

## Three Times World Champion Spots Talent at Kilgetty Shotokan Karate Club

Kilgetty Shotokan Karate students continued their 100% pass rate, during recent grading examinations in Stepside School Hall.

In addition to their excellent achievements, Kilgetty Karate students have potential for further success. Visiting grading examiner: 6<sup>th</sup> Dan Black belt Sensei Leigh Smith, 3 times world champion, 3 times European champion and current black belt examiner said he is: "searching for new talent at Kilgetty Shotokan Karate Club".

Selecting students from North Wales, Latvia and England, Sensei Leigh Smith formed a team who went on to defeat the Italian Karate World Champions, in a recent competition in Glasgow. Sensei Leigh is aiming to promote this sort of high class competition, and is hoping to select more Welsh students to join him.

"I am looking to bring people together who are willing to show dedication and hard work in Karate, these are the keys to becoming World Champion class. As people move closer to Black Belt status here in Kilgetty, I see potential for building a great Welsh Team."

With the youngest student achieving red belt at 6 years of age, the opportunities for success are high here in Pembrokeshire. Sensei Leigh said some student's have shown: "fantastic improvements". Saying to one student: "This is your best yet. You do not know just how good you are. Know you are good and be sure of it, this will give you confidence to be better, and that's what matters. I can see that you have strong potential to achieve Black Belt status; that is just the beginning!"

Sensei Leigh was firm but fair. If he noticed students were nervous, he tried to settle them down by sharing a little story, before they performed their next Kata. Each student's grading card is retained throughout their entire Karate gradings, from red/white belt to black belt. This helps the examiner see the performance of the student as they progress, noting areas of weakness or strength.

Kilgetty Shotokan Karate's Sensei, Ian Ratcliff, and his students have been invited to join Saxon Karate for a weekend away this September, in Lancashire. Both Sensei's are proud to be good, family clubs, where parents play an important role, with hard work, respect and dedication at the centre.

Kilgetty Karate club are hoping to raise funds for this trip, and a return visit to Latvia next year.

The students were awarded - **Red Belts**: Josh Handley; **Red Belts**- double grade: Issac Higgon, Kaleb Higgon, Tia Jackson, Sarah Barrat, John Jackson. **Orange Belt**: Camaron Barrat. **Yellow Belt**: Liam Kidby. **Green Belts** - double grade: Anthony Bowen, Neil (Bomber) Handley. Purple Belts: Domanic Cunningham, Myles Johnson, Kieron Johnson, Carys Bowen, Georgia Thompson. **Purple/White Belts** - Double grade: Neil Cunningham, Matt Davies; **Brown Belt**: Phil Williams.

Kilgetty Shotokan Karate training is open to all, suitable for all ages and abilities. Training takes place on Mondays 6.30pm in Kilgetty Community Centre and 6.30pm on Thursdays and Friday's in Kilgetty Scout hall. For more details call 07986 332288.

