



Shaolin Martial Arts recognizes its nine Ontario Winter Games medalists

By Jim Stewart

Mayor Tom Mrakas presented Town of Aurora pins for excellence in athletics to nine Ontario Winter Games medalists from the Shaolin Martial Arts Canada youth team.

The ceremony moderated by Head Coach (or Shifu?) Tim Wakefield -- took place on Saturday morning at the Shaolin studio (or wushu guan?) on Mary Street in Aurora.

After congratulating each of the medalists, Mayor Mrakas expressed how proud he was of these young athletes who not only worked to get better and won medals, but they also did it on a big stage.

It's incredible to see such excellent results in their first provincial competition.

The Ontario Winter Games took place in Renfrew on February 9-12 and the nine medalists were proudly displaying their hardware during the group photo with Mayor Mrakas and the Shaolin coaching staff.

The most decorated performer among Shaolin's Ontario Games medal winners was Ron Picklas who captured two Gold medals in Chinese Kickboxing (Sanda) and in Traditional Form--Hand and Weapon both in the U12 Division.

Picklas enjoyed his experience with the 147 martial arts competitors at the Winter Games in Renfrew and noted that it was fun meeting everybody.

When asked about winning two gold medals at the provincial event, he nodded: It's cool to win. It was amazing because it all came together after two months of going at it and preparing.

Picklas noted that his singular sporting focus on martial arts has been beneficial in many ways.

The main benefit is good health, but it also provides a mindset that drives you.

Shifu Wakefield also acknowledged the benefits of his martial arts program such as keeping the mind clear in the present moments and helping our participants deal with adversity.

The Coach Master felt his team's excellent showing in Renfrew was very validating.

?It's always great to see your students win and compete. The medals were the icing on the cake.?

Wakefield said he was pleasantly surprised by his team's inaugural appearance at the provincial championships.

?It was our first time at the Ontario Summer Games and we weren't sure what to expect. It was great to see them hold their own at a high caliber event.?

Coaching partner Rocco Colarossi echoed Wakefield's remarks about his team's performance at a province-wide event and said he was impressed by ?the calmness they showed on the mat as well as the timing they showed, and the skill they displayed at the Games.?

Shaolin's other Gold Medal Winners included Jayden Deshong in Sanda in 13-15 Class D and Jordan Hong in Traditional Form in the 13+ Division.

The following martial artists were recognized by Mayor Mrakas and the Shaolin Coaching Staff on Saturday morning:

In Sanda or Chinese kickboxing:

U12 Class D Ron Piklas ? Gold; 13-15 Class D Jaydan Deshong - Gold; Jordan Hing ? Silver;

13-15 Class C Adam Pillars Resolver; 13-15 Hi Perf Class C Kian Moosavi ? Bronze;

16+ Hi perf Class B Daniel Wakefield ? Silver; Special mention to Jeremy Lind.

In Traditional Form or hand and weapon:

U12. Ron Piklas ? Gold; Jeremy Lind ? Bronze; 13+ Jordan Hong ? Gold, Adam Pillars ? Silver, and Hayden Fishing ? Bronze.

The next major martial arts competition for the Shaolin squad is August 3-6 at the Pan-American Games to be held at the Pan-Am Centre in Markham.

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