

INTERNATIONAL OKINAWA GOJU RYU KARATE-DO FEDERATION NEW ZEALAND

# WAIKATO REMBUDEN<sup>Inc</sup>

IOGKFNZ



**KARATE  
NEW ZEALAND  
2013**



沖繩  
剛柔流



**RAUKAWA  
JEFFERIES  
AND CHASE  
HENNESSEY**

**2013 Commonwealth Karate  
BRONZE MEDALLIST**



# The build up to the Karate Commonwealth Games in Canada

By Binh Nguyen



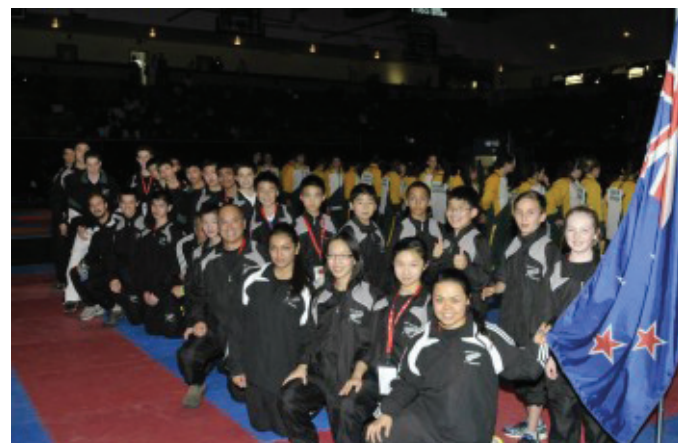
The idea to go to Canada was planted by two of my students, after they, Chase Hennessey and Ruakawa Jefferies competed at the Oceania Games in 2012, both boys bought home medals – gold and bronze. This was their first taste of international competition; to compete and bring home medals at their first Oceania Games was just incredible. (This is what qualified them to go to Montreal Commonwealth Games.) They had a taste of international success.

The decision to go to Canada was made at the start of 2013 – when I talked to my students about the sacrifice and commitment involved in training for the build up to the games. With my previous

experience competing at an international level, I just knew how much training was needed to be done in preparation for the Games. Both boys were keen, and with the support of their parents training stepped up a notch, often training up to seven times per week.

This was also in preparation for the Karate Nationals held in Wellington, June 2013, where both boys won their fighting division, this reconfirmed their fighting ability. It was uncertain on the morning whether Ruakawa would fight as he had a sore neck and visited a physio on the way to the competition. For Ruakawa winning Gold this day with an injury was very intense and emotional, as prior to his fight I had suggested for him not to compete due to his injury, he wanted to fight regardless. It was nail biting stuff watching Ruakawa's fight, I was in awe of his dedication and fighting spirit this day!

After both the Oceania and Nationals where both boys bought home medals, this gave both the boys the confidence and drive to keep pushing harder in training.



In Canada we discovered most students had competed at international level, so the competition was very high and intense, but this did not faze my students, as they kept their focus. After I watched two matches in our pool I knew we had a chance to win gold or silver, with months of training I

was confident the boys had what it took to get results. After a couple of rounds the boys got into the semi final, I was very happy for the boys to get to this round as competition was very close and it could have gone either way. I did feel the referee made some incorrect judgement calls with both the boys matches, the boys have been schooled on the rules of fighting and they too felt unjustifiably robbed of a higher medal.

34 Total competitors from all accross NZ All these competitors have attended intensive NZ training camps in Christchurch, Wellington or Auckland. These ranged from 10 years to adult divisions.

NZ ended up 2nd on the medal table with 17 golds, 7 silvers and 14 bronze Canadian national team were first with 18 golds, 6 silvers & 9 bronze 7 Nations competed, Canada, NZ, South Africa, Australia, India, Pakistan, & Botswana.

As we all know this is the nature of the sport – you win some and you lose some. This has made my students even more hungrier and determined to do better next time. The boys thoroughly enjoyed the experience of travelling to another country to compete and this has been an invaluable experience for them. The next commonwealth champs will be in India in 2015 as this takes place every second year and the boys are already aiming for this.

I believe the boys can go all the way, starting karate at a young age, the boys have developed a passion for the sport which makes my job as coach that much more enjoyable. The boys are both brilliant role models for the club, especially for the younger generation growing up, aspiring to be like them which is great to see. They also give up there own time to to help teach our junior classes. These boys have a bright future in front of them and I continue to look forward to the journey with my supportive community dojo and supportive parents. I have been working with a number of our Dojo's developing juniors to also bring them into the competitive level. And 5 students won medals at the NZ nationals this year. I am hoping this will also raise our National organisation profile.

I could have only achieved this through the support of our organisation and our club. I would like to say a huge "Thank You" to those who have believed in us and supported us to get to the other side of the world to compete. The parents of the boys worked hard to raise as much as money as they could to enable me to join the boys to support them during the competition – as well as giving me the opportunity to coach at a national level some of the NZ junior team.

**Thank you to the National Body, I.O.K.G.F.N.Z., & Phil Dovaston for helping us achieve this wonderful opportunity for our club and our national style. I cannot thank you enough.**

**Chase Hennessey Quote:**  
*I was excited to go over and experience the level of skill from around the world.*



*I knew it was not going to be easy so I had to train hard and go 100% all the time to get an edge over the other competitors. I didn't think too many other people would be training in the morning and at night as hard as we did. We even trained the morning we flew out! Some weeks we trained 12 times a week (mornings and night). My coach Binh would pick me up 6am in the morning and after training would take me to school. Binh believed we would do well and never said no when I asked for another training session.*

*Binh is an awesome coach who is kind and lots of fun!*

*Karleen Hennessey, Chase parents said that the boys and the kids at the club are incredibly lucky to have a coach and trainer that is so dedicated and enthusiastic. The amount of time he gives up for the club and training kids that want to compete at national and international level is amazing. It is rare to find a coach that volunteers their time freely the way he does. The club has a new young group of competitors coming through as well with the club receiving 5 students winning medals in the Kumite (fighting) divisions at the NZ Nationals this year.*

**Quote from Sherrin Jefferies, Raukawa parents:**

*Binh has been amazing with the amount of time and energy he has put into both Raukawa and Chase, particularly in the weeks leading up to their most recent tournament in Canada, the 7th Commonwealth Karate championships. Binh and the boys train hard, up to seven days a week sometimes, including early mornings before school, and again later in the evenings. They fit this all in around school, work and their other sporting commitments.*

*Binh's training are challenging, they cover fitness, strength and speed work as well as karate form and technique but the boys respond to it and he gets the best out of them. As Raukawa said, "Binh is very motivating. He really pushes us hard and it makes us better at karate."*

