

MARTIAL ARTS

Pair progressing well to kick on to next level

Anthony Momoemausu

It's been a stellar year for the young Hamilton karate duo of Chase Hennessey and Raukawa Jefferies as they look to take their training to the next level.

Representing the Waikato Rembuden Karate Club, the 12 year olds are part of a small community dojo and while the competitions might have slowed down they are currently training to get their black belts.

After doing karate for five years and competing in numerous competitions the boys have strived for higher goals and taken extra training for the past 15 months towards various national and international competitions.

Hennessey and Jefferies both won gold at the New Zealand national tournament this year and in 2012 as well as competing at the Oceania karate champs in Sydney, bringing home gold and bronze.

A vital part of the pair's success has been the work of their coach Binh Nguyen, who last month travelled to Montreal, Canada alongside the youngsters for the Karate Commonwealth Games.

With nations like Canada, South Africa, Australia and Pakistan competing, Nguyen acknowledged the competition at international level was tough but overall provided a great experience for the boys to compete on that stage.

"Their dedication to their 12 hours training per week paid off, with both boys winning bronze for their age division," Nguyen said.

The experience has only inspired both Hennessey and Jefferies further and their next goal is to compete at the

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Chase Hennessey

karate junior world championships in 2015.

Hennessey, who attends Marion Catholic Primary School in Hamilton, said he was excited to go over and experience that level of skill from other competitors around the world.

"I knew it was not going to be easy so I had to train hard and go 100 per cent all the time to get an edge over the other competitors," he said, adding that a lot of his training was put down to his coach's dedication.

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"Binh is an awesome coach who is kind and lots of fun."

The parents of Hennessey and Jefferies praised Nguyen's efforts and believe the club is incredibly lucky to have a dedicated and enthusiastic coach and trainer.



On the up: Hamilton karate duo Raukawa Jefferies (left) and Chase Hennessey (right), pictured with their coach Binh Nguyen.