



/ Charlotte, Mark and Melissa



/ Melissa Lock

IWWF WAKE WORLDS CHINA



Only 3 GB riders made it to China for the 2024 IWWF Wakeboard Boat World Championships, which took place at the end of October. It was an experience they will not forget.

Melissa Lock & Charlotte Millward competed in Open Women and Mark Osmond (Captain) in Senior Men. GB's Jeremy Nevill was there as Team Manager and Colin Hart as Chief Judge. Colin, Vice Chairman of the IWWF Wakeboard World Council, first acted as Chief Judge at the World Championships in 2000.

The IWWF and local organisers put on an amazing event. Whilst language could have proved a barrier, each team was assigned a volunteer who was a student of their language and we are very grateful to Elia and Luo for their assistance.

We arrived in Shanghai a few days before the comp to acclimatise then headed to the host city Hangzhou on the bullet train where we were greeted with a car each to take us to the official hotel.

The practice site was a beautiful

location with the lake featuring large lotus flowers (unfortunately not flowering) and fronted by ornate bridges and a pagoda.

Melissa and Charlotte both rode well, adjusting to the wake of the Centurion Ri230, a boat we don't see in the UK. Against fierce competition and with only one going through from each LCQ (Last Chance Qualifier) it was always going to be tricky and they didn't make it through to the final. Mark was up against riders that he knew very well had more in their trick

locker than he did and was just pipped to 4th place in Senior Men.

With practice and competition spread over the week there was plenty of opportunity to explore and enjoy the sights of Hangzhou and Shanghai, including the temples, ancient town and water village.

We were treated by the organisers to a lavish multi-course opening dinner and a brilliant light show.

The international wakeboard community is one big family; we have wakeboard friends all around the world and it's always good to see the other teams and their crews. On this occasion we fostered relationships with members of the Chinese and Hong Kong teams that we didn't



know so well previously. We're extremely grateful for their generous hospitality. Team Italy won the overall gold medal with Australia taking silver and Japan bronze.

China surpassed all our expectations. With the help of Google Translate to break down any language barriers, we found the people very friendly and keen to help. We were pre-warned to carefully navigate our nutrition and we all survived the week without any stomach upsets. We did, however, avoid some of the more exotic local delicacies such as scorpion, millipede and locust!

China is technologically very advanced. The roads are busy but quiet with an abundance of electric cars and taxis. The train and metro systems were spot on.

All in all, it was a great experience and we're so looking forward to the next IWWF international event.



/ Charlotte Millward