



3rd World Shoto Cup August 12-14th Cape Town, South Africa Editorial

By Martin Vaughan, Michelle Randall, and Martin Schrager

Editorial By Martin Vaughan

I had been looking forward to this tournament since the location was announced in 2011. The Shoto Cup did not disappoint. It was organized by our friends from South Africa; San Pillay, Chief Instructor and Country Director of South Africa ISKF, and Karien Jacobsz, Tournament Director. Mr. Pillay, Ms. Jacobsz, and their staff did an excellent job of hosting and executing a world-class tournament. Over 20 countries were represented, but the feeling of friendship and “family” was apparent to all from the start.

Our Mid-America Region was well represented in terms of competitors and as judges. Kim Weber (2nd women’s individual Senior Kata, 3rd individual Senior *Kumite*), Jeff Weber (3rd men’s individual Senior Kata, 1st Senior Team Kata, 2nd Senior team *Kumite*), Carol Glenn (3rd women’s individual Senior *Kumite*), and Marty Schrager (2nd men’s Team *Kumite*) did a great job of representing the region and the national organization with their performances as competitors, but Kim, Carol and Jeff did double duty as judges in the Children’s Tournament and the elimination rounds of the Shoto Cup. Joining them as judges were Michelle Randall, Jim Oberschlake and myself. It was an honor and a rare opportunity to judge so many athletes of such high calibre during this tournament.

However, for many athletes it seemed that the purpose of competition was winning. Wild cheering, with celebrations inside and outside the competition area, show a lack of respect for one’s opponent, and a lack of emotional control. This represents all of us in a bad light. Our Masters have always emphasized self-

control; a martial artist conducts himself with dignity and respect for the the opponent.

Continued on Page 2



*Marty Schrager arriving in Cape Town after a 25 hour flight.
Photo courtesy of Marty Schrager*

In This Issue...

- Golf Outing - Pg. 4
- Summer Camp- Pg. 4
- Athens Regional Training - Pg. 5
- The Rules of the Game - Pg. 6
- Student Profile - Page 8

3rd World Shoto Cup

Continued from page 2

I noticed that many of the competitors did not bow to their opponent after a *kumite* match or bow before and after their kata match. This is a fundamental lapse of proper etiquette. Master Funakoshi said “karate begins and ends with courtesy (a bow).” *Karate-ka* must display good manners at all times, especially on the world stage.

Competition is just part of what we do, it is not the end product. Master Okazaki often told us before a tournament, “This is just another training.” All competitors are there for the same reason, to test their skills. By doing so, one finds out what they need to work on in training. The lesson here is simple; we can’t change what others do, we can only change what we ourselves do. I would like to see our Region lead by example in this regard. Maybe if others see us acting the way our Master taught us, then others will follow our lead and change their behavior.

ISKF Gold - *Editorial By Michelle Randall*



Mid-America Representatives to the 3rd World Shoto Cup.

Photo courtesy of Lexi Weber

Along with staging a first-class tournament, the team from South Africa hosted several cultural events and activities that took place outside of the dojo. Mid-America *karate-ka* enjoyed a taste of the African arts one evening alongside Hiroyoshi Sensei, members of the ISKF Technical committee, and other distinguished

guests at Gold, a popular Cape Town restaurant. Gold is known for its 14-course tasting menu served by an animated and costumed staff of drummers, singers, and dancers. (We especially enjoyed having our faces painted and sampling the springbok.)

Other activities included taking in the beauty of the South African landscape, which proved a special joy to *karate-ka* from all over the world. Many could be seen taking the cable car up to the top of Table Mountain for the spectacular view, while others hiked down to the waterline to visit the penguins at Boulders beach. The Shoto Cup culminated in a well-attended banquet at the Two Oceans Aquarium on the Victoria and Albert waterfront, complete with sharks, moon jellyfish, giant spider crabs, and rock lobsters! All in all it was an incredible trip that gave *karate-ka* memories worth more than gold.

The Journey to Representing the USA - *Editorial By Marty Schrage*

As Sensei Vaughan mentions in his editorial, competition is only one part of what we do and is not the focus. Sensei Oberschlake has told me that with karate, the journey is the goal - they are inseparable. There is no end-point nor final destination.

Most *karate-ka* train because they enjoy it. It feels good. They aren’t necessarily training for a specific event. We do often put in extra time and effort as some specific events arise - a demonstration, belt testing, or a tournament. However, the event is not the end-result, but just a step along the journey.

The most important aspect of a karate tournament is that by competing and training for that competition, you become a better *karate-ka*. Leading up to the Shoto Cup, I trained seven days per week - most days waking at 5:00 AM to minimize the impact to my job and family. The reward for that dedication and hard work is not a medal, bragging rights, nor fame and fortune, but the fact that I made so many self-discoveries during this process and am now a better *karate-ka* than I was before.



Mid-America Golf Outing Fund Raiser 2016

By James Oberschlake

The 2016 Mid-America Karate Golf Outing was a success. It was a very hot day, but everyone seemed to persevere and have a good time. Officially, we served lunch and dinner, but truth be told, we fed people all day long whenever they passed by the grill. We made sure a good supply of water was always available.

24 teams with 95 golfers participated. We had over 40 hole sponsors, and cash donations from over 15

individuals and businesses. Our raffle and putting contest also contributed to our fund raising efforts. We raised several thousand dollars to help support Mid-America's not-for-profit activities throughout the year.

Many thanks to all those who helped make our outing a success!

What I Learned at Summer Camp

By James Nelson



Photos courtesy of David Ihnen

Mid-America celebrated its 35th annual Michigan Summer Camp at beautiful Camp Copneconic, in Fenton, Michigan. Our special guest instructor was Mr. Gary Swain, 8th dan, who is a member of the ISKF technical committee, and soon to be the Chief Instructor of the Mountain States Region. Mr. David Talley served as assistant instructor, and taught the *kyu* ranks on Saturday afternoon. The Swartz Creek Shotokan Karate Club served as host of this year's camp. We welcomed 35 weekend campers plus an additional 18 *karate-ka* who were day campers.

Taikyoku Kata

Sensei Swain introduced *Taikyoku* kata to the group, and we practiced *Taikyoku Shodan*, and above. *Taikyoku* kata follows the same pattern (*enbusen*) as

Heian Shodan, with a few minor variations. *Taikyoku Shodan* for example uses only front stance (*zenkutsu dachi*), down blocks (*gedan barai*), and step in punches (*oi zuki*) to the stomach (*chudan*), and it omits the hammer fist strike. In addition, the pattern is different at the end. After the last step in punch and *kiai*, turn 270° and down block, step in punch, turn 180° down block, step in punch. *Taikyoku Nidan*, follows the same pattern, but the punches are to the face (*jodan*). In summary, *Taikyoku* kata has many variations, but always follows the same pattern (*enbusen*). Feel free to experiment with a variety of stances, blocks, and strikes. Additional information may be found using the internet.

Continued on Page 5

What I Learned at Summer Camp

Continued from Page 4

Fly Fishing

Sensei Swain and I had a chance to get to know each other better during his visit to Michigan. One of the things I learned is that fly fishing is not a passive sport. Sensei is an avid fisherman, and enjoys fly fishing whenever he gets a chance. He said it helps him relax and rejuvenate among the tranquil settings of the river and environment. In addition, fly fishing is a very active sport because one is always casting and reeling while fishing, and of course, actually catching some fish. He said he likes to catch and release (put the fish

back in the water), and believes in protecting the environment for future generations. In addition to fishing, Sensei also enjoys hunting, and spending many hours at the dojo teaching and training.

In all, this was another enjoyable camp for me and the rest of the *karate-ka* in attendance. We hope that Sensei Swain will be able to return to our Region in the near future. As always, it was a pleasure working with the fine group of volunteers from the Swartz Creek dojo to make this a memorable experience for everyone. A big thank you all of them, and to everyone who attended.

Athens Hosts Mid-America

By Lynette Peck

The Athens Karate Club was delighted to host Sensei Vaughan and 50 Mid-America *karate-ka* on September 17 and 18, 2016. Sensei Vaughan chose footwork as the weekend's training theme, emphasizing that correct foot placement is the foundation of well-executed technique. On Saturday, we explored this concept by practicing moves 10 through 13 in *Bassai Dai*, and moves 7 through 9 in *Heian Nidan*.

First, Sensei stressed that the middle block in the *Bassai Dai* sequence is completed as the feet shift toward the opposing 45-degree angle. Without this shift, the upper body cannot execute the necessary torque and the block will lack power. Participants practiced the sequence on both sides with a partner. Specifically, the attacker stepped in with a *chudan* level punch, and, as in the kata, the defender blocked and countered *chudan*. Sensei emphasized the importance of leading with the feet so as to execute the block without winding up. This quick lower-body action gives the arm the

power it needs to make an efficient and strong block.

Likewise, the counter-punch gets its power from the foot-knee-hip rotation as the block is released. Economy of movement is, as always, essential. It is correct footwork that makes this possible.



Photo courtesy of The Athens News

Sensei then asked us to consider moves 7 through 9 in *Heian Nidan*. He stressed in particular the value, in move 7, of pointing the left foot fully toward the right wall before preparing the side-snap kick to the back. In other words, the left foot must anchor the kick just as it does when we practice our karate basics. If we leave it pointing toward the front, our hips won't be under us and our kick will lack power. We will not be able to recover in time to execute our knife-hand to the front. Here again, footwork leads to proper technique. Sensei had us practice these moves first in the typical sequence, then on the other side. He reminded us that, while working in the reverse feels strange, it is good for our bodies and our brains to train on both sides.

Continued on Page 6

Athens Hosts Mid-America

Continued from Page 5

On Sunday, Sensei presented us with a five-step sparring sequence that once again challenged us to understand the centrality of footwork to technique. In this sequence, the attacker punches first *jodan*, then *chudan*, and finally *gedan*. The defender blocks with rising block in front-stance, middle block in back stance, and down block in side stance. To counter, the defender steps in twice, punching *jodan*. The exercise

quickly exposes weak footwork and again highlights the importance of foot-knee-hip alignment. This facilitates the economy of movement that is the basis of the *karate-ka's* power and control.

Many thanks to Sensei Vaughan and the Athens Karate Club for providing this wonderful training opportunity.

The Rules of the Game

By Hannah Heavener

High School Student - Youngstown, Ohio

Over the course of my life, my interests have been captivated by many things. At the forefront of those interests is martial arts. However, it's not all about kicking and punching. The thing that not many people realize is that, in karate, there is a very strictly enforced system of principles that are expected to be followed. Those principles changed my life, and I expect that they will continue to for years to come.

When I first started karate, it wasn't all smooth sailing. For one thing, I was the oldest person in the beginner class. Luckily, I had a saving grace. Sophia Talley was Sensei Talley's daughter. She was older than me, but if she hadn't been in that class, I probably would have dropped out of karate altogether, and I would have missed out on learning the lessons of a lifetime.

Sophia, whom we call Sophie, was the one who truly helped me to understand what karate was all about. She made time for me, and taught me that there were some basic rules that dictated the sport. Before I could become an official beginner, I had to learn these principles, that everyone learns, on their first day of training, and I am still learning the implications of them to this day. Those principles are learned by repetition (sometimes in multiple languages) in one big block. That block is called the *Dojo Kun*.

Dojo Kun translates to Training Hall Rules. The Rules were originally taken from the teachings of the man who fathered Shotokan Karate, Gichin Funakoshi. The *Dojo Kun* was adopted from Sensei Funakoshi's *Niju Kun*, which consisted of twenty principles of karate. Eventually, those twenty were whittled down to the

Dojo Kun we know today, which adheres to the five most fundamental basics of the martial art. These five rules are learned virtually immediately upon entering the dojo for the first time. They are also recited, by everyone, at the end of every single class, and more advanced students are expected to have them memorized. That just shows a glimmer of how important these rules are. Sensei Tim Gay, another of my instructors, strives to follow the *Dojo Kun* every day. He makes it easy to see that these rules govern not only how people train, but also how they live their lives. Through the way he and my other teachers have almost religiously allowed the *Dojo Kun* to dictate their lives, I have subconsciously allowed it to impact the way I live my life as well.

The first rule of the *Dojo Kun* is Seek Perfection of Character. My third instructor, Sensei Tom Ventresco, told me that this is the principle that he tries to achieve the most strenuously. I agree with his assessment that humans aren't perfect, but we must try to be the best that we can. I know that, in my life, it is very difficult to try and reach this goal. Sin nature is overpowering, and attempting to teach perfection can help to curb that.

The second principle is to Be Faithful. Not only does one need to have faith in their own belief system, which I do, but they also need to have faith in themselves, and what they do, on a day to day basis. Personally, I must be faithful in God because life can be overwhelming at times, not just in karate, and falling back on faith is the only way to keep myself upright. In karate, and especially in life, everyone needs to be faithful, or

Continued on Page 7

The Rules of the Game

Continued from Page 6

believe in what they do, or it has no purpose. After all, to have faith is to believe, and I believe I need as much faith as I can get.

The third rule is Endeavor. Endeavoring is to put forth effort in order to succeed. Sensei Gay likes to tell us that we only get out what we put in. In that regard, this particular rule has taught me to try my best in every aspect of my life, and that the rewards for such a feat can be well worth it. If I don't try my best in everything that I attempt, then it will be difficult for anyone to take me seriously, without being called lazy or incompetent. Those are titles that I think everyone would rather live without.

The fourth rule of the *Dojo Kun* is Respect Others. Although it should be obvious, one of the most fundamental rules of karate, and life, is to respect each other. Respect is earned through trust and camaraderie. In my class, respect has been cultivated from years of training together. For example, whenever someone bearing the title 'Sensei' starts talking, the advanced students, all of whom have studied karate for years, instinctively know to shut up and listen. My classmates and I do this because it's a disciplined, ingrained response to respect whoever is in charge, and trust them to do right by us. This is another rule that can be applied in all walks of life. If we don't respect others out in the workforce, it will be virtually impossible for them to reciprocate. Not only is it a societal rule, but it is an important life lesson as well.

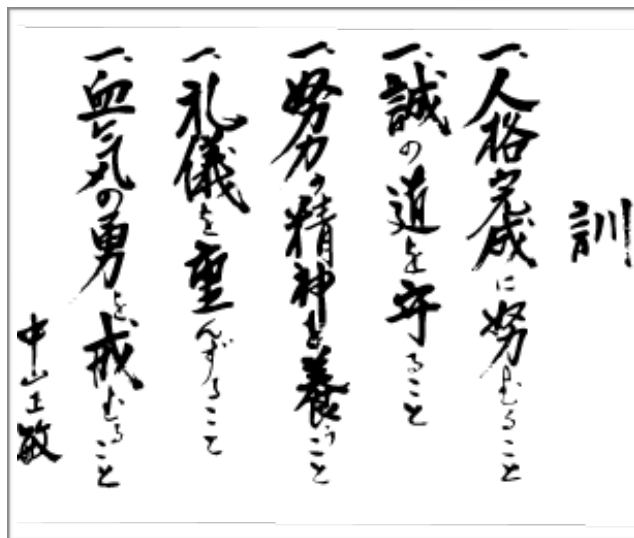
The fifth, and final, rule of the *Dojo Kun* is Refrain From Violent Behavior. That's not to say we don't roughhouse while we're on break, after all, it is a martial art. However, the true meaning is to never

instigate any form of hostile intent. Sensei Talley believes that this is the most difficult, and one of the most important rules to follow. I wholeheartedly agree with that assessment because, in order to practice this rule, one must adopt, and have an innate understanding of, patience. This may be one of the most difficult rules for me to adhere to, if only for the reason that I often find myself an impatient character. This rule also teaches me self-control, an important characteristic, and I try to cool my temper when I think about it. It is very difficult to master, indeed.

Tying in the fifth principle, we learn choreographed series of movements known as katas. There are twenty-six katas in Shotokan karate, and all of them start with a block. This is a significant concept we learn at the beginning of our training. We never start with a strike, always a defensive technique. It is another way to reinforce the idea that true violence is not tolerated, either in training, or in any part of life.

In karate, all of my classmates aim to follow the *Dojo Kun* in order to lead a more productive life. I wholeheartedly believe that the set of rules that has been established will truly advance me in life. It is for this purpose that I must strive to follow this unconventional code of conduct. These rules have taught me the pathway to success in life.

Seek Perfection of Character, Be Faithful, Endeavor, Respect Others, and Refrain From Violent Behavior. Some people may just see the *Dojo Kun* as words tacked up on a wall in a karate studio. I disagree because, not only was I rigorously trained to abide by these rules, I also wouldn't be the person I am today without them.



*Dojo Kun Calligraphy by Master Nakayama
Image courtesy of ISKF.com*

Student Profile

Sensei Larry Rota

Columbus Shotokan Karate Club

I began training with Sensei Golden in 1981 at his private dojo Karate Columbus. Leading up to my training, I was coaxed by a close friend who was already a member, to observe a class in the dojo. Coming from a background in traditional American sport, I recognized the sincere effort given by instructors and students in training. Even though the karate traditions and techniques were unfamiliar, I was impressed by the aesthetics and power demonstrated by the class.

Membership with Karate Columbus quickly followed and although I had many excellent coaches as a young man, I was inspired by the extraordinary teaching skills possessed by Sensei Golden and so committed myself to training under his guidance. As Sensei Golden moved his focus to the Ohio State University Shotokan Karate Club, I was accepted and joined that outstanding club. Two years later, through dedicated and difficult

training, I received my *shodan* from Master Teruyuki Okazaki.

As the years passed, and OSU policy toward non-student participation changed, it became necessary to find new ways to train. Thankfully, in 2000 the opportunity to join the relatively new Columbus Shotokan Karate club emerged. Soon thereafter in 2003, I was asked by senior members to undertake the duties of head instructor and I have remained in that role ever since. The ISKF/MAKI is the only karate organization of which I have been a member and I plan to continue contributing in that role training for advancement, instructing and participating in events as a contestant and judge.

I believe my life has truly benefited from all the contributions of my instructors and fellow *karate-ka* over the years and wish to express my appreciation to them all.



Image courtesy of Larry Rota



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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.



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 Brown County Shotokan Karate Club.



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

October 15-16 - Fall Camp

Hosted by Creekside Karate, Youngstown, OH.

November 11-13 - ISKF US National Tournament

Valley Forge, PA

December 12 - Regional Training, Kyu Exam, and Dan Exam

Hosted by the Dayton Shotokan Karate Club at Milton-Union Elementary School, Dayton, OH

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