

Victorian Judoka excel at the Oceania Championships, Canberra 2010



Dos Santos AUS vs Gravier NCL

The 2010 Oceania Judo Championships were held in Canberra on the 14th and 15th of August at the Marist Brothers College, where the ACT Open is held each year. The OJU Championships are now an annual event and next year's championships are planned to be in Tahiti. In November the OJU will be running its Work Cup event in Samoa, which is open to all international Judoka.

The two highlights of the event were the introduction of a Cadets (under 17) division for the first time, and the attendance for the President of the IJF Marius Vizer. I am sure that the event left a strong impression on Mr Vizer. He was very positive about the standard of the refereeing, although he thought that some of the Ippons were scored too easily. At the opening ceremony he announced that the IJF would be giving two competition mats to each of the six Federations that were competing in Canberra, and that he is planning to fund development coaches for each of them! This new policy direction to channel money through the national federation instead of all of it going to the OJU, was great news for Australian Judo!

In the Seniors each country was only allowed to enter two players. This meant that in most divisions there were only eight competitors and the players went straight into the quarter

finals. For the whole championships there were fewer than 180 players, of which more than half came from Australia. Not surprisingly Australia dominated the medal tally.



Iverson AUS vs Stowers SAM

Despite the low numbers in many divisions, the standard of the judo was high. The new rules introduced by the IJF have certainly encouraged more attacking judo, and many of the fights were won with big and spectacular throws. There were a few matches that went to Golden Score on the first day, but in the Seniors I can only remember one fight that went to Golden Score and it was won by an Ippon throw.

On Saturday in the Cadets **Aoife Coughlan** won the under 63Kg and **Melanie Wallis** won the Over 70 Kg division. Both of these girls should be congratulated for their wins. I have to admit that we provoked an international argument at the draw that left the Kiwi manager red faced even though they didn't have a player in that weight division, when we tried to have a mistake in Melanie's weight division corrected!

In the Cadet Boys **Jake Bensted** won the Under 66 division with class while **Tom Bensted** won the Under 73Kg division with a great throw in the final!

In the Young Women's Under 63Kg event **Aoife Coughlan** followed up her win in the Cadets with a silver.

In the Young Men's divisions **Kim Jolly** won a Bronze medal in the Under 55 Kg and **Jake Bensted** backed up to win Bronze in the Under 66 divisions. **Jack Bensted** won silver in a

hard fought final in the Under 73Kg event. Not to be out done by his sister **Eoin Coughlan** won the Gold in the Under 81 KG division.

In the Senior Under 57Kg division **Carly Renzi** won gold with a fantastic rear throw and **Emily Bensted** came third!

Unfortunately one of our medal hopefuls Shaeanne Stewart was injured in the national training camp during the week before the event and wasn't able to compete.

In the senior Men's Divisions **Ivo Dos Santos** won Gold in the Under 66Kg division. He fought hard to get to the final and showed real determination to come from behind to win his semi final match. Unfortunately we missed out on the much anticipated rematch in the final with Steven Brown who withdrew with an injured shoulder.

In the Under 73 Kg division **Dennis Iverson** was unlucky to lose in the Gold medal match to Woo Su Choi from New Zealand after leading through most of the fight.

Brent Iverson won Gold in the under 81 Kg final against Andrew Butterfield with a very decisive Uchi Mata for Ippon. This was one of the best throws of the tournament.

Mark Anthony won Gold in the under 90 Kg final beating Priscus Frogonolo showing that he has nerves of steel and can perform under pressure. Finally a very fit **Daniel Kelly** won the under 100Kg Gold medal.



Chevalier NCL vs Anthony AUS

Victorian competitors won four out of the seven Senior Men's divisions!

Well done to all of the Victorians that competed at the Oceania Championships. The great news story for our state is that our elite seniors are being followed up with a quality field of Cadets and Young men and Women.

Neville Sharpe



Photos from the championships are available at:
<http://www.colouredmist.com/judo/OJU%20Championships%202010/index.html>