



Irish Taekwon-Do Association



Annual Report 2015





2015 has been another excellent year of growth and success for our organisation, the **ITA now has more than 100 schools** across Ireland, with many schools opening internally due to initiatives by the board of directors in terms of financial and marketing support and many instructors and schools being attracted to ITA in the last 12 months from other organisations, attracted by our success, our focus on the membership, democratic structure and professional events.

2015 sees the end of our current strategic plan ([download here](#)). We are proud to say we have achieved the majority of the objectives set out in that plan and we now look to the future with renewed goals and vision as we launch our next Strategic Plan 2016 to 2020 at our AGM in January.

2015 was another year of fantastic success for our national team members with many Irish Athletes medalling at the ITF World Championships in Jesolo and the European Championships in Motherwell. It was also a very good year for national events with 3 major ITA championships, each in excess of 600 competitors taking place, two national black belt tests, several national technical seminars and government recognised & accredited coach education courses where our members continue to up skill and set that standard for other organisations to follow.

International Instructors

1. **Master Kenneth Wheatley VII Dan**
2. **Master Patrick O'Rourke VII Dan**
3. **Master Pat Barry VII Dan**
4. **Master Tim Forde VII Dan**
5. **Master Paul Delea VII Dan**
6. **Master Adrian O'Mahoney VII Dan**
7. **Master Frank Murphy VII Dan**
8. **Mr. Stephen Cooley VI Dan**
9. **Mr. Mark Buckley VI Dan**
10. **Mr. Francis Plunkett VI Dan**
11. **Mr. Niall Jones VI Dan**
12. **Mr. Ken Leahy VI Dan**
13. **Mr. Adrian Byrne VI Dan**
14. **Mr. Kevin Kinsella VI Dan**
15. **Mr. Stephen Ryan VI Dan**
16. **Mr. Brian Coughlan VI Dan**
17. **Mr. Jamie Rigney VI Dan**
18. **Ms. Fiona Gallagher-Payet V Dan**
19. **Mr. Donal O'Donoghue V Dan**
20. **Mr. Declan McMullen V Dan**
21. **Ms. Anne-Marie Kinsella V Dan**
22. **Mr. Hong Keat Looi V Dan**
23. **Mr. Darren Smith IV Dan**
24. **Mr. Alan McDonagh IV Dan**
25. **Ms. Una Byrne IV Dan**
26. **Ms. Ann Curran IV Dan**
27. **Mr. Marcin Oworuszko IV Dan**
28. **Mr. Carl Smullen IV Dan**
29. **Mr. Stephen Smullen IV Dan**
30. **Mr. Ross Smith IV Dan**
31. **Ms. Laura Ryan IV Dan**
32. **Ms. Eileen Plunkett IV Dan**
33. **Mr. Derek Hanlon IV Dan**
34. **Mr. Leonard Coughlan IV Dan**
35. **Ms. Sabina Mason IV Dan**
36. **Mr. Darren Doherty IV Dan**
37. **Mr. Leonard Coughlan IV Dan**

2015 has seen significant growth in instructors and clubs...

The list of ITA clubs can be viewed here:

http://www.taekwondo.ie/information/ita_national_club_directory-31.html



Jan. 2015



The Irish Taekwon-Do Association Annual General Meeting (AGM) took place in the Horse & Jockey Hotel. Instructors from all across Ireland attended to elect the board and officers of the association and to plan the year ahead.

The Irish Taekwon-Do Association hosted the 15th Cork Open Championships in the Neptune Stadium, Cork on the weekend of the 14th & 15th February. The tournament was made up of 614 competitors from around the country including many experienced international competitors and World & European champions. The competition was run by the ITA tournament & Umpire committee of Mrs Laura Ryan, Master Pat Barry, Mr Stephen Ryan, Mr Mark Buckley & Master Tim Forde with the assistance of dozens of umpires from clubs around the country. Saturday's competition was made up of cadets (aged 14 - 17), seniors (18+) and for the first time at an ITA tournament a veterans (+35 years) section. There were many excellent performances over the course of the day across the patterns, sparring, special technique & breaking

February 2015



March 2015

On Saturday and Sunday the 7th and 8th March the Taekwon-Do Advisory Board of the Irish Martial Arts Commission held an Introduction to Coaching ITF Taekwon-Do Course in Rivervalley Taekwon-Do Club. 11 coaches from the ITA completed two days of training under the supervision of Adrian Byrne, assisted by Mr Stephen Cooley and Mr Carl Smullen

The topics covered included: long term athlete development; retention and dropout; coaching philosophy; group management; preventative discipline; basics of skill learning; coaching roles; instruction of technical fundamentals; teaching sparring through a games for understanding approach; physical development of the child athlete; observation, analysis and delivery of feedback; safety and communication skills. All courses delivered by IMAC follow an integrated model and make use of adult learning principles. As such, each participant was involved in lectures, group discussions, role play, practical coaching tasks and problem solving activities in a 100% ITF Taekwon-Do focused programme. The weekend finished on a high following a practical coaching session in which all participants had a short opportunity to deliver a prepared activity to a group of local Taekwon-Do students! We wish to extend a huge thank you to all of our volunteers from Rivervalley TKD and IMAA Ashbourne.



The 1st ITA Technical Seminar of the year took place in Loreto College Mullingar on Sunday March 22nd. The event was hosted by Inspiration TKD instructor Mr Rodney Connolly and his team. Over 50 people from around the country attended the event. The day kicked off at 10am and over the course of the day the ITA technical committee covered the 24 patterns, kicking (with an emphasis on posture, hip mobility, ability to close distance and multiple kicking), fundamental movements, patterns of performance with an emphasis on correct breathing, stability, rhythm and execution of techniques, free sparring with a focus on movement, how to create scoring opportunities, lateral movement, counter attacking, controlling space etc and step sparring. The ITA Technical Committee was this year expanded to four and now includes 5th Dan instructor Mr Hong Keat Looi who has added a new layer of expertise to compliment the skills of the existing committee of Master Ken Wheatley, Mr Niall Jones and Mr Stephen Ryan. The seminar was also attended by 3 ITA Masters, Master Delea, Master Forde and Master Murphy who led by example, training hard all day and offering support to the committee.

April 2015



The ITA Dublin Open took place on the weekend of the 28th & 29th March in the National Basketball Arena, Tallaght. 639 competitors from several Irish Associations, Germany, Switzerland, Albania & Scotland competed over two days across seven rings in patterns, sparring, special technique & breaking.

Day 1 of the tournament was made up of those aged 14 & older with sections divided into cadets, seniors and veterans, colour belts & blackbelts. The standard on the floor was as high as ever with many Irish national team members competing alongside high level international competitors. As with all ITA tournaments, the blackbelts competed in a requalification/pool system, meaning each competitor had a number of matches. The tournament was an excellent chance for the high-level athletes to test themselves as they prepare for the ITF World Championships which takes place in Jesolo, Italy in May.

The best overall competitor awards at the Dublin Open were presented to Hong Looi, best senior male with 2 golds and a silver, Ellen Ince, best junior female with 2 golds & a bronze medal and Dylan Murphy, best junior male who won 3 gold medals. There was no senior female award presented as many competitors had the same point's total.

Day 2 of the Dublin Open took place over 7 competition areas with those aged 7 - 13 competing in patterns, sparring & special technique. There was a high standard on display with competitors having to come through many rounds to claim a medal. A special mention must go to Abbie Walsh, Ellie Hendrick, Ellie Pyke, Isabel Lehane, Jack Barrett, Joanna O'Sullivan, Mark Hayes and Warren Kiely who all won 2 Gold medals, while Fionn Hagon won as impressive 3 Golds.

Thank you to the ITA tournament & umpire committee, volunteers, umpires, coaches, competitors & supporters for helping to make the ITA Dublin Open a very special weekend.

May 2015

Following a successful bid at the ITF congress held in Jesolo, Italy, the Irish Taekwon-Do Association could officially announce that the 2017 ITF World Championships will take place in Ireland. The championships will be held in the Citywest Hotel in October 2017, following a very professional bid put forward by the ITA. We now look forward to the championships which will be a historic event for Irish Taekwon-Do and will bring the competitors, coaches, umpires, officials and supporters from around the world to Dublin. We look forward to welcoming them in 2017.



The Irish Taekwon-Do Team returned to a hero's welcome at Dublin airport, following a very successful World Championships in Jesolo Italy. The team led by coaches Adrian Byrne, Stephen Cooley, Stephen Ryan, Paul King, Darren Smith & Luke Laffan as well as team managers Jack Sheehan & Gerry O'Rourke finished in fourth place overall with 5 Gold, 6 Silver & 5 Bronze medals. Including Gold medals for World Champions Ellen Ince, Dylan Murphy, Luke McGrath, Adam Shelley and the Senior male sparring team.



Master Adrian O'Mahoney was successfully promoted by the panel of Grandmaster Marano IX Dan and Grandmaster Lan IX Dan at a testing during the ITF World Championships in Jesolo Italy.

June 2015

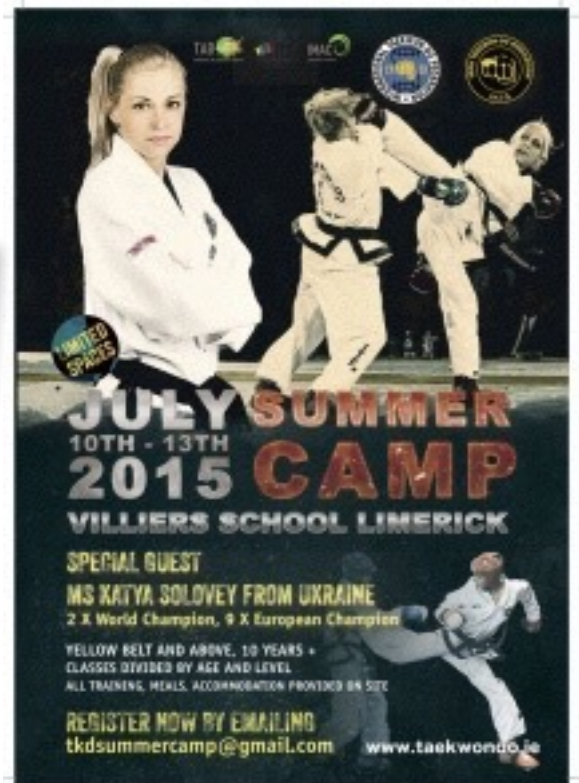
Congratulations to the candidates promoted at the Summer Black Belt Grading in Rathcoole, Dublin. The grading took place over the weekend of June 6th & 7th. On Saturday the 6th the examiner panel consisted of Master Wheatley, Master Barry, Master Delea, Mr Cooley and Mr Jones, with Master Forde and Mrs Ryan testing theory and Mr Hanlon and Mr Carl Smullen testing breaking and special technique. Mr Sheehan acted as narrator. On Sunday June 7th the grading was conducted by two panels; panel 1 consisted of Mr Buckley, Mrs Ryan, Mr Jones, Mr Byrne and Mr Cooley. Panel 2 consisted of Master Barry, Master Forde, Master O'Mahoney, Mr Kinsella and Mr McMullen. Theory was tested by Master Wheatley and Mr Carl Smullen, power/special was tested by Mr Stephen Smullen and Mr Hanlon. Mr Sheehan and Ms Sarah Lehane acted as narrators for the panels. Candidates were tested on all aspects of the ITA Dan grading syllabus, 40 candidates presented for the test out of which 38 were promoted.



July 2015

The ITA Annual Summer Camp took place in July 2015. The camp was attended by approx. 150 participants with many instructors in the ITA leading the camp; including Master Wheatley, Mr Buckley, Mr Ryan, Mr Byrne, Mr Cooley, Mr Smullen, Ms Kinsella & Mr Laffan taking classes across a broad range of topics including sparring, self defence, patterns, special technique etc.

This years special guest was multiple World Champion Ms. Katya Solovey from Ukraine. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed and learned from her classes.



September 2015

A very successful ITA national technical seminar took place in Ennis National School, Co. Clare on Sunday September 27th. The event was attended by over 90 ITA members green belt and above including some of the ITA masters (Master Delea and Master Forde). The ITA Technical committee of Master Wheatley, Mr Jones, Mr Ryan and Mr Looi worked tirelessly in sharing their knowledge over an action packed and informative 6 hours. The seminar included all 24 patterns, step sparring, free sparring, kicking, and conditioning exercises and routines and mobility work. The feedback from participants was very positive



October 2015

The 30th Senior and 21st Junior AETF Taekwon-do European Championships in 2015 took place in Motherwell, Scotland on 22-25th October

It was another very successful campaign for the Irish Team finishing 4th overall on the medal table with 6 Gold, 5 silver and 12 bronze medals.

The ITA Board of directors would like to extend our congratulations to all medalists, competitors, coaches, managers, umpires and officials for representing your country so well. A big thank you also to Top Ten who supplied a free dobok to every member of the squad. A special thanks also to Pat Fitzsimmons for once again acting as official photographer and capturing some fantastic memories.



November 2015

On Sunday 22nd November 2015, I.T.A Masters and Instructors met at the Dojang of Mr Hong Keat Looi and Miss Sabina Mason for Sabum and Sahyun training.

The Dojang at St. Conleth and St Mary's Primary School, Newbridge, Co. Kildare was the perfect venue for the training session and the class format thoroughly prepared by the hosts.

The session began with those present taking a warm up, skilfully prepared and presented by Mr Looi which ensured everyone was sufficiently supple for what was to follow.

The warm up was followed by plenty of stretching routines, mobility exercises and again every aspect was monitored and corrected by Mr Looi while walking around the class ensuring each and every one was getting the maximum benefit from each routine.

Kicking drills followed and it has to be said that Mr Looi demonstrated each and every one of them in a manner consistent with a true international athlete showing his vast experience with his true passion for Taekwon-Do shining through.

Lots of sparring drills after the kicks and it turned out to be as much fun as it was beneficial but this was again as a result of the excellent format and tuition.

For the last of the session it was time for patterns led by Master Kenneth Wheatley with input from Master Patrick O'Rourke and Master Paul Delea.

From Yong-Gae to Tong-Il each senior pattern was practiced and dissected numerous times until all techniques were corrected and all happy with the performance.

Sunday afternoon was a time to relax when all walked to a local cafe. This was a great hour of conversation and laughter before we left for home and agreed that it was a super session and planned for another one in the near future.

A special word of thanks must go to our hosts for such a wonderful day of training and a rare opportunity of socialising together.



The 15th ITA Irish Cup took place in the UL Arena, Limerick on the 14th & 15th November 2015. The tournament was attended by athletes from around Ireland as well as from the Netherlands, Scotland, Albania, Italy and England. Both competition days began with a minute of silence in respect of the victims of the Paris attacks as well as in memory of Jacqueline Rowold, a young German competitor who sadly lost her life recently.

Saturday was a day of cadet & adult competition, with five rings running patterns, sparring, special technique and power breaking competition. The tournament also included a specific section for novice blackbelts aged 13 years as well as veteran sections for older competitors.

There were many high-level international competitors taking part, making for many exciting match ups. In the junior sections junior World & European champion Luke Mc Grath continued his run taking Gold in sparring & special technique and Silver in patterns, making him the overall best junior male. While Joanne Potter was awarded best overall junior female with 2 Golds and a Bronze.

In the senior sections, Jenny Lehane and Louise McCagh both took Gold in the -56kg & -68kg sections respectively. While Stephen Ryan & Hong Looi met once again in the final of the 4th - 6th Degree section with Mr Ryan taking Gold. In Male sparring Stephen Smullen took Gold in a large -78kg sparring group, with Hong Looi taking silver and John Moffitt picking up Bronze on this occasion. Day 2 of the competition was for competitors aged 13 and younger, with over 450 competitors taking part from ITA clubs, other Irish TKD groups and the Netherlands. As with all ITA tournaments, there was a very high standard of skill in the sparring, patterns & special technique sections taking place over 8 rings. The future of Irish Taekwon-Do looks bright!

At the end of Day 2, the awards for best overall club were presented to the clubs with the highest points tallies. Mr Stephen Cooley picking up the 1st place trophy for Integrity/Rivervalley, Mr Mark Buckley from Cork ITA received the second place trophy, while Mr Niall Jones, coach of the North Taekwon-Do Club was awarded the 3rd place trophy.

The Irish Taekwon-Do Association would like to thank our tournament & umpire committee, organisers, umpires and volunteers for their excellent work over the weekend. We would also like to thank our competitors from around Ireland as well as our guests from around Europe for making the 15th Irish Cup such a memorable weekend



December 2015



The Irish Taekwon-Do Association held it's winter blackbelt grading on the weekend of the 5th & 6th December in Co. Clare. 48 candidates where successfully promoted on the weekend under the ITA examiners panel, made up of Masters and international instructors from around the country. Candidates where tested on all aspects of Taekwon-Do including hand & foot techniques, patterns, step-sparring, free sparring, special technique, breaking, self defence and theory.

The Saturday was for candidates testing for 2nd - 4th degree and took place in the Quin Community Centre. Twelve candidate were promoted to 2nd Dan, three candidates promoted to 3rd Dan, while two candidates were promoted to the grade of 4th Degree Blackbelt.

On Sunday, the grading for candidates testing for 1st degree Blackbelt took place on the Sunday in Ennis National School. This is a big milestone in the career of any Taekwon-Do student and 31 new blackbelts were awarded to students from around the country who met the standard required.

The ITA would like to thank Quin & Ennis Taekwon-Do clubs, the organisers of the winter grading for their hospitality on the weekend and congratulation all those promoted.

