

Orinda Teen Seeks Second World Title

Submitted by Jeanette Kermainejad



Miramonte senior Naveed Kermainejad Photo provided

and Nevada. His goal was to repeat last year's title win in continuous sparring, but his real challenge was in point sparring. Junior continuous sparring divisions group competitors according to weight unlike point sparring which groups competitors according to age, 15 to 17 in his case.

The size and weight disparity is greater here and, as Kermainejad has experienced, there are some very large 17 year olds in the division. Competitors come from around the globe, but mostly from the U.S., Canada, Central America and Europe and most are seeded.

Ranked in the top in continuous sparring, a series of bad luck has kept Naveed from a high seed in point sparring so he had to use all his skills and training to keep ahead of the top fighters. He took second in continuous sparring against a Guatemalan fighter named Juan Pablo Santiago. Many participants also competed in forms and weapons in dazzling displays of choreography and gymnastics during the week long tournament in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

Every evening, spectators enjoyed a show with the top two divisional performers of the daytime eliminations vying for first place and the coveted gold ring and embroidered black belt. More important than the prize is the prestige and bragging rights that are bestowed upon the winner.

Most Orinda teenagers spent Thanksgiving vacation with friends and family, enjoying a turkey dinner on Thanksgiving Day. But one 17-year-old Orinda youth was eating turkey from a buffet line in a South Carolina hotel.

During Thanksgiving break, Miramonte senior Naveed Kermainejad endeavored to win his second title at the Karate Super Grands World Games. This competition was hosted by the NBL (National Blackbelt League), which is the only international sport karate league that is based upon a series of open tournaments which rate and qualify blackbelt level players to become official sport karate world champions at the year-end championship called the "Super Grands World Games."

Inspired at first by the Ninja Turtles of the 1990's, Naveed has been training in the martial arts for 12 years, discovering the commitment needed to train daily and the discipline required to learn the philosophy of the martial arts. He has won several local titles, a Sport Karate International amateur title, and an NBL "world title."

While most parents are kept busy shuttling their children between football, soccer and basketball games, there are a growing number of parents who take a more costly route and travel statewide and even nationwide to participate in the elite NBL sport karate circuit in a points race for the highest ranking possible by year end. Through a series of regional and national events competitors gain points depending on the place taken at these tournaments.

During the 2007 season from March to September Naveed (who has chosen sparring as his specialty) attended tournaments in California, Oregon, Texas



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