

South African Mark McCarthy wins his maiden IBA victory



Mark McCarthy : photo courtesy Core Active

Bodyboard News

Mark McCarthy bags maiden world tour win

Surfersvillage Global Surf News, 11 September, 2008 : - - Richards Bay bodyboarder, Mark McCarthy, 25, claimed his maiden victory on the International Bodyboarding Association (IBA), World Tour on Saturday 6 September, while competing in the Doninos Bodyboard Pro, in Spain. McCarthy is supported on his World Tour campaign by Lizzard Surfwear, Mike Stewart Science Bodyboards and Factory7.co.za Online Surf Store.

McCarthy is competing in his second year on the IBA World Tour and is known to be one of the toughest competitors in the water, having made four IBA event finals prior to his victory. McCarthy, who has spent the last 9 months travelling the world following the tour circuit, said that he was delighted with his win and could hardly describe how much it meant to him.

"It is a dream come true to make a final on the IBA Tour and then to win it. To set a goal and achieve it is a really great feeling! It's the win that I needed after making the finals four times and always falling short of victory", said McCarthy. En route to the final, McCarthy faced and defeated tough opposition in the form of 6 times World Champ, Guilherme Tamega, from Brazil and 9 times World Champ, Mike Stewart, from Hawaii.

McCarthy set the pace early in the final scoring highly on his opening ride. Current World Champ, Ben Player, from Australia, quickly matched his score and for the next twenty minutes, Player and current IBA Tour leader, Uri

Valadao, from Brazil, exchanged the lead and seemed like the riders to beat. With 5 minutes remaining McCarthy found the wave he needed and scored a massive 8.75, out of a possible 10 points, to take the lead.

Rene Xavier put in a late show to grab two scoring waves and move ahead of Player. Valadao got his second scoring wave, which ended up 0.16 short of what he required to beat McCarthy. As McCarthy made his way from the water to the cheers of the crowd a sea of supporters rushed to his side and carried him off to face the media.

Final Results:

1st Mark McCarthy
2nd Uri Valadao
3rd Rene Xavier
4th Ben Player

Humble in victory, McCarthy, chose to dedicate his win to a close friend who believed in his dream, but sadly passed away recently. "It was pretty close final, but I always knew that I was just one good wave away from the lead and when it came I was really happy. I would like to dedicate this win to a very close friend of mine Ian Patton."

Mike Stewart gave us a little insight into the psyche of the winner in the lead up to the final day as well as praise for what he had achieved, "Mark said he woke up this morning thinking there was no way he was going to win with the heat draw that he had. But he didn't lose a heat against former and current world champions on his way to a convincing win against current IBA tour leader Uri Valadao."

McCarthy plans to return to South Africa in the coming week and is looking forward to competing for Northern Kwa-Zulu Natal in the 22nd annual Reef/Science South African Bodyboarding Championships, which will take place in Richards Bay from 28 September to 3 October.

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