

Christmas came early for ATA Students



“There is nothing more rewarding than succeeding in your goals. I can now tick this one as ‘achieved’ on my list.”

☯ Saturday 13th December saw Instructor 4th Dan Richard Allen stand proud as one-by-one his student’s names were called – and I am ecstatic to say I was one of them.

I am in fact talking about the Black Belt Grading. I travelled along with fellow students Natasha Campbell, Olsi Hoxha, Faye Pearce and Christopher Coleman to Boston – yes Boston..... Lancashire – to take part in the BTCB 83rd Dan Grading.

“...I am just as worthy...”

After a 2-

hour seminar hosted by BTCB chairman Master Ian Lennox, Neil Guest, and Adam Tranter, we still felt anxious about what was yet to come.

I remember lining up prior to the grading and the students either side of me asking me how old I am. Both students were thirteen years old and there I was in the middle – old enough to be their mother.

For a split second I felt despondent, I mean they had youth on their side. But then I thought how much hard work I had put in to get to this stage and I acknowledged that I am just as worthy of this black belt as anyone regardless of their age or ability.

With 4 section of the grading to complete, sizing up the competition was not an issue on this occasion as the only battle we had to contend with was with ourselves.

For the last eighteen months we have trained as a group intensively and although I reduced my training and preparation until the birth of my child my mind was still set on achieving my goal by obtaining my black belt.

With the extensive help and support from our instructor Richard Allen and Master Azim Razak, we entered the Do-jang in Boston composed with our heads held high.

After six grueling hours the results were in.

“...I knew they would do it...”

Analyzing the box of belts and the pile of certificates we waited anticipating the sounds of familiar names called.

Elated as one-by-one we all became successful in achieving our 1st Dan.

Travelling back to London with our goals accomplished, we bantered about our highs and lows of the day.

Richard Allen was so proud “I knew they would do it. My students worked very hard for this day and their hard work has paid off.

Over the last year there have been tears, trials and tantrums – ok I confess – the tears were from me – and each drop was worth it.



Proud: The Black Belt's are taking over at Allen Taekwondo Academy

To all the students who took this journey with me. Thank you and congratulations. WE DIT IT!!!

By Tricia Hopkins
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