

martial artists

LOCAL STUDENTS BRING HOME NATIONAL TAEKWONDO TITLE

The 2014 United World Taekwondo Association International Championships ended in Reno this month, drawing competitors from across the country. Two of them, ages 7 and 12, were students of Roseville's The Studio Martial Arts & Fitness who earned the title of National Champion in "forms," or fixed series of movements for learning defensive and offensive techniques.

Both students train under sixth-degree black belt Master Amitis Pourarian, owner of The Studio.

Seven-year-old Miko Cooper said she trained hard for the tournament by attending extra classes and practicing every day, including weekends.

"Even though I'm only 7 years old, it feels great to be a National Champion," Miko said. "Being a martial artist and a black belt has helped me in school, in my after-school sports and even playing the piano."

When asked what advice she would give other kids interested in learning Taekwondo, she offered the following: "Train hard, set goals and never give up, even when you don't feel like going to class."

Miko's next goal?

"Winning National Champion in both forms and sparring!"

Twelve-year-old Amir Khatib trained by practicing his form and sparring in class several times a week, as well as practicing at home.

"I feel very proud of my achievement, but I would never have reached this great goal if it wasn't for my Taekwondo instructor, Master Amitis Pourarian," he said.

His advice for other kids interested in martial arts was to "never give up and always persevere if you are faced with an obstacle ... Practice as much as you can, and eventually it will pay off." Amir said his next plan is to become a third-degree black belt and keep his status as a National Champion in forms, though he is also thinking about returning to compete in the sparring division.

For more information about The Studio Martial Arts & Fitness, call (916) 258-5425, send an email to info@trainatthestudio.com, or visit www.trainatthestudio.com.



COURTESY PHOTOS

Miko Cooper, top photo, and Amir Khatib landed impressive Taekwondo accolades recently.



"Even though I'm only 7 years old, it feels great to be a National Champion. Being a martial artist and a black belt has helped me in school, in my after-school sports and even playing the piano."

Miko Cooper, 7, black belt



"I feel very proud of my achievement, but I would never have reached this great goal if it wasn't for my Taekwondo instructor, Master Amitis Pourarian."

Amir Khatib, 12, black belt



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