

Robbins in constant pursuit of gold

By **DINO MACRO**
STAFF WRITER

Chad Robbins is a 16-year-old who teaches karate. Some of his work involves handicapped kids, so patience is a virtue.

"He's a real sensitive kid," said Deerfield resident Jeff Kohn, who is Robbins' Sensei (coach) at North Shore

Martial Arts Academy in Northfield.

When Robbins steps into competition, a different face emerges.

"When he gets in the ring, he's pretty ferocious," said Kohn of the Riverwoods resident.

But the Deerfield High School student knows the boundaries of his fighting spirit.

"I like the contact," Robbins admitted. "But it's more formal (than other sports). Everything is real serious. There is no booing or taunting of the other guy."

Robbins is relentless in his pursuit of gold, though. He brought home a trio of gold medals in the recent Junior Maccabi Games at Hofstra University in Long Island, N.Y.

Ashley Mandel, a 13-year-old from Highland Park, also earned an individual bronze medal and a team gold medal. The games featured boys and

girls age 12-16 from all over the world. More than 1,600 athletes competed.

Robbins' gold medal count in two appearances in the Junior Maccabi Games: five. He also earned a silver in the '92 games in Baltimore.

Winning medals is important to Robbins. Yet he also values the opportunity to teach karate to kids aged 4-8.

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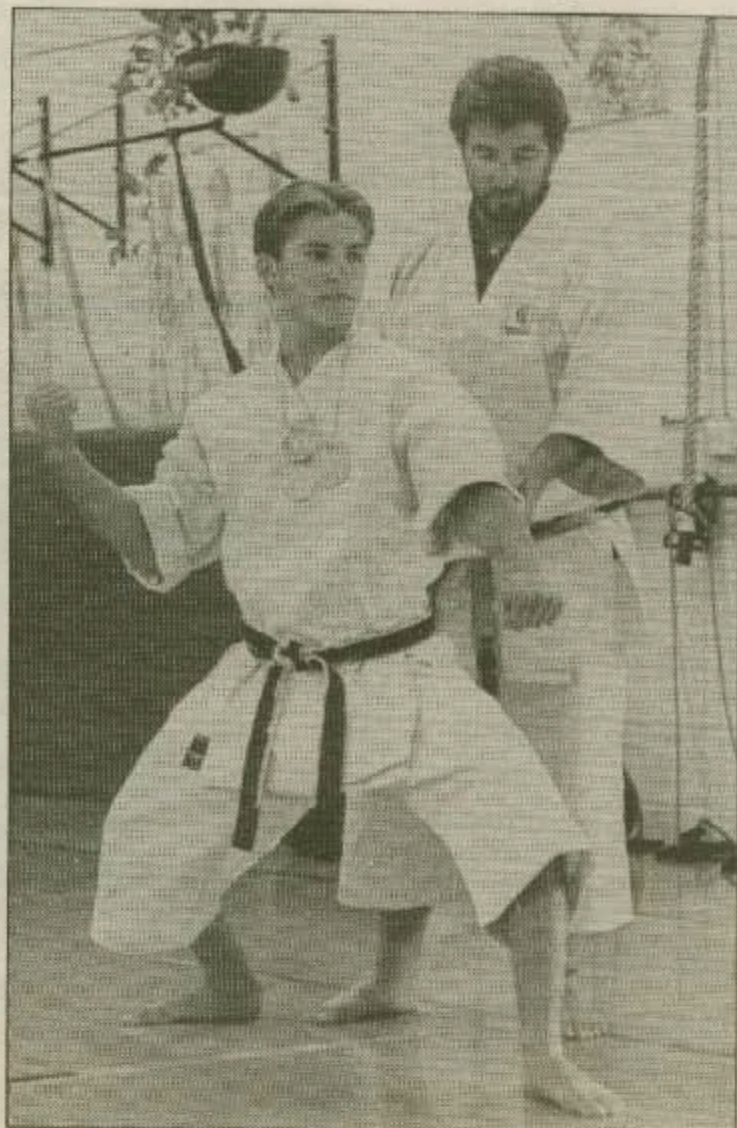
"It's rewarding," said Robbins, who teaches the basics to 10-20 kids twice a week along with one other instructor. "It's not an every day kids' job."

Neither is working on the floor of the Chicago Board of Trade.

"I was a runner there last summer," Robbins explained. "You get yelled at if you make a mistake. As the summer went on, I was getting better at it."

His karate career continues to blossom. The next step on Robbins' ladder could be the Senior Maccabi Games in Israel in 1997.

"It's a very competitive game," noted Kohn, Robbins only coach for more than 10



Riverwoods' Chad Robbins (left), seen here with his coach, Jeff Kohn, has big dreams in karate.

years. "But he's very qualified."

Farther down the line, Robbins dreams of the Olympics.

"They're talking about

making it an introductory sport in the year 2000," Robbins said.

If that happens, the world may say hello to Chad Robbins.