



7th World Cup Kuoshu Championships a Success

By Mike Onuschak

From November 20 through November 24, 1992, the gymnasium of the Chung Yuan Christian University in Chung Li City, Taiwan, became the center of the universe for over four hundred Kuoshu competitors, coaches, observers and officials from around the world. These representatives from 45 countries gathered to participate in the Seventh World Chinese Kuoshu Tournament sponsored by the International Chinese Kuoshu Federation (I.C.K.F.) and hosted by the Kuoshu Federation of the Republic of China. Once again, "The World's Toughest Tournament" was underway.

The format of the tournament included full-contact matches for ten male and seven female weight categories as well as single and two-person open-hand and weapon form competitions. As in the past, the Kuoshu matches consisted of three 3-minute rounds, with the winner of two rounds winning the match.

November 20, the tournament's first day, was devoted to team registration and competitor weigh-in as well as the compulsory open-hand and weapon forms demonstrations which were required of all contestants to qualify for the Kuoshu sparring. Even this event had its elements of drama: several teams, notably the Belgian and Polish contestants, literally just skimmed in under the wire because of weather delays enroute to Taiwan. After over thirty hours of air travel and waiting room delays, the Belgians changed into uniforms in a Taipei International Airport restroom, left their team leader to collect the luggage and caught a taxi directly to the Chung Yuan gymnasium to register and qualify.

On the following day, the tournament began in earnest with a blockbuster opening ceremony including rousing music, a grand entrance by all participating teams, massed flags, a heartfelt welcome by International Chinese Kuoshu Federation President General Chen Shou-Shan, Lion Dances and a spectacular demonstration of Kung Fu and Tai Chi organized by the Chinese Culture University.

Once the opening ceremonies were completed, the tournament got down to what it does best: matching up some of the best male and female full-contact fighters in the world. The next three days provided the assembled teams and spectators with exactly what they have come to expect from the I.C.K.F. and its regional and country affiliates -- they witnessed one high-caliber, hard-fought match after another with strong

showings from the Taiwanese, French, U.S., South African, Korean, British and Argentinian teams. When the dust settled, the Taiwanese powerhouse coached by Masters Chang Fu-Chen and Chi Kun-Huang took Team First Place honors followed by France and the United States.

The U.S. Team assembled for this tournament was a truly nationwide group with members from states reaching from the Chesapeake Bay to the Pacific, and from New England to the Gulf of Mexico. The group was led by Grandmaster Huang Chien-Liang of Towson, Maryland. Grandmaster Huang is a Vice-President of the International Chinese Kuoshu Federation, President of the United States Kuoshu Federation and President of the Chinese Kuoshu Federation of the Americas.

In addition to leading the U.S. team, he also served as Director and Chief Arbitrator for the World Tournament and participated in the meetings of the I.C.K.F. Executive Committee. Grandmaster Huang was the final authority over any disputes which arose during the tournament and was an active force at the Executive Committee meeting held at the conclusion of the tournament. During this meeting, methods of improving future tournaments were discussed, rules changes were made and policies were enacted which were aimed at improving the effectiveness, stature and growth rate of the Federation.

Other United States Team officials included Dr. Steve L. Sun (Men's Team Leader) from Pennsylvania and Sifu Manuel Taningco (Women's Team Leader) from Ohio, Maing Yul Jung (Men's Coach) from Texas and Richard Lee (Women's Coach) from California. Sifu Jung and Lee are also Regional Vice-Presidents of the U.S. Kuoshu Federation.

Injuries plagued the United States Team during the tournament. Heavyweight C (70.1 - 75 KG) contender Aaron Honeycutt of Maryland handily won his first match and was leading in the second round of his second match when he broke a shin bone while delivering a tremendous roundhouse kick to his opponent's hip. Rodolfo Moterroso, a Middleweight C (56.1 - 60 KG) from Virginia, broke a collar bone during his second fight. Super Heavyweight Ed Harrington from Pennsylvania fought his way to a Silver Medal on an injured leg.

Looking at the brighter side, 1992 obviously wasn't the



Lion Dance at the Opening Ceremonies

"Year of the Woman" in only a political sense. The female members of the U.S. Team captured four of the seven women's championships. Andra Gorman of Maryland and Californians Brandi Piacente, Mia Munayer and Lisa Young brought home the Lightweight C, Middleweight B, Middleweight C and Super Heavyweight titles. This was by far the best ever showing by American women in a World Kuoshu Tournament.

Additionally, three U.S. team members from Maryland took honors in the forms competitions. Ian Chisholm and Eric Lee captured a Gold Medal in the open-hand two-person form competition. Chisholm and Mike Warres took a Bronze Medal in the two-person weapon form category with a spear vs. long staff form.

In the compulsory qualifying forms competition, Choon Kun Jung of Texas won a Gold Medal, Mia Munayer took a Silver and a Bronze Medal, and Andra Gorman's fan form placed fifth.

Every tournament generates tales that are told and re-told for years. The Seventh World Tournament's contribution to Kuoshu lore will undoubtedly be the story of Taiwanese Team member Hsu Ren-Chai, whose arm was injured in his first match. When he resumed the fight after a very short delay, it was assumed that he had suffered a sprain or dislocation. It was only after his winning the fight that it became known that his arm had been broken. Hsu not only won that first fight, but also used his speed and agility to

offset the impediment in two more fights. The "One-Armed Bandit," as he was affectionately (and by tournament's end almost reverently) called, won the Gold in his weight class.



Sifu Huang Chien-Liang received the "Kuoshu Medal" for his dedication to promoting the Chinese martial arts.

Many of the tournament attendees from the U.S. were surprised to see a familiar face in midst of the small Norweigan Team: well-known Hung Gar and Tai Chi stylist Sifu Tony Brown from Delaware, Ohio. Sifu Brown has taught in Norway in the past and accompanied the Norweigan Team as both coach and competitor. He competed in both the forms and sparring competitions. As many of you are aware, Shi-Fu Brown lost an arm before beginning his martial arts career. This did not, however,

slow him down for a moment during his fight with a two-time World Champion and French National Champion.

The Seventh World Championship was truly an awesome display of martial arts talent and knowledge, not only from the competitors, but also from the tournament organizers and sponsors who invested over \$400,000 in the tournament, and from the officials and the referees who managed every aspect of the tournament in an outstanding manner. This favorable sentiment was echoed by the majority of attendees, including a



U.S. won Best Team Spirit Trophy.

number of observers from countries not yet formally associated with the I.C.K.F. This tournament has definitely enhanced the standing of the International Chinese Kuoshu Federation in the martial arts community and will surely promote the future growth and success of the Federation.

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Officials at the 7th World Cup Kuoshu Tournament, (L-R, back row) Arbitrators: Huang Ching Zheng (Germany), Huang Chien-Liang (USA Director and Chief Arbitrator), and Li Wing-Kay (Brazil); Front row: Referees.

Photos by
Andra
Gorman,
Dana
Honeycutt,
and Marinos
Triantos