



Friday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2006

## **FALLON BECOMES EUROPEAN CHAMPION**

Craig Fallon has today become Britain's first male European judo Champion in ten years after winning gold on the first day of the 2006 European Judo Championships, in Tampere, Finland.

Fallon, who won the –60kg World title in September last year, beat the reigning European Champion Armen Nazaryan of Armenia in the final by ippon to take gold.

In the semi final he defeated Athens Olympic silver medallist Nestor Khgeriani of Georgia, and in the early rounds convincingly beat Kamil Sulek of Poland and Joao Cardoso of Portugal.

The 23-year-old from Wolverhampton, who trains at the Hardy Spicer Judo Club in Birmingham, was competing in his first European Championships since he clinched silver in 2003.

Fallon now holds both the World and European titles – the first British male to do so since Neil Adams won the European gold in 1983 whilst holding the 1981 World title.

Afterwards Colin McIver, British Judo High Performance Director said, "Craig's win has confirmed his status as the best –60kg judo player in the world. He is truly an outstanding talent".

Also today, Matthew Purssey finished 5<sup>th</sup> in the men's –73kg weight category.

The Championships continue over the weekend. On Saturday Sarah Clark, 2004 European bronze medallist, will be a medal hope in the –63kg after taking bronze at the GB World Cup earlier this month. 2005 European bronze medallist Euan Burton will also be hoping for success in the –81kg weight category.

On Sunday four times European Champion, Karina Bryant will be looking to hold on to her current European +78kg title. While Winston Gordon, who placed 5<sup>th</sup> in the 2004 Athens Olympics, aims to take his first European Championship medal.

### **For further information:**

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## Full Team

### **Women:**

<b>Category:</b>	<b>Selected:</b>	<b>Home Town</b>	<b>Club</b>	<b>Personal Coach</b>	<b>Date of Birth</b>
- 52 kgs	Sophie Johnstone	Brighton	Bridgeview	Mark Earle	23/8/84
- 63 kgs	Sarah Clark	Edinburgh	Edinburgh	Billy Cusack	31/1/78
- 70 kgs	Samantha Lowe	Ovington	Camberley	Mark Earle	20/1/82
- 78 kgs	Michelle Rogers	Swinton, Manchester	Whitburn /SIS	Darcel Yandzi	21/06/76
+ 78 kgs	Karina Bryant	Aldershot	Camberley	Mark Earle	27/1/79

### **Men:**

- 60 kgs	Craig Fallon	Wolverhampton	Hardy Spicer 83	Fitzroy Davies	18/12/82
- 66 kgs	Colin Oates	North Lopham, Norfolk	Kumo	Howard Oates	7/6/83
- 73 kgs	Matthew Purssey	Edinburgh	Edinburgh	Billy Cusack	23/2/81
- 81 kgs	Euan Burton	Edinburgh	Edinburgh	Billy Cusack	31/3/79
- 90 kgs	Winston Gordon	London	Budokwai	Eric Bonti	9/11/76
- 100 kgs	Peter Cousins	Harlow	JSC	John Cottis	3/3/81

