

THE MAKIWARA

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE AOKA

2009 AOKA World Championships Cancelled By Grandmaster Stephen Young, Chairman & CEO

The AOKA Board of Directors voted in favor of canceling this years AOKA World Championships due to the overall economic conditions. While many are disappointed, the Board felt that it is the right thing to do. We will plan to resume the event in 2010 providing economic conditions have improved. I'd like to thank Terry Creamer and Jill Bingham for the work they did in securing a facility for the event. St. Louis would have been a great location for us to meet!

In the interim, the various regions are trying to put together events that are much more cost effective for the participants. Information about these events will be posted on the web and sent via email once specific dates and places are established.

I will be hosting a training weekend for the same dates that the AOKA World Championships were schedule for, July 10 through July 12. Various instructors will be offering workouts for Isshinryu practitioners of all ranks commencing the evening of Friday, July 10, and concluding Sunday morning, July 12. Special black belt sessions will also be available. Everyone is invited to attend. Special discounts will be available to AOKA members.

[Click here for details!](#)

Grand Master Kobylanski will be hosting a regional Kyu Fest tournament in Charlotte, NC this summer. The tournament participants will only be kyu ranks. Black belts will get hands-on training on tournament judging; more senior instructors will learn tournament operations. Details of the Kyu Fest will be announced soon.

Even during the worst times, we can still be our best.



Who Are You When No One is Looking?

By Justin Serpico, Nikyu, Charlotte, NC

While spending some Christmas gift certificates at my local "Big Box" sporting goods store, I found myself getting frustrated with the lack of customer service help. I had circled the store twice unable to find a salesperson. I had been avoided by a manager and ultimately pawned off on to a person who then claimed ignorance of the department for which I had a question. I had waited through endless pages while same said person attempted to reach another employee who supposedly had the information I needed. And finally I had been scoffed at when I requested a phone call to a sister store to check inventory so that I didn't have to drive 30 minutes only to discover they too were out of the item I was hunting. In short I had quite enough of the treatment I was receiving and I was mulling my options.

I was desperate to give the whole crew a piece of my mind; tell them what I thought of their

(Continued on page 2)

March 2009

*Thoughts for Testing
for Brown Belt*

Chinto Kata

*Toshikia Out-
standing Black Belts*

*Warrior Training
Seminar*

*1st International
Martial Arts Festival*

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Please send questions, comments or contributions to the Newsletter Committee to have answered in the next edition:

newsletter@aoka.org

(Who Are You -Continued from page 1)

store AND their customer service. Better yet I had some wicked new bunkai and a store full of unsuspecting Ukes. (A.K.A: employees) Yet, something was nagging in the back of my mind. Something was causing me to pause and think twice. And then, I heard my name. It was the voice of a child. But I had left my kids at home. Who was this person and why were they interrupting me in my moment of conflict?!! I turned toward the voice and beheld the face of not one but *two* of the junior students from the dojo where I assist with the teaching duties. And what's more, their parents were in tow.

Remembering the 5th code, "The body should be able to change direction at any time," I adjusted my demeanor and greeted my faithful students and their parents with a positive attitude, firm handshake and hearty salutations. We made some small talk and just as quickly as they had arrived, they were gone. But the lesson was burning in my mind hotter than the rash left by a good gi-choke.

I often hear my instructors addressing students about what it means to be a black belt. Statements are made about how being a black belt is more than just achieving that rank and acting like a black belt in the dojo during class. You have to act like a black belt outside the dojo as well. The point is that every move you make outside the dojo is not only a reflection of your own character, but also a reflection of the character and integrity of your instructors and ultimately the entire Isshinryu community. In short, it is called "Integrity," and a true black belt is brimming with it.

Integrity can be defined as "Who you are when no one is looking." When the world throws you a curve ball, do you stand in the batters box and behave like a disciplined hitter who understands their position and strategy in the

game? Or do you just swing for the fences and hope for the best; cheering wildly if you make contact or angrily throwing your helmet and bat into the dugout if you whiff? Do you consider your actions in the context of whether or not you would want someone to treat you the way you are treating them? Do you consider your actions in the context of how you look to others? Do you consider your actions in the context of the example you're setting for those who respect you and consider you a role model? It's a lot to consider, but then again the adage says, "With great power comes great responsibility."

You see, a black belt is a role model and a person of authority. By definition the belt they wear tells the world that they are an advanced practitioner of their chosen discipline. They are trained and disciplined both physically and mentally. They are a person who knows the difference between right and wrong. They understand honor and courage and difference between when to use force and when to use tact; or both. They apply their skills in the physical, interpersonal, and professional environments in their lives. A black belt isn't limited to the brick and mortar confines of the dojo. (For more on this topic I suggest reading "Be Like Water" by Joseph Cardillo) A black belt is a way of life; still a student but also a teacher. Therefore their actions are likely to be imitated by those who wish to be like them; achieve their status. And therefore they have great responsibility inside and outside the dojo.

So I ask you, are you a black belt in life *and* in the dojo? Who are you when nobody is looking?

NOTE: For those of us yet to achieve a "Dan" rank, this lesson still applies. You are an inspiration and an aspiration to any kyu junior. to your rank.



Thoughts for Testing for Brown Belt

By Walt Ellingson, Sankyu, Huntsville, AL

Testing for Brown Belt was an interesting, excruciatingly painful experience and, as everything in Isshin-Ryu, is a step in the journey that will always remain underway.

Not truly knowing what to plan for – and trust me, there is nothing out there to tell you what to be prepared for (I searched), and then on the appointed test day hearing Sensei's first statement after the normal salutation, some

words to the effect that "virtually no one passes the Brown Belt test the first time out" followed up with, "Come to think of it, I don't know of anyone that has ever passed on the first attempt," really set the tone for the three of us. This came along with the realization that two "screw ups" and you failed, and if you failed early you still had to do it all, and if you didn't screw up until the very end but did then – it was still a failure. Didn't

(Continued on page 3)

(Thoughts for Testing for Brown Belt - Continued from page 2)

that pump us up! Sensei was kind enough to define what a “screw up” could be i.e., it could be anything from improper execution of techniques to incorrect stances, wrong foot placement, improper hand positions, poor blocking, et cetera. You could see the joy etched on our faces.

So why am I writing? It's to help up and coming karate-ka mentally prepare for this test. I think everyone will realize by now, the testing for Brown will take each individual and the evaluator a minimum of three hours, likely more. This is a major step in your practice of karate. By your Sensei telling you that he/she feels you are ready to test for this level is an indicator that you've started to reach the level of competency that places you finally into the “teachable” category. It's sort of like moving from Junior High into High School (just don't forget that College and Graduate School follow).

Factors.

A couple of factors to consider, you've prepared, gone through your Kata and drills seemingly a million times and you are ready (or believe you are), and its been tough - as tough as it is on a you, think of how tough it has to be for the evaluator who must see each candidate do the same thing over and over again, keep track of what he/she saw and evaluate it. In our case, things are little different - we are without any consistent (meaning day-to-day or even weekly) Black Belt observation and correction come from observing video and reviewing ourselves. Not necessarily a bad thing, but an additional consideration. What this meant for us, and could mean for you, is that if the kata / technique was practiced incorrectly and wasn't caught by any of us, it would continue to be practiced yes, but incorrectly. This concept applies to everything whether it's a technique, a stance, a block, a kick, a punch, you name it. If it is incorrect and it is practiced that way perfectly - it will be perfectly incorrect at the test. The maxim is simple - practice does not make perfect, but perfect practice does. This is one of the necessities of insuring standardization.

Preparation.

Preparation is what we constantly do. The basics, both upper and lower body, the Kata, and it's lines, technique - we all practice them - so why do we mess up when it comes to the execution phase at a “test?” It's a mental game. We need to practice and prepare yes physically but even more so mentally. I don't think most Dojos train this way enough.

Execution.

The test is where the rubber hits the road. All the steps taken in your planning and preparation come to a defining moment. For many these is the culminating point - the point where you are physically and mentally as far as you can go without braking. I do not believe that that is the intent of the belt test - but the test it is the development of your character and your desire to succeed.

I have been a part of other traditions that were for the lack of better terms “belt mills” with no “heart,” this is not the way here. In reflection I'm reminded of a passage I read some time ago, and it says in speaking of achieving rank, “... rank was obtained because of ability and desire, not politics and longevity. This time should be now.” I am pleased that this is the way, at least is my short experience, which karate is practiced in the AOKA - to do it any other way would take away the spirit and intent I believe Shimabuku wanted to instill.

Now as I look back over the 4 plus hours we went through, I can say in all sincerity that the test needs to be the way it is. Two faults is a disqualifier. I also developed a much greater appreciation of what the evaluator has to go through as well: reviewing all katas 3 times with (in our case) three students - a lot of time, a very long day, with a lot of moving parts - requiring much patience. For me the lessons I learned earned in this process: 1) Perfection comes through perfect practice, 2) The standards are high - and need to remain that way, and 3) The end result is worth the effort.



Chinto Kata

By Sensei Mike Fenton, Yondan,

Understanding the history of the Isshinryu kata can provide the Isshinryu Karateka with a greater knowledge of the kata and the techniques it employs. The origins of a kata can guide us toward understanding both the application of the technique as a student and a deeper respect for the evolution of the art as an instructor.

The information within this article is a result of research done as part of a book in progress. It is to represent a comprehensive resource of data concerning the art for all Karateka. While every effort has been taken to ensure accuracy of the information, any corrections or additional details are welcome from one and all.

Chinto Kata 鎮鬪

The Name

Chinto kata is the first advanced kata in the Isshinryu curriculum. The kata like so many others may have been named for a great master who visited Okinawa.

The Kanji for Chinto can be translated as “Fighting to the East”. This translation is likely representative of the linear nature of the kata, and does not preclude the possibility that it was named for a Master Chinto. The possibility of a “Master” Chinto will be discussed during the origins of the kata.

Another possible origin for the name is a Chinese term Chen Tou. Chen Tou has a literal translation of “Sinking the Head”.

Chen Tou: 沈頭

The sinking of the head refers to dropping the body as a way of defending the head. The opening moves of the kata are the namesake techniques of the kata. In translating Chen Tou from Chinese to Japanese the accepted

translation is “Chinto”. Indicating a possible connection between the kata and the Chinese techniques.

Alternates: Not really an alternate. But a similarly named kata is Chinte. It has similar origins but is an unrelated form.

Chinto also appears within the art of Shotokan as created by Funakoshi Gichin. When translating the forms to Japanese the name was changed to Gankaku, “Crane on a Rock”. Named most likely for the prevalence of the cross stance in the kata.

The Myth's

The only myth associated with Chinto is the possibly origin of the name Chinto. The kata may have been named for a great Master Chinto. There is no evidence to support this. It is likely that a martial artist taught it while on Okinawa, however, it is unlikely that his name was Chinto. It's far more likely a translation of his name and as the associated story grew it became confused.

I sincerely hope that you enjoyed reading this. The next article will continue the background of Chinto with the bulk of the article primarily on the kata's origins focusing specifically on the path the kata took on it's way to Shimabuku Tatsuo and it's incorporation into Isshinryu Kata. If you have corrections or comments regarding this article or any future article, please feel free to contact me directly at mike@issheinryu.ca.

This article represents part of an unfinished work by Trevor Warren and Mike Fenton. Nothing would have been possible without the many resources available both on the internet and via books currently available on Okinawan Karate. Additionally, special thanks must go out to Joe Swift, his research and willingness to share was an invaluable asset.



2009 AOKA AWARD NOMINATIONS CANCELLED

The AOKA Awards Nominations for 2009 are cancelled. We regret having to make the decision to cancel the Awards for 2009. We know there are a lot of deserving individuals who should to be honored for their hard work in promoting the growth of Isshinryu and the AOKA. Again, we regret having to making the decision to cancel the Awards Nominations.

Toshikai Dojo's Outstanding Black Belts

By Susan Baldassi and Janet Fuchek

Ottawa's Tanya Lemaire and her husband Shane Hale fight fiercely and get rewarded for it. After all, they're award-winning Isshinryu karate experts, both recent recipients of American Okinawan Karate Association distinctions. Lemaire, a Shodan, earned the "Outstanding Black Belt – Female" plaque, while Hale, a Nidan, took the honor for the males.

While their fighting spirit is evident in the karate dojo, the Canadian couple gets along quite well behind the scenes. "We always work things out," says Lemaire.

The jubilant duo credits the karate club where the two train as instrumental in their karate development. For the past 10 years, they have been members of Ottawa's Toshikai dojo, under the direction of Sensei Tim Leonard. "I guess my first reaction (was) I was just completely surprised and honoured and overwhelmed that my dojo had done that for me" says Lemaire, whose club nominated the pair for the prestigious award. "It validated all the hard work I put into my karate career and all the work I put into my dojo to make it a success."

Her husband was also taken off guard by the accolade. "It's obviously very impressive," he says. "It came as a bit of a surprise, of course. It was obviously an honor. All the people that go before you (for this award), I don't know if we are that calibre, but we try our best."

The fact that it was a husband-wife duo who won the distinction makes it all the more unique. "That's amazing

that it happened to be two of us who got it – and from the same dojo," says Lemaire.

Their instructor Leonard praises the couple for loyalty and dedication. "In the club, Shane is my most senior black belt, and I rely on him to be there, to run classes when I am not able and to set the example for the others," says the proud teacher. "Shane has done this willingly and consistently. This past year, he took the next step in his martial arts path and opened his own dojo. It has been a great success. Shane has been vital to Isshinryu in Ottawa. He is committed to the principles of (Master Tatsuo) Shimabuku's teachings, and when you meet him, it is evident Isshinryu rests in his soul."

He also has positive things to say about Lemaire.

"Tanya typifies everything that an instructor would want in a student and as one of their assistant instructors," says Leonard. "She is a true leader in the dojo. Tanya will now be offering Isshinryu kids' classes on a weekly basis, which is a first for our dojo since its inception in 1997."

The Canadian couple is grateful for the support of their club. "It's a joy to see everyone progressing through the ranks and growing as people on their individual martial arts journeys," concur Lemaire and Hale. "These awards are a token of the passion we feel for our dojo and our karate."



Training Weekend

By Grandmaster Stephen Young, Chairman & CEO

Master Steve Young is hosting a training weekend for the same dates that the 2009 AOKA Championships were originally planned, July 10 - 12. The event will take place in a small town in South East Iowa called Fort Madison. There will be a series of classes beginning Friday evening and ending on Sunday morning. A detailed class schedule is being developed.

Instructors for the event include Masters Nick Adler, Peter Carbone, Marilyn Fiero, Wayne Wayland, John Holwager, Steve Young, Keith Smith and others. Two ses-

sions will be offered concurrently so that there will be choices for everyone. There will be several "Black Belt Only" sessions, but there will be plenty of information for all ranks.

Everyone is welcome, but space is very limited due to the facility size. More information will be available on March 1, 2009, by going to www.SYMAC1.com. All people interested in participating must be pre-registered.



UPCOMING EVENTS

(source: <http://www.bohans-family.com/Events/UpcomingEvents.htm>)

Date	Location	Event
25-Apr-2009	King George, VA	King George Isshin Ryu Open Karate Championships
30-May-2009	Detroit, MI	Metro Detroit Open Karate Tournament
5-7 Jun-2009	Novi, MI	KIAI Mid West Quest Tournament
18-20-Jun-2009	Pittsburgh, PA	IWKA World Championships
1- Aug-2009	Knoxville, TN	Isshinryu Hall Of Fame

Warrior Training Seminar

By Mark Ciprich, Yondan, Monroe, NC

On Saturday, February 21st, Carolina Isshin Ryu Academy, in conjunction with Cape Fear Isshin Ryu, hosted an AOKA training seminar. The seminar was our best yet with over 70 people in attendance. Sensei Brent Holland owns Cape Fear Isshin Ryu and has been working out with us now for over five years. He has a great facility, almost fully matted with 15 foot ceilings and two separate rooms for training. The large amount of room allowed for five different groups to run at once. The groups were Beginner Children, Advanced children, Beginner adult, Intermediate adult and Advanced adult.

The day started early with a Black/Brown workout from 9am-11am. Masters Mitch Kobylanski, Tim Boykin, Tim Grismer, Tim Cunningham and Butch McLaughlin each took turns demonstrating techniques. The two and a half hours were spent working on various closing drills, Tai Sabaki drills, timing and distance drills and of course striking drills. It was a vigorous workout and the smaller room was STEAMY! The turnout for this session was great with over forty participants.

The afternoon session was from 1pm-4pm and provided a chance for the Senseis to work together in different pairings while teaching a myriad of groups on many different subjects.

Sensei Jon O'Shita led segments covering Wansu and Self Defense; Sensei Rita Parke led a segment on self de-

fense: Sensei Don Gyr led segments on Ukemi and later Aikido throws within the kata that put the Ukemi training to good use; Sensei Mark Ciprich led segments on Seisan and Tuite applications from various kata; Sensei Brent Holland led a segment on sparring; Master Butch McLaughlin led segments on Wansu and Sparring; Master Tim Cunningham did a great segment on Chinto applications with the Black Belts; Master Tim Grismer shared some great ideas on Kuzushi/Takedowns and Ju Jitsu applications during his two segments; Master Tim Boykin did three segments. The first was on wrist locks, the second on Seisan applications and the third on Bo applications from the kata Tokomeni no Kun; Master Mitch Kobylanski started with sparring and was then free to sit in as he wished throughout the afternoon.

The over all tenor of the day was teamwork. The thing that consistently impresses me about ALL the AOKA sponsored functions I've attended is the good will and teamwork that is always present. This day was the same, from the Masters down to the white belts. Everyone was able to check their ego at the door and noone got hurt. Afterwards we shared some pizza and talked for a while which proved a good ending to a great day.

Carolina Isshin Ryu Academy is planning another seminar in Charlotte on May 2nd. Please contact Mark Ciprich at maciprich@verizon.net or Bob Harris at unante@elmore.rr.com for more information.



1st International Martial Arts Festival

By Grand Master Al Mady

Last year was an eventful year for us; we had losses and we had gains. We finished off 2008 with some great competitive wins. This past summer I was contacted by Dr. Steve Rajan who was part of the organizing committee for the 18th International Association of Educators For World Peace, 1st International Martial Arts Festival, October 29-31, 2008 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Originally, 40 Grand Masters from around the world and local Malaysians were chosen to teach and demonstrate their system and skill at the 1st IMAF in Malaysia. This all expense paid event was hosted by the government of Malaysia and was held at the Sunway Resort and spa.

I opened the festival with the first seminar; we had quite the crowd, with a mix of martial artists from several systems. The main system, Silat, which almost everybody studies including government officials, military, police and royalty, was very interesting and entertaining. The local schools did a few seminars but mostly demonstrations, which were interesting and educational. I was scheduled to do one seminar, and ended up doing three more as well as their morning TV show. I developed quite the following! In Malaysia there is a great respect for high ranking martial artists. Whenever I entered a seminar or demonstration my presence was always announced. I wanted to introduce Isshinryu Karate to everyone there, some had heard of it and some had not. I was lucky enough to have Sifu Fleming volunteer to be UKE for a couple of my seminars and for the rest was some of the Malaysian TKD practitioners. They volunteered! I unfortunately ripped my hamstring the day of the first seminar when I was working out; my legs were tight from cardio training the day before. Unfortunately I had to modify what I was teaching but no one noticed the injury. I couldn't kick as well as I wanted to. I took Naihanchi kata and showed them the importance and meaning of true kata by teaching them BUNKAI, they were impressed! I taught Knockdown fighting skills from Kyokushin kai, Shidokan and Isshinryu, and beat the heck out of my uke legs. I felt bad for my uke, no, not really. They wanted to learn. Then we did some

MMA training, striking, take downs, throws and submissions. I had a good time, and the students came back for more each day. Some came back twice a day. Well I guess they liked what I had to offer and I may be back there in 2009. For the Europeans, I will be teaching in Berlin Germany for a week in the middle of May, if you are interested in coming out contact me for details.

Each night of the IMAF, there was a huge banquet, with about 800 people from the martial arts festival, the world peace congress and dignitaries from the Malaysian government. The banquets were amazing, great ten course meals, speeches and entertainment representing the cultures of Malaysia to include traditional Chinese Dragon dance and drumming, traditional Indian dance and of course Malaysian entertainment. They also had some of the famous Malaysian entertainers and singers perform at the events.

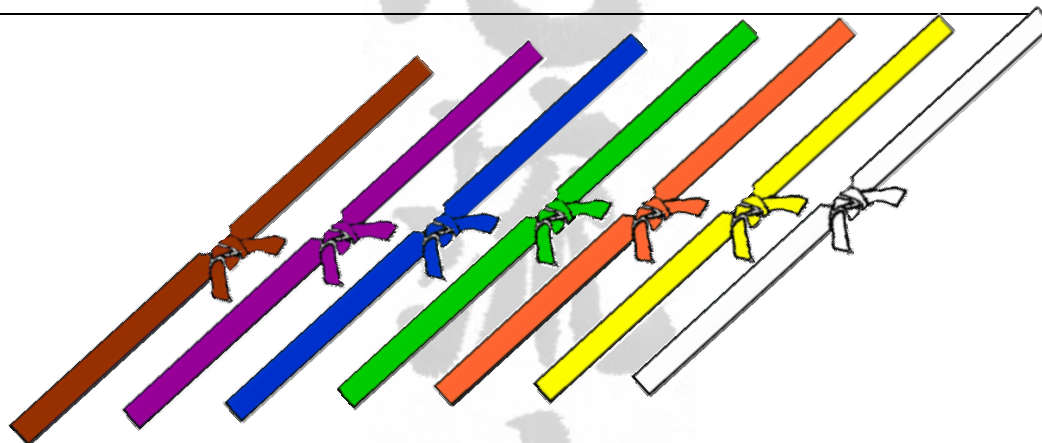
On the final night we had a European style meal at the banquet, more entertainment, presentations and speeches by government officials. The Grand Masters, including myself, were awarded a certificate from the International Association of Educators for World Peace. It was a World Peace Diplomat Award. Some have asked what does this have to do with martial arts. The IAEWPP wanted to affiliate their event in 2008 with the martial arts because they believe that Governments, especially powerful ones, should act like martial artists - we have the ability to hurt, destroy, or bully weaker opponents, but do not. They wish these governments would act as martial artist do. The second award was called a Tong Kolok which is the head dress worn in Malaysia. This award was presented to us in a glass case. The significance of this Tong Kolok is that it is made of the fabric and color worn only by the royal family. It is a very special award that was presented by the host of this event, the Malaysian Government and the heads of Silat, their national martial art. When I have video available I will post it, some pictures and video on my Facebook.





PROMOTIONS

Glen Froese, Shodan



PROMOTIONS

Ikkyu promotions:

Jordan Marlein
Suzie Eren
Casey Froese
Samantha Froese

Nikyu promotions:

Anthony Pirruza
Fawaz Manfoukh
Nadine Blacklock
Cyndy Marlein
Ted Kruzely
Shady Ammari

Sankyu promotions:

Greg Schreiner
Heather Schreiner
Andre Ozvat
Cheeta Tran
Nicholas Bondar
Micheala Bondar
Kylie Tiffin
Dave Taiariol
Lyndsay Patten
Joel Bently
Danielle Lauzon





ST LOUIS SILVER SUN SHOWDOWN



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