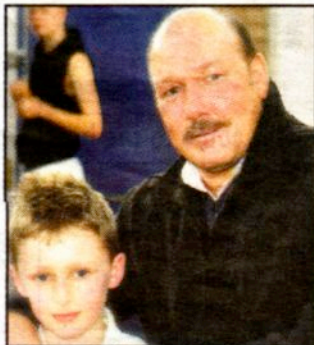


Championship club opens up new venue



by Mike Bradley
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One of the areas leading judo clubs is celebrating its tenth anniversary by throwing open the doors to a new venue based in Heath Hayes.

The Meiji Judo Club, also based at Burntwood Leisure Centre, has built up a fantastic reputation for producing champions over the last decade, under the instruction of 2nd Dan black belt organiser and founder Stewart Hogg.

Stewart, whose club has produced local, national and European champions, said: "There's been a lot of interest in the club from people in the Cannock area, asking when I'm going to open here. As it's the tenth anniversary of our club in Burntwood, I thought what better time to open one in Heath Hayes?"

The club has grown massively in popularity over the last ten years, and Stewart says he was inspired to teach judo after being the victim of bullies at school.

"It makes a difference," he said. "I took up judo when I was 13 because I was a target for bullies. By doing this I gained confidence to stand up for myself, and I also learned respect and discipline. It is good to see people working towards that themselves, and it's great to be able to teach

■ **Coach Stewart Hogg (top) and students in action at the club**

Members win nine national awards in two years

them to do it in a safe, friendly, helpful environment."

It's that individual approach to the art of judo that has seen students from Meiji Judo Club winning nine International Judo awards in the last two years alone - and armfuls of awards from other contests in Britain.

"I'm so happy teaching judo," Stewart explained, "and I run my club as a club - not as a business - and no-one receives any payment for doing it."

"Not only does the club do judo, we also go on social days out and have social evenings such as discos. It's a very friendly atmosphere at the club and everyone gets on with each other well."

Heath Hayes Judo Club meets every Friday, from 7pm to 9pm at Heath Hayes Community Centre, next door to Tesco, Heath Hayes.

As an introductory anniversary offer, the club will pay for the Judo licence and the first grading fee for all new pupils to the Heath Hayes club within the first three months.

All enquiries regarding lessons, please contact Stewart on 07957443642.