



Canadian Team Earns Bronze Medal at Senior Pan Ams

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil - Today was an exciting first day of competition for the Canadian team in Rio de Janeiro, at the 30th Senior Pan-American Karate Championships. Altogether, a total of ten athletes competed in six different divisions, earning one bronze medal and achieving both a top 5 and a top 7 finish.

This morning, in individual kata, Kenneth Lee, hailing from British Columbia, achieved a 3rd-place finish in the men's division, ahead of Fabrice Chiron, of Brazil. Lee, who has previously ranked in the top 8 at the Premier League Dutch Open Karate-1 2016 competition, as well as at the Premier League Okinawa Open 2015 tournament, is the first Canadian individual in twelve years to make the podium in a male kata division at the Pan-American Championships. Toshi Uchiage, also from British Columbia, lost to Jaime Teruel Duran of the Dominican Republic.

In women's individual kata, Rita Ngo, of British Columbia, achieved a 7th-place finish, losing in repechage to eventual bronze medallist Xatzi Y. Trujillo M. of Mexico. Daphné Trahan-Perreault, of Québec, lost to Victoria Cruz of Mexico.

In women's kumite, Marianne Boulé, of Québec, won her first match in the -68 kg division, against Catalina Venegas, of Chile. She went on to lose her second match to Marianth Cuervo, of Venezuela. In the -61 kg division, Kamille Desjardins, also from Québec, lost to 2015 Pan American Games silver medallist Karina Diaz, while Hana Furumoto-Deshaies, from Québec as well, lost to Nicole Steembecker Pinto, of Chile.

In men's kumite, Alexandre-Benjamin Rivest, of Québec, achieved a 5th-place finish in the 84+ kg division, winning his first match against Brian Irr of the USA, and subsequently losing the next to Alejandro Mellado, of Chile. He ultimately lost his repechage match to Franco Recuso, of Argentina, bronze medallist at the 2015 Pan-American Karate Championships. Patrice Boily-Martineau, of Québec, handily won his first match against Julio Ichiki of Argentina in the -75 kg division. He later lost his second match to 2015 Pan American Games gold medallist Thomas Scott. Nicholas-Patrick Rivest, also from Québec, competing in the same division for the first time at the senior level, lost to Julio Silva of Costa Rica.

Tomorrow will be another very busy day for kumite competitors on the Canadian team. In the women's divisions, Canadians competing include Isabelle Chan and Jusleen Virk (-50 kg), Melissa Jennings and Kate Campbell (-55kg), and Yashna Hathi and Camélie Boisvenue (68+ kg). In the men's divisions, Canadian athletes include Nicolas Bisson and Derek Chan (-60 kg), Ryan O'Neil and Carl Rodrigue (-67



kg), and Sarmen Sinani and Philippe Soucy (-84 kg).

Today's Canadian competitors are now setting their sights toward the Senior World Championships, which will be held in Linz, Austria in October 2016. They are furthermore energized by the probable inclusion of both kata and kumite divisions at the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo, Japan.

About Karate Canada:

Karate Canada is a not-for-profit corporation constituted under Part II of the Canada Corporations Act, with the objective of describing and incorporating all activities related to the promotion, organization, regulation and popularization of the sport of karate all over Canada, of protecting the physical and emotional health of athletes, and of promoting the interests of karate throughout Canada. Karate Canada and its 10 member Provincial and Territorial Associations assemble roughly 16,000 participants nationwide. Furthermore, Karate Canada is a proud member of the Canadian Olympic Committee, the World Karate Federation and the Pan American Karate Federation. See more at www.karatecanada.org.