

# Kyokushin Crunch News

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Volume 8

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### Tournament

Four fighters... Four championship fights. Fighters representing Eagle Rock dojo achieved unprecedented success at the Little Tokyo Tournament of October 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Fighting in the 2<sup>nd</sup> match of the morning, Donald "KO Kid" Kaplan was looking to win his second Little Tokyo title. He quickly KO'ed his Oceanside opponent with a vicious array of body punches & low kicks that set the tone for the day.

Competing in his first major tournament, and fighting with a cold he'd caught from his daddy, Steven "Crusher" Kaplan won his semi-final match with a unanimous decision. After tasting The Crusher's punching power, the Torrance boy constantly retreated, Crusher following

him with straight punches and mawashi geris.

In the semi-finals of the 9-10 division, KO Kid was presented with the daunting task of fighting a taller, heavier opponent. KO, however, showed his experience by overcoming bulk with superior blocking and footwork, and then pounding the Torrance fighter into submission with rapid straight right hand-left hook combos.

Wendy "The Windmill" Gramajo gave up approximately 40 pounds in size to the Torrance boy she fought in the 11-12 semi-final. With the bipartisan crowd cheering her on, she battled him punch-for-punch in the middle of the ring, & finished by sweeping her massive opponent. In overtime, Windmill displayed her superior skills by side-stepping aggressive attacks, and countering with crippling low kicks and quick body punches. She won a 4-1 decision.

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### Upcoming Dates

- **November 20<sup>th</sup>: Promotion @ Eagle Rock Dojo. 1:00-4:00**

Burbank & Reseda dojos will join Eagle Rock for a Saturday promotion. All students will participate. Only students eligible for rank pay the \$10 fee. All students will spar, exercise, and learn new skills. Promoting students will receive promotion certificates and a personal trading card. Stripes are free, color belts cost \$5. All students should discuss their eligibility for rank with Senpai Jeremy, and attend class regularly.

- **December 4<sup>th</sup>: Winter Demonstration @ Burbank Dojo.**

Please join us for our 28<sup>th</sup> annual Winter Demonstration. The event commences with a potluck dinner, followed by a martial arts demonstration for friends & family. All students who practice shall participate! Skills will be demonstrated in bag work, kumite (fighting), kata, self-defense techniques, & board breaking. Don't miss it, bub!

### Fighting Tips

The key to power (kicking, punching, & grappling) is the ability to shift your weight. Turning your weight depends on being in balance. Below are a number of tips for improving power & balance.

**Exercise for Balance:** Get on the balls of your feet. Bring your weight down by bending your knees and lowering your hips. Keep your eyes fixed on one spot, straight ahead. *Slowly* raise one knee in the air, pointing toes down. Keep your weight low & over your hips. Count to 10; repeat with your other leg.

**Exercise for shifting weight:** Get in a fighting stance. Stay on the balls of your feet, knees bent, hips low. Stand in a doorway, or in front of a pole. Choose a spot on the doorframe or pole. Hands held high & open, you will lightly hit the spot. Pivot your feet a little & turn your shoulders, as you hit the spot (left-right- left-right) with the palms of your hands. Don't hit hard. Don't lean your head. Turn your shoulders & hips as you continuously touch your spot.

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## Fighting Tips

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### **Balance with a Partner:**

Your partner bends his knees, while you *slowly* bring your leg onto his shoulder. Next, your partner slowly stands up straight. Balance on the ball of your foot. Bend the knee on your balance foot, but keep your lifted knee straight. With eyes up, count to 10. Keeping your knee high, pivot on the ball of your balanced leg, and shift your weight to the side. This simulates a high *mawashi geri* kick. Count to 10. Do both legs.

### **Turn Shoulders w/Partner:**

Get into a fighting stance. Hands held high & open, turn your left shoulder & try to touch your partner's opposite shoulder. Turn your right shoulder & do the same. Continue without stopping (left-right-left-right).

**Fighting/Bag Work:** When sparring or hitting the bags, use these same principals: weight low on the balls of your feet, pivoting feet while you turn hips & shoulders. Do not lead with your head! Lead with your shoulders. Feel your balance over your hips. Your legs, hips, & shoulders should explode into every punch! As your balance improves, you will start increasing the speed of your combinations (turn-turn-turn) & adding kicks at the end of your combos. Continue to pivot your feet, and turn hips & shoulders as you kick.



## Tournament

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In the finals, Crusher took on the defending champion, Nathan of L.A. Though occasionally pushing Nathan back with punch combos, Crusher could not keep up with Nathan's furious pace. The L.A. fighter won a unanimous decision, & Crusher was awarded the 2<sup>nd</sup> place trophy.

In the 9-10 division final, Justin of L.A. looked to take advantage of his size by taking the fight to The KO Kid. However, KO's lack of size is deceiving; few fighters hit as powerfully, rapidly, or effectively. By the end of the fight, Justin was in retreat, hands crossed protectively over his battered chest and belly. KO won the championship on a 3-0 decision to become the 1<sup>st</sup> fighter in this tournament to win titles in 2 age divisions.

Windmill, as usual, gave up about 25 pounds to her final opponent, Maya of Torrance. Tired from her grueling semi-final, Windmill elected to counter. Maya pushed forward with punches & mae geri. Windmill side-stepped & smartly kicked her exposed legs. Following an overtime, judges awarded Maya's forward movement over Windmill's countering technique. Wendy had to settle for 2<sup>nd</sup> place, & sympathy from many audience members who felt she deserved victory. Wendy's the first fighter in this tournament to medal in 3 consecutive tournaments.

As defending champion of the 13-14 division, Ali "The Greatest" Harbi received a bye into the finals. In a rematch of April's Champion-

ship, he faced Elmo of Burbank. Elmo flashed a surprising mae geri that grazed The Greatest's nose, but after that, it was all Ali. Utilizing a sharp jab, The Greatest peppered Elmo with punch combinations, & finished with hard Thai kicks to the left thigh. Thanks to an improved jab, mawashi geri, & sharp footwork, Ali dominated a tough opponent, and won a unanimous decision to become only the 2<sup>nd</sup> champion in this tournament to repeat.

Special thanks to assistant coaches, Phil "Flash" Lomboy & Chris "Taiko" Tokita, who prepped our fighters, and Tisag "TNT" Moseley for cheering us on.

2004 was a good year for Eagle Rock karateka. Fighting in 3 tournaments (see [www.eaglerockkarate.com](http://www.eaglerockkarate.com) for results) we compiled a record of 29 wins against 7 losses. Competing in 12 divisions, we sent fighters to all 12 championship fights, winning 9 titles and 3 2<sup>nd</sup> places. Your hard work paid off!

*Little Tokyo 10/03/2004*

- 5-6 Division  
1<sup>st</sup> Place: Nathan Pantijadarma (Los Angeles)  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place: **Steven Kaplan (Eagle Rock)**
- 9-10 Division  
1<sup>st</sup> Place: **Donald Kaplan (Eagle Rock)**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Justin Naiko (L.A.)
- 11-12 Division  
1<sup>st</sup> Place: Maya Igarashi (Torrance)  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place: **Wendy Gramajo (Eagle Rock)**
- 13-14 Division  
1<sup>st</sup> Place: **Ali Harbi (Eagle Rock)**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Elmo Dimaano (Burbank)