



# Wado International Karate-Do Federation

## DOJO CONNECTION

April 2005

### Quote of the Month

Gene Evans

*"Some choices we live not only once but a 1000 times over, remembering them for the rest of our lives."*

Experts say it takes 21 days to create a good habit, 7 days to break a good habit and 30 days to break a bad habit and 7 days to create a bad habit. Make sure the actions we take are the one's that we want to become our habits. Don't lose sight of our vision and make sure the choices we make are ones that we will be happy to live with, over and over.

### WADO Message Board

Some of you are undoubtedly familiar with the Message Board on the WIKFUSA website. Others of you may not even be aware of its existence. There have been some pretty informative discussions that have occurred on these pages and I would encourage more of you to participate. I have copied a few of the messages and placed them in this issue of the Connection so that you can get a taste of what I am talking about.

### AAU Face Masks

(Topic on Message Board)

Dale Gatchalian

I have not worn face masks either, but have seen them in use.

The earliest videos that I have seen were back in the 1980's of the All Japan Karatedo Championships. It looked either the competitors, the officials, the manufacturers of the face masks, or the organizing committee overestimated the efficacy and safety of the face masks because it seemed like they hit the mask as if it was a piece of padding with full force. Now instead of getting hit in the face with a few square inches of padding they got crammed in the face with a full impact resistant plastic. Suffice it to say I sure would not be going to work on Monday after that.

When I was taking a Sport Psychology class, we had a guest lecturer – Red Cashion, former NFL referee and referee in a few Super Bowls. The thing that struck me the most about his lecture was not his theories on how the minds of athletes work or anything that was necessarily going to be tested on an exam but rather a commentary that he made on the safety equipment in the NFL. He was a proponent of returning to a time when helmets were NOT used. This world class referee was actually endorsing a seemingly insane idea of less safety. His reasoning however was valid to say the least. Football helmets of today are nothing like the helmets of the early days of football. Today, they are, as he stated, "weapons." They are made so well to protect the athlete wearing it that the player could get figuratively hit by a Mack truck and still make it to the line of scrimmage before the play clock runs out. The downside to this increased level of safety is a sense of security accompanied by a neglect of prudent safety should the gear not be worn. Players began to realize that they could "attack" with their helmets by "spearing" and without a significant risk for injury. Helmets effectively went from safety equipment to "weapons" or even "protective gear for safety neglect."

Without the technologically advanced helmets, the sense of security would be removed from the player's minds. Players would begin thinking of their own personal safety rather than attacking without thought of preservation of self.

What would face masks do? Would it give competitors a false sense of security? Would we also see karateka lunging into a clash without concern for their own safety leading to increases in Mubobi and contact fouls and possibly even worse causing greater damage from the plastic hitting the entire face than the glove hitting a localized area? Would we see careless attacks and decrease in the quality of techniques because of the lack of fear of getting hit in the face?

As was stated by Sensei Burns, I haven't worn a face mask let alone competed and been hit while wearing one. I can see the need for safety devices to insure the safety of our competitors, but I would have to agree that by adding additional safety devices merely gives a false sense of control. Control must be learned and safety devices should not take the place of adequate training.

### **What Is Wado**

(Topic on Message Board)

Doug Jepperson

Dale and Tom are focusing on one of my favorite topics, practice, searching for the way. Sometimes it helps to back up the esoteric eastern way of learning with western science.

Dr. Michael Livingston (Harvard Law Professor, Olympic Athlete 1972) contends that "Right" practice involves systematic thought or conduct performed for the purpose of acquiring knowledge or skills. He mentions, and get this he has no knowledge of martial arts that I know of, that proper practice for athletic achievement and peak performance is found on the path of practice.

He goes on to say that the essential aspect of practice is it's implication of purposeful thought or conduct. It is the concept of purpose that distinguishes practice from experience. Without question one can learn from experience, but mere experience is a clumsy and limited way to learn, and it certainly does not constitute practice. Only when experience is systematized by the application of purpose does it rise to the level of practice. So the next time some old fart tells you he has 30 years of experience, ask him, but how many of those years did you practice?

Enough of the science. I am more of a poet, so I like the ethereal part of martial arts too.

"For me there is only the traveling on paths that have heart, on any path that may have heart. There I travel and the only worthwhile challenge is to traverse it full length, and there I travel, looking, looking breathlessly." (*Don Juan*, Carlos Castaneda)

Think about what Castaneda says and you realize the tournaments, the promotion tests, seminars special events all fade from memory. As the dust gathers over these memories all we have left is practice, our journey down the path. And hopefully if you are lucky, you have the right Sensei, and the moon is in the proper alignment, you are on a path with heart.

### **Ichigo, Ichi-e**

Tom Kosslow

A lot of you are probably familiar with this phrase. For those of you who are not it comes from a treatise used by Naosuki Ii in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and it means "one encounter; one chance."

When I first heard this, probably around 15 years ago, I thought it was in reference to fighting and your technique against an opponent. However it turns out it was made in reference Chado...The Way of Tea. Basically it means that the host of the tea ceremony has only one chance to prepare the tea and the recipient has only one chance to appreciate it. It can never be replicated exactly the same again once the moment is gone.

I still see the relevance to facing an opponent and executing a technique as if it would be my only chance. To realize the chance at the moment is a critical way of thinking when facing an opponent. I still think that you should make each technique as if it would be the decisive technique. But I also now see the relevance to other aspects of my martial arts training and my life as well.

I am reminded of a karate sensei that died stepping off of a bus. The driver that hit him was high and had just stolen the car he was driving. The person I am thinking of just happened to be in his path. Each time you get to train in the dojo you should consider that it could be your last encounter, last chance to train yourself or with your sensei. Think about that as it relates to your family, friends, physical health etc. I woke up one morning and found myself in surgery and spent six months recovering. Remember whatever you are doing; one encounter; one chance and you will change your way of thinking and acting.

### **News**

1. Unfortunately it is going to be necessary to cancel the summer training scheduled for Utah June 14-19<sup>th</sup>. Sometimes things just don't work out the way we would like. We hope this does not cause a problem for any of our members or friends.
2. The Newnan Karate Center wishes to congratulate CHRIS NIELSEN on his promotion to the rank of Ik-Kyu (1<sup>st</sup> Brown Belt).
3. Susuki Sensei's Essence of Wado-Ryu tapes are now available as a DVD set. Check the website for information on ordering.