



Family passion takes sisters around the world

UNITED STATES FENCERS FIND A SILVER LINING IN SHENZHEN

By ZHANG CHUNMEI
CHINA DAILY

SHENZHEN — Wearing white protective armor and wielding thin swords, sisters Kelley and Courtney Hurley of the United States devoured teams from Hong Kong, Estonia and Ukraine in the women's epee team event on their way to silver medals at the Universiade on Tuesday.

They lost 45-39 to the French team in the final, but they were not upset.

"I think we played very well today," Kelley said. "Though we lost in the final, I still think the whole team has done a good job to get this far."

The US Fencing Association ranks the Hurleys as the best two epee fencers in the country.

Kelley, 23, won gold in the individual and team events at the Junior World Championships in 2008, and represented the US at the Beijing Olympics.

She entered the University of Notre Dame on a fencing scholarship in 2006 to study art.

"Actually, I want to be a doctor but I have to travel and compete for such a long time that I don't have enough time to study science," Kelley said.

Courtney, 21, followed in her sister's footsteps. She won gold at the 2009 Junior World Cup, and enrolled at Notre Dame that same year, majoring in film, television and theater with a supplementary major in computer applications.

The sisters' parents, Robert and Tracy Hurley, have been involved in fencing as competitors and coaches, and introduced their daughters to the sport in 2002.

Both girls attribute much of their success to their parents.

"Fencing is kind of a whole family business," Courtney said.

The family has traveled to many countries and around the US for fencing competitions. The sisters' parents act as tutors while they are on the road, but did not come to Shenzhen because of the cost.

"I will go to call my mom after the interview. I know that they



US sisters Kelley (left) and Courtney Hurley during the women's epee event at the Universiade.

ZOU ZHONGPIN / CHINA DAILY

must be waiting for our message," said Kelley.

Learning about different cultures and meeting new people have been positive aspects of the Hurleys' traveling. "Not all people can say they have the opportunities that we have," Kelley said.

During the school year and the summer holidays, the Hurleys maintain a rigorous practice schedule, training two to four hours a day at their fencing club and in their backyard.

"I have complained that I wanted more time to make

friends, but now I don't think it's necessary," Kelley said. "I always travel with my sister. We live, play and train together. She's my best friend."

After the Universiade, the Hurley sisters will go to the World Championships in Sicily and the Pan American Games in Mexico. It is a heavy schedule, but they are experienced at handling such challenges.

"We are used to it," Courtney said. "The thing you have to do is make sure you get plenty of rest and stay healthy. Sometimes that

is not easy, because you can get worn down with the travel. But you try to train as much as you can."

With the London Olympic Games less than a year away, Courtney said her next goal is to compete on the world's largest stage with Kelley.

"When we won the Junior World Championships, it was the best experience to be able to share it with our family," Kelley said. "To go to the Olympics is such a big accomplishment that I can't wait to share it with them."

Judo is not be-all or end-all for young Brit

By GAO CHANGXIN
CHINA DAILY

SHENZHEN — British judoka Theo McIntosh is struggling to strike a balance between training and life.

The 22-year-old says that despite his deep love for judo, he doesn't want it to take up all of his life and wants to find ways to keep his life more balanced.

"Training does pretty much take up almost all of my life, but I always try to find space for life off the mat and to rest," said McIntosh, who is a junior at Middlesex University in London.

"When I was 19, 20, I spent all my spare time training, and finding ways to get better. But then I found I improved more if I balanced my training with relaxation. So I tried to step back from training a little bit and hopefully come back stronger."

"I am pretty much a student. I like to go to music festivals and concerts and go out and have fun with friends. I also like watching soccer, baseball and a little tennis," he said.

McIntosh has a little more spare time than many of his colleagues because he doesn't have to work.

He said he is "lucky" that his university covers a large part of his training fees and his tuition is paid for by a state grant.

McIntosh finished seventh at the Great Britain World Cup in Birmingham in September 2010 and also competed at the Tokyo Grand Slam event in December. In June this year, he won the Kent International Crystal Palace judo tournament.

But he failed to get a medal at the Universiade's judo competition, which ended on Wednesday.

He is not too bothered, however, because he has his heart set on the London Olympics at home next summer, where he hopes to enter the top seven in the 90kg division.

"I came in (the Universiade) knowing that I still have things to work on. I will work hard for next year (in London)," said McIntosh.

In fact, the British judo team didn't win any medals at the Universiade, but coach Darren Warner says the competition has inspired it for the Olympics next summer.

"I am very happy with the experience they have achieved and all of them seem to have learned a lot," said Warner.