

**MARK MULLEN 1<sup>st</sup> Kup**

**12Years Old**

**1st Degree BLACK BELT ESSAY**

**Instructor: Karim Belgacem 4<sup>th</sup> Degree**

My name is Mark Mullen, I am 12 years old and have been doing Tae-Kwon-Do training since I was 5. I am training hard just now for my black belt on the 4<sup>th</sup> of November.

I started Tae-Kwon-Do at Blantyre training under Mr. Kirkwood (5<sup>th</sup> Dan going for 6<sup>th</sup> in November). Tae-Kwon-Do is the art of fighting with feet and fists. It is a non violent sport, with a system devoted to train both mind and body with emphasis placed on the student's moral character.

From the very beginning I learnt the 5 tenants of Tae-Kwon-Do:

- Courtesy – Being polite and respectful
- Integrity – Doing the right thing
- Self Control – Being master of your own impulses
- Perseverance – Never giving up
- Indomitable Spirit – Never wanting to give up

Recently a new tenant has been introduced within the association. These making 6 tenants

- Modesty – Being humble and unassuming

I have tried very hard to include all of these tenants into my life.

I train 2-3 times a week and work very hard at every training session.

When I began TKD , I was a member of the Scottish Tae-Kwon Do Association (STA) but now I belong to AIMAA (Action International Martial Arts Association) and train at Hamilton under the instruction of Mr Belgacem (4<sup>th</sup> Dan), Miss Shaw (3<sup>rd</sup> Dan), Miss Mallon (2<sup>nd</sup> Dan) and Mr Shaw who is also a 2<sup>nd</sup> Dan. I respect and admire all of my instructors and aim one day to be as good as them.

TKD has made me stronger, more flexible and my co-ordination has improved. My stamina has improved, this has therefore made me more self confident, a better person, a more determined person and more respectful of others.

One of my proudest moments so far in my TKD career was being awarded Student of the Year in 2004. I was awarded a trophy for this and I have also been awarded student of the month.

I have entered several inter-club competitions during my seven years of Tae-Kwon-Do. At these competitions I have won three silver medals and two bronze medals of which I am very proud. One of my bronze medals I won for my patterns. My three silver and my other bronze medal were all for my sparring. I have enjoyed competing in all of these competitions and will strive to improve in all aspects of TKD.

My biggest and proudest moment will be when I am awarded my black belt. The reasons that I want to gain my black belt are that my seven years of dedicated training and learning will have been worthwhile and I will have achieved one of my many goals. This will encourage me to strive to gain my next goal in life. Another reason for gaining my black belt is I would like to become an instructor and help Mr Belgacem or Mr Kirkwood or maybe run my own club one day within the Association. I feel I have learned a lot over the last seven years within the TKD Association and I feel its only right that I can put something back in. I would like to think I could pass on some of my knowledge on to new students the same way it was passed on to me.

