

Pierre Damoiseau.

6th Dan Karate Black Belt, National 2nd level Instructor.

Technical Director of the Ecole Clermontoise de Karate & Auvergne region League.

National-level referee.

Concerning: letter of recommendation for Theo Barrard

Dear Madam or Sir,

In my 30 years as Director of the 7th largest Karate club in France I have had the opportunity to train several thousand people and to guide hundreds of them to the Karate black-belt level and beyond.

My approach is mainly focused on personal development, specifically helping children to learn and flourish in the sport. I was a precursor in the French Federation in building a teaching method adapted to the youngest students. This has allowed me to accompany many different children with varying profiles.

I have appreciated Theo's impressive capabilities as a Karateka since he was 5 years old:

- Ability to integrate the most complex movements and technical arrangements normally practiced much later, sometimes trying to find by himself ways to perfect their execution or understand the underlying logic (at an age when others often sought basic balance and coordination or to simply have fun).
- Winner of the majority of regional competitions when he was a child followed by many first-place or podium finishes in major national and international competitions. It is even more remarkable since he is one of the rare competitors at this level to practice 2 disciplines requiring very different skills and mindsets: "combat and kata". He was also probably the only one among the "top 5 in his category" to not train in a competition club (our club is more focused on leisure and tradition).
- Youngest black belt in the club at 14 years old (minimum age to be eligible) and with the best scores in the region.
- In the last 2 years before his departure for the US, he was accepted for individual coaching by a 5-time World champion and 6-time European champion.

These athletic capabilities also reveal some character traits that I would like to highlight:

- Exceptional personal motivation and determination: able to train 6 hours a week in expert adult-level classes plus at least as much individual practice to relentlessly and without compromise perfect each movement.
- An ability to question and challenge himself, to learn, and to individually seek improvement that is rarely observed in this age group.

- An impressive maturity despite a difficult personal situation. Capable at a very young age of facing the pressure of competition and of being responsible for a demonstration during the annual club gala. Capable of running a warm-up or practice session with children or teenagers of his age knowing how to listen to them, understand them, and keep them interested to help them focus and progress.
- Recognized as a peer by highly-ranked adults who have always appreciated his commitment, his humility, and depth.
- Beyond the sport, Theo has always shown a profound respect for the tradition, culture, and the origin of our art in order to go further in learning the sport but also because of his passion and curiosity for the world around us.

It has been wonderful for me, and for all of us, to know Theo as a person and as an athlete. He has shown a rare balance of vivacity, sensitivity, determination, and being self-demanding – a complete “heart, head, and legs” profile.

I am convinced that Theo will be able to show all his potential in his future studies and beyond. Whether in the context of classes or extra-curricular activities, he will actively participate in the dynamics, the spirit, and the success of the teams that he will be involved with.

I sincerely believe that beyond being a colleague, a partner, and a friend that you can always count on, he will be exemplary and demonstrate a natural leadership. He for sure will be a reference regarding his level of self-demand and commitment, and his values.

Sincerely yours,

Pierre Damoiseau

ECOLE CLERMontoise DE KARATÉ
Maison des Sports
Place des Bughes
63000 CLERMONT-FERRAND
Agrément J et S 63 S 109

