Wado International Karate-Do Federation

DOJO CONNECTION

"Like Minded People With A Common Goal"

September 2010

WIKF WORLD CUP 2011

WIKF USA is proud to announce that we will be hosting the 2011 WIKF World Cup. Sensei Brody Burns has announced that the 2011 WIKF World Cup will be held in Texas August 9-14, 2011. More information concerning hotels and the rest of the venue will be announced later this year. Start making your plans now to attend this world class event!

SUZUKI CUP 2010

The 2010 Suzuki Cup Tournament and WIKF Training seminar will take place in Plano Texas November 10-13th. Make plans now to attend all or part of this event.

SPECIAL RATE FOR SUZUKI CUP PARTICIPANTS at
Plano Marriott at Legacy Town Center
7120 Dallas Parkway
Plano, Texas 75024
972-473-6440

For more information contact Sensei Brody Burns at **bburns@planodojo.com**

DOJO NEWS

Mountain Martial Arts in Tennessee:

Sensei Michael Cimino-Hurt wishes to announce the following promotions

Dale Hoagland	**7th Kyu (Orange)**
Shyanne Griffith	**6th Kyu (Green)**
Megan Griffith	**6th Kyu (Green)**
Robert Yates	**5th Kyu (Blue)**

Newnan Karate Center, Newnan, Georgia

Recent Promotions:

Trevor Wright	**3rd Kyu**
Chaz Brown	**4th Kyu**
Terrez Willis	**6th Kyu**
Khalob Hill	**6th Kyu**
Destiny Brown	**6th Kyu**
Todd Traver	**7th Kyu**
AJ Trever	**7th Kyu**
Brianna Trammell	**8th Kyu**

NEW DOJO

The members of the Board of Directors of WIKF USA are pleased to announce the addition of a new

WIKF dojo in Rochester, New York. **Sensei Dan Taylor** is the chief instructor. Sensei Taylor is a 4th Dan who was promoted by Suzuki Sensei way back in 1992. Because of personal reasons he was unable to be active in WIKF until just recently Sensei Taylor is working to organize a Karate Association in the Rochester area. He has friends here and they are going to have a Rochester Association the goal to organize to lift the image of karate to a higher place, within the community. Maybe organize with other businesses and attempt to be more professional and organized within the social structure in Rochester, New York. His motive is to make karate a serious discipline and show the community that there is an accredited and legitimate organization within the community. Sensei Taylor says that the reason he wanted to connect with Suzuki Sensei again is because he has had the right training and is still working still to be a good karate-ka and show the community what real karate is.

"I train hard, still work to be better each week at my techniques and show everyone age is not a factor that is what separates our system from other systems. He (Suzuki Sensei) is an inspiration to me and his words still ring in my ears, when we talked on the phone in the late nineties. This is also another reason I wish to support him. He is more than an inspiration to me when in my darkest hour my strength came from my karate training and years of working at the perfection of Wado technique. Wado has a new meaning for me and I wish to be a proud member of his organization."

New Web Page

WIKF USA has revised their web page thanks to the work of Sensei Richard Gainey. You can view the web page at

www.WIKFUSA.com

Assumptions

By Toby Threadgill, Takamura-ha Shindo Yoshin-ryu

Recently I was introduced to a gentleman interested in martial arts training. He was not really aware of what I teach or of what constitutes Nihon Koryu Jujutsu. He just assumed that because I taught it, that I must believe it to be "the best". When I told him I did not believe the art I taught to be "the best", an uncomfortable silence ensued. I finally broke this taciturn moment by explaining that there is actually no such thing as a "best" martial art. Despite a noble effort to grasp what I was talking about, the gentleman in question eventually regressed, unable to shake the impression that if I was not convinced that what I taught was superior to all other forms of martial arts, that I was somehow unworthy of teaching him. I politely encouraged him to look around, consider what I had said and contact me again if he had any further questions. A few days later I received an e-mail from this gentleman in which he explained that he had indeed found someone convinced that they taught the ultimate style of martial arts. It was called "mixed martial arts" because it embodied only the best of all the styles. I just smiled to myself as I politely responded, congratulating him on his fortuitous discovery.

An ultimate martial art, huh? Now there's an oxymoron for you. Every martial art is ultimately based on assumptions. In fact any training program formulated to address conflict is based on assumptions. It's kinda like the old joke about bringing a knife to a gun fight. No matter how good you are, your assumptions define your training paradigm. Narrow your assumptions and you specialize, gaining the opportunity to excel at one task. Broaden your assumptions and you might be able address many different situations but at what level of expertise? It's an intriguing dilemma isn't it? Specialize, and be defeated by someone outside your strengths. Be a generalist and some specialist will hand you your head on a platter. What's a martial artist to do?

Years ago my teacher Yukio Takamura taught a seminar which touched upon this topic. The seminar subject was a comparison between sport budo and classical budo. During the lunch break a young karateka and wrestler, I'll call Donny, loudly dismissed Takamura Sensei's teachings as antiquated nonsense. In response to this pronouncement Takamura shook his head and chuckled while fiddling with his shoes. Donny, rather brash and full of bravado turned to Takamura Sensei and said, "Now don't get me wrong old man, your stuff is fun to watch and all but your jujutsu is no match for my karate and wrestling. Takamura flashed a devilish smile at Donny and said, "Okay, show me". Donny

backed off a bit at this unexpected challenge and said "Well, I'm not going to fight you, you're too old. How about him" pointing at Dave Maynard. Takamura responded "No, you were talking about my jujutsu, not his. I want you to show me." Rather pensively Donny strolled out onto the dojo mat with Takamura Sensei as a hushed silence overtook the room. At first Donny appeared reluctant to do anything but when he noticed that all eyes were on him he revved up his courage and proceeded to execute a very nice double leg takedown, climbing up on what at first appeared to be a rather startled Takamura Sensei. As Donny attempted to continue his seemingly successful offense we noticed something flick around Donny's neck. Suddenly, Donny tried to pull away, his head turning as red as a ripe tomato. In a few seconds he fell over wheezing. At that point we realized that a shoelace was resting tightly around Donny's neck. Where had it come from? Takamura had secreted the shoelace in his sleeve and then executed a simple choke with it. As he revived Donny from his impromptu slumber he explained to the stunned witnesses that Donny had missed the point of the seminar altogether and made a dangerous assumption. He assumed that this was a contest with rules and that Takamura sensei was unarmed. The most interesting thing to me about this whole incident was that Takamura had deliberately pulled the shoelace from his shoe, placed it in his sleeve in plain sight and not one of us noticed. What a lesson rich incident this was…

Now I'm sure that some MMA proponents will roll their eyes at this interlude and remark that it proves nothing. They will say venues like Pride and UFC prove you must do everything in budo well and that Takamura Sensei with a shoelace couldn't defeat the likes of Matt Hughes or Sakuraba. That's probably true and sounds convincing enough but such a dismissal misses the point. The truth is that to be successful in a venue like the UFC your time is best spent training to confront the challenges you ASSUME you will meet in the ring. Training outside such an assumption is a waste of time. However, drop a Portuguese knife fighter into the UFC ring and the mixed martial arts guy will realize he's really not a mixed martial artist after all, but instead a specialist in unarmed sport conflict who hasn't "mixed" expertise in knife fighting into his supposedly mixed martial art.

Those nasty old assumptions…

Now don't get me wrong, I greatly admire the technical efficacy and extreme level of physical training the serious MMA practitioners like those in Pride or UFC display but outside the paradigm they train for they can be just as vulnerable as anyone else. It's not the individual version of MMA itself that made guys like Rickson Gracie, Ken Shamrock, Sakuraba or Matt Hughes champions. It's really their creativity within each venues rules and the extreme level of training they have devoted to obtaining their skills. Each of these guys within the paradigm of what they do has trained himself to an extreme level. That's the real secret to the best style of budo… Training intensity!

So don't get hung up in training in the ultimate martial art. You will be chasing assumptions forever. Instead pick an art that makes assumptions in line with what you value or desire and then train with a level of dedication equal to what you expect to get from your martial art. If you're a police officer this will probably be a very different from a college professor.

In the case of the gentleman who contacted me in search of the ultimate martial art, I guess it is human nature to seek out someone else's version of what's best when one has scant experience to base an opinion on, but it is amusing to note how many people studying martial arts beyond a beginners level fail to progress beyond the myopic view that there could be any such thing as an ultimate martial art.

Remember, the only accurate assumption in budo is that your assumptions are never 100% correct.

A Little More on The Lost Fleet, by Jack Campbell

By *Michael Cimino-Hurt*

In the last Dojo Connection, Sensei Kosslow wrote about the Lost Fleet novels, a series of science fiction books he and I had the pleasure to read about a commander of an Allied Worlds battle cruiser who was cryogenically frozen after a battle in which his ship is destroyed in a rear guard maneuver that saved a fleet. One hundred years later, he is recovered just before a crucial battle, and is placed in command of a

fleet after the senior officers are killed in a betrayal. It is newly promoted Captain John Geary who saves the fleet from destruction, and finds the knowledge that he and many other trained officers had taken for granted, had been lost through a century of brutal war. The result was that fleets used battle plans that were as destructive to their own ships and people as to those of the enemy.

I wanted to add a bit onto what Mr. Kosslow said about the traditions and knowledge that were lost by these commanders and the navy of that future time. I found that *what* had been lost was as surprising as the fact that things had changed. I think there are lessons there that we might think about.

First, the most important thing they had lost was honor. In their anger at the perceived brutality of the enemy, they had sacrificed their principles in favor of an overarching desire for revenge. Over the long-run, this mindset almost cost them the war. Once they had stooped as low as their enemy in what atrocities they were willing to commit, they were fighting an enemy not recognizably different or worse than they were themselves.

Second, those in command had lost their compassion for those who served under them, and were willing to sacrifice the lives of subordinates in rash actions that were fueled by ego, arrogance and ambition. To the unbiased eye, they probably didn't deserve to win, if this had become their motivation.

Third, they had lost unity of action. As a result of their rush to individual glory, they had come to value personal achievement over cooperation, to the detriment of their ability to work cohesively as a fighting force, with the result of staggering losses in every engagement.

And last, a majority of the commanders no longer honed their skills thoroughly enough to learn their craft properly. They lacked training, which is the backbone of an efficient fighting force. Training builds patience, and gives people time to grow deep in their knowledge. It tells them how to plan in advance and gives them the stability to deal with the unexpected.

It is not difficult to imagine that Mr. Koss low's karate visitor from the past would find things much different, but I would hope that he would not think that we had lost the principles that are central to Budo. I would hope he would see integrity and principled behavior from our practitioners. I would hope he would see teachers with compassion for their students, and students who had respect for their teachers and for the principles and traditions of the arts. I would hope he would find us working together for our common good and the continuation of our shared art. And I hope he would find us training as hard as we can to grow deeper, and it is hoped, wiser in our understanding of the martial arts path of Wado that we walk together.

I think you should know this about Karate-Do

By Doug Jepperson

Karate-do means the "Way" of karate. It is a journey, which begins with the physical and ends with the spiritual.

I often heard that martial arts were not about fighting, but I did not understand this.

I heard that we train for other purposes than the physical exercise, but I did not understand this.

I heard that we train in martial arts to lose our ego, but I did not understand this.

Now years later I still understand less than I should, but I know this, you train to discipline your mind. Training consistently is difficult, it is painful, and boring and surprisingly for me, it does not get easier the longer you do it. You train to get past the ego. You train alone. You train to work in the struggle, not win in it. You train to strengthen your spirit, the indomitable spirit, the unconquerable spirit.

I have seen Sensei Suzuki train when he thought no one was watching. He needs to train like we need to breathe

We all love the stories of the Samurai and how they trained their mind to face death unflinchingly. I wrote to Tom Kosslow to tell him how much I enjoyed the movie "The Last Samurai". How I wished I too could fight a battle over my principles with life or death in the balance

But after reflecting on this and reflecting on my own training since I was in high school. Looking at my life at age fifty-four I realized that the Samurai

training his mind for one singular battle of life and death had it easy. That is not difficult.

The difficult part is to train when there is no great battle. No readily apparent goal. I know that exercise and good health are a goal. But this is too vague and no one has given me a trophy or medal when I get my cholesterol to go down because I have exercised.

The years go by, time takes it toll and wears down the strongest among us. All the people I looked up to when I began training have retired. People I trained with my own age have mostly all retired. Now students and friends younger than me are telling me they are too old to do this.

But occasionally once in a great while when the moon is right I get just a glimpse of what I should know about Karate-Do. It is about discipline, persistence and developing the spirit in the most difficult way possible through the body, <u>because it is difficult.</u>

We are all heroes in disguise. Most have "it" in them to fight the great battle. I believe we all have the potential to be brave on occasion even self-sacrificing. But to do this all your life, when no on is watching, that is altogether different.

My instructor, Toshio Osaka, told me once the most important thing is continuation.

So the struggle is more about continuing, for which there is no "how to manual". The old Masters hinted at this as they wrote down their intentions of what Karate-do would mean.

Gichin Funakoshi, the so called father of Japanese Karate, said karate meant "empty hands," but also "emptiness of bad intentions." It's the recognition of self-reliance. Empty hands implies a commitment to shape your life as you choose. It implies self-direction, fortitude and strength of spirit. And it requires disciplined training. It begins with physical training; the thrusting, blocking and kicking that make up the training of karate-do. But this is only the beginning. The end is to discover who you are and to discover your own unconquerable spirit.

Yes, the Samurai in the movie did have it easy, I would like to see one of those guys come and train today. Train even though he had HDTV a DVD player with surround sound. Train when there was a plate of chocolate chip cookies in front of the fireplace. Train when there is no battle.

So perhaps we need to recognize today's challenge as finding our Samurai spirit in spite of the times we live in, finding our fighting spirit in spite of the boredom, or the pain.

And by the way this is not just a Japanese concept, Calvin Coolidge said this, about that:

Nothing in the world can take the place of perseverance, talent will not.

Nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent.

Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb.

Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts.

Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent….Press On!

<u>Will you ever arrive?</u>

By Tom Kosslow

Karate training requires the very best you have. The path to real skill is not a path for people who are afraid to take risks and grow. You can't be faint-hearted. You have to be courageous and committed. Even if you are all of that what happens after you attain some skill? There is a story of a monk who was famous for having become enlightened. He was asked what life was like before he became enlightened and he replied," I chopped wood and carried water." Asked what his life was like after he became enlightened his response was," I chop wood and carry water."

Self empowerment is taking action. It is how you do things and the fact that you do it at all that changes everything. The process of becoming a skilled karate-ka is not a destination. Instead it is a journey that is never ending. You have to recognize that you will never arrive. The more you do it, the more proficient you become, the more you realize that there is always more to learn, more to be done.