

# First Degree Essay

## By Alastair Martin

On my first day of Tae Kwon Do I didn't know what to expect. Five years on I am getting ready to sit my 1st degree black belt grading. Will I pass or will I fail ? This is the question always on my mind. I will never know until after the grading.

I have had many great experiences during my time at Mr Belgacems school , but none can top my very first grading. Preparing for the grading was the hardest part because we had to remember all sorts of blocks, punches, kicks & an exercise called Sajo Jirigu and this was all new to me. I pushed myself to my very limits and it all paid off in the end. I tried my best and because of this I passed with a grade of B+ . When I was awarded with my orange belt I was ecstatic , I couldn't believe I passed and was now an orange belt !

Two years later I went to my very first tournament in Eddlewood Sports Barn. I was entering both categories ( points sparring & patterns ) . During the pattern section I got third place. In sparring I fought a boy taller and older than me, so he had an advantage. I lost and was knocked out of my category. Though I didn't win a trophy for this , we all received a medal and this made me feel like a real winner . I also learned a valuable lesson - it doesn't matter if you win or lose it's the taking part that counts.

My next grading was for my blue tag. We had to learn a pattern called Won-Hyo . I found this pattern quite easy to learn because the moves just seemed to flow and I found it a lot easier to remember. During the grading we had to do free sparring, grappling and a variety of punches kicks and blocks. I enjoyed grappling the most because it lets you use a range of different moves. After we were awarded our belts we started to learn our new pattern, Yul-Kok . We learned lots of new moves and I enjoyed it a lot !

The most recent tournament were the nationals in Blantyre. I got third place for continuous sparring and second for a team pattern with my classmates . I also got second place for points sparring. My brother Ross and friend Taylor also got second place in points sparring. I had a fantastic time and I'm sure everyone else did to.

The hardest grading I have ever had was my black tag grading. We had to break boards and this was the first time I had broke a board but I done quite well. When I found out I passed the thought of becoming a black belt was filling my mind.

If I want to pass my black belt I need to know a lot of theory and patterns. I know all my pattern meanings , aims to achieve and their meanings , Tae Kwon Do pledge and the principles of A.I.M.A.A. I also know my two knew patterns so hopefully I will pass.

I would just like to thank everyone who made this possible especially Mr&Mrs Belgacem.