



## Volunteers needed

# Karate BC to Host 2012 Nationals



Members of the committee organizing the 2012 Karate Canada National Championships visited the venue — the Richmond Oval — where the tournament will use only a small portion of this vast facility that includes two ice rinks as well as numerous basketball courts, all on the same level. Karate Canada tournament director Stanley Janusas was in Richmond earlier this month to meet with the committee and to check out the venue.

**By Charles La Vertu**  
KBC President

It's official. Karate BC will be host for the 2012 Nationals, and we could use your help.

The tournament will take place March 16-18, 2012 at the Richmond Olympic Oval.

Host hotel for this event is the Richmond Sheraton.



Former Karate BC executive director James Johnson has been hired as director of operations and general manager of the event.

Joanne Veltri is handling the marketing and drumming up sponsorship.

Committee chairs have been appointed.

They include Bob Mooney, sport technical director responsible for venue set-up, sponsor booths and team services. He will need volunteers;

Kate La Vertu, director of administration, will be responsible for registration and accreditation and volunteers. She will be ably assisted by Joan Clarke. They will need volunteers;

The volunteer positions are being determined and if you are interested please let Joan know. She can be reached at [ClarkeJE@shaw.ca](mailto:ClarkeJE@shaw.ca);

Communications director is Charles La Vertu, responsible for media and public relations;

Medical director is Dr. Chee Ling who will deal with doping control and medical services on site;

Former national tournament director Bob Howlett will handle protocol and organize the opening ceremonies, entertainment and deal with the VIPs. He will also be looking for volunteers;

Also on the Nationals organizing team are

Sasha Chin who, among other things, will be handling food services; Lawrence Brown, transportation. KBC Administrative Assistant Cheryl Gray and Executive Director Dan Wallis are also on the team.

We hope to populate the ring tables with provincial officials.

Please consider helping out.



Victoria Barusic gives Karate Canada National Team Coach Nicole Poirier a big hug after winning the gold medal for Canada in the Junior (16-17 year old) -53 kg female kumite division at the 2011 Commonwealth Karate Championships in Sydney, Australia. In her final match, Victoria defeated Australian National Team member Alexandra Gallo, who won the Oceanic Cup and had been undefeated for three years. Victoria won her final match by a score of 4-1 (no penalties) — Dick Grant photo



*We wish you a very merry Christmas and health, prosperity and great training in the New Year*

225 - 3820 Cessna Drive  
Richmond, BC V7B 0A2  
t 604.333.3610  
f 604.333.3612  
e info@karatebc.org  
www.karatebc.org

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

President: Charles La Vertu  
clavertu@karatebc.org

1st Vice-President: Kurt Nordli  
nanaimo@shimakarate.com

2nd Vice-President:  
Jason Farquharson  
chitoryukarate@gmail.com

Secretary: Brendan Flower  
brendan.flower@gmail.com

Treasurer: Ken Corrigan  
kenjan6@telus.net

Membership: Andreas Kuntze  
andreask@shitoryu.net

Director-At-Large:  
Rick Penner  
ripenner@telus.net

Director-At-Large:  
Donna Gardecki  
gardecki@shaw.ca

Director-At-Large  
Noreen Yeomans  
noreen.yeomans@shaw.ca

Newsletter editor:  
Charles La Vertu

**Karate BC Affiliations:**  
Karate Canada,  
Pan-American Karate Federation,  
World Karate Federation,  
Sport BC,  
Canadian Sport Council,  
Coaching Association of BC,  
The Canadian Olympic  
Association,  
BC Recreation and Parks  
Association



Funded by the Ministry  
of Community, Sport &  
Cultural Development

## KBC elects new board

Long-time Karate BC Secretary Charles La Vertu of CASK Shiai in Victoria was elected president of Karate BC at the Annual General Meeting held during the recent Provincials.

He succeeds Rob Walker of Kimura Shukokai Karate in Colwood.

Elected First Vice-President was Kurt Nordli, our current tournament director, of Shima Karate in Nanaimo.

Ken Corrigan of the Nechako Karate Club in Prince George was re-elected Treasurer.

Elected to complete La Vertu's term was Brendan Flower of Victoria Renshikan in Saanich.

Andreas Kuntze of Vancouver Shito-Ryu Seiko-Kai was re-elected Membership Director.

Elected to the new position of Director-at-Large was Noreen Yeomans of Jushinkan Martial Art in Kelowna.

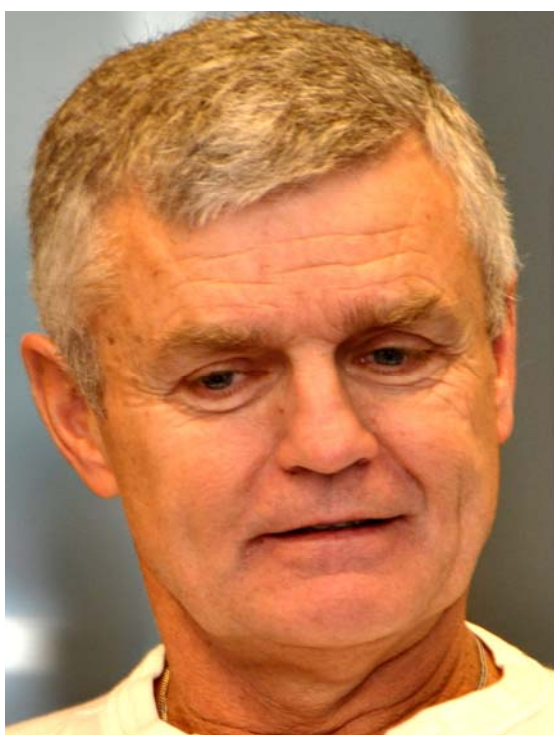
They join Second Vice-President Jason Farquharson of Northern Rockies Karate-do in Chetwynd, Director-at-Large and High Performance Committee chair Rick Penner of Kelowna Tsuruoka Karate Club and Director-



**President Charles La Vertu**

at-Large and NCCP Committee chair Donna Gardecki of West Coast Goju-Kai Maple Ridge.

## Wallis new Executive Director



**Executive Director Dan Wallis**

Four-time Karate BC president and former Karate Canada president Dan Wallis has been hired for the all-important job of Executive Director.

Dan has been a member of Karate BC for the past 37 years, and has also served as Director-at-Large, Treasurer and First Vice-President.

Due to budget restrictions, the position is part-time.

First Vice-President Rob Walker took over as president following Dan's appointment.

Due to work pressures and the demands of starting a new dojo Rob chose not to run again.

President Charles La Vertu thanked Rob for his contribution to our cause on behalf of the board.

"His sage advice will be missed, and I look forward to seeing him run again in the near future."

**Karate BC honours its volunteers and athletes**

**Nordli, Fard Volunteers of the Year**

Karate BC tournament director Kurt Nordli is Karate BC's Volunteer of the Year while Kamelia Fard is Dojo Volunteer of the Year.

They and other award winners were honoured during the November 2011 Provincial Championships.

Nordli, of Shima Karate in Nanaimo was subsequently elected KBC first vice-president.

Fard was nominated by KimNik Shotokan Karate Academy.

Two of our young athletes, Andrea Maikawa and Matt Bickel, were awarded the Vince Redfern scholarships.

The two awards, \$500 each, are presented each year to male and female karate-ka attending a post-secondary institute.

They must be Karate BC members, have a high academic standing, demonstrated leadership capabilities and perform well at Karate BC tournaments.

Karate BC and Karate Canada coach Nicole Poirier was named High Performance Coach of the Year while Steve Tang of the Aldergrove Karate Club was selected Grassroots Coach of the Year.

On the athlete side, Shaun Dhillon was named Karate BC Male Athlete of the Year and Jusleen Virk, Female Athlete of the Year.

Dhillon won bronze at the 2011 Pan American Games, the first Canadian to do so in some time.

Shaun tied the 2011 Pan American Championships gold medalist from Mexico in his first match, defeated a rival from Puerto Rico and tied with an opponent from Trinidad Tobago, but then lost in semi-finals against the 2011 Pan American Championships silver medalist (and gold



**Dojo Volunteer of the Year Kamelia Fard and daughter at the November Provincials**

medalist in Open weight kumite) from Venezuela.

He also won gold in the men's +84kg division in the North American Cup in June.

Virk, who won gold and bronze at the Karate Canada National Championships in March, placed 5<sup>th</sup> in the Paris Open in January, and walked home with silver from the North American Cup in June.

Both Virk and Dhillon took part in the 2011 Istanbul Open Karate Championships.

Tan Nguyen was named Junior Male Athlete of the Year and Victoria Barusic, Junior Female Athlete of the Year.

Tan took gold in both kata and kumite at the Nationals; while Victoria won gold and bronze at the Nationals and gold at the Commonwealth Championships in July.



**Shaun Dhillon shows off this bronze medal won at the 2011 Pan American Games — Dick Grant photo**



**Volunteer of the Year Kurt Nordli stacks chairs following the November Provincials**



**Tammy Miller of Valley Shidokan, seen here with Paul Sexton and Andreas Kuntze, was selected Tournament Official at the November Provincials — Charles La Vertu photos**



# KBC needs you . . .

The 2012 Karate Nationals are coming to Vancouver – March 16, 17 and 18.

How would you like the opportunity to see some of Canada's top competitors for free?

The organizing committee is looking for people to volunteer their time and expertise to help make this the best Nationals yet.

If you are interested please contact Joan Clarke @ [ClarkeJE@shaw.ca](mailto:ClarkeJE@shaw.ca) with your contact information, your tournament experience, belt level and availability.



Steve Tang of the Aldergrove Karate Club and Karate Canada and BC Team coach Nicole Poirier of Top Karate at the North Shore Winter Club, seen here with Executive Director Dan Wallis, were named Grassroots and High Performance coaches of the year.

# At the Provincials



Brian Purves of Westwood Goju-Ryu in Port Coquitlam was winner of the Male Provincial Grand Champion award



Winner of the Provincial Female Grand Champion at the November BC Provincial Championships was Andrea Maikawa of the Burnaby Karate Academy. Karate BC President Charles La Vertu presented the award



Ken Corrigan — Official of the Year



KBC Executive Director Dan Wallis presented the \$500 Vince Redfern Memorial Scholarships to Andrea Maikawa and Matt Bickel



Victoria Barusic — Junior Female Athlete of the Year



Our Provincials held at the end of November attracted good crowds



**Jusleen Virk**, who won gold and bronze in kumite at the Karate Canada National Championships, silver in the North American Cup and placed fifth in the Paris Open, was named Karate BC's Female Athlete of the Year



**Tan Nguyen**, who won gold in both kata and kumite at the Karate Canada National Championships this year, was named Karate BC's Junior Male Athlete of the Year — Charles La Vertu photos



A nosebleed did not prevent Chad Edberg from winning his BC Team division in men's kumite at the Provincials

## Meet your new board members

Karate BC added two new members to the board at its Annual General Meeting held during the November Provincial Championships. They are:

**Brendan Flower:** Brendan has been training with Victoria Renshikan since 2001, and was awarded the rank of Shodan in March, 2001.

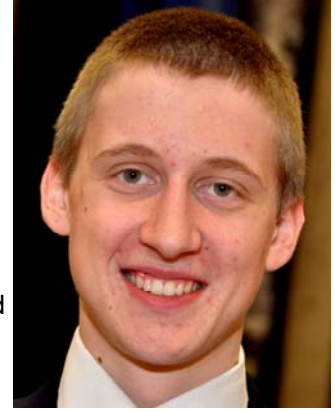


Brendan has been officiating since 2008 and just recently was promoted to Provincial Judge.

Brendan attends the University of Victoria, majoring in psychology.

**Noreen Yeomans:** An assistant instructor at the Jushinkan Martial Art Dojo in Kelowna, Noreen is a financial accounting clerk with extensive experience in government and the private sector.

She currently works for Gorman Brothers Lumber in Kelowna.



The Uchiages, seen here with their father Sensei Takeshi Uchiage, returned to Richmond from the Karate Canada National Championships this year with four medals. Hidemi won silver in kata. Sumi took gold in that competition, and bronze in kumite. Toshi won gold in kata — Dick Grant photo



Victoria Barusic (second left) and Emma Arksey (left) placed one two in kata at the Karate Canada National Championships earlier this year — Dick Grant photo

# Karate BC in the news

## Student wins karate gold at Commonwealth meet

Burnaby Now Aug. 12, 2011

Grade 12 Byrne Creek Secondary School senior Victoria Barusic won a gold medal at the Commonwealth Karate Championships in Sydney, Australia July 31.

The 16-year-old national champion in kata, or forms, and bronze medallist in kumite, or sparring, won the women's 16-to-17 under-53-kilogram kumite division at the international competition.

Barusic defeated Australian national team member Alexandra Gallo, recent winner at the Oceanic Cup and has been undefeated for the past three years. Barusic defeated Gallo 4-1 (with no penalties) in the final match.

She was the only Canadian athlete competing at the event. With the win, Barusic is hoping to represent Canada at the upcoming junior world championships in Malaysia this fall.

## Karate tradition continues in Trail

Trail Daily Times August 12, 2011

There are few things that transcend a millennium but the kata performed by a local Chito-Ryu karate instructor and his pupils are one of them.

Sensei Scott Hutcheson and students like Lorne Nedelec meet at Queen Elizabeth Park in Glenmerry every Wednesday. They start with a moment of meditation before they move through the katas, a series of motions steeped in a thousand-year tradition of self-defense, artistry, ethics and precision.

Nedelec started Chito-Ryu in March and after a grueling testing session at Gyro Park last week, was promoted to sixth Kyu, distinguished by a yellow belt.

The Castlegar native recently moved to Trail to work as a carpenter on the Waneta Dam project.

"I use to study martial arts so when an opportunity (to study Chito-Ryu) arose I took it," said Nedelec.

Since joining Sensei Hutcheson's dojo he has learned a lot from this more traditional style of karate and looks forward to competing.

Chito-Ryu karate goes back to the eighth and ninth century to the Tang Dynasty in China and was first developed by Tsuyoshi Chitose and introduced to Canada in 1958 by Sensei Tsuruoka.

Hutcheson began studying karate in Kamloops in 1985 when he was 13. The former librarian studied under every leading Chito-Ryu Sensei in B.C., received his Ni-Dan or second-degree blackbelt in 1998, and taught for a number of years before opening his own dojo in Kamloops in 2004.

For Hutcheson, karate is a deeply philosophical practice that teaches ethical principles with spiritual significance.

Hutcheson moved to Trail last November where he began instructing local kids and adults in the ancient art.

"A lot of people like the mixed martial arts, unfortunately that's the opposite of what we try to proliferate," he said. "Once people realize that that's entertainment and not actually a form of self defense, maybe they'll see it for what it is."

Essentially, Chito-Ryu is the practice of teaching people how not to fight, being prepared but not belligerent.

"Training in karate requires an extreme ethic, self-discipline and a serious commitment, it's not something you just learn in six months."

But that doesn't mean Chito-Ryu initiates do not compete.

**Karate BC** and Karate Canada organize competitions throughout the year ranging from semi-contact to full-contact karate and has been named a trial sport in the upcoming Olympics.

As Hutcheson says, "Through karate we learn, teach, and promote values of respect, discipline, self control, truth, harmony, perseverance, and responsibility. We internally teach the mind to develop a clear conscience enabling one to face the world truthfully, while externally developing the strength to overcome the physical dangers of the world."

Sensei Hutcheson is the only registered and certified Karate BC dojo in Trail and he is Zone 1 head coach for the B.C. Winter Games.

Chito-Ryu karate classes start in the fall through Beaver Valley Parks and Recreation; phone 367-9319 or go to [www.trailtraditionalkarate.ca](http://www.trailtraditionalkarate.ca) for more info.

## Best-ever showing for karate team

The (Chilliwack) Times September 13, 2011

Four Chilliwack athletes are back in the Fraser Valley after posting solid results in the JKA World Cup Championships in Pattiya, Thailand, in August.

Jacob Maud, Zach Charleton, Amanda Keriliuk and their Sensei, Don Sharp, competed with 13 other Canadians alongside 800 of the best practitioners of karate in the world.

The Canadian team came back with a composite ranking of fourth place, the best showing ever for Canada. Typically, Canada falls in the middle of the pack, placing around 24th or 25th.

Individually the juniors excelled. Maud, 13, faced tough battles in his Kumite (fighting) matches. While he was possibly the smallest competitor, what he lacked in stature, he made up for in spirit. He fought his way to the top eight after eliminating opponents from India and New Zealand. In the third match he fell to a boy from Thailand that the team fondly named "the Thailand Tank." Maud's kata (form) also showed well, but he was eliminated by a Russian and did not place.

Charleton, also 13, showed some character and strength through his matches. In the first event (kata) he was matched up against the dreaded Japanese and was eliminated. The Japanese always do very well at karate championships as they live, learn and breathe karate.

Despite facing the Japanese champion, Charleton earned a moral victory by managing to pull out one flag, meaning one of four judges on the floor felt he was deserving of the win. His Kumite matches also showed spirit and courage.

He won his first match against a New Zealander but lost his next match against a boy from India twice his size. While he was eliminated, Charleton earned himself a top 16 spot in the world.

Keriliuk, 15, was the only female junior to represent her country. In the first event, she preformed one of the finest katas her sensei had ever seen her perform. But she too was eliminated by a Japanese girl who went on to win the gold in this event.

Kerliuk, though, shone in her Kumite. She defeated tough competitors from the United States and Venezuela to earn a top-eight finish.

"It was extremely exciting," she said. "I couldn't have asked for a better atmosphere there. To see so many of my teammates do well, cheering them along from the sidelines, was great."

Sensei Don Sharp, mean-while, had to retire from the competition early after suffering a severe concussion from a kick to the head in his second team Kumite match, an event consisting of five men from one country fighting against five men from another country with one-on-one sparring.

Canada won the first match. In the second match Sharp was in control and had his English opponent down by a point. But with less than 20 seconds left in the match, he received a kick to the head and sustained a severe concussion.

While he won the fight with his one point and the consequent disqualification of his opponent for excessive force, the injury forced Sharp to retire from the rest of the tournament, including the individual events.

Sharp's Canadian team continued on to earn a bronze medal in team Kumite. Sharp, meanwhile, has recovered from the concussion and is back at his dojo, Valley Shidokan Karate.

Sensei Sharp and the junior's coach, Sensei Sal Sharp, said they were extremely proud of their juniors and that they exceeded all expectations. The Sharps said they would have been happy with one top-16 placing, but instead each of the athletes placed top-16 or better.

## Virk snares silver in Brazil

Peace Arch News, September 19, 2011

South Surrey's Jusleen Virk won a silver medal at Junior Pan-Am Karate Championships in Brazil earlier this month.

Virk, competing in the U21 women's under-53 kg division, advanced to the finals in kumite (sparring), but was defeated in the gold-medal match by a fighter from Venezuela.

The Junior Pan-Am Games were held Sept. 1-3 in Fortaleza, Brazil. Last week, Virk was in Istanbul along with six other kumite competitors from Canada's senior national team, taking part in the Istanbul Open Karate Championships.

Virk's silver-medal performance in Brazil was also enough to earn her an invite to the Pan-Am Games in Mexico, and she'll also compete next month at the world championships, scheduled for Malaysia from Oct. 13-16.

## BKA places two at karate Pan Ams

Burnaby Now, September 14, 2011

Two Burnaby Karate Academy athletes qualified for the Pan Am Games in Mexico.

Jusleen Virk, in the women's under-50 kilogram category, and men's heavyweight Shaun Dhillon both earned spots on the Canadian team after winning their divisions at the North America Cup in Montreal.

Dhillon took the gold in the senior over-84 kg men's division, while Virk also earned a qualifying spot, despite taking a silver medal against Laura Contreras of the host Mexican team.

The Games will be held in Guadalajara from Oct. 22 to 31.

At the junior Pan Ams in Fortaleza, Brazil, five BKA fighters returned with encouraging results.

Virk reached the women's u-53 kg final in kumite, or sparring, but settled for a silver medal against a Venezuelan fighter. Virk also won all her matches to earn a bronze medal in the team event.

Derek Chan also came home with a bronze medal in the junior men's u-55 kg division for 16-and 17-year-olds.

Isabel Chan lost to a Brazilian fighter in her first international tournament. Matt Ly was nipped in the final seconds of his first-round match to a Mexican fighter, and Reid Lofstrom also did well before losing a close match to the Dominican Republic.

Team Canada won a total of 11 medals at the junior Pan American competition.

## Karate club shines at provincials

Penticton Western News, November 29, 2011

Twelve members of the Taneda Karate Dojo won 14 during provincial competition.

Instructor Chris Taneda guided his group during the 2011 Karate B.C. Championship held at BCIT in Burnaby Nov. 26 to 27. Will Wright was among the medal winners with gold in kata (forms) and a bronze medal in kumite (sparring).

"It was really good," said Wright of the competition. Wright was tested in his first match against Jag Sandhu, who is a national champion.

"He was a really good competitor," said Wright, who lost 5-3. Wright, who is a green belt, enjoyed the kata because it was different competing in the non-elite division. While the competition was good, it also gave him the chance to spend time with his competitors.

"It's the second time that Wright has won a gold medal. His goal is to qualify for the national championship to be held in Richmond. Wright is eager to see what the competition is like as he expects everyone to be strong.

"I was glad to see the competition there (provincials)," he said. Taneda said Wright upset a competitor who was favoured to do well in the championship.

"He is quite a good athlete," said Taneda of Wright. "It was more like we expected that from him but others didn't know who he is, which was to his advantage."

Other winners were Michela Russo who earned a gold in kata and bronze in kumite. Mike Michaud earned a gold in kata and silver in kumite. Brett Michaud won bronze in kumite.

Claire Boothe and Katie Becker both earned gold medals in their kumite events. Coulson Boothe earned two silver in the 18 to 20-year-old black belt division and men's kumite under 65-kilogram weight division. Jackson Tribe won silver and Taylor Hunter bronze in their kumite events.

Anne Ross earned a bronze in kata. Simonka Slizek won her first fight and her brother Jacob won two of his matches before being knocked out of the draw. Koen Buckingham made a strong showing in his kumite division as well.

"I was really happy with the way our group did," said Taneda. The provincial championship attracted over 550 competitors.

Tribe, Russo, Boothe and Coulson Boothe have earned an opportunity to compete at the B.C. Team selection tournament in January 2012.

Top competitors from the elite divisions will fight for a spot to represent B.C. at the Nationals Black Belt Championships in March.

## Karate club shows well at provincial tryouts

Peninsula News Review, November 01, 2011

Kimura Shukokai Karate had a good showing at the Zone VI of Karate BC tryouts.

It was the last tryouts for the upcoming provincial tournament. Kimura Shukokai, represented by four different dojos, had 12 competitors entered.

They walked away with 12 gold medals, four silver medals and seven bronze. In Kata (forms), Maarten Kooijman, Joel Southwood and Becky Naylor took gold, Greg Foster and Karen Naylor won silver, and David Lowe, Mohamed Dehairi, Rob Walker, Marika Tol, Sarah Walker and Taimi Mulder each won bronze in their various categories.

Naylor, Walker and Tol won gold in their team kata division.

In kumite (sparring), Jackson Dallas, David Lowe, Kooijman, Foster, Dehairi, Walker and Naylor came away with the gold medal, while Southwood and Mulder won silver in their categories and Tol earned bronze.

Kimura Shukokai Karate has operated in Victoria for more than 10 years and is now spreading out from Brentwood Bay into North Saanich, Juan de Fuca/Westshore, Sooke, and Shirley.

For more information, contact David Bentley at 778-678-5425 or visit [www.shukokai-canada.com](http://www.shukokai-canada.com).  
[sports@peninsulanewsreview.com](mailto:sports@peninsulanewsreview.com)

## Fine showing for Shidokan students at provincials

The (Chilliwack) TimesDecember 13, 2011

Valley Shidokan Karate students brought home medals and awards from the recent Karate BC Provincial Championships in Burnaby.

Tammy Millar, who both competed and officiated at the event, was named "official of the tournament" and then won a silver medal in women's black belt kumite (sparring).

The officiating award was fitting, given that the tournament was part of an exam that will qualify for her to become a provincial-level judge. But Valley Shidokan sensei Don Sharp was particularly impressed by Millar's ability to compete as well. "Competing after shedding the judge persona . . . is tough," said Sharp.

Other local karate students also placed well. Mike Gemelas won bronze medals in each of his three divisions: men's black belt kata, kumite and open kumite. The medals give Gemelas a chance at qualifying to represent B.C. in both kata and kumite at the Canadian Nationals in March.

John Hartman claimed golds in both men's intermediate kumite and men's intermediate kata. Competing in one of the largest divisions of the tournament, Zach Charlton took home a bronze medal in boys 12/13 advanced black kata and fought several rounds before winning gold in advanced black kumite. Sandy Turner received a bronze medal in women's advanced kata.

Valley Shidokan's two qualifying junior squads in team kata also brought back medals. In the 10-and-under team kata, Eli Schultz, Jack Robertson and David Garbet gave a Silver medal performance to tournament officials. In the older junior division, Nik Charlton, Zach Charlton and Jacob Maud were judged against 11 other teams from across the province and walked away with silver for their efforts.

## Karate students earn medals

By John Arendt, Summerland Review, December 07, 2011

Several members of Taneda Karate who participated in a recent tournament returned with medals for their efforts.

Claire Boothe took gold in the 16 to 17 under 48 kilogram Kumite division. Jackson Tribe received silver in the 14 to 15 under 63 kg. Kumite. Anne Ross took bronze in masters Kata and was also a referee at the event.

Brett Michaud took bronze in the 12 to 13 intermediate Kumite division. Other medalists were Katie Becker who won gold in fighting, Mike Michaud who won gold in Kata and silver in Kumite, Micheala Russo who won gold in Kata and bronze in Kumite, Will Wright who won gold in Kata and bronze in Kumite and Taylor Hunter who won bronze in Kumite.

Instructor Chris Taneda said the competition was tough with 550 competitors, but the Summerland participants did well. "Some who didn't get medals did well in their fights," he added.

While the participants have done well in their sport, Taneda said karate also gives them discipline they can use in other areas of their lives.

"It's affected their lives in a positive direction," he said. Taneda Karate has been operating in Summerland since 1981, meeting weekly at Giant's Head School.





Karate BC officials made a strong showing at the 2010 BC Winter Games. The 2012 BC Winter Games will take place Feb. 23-26 in Vernon. Athletes must be 12 or 13 years of age as of February 23, 2012 to take part. — Chris Webster photo



Kenneth Lee won silver in kata at the Karate Canada National Championships. Toshi Uchiage won gold — Dick Grant photo

### Dhillon aims for podium at Pan-Ams

By Dan Kinvig, Abbotsford News, Oct. 20, 2011

Ask Shaun Dhillon how coaching youngsters has enriched his own experience as a national team karate athlete, and he can't help but chuckle.

"It's been a learning experience, let's put it that way," said Dhillon, a 25-year-old Abbotsford native who runs karate clubs in Abbotsford and Mission. "I've developed a greater respect for people who are high-level elite coaches. It takes a lot of patience.

"At karate tournaments (as a coach), it's frustrating, because I just want to go in there and do it myself. You have no control of what they do, and it's just, 'Arrrggh!' You're so used to going to competition and being ready."

In that which he has more direct control over, Dhillon has tasted some terrific success recently. Last year, he notched a top-eight finish at the World Championships in the 84-plus kumite division.

In June, he finished first in his weight class at the North American Karate Cup in Montreal, defeating the top contenders from Canada, the United States and Mexico to earn a berth to the Pan American Games. He flies to Guadalajara, Mexico on Sunday, and opens the Pan Am tournament next week.

For Dhillon, the recent success has been gratifying, after battling back from a knee injury. In 2007, he tore his ACL and meniscus, but actually managed to make it to the quarter-finals at Worlds in '08 before undergoing surgery. Between rehab time and various setbacks, it's only been within the last 12 months that he's back to 100 per cent.

"Now, I'm finally at a point where everything is excellent," the Mennonite Educational Institute grad said. "It's a good mental relief."

As Dhillon has been preparing for the Pan Ams, he's also been working with his karate students – he has over 100 at this point – to get them ready them for various youth meets.

At the recent zone championships, 35 of his students earned medals and qualified for provincials. Eight more are set to participate in Team B.C. tryouts.

"The whole coaching thing is a completely different realm for me," he said. "A lot of athletes, when they start coaching, they're done their athletic career. But I'm still in my prime. Now, I'm understanding the other side – how the coach feels when I'm competing."

To volunteer for the Karate Canada National Championships March 16-18 in Richmond, please contact Joan Clarke at [ClarkeJE@shaw.ca](mailto:ClarkeJE@shaw.ca)



You are invited  
To watch Canada's finest  
athletes compete at the  
National Karate  
Championships in the  
Richmond Olympic Oval  
March 16 to 18, 2012