

Carol

2007 NAS Champion



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How did you get into Martial Arts?

My brother Paul had someone knock on his house door to see if he wanted to join a karate club, he joined and attended his first class, when he got home he was buzzing and phoned me to tell me how great it was, I had always thought about doing a Martial Art but had never got round to actually doing something about it, so when he said I should go along I thought 'why not'. At my first class, I had so much fun and the instructor praised me on my round kick, which was such an encouragement, I was hooked and immediately started training twice a week.

What are your most effective scoring techniques?

My reverse punch is the technique I score most points with, it's not a conscious competence with this technique anymore, I have drilled my reverse punch to the point that it becomes a reflex action.

I have worked tirelessly on my hips to get power and reach with this technique but the biggest secret with it is timing. Good timing helps you to capitalise on your opponents weaknesses in offence and in defence seize the split second moment where your opponent is exposed.

A fast reverse punch is not enough it is the timing that makes it a winning technique.

Do your techniques change with each opponent/match?

I do watch my opponents as much as I can to see which leg they favour forward, if they always initiate an attack with a particular technique or always react in a certain way and I bear that in mind when I step into the ring, but for myself I don't change my techniques too greatly between opponents I find sticking to my core skills and strengths gives me the specialist edge.

I do change my ringcraft, i.e. how I use the ring in the match, whether moving in circles to create openings or straight line attacks/counters.

I do have a number of combinations that I practice physically and mentally, picturing myself carrying them out with perfect technique and timing, and most tournaments I will pick 2 or 3 that I am consciously intending to use to create variation so I don't become predictable to my opponents.

How did you get involved in competing in NAS?

I had heard a lot about the circuit in Australia and was inspired by the success of people like Renee Joyce and Angela Uytengco and loved the idea of testing myself against other Karate styles and other martial arts and seeing how effective my techniques were against such different dynamics.

What do you believe others can get out of competing?

Tournaments are one of the greatest lessons you can have on your Martial Arts journey, it's all down to you, if you lose you must learn from that, you cannot blame the judges or other factors on the day, you have to look to what area(s) you have weaknesses, whether it be in your abilities or in your mental game. If you win you should allow yourself time to be proud of your achievement, don't throw it in other peoples faces, be gracious, But do play back what you did in your head what made you the best on the day, remember what you did, how you felt, write it down if you can, then you will be able to return to that state when you are next in a tournament or in a tough training

session even a situation not related to your martial art where you need to feel confident in yourself.

Secondly most people start a martial art with a main reason being the idea of learning self defence, and in that respect we are training for something we hope we will never have to use, we don't walk down the street hoping to be attacked, but what if? We live in a world where increasing violence is a fact, if you were to be attacked what would you do? Would you freeze with fear? Would you panic? Unfortunately just going through scenarios in a class will give you ideas but without the adrenaline dump that you experience in the moment of attack you can never fully prepare or know how you will react, unless you enter a competition. When you step up to the line to perform your Kata (form) or fight you get an adrenaline dump into your system, you have butterflies and your heart beats right through your chest, the same physical effects you would get in a real self defence situation, but in a safe environment, this gives your body the opportunity to develop the ability to cope with this physical change and still be able to perform, it is the most valuable self defence lesson you can subject yourself to.

PROFILE.

I started competing in 2002 and I was not one of those who enter and get medals straight away, I did terribly in both Kata and Kumite, but I was inspired, I remember looking at those that did win and although at the time they were so much better than I was, I said to myself 'why not me' and decided I was going to get to medal standard myself.

It took me a year of competing, but in September 2003 I found myself in my first final in a GKR regional tournament against Angela Kay (2006 NAS Champion of Champions) I took Silver and Angela was so humble in her success and outstandingly encouraging to me I was in awe of her, it's therefore such an honour for me to follow on from her as NAS Female Champion of Champions.

I started entering NAS in the 2007 circuit as I wanted to concentrate 2006 on the GKR UK Nationals, and I did achieve GKR UK 2006 Female Opens Kumite first place. So for 2007 I had two main goals, to place in the top three in the GKR World Titles and NAS Female Champion of Champions. The GKR World Titles came first, in June, and I finished in 2nd Place which I was hugely proud of and to top off the year, I have now achieved the NAS Female Champion of Champions.

The NAS Nationals was for me the best NAS tournament to date, in the Female Black Belt opens we had 3 Karate styles, Tae Kwon Do and Kickboxing represented so this was truly the NAS I had pictured and it was just fantastic to test ourselves against each other's differences, one of the greatest memories for me on the day though was how friendly and supportive we all were to each other.

I was fortunate to fight Sabrina Annon of GKR in the Open Weight division, she had already qualified for her weight division as had I, so I expected to possibly meet her again later in the Champion of Champions final which I did, this gave me the chance to see which techniques of mine worked best on her, which techniques of hers scored and assess which legs she favoured forward and techniques she started with so I was going into the final fight of the day feeling prepared and confident, a huge mental advantage, the room was electric and the organisers do a fantastic job of creating a special atmosphere for the showcase events, I was honoured to be in the final and hugely honoured and proud to be 2007 NAS Champion of Champions.

NAS is clearly going from strength to strength and 2008 looks set to be a fantastic year, bring it on!