

# **“Canadian Taekwon-Do Team World Champions”**

Canada has won Gold for the first time at the Global Taekwon-Do World Championships held in Arkhangelsk, Russia, from July 30 to August 2. The Canadian team was led by Washington Celis, 6<sup>th</sup> degree black belt and Vice-President of GTF Canada and Boris Celis, 5<sup>th</sup> degree black belt, both members of the Saskatchewan Global Taekwon-Do Federation (Sask GTF).

The Canadian Black Belt Male Team won a decisive 5 - 0 victory over Russia, in the Team Pattern Competition.

Although representing Canada, the six members of the team are exclusively from the **Saskatchewan Global Taekwon-Do Federation (Sask GTF)**, with members from Regina, Saskatoon, and Estevan. Team members include: Andres Celis, Clint Diekema, Curtis Rieder, Dustin Martens, Kevin Niessen, and Chris Krywulak.

Clint Diekema of Saskatoon took the Silver medal in the Mens Black Belt Individual Patterns, with a division of over 30 black belt competitors. He was also honoured with the award for **“Most Valuable Athlete and Competitor”**; this award is decided by a combination of judges and the audience in attendance.

Melissa Mushanski of Regina received the Bronze in Junior Female Black Belt Sparring, and Gurjeet Bilkhu of Estevan was eliminated early in the Junior Male Division. However, both displayed diverse skills and put on a great performance.

Sask GTF has a strong pool of talented athletes and their achievements are certainly very impressive. Members of the team have worked incredibly hard to get to such high levels of competition. The team trained every day up to 25 hours a week, and eight hours during weekends. The team deserves recognition, because they always show great desire, discipline and dedication during training. Obviously, the team put on an impressive performance. They performed excellent under pressure and in front of the Russian hometown crowd. After the Canadian Team was announced the champions, even the Russian crowd was genuinely cheering and acknowledging their outstanding victory.

Team Pattern Competition, the most prestigious event in the championship, involves synchronizing the movements of team members as they move through a pattern of kicks, punches and blocks.

Twenty-six nations were competing at the competition.

Sask GTF is now planning to attend other championships in Canada, in preparation for the upcoming European Championships to be held in Italy in 2005.