

Deputy JAG competes in Tae Kwon Do state competition

By Staff Sgt. Michael Duhe
437 AW Public Affairs

Marge Overly, an Air Force major and deputy staff judge advocate for the base legal office, will be among those competing in the 13th Annual South Carolina State Tae Kwon Do championships Saturday at Fort Dorchester High School.

Overly, a second degree black belt, has been a student of Tae Kwon Do for five years. She is a member of Ray Smith's Tae Kwon Do school in Summerville. Master Smith, a sixth degree black belt, coaches Tae Kwon Do students of all ages and encourages them to participate in competitions. Two events are included in the competitions — sparring against opponents and "form." Sparring in Tae Kwon Do is a full-contact proposition. The competitors are protected with gear and the object is to score more points than your opponent. Each kick, to the body or head can yield a point. Form can be described as a routine of techniques and movements that must be precisely performed to earn the highest scores from the panel of judges.

Overly first became involved in Tae Kwon Do five years ago while stationed at Bolling AFB in Washington, D.C. "It's something I've always wanted to do — martial arts," she said. "A friend of mine was equally interested and there was a Tae Kwon Do instructor who was giving lessons on base. We went over and started."

Her first few days were far from easy, however. "On the second day I went, I walked off the floor where we were doing our routines," she recalled. "I was upset because I couldn't do it. The instructor was very kind and came over to talk to me. So, I came back and here I am."

She continued her study of Tae Kwon Do after being assigned to Charleston AFB. Last year, Master Smith persuaded Overly to compete in the state championships. It was her first time in official competition.

"I liked it," she said. "It was fun, although at that stage I didn't have anyone in my age division."

Overly especially likes competing in forms, also known as "poomse" in the world of Tae Kwon Do.

"You are fighting an imaginary foe, so to speak," she explained. "You do certain techniques, and if you do them correctly, you should end up in the same position that you started."

So far, she's competed in local, state and a national competition. Last year, she won gold medals for both sparring and form in state competition, a gold in form at national, and a bronze for sparring at nationals.

Reasons vary for studying the martial art of Tae Kwon Do. The focus required is what is most appealing to Overly.

"I like form better than sparring," she said.



Courtesy photos

Above, Marge Overly delivers a kick while sparring. At right, she receives a gold medal following a competition last year. Overly has received medals in both sparring and form.



"Sparring takes a different skill, but form is a matter of focus and remembering. It's being detail-oriented and doing the right technique at the right time. You just concentrate on doing your form the right way and getting back to the starting point. You can't think of anything else. I enjoy that."

Tae Kwon Do is an excellent sport for young people, according to Overly. It teaches them discipline, how to maintain focus and builds self-confidence.

"I see that in the kids that are in Master Smith's group," she commented. "The teenagers really stand out — they're like no other teenagers I've ever been around. They have a lot of maturity."

Master Smith's class has the youngest Tae Kwon Do Kukkiwon-certified black belt in the country — a six year old girl named Jenny Schenkler, Overly said.

Tae Kwon Do is the first martial art to be included as a competition in the Olympics, she pointed out. Previously, it was only a demonstration at the games. It will be featured as a medal sport in the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia (see related article).

Overly's immediate goal is to earn a third degree black belt. She said she would also like to eventually become a Tae Kwon Do instructor.

As deputy staff judge advocate, Overly is responsible for many things. She leads the legal office when the staff judge advocate is away. She also mentors and trains junior judge advocates and paralegals, helps manage the office work flow, works the labor law issues on base and occasionally serves as trial counsel on courts-martial.

About Tae Kwon Do...

The earliest records of Tae Kwon Do practice date back to about 50 BC. It was then known as Taek Kyon. When they began training warriors—the Hwarang—to protect the Korean coastline against attack from Japanese pirates, Taek Kyon was part of their training. The guiding principles the Hwarang lived by which were established by a Buddhist scholar are still seen in the so-called 11 commandments of modern Tae Kwon Do:

1. Be loyal to your country
2. Respect your parents
3. Be faithful to your spouse
4. Respect your brothers and sisters
5. Be loyal to your friends
6. Respect your elders
7. Respect your teachers
8. Never take a life unjustly
9. Have an indomitable spirit
10. Be loyal to your school
11. Finish what you start

Initially, Taek Kyon was designed primarily to promote fitness, but eventually it changed (about 1147-1170 AD) into a fighting art. When Japan invaded Korea in 1909, there was a marked resurgence in the art, despite the official ban of the practice of all military arts for native Koreans. Once the Japanese left in 1945 Tae Kyon took root.

Although Tae Kwon Do was first developed centuries ago in Korea, it was not officially recognized as a system of self-defense until the 1950s when a group of leading Korean martial artists came together and unified their various art forms under a single style of hand and feet fighting.

Sports Line

No restriction

Beginning April 3, individuals on the Monitored Fitness Improvement Program will be allowed to utilize the base fitness center for exercising and will no longer be restricted to exercising at the Health and Wellness Center.

Those on the MFIP will carry and maintain their own MFIP cards and after exercising will be able to have their MFIP cards documented by either the HAWC or fitness center personnel only. The fitness center hours of operation are Monday

through Friday from 5 a.m. to 11 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and holidays from noon to 6 p.m.

If you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact the HAWC at 963-4007.

Smoking cessation facilitator course

The Health and Wellness Center will hold a free "Quit Smart" Tobacco Cessation Facilitator Course April 7 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the HAWC. The course was developed by Dr. Robert Shipley, director of the Duke Medical Center Stop Smoking Program.

This one day train-the-trainer seminar combines a multi-media presentation to show you how to implement and promote a Quit Smart tobacco cessation program for up to 30 people.

Limited seating is available. Course content includes: assessing nicotine addiction, coping skills, non-smoking thinking, nicotine weaning, medication use, relapse prevention, self-hypnosis, social support and weight control.

To register or for more information call the Health and Wellness Center at 963-4007.

Intramural bowling

American League

1. 637 AGS 2
2. EMS 4
3. 637 AGS 3
4. LGT
5. APS 3
6. APS 2
7. EMS 1
8. SVS
9. SFS
10. 437 OSS
11. CTCS
12. APS 4