



武道

06/03/24

NATSUOKA KARATE  
COMMUNIQUE

# WINTER 2024 TOURNAMENTS



Natsuoka Karate was invited to participate in both the Seikikai Winter 2024 Karate Tournament held at the Etobicoke Olympium on February 17th and the University of Toronto Karate Tournament held on February 24th. With an impressive showing from both the Toronto Annex Dojo and the Toronto Metropolitan University Dojo, both events were a great opportunity to build community and create a training environment filled with adrenaline!

## **Seikikai Invitational Karate tournament**

In addition to a strong showing from both Natsuoka Dojo including Annex Karate and Toronto Metropolitan University Karate, the Seikikai invitational tournament saw participation from Toronto Goju Ryu Karate, McMaster Goju Ryu Karate and Oshawa Wado Kai Karate, and Brooklyn Wado Kai Karate.

In total, 22 Natsuoka students participated in both kata and kumite with impressive results. Nothing matched the intensity of the yellow/orange belt kumite division except the control with which the participants executed their techniques. Especially impressive were the TMU yellow belt participants who received their yellow belts only the Wednesday before the tournament and the novice TMU students who entered the ring with only 5 weeks of training under their white belts!

## **University of Toronto Karate Tournament**

It was an honour for the Toronto Metropolitan University Dojo to be invited to participate in the University of Toronto invitational karate tournament also attended by University of Waterloo, and University of Guelph. Cesar Rodrigues represented TMU well with a Gold in the Senior Kyu Belt sparring.

Stepping into a competition is an important part of contributing to our community and a way to practice the control of your adrenaline. I'm amazed at the courage of you all!

# TWKK/SEIKIKAI WINTER TOURNAMENT RESULTS

DIVISION	TYPE	1ST PLACE	2ND PLACE	3RD PLACE
○ WHITE	型 KATA	Emund Stapleton Natsuoka Annex	Zarrin Tarannum Natsuoka TMU	Gohul Tharmakulaseeian Natsuoka TMU
● YELLOW~ORANGE		Joy MD Manwer Islam Yellow, Natsuoka TMU	Daniel Gillis Yellow, Natsuoka TMU	Owais Lightwala Orange, Natsuoka TMU
● GREEN~BROWN		Nathalie Trinh Brown, Toronto Goju	Munazir Hashim Blue, Caledon	Yee-Guan Wong Blue, Toronto Goju
● BLACK BELT		Eddie Hobart Shodan-Ho, Natsuoka TMU	Daina Als Sandan, Oshawa/Pickering	Andrei Petrov Shodan-Ho, Natsuoka TMU
○ WHITE	組手 KUMITE	Emund Stapleton Natsuoka Annex	Kid Naary Branco Natsuoka TMU	Newsha Mohammadzadeh Natsuoka TMU
● YELLOW~ORANGE		John Thomas Laramore Yellow, Natsuoka TMU	Denis Takacs Yellow, Natsuoka TMU	Sherru Yousafzai Orange, Natsuoka TMU
● GREEN~BROWN		Ali Rouzrokh Green, Toronto Goju	Sofia Szabo Blue, McMaster	Yee-Guan Wong Blue, Toronto Goju
● BLACK BELT		David Zvekcic Sandan, Seikikai/Etobicoke	Daina Als Sandan, Oshawa/Pickering	Andrei Petrov Shodan-Ho, Natsuoka TMU





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## CROSSING THE THRESHOLD

While there is mystique associated with the Black Belt and its achievement is, without question, difficult even for dedicated practitioners to acquire after years of study, I believe the most difficult rank to conquer in any martial art is the white belt.

When you take that first step into the training hall of a new system, it takes immense courage. Entering a dojo for the first time, we often do not know anyone, have only a superficial understanding of the art we are pursuing, and may feel clumsy as we learn the most basic techniques while standing next to more proficient students.

This is also one of my favorite experiences as it is often where one can find the greatest learning opportunities. The more expertise we acquire the harder it can be to don a white belt and admit that there are things we are not capable of performing or reveal the boundary of our knowledge. We can find security in our own system and experience fear in exposing our limits to others.

One of the requirements for our Black Belts is that they experience another martial art, as a beginner, for at least a year. This can be a counterintuitive request, especially for those with any business savvy. Forcing students to absorb the teachings of other systems and instructors and then reconcile them with their own understanding of their art is an important part of the journey to being autonomous and self sufficient as a Black Belt.

Coming to a style from another requires even more courage. Students who have previous experience can face an insurmountable task of adapting to a new system. Beyond that of a white belt, these students face similar challenges to black belts and, may find a need to change some of the habits that had been ingrained through years of training. Intermediate students who pass this test, however, have proven to be some of the strongest practitioners I have seen, and many of our senior black belts are among them. I have great respect for the courageous white belts who step across the threshold of our dojo – they have, in that one action, conquered a mountain.

