

## South Bay Filipino Martial Arts Club Adventures at Long Beach International

By Marc Lawrence



Darren Tibon, Gilbert, Matt Lawrence and Marc Lawrence

On August 7-9, 2009 was an amazing weekend for Filipino Martial Arts here in South California. The USFMAF (United States Filipino Martial Arts Federation) in Brotherhood with Eskrimadors Academy had two tournaments together side by side. The form competition was held with joint judging by the two groups. Everybody went to the Long Beach International for the variety of fighting styles and systems. There were two FMA tournaments held as part of giant martial arts event in a World Class facility-the Long Beach Convention Center. With Masters of many arts doing seminar upstairs on Friday, Saturday and Sunday while tournaments were happening downstairs.

On Saturday in one ring was the USFMAF with all seven of its divisions and in the next ring was Eskrimadors Academy with WEKAF style it's single and double sticks divisions. The action was great; fighters could fight either circuit or both. The WEKAF style fighting happened on Saturday only with the USFMAF happening on Saturday and Sunday. There were some great fights that happened that I watched as well as coaching my fighters from our club. This was for many of my fighters their second tournament ever. Some it was their first one!

I have never seen more near knock-outs and with padded weapons no-less!!!! Those new padded sticks by Action Flex Century were really great. Some other team's fighters got hit hard and dropped to one knee and got up shaky. Live-stick was just fierce with some hard core battling happening. My guys really could hit. They were fighting with standard rattan sticks with the skin on not the kiln dried ones.



Gilbert and Matt Lawrence, sparring padded sticks



Mike Cultural Challenge

The Cultural Challenge was really something with strikes from padded weapons so had that they broke shields wood and the fancy foam-rubber types too. I saw some of the non- Filipino martial arts helmets crack and faces masked dented in. It really pays to have good equipment. I was really glad we use quality equipment. Sundays afternoon

wrapped up with great action happening with knife with kick and punch. My fighters were really holding their own against other systems and arts that came to play. We took 1st and second place in the division.

There were vendors (Filipino martial arts included) there of all kinds of Martial Arts equipment. While all of this action was happening, the House of Champions in Van Nuys was hosting the 90th birthday party and seminar for Senior Grandmaster Cacoy Canete, and on Saturday was FCS's Seminar and tournament at the park in Eagle Rock.

Because so much was happening, many groups sent people to as many as they could. Our club's brother group from Lake Elsinor, Pakamut - Riverside area Guro Jason Stanley went to the FCS and fought hard bring back the gold. Our Grandmaster Felix Roiles was able to go on Saturday and support the FCS event with a seminar, and on Sunday the USFMAF event with the same. I felt like a kid in candy store with so much Filipino martial arts happening at once. Our Club was glad to be at Long Beach, were history was made with a Filipino martial arts Open World Tournament. It was the weekend not to stay home but to get out play in the Filipino martial arts.



Matt Lawrence Forms





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