



ITF World Taekwon-Do Championships

Ottawa, Canada – 6th – 12th August 2012

This year saw two seeded contenders from the Sydenham camp of the Hogan's institute of taekwondo, to take part in the world championships in Ottawa, Canada

DAY 1

I John Vernazza and Sam Brown left Gatwick on the Monday the 6th of August and arrived after many hours of travel to the Marriot hotel in Ottawa a day ahead of most of the England squad. The hotel was nice with plenty of amenities such as gym, pool, sauna and a revolving top floor restaurant [this was not down to alcohol abuse]

Sam wasted no time at all and with his Sauna Suit headed straight for the gym to make sure he made the weight. I also was part of this training and was forced to eat all of his in flight meals. It was in the heart of the city where we were with all high rise tower buildings; I left Sam in the room whilst I checked out the immediate area.

When I returned there was Sam fully dressed asleep amongst bags of vitamins and lotions, out for the count.

Day 2

I woke up bright and early and Sam after 9 hours was still in the state he was in the night before [bag man of Ottawa]

We had breakfast in the revolving restaurant, and the views surrounding were spectacular, the breakfast wasn't bad either.

Later on in the day saw the arrival of the rest of the England squad and the weigh in, in which we all sailed through.

That night the heavens opened up at the tournament stadium so it was straight to the local restaurant.



Day 3

This was all a bit of a song and dance, literally. The opening ceremony was held at the tournament stadium, a twenty minute coach trip from the hotels, a singer with a keyboard kicked off the ceremony with a catchy number called Taekwondo in Canada, Taekwondo in Canada, shooby dooby Canada or something of that nature, along with a local dance group. The speeches were made by the organisers, the mayor, some masters and a special appearance was made by Choi Jung Hwa. This was followed by the flag ceremony by the Americans, Argentineans, Brazilians, Canadians [who invited them?], Japanese, Italians, Moldovans, and Dutch the list goes on and on. Then it was back to the hotels and a little walk to the Market Square which is a bit like Covent Garden in London with all its bars and restaurants and stalls.

Day 4

Our competition started with Sam Brown up for patterns, unfortunately for him he was up against Adam Gibbs, from team England [who went on to win the silver medal] this was not his only bit of bad luck, as his designated pattern was Kodang [not that easy] Sam did well, but was wobbling a bit on the slippery mats. Andrew Lawrence went on to win Gold so it was a good result for team England. Well done to them.

Heavyweight sparring

It was rotten luck, in which the draw saw me and Kerry Wilson against each other in the first round. Kerry fought well but I got the decision to go through to the next round.

Sam's first draw was up against an American who was trying to remove his head from his shoulders with punches that came from last week. The second round of this fight saw Sam not standing for this and out skilled his opponent with an array of kicks and punches, Sam also through.

Both getting through to the second round meant that we had to face each other. All I can say that it was a tough fight, with both of us scoring



well only Sam lost quite a few points for going outside of the matted area. The decision went my way, through to the semi finals.

Next up for me was an Argentinean he started well from the word go, with turning kicks to the head, and counter punches from myself. Unfortunately for him he had a groin strain in the first round, he soldiered on but it was clear he was in immense pain, the fight was stopped and I had secured a place in the final.

The final was myself against Stefano Bulla from Italy. Another tough fight, we both traded some feet and hand techniques I think I was in front in the first round but lost it in the second as it all got a bit scrappy. So a well deserved Gold for him and a silver medal for me, c'est la vie.

The rest of the tournament saw the England squad and individuals do very well clocking up the medal tally. not forgetting the Scottish contingent. Overall winners were the Argentineans but for a small squad the Maldovians were quite impressive.

Closing ceremony, again with the taekwondo in Canada, dooby dooby Canada, lots of tears of joy, pride, flag folding and speeches and an impressive traditional Japanese percussion outfit for desert.

All in all a good tournament in a nice city

P.s. – Many thanks to Master Hogan, Mr Richards and Mr Scott for their coaching advice.

Written without bias: **John Vernazza**