



Gold glory for Devini

By Helen Drake

Eleven-year-old Devini Bharat Patel is basking in the glory of having won the gold medal for the Kata competition (a sequence of attack and defence moves) at the Amateur Martial Arts (AMA) International Karate Tournament held in Sheffield.

Devini, who attends Martin Primary School, beat 23 other boys and girls from 22 different countries (including Russia, Denmark, Australia, Nepal, Ukraine, Sweden and Iran) in the ten to 15-year-old category, a huge achievement.

How did she feel before taking part in the contest? "I felt quite confident because of the amount of training I have done and because I always try very hard," said Devini.

Following in the footsteps of her older brother Navin, and sister Hunisha, Devini is an active member of the Ashin-Do-Kai karate club at the David Lloyd Club in Finchley, and has been having lessons since she was seven. She currently trains on Monday, Tuesday and Friday evenings after school.



Devini with the winner's cup.
Photo taken by Jo Patel

Her mother, Jo, commented that the enjoyment Devini has gained from learning karate and self-defence has given her "great confidence". Devini herself, who will be transferring to The Compton School in September, is keen to learn new moves and techniques and is determined to do well in the future.

If you feel inspired to take up karate, go to www.ashin-dokai.com to find out more about Devini's club.

Protect your identity

By Sergeant Andy Matthews

Two local residents have recently become victims of identity theft. One had nearly £5,000 taken from their bank account, even though the thief started with just a name, address and part of the account number. Criminals need only a few of your personal details in order to apply for accounts, credit cards or benefits in your name. Here are some tips to ensure your personal information stays personal.

Shred everything containing any personal details, including junk mail. The discarded documents, letters and receipts you've put in your rubbish are a rich source of information about you.

Be wary of anyone asking you for personal information either by email or phone. Delete any emails asking for information (banks never ask for personal details by email).

Never give out personal information over the phone unless you are absolutely sure the caller is legitimate. If you move, make sure you tell organisations such as your bank in advance and arrange for the Royal Mail to redirect your mail.

If your identity is stolen

If regular mail, such as bank statements, stops arriving, you may have become a victim of identity theft. Another sign is getting bills or letters about things you haven't bought or signed up for, or finding unusual payments or direct debits on your bank statements. Your rubbish bags may also look as though they've been tampered with. If you have any concerns, contact Barnet Police on 0300 123 1212.

You can also apply for a copy of your credit files, which list organisations that you've had financial dealings with. To do this, contact Callcredit at www.CallCreditCheck.com,



Equifax at www.equifax.co.uk and Experian at www.experian.co.uk and ask for a report from each. If you find anything you don't recognise, contact the organisation concerned immediately.

How to contact us: The Safer Neighbourhood office is at 113 East Finchley High Road, N2 8AG. You can phone us on 020 7161 9014 or 07887 632767, email us at EastFinchley.snt@met.police.uk or talk to the Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) you see on patrol.

Pedestrian hit by car

By Janet Maitland
Police were called to a collision between a blue VW Polo car and a 70-year-old female pedestrian on the High Road just before 11.15am on Saturday 4 April.

The pedestrian suffered head injuries, which are not thought to be either life threatening or life changing, and was taken to the Whittington Hospital by ambulance. Local people rallied round and helped to divert the traffic until the police arrived. The road diversions stayed in place until 1pm.

How to give cold callers the cold shoulder

Why do they always call at the most inconvenient time? In fact, why do they call at all? Telephone sales people are only doing their job but sometimes we just want them to go away.

Paul Hammond, of the police's Barnet Boroughwatch, has some tips for dealing with unwanted marketers.

First, try saying 'Hold on, please', then putting the phone down and walking off. The more of their time you can consume, the less time they have to call others. After a while, they will end the call and you can replace the receiver.

Secondly, those annoying calls with no one on the other end are generated by machines and record the time of day when a person answers. This technique is used to determine the best time of day for a 'real' salesperson to call back and find someone at home. What can you do? If you realise there's no-one on the end of the line, immediately start hitting the # button on the phone six or seven times as quickly

as possible. This confuses the machine that dialled the call and it kicks your number out of their system and eliminates future calls from that source.

Junk that junk

Finally, when you receive junk mail for everything from credit cards to second mortgages, don't throw away the return envelope. Why not dispose of other junk mail by putting it in these postage-prepaid return envelopes? If you received nothing else that day, just send back the blank application form. If you want to remain anonymous, make sure your name or a reference number isn't on anything you return. You can even send the envelope back empty if you just want to keep them guessing. It still costs them and, after all, it's their envelope that you're returning.

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