

The T.K.D. Flash

A Publication of the Association of Academies of Martial Arts

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Upcoming tournament action:

Region 5 Championships in Waunakee WI on March 19 2005. The promoter is Mr. Kevin McDaniel. If the last was any indication, it should be excellent classic USTF competition with head to head bracketed patterns, team patterns, continuous free sparring and team sparring.
March 19 A.A.M.A. North Carolina Tournament. The promoter is Mr. Jeremy Kempka. Pure U.S.T.F. Competition with a twist.

Start getting ready for U.S.T.F. 2005 Nationals in San Diego! June 24 and 25, 2005. Contact Mr. VH for details.

The Winternational TaeKwon-Do Open will be held February 19 & 20 at the Hervanta Sports Hall, Lindforsinkatu 5, 33720, Tampere, Finland. Up for a little international competition? Questions? See www.winternationaltkd.com or www.blackagletkd.com. The promoter is Mr. Thierry Meyour, Fifth Dan.

Congratulations to First Dan Stan Ruppel and his wife Valerie, now parents to twins, the female half of which is Breanna Renee, and the little boy Brandon Lee (hmm...). Well, done!

Electronic subscriptions to the Flash continue to be free for 2005. If you wish to add or change the email address at which you receive your monthly Flash, just email us that information at the email address above. If you wish to add subscribers, such as your students, supply names and their email addresses in the same manner and we'll take it from there. Also free. Print (snail-mailed) subscriptions to the Flash for 2005 will be \$7.50. Please remit the fee to the office (above) by January 31.

To all Students, Instructors and Members of our TaeKwon-Do Family:

I would like to take this chance to wish you all a wonderful and prosperous New Year. Let us take at this time to reflect on an important part of the Student Oath, "I shall build a more peaceful world." Now is a time we need this more than ever. We should support our troops 110% and hope for their safe return home.

Look for some exciting thing the organization this year. I hope to see you all at the National in San Diego in June.

--Grand Master C. E. Sereff

On December 18th there was a Gup Level Test in North Carolina.

On February 19 a Gup Test will be held in Charlotte.

There will be regular Black Belt classes in Grafton commencing January 4 and continuing thereafter on the first Tuesday of each month. Guest instructors are sought. Contact Mr. VH for details, times. fmvh@execpc.com.

On December 11 in Denver, G.M. Sereff taught a Step Sparring Seminar. Several Region V members attended, including Dr. Rick Bauman, Mrs. Mary Lubner, Mr. Luke Mattias, Ms. Debbie Gray, Mr. Brian Nusslock, and Tony Mattias. Grand Master Sereff was presented with an Association of Academies of Martial Arts flag..

A make-up Black Belt Test will be held in Charlotte February 12, promoter Mr. J. Kempka. On December 11 Mr. VH presided at a gup testing at Middleton's American Martial Arts Center. A total of 6 students tested while Mr. Kevin McDaniel took the Corner, assisted by Mr. Michael Love.

An Association Black Belt Banquet will be held in Charlotte February 12.

Upcoming Seminar

Opportunities:

Class C U.S.T.F. Instructor Seminar April 16-17 at Denver.

Class A U.S.T.F. Instructor Seminar May 14-15 at Denver.

Pressure Point Seminar at Denver April 23.

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The Sheboygan Academy Of Marital Arts did a demo at the AAA Open House on Saturday December 4, 2004. Mr. Schneider and Mr. Mickelson had great showing Mrs. Scheinders co-workers and family how to break boards. The event was a great success!

The A.A.M.A. medaled 25 times at the Disney I.T.F. Tournament and was the largest USA group participating. 425 competitors from 29 countries.

A Gup level test will be held in Grafton WI on January 5.

Note: Every Black Belt must meet an eight hour annual continuing education requirement for U.S.T.F.

How to Keep Motivated In Tae Kwon Do

By: Valerie I. Pals

[Ed.: This is a summary of Miss Pals's First Dan Essay.]

Have you ever felt that you were bored or tired of Tae Kwon Do? I know that I have. It is pretty hard to always want to go to class, but I think I have a few examples and suggestions on how to keep motivated.

There are a lot of reasons why you may not want to go to TKD.

You may not like some kids or a teacher. Maybe you don't know your stuff, you're

physically tired, lazy, or there is no one in your age group.

Most of those things you have to tough it out and just go! You can make friends, go on different days, or eat a Granola bar before you go. If you are sick or injured, you should probably just stay home, otherwise you can come and teach or watch while you read a book or work on terminology. If you want to go to a friend's house you can always go after class or if it is a rare occasion like you're going to see a movie or go to a concert or something it's OK to miss one class.

Let's say you don't want to go because you feel like you are not learning anything. Well in that case, that is a reason that you should go because you can go early and work a little or ask the teacher (Black Belt) if you can work on your matrix. If you are emotionally tired like if your dog was put to sleep then I would say that you should take a break for a little bit. You might just have a lot of home work. Then you also should take a break or just go to one class.

On the other hand there are also a lot of reasons that we do want to go to Tae Kwon Do. For one it is Fun! You can come and have a good time and just be yourself. If you had a bad day or you need to escape your family you can come and get some moral support and it feels good because you can have a break from whatever you are doing.

There are many long term benefits as well. You'll

have protection over yourself, you'll be more flexible and strong, you'll be more outgoing, and you can get your Black Belt. I know some one who used to be scared to talk in front of people but now can talk in front of a group just like any other. If you're just scared to meet new people and you don't like to talk then you should come and get a buddy. You can hang out with them at school, if they go to your school, or invite them to your house.

All in all most people get sick of TKD once in a while, you can always take a little break. There are a lot of ways to keep motivated. In conclusion you can do a lot, but you can never practice too much.

A Comparative Study of WTF TaeKwon-Do Style as it is Practiced in Senegal and the ITF TaeKwon-Do Style

By Mathiam Mbow

[Ed.: This is Mr. Mbow's First Dan Essay, begun in this and completed in the following issue. Mr. Mbow is a native of Senegal]

INTRODUCTION

Although almost all Tae Kwon Do schools agree on the basic principles and philosophy of the discipline, many go about different ways of teaching it. The art quickly became a worldwide discipline and brought many people to share and live by the same codes which are primarily the tenets and student oath of Tae

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Kwon Do. These basic root foundations of the art are shared by all practitioners yet they did not stop the creations of various styles of Tae Kwon Do.

This study will focus on the fundamental differences between the WTF style Tae Kwon Do I practiced in Senegal and the ITF style of Tae Kwon Do I'm practicing in America.

TAE KWON DO IN SENEGAL

Before I talk about the art of Tae Kwon Do as it is practiced in this beautiful small West African country, I would like to share the reasons why I decided to study this discipline and how it can shape up a person's life forever.

It was the summer of 1992, my mother and I went shopping for clothes at a Wal-Mart version of clothing department in Dakar (Capital of Senegal) and a group of four big men approached us and wanted to pick a fight with us. Thankfully, a woman standing by saw the whole thing and pulled me aside and informed me that these guys' intention was not to hurt us but to create a scene that would be favorable for one of them to snatch the gold necklace my mother was wearing. That saved the day because as soon as I removed the necklace from my mother's neck and carefully placed it in my pocket; they disappeared as fast as they had gathered around us. We peacefully finished our

shopping and went home. My mother did not think twice about the situation. As for me, it was quite a revelation and an awakening that no matter where you are, you could never be one hundred percent safe. I decided from that day that I was going to study martial arts to defend myself should the need arise.

I studied for a short period a variety of Martial Arts such as Karate, Viet VO Dao but I was too eager to learn how to fight that I did not find satisfaction in these arts as the teaching pace was too slow for my taste. At this point, I thought I was never going to find the art that would please me until a friend of mine invited me to go watch a Tae Kwon Do tournament. I first hesitated but then decided to go along. That decision changed my entire life. I knew from the passion of competitors eyes, their determination to fight to the bone and not give up on a victory that is within their reach no matter how bad the price they had to pay gave me a different perspective of martial arts. From that moment, I knew that Tae Kwon Do was the art for me. I just knew it.

At the end of that summer, when school started again, I immediately joined the Tae Kwon Do organization on campus. The style we studied: WTF style and it became my life. However, as I progressed through the belt ranks, I was less interested in fighting as I began to discover that there was more to Tae Kwon Do than just kicks and punches. I

was much more interested in the philosophy and the passive side of the discipline. In the end, a lot of things that used to bother me became so trivial to me that I would laugh at them. That was quite a paradigm shift in my life.

Today I can look back at the years I spent studying Tae Kwon Do in Senegal and make a fair comparison of the art as it is practiced back in that part of Africa and how it is practiced in the US.

The principles and philosophy of Tae Kwon Do are the same no matter what style you teach or study. Tae Kwon Do calls for excellence, perfection, discipline, control, respect, obedience just to name a few and all of which are summarized in the tenets and student oath of Tae Kwon Do. These basic fundamental principles remain unchanged. However, with the evolution of Tae Kwon Do, various styles began to emerge one of which is known as WTF. The following chapters will give a brief description of the differences between WTF Tae Kwon Do as practiced in Senegal and the ITF Tae Kwon Do as practiced in America.

WTF TAE KWON DO I PRACTICED IN SENEGAL

Tae Kwon Do is one of the martial arts that penetrated this part of Africa at a later date. Therefore it is not well known by many. However, the Senegalese Tae Kwon Do federation is very much involved in the promotion and evolution of the art throughout

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the country. In order to achieve this, the National Tae Kwon Do team is usually called upon for this purpose. They go from region to region to hold demonstrations to attract as many students as possible. Although this approach is a great way to promote the art, it has two main shortcomings:

1- There are more people interested in learning than there are qualified, certified instructors. Consequently, Tae Kwon Do schools are overpopulated for the most part. This makes it really hard for the instructor to ensure that proper techniques are being applied or that students are trying their best. It also makes it really hard for the students because sometimes, they do not even master the basic stances or techniques due to the lack of one-on-one coaching and guidance from the instructor. Therefore, many students would progress through the ranks and not be able to apply correct techniques. Many of my peers and me made it a habit to go back to our dorm rooms and practice what the instructor showed us in class to ensure we were applying the correct techniques.

Furthermore, we took it upon ourselves to learn as much as we could and every summer while school was out, we would go to the Tae Kwon Do headquarter and practice with the chief instructors. We had our summer dues waived by

the president of the federation because he said by mastering the techniques we would be of great resource in that side of the country we were located during school season (not everybody had this privilege because they lived far away from the headquarter.)

He was right because after 3 consecutive summers studying with him and other instructors, we became responsible for teaching Tae Kwon Do in Saint Louis (a city North of Senegal) and he would come up every quarter to supervise and evaluate what was being done in that area. Although honored and privileged to teach Tae Kwon Do, I was not sure or comfortable with my abilities to teach as I felt I had a lot to learn still. However, we were appointed to head the school on campus and in the philosophy of Tea Kwon Do it says "a good student should always follow orders first." The primary reason for this is that anybody that has a black belt could be appointed to a school and be fully responsible for an entire group of people and their evolution through their gup levels. With the exception of a few instructors who open their own schools, basically most school instructors are appointed by the Federation.

2- Students who are really interested in learning the art and are committed to doing an excellent job usually get frustrated because of the lack of attention. Their commitment level is not matched by the instructor's availability to show

and cultivate excellence. Consequently, these students drop out one after another in search of something more structured. Not saying the way the federation runs operations in the country is not structured but it does not respond to the students' needs and hunger for knowledge. One other primary reason why students would drop out was the fact that many students did not think they were applying the techniques correctly and therefore were not getting any better at what they were doing. For instance in my experience nobody taught me what the proper length/ width of a walking stance or L-Stance was or how the weight was distributed between the two legs. That's something I learned when I started studying the ITF style which I will discuss in the following section. Basically stance length/ width were a guessing game depending on the height of the student. Due to this lack of focus, many students thought this was a waste of their time and money and therefore quit the art.

[This essay is continued in next month's TKD Flash. Mr. Mbow's contribution, just as Miss Pals's, remind us of the broad appeal of TaeKwon-Do to both young American ladies and to people across the globe. The Flash begins its 17th year of publication with confidence that the legacy of Choi, Hong Hi will live on in his loyal students and this publication.]