

## The World Police and Fire Games 2013 - Belfast

The World Police & Fire Games is a biennial event for serving and retired police, fire, prison and border security officers. WPFG is the third largest international multi-sport event in the world and is the largest sporting event ever to take place in Northern Ireland. In 2013 there was 56 sports held at 41 venues across Northern Ireland and had in excess of 7,000 competitors from over 60 countries taking part.

Seven judo players from Great Britain took part in the event with achieving various degrees of success.

Jason Moore from Aberdeen (Police Scotland) competed in the Mens under 90kg 30-39 year old category. Jason had a round robin in his pool which saw him defeat players from countries including Canada and Brazil. Jason won his fights by ippon, including a victory on the ground against the Brazilian player, a nation renowned for their strength in ne-waza to take the Gold medal and get the British team off to a good start.

Next up was Duncan Jones from Worcester competing in the under 100kg 40-49 year old category. Duncan started off with a huge ippon against a player from Northern Ireland before moving on to fight a player from Chinese Taipei. Duncan had full control of the fight and was dominating his opponent throughout. Duncan then dropped in for a lovely drop seio nage for ippon and was awarded the win. However, following a large and lengthy dispute from the Chinese team it appeared Duncan finished his technique with a leg grab. Duncan and Jason (acting team Coach) were called over and it was explained the result was going to be over turned as the referees had viewed video footage from one of the Chinese team. Earlier in the tournament (and following a number of other disputes) it was clearly stated that the use of video footage to confirm refereeing decisions would not be utilised, however on this occasion the referee's decision was final and despite our best efforts Duncan was disqualified. This left Duncan needing to beat the large and aggressive Ukrainian by ippon in order to progress from his pool. A hard and bruising battle ensued resulting in a victory for Duncan, however only by means of a Shido resulting in a disappointing conclusion and end to his competition. An absolutely superb performance not reflected by the result.

Mark Montrose from Greater Manchester Police was also competing in the under 100kg 40-49 year old category. Marks first fight was against a strong 5th Dan from Croatia (who went on to win gold). After a fairly even first minute, Mark attacked to which the Croatian player countered with a leg grab for which he was disqualified. A good start for Mark. Mark then came up against experienced international player Rob Kroonan from the Netherlands. Mark started well but was caught with Kroonans signature move (hip switching Harai Goshi) for ippon. Mark was then countered for ippon against the player from the USA before winning his final match with a lovely drop seoi nage for ippon. Mark therefore did not progress from his pool but was only one win away from a medal.

Next up were the Heavyweights John Ellis and Gavin McNeil fighting in the Over 100kg 30-39 year old category. Gavin drew a tricky pool against players from Russia and Kazakhstan. Gavin had a very close fight against a power house Russian which could have gone either way. Right at the end of the fight, Gavin countered the Russian rolling him onto his back and held him down for ippon. Gavin then fought an immovable object in the player from Kazakhstan. Gavin was caught with a wrestling move (neck/arm throw) for yuko before being held down. The Russian then beat the player from Kazakhstan meaning the pool had to be re fought. Unfortunately Gavin couldn't repeat his win and lost the next two fights meaning this time he didn't get out of his pool.

Its not often John Ellis looks like a small man however there were some monsters in the Over 100kg category. John Ellis was given a tough draw and first came up against a truly enormous Georgian. After some grip fighting between the pair, John was thrown for ippon and the Georgian went on to win Gold. John then defeated the player from Northern Ireland with a nice clean Ippon throw. Next up for John was the eventual silver medallist from Kazakhstan. Again outsized, John was thrown for ippon and eliminated from the tournament.

On the Sunday, the remaining two British fighters contested their categories.

First up, Saeed Iqbal in the 81kg 30-39 year old category. Saeed has been out of action for 8 months due to an ankle injury, however set the pace in his first fight against the player from France. A very close fight went the distance with Saeed losing narrowly by Shido.

In the repechage, Saeed fought a player from the USA. Again a very even match went the distance with Saeed narrowly losing by yuko. A very good performance after so many months out with injury!

Last up was Stewart Hyde in the under 100kg 50-59 year old category. Stewart had a round robin in his pool and started off against a Romanian. After an even first couple of minutes, Stewart was taken to the ground and held down. He did however bounce back with an excellent victory against a strong Russian to finish second in his group and take the silver medal.

Overall, it was a great performance by the British Team. On another day a win here or there could have brought us home a number of additional medals.