

## NEWS

# A long road home but Eddie's

After 23 years practicing Tukido and travelling the world mastering the art, as well as teaching, Eddie Smith is now keen to honour Grandmaster

## FEATURE

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**A**t six foot six Eddie Smith is not the sort of man you would want to mess with – especially when you know he is a fourth Dan Tukido expert.

But there is more to this softly spoken giant than meets the eye.

Having spent the best part of a quarter of a century perfecting this martial art, which has its roots in the Korean discipline of Tae Kwon Do, he has now returned to his home town of Kirkintilloch to set up a new Tukido school in Kirkintilloch Leisure Centre.

He also runs a class in Chryston Cultural Centre.

Eddie trained at the Kirkintilloch Club for many years but it closed in 2009 when instructor Kenny Murgitroyd moved to New Zealand.

Now Eddie, a 38-year-old English teacher, is keen to make the club a success once again.

He said: "I grew up in Kirkintilloch and started training when I was 15.

"The most powerful inspiration I had in Tukido has always come from the founder, Grandmaster H.A.Teh, who we were lucky enough to train under at the Kirkintilloch club.

"However, I also got a lot of inspiration over the years from Robert Miller, who is sadly no longer here.

"The re-opening of the class at Kirkintilloch Leisure Centre is dedicated to both Grandmaster Teh and to the memory of Robert Miller."

Over the years Eddie

has built up an impressive medal haul. His first came in November 1996 when he won a set of medals at the bi-annual British Tukido Championships in Wishaw.

Eddie picked up more medals the following year – again at the British Tukido Championships in Wishaw, winning five, including three golds.

But he said Tukido is so much more than just medals.

"Everyone will get something different out of Tukido," he explained.

"The physical, emotional and spiritual benefits that Tukido has given me over the past 22 years are huge, not to mention the immense level of enjoyment both training and coaching have given me.

"On top of that, without Tukido I would probably never have travelled to the East, never have become an

English teacher, never have fallen for a beautiful girl from Taiwan who is now my wife and never have had the chance to meet wonderful people from all around the UK, Malaysia, Taiwan, Singapore and China."

Extolling the benefits of the martial art, Eddie

continued: "It can help such things as self confidence and the ability to

try things you may not have thought possible.

"It is okay to fail. That is how we learn, but we need to have the resilience to realise this. Tukido gives you the determination to succeed even if you fail.

"My philosophy is try to have a plan of how you want to achieve something and if you succeed that is great.

"If you fail then look at your plan and see where you failed and learn from it."

**'I have a lot to learn, even though I train five times a week'**

Eddie said that, from a self defence point of view, a complete beginner who was committed would see their co-ordination improve after about three months.

However, they would have to train regularly.

He said: "I still feel I have a lot to learn about Tukido, even though I train up to five times a week.

"You never stop learning and improving."

In September 1998 Eddie was part of the four-member British team competing in the second International Tukido Tournament in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The following year he became a black belt.

"I had the honour of being presented with my black belt from Grandmaster Teh," he added.

More globe-trotting followed, with Eddie returning to Malaysia in August 2000 as part of the six

member strong British team at the third International Tukido Tournament.

In April 2001 Eddie qualified as an instructor and later that year he moved to Taiping in Malaysia to work as an English teacher.

He returned to Scotland and while completing a degree in 2005 fell in love with his future wife, Chih-chun Wu, from Taiwan.

He spent four years in Taiwan, returning to Scotland in 2009 to work with the University of St Andrews on one of its International Foundation Programmes of Science.

In September 2013 he started teaching English in Ningbo, China.

But he is now back in the UK as Chih-chun has a job at Stirling University and he is keen to bring the Kirkintilloch club back to life in honour of Tukido Grandmaster Teh.

## picking up where he left off



Back home...and hoping to teach more students the art of self-defence as well as building their confidence via Tukido classes at the leisure centre.

### The Grandmaster of Tukido

Tukido was established more than 30 years ago and literally translated means the art of skilful combat.

It was developed by Grandmaster Hock Aun Teh, D.A., whose concept of modern martial arts encompassed fitness and self-defence.

Tukido is based on natural and effective movements which are easy to learn and apply.

The exercises and combat movements are designed to simultaneously improve fitness, develop the skill of self-defence and help individuals develop an increased awareness of their surroundings.

Founder Grandmaster Teh was born in Malaysia of Chinese parents and educated at Hua Lian High School in Taiping. He later came to Scotland to study drawing and painting at the Glasgow School of Art, where he graduated in 1974. He is now an established and well-known abstract painter and sculptor whose work

has been acquired by many British, American and Chinese collectors, museums and government bodies.

In the run up to the 2008 Beijing Olympics, he was commissioned by the Chinese Government to produce a five-metre painted steel sculpture in celebration of the event. The Energy of Life is placed close to the Olympic Stadium.

Grandmaster Teh holds a Black Belt Sixth Dan in Tae Kwon Do and was the chief instructor for the UK from 1975 to 1978.

In 1979 he formed the Scottish Tae Kwon Do Association and has trained many members of the police and Royal Air Force. He has written two books: Warm-up and Stretching for All Sports and Martial Arts and Clouds – The Book for Instructors/Coaches. Grandmaster Teh still regularly travels between Asia and Europe to give seminars, classes and instructors' training courses in Tukido.

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