



Chuang's wise move

MARTIAL ARTS STAR FROM CHINESE TAIPEI WINS GOLD MEDAL IN 73KG DIVISION

By GAO CHANGXIN
CHINA DAILY

SHENZHEN — Say what you will about getting kicked in the head, but it's certainly not boring.

Chuang Chia-chia made the move from poomsae to hyung taekwondo three years ago, saying she found her former discipline "tedious".



TAEKWONDO

The gamble paid off yesterday when the 22-year-old from Chinese Taipei won gold in the 73kg division at the Universiade.

Early in her development, Chuang showed more promise in poomsae than hyung.

As time wore on, she found it hard to succeed in something she'd lost interest in.

"Poomsae is all about repetition, doing the same choreography again and again. At the time I just thought 'I don't want to do it anymore,'" said Chuang.

After winning a closely fought match over South Korea's Park Mi Yeon yesterday, Chuang said her mind went momentarily blank.

Then, all the hard work and emotional turmoil over the decision flooded back.

"I feel like a burden has been lifted. Three years later, I finally made it," she said.

Chuang got an early lead after landing a head-kick in the first round, bringing the score to 3-0. But Park gave Chuang a hard time, forcing her into defense for long stretches until the match ended at 3-2.

"I was not as passive as I looked — my defenses were effective," she said.

Coach Lee Chia-jung said Chuang's performance was "superb".

"Chuang is not so good in movements and strength, but she knows perfectly what her rival is going to do next and can take early preparations," Lee said.

"It's like when they are having dinner — you hold out your chopsticks, she knows which dish they are going to."

Beating a Korean in the final had deeper meaning for Chuang.



LIANG XU / XINHUA

Chuang Chia-chia of Chinese Taipei celebrates after winning the 73kg division of taekwondo competition yesterday at the Universiade.

“Poomsae is all about repetition, doing the same choreography again and again. At the time I just thought ‘I don’t want to do it anymore.’”

CHUANG CHIA-CHIA, TAEKWONDO ATHLETE FROM CHINESE TAIPEI

She has a long history — including the Asian Games last year — of being eliminated by Koreans.

All the losses, made her develop

Koreaphobia, she said.

"It feels very good beating a Korean — I have my revenge," Chuang said. "I think I won't have

much mental problems facing Korean athletes in the future."

For the Chinese Taipei taekwondo team, Chuang's gold also served as a relief.

Chinese Taipei sent athletes in almost every category, but the team had no gold until yesterday.

"Winning a gold makes it easier for us to face the fans at home, and ends our journey to Shenzhen on a high note," Lee said.

Turk's OK after being kicked out of comp

By SUN XIAOCHEN
CHINA DAILY

SHENZHEN — Better early than never.

Turkey's Eski Bruak was knocked out of the Universiade a little sooner than he'd hoped, falling to Brazil's Guilherme Felix, 3-1, in the semifinals of the -87kg taekwondo competition on Tuesday at the Universiade.

"I am so happy to be here and I am satisfied about my result, even though I didn't reach the final," he said. "The competition level here is so high, more challenging than I imagined.

"It's my first time participating in such a worldwide event. I met a lot of good players here, and it's been a great experience for me."

South Korean fighter Park Yong Hyun stunned Felix, 14-3, in the final to clinch the nation's seventh taekwondo gold medal at the meet.

A bronze medalist at this year's European Championship, Bruak had expected to do better as he made his debut in a worldwide meet.

But fighting in front of a packed venue, Bruak fell victim to nerves.

He was fouled for pushing three times, and was issued a one-point deduction, while Felix scored twice with kicks.

"I wasn't determined enough to attack when I got the chance, and I lost easy positions sometimes," Bruak said.

Inspired at the age of 12 by his brother — a national titlist — Bruak fell in love with the sport.

"It is a good sport for little kids to release their energy," he said. "Practising taekwondo is good to improve both the body and the fighting will. Then you can become strong physically and mentally."

After the six-day competition, South Korea topped the medal standings with seven golds.

China was next with four, while Russia finished third with three.