



Brookvale teen Simon Chandra, 13, is a world champion in jujitsu. Picture: Troy Snook

## SIMON SAYS 'FOLLOW DREAMS'

**Bryn Kay**

HE'S the Brookvale sporting prodigy who has grappled his way to the top of the world.

At just 13 years old, Simon Chandra became a world champion last month at the Abu Dhabi World Youth Jiu-Jitsu Championship.

The young gun Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu (BJJ) competitor beat four opponents - including a local fighter in the final - to claim his maiden world title.

Simon, who has only been competing in BJJ for five years, said that he had trained six days a week in preparation for the major tournament.

"It's my favourite activity to do," he said. "I take it really seriously and I love how you put so much work into it and it pays off in the end.

"You don't really get bored because there's so many techniques you have to learn."

The Forest High student - who trains at Sydney Jiu-Jitsu Academy in Crows Nest and Dee Why - also coaches children younger than himself.

"I think quite a few little kids there look up to me. I would say to them, 'keep training for your dream and one day you will accomplish it,'" he said.

Simon thanked his coaches, Bruno Alves and Vincent Molica for their support.

### COUNCIL AMALGAMATIONS

# Dick deems merger call 'right move'

Parking, savings, walkway listed as achievements

**Robbie Patterson**

A YEAR after amalgamation, Northern Beaches Council administrator Dick Persson has declared the transition from three councils into one "a success".

A merger savings fund - expected to raise \$10 million a year towards public infrastructure - plus the rollout of large-scale projects which were previously unachievable, had shown the council's value, he said.

Mr Persson also highlighted opportunities available from mergers such as free beach parking for residents, a golf course review and the northern beaches walkway connecting Manly to Palm Beach.

But it came as an anti-amalgamation rally organised by the Save Or Councils Coalition took place in the Domain.

Buoyed by the renewed momentum for anti-merger activists, some former Pittwater council residents will host a forum next Tuesday to raise funds to launch a legal bid to de-merge.

The anniversary of the State Government's amalgamations also saw eastern suburbs-based Woollahra Council win the right to launch an appeal against its forced merger with Waverley and Randwick councils in the NSW High Court.

The Greens and former Pittwater councillor Bob Grace are leading the renewed push, which will launch on Tuesday night



Administrator Dick Persson.

from 7pm at Pittwater RSL.

They cited the decisions about Woollahra and Kuring-gai Council, which won a High Court battle to cancel a merger with Hornsby Council, as a positive sign.

Mr Persson would not comment on the protests but said he believed a majority of people were happy with the council and that staff had achieved the brief set out by the government.

"Not much was supposed to change in year one, the government's policy - they hold this council up as the model of success which is very flattering," he said.

"The merger savings is \$5.5 million per annum and it will build to \$10 million per annum, that will be forever. It will be an annual dividend to the residents. I have set some early priorities (on how to spend that money) the elected council can review them and change them if they want."

He said the majority of residents "thought of themselves as living on the northern beaches, rather than a specific suburb, before amalgamations, mak-

ing the transition easy.

He pointed to his first policy - the beach parking stickers allowing residents to park for free at any beach - as an example of how things were better as a bigger community.

"Even now, I am in sandwich shops and people say 'thanks for the sticker,'" he said. "The reason the previous councils didn't do it was they looked at revenue, not what is best for the broader population."

He highlighted the Mona Vale Place Plan as one of the bigger frustrations.

"I don't think we have made any mistakes, but obviously I hadn't appreciated the extent to which some people in the old Pittwater council area would try to hijack an initiative like the place plan," he said.

He argued it was used as an anti-amalgamation tool to destabilise the council.

"I hope people who want to protect the values they hold in Pittwater think carefully on how they go into that battle," he said.

Greens MLC David Shoebridge will discuss his bill for council demergers at Tuesday's meeting.

At yesterday's rally he stated: "Twelve months on from the Coalition's forced amalgamations announcement the High Court has delivered them one hell of a birthday present. The High Court decision inspires the hopes of residents in Pittwater and other councils that have been forcibly amalgamated."

## SYDNEY'S LATEST BATHROOM SHOWROOM

With Tap, Tile, Sink, Laundry & Cooking Displays

Specialising for Builders, Plumbers, Trades & Home Renovators

- Over 1000m<sup>2</sup> of Bathroom, Tap, Tile, Sink, Laundry & Cooking Displays
- Modern Displays of Latest Designs
- Leading Brands
- Concept Bathrooms & Ideas
- Experienced & Specialist Advice
- Relaxation & Kids Zone

NEWEST SHOWROOM ON THE NORTH SHORE

www.hg.com.au

68 Winbourne Rd, Brookvale.... 8456-1300  
Extra parking via 728 Pittwater Rd  
Mona Vale showroom at 60 Darley St... 9997-1711

HUGE SHOWROOM GREAT RANGE!

V1 - MANE01201MA

MANLY DAILY, Saturday, May 13, 2017 09

press reader Printed and distributed by PressReader PressReader.com • +1 604 278 4604 COPYRIGHT AND PROTECTED BY APPLICABLE LAW