

Toe to toe with the best

KARATE
JESSICA CLEMENT

KARATE champion Ray Morcomb, already a real-life action hero to his students, is about to go toe to toe with the best in the world.

Australian champion Morcomb, 28, will take to the mat at the seventh World Karate Confederation Championships at Fort Lauderdale in Florida, US, this week.

When the *Advocate* caught up with Morcomb at his Pennant Hills home last week he was eager to return to the world stage after a five-year absence.

"I've been competing for a long time now and I have my own expectations," Morcomb said.

"I know what I'm capable of." So will his opposition.

Morcomb has competed at the sport's highest level twice before, in 2004 and as a 20-year-old in 2001.

In 2001, he stormed through the elimination stages to reach the top 16.

"I'd like to better that result. But you never know who you're going to draw in those early rounds," he said.

"The way I see it though is if you win it you have to beat them all anyway."

‘If you apply yourself and stick to it then you can achieve at a high level’

— Ray Morcomb

Morcomb will compete in the under-68kg division in the black belt kata and the black belt kumite (sparring). He qualified for the event after being crowned Australian champion last August.

Morcomb, who is the head instructor of Evolution Martial Arts at Thornleigh and Pennant Hills, said his students were well and truly on his side.

"All the kids are really excited I'm going across," he said.

"It's good to be in a position to set an example for them – not just for karate but in life. If you apply yourself and stick to it then you can achieve at a high level."

Morcomb has broken his nose four times, had "countless" broken knuckles, several shoulder operations and an array of injuries to his feet and toes.

"But it's well worth it in the end," he said.



See what Morcomb will be up against in our online video at www.hornsbyadvocate.com.au



Ray Morcomb will contest the Karate World Championships this week.

Picture: BRENT MCGILVARY

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