

March 2012 Newsletter
Goju-Ryu Karate-Do Kyokai

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Annual Dues 2012

by Ed Myers

“It is once again time to collect the annual dues and generate an active member list. Dan ranks are \$25 and Kyu ranks are \$15. Dojo leaders are to send this to your national director. The national directors are to send the active member list to Ed Myers (CEO) and the monies to Jean Stamper (Treasurer). This is all due by April 1, 2012.”

Windsor, Canada Seminar

by John Roath

On Feb. 11th and 12th, 2012, Yamakura Shihan visited Canada and conducted a seminar at the Windsor YMCA. As always it was a very informative event and our thanks go out to Pirrone Sensei for bringing this training opportunity to us. We are truly fortunate.

During the seminar Shihan covered many topics from stance transitions, basic's practice, kata review (Kihon Tzuki, Geki Sai's, Saifa, Seiunchin, Sanseiru, and Sanchin Testing), bunkai, conditioning drills, some partner work and he also discussed overlying principles in the martial arts. There was a lot of information shared in a short period of time which makes it hard to accurately write up now.

With each portion of the seminar, Shihan called attention to areas where focus should be noted and where corrections should be worked on. He did this with both the group as a whole as well as providing individual students with areas of focus in front of the group. There were probably more things covered too, hopefully I'll remember those at some point. Sometimes it's hard to take everything in all at once and it takes time or practise to bring it back into mind.

Something that does strike me at a personal level with these visits is how varied the information presented is and the depth of instruction. This becomes evident when you talk to different students afterward and hear what they have to say. When you listen to the comments its remarkable how different people were able to learn or see different material being presented. Things that were important to them that I had either missed or overlooked, but once brought up I remembered. In my mind that kind of depth is a true indication of quality instruction. To me it was just a great learning environment and a pleasure to be part of. Our thanks go out to Yamakura Shihan for sharing his time and knowledge with us again.

As a bit of added interest to the weekend on the 11th there was a gathering for Fina Pirrone's 12th birthday, Happy Birthday Fina!!



Did You Know?

by Rich Stamper

Did you know that Yamakura Shihan visited our schools in Canada six times last year? He did. And he will visit your school too if you just ask. Contact Headquarters or Shihan directly to arrange for a visit.

USA-NKF National Championships and Team Trials

by Mark Cramer

This year, Bedford Goju-Ryu Karate-do Seiwa Kai and Bedford Community Education are sponsoring the Michigan Qualifying Tournament to the USA-NKF National Championships and Team Trials. The tournament will be held at Bedford High School on Saturday, March 24. Competition will begin at 10:00 A.M. The entry fee is \$45 for USANKF members and \$50 for non-members. This allows an athlete to compete in up to four events without any additional charge and includes a weekend membership to the USANKF for those who are not members. The spectator fee is \$6 for adults and \$3 for children. For more information, contact Mr. Cramer at: colette.cramer@att.net

Koshin Iha

by Michael Galose

I regret to inform my friends at the GKK that Koshin Iha, senior student of Miyazato Sensei, and former student of Miyagi Sensei, has died. Koshin Iha was the chairperson of The Okinawan Goju Ryu Karate Do Kyokai, a kaihwa which is a collective of Okinawan organizations and dojos dedicated to the preservation, propagation and practice of Goju Ryu. The OGKK has branch dojos throughout the world. Mr. Iha helped lead Goju Ryu from the post WW2 world, the industrial era into the millennium. Simply put, Iha Sensei forged the way from the post World War 2 perception of karate as seen solely as an Okinawan / Japanese self defense system, - into the modern perception today that karate do is a cultural gift to the world from Okinawa, which has self defense, artistic, intellectual, cultural, and spiritual components. Sensei Iha's teachings, like all great meijins, will live on through his students!----Michael Galose.

Training Event, Cumberland National Park, Kentucky

by Ken Maunz

I am trying to put a camping, vacation, and training thing together. So I'm putting this out to check the interest for it. The target date is Wednesday June 13th to Sunday June 17th. The place is Cumberland Gap National Park, KY. Cost, guess about \$50. Hope to have 2 practices a day. Instructors will be myself and whoever else maybe talked into it. There is great hiking at the park, 15 miles of bike trails, mostly paved. There are also 125 miles of trails very close for ATV, 4 wheel, dirt bikes and the other stuff you can find to get dirty with. There is also a cave tour in the park. Also a lot of historical interest. The campground is a nice one with electric and non-electric sites about \$14 to \$18 per night. Several motels close.

Things could change a little depending on group interest. At this time it is the guideline. Any interest?

Contact me at kenmaunz@bex.net

An Excerpt From:

The Character of Goju-Ryu Kata Implications for Experienced Practitioners

by Rich Stamper

Chapter 12 - In The Beginning - Movement

Movement is pretty basic to martial arts practice and often taken for granted. By movement I mean stepping from stance to stance, but I will also discuss movement within a stance.

We tend to emphasize the completed stance – the posture, balance, weight distribution, being locked in, being rooted and so on. We tend to neglect the transitions from stance to stance or within a stance, and tend to view these as simply the movement required to get from one good stance to the next. When doing this we severely limit our effectiveness for practical, actual application.

Most instructors teach a smooth, quick transition from stance to stance. This is good and appropriate. But then many of the instructors insist upon a fully established stance prior to executing a hit, kick or block. This becomes a sequential action and the momentum of the stance movement does not carry into the technique. This reduces the effectiveness because it uses strength only, not a combination of strength and momentum.

Another factor is lack of understanding of focus. Focus does not mean locked or tense. When locked or tense at the instant of impact, a lot of the energy is held back by the locking action. While the lock-in is important, it should occur well after impact. For example, when breaking a board, one should punch through the board with the tensing well past the board's surface. If a lock or tensing takes place when contact is first made with the board, much of the energy will be lost.

The locking-in is only important from a form standpoint and as a defense if the hit is not successful. The lock makes it difficult to be thrown by one's opponent if she evades the hit. But focus is another topic and we're discussing movement here.

Let's consider normal walking. When taking a step, the body moves and then the foot moves forward under it. To move the foot first and then move the body over it is unnatural and results in the "keep on trucking" step. Most of us do not stick the foot out first when walking.

Think about a baby's first steps. The baby usually reaches out with his arms in the direction he wants to go and his body leans in that direction. He will then fall forward and either take a step or do a nose dive. Walking is a series of falls interrupted by taking steps. This is why we fall up the steps when our foot hits the edge of the step. If we placed the foot on the step first and then moved the body over it, we wouldn't fall. We've become so used to walking that we lean and step at the same time in most cases.

Because so much emphasis is placed on foot positioning and the mechanics of stepping in karate, we tend to become very foot conscious and may lose the natural way of moving the whole body. Before the feet move the body should be driven forward.

This is different from normal walking where the body simply leans slightly before stepping. For fast, powerful stance transitions, the body should be driven forcefully while the feet are still planted, much like a sprinter at the starting blocks. To put the foot out first or even to just lean in the direction of travel is slower and less dynamic than to drive the body first. To do this requires that the body be relaxed just prior to movement. All the driving muscles must be allowed to perform without resistance from opposing muscles.

After driving the body forcefully, the soon to be supporting foot must move quickly. The impact of the hit or kick should take place while the body is at its highest speed prior to establishing the next stance. This action makes use of both strength and momentum. Usually the movement slows as the stepping foot reaches its destination.

Consider an arrow shot from a bow or a bullet from a gun. These projectiles do not need a strong stance or contact with the ground to be effective. They do need a solid foundation to push from initially, and this equates again to the sprinter at the starting blocks. The most powerful punch or kick starts relaxed, drives the body forward, and uses all of one's strength in the application of the technique - prior to locking in well after the point of impact was passed. The foot that is not stepping should be solid and driving throughout the execution of the technique.

Most of the kata have many steps or body movements. Why? If the purpose of kata was to teach us a strong stance and hit, kick or block, that could be accomplished without stepping movement. Naturally, it is understood that it is necessary to be within reach of the opponent. How to use the necessary movement is one of the things kata teaches. Some kata teach different ways of moving.

Master Jack Dempsey was known as "Jack the Giant Killer". He weighed about one hundred and eighty pounds and routinely beat boxers who were well over two hundred and fifty pounds. He used what he referred to in his book as a falling punch. He would drive his body forward and down when punching as though falling. This added momentum to his strength.

The same concept is used when evading an attack. One of the most important things that is often not emphasized is getting our vulnerable body parts out of harm's way. We tend to rely on blocks to deflect and don't move our bodies out of the range of the attack. If our head or chest is the target of an attack, the foot should not move first. The target area should be driven forcefully out of range and the foot moved along with the body. The foot should move first only if it is the foot being attacked. A deflection may accompany the body movement. Boxers don't stand and block, they move. When defending or attacking, the body should move first or at least along with the stepping foot.

This same rationale applies to cases to "toe-to-toe" close-in situations. Here, the feet may not move, but the body should move in and back or to the side as appropriate. These movements should be forceful - in to add momentum to the attack, and out to evade the opponent's attack. A standard practice routine is to shift from shiko-dachi to zenkutsu-dachi with a reverse punch, and back to shiko-dachi. This usually only teaches half of what's intended. It teaches using momentum without stepping for a punch, but not the very important aspect of driving the body forcefully out of harm's way. This exercise was intended to teach dynamic body movement in both directions.

One way to help beginners become effective is to require that stances and hand techniques start and stop at the same time. Usually what happens is that the stance movement is half completed before the hand technique starts. This gives the illusion of speed, but is not the fastest way to close and hit. Better to start the hand and foot at the same time and force the foot to keep up. Ending at the same time helps assure that impact with the target occurs prior to locking-in.

New students are usually taught to step and then punch, or step and then block. This is so that they can concentrate on the step first and then concentrate on the punch or block. As soon as possible, they should be taught to step and punch or block at the same time.

All of this might be obvious to you, but the fact is that I often see very experienced practitioners who attack sequentially rather than with simultaneous movement and who can't get out of harm's way.

The kata teach us how to move, but we tend to learn only how to have strong stances. We need to study our kata textbooks with a direction and a desire to learn from them.

The Protein Sparing, Modified-Fast, Cyclical Ketogenic, Low Glycemic Index Diet - Part Two

*"I asked my wife why was she crying?" She said, "I burned dinner."
I said, "no problem, just open another.".....George Knudsen, Pipeliner*

We have become a fatter nation over the last fifty years. A big reason is convenience. It is easier to pour from a box of cereal than cook a few eggs. You just open a bag of snacks, you do not prepare them. The microwave is the most used appliance in our kitchen. It heats something fast and conveniently. It is a wonder I don't glow in the dark from the microwave emissions which are constantly bombarding my kitchen. Most microwave-ready and pre-packaged foods are filled with sugar and starches. Bodybuilders have known for a hundred years that sweets and starches build bodyfat.

Clarence Bass, author of the "Ripped" series of books, writes he can tell whether someone is overweight by looking at their grocery shopping cart. If it is full of soda, white bread, chips, dry breakfast cereal and snacks, the person pushing the cart will be fat. He is right. I notice the same thing. Unfortunately, it is sometimes my cart. I suspect the checkout girl no longer believes me when I tell her I am hosting a child's birthday party.

There is an old saying, "the more you sweat in the gym, the less you bleed in the ring." It is about preparation. The same thing for eating. The key to my not getting fatter is preparation. Make leaner eating convenient. Without adequate preparation, I will fail. Period. No serious athlete would "wing it" when it comes to training. Eating to keep bodyfat down requires the same attention.

Over the last ten years on my job, I passed up at least a thousand donuts. Willpower? Not hardly. It was pre-planning. It was easier to skip donuts when I had just finished a can of tuna or a baggie filled with nuts. Hunger trumps willpower every time. By bringing my snacks and meals, I kept those donuts from finding a permanent home in my pants. It was also cheaper. I would cringe when I saw co-workers feeding money into sandwich and pop machines like Las Vegas gamblers at the slots. The simple trick of bringing my work meals kept me from buying clothes in the husky section. Every little reduction subtracts from the total. The act of controlling what I ate at work alone would have made a difference, but I did the same at home except for the carb up days.

Most of the credit for keeping my bodyfat down goes to my wife. She would cook a few huge pots of food then portion the servings into containers and freeze them. By having these meals readily available, I had little excuse for filling up on junk. Same for breakfast omelets. Other tricks have worked well.

Never skip breakfast and make sure it is substantial. A half grapefruit, cup of Special K and a half glass of skim milk won't cut it unless I wish to become an anorexic runway model. I will be hungry before I get out the door.

Eat six times a day. Seriously. The body becomes wasteful of calories when it believes there is a never ending supply of food. It also minimizes muscle loss if the meals contain protein.

Aim at keeping muscle and gradually trimming some fat. If I lose five pounds of fat a year, those years add up. Steady wins the race. I measure my waist and my arms. If my waist goes down and my arms don't, I'm doing OK. Strength levels are also a good indicator.

Ignore the scale. A gallon of water weighs a little over eight pounds. Hydration levels affect weight. Also, for every gram of glucose stored in the muscles and liver, three grams of water are stored with it. Rapid weight loss is usually simple water loss through glycogen depletion.

No aerobics for fat loss. Not only is it a horribly inefficient way to burn calories, it has the tendency to strip muscle and cause repetitive stress injuries. Running a mile burns about 150 calories. I spill more than that when I eat.

A gallon of water a day, in addition to whatever else I drink. This has helped my overall well-being more than any other. Hyponatremia, also known as water intoxication, only occurs when one performs intense exercise for long periods while consuming large amounts of water. Unless you are an infant, running a marathon, or guzzle an entire gallon at once, it is nearly impossible to have an adverse effect.

A daily multi - vitamin. I have never met a person who eats a perfectly balanced diet.

Common sense substitution. A bucket of broccoli won't add bodyfat. A pint of ice cream will.

There are many other tips, but the best one is never go grocery shopping hungry. There I am, in a world of tasty goodies each calling my name to be taken home. Tempting.....all I have to do is toss them in the cart.....soooo convenient.

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