

TOURNAMENT COMPETITION

How to get the most from competing.

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 wins. In fact, only one person will win in each division. 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.*