



Master Camp 2018 Why You Should Go

By Chip Poirot



Photo courtesy of Kim Weber

When I started training in martial arts in Aikido 30 years ago, I wanted to go to Master Camp in Aikido. Unfortunately, as a graduate student, I could never muster the money to make it happen. After finishing my graduate degree I lived the life of an itinerant academic for many years and consequently never managed to make it to a camp either. Finally, about 19 years ago, I finally landed the big tenure track job, and upon relocating to Ohio, joined the ISKF. But for the next 18 years I set summer teaching and extra pay as my priority and so still, I did not make it to Master Camp. And then finally, this year it happened. My summer classes were canceled due to low enrollment and I began to make my plans to attend Master Camp. I will add that being able to do so was an accomplishment, as back and hip issues had forced me to train less frequently and intensively than I wanted to. But with lots of physical therapy and self-rehab, I finally got

myself up to the point where attending Master Camp seemed doable. The Thursday night before leaving however I began to get cold feet: I felt like I was getting a cold and my leg had started hurting again. And besides, going to Master Camp meant I would have to kennel my dogs and it would be so much easier to stay home in my cozy chair. But with trepidation I took my dogs to the boarder Thursday afternoon, packed my bags, and drove to the airport Friday morning.

Sure enough, the cold I thought was coming on was quite real. I coughed and hacked my way all through camp, and my cold turned into a sinus and ear infection. My leg and hip hurt continuously and the unexpected cold and rain only made the matter seem worse. The food at camp was your basic camp food and there were several breakfasts when I resorted to peanut butter and crackers in my bunk.

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at our regional events**



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The state of the coffee is a matter polite people should not discuss, and of course the bunk was uncomfortable.

And yet, as I reflect about my time at Camp, what I regret the most was not finding a way to make participation more of a priority many years ago. First of all, the instruction at Camp was absolutely first rate. The Classes were taught by members of the ISKF Technical Committee and every class either showed me a new dimension of Shotokan, or helped me to deepen and correct my practice. Though every class was great, there are a few in particular that stand out in my memory. Sensei Miura first focused on correct bowing and class etiquette. In the rest of his classes he presented a unique interpretation of Kata *bunkai* that emphasizes softer, blending techniques and hip rotation to unbalance your opponent without using muscular strength. Though different in emphasis from much of our standard practice, I saw some valuable insights, especially for older or smaller Karate practitioners. On the whole, his teaching reminded me of both Aikido and Wa Do Ryu principles I had learned many years ago.

Sensei Cathy Cline and Sensei James Field taught classes on Tekki Shodan and Tekki Nidan respectively. Both classes helped me to better understand the nature and importance of *kiba dachi* and how to build a strong foundation with which to apply the techniques. Sensei Cline emphasized that Tekki means “iron horse” and that lesson was driven home as we worked on *kiba dachi* until my calves, quads and adductor muscles quivered and burned. I came away from these classes with a much deeper understanding of the Tekki Kata.



Sensei Vaughan coaching Sonia Erfani on Jion at Master Camp

Photo courtesy of Kim Weber

The class that made the deepest impression on me however was a Wednesday morning class taught by Shihan Hiroyoshi Okazaki. During an interview the night before, Okazaki Shihan had talked about how his favorite Kata are the *heians*. He also emphasized the value of older training methods, which he contrasted with contemporary scientific methods of training, as well as training of the spirit. In the Wednesday morning class we did multiple exercises of over 100 techniques

as well as several interesting and complex punching and kicking drills that also required us to quickly shift from stance to stance. But what stands out in my mind is Okazaki Shihan's emphasis on the use of the draw hand, its relationship to hip rotation, and also the importance of bringing your knees together in movement. Though these are details we often emphasize to

beginners, even as advanced students we sometimes forget these points and it is easy to become lazy or lapse into bad habits. During this class I finally understood just how important these details are to Karate practice. And yes, this class really did train and test my spirit. Yet I walked out of that class feeling the best I had felt all week, even if I felt like an extremely clumsy white belt as I struggled to do the drills correctly.

Secondly, Master Camp gives you a chance to see what is really inside you. Fortunately, I had been able to ramp up the intensity of my training several weeks before camp, so I was not overly sore during training. But every morning as I awoke at 5:45, I would tell myself to wiggle my left toe, slowly try to move the rest of my body, down a protein bar, and prepare for class by rolling on my foam roller. Could I do this? Could I overcome my back and hip arthritis and my constant coughing and hacking to train? I did! Though the trainings were physically demanding, in some ways

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I found them to be the easiest part of camp. The hard part would always come later as the muscles tightened. Finally, I would like to point out that as humans we are social animals and as in all things, we can and often do more when we interact with our fellow human beings. Master Camp gives you the chance to meet and train with

some of the best *karate-ka* in the world. In every training I benefited from the chance to do partner work with other people. And as Camp went on we all developed the kind of camaraderie that comes from a group of dedicated people all working together to achieve a goal.



Mid-America Karate-ka at Master Camp 2018

Photo courtesy of Kim Weber

Seek Perfection of Character

By William Hall

Let's look at the first precept of the *dojo kun*: "Seek perfection of character." Master Funakoshi established this as karate's primary principle when he developed this magnificent martial art. The more I train, the more I begin to understand why. To have created the awe-inspiring *dojo kun* and to regularly recite it at the end of each training, was wisdom for the ages! Master Okazaki, in his book, *Perfection of Character: Guiding Principles for the Martial Arts & Everyday Life*, emphasizes his teacher, Master Funakoshi's message, "Karate practitioners and other martial artists must know that the martial arts are about more than physical development, self-defense, and competition; most importantly, they are about continually striving to perfect one's character."

The other precepts of the *dojo kun* seem to flow naturally from "Seek perfection of character." "Be Faithful" is steadfast loyalty, which is a strong samurai tradition. "Endeavor" is to pursue the objective with complete and persistent commitment. "Respect others" is an important part of the Japanese martial arts culture. Without it, the other precepts fail. If we can "Refrain from violent behavior," we can learn to be in control of our emotions, not vice versa, and be at peace with ourselves. Master Funakoshi stressed that karate begins and ends with etiquette.

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Seek Perfection of Character

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If *karate-ka* practice the *dojo kun* precepts, they will not only improve their character, they will serve as an example and make the world a better place.

While reciting the *dojo kun* after each class, we realize that each precept is a component of “Perfection of character” -- our ultimate objective. It is amazing that we are saying the same *dojo kun* that Master Funakoshi had his students recited when he first introduced karate to the Japanese mainland about 100 years ago. Many of his students became legendary, and they faithfully recited the same *dojo kun* after every one of their trainings.

When people ask me why I train in Shotokan, I tell them I am striving to perfect my character. They inevitably ask, “What does that have to do with learning how to fight?” My reply is that karate is not about wanting to fight. Rather, through the physical, we are striving to perfect our character so we can avoid fighting. This refers not only to avoiding combat in the street, but

even minor negative verbal interactions with our co-workers or neighbors.

I am 61 year young graduate student at Cleveland State University. Shotokan karate and my Sensei are teaching me to be both persistent and patient -- traits which are essential in seeking perfection of one’s character.

I truly believe Master Funakoshi is smiling, and very pleased with how his disciples transmitted, as our ultimate objective, “Seek perfection of character,” through several generations, and that our generation’s Senseis are faithfully instilling it in us.

The more I train, the more excited I become about being a *karate-ka*. Through our consistent, rigorous training, and sweat, we gain enlightenment into Master Funakoshi’s *dojo kun*, and a mechanism to improve our character.

Mid-America Spring Camp 2018

By Adam Clouser

Mid-America’s annual Spring Camp was held on the campus of the Ohio State University on April 14TH and 15th. Eager *karate-ka* from around the area joined us in Columbus for a wonderful weekend of training. This would be the second year in a row that Sensei David Jones of Alberta, Canada was able to join us and bring some of his personal brand of training to our region. Sensei Jones expressed that if we are to improve we must maintain both our mental and physical focus on the task at hand. This mentality was carried throughout the camp, not only through the physically demanding nature of the drills, but also in the complexity that left no room for thought outside of the moment. It was a fantastic way to train.

We worked us through repetition of basics drills of increasing complexity. “We must train to become a well-oiled machine,” Sensei reminded us, following with, “Some of you need to add a little oil.” Below is one such drill, to be practiced with precise, large motion and full-body focus on every technique:
From *zenkutsu-dachi*:

1. *Oi-zuki*
2. *Oi-zuki, gyaku-zuki*
3. *Kizami-zuki, oi-zuki, gyaku-zuki*
4. *Kizami-zuki, oi-zuki, gyaku-zuki, kizami-zuki*
5. Step forward using *oi-zuki* to reset and change side.

Combine step by step until all 5 steps are done fluidly.
Focus!

Repeat pattern with blocking techniques and reverse punches.

Repeat pattern with kicks. (Substitute front leg front kick for *kizami-zuki*)

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Mid-America Karate-ka Welcome Sensei David Jones to Spring Camp 2018 - Photos courtesy of Adam Clouser

The Camp's trainings evolved naturally from basic combinations to partner work and kata. Sensei stressed that this progression is very important that we connect with the kata to make it more authentic and real. He demonstrated complex multiple attacker *bunkai* using Bassai Dai and Jion, and strongly encouraging us to put them together on our own time. Sensei spent some dedicated time in the afternoon working with Senseis Vaughan and Obershlake to teach kata of varying levels to those in attendance, Katas covered included Bassai Dai, Kanku-Sho, Kanku-Dai, Hangetsu, and others.

Saturday evening Campers convened at Miller's Ale House near campus for some food and camaraderie. The weather was cool, but so were the drinks. We had a great showing and everyone enjoyed spending a little time together off the dojo floor. It is these dinners that help to strengthen community beyond the workout.

The weekend's final training took place in upper floor of OSU's gym on Sunday morning. Sensei woke the group up with a bang, pushing us through kicking combinations at a pace that drove anything but karate from our minds; a result no doubt intended. Much of the morning was spent working partner drills to teach timing and rhythm. Below is one such drill, focusing on footwork and sharp recovery in addition to timing. A progression built from this drill into more complex partner work, but, for brevity, only the core and most important lesson is included here.

Both partners in left leg forward, *jiyu kamae*, at safe distance to avoid clashes:

- Both partners shift in making *gyaku-zuki chudan*.
- Both partners switch feet simultaneously.
- Both partners shift in again making *gyaku-zuki chudan*.

Increase rhythm, moving faster and faster. The goal is not to beat the partner, but rather to match timing and increase pace together by pushing each other. Having so many people of different levels of experience, age, and background coming together under one roof with the intent to learn and work with one another is one of karate's great strengths. It is one of many reasons that our Mid-America Camps always feel so special. Sharing that experience with Sensei Jones was both an honor and a pleasure. We owe a great deal of thanks to Sensei and the Mid-America leadership for bringing us together at these events and sharing their knowledge and experience with us. The best way to show that gratitude is to learn from the lessons they gave us and remember that it is up to us to continue the lesson by bringing them back to our dojos and training with them.

If you are interested in perusing (or contributing) to a more complete, if less neatly formatted, list of drills and comments from Mid-America Spring Camp 2018, please follow the link found [HERE](#).

Coach's Eyes

By Jerry Baker

I remember a day when Sensei Oberschlake and I were watching a student perform a kata, and an observer of us might have wondered if we were even paying attention at all. Sensei Oberschlake was looking upward as if seeking guidance from above while I was looking to the side and a bit downward as if I was looking for my car keys. The truth is that we were both watching the same thing at the same time in two directions, but both of us were using our “coach’s eyes.” Each of us was recalling the admonition from Sensei Golden to see much by looking away. He taught each of us the valuable lesson to use our “coach’s eyes” to see the whole picture by using an askance view of the action. His lesson taught us how to see what is critical to effective movement by seeing all at once all the parts that make such movements possible.

Whenever I am teaching, I look for five things when I take that global view of my students’ actions. I look for *kime*, correctness, completeness, spirit, and fluidity. The final four items on that list facilitate the first. Let’s look at each and then at how the whole package comes together.

Kime can be seen as the ultimate goal of any punch, strike, block, or kick. If the move lacks efficacy, it will simply fail in its attempt to provide protection or end an opponent’s attack. The wrong way to think of *kime* is to assume that it is the final step in the delivery of an action. Rather, it is the result of many components of the action being accomplished correctly and completely with spirit and fluidly. Without *kime* a punch becomes a push, a kick lacks power and direction, and a block can prove ineffective. We are taught to bring all of our power to a dime-sized target. We are drilled on the methods to anchor that power in rooted stances. We find our power increasing as we use our breath and the ability to relax to enhance the smoothness, the fluidity of our movements. That is how you produce effective *kime*.

Correctness is essential if one is to learn the components of effective karate movements. Sensei Vaughan often tells us to make sure that what we are

doing is done correctly rather than quickly or strongly. Speed and strength cannot be fully utilized if the movement, position, and posture are incorrect.

A move must be complete so that it is not inhibited by a desire to tense muscles prematurely. You can observe this by noting a punch or block that seems to put on the brakes before reaching its desired conclusion. Such incompleteness often results in a stiff approach or a drifting *kime* that lacks the very focus needed to be successful. One must let the stance and hips propel the body and thereby smoothly deliver the technique in an efficacious manner to its target.

Without spirit, our performance misses the essence of how karate connects the mind and body to formulate an effective and artistic performance. To expend energy inefficiently in an effort to look strong is not the same as delivering powerful techniques enhanced by a clear mind, a willful purpose, and a spirit of determination. Your coach’s eyes can tell the difference as you observe someone whose techniques are always sharp, always strong, always seemingly effortless, and always delivered with a strong spirit.

As power, speed, posture, form, and mindfulness come together, fluidity becomes possible. Breathing properly facilitates relaxation. Repetition training develops the neural pathways to create proficiency. A sense of flow develops, and this can be observed when the coach looks askance at the student in order to gain a holistic sense of how the movement starts, travels, and concludes. Your coach’s eyes can show you what you might miss if you only focus on individual techniques.

What is the task that faces the instructor who is watching a class or a self-training student seeking to understand the components of effective movement? This is the time to develop your own “coach’s eyes.” Sometimes you look for specific details of foot placement or technique delivery, but at other times you take the wider view to see the whole student and the entire picture of what is going on before you.

Exam Results And Announcements

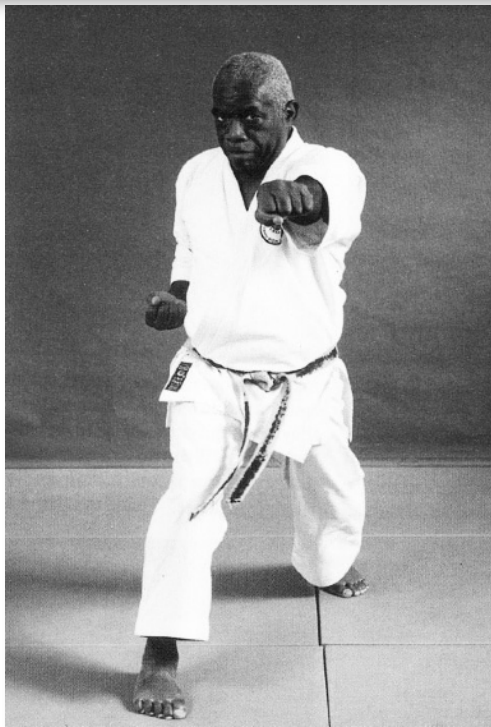


Photo courtesy of Black Belt Magazine

Name	Club	Exam Type	Result	Location
Anthony Sammons	Shotokan Karate of Lexington	Dan	Nidan	Spring Camp
Nezar Falluji	Shotokan Karate of Lexington	Dan	Nidan	Spring Camp
Carol Glenn	Swartz Creek Karate Club	Instructor	Level D	Master Camp
Jeff Weber	Shotokan Karate of Anderson	Instructor	Level C	Master Camp
Kim Weber	Shotokan Karate of Anderson	Instructor	Level B	Master Camp
Kim Weber	Shotokan Karate of Anderson	Examiner	Level C	Master Camp

Congratulations to Carol Glenn, who was appointed to the Mid-America Technical Committee and as the Mid-America Regional Team Coach!

Mid-America 2018 Regional Tournament Results

Event	1st Place	2nd Place	3rd Place	3rd Place (Kumite)
Adult Team Kata	Teachers Pet	OSU Shotokan	Anderson Karate	
Adult Women's Senior Kata	Yuki Kikuchi	Laura Graham	Jamie Kennedy	
Adult Women's Senior Kumite	Laura Graham	Yuki Kikuchi		
Adult Men's Senior Kata	Michael Tomcsanyi	Tom Weidel	Chip Poirot	
Adult Men's Senior Kumite	Matt Madison	Michael Tomcsanyi	Greg Esz	Chip Poirot
Adult Women's Black Belt Kata	Sonia Erfani	Jazmin Sorvala	Hannah Heavener	
Adult Women's Black Belt Kumite	Jazmin Sorvala	Sonia Erfani	Savannah Gay	Hannah Heavener
Adult Men's Black Belt Kata	Brett Riedel	Adam Clouser	Adam Piccarillo	
Adult Men's Black Belt Kumite	Brett Riedel	Adam Clouser	Cameron Lasley	Chuku Oje
Adult Men's Brown Belts Kata	Archie Tram	Mike Herrin	Terry Hazelbaker	
Adult Men's Brown Belt Kumite	Archie Tram	Terry Hazelbaker	Steven Robbins	Mike Herrin
Adult Kyu Ranks Kata	Tanner Anderson	Yu-Shen Chui	Janet Meier	
Adult Kyu Ranks Kumite	Janet Meier	Yu-Shen Chui	Maggie Lange	Tanner Anderson
Youth Team Kata	Creekside 2	The O'Hara's	Creekside 1	
Boys 8-9 Beginner Kata	Caleb Horner	Ziyad Ahmed		
Boys 8-9 Beginner Kumite	Caleb Horner	Ziyad Ahmed		
Mixed 10-11 Beginner Kata	Maya Minano	Zane Ahmed		
Mixed 10-11 Beginner Kumite	Zane Ahmed	* Forfeit *		
Boys 13-16 Beginner Kata	Anthony Lonsway	Hunter Wolfe		
Boys 13-16 Beginner Kumite	Anthony Lonsway	Hunter Wolfe		
Girls 7-8 Intermediate Kata	Kenzington Brown	Caitlyn O'Hara		
Girls 7-8 Intermediate Kumite	Kenzington Brown	Caitlyn O'Hara		
Girls 10-13 Intermediate Kata	Jasmine Duvall	Miranda Jorge		
Girls 10-13 Intermediate Kumite	Jasmine Duvall	Miranda Jorge		
Girls 10-12 Advanced Kata	Hailey O'Hara	Jessica Robbins	Ashley O'Hara	
Girls 10-12 Advanced Kumite	Ava Brown	Hailey O'Hara	Jessica Robbins	Ashley O'Hara
Boys 11-13 Advanced Kata	Aiden Glaeser	Jason Dangol	Isaac Deiningner	
Boys 11-13 Advanced Kumite	Isaac Deiningner	Sean Teismann	Aiden Glaeser	Jason Dangol
Boys 16-17 Advanced Kata	Nathan Deiningner	Noah Gay		
Boys 16-17 Advanced Kumite	Nathan Deiningner	Noah Gay		

Sensei Vaughan



Chief Instructor, ISKF Mid-America Region

Sensei Martin Vaughan trained under Sensei Golden and Master Okazaki for over 40 years and is our Regional Director. He is also the Chief Instructor of Indiana ISKF and Vice President of ISKF.

Sensei Oberschlake



President and Assistant Instructor, ISKF Mid-America Region

Sensei James Oberschlake trained under Sensei Golden and Master Okazaki starting in 1974. He is also the Chief Instructor of the Brown County Shotokan Karate Club.

Sensei Golden



Instructor Emeritus, ISKF Mid-America Region

Sensei Greer Golden graduated from the Instructor Trainee Program in 1969 and was sent to Ohio University in Athens to begin sharing his knowledge with Mid-America karate students.

Calendar

August 10 - 12 - Mid-America ISKF Summer Camp

Hosted by the Swartz Creek Shotokan Karate club at Camp Copneconic in Fenton, MI

September 15 - Regional Training

Hosted by the Ohio Valley Karate Club in Cincinnati, OH

October 13 - 14 - Mid-America ISKF Fall Camp

Hosted by the Creekside Karate club in Youngstown, OH

Contributors

CHIP POIROT

Mr. Poirot, 3rd *dan*, is a student at the Brown County Shotokan Karate club in Hamersville, OH.

WILLIAM HALL

Mr. Hall is a beginning student at the Cleveland Shotokan Karate Club in Cleveland, OH.

JERRY BAKER

Mr. Baker, 4th *dan*, is the Chief Instructor of the Dayton Shotokan Karate Club in Union, OH.

ADAM CLOUSER

Mr. Clouser, 2nd *dan*, is the Chief Instructor of The Ohio State University Shotokan Karate Club in Columbus, OH.

Editor

MARTY SCHRAGER

Mr. Schrage, 5th *dan*, is the Chief Instructor of the Ohio Valley Karate Club in Cincinnati, OH.

Associate Editor

MICHELLE RANDALL

Ms. Randall, 2nd *dan*, is a senior student at the Indiana ISKF club in Indianapolis, IN.