



Fighting Griffins (from left) Tammy Hogarth, Melaine Rego, Scott Hogarth, Mark Logan and Joanne Agnew display the hefty hardware haul they brought back from their recent trip to New York.

Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Griffins shine in New York

Fighting Griffin Martial Arts enjoyed a remarkable hardware haul recently in New York.

Under the tutelage of Kancho Sensei Scott Hogarth, Milton-based competitors piled up the awards during the International Federation of Martial Arts' year-end banquet — honouring last year's overall champions.

Particularly prosperous in the 15 to 17-year-old Kyu Belt Advanced class was Melaine Rego, who earned a special up-and-coming award due to her overall success. She topped her fighting and traditional forms categories, and scored second-place efforts in open forms and self defense.

Joanne Agnew was even busier in the 18 to 34-year-old Kyu Belt Advanced loop and was golden in traditional forms. Her fighting and self defense performances were both good enough for silver, while she also took third in weapons and fourth in open forms.

New blackbelt Tammy Hogarth dominated the 18 to 34-year-old division with victories in weapons and open forms. She also took second in traditional forms and earned further distinction with the award for up-and-coming black belt.

In the 18 to 34-year-old Kyu Belt Advanced division, Mark Logan topped the traditional forms competition and was just one spot back in fighting.

Meanwhile, Kancho Sensei Hogarth was honoured with the lifetime achievement award. He becomes only the fourth martial arts instructor to receive this highly-prestigious distinction.

The Fighting Griffins were every bit as impressive during the following day's tournament — with three members collecting a total of seven gold-medal finishes.

Tammy Hogarth snagged three of those with a clean sweep in weapons, self defense and traditional forms. Equaling that victory count with wins in weapons, open forms and traditional forms was Agnew — who also took second in fighting and self defense.

Rego was tops in her fighting event, and was the runner-up in self defense, open forms and traditional forms.

This milestone weekend came on the heels of strong tournament showings in Kingston and Hamilton earlier this year.

Madd Dawgs fall short at provincials

Heartbreak struck twice for the Madd Dawgs at last weekend's provincial championships in London.

First, Milton's major bantam boys basketball was denied passage to the gold-medal round by the Hamilton Wildcats, who squeaked by in the last two minutes to win 47-41 Sunday morning.

According to head coach Zack Alilovic, the Dawgs delivered one of their best efforts of the season overall but short-circuited offensively at crunch time — missing a couple of three-pointers and three straight shots from the foul line.

"We couldn't buy a shot from the outside, but it was an excellent game," said Milton's skipper.

Leading scorer Al Alilovic stood out in the semifinals with 22 points, but enjoyed little support from his fellow cagers.

Still reeling from the narrow loss an hour later during the bronze-medal clash, the Dawgs were lacklustre for most of the opening half and went into intermission trailing Toronto Five-O by about 20 points.

They came alive after that and actually wiped out the huge deficit before getting edged 48-47. Alilovic Sr. said a couple of questionable calls by the referee at the end killed his team's bronze-medal bid — but admitted that a lack of desire early on was equally to blame.

"The kids were still down (after losing semis). It was hard to motivate them," he said.

Alilovic and Dalton Olinoski each hit double-digits in the battle for third place.

Milton turned back challenges from Oakville, Hamilton's Blessed Sacrament and Toronto BJC before dumping the Scarborough Roadrunners in the quarterfinals.

Finishing fourth was a major disappointment for the Dawgs, who headed into last weekend's provincials as a serious threat to win it all after besting top-ranked St. Catharines just one week earlier. Milton was seeded top three for much of the year, won five tournament titles and finished with an overall record of 33-6.

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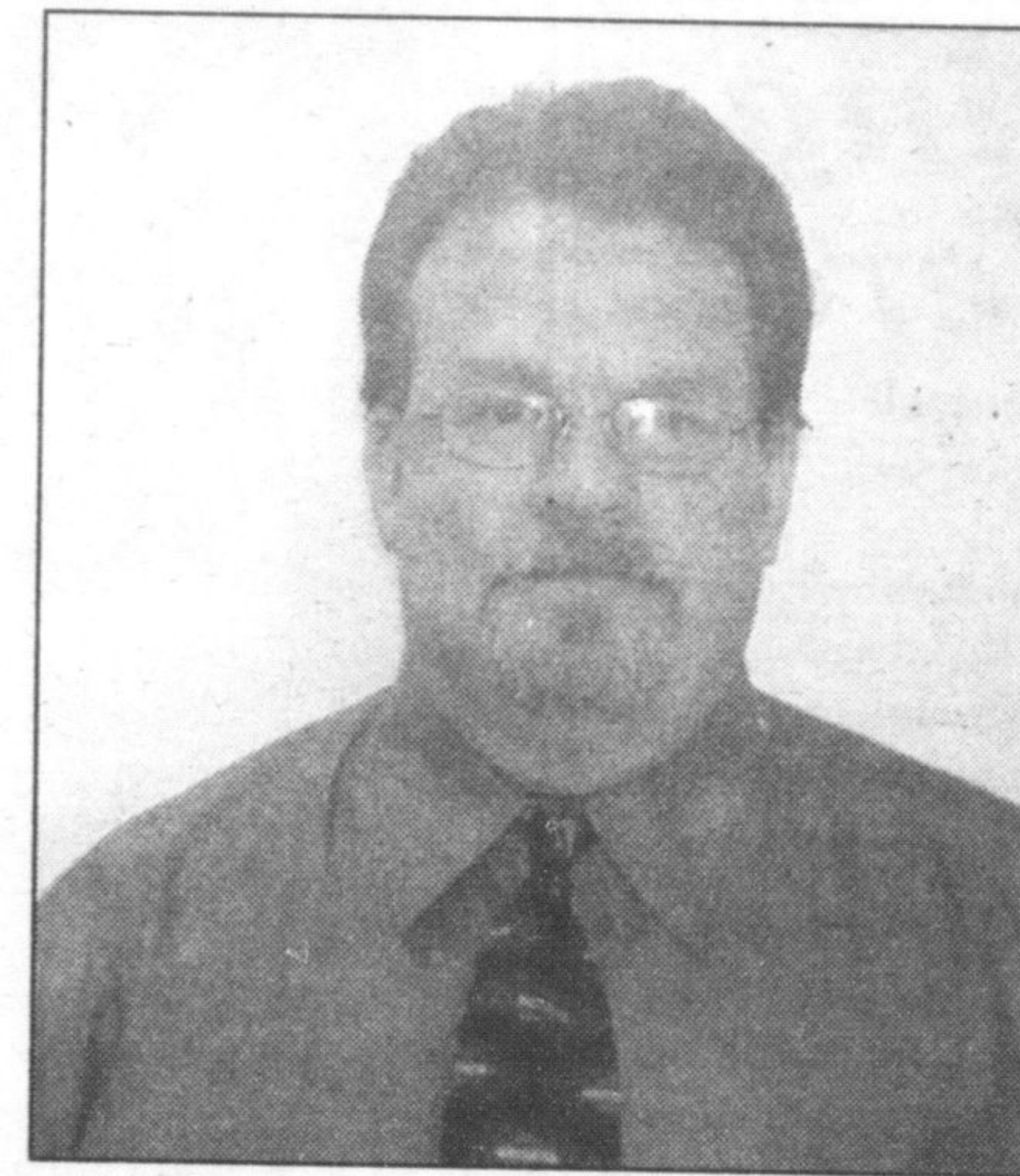
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