

## Cambridgeshire Tang Sou Dao

For most of the students in the St Neots class this would have been the first experience of the National Championships. Our Instructor Mr Steven Treadaway gave us all an insight by holding extra Saturday lessons where we watched previous footage of last years Championship. He also prepared us by setting up a similar scenario to the free sparring we would find there. These extra classes alongside our normal training classes proved invaluable.

Most of us were up at 5am, to make sure we got there on time. On our arrival there was a real positive buzz about the whole place. Once we all settled in and found out what we were all doing we all stayed together trying to watch each other as much as we could.

We all had nerves and all had different ways of dealing with this but most importantly we all helped each other along. There was a real St Neots team spirit and also a Tang Sou Dao spirit. This gave us the confidence to do our best. Our two youngest students who entered the championships, James & Regan, were a shining example on how to overcome first time nerves and watching the boys spar; they looked as if they had done it many times before.

It was also a great opportunity for us to meet other students from all over the country and share our experiences and swap knowledge. It was also great to watch how other students performed, especially good to see the higher grades and how effortlessly easy they made it look.

From a personal perspective I was in two minds whether to go. I made the right choice. I was so apprehensive and nervous I felt sick but once there I started to relax and enjoy what proved to be one of the

highlights of my training so far. It was awe inspiring to watch the Duan's in action and to see that no matter your age, shape or origin we all have our personal reasons for training and different goals and once a year we get to share them with likeminded others.

From a St Neots perspective it proved to be a brilliant experience for us all. We all received a medal, in either, forms, sparring or both, which is an amazing achievement and a reflection on the positive instruction we have all received.

In total we took home

3 Bronze    2 forms 1 sparring

4 Silvers    4 sparring

2 Golds    1 forms 1 sparring

We all agreed, though a long and tiring day, it was a day, which we all thoroughly enjoyed and would encourage others to try. It was an experience and an achievement not only for the students but for our instructor Mr Treadaway and the dedication and effort he shows all his students.

Tang Sou!

Lisa Watson (6<sup>th</sup> Ji) Orange Belt