

# TOURNAMENT COMPETITION

## *How everyone can win!*

Tournaments are a great way to have fun and meet new people. Every tournament is like a family reunion where we get to see people we might never see otherwise.

You can gain a new perspective on Taekwondo from observing students from other schools. By watching the high rank black belt divisions, I have realized what is possible. Everyone needs inspiration and this is a good source. I might not have challenged myself enough simply because I didn't know what could be achieved.



Tournaments provide excellent training experiences. First, they serve as motivation for students to concentrate on their training as they prepare for the tournament. Next they provide the student with valuable experience in performing before a group. This helps the student who is extremely nervous to confront and control his anxiety. I must admit though that the "butterflies" will never go away unless you cease to care.

about the results. By watching other students of similar age and rank, the student may notice areas where he can improve. Go to the tournament with the attitude that you want to learn from others.

Before you can enjoy and learn from your experience, you must go to the tournament with the right attitude. Not everyone who competes in a tournament gets a 1st place trophy. In fact, only one person will in each division will leave with one. It is how we learn to deal with not being that one person that develops our character. It is what we learn from our performance that will allow us to return next time and improve our performance. I have always found that I learned a great deal from my losses and very little from my wins! *There is no shame in losing if you lose gracefully and have done your best. Whatever you do, don't choose not to compete because you don't think you can win 1st place!*

## A NOTE TO PARENTS

Parents are often the unsung heroes of their children's Taekwondo success. Their support is critical if a child is going to reach his potential in Taekwondo, whether he competes or just trains. By providing positive support you can help your children realize that they can reach difficult goals through hard work. If you can give them the little push they sometimes need to get past a difficult time then you are helping them learn a valuable life lesson. Nothing worth having is gained without effort.

You, too, can make a child's tournament experience a positive one. Encourage your child to train hard before the tournament so that he will have the best preparation possible. Nothing is more embarrassing to a child or adult than forgetting your pattern.

Teach your child that true winning means having performed your best whether or not you win a trophy to take home. It takes a lot of courage for your child perform in front of the judges and audience and, therefore, he is already a winner by just stepping into the ring.

*"Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall."*

*- Confucius*