.

There will be a lot of soul searching in many of the traditional judo powerhouses – Russia came away with a mere 4 bronze; Germany 1 silver; Cuba 3 bronze; Netherlands 2 silver; Spain and Georgia not a single podium place. Great Britain was disappointing with a single bronze. There will be many questions asked as the world heads for London in 2012..



Anai (JPN) scores on Grol (NED) in the men's 100kg final



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# WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS continued...



View of the competition venue

**The Stars:** It is hard to nominate these in a competition where there were so many...but some deserve special recognition. **In the men we had Teddy Riner of France, a giant of a man, who at only 21 already has four World Titles, and threatens to eclipse the record of his countryman David Douillet.** Riner smashed his way to gold in the +100 category, winning 5 out of six fights by ippon. His opponent in the final was the tough German Andreas Toelzer who fought out of his skin all day, defeating some more fancied athletes. Riner then almost made it a double, controversially losing the Open category final in a flags decision to Japan's Daiki Kamikawa.

Among the few other non-Japanese to taste success, the mighty Greek Athens gold medallist, Ilias Iliadis was back to his best in the 90kg to take his first World Championship. Henk Grol (NED) was also impressive taking silver in the 100kg.

**In the women another Japanese, Mika Sugimoto, was even more successful, taking a golden double in the +78kg and Open categories.** Sugimoto's power and speed had to be seen to be believed as she simply demolished everyone. Kayla Harrison of the USA was also a stand-out, winning only her country's fourth ever gold medal, and the second for women, in taking out the 78kg title. France's Lucy Decosse, as expected, won the 70kg without too much trouble, defeating the fiery Hungarian Anett Meszaros in the final.

**The Aussies. On the face of it, a total of six fights won in total doesn't sound much, but that ignores both the standard of the competition, and the luck of the draw.** Best of the Aussies were Ivo Dos Santos in the 66kg, with two wins, equalling his performance in Rio in 2007. Others to take individual wins were Matt D'Aquino (60kg) Brent Iverson (81kg) Duke Didier (100kg) and Jake Andrewartha (+100kg). It has to be said that on this occasion the draws certainly were kinder to our men, who had more winnable fights.

On the other hand, our women had an extremely tough task. Emily Bensted faced World no 1 Kaori Matsumoto (JPN) who went on to take gold, Sonya Chervonsky had World no2 Kuziyutina of Russia, who finished with bronze, Sarah Collins went up against Tanaka of JPN, who also took the silver medal.

Janelle Shepherd had a tough battle with WRL no 8 Chikhroukou (TUN). At one stage it appeared Janelle had scored with an ouchigari, but the score went to the Tunisian from a counter. Kylie Koenig faced a familiar foe in Brazilian no1 Mariana Silva. This fight also went down to the wire, with Kylie leading until the last 30sec, when she was thrown with sumigaeshi.

In the 73kg Nik Pejic had a tough initiation to this level of competition when he stepped out against Mongolian Sainjagal, who was also headed for bronze when he was forced out with an elbow injury.

The final day of the Championships was devoted to the Open categories for men and women. In a fitting final display of Japanese power, both categories were won by the host country. Japan's former Olympic Champion Keiji Suzuki redeemed himself a little after his first round loss on day one to take bronze, while the women's final was a repeat of the +78kg, with Sugimoto again defeating Qin of China.



Kylie (above) takes on Mariana Silva (BRA) and Sonya (below) shapes up with Natalia Kuziyutina (RUS)



Iliadis (GRE) on his way to the 90kg gold medal

# UNSW PEOPLE...at the World Championships

There were almost more UNSW club members in Tokyo during the World Championships than in Sydney - around twenty five in all - ranging from those members and officials of the national team, to our junior visiting squad, to those who had just come to watch and be a part of this amazing event.

They came from everywhere... Alex Else came from home, Rob Maurency made the long trip from England for the occasion, Scott Smith was there with his Hong Kong judo club, Michael Penkov interrupted his studies in Hokkaido to come down and be part of the action. (The great action photos in this newsletter are courtesy of Michael)



Warren seen above with Rob Maurency and Sonya, and below with former club president Scott Smith



Then there were our Japanese friends...those who had trained with us over the years at UNSW, and those we had visited on the many trips to Japan. . It was almost surreal to see Norio Kasahara (photo below) Miyuki Sakurai, Shogo Kuramoto, Sayaka Abe, Honami Yoshizawa, Aki Higashi. .just as if we had never lost contact at all. Even Kazuya Maruyama put in an appearance on the final day of competition.



Most of the UNSW group and friends met up for a dinner at a Tokyo restaurant before going their separate ways. The evening was a naturally festive occasion as old friendships were re-ignited. The oldies reminisced (and drank some beer) the youngies watched on somewhat bemused, but soaking up the occasion. Afterwards, the National team members continued with their World Championship campaign, while the junior group headed for Saitama Prefecture and Obusuma judo club for their introduction to training in Japan.

During the competition the juniors also had the opportunity, courtesy of Kylie and Hitoshi, to take a peek behind the scenes. With "borrowed" accreditation badges they were able to go into the restricted athlete areas where they mingled with the worlds best. They also got to meet other members of the Australian team...a fantastic experience.



Kylie shows Maxine around the Worlds venue



Hitoshi Kimura was a tremendous asset to the National team. As assistant manager he did much more than just help out.

Here he is with his equipment waiting to go to the competition. The real unsung hero of the tour.

And of course soaking it up more than most was Warren Rosser – hugely enjoying his trip and enjoying the atmosphere once again. (How long is it since he competed at the Worlds...??) Warren was everywhere – supporting our UNSW team members, giving the kids the benefit of his experience, taking photographs... and being roped in as a warm up partner for Kylie and Sonya! (he reckoned he would have trained for the trip if he had known about that bit)



## OLD RIVALS MEET AGAIN

A surprise for JB and Warren in Tokyo...chance meetings with a couple of their old "foes". Warren fought world and Olympic medallist Janusz Pavlowski of Poland in 1985 and 1987. JB also met up with Swiss Frederick Kyburz, whom he fought in Salt Lake City way back in 1967.



# More pics from the Worlds...

All action shots in this issue courtesy of Michael Penkov and the JFA



Janelle battles Chikhrouhou of Tunisia in the +78kg



Nikola grip fighting with Sainjargal of Mongolia



Jake Andrewartha's uchimata on Hoshina (PHI) in +100kg



Mark Anthony almost scores on Tseng (TPE)



Brent Iverson dominates his first round fight in 81kg



Ivo Dos Santos scores in his second round win



Sonya and JB line up to go out to fight



Priscus Fogagnolo attacking Mamedov (KGZ)

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