

# BUCS 2025 CUKC Competition Report

Stepping up to the first competition of the year, we had a squad of 8 karateka attending the BUCS Karate Championships 2025! Fresh with our new sponsorship for this year with Blitz, our team was fully kitted out with new gis, bags and pads, ready to take on the challenge of this national level competition up in Sheffield on the 15th and 16th February.

## Day One

The first day was all about individual kata for our squad. Emma started us off with a brilliant performance in the Novice Women's Individual Category, alternating between Heian Yondan and Heian Godan, going all the way to the semi-finals against last year's champion and coming home with a fantastic Bronze medal!

Yusuf was up next in the Intermediate Men's Individual, determined to come home with a shinier medal than last year's bronze. Battling through several rounds, alternating between Kosokun Sho and Bassai Dai, he showed off his sharp katas and made it to the finals later on in the day under the spotlight on the sacred "centre tatami". There, he performed Jyuroku as Ao (blue) against Jion performed by Aka (red). Both katas were excellent but unfortunately, Aka narrowly won, with Yusuf bringing home the Silver medal and further motivation to bring a Gold next time.

The competition was fierce in the Seniors' category with Nirmay being knocked out in the first round, but Li Sen, Lukas and Rose putting up a good fight for another round. Lukas was particularly strong, getting into the next round too, but the standard was high and that brought a close to the seniors category for CUKC. Both Lukas and Li Sen also faced our Oxford frenemies as a little tease for the following weekend!

We stayed back a little after Yusuf's finals to observe the team kumite and determine the standard for the next day's individual kumite.

Overall a good first day for the club, with two medals confirmed and a strong team spirit created by Liz and Callum to lead us into day two!

## Day Two

Categories for kumite build up from the lightweights to the heavyweights, so Yusuf and Nirmay were called up first from our squad, followed by Callum, then Lukas with Liz and Rose following up for the women's afterwards.

Nirmay was up in the first match, winning narrowly by backing his gyaku-zuki (reverse punch) but giving him a chance to zone into the kumite mindset. Yusuf was fighting next for us, again a narrow match, which he unfortunately lost despite his confident performance. Nirmay kept his guard tight in the next match, again scoring gyaku-zukis in a low scoring 3 minutes and proceeding to the quarter finals. His confidence peaked in this match, allowing for a very controlled fight on his side to get him to the semi-finals. Losing 8-0 in this fight against the eventual Gold medallist was a brutal reminder that there is still much to improve for him, but put him in the bronze medal fight from the repechage. A final high scoring match against an Oxford rival unfortunately left him short of the podium places but gave some valuable experience for the following week's Varsity matches.

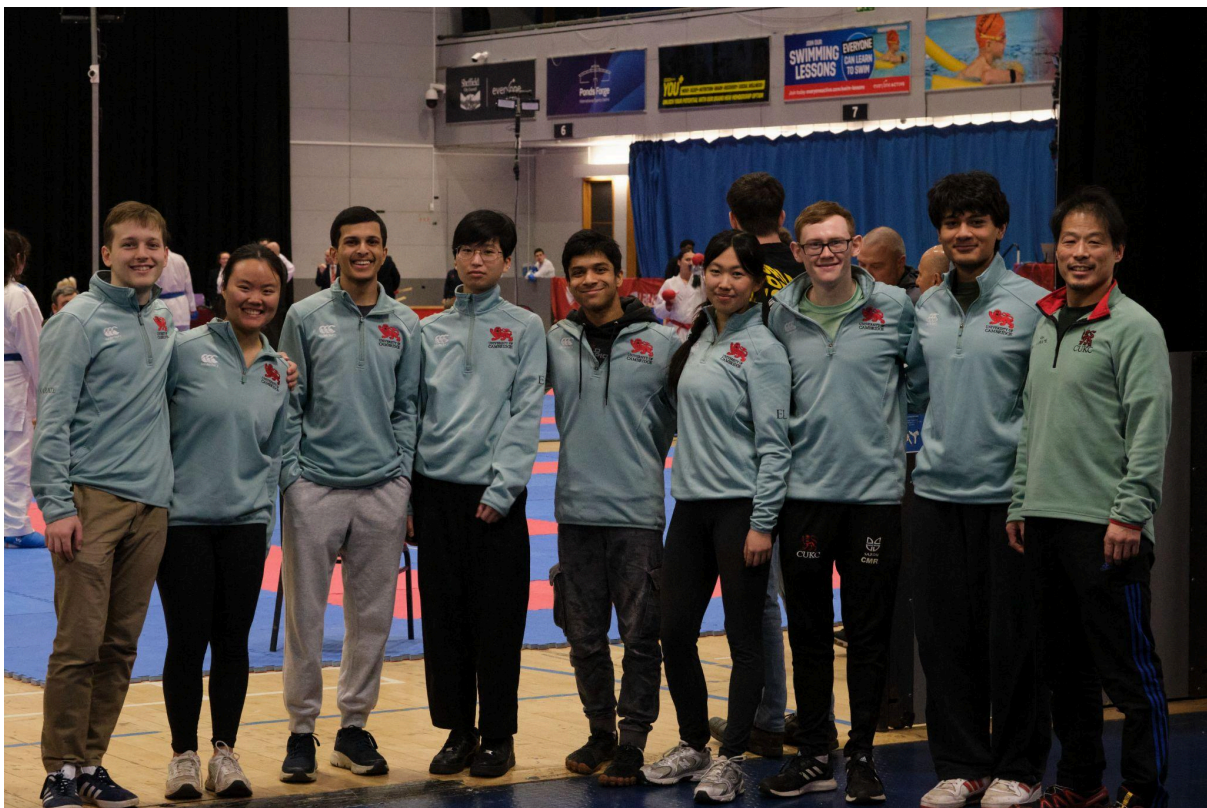
Callum was simultaneously fighting on another tatami, with a fast and action-packed round, but was unfortunately knocked out in the first round. Lukas fought next with a tight win in his first round, before facing an experienced and confident fighter, giving him the full speed experience despite not making it through.

Rose, whilst fighting in a higher weight category faced a finalist in her first round, being knocked out there, before entering the repechage and being paired up against another eventual medallist. Liz was up fighting too, and was knocked out in the first round but showed great perseverance throughout the match, whilst her hair continuously fell over her face.

A tough day for the squad today overall but everyone was amped up with the fighting spirit and looking forward to the unusual combination of food, rest and anticipation ahead of Varsity!

Special thanks goes to our coach Sensei Ken for supporting us throughout the competition and jumping between the different tatamis to sit in the dedicated coaches box for as many rounds as possible! Our ability to compete at this national level would not have been possible without all the training and guidance that he has been able to provide.

Also congratulations to our medallists Emma and Yusuf and amazing resilience from everyone else. Also a quick thanks to Blitz for supporting us throughout and providing the entire squad with new equipment! Final thanks must go to Emma for taking incredible photos of everyone right in the action!



BUCS Squad 2025 (left to right): Lukas, Rose, Yusuf, Emma, Nirmay, Liz, Callum, Li Sen, Sensei Ken

Report by Nirmay Jadhav  
(Men's Captain)