

## Squad Managers Report AGM 2018

This year has proved to be very demanding and very trying. The recent divisions within the bu impacted the squad in various ways. Most regrettable was the withdrawal of the team coach and assistant coach at last year's AGM. Further, some senior, experienced teachers provided support to other countries at the EIC, rather than providing support to the UK team. This led to considerable ill-feeling amongst the squad, coupled with a feeling of abandonment by teachers they had such respect for.

The team was picked using a fair and democratic method, it was representative of the whole of the UK. There were a lot of new faces at STS and places on the team were hard fought for. Team members came from all over the UK. STS events were hosted all over the country, and I believe we have been very successful in being inclusive to the whole membership.

Our young team actually performed very well both on and off the floor, I am very proud of the commitment, spirit and camaraderie shown by all, they represented themselves and the country to the highest level, they were disciplined and well behaved throughout the event, their cohesion as a team was commented upon.

I would like to congratulate Sophie Ralston on her fighting spirit medal at 3rd Dan level, she totally justified her selection. Also Steve Taylor who came close to winning a medal and was beaten by the gold medallist as did Sophie Ralston, Ed Umeyama lost to the silver medallist, so well done team, I would like to make a special mention for Robert Boyd who competed just weeks after a kidney transplant his determination and drive to make selection was inspiring.

Special thanks to Sensei Len Bean who was delegation leader and did a fantastic job, his contribution was an inspiration and abject lesson in how to present the national team at a major International event.

My personal thanks go to Sensei Chris Mansfield for his unbending support of our squad and team this year, his efforts are acknowledged by the level of esteem and respect that he is held in by the current squad and management team.

I would like to thank John Honisz-Green for the support, advice and assistance that he gave freely when times felt very dark indeed.

Karl Gibbons      United Kingdom Team Manager