2019 will forever be a day to remember in the history of Karate. The sport made its debut in the ANOC World Beach Games with a spectacular opening day of competition. It is the first-ever Beach Karate event; Karate stars were thrilled of being part of a memorable experience:

Valerya Hernandez from Venezuela, who was the first athlete to compete today said: “It was a very emotional moment for me to be the first athlete to open the ANOC World Beach Games and Karate in the sand. It was a challenge for me but we made it! I am very pleased to have the chance to compete against the best in the world. It makes me very happy to be here with them.“

Mo Sheung Grace Lau of Hong Kong said: “I am glad that I finished first to go to the second round. It is difficult to perform on sand because we are used to competing in tatami and here, on sand, it is very easy to lose balance, so I had to be focused on the rhythm of my kata. But I did it and I hope to continue like that tomorrow.”

Terryana D’Onofrio of Italy: “The first day here in Qatar went well. This round begun very well for me and I hope that we can continue at a good level tomorrow, as tomorrow will be the continuation, it is not yet finished and I will try to keep up the focus.”

Sandra Sanchez of Spain said: “I had a strange mix of feelings. I was nervous like if it was my first championship, which in fact it is since this is the first event of this kind. I also felt a lot of emotions for being part of such a great event as the World Beach Games. I am very happy to be here.”

Ali Sofuoglu of Turkey said: “I am very pleased that I finished first in the first round. I hope to continue like this in the next rounds. It is the first experience for me in this tournament, and I am glad for the result.”

Damian Quintero of Spain said: “We finally had the chance to have this experience. The moment finally came. At last, we changed the tatami for the sand, and I think I am sore in muscles that I didn’t even know I had. But it is very interesting, it is a new challenge. I finished first for the second round tomorrow, I am happy about my performance, and we will see what happens tomorrow.”

Gakuji Tozaki of the USA said: “I have been training on the sand a lot, so for me, it felt good, it was fun. I needed to make some adjustments (when I went into the tatami) and I started getting confidence and I think this is why I could finish on top of the pool.”

Salman Almosawi of Kuwait said: “I am very happy that I could be the best in my pool against very, very good athletes, amazing opponents. I am proud that I could be the best today. This is just the first step, we are not done yet, I will do my best tomorrow to reach the podium.”

(Pictures: S.A./WKF and ANOC)

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