



14 May 2004

## **COX WINS EUROPEAN SILVER AND QUALIFIES OLYMPIC PLACE**

Sophie Cox has qualified an Olympic place for Great Britain in the Women's –57kg weight category after winning a silver medal on the first day of the European Judo Championships taking place in Bucharest, Romania.

The win will no doubt be a welcome boost to members of the British squad competing over the next two days and hoping to qualify more Olympic places to add to the four secured from results achieved by Craig Fallon, Georgina Singleton, Kate Howey and Karina Bryant at the 2003 World Championships.

The medal for Cox finishes a long European Olympic qualifying season and means that she is currently ranked 2nd in Europe, well inside the required top five ranking needed for an Athens place.

Things were nearly very different for the 22-year-old Rochdale judo player. She was expected to finish top five at the 2003 World Championships in Japan, which would have meant automatic qualification for the Games. However a freak accident in training just three days before she was due to depart for Japan left her with a dislocated elbow, and forced her to withdraw from the competition. Luckily, after making a full recovery, she was able to return to compete in the nine European qualifying tournaments during 2004, finishing with her inspired performance in Bucharest today.

Cox beat both Maria Linberg of Sweden and Inga Golaszewska of Poland to win her pool round and then Cinzia Cavazzuti of Italy in the semi final. In a closely fought final she lost to the Spanish reigning Olympic Champion, Isabel Fernandez.

Also on Friday, Britain's John Buchanan finished 7<sup>th</sup> in the Men's –60kg weight category and James Warren's attempt at qualifying the Men's –66kg weight category came to an end after he failed to achieve a result.

**The Team GB Judo Squad will be announced at a press conference in London on 20<sup>th</sup> May. Please contact Emma Reed for further information.**

### **Contacts:**

Emma Reed  
Public Relations Officer  
British Judo Association  
Tel: 01509 631 692/Mobile: 07702 882951  
[emmareed@britishjudo.org.uk](mailto:emmareed@britishjudo.org.uk)

