Karate News: Locals Garner Honors, Medals

Submitted separately by Dave McKinnis and the Karate & Fitness Place



Three athletes from the Karate & Fitness Place USA of Moraga returned home with five medals from the 2007 Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) National Karate Championships, held in Winston / Salem North Carolina.

Upcoming freshman at Campolindo High School and first timer Brandon Tokuyama, 14, earned a Gold Medal and National Karate Champion for his age group in Kata (Forms). Brandon also returned home with the Bronze Medal in Kumite (sparring). Haze Mach, 11, who commutes from Palo Alto to be a part of the Karate Team, earned a silver medal in the Kata Division, while upcoming Joaquin Intermediate eighth grader Chris Wellbrook, 13, scored a bronze medal in Kobudo (weapons) and a Bronze Medal in Kumite (sparring).

Chris has qualified himself to represent the USA/AAU Junior World Karate Team. The Junior Worlds are to be held in October. Chris was also



front row left to right: Keanu Karsevar, Kelly Suzuki, Kyle McKinnis, Kassie McKinnis, and behind instructor Richard Boeckholt Photos provided

named the most outstanding competitor at the national qualifier that was held in Grants Pass, Oregon by winning three gold medals.

Other karate successes occurred at the biennial Taikai International, held July 27-30 in Lake Placid, NY, where Campolindo freshman Kyle McKinnis, 14, took gold in both sparring and Kata. Kyle had previously won gold in Kata in Osaka, Japan at the last Taikai in 2005. The Taikai pays homage to two founding karate masters Itosu and Higaonna and emphasizes traditional Japanese karate.

Teammates from the NCJK dojo in Danville all gave stellar performances. Other black belts winning medals were: Kelly Suzuki, 16, member of the National Karate Federation national team, and Keanu Karsevar, 11. Kelly took two gold, and Keanu two silver.

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