

MIND OVER MATTER

Father-daughter bond gives Young winning edge in judo

By Maggie Thach

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Austria is not the typical destination for a father/daughter trip, but for Kevin Young and daughter Alex Young, it was a trip to Vienna that made the bond between the two stronger.

Because Kevin is diabetic and hard of hearing, Alex accompanied her father to the 2004 Judo World Championships, and it was there that Alex wanted to get back into judo.

"Originally, why I went to the world tournament was to help him. I went because he was diabetic, we didn't want him to be by himself," said Alex, a 24-year-old who works in finances at TriAmerica Financial

Services. "I saw [judo] in a different level. He put us in it when we were little, but there, I just saw how it really is, it's a beautiful sport.

And since then, Kevin and Alex, both of Clovis, have been practicing and training together. Seeing the duo at tournaments together acting as each other's coaches isn't unusual either, although Alex was unable to be in Denver with her father when he competed at the Pan American Masters Championships in November. The Masters competition is for participants 30 and over. Even without Alex giving him signals and coaching alongside him on the mat, Kevin still placed third in the age 55 to 59, 81 K (kilogram) division and

second place in the open division.

"I would have been a little more successful if she was there," said Kevin, 59, who earned silver and bronze medals. "It was a very rugged tournament. The competition was fierce."

Kevin got his start in judo when he was 5. His father, a dentist in the mass unit in the Korean War, brought the passion for the sport back with him to Bakersfield. Even though Kevin participated in other sports, judo was his main one. He even competed at a collegiate level at San Jose State.

Judo has always been a part of Kevin's life but he went through pe-

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