

## Running competitions in your school. ©

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Competitions are good inspire martial artists in different ways, if a competitor is only motivated by a win and when they lose they perform a spoilt brat routine this is bad for the school because it influences others. The spoilt brat routine effects how others think of you, your teaching and your school. In school competitions help train your students in the rules, contact levels and conduct, and getting these issues right in the outset will help develop your students in to more disciplined martial artists.

In your classes you will possibly have some shy individuals who value their autonomy and loathe anything that brings attention. Attention to shy students is intimidating and may drive them away and they could stop coming along. Don't think competition isn't for them, they may not like competing because of their shyness but they will like being part of it as may be a judge, corner crew, scorekeeper or timekeeper etc.

Children are particularly inspired by the excitement of competition and when you run one in your school make an issue of it. Invite parents and guests, local papers, councillors, local company executives to give out the medals or main trophy etc. This type of in-community involvement adds vales and importance and creates local news. The local news aspect is a way of featuring in the local paper or local radio, if it isn't seen as having a news value it doesn't get mentioned. The guests and format of the event need to present the right image and come across as a safe, good event that inspires locals under the responsible supervision of an instructor who provides a GOOD DUTY OF CARE to all their community (which includes their students). Parents can be asked if they can help out in the canteen, as first aiders, assist their children as a corner man/woman or just be a spectator.

To summarise the benefits of in-school competitions:

1. Familiarise your competitors with a new set of rules.
2. Introduce competition to your school.
3. Teach controlled contact in sparring.
4. Involve local community guests.
5. Create local news for features in the local newspaper and radio.
6. Inspire your students.
7. Motivate your students.
8. Add values to your school.
9. Get student parents active within your school and create interest.
10. Enhance student self-discipline and being a good sportsman if they lose.
11. Create junior posts like junior judges, junior, referees, junior timekeepers etc.
12. Create club champions, over all champion and divisional champions in categories etc.
13. Creating an environment for competition is fun win or lose.
14. Educating parents on conduct when their child is competing.
15. Raising awareness and interest in other competitions you want to attend.
16. Tests students abilities and technique application

Competitions are not for everyone, the human animal is very competitive and most of us enjoy a challenge. There are some students who will do anything to avoid failure including avoiding all challenges in the first place. These students are often thrilled at the importance of officiating in some way, it empowers them and makes them feel important and a valuable part of your team.

Team building is valuable to all martial arts schools it provides a sense of belonging, which helps with student retention and helps get other family members involved. When parents or other family members are involved and enjoy the involvement they encourage on-going training and may well get more involved and even start training themselves.

The most narrow-minded vision is to believe competition has no place in martial arts. There are so many different martial arts, some of which are developed for competition. I have experienced arguments between two instructors in the same style of martial arts over whether there should or should not be competitions. I see this argument as pointless, no one has to compete but there should be competitions for those who do. If I made it clear every time I taught a lesson I didn't like competition no one would ask me about competitions. On issues like competition I like to remain open and indifferent because if it helps me keep a student I will provide support, I know I would be proud of them if they win or lose. Organisations, clubs and schools have to provide for their membership if half their membership want competitions why let them leave your group and drift to a competitor who can offer them what they want.

If you are considering running your own competitions or attending outside competitions you will need to look around for a set of rules, paperwork, match up sheets, scoring slips and judging criteria. You can find all this including free downloads, free corner-crew courses and rule books at <http://www.the-s-factor.com>.