

Kilgetty Shotokan Karate Club Grading success

1. Kilgetty Shotokan Karate Club, led by Sensei Ian Ratcliffe, 3rd Dan, achieved great success in their grading examinations on Saturday 24th May with Sensei Leigh Smith. The Kilgetty Shotokan Karate Club opened on the 14th February 2008 and has 12 members who meet twice weekly in Kilgetty Scout hut.

After weeks of training Sensei Ian Ratcliffe enrolled the youngsters for grading. Sensei Leigh Smith, 6th Dan black belt, has been 3 times world champion and 3 times European champion in his 38 years of Karate. He is currently Sensei of Saxon Karate, Manchester, and a black belt examiner.

Sensei Leigh Smith and 4 of his adult students travelled from Manchester to lead a Karate training course prior to the grading session. 72 year old June Duff, who gained her black belt under Sensei Ian Ratcliffe, spoke to the children before the session encouraging them not to worry but to relax and enjoy the morning.

During the course the children were reminded the most important things to do in Karate are to 'Listen and try.' Sensei Leigh Smith explained: 'In karate we work on our natural instincts of self defence. Discipline and respect are paramount in the nurturing of our students, any students found misusing their training will be instantly dismissed. We are fully supportive of anti bullying strategies of all descriptions. By listening and trying we can all improve our technique, which is always more important than strength.'

After the training course the adults demonstrated the sequence of moves to be used in the children's grading examinations. Sensei Leigh Smith explained that if the children followed the 2 main aspects of listening and trying they could all pass the grade. 9 students took part in the grading examinations, Cameron Barrett (8), Carys Bowen (6), Thomas Bowen (8), and Corey Hayes (6) gained red & white belts and Aimee Beynon (12), Chloe Hayes (9), Georgia Thompson (8), Leah Duffy (11), and Shannon Sheilds (12) were awarded red belts.

The 9 children, from the Kilgetty area, who took part in Saturday's grading session were thrilled to receive their new belts in an award ceremony held after the examinations. Parent, Sarah Barrett shared how Kilgetty Shotokan Karate Club has helped her son:

'I felt my child had never been taught much about what to do in threatening situations. By coming to Kilgetty Shotokan Karate Club my son now has confidence and discipline rather than fear, he has learned that he has the power to defend himself in threatening situations.'

Kilgetty Shotokan Karate Club provide training regimes for people of all abilities.

'To hear that our classes are making the children of Pembrokeshire feel more confident and safe is a great pleasure. Knowing that 9 of my students have reached red and white or red belt status is very encouraging. I hope my students will continue to learn self discipline, whilst respecting others and enjoying training in the 800 year tradition of Shotokan Karate' says Sensei Ian Ratcliffe.

Kilgetty Shotokan Karate Club meet on Thursday evenings from 6.30pm to 8pm and on Saturday mornings from 10am to 11.30am, cost £2 per session. If any one would like to join the class please call 01834 811713 or turn up at one of the sessions to register.

'Any one above 6 years old can join, adults are also welcome. Come along have some fun

whilst learning to defend yourself at the same time.' Sensei Ian Ratcliffe.

Thanks were expressed to Kilgetty Scouts for the use of their hall.

