

BRIMBANK & NORTH WEST

Karate kid kicks on

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BY EWEN MCRAE

KARATE SPAIN ST ALBANS



St Albans teen Teo Cvetkovski is as single-minded as he is talented when it comes to karate.

After beginning his training in his native Macedonia at just four years old, and achieving his black belt by 10, the now 15-year-old is busy preparing for his first junior world championships, in Spain, next month.

He says it's a discipline that has always come naturally to him.

"The early days were lots of fun, making new friends and getting exercise," he said.

"My sensei saw the potential in me and challenged me ... I progressed fairly quickly through the belts. It was a lot of effort and training, but that's what karate is all about – determination and discipline."

After his family moved to Australia five years ago, and he re-earned his black belt in the Australian system, Teo began competing in local and state competitions, quickly getting strong results.

He recently became the Australian Karate Federations' national champion in the kumite under 57 kilogram division, giving him selection in the Australian team that will head to Spain in October.

"The whole trip will be unique – I'm really looking forward to the experience," he said.

"I've trained really hard all year with this as the goal and I feel ready, but we'll have to wait and see once I'm over there. It will be a big step up.

"Long-term, I'm hoping to make the Olympics now that karate is part of it – hopefully it stays in the Olympic program and I get my chance later on."

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