

WA firefighters take on world class competition



The West Aussie career Fire and Rescue Service team in Times Square, New York.

When forty career firefighters arrived in New York to represent Western Australia at the *World Police & Fire Games*, they got more than they bargained for, with a hurricane and a city in lockdown.

This biennial athletic event, the second largest multiple sports competition on the planet, was held between late August and early September to coincide with the ten year remembrance of September 11.

Due to Hurricane Irene which tracked along the east coast of the United States and coincided with the games, some scheduled sports either had to be cancelled, postponed or relocated due to the widespread New York city shutdown.

Despite the restrictions due to severe weather conditions, the group was thrilled to be in the 'Big Apple', with many contesting the events and others proudly cheering on their mates for what was the experience of a lifetime.

Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Officer Andy Lane said it was fantastic to have met so many men and women from emergency services around the world.

"Hurricane Irene put a dampener on the first couple of days, but as firefighters it was incredible being in New York ten years after the 9/11 World Trade Centre attacks," he said.

"All our people gave it their best and many came home with sporting medals, but the most enduring memory will be the fantastic friendship and spirit we found over there."

During the week of competition more than 20,000 full time firefighters and law enforcement personnel from 70 different countries contested a total of 69 sports.

Among the career Fire and Rescue Service of WA medal winners were:

Scott Gamble and Phil Badaraco – 2nd Men's Doubles 500m Indoor Rowing, Senior Division

Mark Hatty – 2nd Men's Doubles Lawn Bowls

Jane Humphrys – 2nd Ultimate Firefighter Women, Senior B All Stages

Phil Badaraco – 3rd Men's Karate – Kumite, Senior Under 80kg

Scott Gamble – 3rd Men's Master A 50m Freestyle

Paul Paardekooper – 3rd Ultimate Firefighter Men, Master B All Stages



The WA Fire and Rescue Service Gaelic football team.



Western Australia's Mark Hatty (right) paired up with South African Pierre Westerveld to score a silver medal in the Men's Doubles Lawn Bowls.