

TOP OF THE CHOPS



WORLD CHAMPIONS . . . Three Nelson Mandela Bay karate aces made history by scooping gold as members of the South African team competing in the Commonwealth Senior Karate Championships in Scotland at the weekend. The karate kings (from left), Karl von der Marwitz, Steve Johnson, coach Hezaron Essen and Michael Kliment, returned home with a gold medal after beating England in the kata. **Report on Page 3** Picture: JUDY DE VEG

Champions bring home proud gold

■ Karateka shine in major contest

Khanyi Ndabeni
HERALD REPORTER

ndabeni@avusa.co.za

THREE Nelson Mandela Bay karate champs made history by winning gold in the Commonwealth Karate Championships held in Edinburgh, Scotland, last weekend.

Steve Johnson, of Hume-wood, Michael Kliment, of Beverly Grove, and Karl von der Marwitz, of Summerstrand, who were part of a 12-man South African team, scooped a gold in competition with 12 countries in the tournament.

Arriving at the Port Elizabeth Airport yesterday, Johnson, 29, Von der Marwitz, 30, and Kliment, 36, were over the moon about their victory at the fifth annual international karate tournament.

The three said they could still not believe they had beaten some of the great countries in karate.

The gold medal, which is the first for a South African karate team in the tournament, was won when they beat England in kata. Team coach Hezaron Essen said the three had given a top performance.

"I'm not surprised that they won because they had been training since December for the tournament. Now that we won these games we are auto-



**Now we are
automatically in for
the World Senior
Karate Champs in
Tokyo**

matically in for the World Senior Karate Championship tournament which will be held in Tokyo later this year."

The team will only rest for one week before starting training for the Zone 6 Tournament which starts next month. This is a tournament where they will compete with other African countries in both kata and sparring.

The team is from the FNK karate club which practises at Grey High School. All three also give karate lessons to children in the disadvantaged areas.

Also present to welcome the team when they arrived at the airport yesterday was the chairman of Eastern Cape All Style Karate and Michael's father, Paul Kliment.

"I hope that their winning the tournament will encourage the South African government to put in money to support the development of the sport in the country," he said.



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