

## Background



**Left to right: Grandmaster Han, Grandmaster Yap Ching Hai, Deputy Mayor of Quanzhou, Master Chee Boon Tek**

The renowned Grand Master Kim Han, President of the International Nan Shaolin Wuzu Quan Union led the English and Irish Teams to the Annual Nan Shaolin Wuzu Quan Championships in Quanzhou, Fujian Province, Southern China in November 2006. Grand Master Han is responsible for Wuzu in Europe and lives in North London. He hails from the Malaysian Shizu Chee Kim Thong school of Nan Shaolin Wuzu Quan (Kuala Lumpur). He is the author of the published book one, 'Fundamentals of Nan Shaolin Wuzu Quan'. Book two of nine is already completed and awaiting publication. The two-year Presidency held by Grand Master Han was due to be handed over at a ceremony held after the competition. The next President would be the Deputy Mayor of Quanzhou, a Master in his own right.



Left to Right: Myles Behan, Kevin Naughton, Grandmaster Han, Robert Hanley, Barry Dickson, Nigel Gilham, JJ Digby and Tracy Gilham

## The Teams:

### *Teams Coach...*

- Grand Master Han (*North London*)

### *England...*

- Tracy Gilham (*KIXX Gym Maidstone, Kent*)
- Nigel Gilham (*KIXX Gym Maidstone, Kent*)

### *Southern Ireland...*

- Myles Behan (*Dublin*)
- Barry Dickson (*Dublin*)
- JJ Digby (*Dublin*)
- Kevin Naughton (*Dublin*)
- Robert Hanley (*Dublin*)

### *Other participating teams included...*

China (*included; The Southern Shaolin Temple students and other regional clubs*), Malaysia, Philippines (two organisations and their teams), Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Australia, England, Southern Ireland and Japan.

*The picture opposite shows a group photograph being assembled outside the Overseas Hotel, Quanzhou. There were several hundred competitors and officials present. Local press and television stations were present. The 'Europeans' attracted a lot of interest from the media.*

## **The Competition**

On the evening before the competition, some representatives of the Teams were requested to attend a pre-competition meeting in one of the hotel conference rooms. Grand Master Han, Myles, Tracy and Nigel went along to the meeting. Unfortunately, with the exception of Grand Master Han, a lack of understanding of the Mandarin language meant that the majority of the meeting went 'right over our heads'. Much appreciated help from the Malaysian Team representatives provided us with a clearer understanding of the proceedings. The competition rules formulated by Grand Master Han, for the marking of 'traditional' events, were to be adopted for the competition. As this was a traditional competition it was to be scored differently to the International Wushu competitions we had previously gained much experience by competing in. Grand Master Han took us through the rules, judging, appeals, running order, registration, etc. these were explained to us personally and in more detail after the meeting.



The competition, held at the Overseas Hotel, Quanzhou, opened the following morning at around 8:30am. The first event was the Ladies Hand Form Categories. Following some confusion with registration, Tracy was the first to 'take the floor' from the Anglo-Irish contingent. It is fair to say that, due to everything being conducted in Mandarin, without the help of our friends on the Malaysian Team we would not have had much idea of what was going on. Many thanks Bo, Boon and Chong. Over the next two days we were called up to our events while Grand Master Han was present on the 'top-table' with other notable masters, overseeing the event (*please see the medal table below*).

The Irish Team was competing for the first time. They took 6 silver medal positions and gained valuable experience for the next time. They are certainly looking forward to 'having another go'. Well done.

There were many excellent competitors and teams at the competition. They were friendly, helpful and the competitor atmosphere was very good. The Philippine children performed an excellent innovative, musical group form that made everyone clap their performance and enthusiasm.

The eagerly awaited Southern Shaolin Temple Students performed to their expected high standard with individual and group forms showing clarity and precision.

1. *Nigel performing Sanzhan 11*
2. *Tracy performing Monkey Cudgel*
3. *The Philippine Demo Team*
4. *The Nigel and Tracy Sparring Set*
5. *The Southern Shaolin Demo Team*

## Competition Results

Name	Country	Event	Position
Tracy Gilham	England	Hand Form, Compulsory, Sanzhan Hand Form, Optional, Tiaoqie Weapon Form, Xingzhe Gun (Monkey Cudgel) Set Spar, Sanzhan San Shou Dui Tao ( <i>with Nigel Gilham</i> )	Gold
			Gold
			Gold
			Silver
Nigel Gilham	England	Hand Form, Compulsory, Sanzhan Weapon Form, Shuang Chai (Sai) Hand Form, Optional, Her So Set Spar, Sanzhan San Shou Dui Tao ( <i>with Tracy Gilham</i> )	Gold
			Gold
			Silver
			Silver
JJ Digby	Southern	Hand Form, Optional, Drunken Monkey Weapon Form, Guai Zi (Single Tonfa)	Silver
	Ireland		Silver

	Southern		Silver
Robert Hanley	Ireland	Hand Form Weapon Form, Zimudao (Butterfly Knives)	Silver
Kevin Naughton	Southern Ireland	Hand Form, Tai Chor Sanzhan Weapon Form, Bian (Cane)	Silver Silver

Nigel and Tracy Gilham were presented with a statue of Damo at the evenings presentation ceremony as a distinction for their successes. The Irish Team received their well earned certificates.

It is worth noting that the rules adopted for this competition provided for a smooth, well run event. The organisers are going to present these rules to the Chinese Wu Shu Association in Beijing for the purpose of using them in further international competition possibly in 2008.



## Nan Shaolin Temple, Quanzhou, Fujian Province, Southern China.

Southern (Nan) Shaolin Kung Fu originated in Quanzhou, Fujian Province. A Southern Shaolin Temple and a Southern Shaolin Museum can be found there.

The Southern Shaolin Temple at Quanzhou is found behind the Sports Stadium at the very end of Zayton Street (Citong Road, on Dongyue Hill). It is exactly 1.1 km past the sign that says you only have 600 meters to go. The abbot of the temple, when asked if it meant 600 meters if you climb straight up, said, "No, Kung Fu monks fly straight up!"

The monk Zhikong, who had moved here from the Songshan Shaolin Temple up north, originally built the Southern Shaolin Temple at Quanzhou in the early Tang

Dynasty. The temple had its ups and downs and eventually was totally destroyed in 1763 A.D.

The Shaolin tradition continued to be taught in Congfu Temple, but now that so many people worldwide are studying the many styles of Kung Fu, the Shaolin Temple was recently rebuilt. Each year, thousands of Kung Fu enthusiasts make pilgrimages to this Mecca for martial arts enthusiasts and also visit the local martial arts schools.

### **Post Competition Demonstrations:**

Following the competition all of the teams went to the Southern Shaolin Temple to demonstrate before the assembled audience, some of their medal winning routines. We were also treated to various demonstrations by some of the Masters that had been officiating at the competition.

The hand over of the International Nan Shaolin Wuzu Quan Union Presidency took place at a prestigious Wushu school in Quanzhou, specialising in the Southern Martial Arts. Hundreds of children from the school were present and provided some of the demonstrations that marked the handing over ceremony. The school teaches an academic syllabus around the physical education of the Wushu. Places in this school are highly sought after, as parents are keen for their children to be educated within the martial arts self-discipline system, i.e. Strength, physical and mental.

## **Finally...**

The whole event, competition and post competition tour was without doubt an experience of a lifetime. Many thanks must be given to Grand Master Han, Myles Behan (for organising our itinerary), the other members of the Anglo-Irish contingent, ALL of the other competitors, the competition organisers and judges.

Further competitions are planned with the main one being held in 2008. Plans are afoot to attend this prestigious event with the significance of the Olympics being present. The opportunity to compete is open to all who wish to train for it!

*Compiled by Nigel Gilham – Kixx Gym*