

Review of U of T Senior Tournament – March 28, 2009

As reported by MKC on-the-spot reporter David Hayashida

Hello Everyone

I usually try to keep everyone informed on how we did at the tournaments, but I haven't been keeping up to day lately. I pretty much missed all of last year. Sorry about that guys and gals. I thought I could do better this time around with a smaller group of us; However as it turns out I couldn't keep track of us either as practically all of us fought at the same time am I pretty much missed out on everyone's fights.

Unfortunately this time around things went so fast for all of us, that most of us were caught unprepared.

The gymnasium was divided into 6 courts, A thought to F. And each of the courts had at least two trees of each category going through it. This is especially true for the Mudansha and Shodan / Nidan categories.

I had stepped out to do some eBogu shopping and expected to have plenty of time to catch Sam's first match, but when I came back I found I had to quickly grab my things and race off to my court, as my matches were about to start.

Sam Ho Fung was our only competitor in the Mudansha category and it was his very first tournament. From what I heard, he and performed very well for his first time out, but unfortunately did not advance through to the next round.

In the Shodan / Nidan group we had Dale Cheong, Faisal Haq Shaheen, David Hayashida, Steve Mc Coy, Tim Samios and Dion Sunga.

I wish I had better news to tell everyone, however I believe all of us except Faisal and Tim lost our first matches.

My match went quite badly for me. I could have sworn at least 2 of my Kote's scored, but the judges thought otherwise and I lost to two Men's. I asked one of the Sensei's after the match what I did wrong and he told me they weren't hard enough. (Good notes for later.)

By the time I had come back from my disappointing match, I found out Tim was already on his third one of the court. He had already won the first two. I must have brought bad luck as unfortunately he lost the match to a kendoka apparently he lost to at the last tournament.

Faisal actually just arrived to the tournament after his longer than expected work meetings and he struggled to find a parking spot. He just sat down to chat with us (as we thought he missed his matches) and they were calling for his number. We all quickly helped him get his Men etc... on and Tim lent him his shinai and Faisal raced to the court. For coming on cold Faisal fought very well and won the match scoring two men points against his opponent.

Lunch was the next best thing for most of us. And we had the Team matches coming up so we had to put aside the last matches and look forward to team matches.

Our team B had Sam, Steve, Dale, Joe from Ohio and 1 other from Toronto; was up first and was out

matched by a mixed team, I'm not sure who they were. As we had to be ready on another court for our team match.

Michael, Dion, Tim, Faisal and myself played Montreal Team A. and we fought in this order.

Our first match was against the Montreal A team.

Michael won by 1 point a very nice Kote I believe. Then Dion also won by 1 point against his opponent a beautiful Men. Tim had the toughest match I think. He fought a 3rd + in a very close tough match to a tie the score was 1 to 1. Faisal was next and fought very well but unfortunately lost by 1 point. I was up against their Sensei.

My plan was to go for the tie. But before the matches started they warned all of us of sticking to someone, this would cause a penalty. I wanted to just go for Kote (Yamada Sensei's advice to stick to the higher percentages) and try to waste as much time as I could close in without looking like I was wasting time.

Because they told me my Kote was too weak, I went all out kote hard and as fast as I could first off. I unfortunately knocked the Sensei down, but I managed to score. She said she was all right and a while later caught me with a Men. I went back to the tie strategy. I came in again mixed it up a bit and actually scored a backward Kote and won.

I could hardly believe it. I hope I didn't hurt her. I apologized after the match about knocking her down. Wasn't trying to and I didn't realize I did until I looked around and she wasn't there. She was icing her shoulder later and I again went and apologized. Apparently she was injured from before.

We had a bit of a bye as the tree went and then had to face the winner of the Etobicoke B team and Detroit. Detroit was very good and taking out every team they faced. Man the Detroit team was really good. (I believe the majority of their team was Sandan and up.)

Michael fought and tied his guy from Detroit. Dion fought the lady on the team and won by a point again another very nice Men, she was pretty tough. Tim fought another very hard fight and actually lost only by 1. Faisal was next and lost by 2. So for us to carry on I needed to win against their Sensei by 2. Needless to say that didn't happen. He clocked me twice with Men so fast I didn't even see them coming.

If nothing else I think we all learnt something. "Always be Prepared." As the Boy Scouts say. I think many of us were caught off guard with how fast the tournament ran and how soon our matches came up. Something to be wary of next time.

And as always you learn something new to make us better and work harder at our Kendo so we can get them next time.

See you all at Keiko

David