

Traralgon One Match July 1

Our first tournament for the year and always one we are eager to attend because we know it will be very well run by Sensei David and his members. This year was no exception with the event running like clockwork.

We had great support from Shihan Jim Sklavos, Sensei Frank Cirillo, Sempai Daniel Fitzgerald and Sensei Adam Sultarner and his GMAC organisation.

The day began with 2 non contact demonstration fights. Elaina Domagala (Traralgon) got the points over Quinn McEwan Robertson (Bellarine) as did Tyler McDermott (Traralgon) over Rhyley Mowat (GMAC). All these fighters showed they have what it takes so far as technique is concerned and I am sure we will be seeing more of them.



The first Knockdown fight was Brian Dillon (GMAC) against Adam Riddle (Traralgon). 10 seconds into it and Adam caught Brian with a jodan mawashi geri that put him down and out. As usual, you first experience excitement at the contact and that immediately turns to concern for the welfare of the downed fighter. He was obviously out cold and we had 4 doctors looking after him, he was stretched off and sent by ambulance to hospital. However, before he left he was conscious and talking and all seemed good for his recovery. (We all reminisced that 20 years ago he would have been stood on his feet, taken out the back and given a panadol). He took it as a true budoka would and vowed to be fighting again.



The next match featured 2 rising stars of the Branch: Lachlann Shanahan (Leopold) and Angus Naylor (Point Lonsdale). This match was an excellent example of two strong fighters going for it and the momentum swung both ways. At the end of 2 rounds that judges could not separate them (a very rare occurrence in this type of event). Unfortunately Angus had aggravated an old injury and was unable to continue, giving the win to Lachlann.



James Tyrell (Griffith) faced off against Daniel Worrall (Corio). This went the distance and after 2 rounds Daniel took the honours after a strong showing.

Matthew Martin (GMAC) faced up to Jack Evans (Griffith) with Jack getting the decision after a very good fight from both men.

Lyndsay Le Gall (Narre Warren) took on dojo mate Craig Thompson. However, you would never have known they were from the same dojo as they threw everything they had at each other. After 2 rounds the judges could not separate them and Craig took the honours in the extension however Lyndsay did not lose any friends and it was a great example from both fighters.



We then had another 2 dojo mates from GMAC fight each other with Alex Kaczowski getting the decision over Matthew Yue.



Then came one of the matches of the day. Damien Domagala (Traralgon) against Michael Hilli (GMAC). This fight was a beauty with them hitting each other with everything including the kitchen sink. At the end of the first round we all thought Damien had it but someone forgot to tell Michael, who came out blazing in the 2nd round and took it to the wire. Damien fought back and swung the momentum his way to get the decision. Michael, at 51 years of age, did a fantastic job and will long be remembered. Damien will also be remembered and another Traralgon fighter has made his debut.



After this match I had the pleasure to address the crowd, to thank Sensei David and his hard working group as well as all those who travelled to be there and, of course, the fighters. I also took the opportunity to present our 5 members of the Australian team to the Asian Pacific Championships in Myanmar and I presented Dan grade certificates to Julius Wolfe, Richard Freitag and the unofficial mayor of Traralgon, Elias Kavadias.

Then we moved into the final 3 matches which promised to be sensational and were all over 3 rounds.

Aimee Morris (Albury) took on Frankie Wright (GMAC). Aimee was returning from a long layoff and Frankie had graduated to the Shodan. Aimee showed she had not lost anything and scored 2 waza ari in the first round but I am sure Frankie will have benefitted from the experience (which was what the day was all about).



Daniel Warren (Bellarine) faced off against Julius Wolfe (Narre Warren). This fight was exceptionally good with both fighters displaying great technique and moving well. Both have been around for a long time and both were very crisp and clean and a great example to others. Daniel caught Julius with a jodan mawashi geri in the 2nd round and it was all over.



The final match was Melanee Barclay (Narre Warren) against Jenna Errey (Traralgon). Jenna was giving away nearly 20kg but she went the distance with Melanee who seemed to have the edge but just could not put Jenna away. After 3 hard rounds the decision went to Melanee.



The primary object of this tournament was to give people the opportunity to taste full contact karate and decide if they wanted to go further. We achieved this in spades and I am sure we will see many of the fighters in the Victorian Championships.

Later that day we all met at Sensei David's house for the traditional BBQ and party. This has also become a much appreciated and anticipated event and a special thanks to Sempai Elias, GMOB (Grand Master of the Barbeque). There is nothing better than great food, great company and great Kyokushin spirit.

We all travelled home vowing to be there again next year.