



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

In the last issue of The Way, we learned of Alice's outstanding accomplishments in Hungary. In this issue, she tells us about her personal experience.

During the April school holidays, I traveled to Budapest, Hungary with the Australian U15 judo team. I started with 10 days of intense training before I competed in my first international competition.

The training in Hungary was very different to how I train here in Australia. For 10 straight days I trained every morning and afternoon. In the morning I would do an hour and a half of technical focused training with only the Australian team and in the afternoon I would go back to the training club and train with the Hungarian team for 2 hours. In between, I would stretch or continue fitness training. Usually after training I would be so sore but I knew I couldn't give up!

I really loved the training. Some sessions I also had to do a lot of strength and conditioning. I would do about 15 minutes of running and sprinting and then I would do a circuit full of weights, push ups, sit ups and more sprinting! In my 2 hour training sessions we would start with stretching, then would move on to a 15-20 minute warm up followed by uchikomi. This is where we go down the mat practicing breaking balance, trying our favourite or main throws forward, backwards, sideways and combining 2 or more throws together. Then we would stay on one part of the mat and do speed uchikomi which is doing your main throws really quickly. Lastly we would do nagekomi which is full throwing, usually in sets of fives.

After this we would then move on to newaza which is ground fighting. The aim of ground fighting

is to get your partner on their back or you can do strangles and arm bars. We would usually do these for 5 minutes each and do around 5 sets. We then have a 2 minute break to quickly get a drink of water. Then we moved on to randori. This is fighting like in competition. The aim is to throw your opponent and get your partner on their back. This is always the hardest part of training because you have to break balance, try out our throws and try to block their throws all at the same time! These fights would usually go for 5 minutes and I would do 7 rounds.

After training the Australian team come together on the mat and debrief about the session and talk about things we all need to work on while we stretch. One of the strength challenges was rope climbing so after we stretched we had to try this 3 times. In the beginning I struggled as I have never done it before but I practiced everyday and by the end of the trip I could climb to the top!

The competition was an amazing experience. Unfortunately I lost 2 fights against a Bulgarian and Hungarian competitor, they were both so strong and went on to medal overall. This meant that I was eliminated and I was really disappointed but my coach was happy with how I fought.

After my competition, I then had an International training camp. There were athletes from 24 countries. We had training morning and afternoon with a lot of uchikomi, nagekomi, newaza and randori. By the end of each day I had done 16 randoris which I was very proud of.

Overall, this was an amazing experience!! It really pushed me to my limits and showed me what I can do! I was very proud of myself and I definitely want to do this again! I can't wait to implement everything I learned back into my training back in Sydney!

Alice C, Year 9
