

Ko's Invitational 2018 Wrap Up

by *Cindy Gould*

On Saturday November 10, Team KTA, comprised of 18 athletes and 4 coaches, traveled south to Columbus, Indiana for Ko's Invitational. This was a first competition for some students, and a first competition in the tougher Black Belt division for others. Regardless of their level, every competitor gained valuable experience and came away from the tournament with more confidence and some ideas of areas needing improvement.

Overall, our team did a great job of staying together, staying positive, and cheering for each other. Everyone put in his or her best effort. It was a long day for all – we arrived at 9:30am and finally finished around 8:30pm – but the energy stayed high regardless!

Everyone had big divisions (even mine was 9-11 women over a “certain” age!) and only the top 3 got medals, so the results show a lot of “Did Not Place.” Several times, our people were VERY close to getting medals (the two I know for sure were Mara who was 4th in forms & David was 4th in breaking). Our 10-11 year-old KTA boys made up half of their divisions with 5-6 boys from other schools.

A few individual highlights:

- **Tom Gaber** is a really good coach (this was my first opportunity working with him from the competitor side)
Jackson Capek, as usual, is a great team leader and worked to get everyone warmed up before the competition started
- **Bailey Timmons** was more confident than I have ever seen her before
- **Brennan Kahre** won gold in forms in a huge division, half of which were his KTA teammates. In sparring, he was behind in points (I think he was behind by more than 10 points), never gave up, did not get upset, fought back and ended up winning. He and **Caleb Jensvold** then sparred each other for gold and silver. During this final match up, the KTA team got LOUD, chanting KTA! KTA! KTA!
- **Tim Ueber** kept a really positive attitude saying he now knows what he needs to work on
- **Sara Bennett, Caitlin Johnson, and Mara Johnson** all did great and showed some *real* intensity during sparring
- **Alex Nguyen**, unfortunately hurt her foot during sparring, but finished very strong
- **David Gould** had two tough sparring matches, also got behind, and came back to win
- I had a little hiccup in my form -- I started with Jitae, then turned at the end and finished with Taeback. Like Master Cooley says, don't show that you made a mistake and just keep going. And then practice more afterward 😊

Others who always give their best and will continue to train hard: **Benjamin Mauldin, Isaac Nguyen, Reid Stoddard, Grady Toussant, and Brayden Warrick.**

As a team we brought home **13 Gold, 10 Silver, 7 Bronze!**

Any KTA student who wants to try competition in a fun a safe environment, should sign up for the **KTA Intra School Tournament coming up on January 19th!** Even though you are competing as an individual, you will find the camaraderie and support of a team!

-Cindy Gould