

Reim siblings train and fight each other

Brother-sister judokas are top Quebec combo

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Siblings, almost as a rule, have a tendency to get into fights. But rarely could those squabbles over what to watch on TV or who should get the last slice of pizza be considered training.

For N.D.G.'s Josh and Erin Reim, however, scuffles on the home front are the best way to stay in shape. Josh, 13, and Erin, 10, are probably the best brother and sister judo combo in the province.

Josh is a three-time provincial champion who is headed to his first national championships next month, while Erin won silver at the last Jeux du Québec. They have already collected gold medals at U.S. tournaments and look to have very bright futures.

But sometimes, all that training at the Shidokan Judo Club spills over to the living room.

"We fight a lot," Josh said with a big smile on his face.

And, just to make sure the point was clear, Erin added: "A lot, a lot."

But that fighting should not be mistaken for actual contempt, because the siblings couldn't be prouder of each other's accomplishments.

"Erin has the best grip I've ever seen, she holds on and doesn't let go for dear life," Josh said. "I bet you when she's my age, she'll be a lot stronger than I am now."

Josh paved the way for his sister in judo when he was 6. He was desperate to start training in a martial art of some sort, and his father, Max, figured judo would be a safe bet.

"My dad said I could do judo because there was no punching and kicking," Josh said.

"Now I realize there's choking and arm-breaking."

The siblings' success is made even more extraordinary by the fact they are each competing a bit out of their realm, simply because the province isn't equipped to deal with judokas as advanced as they are.

Josh often has to compete against athletes two years older and at least eight kilos heavier, because there is no weight class to suit his slight build. Yet he still comes out a winner more often than not.

Erin has racked up most of her victories competing in the 13-and-under age group as a 10-year-old, but she still has the maturity to put her wins in the proper perspective.

"When I'm at a tournament and

I win gold, if I didn't try my hardest, I won't be proud of myself," she said.

"I've been prouder of some of my third-place finishes than I have of some of my gold medals."

Josh's first trip to the national championships next month will be yet another step in his young career, one Erin hopes to take as well very soon.

But another step the two have already taken together is to begin mixed martial arts training to supplement their judo.

Those home "training sessions" are about to get a little nastier.

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