

COMPETITION:
Program has added
Brazilian jiu-jitsu

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proud, with several notching silver medals in their individual belt and weight class.

Cody French was entering his first competition.

“I didn’t get a medal, but I had a good time,” he said. “I got experience and it also helped me to push myself harder so I can be the best martial artist I can be.”

Cody acknowledged that he has some “issues” that his martial arts practice has helped him get a handle on.

“It’s helping me get rid of something I’ve had a problem with for a long time. Drama. Drama doesn’t work with Master K,” he said.

Cody expressed great appreciation for his fellow martial artists — which include his sisters and his mom. The whole atmosphere is like a big family, he notes.

“I don’t know what I’d do without you guys,” he said.

Jaxon Barry won a match by armbar submission before losing his final match. Described by Master K as “very talented,” Jaxon’s slight frame belies a big competitive spirit and a commitment to his martial arts.

“If I ever got in a fighting situation, I’d be able to defend myself,” he said. “And it’s fun. You get to compete with

your friends. It’s athletic.” Tate Kaczmarek is a second-degree taekwondo black belt, having started training at age three, and he has been working on Brazilian jiu-jitsu for a couple of years.

He won a submission in his first tournament match in six seconds and was forced to tap out in a tough match where he and his opponent spun on the mat, each seeking an advantage and a submission. His performance was strong enough to earn a silver medal.

George Chladek took second place in his class, winning two matches on points and losing one.

“He’s really talented, for sure,” Master K said.

“I like learning the moves and the moves themselves,” George said. “I like being able to take control of someone.”

He is also a Taekwondo martial artist.

“I like the movement, the kicks and punches,” he said.

Tony Gonzalez IV earned a bronze medal. He was in Utah and unavailable for an interview.

Taking students to competition is important, Master K says. It may not suit every student, but most learn from it — and so does he. Seeing how students stack up in competition is a great way

to gauge the effectiveness of instruction.

Given that the BJJ program is still young and the students are performing well, Kaczmarek is satisfied that the program is on the right track.

BJJ offers a new dimension to a martial artist’s practice. While most traditional martial arts emphasize striking and kicking — standup fighting — BJJ gives them options if and when a fight goes to the ground.

The art is heavy on technique, which can allow a smaller martial artist to submit a larger opponent.

BJJ training, called “rolling,” puts practitioners on the mat working through a variety of techniques to obtain submissions — each of which also has a defense.

“Jiu-jitsu is all flow,” Kaczmarek says.

While it is challenging, it is also exhilarating. Unlike with other martial arts, BJJ is all about work with a sparring partner.

“It’s fun to have that constant, physical interaction with somebody else,” Master K said. “There is nothing like the grind of being on a mat.”

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Blood Moon...



PHOTO BY RON THORKILDSON

A lunar eclipse and blood moon coincided over Sisters last week.

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**Sisters
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William and Alexander Cyrus left for South Africa on Monday for a three-month trip.

They will be spending the first month learning to be rangers (guides) in an intensive Ranger Experience training program, then spend the second month working on some safari camps as rangers, and the third month will be spent touring South Africa, Botswana, and Namibia.

Their father, Matt Cyrus, reported that “the gentleman who is arranging the program has indicated that they will also be traveling with him to a very remote portion of Botswana to negotiate a deal with a tribal chief. This is a fitting trip for the boys now that their Boy Scout careers are done and they both have their Eagle rank. Kind of like scouting on steroids.”



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