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# Top judoka is back with a bang

**Koos Venter**

Sometimes you got to lose something to appreciate what you had.

DJ le Grange from TuksJudo can vouch for this statement. He started competing in February again after being suspended for two years for the use of a banned substance.

At a recent South African Ranking Judo Tournament in Cape Town he was in outstanding form winning all four his fights in under two minutes. What made his performance impressive was that he won by ippon.

An ippon is awarded for a technique which is judged as decisive. It is usually a move which connects cleanly, with good form and with little opportunity for the opponent to defend against it.

It was only Le Grange's fourth tournament since he has been allowed to compete again.

"I can't describe how good it feels to be back on the judo mats testing my skill against opponents again. It is one thing to train and something else to compete. At times over the past two years it felt like I was in 'prison' for I missed actively participating in judo so much," said

Le Grange who was placed fifth in the u.60kg category at the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.

"The last two years were not all bad. I had time to do things other people do every day. I bought a house, started a company with a friend and got engaged," he said at a recent training session.

Le Grange admits that the biggest mistake he made was to be careless in the medication he used.

"My advice to any youngster who is serious about sport is to make sure before taking any medicine. If in doubt don't use it. It is not worth it to put your sports career at risk."



Top local judoka, DJ le Grange.  
Photo: Reg Caldecott

