



ALONG THE WAY

River Valley Martial Arts Newsletter
January, 2010



WORDS OF WISDOM

"Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners..."

Romans 5:6 NLT

This month build upon last month's focus on self-control to take a serious look at being punctual. Making sure we do the right thing at the right time is a character trait we can all spend time working on, as people are regularly relying on us to do what is required, and to do so in a timely manner.

Kyle Bennett

Instructor

John Terry

Instructor

THEME OF THE MONTH

Punctuality: Honoring others by doing the right thing at the right time. (Punctuality vs. Tardiness)

1. Strictly observant of an appointed or regular time.
2. One who is prompt, not late or tardy.
3. One who regular demonstrates faithfulness in managing time.
4. One who is precise or exact.

Why is Punctuality Important?

"So observe the decree of this festival at the appointed time each year..."
Exodus 13:10 NLT

"See to it the offerings are brought at the appointed times..."
Numbers 28:2 NLT

"Don't make a rash promise to God and only later count the cost..."
Proverbs 20:25 NLT

"The Lord detests the use of dishonest scales, but delights in accurate rates..."
Proverbs 11:1 NLT

Be On Time, Every Time!

TUITION : UPDATES & PAYMENT OPTIONS

We have been advised the State of Arkansas is now requiring the collection of sales tax on martial arts tuition payments, so starting in January we will be adding applicable sales tax to our monthly tuition to comply with this obligation.

- Lil Dragons: \$43.40 a month
- Kick'n Kids: \$65.10 a month
- Teens/Adults: \$65.10 a month
- Ju-Jitsu: \$54.25 a month

As several of you are now requesting this, we will be adding a "Bank Draft" option in the coming weeks as a convenience to automate your payments to the school. We'll be providing additional details on this as we finalize this interface with our new computerized attendance/billing system in the coming weeks.

NEW CLASS SCHEDULE STARTING IN JAN.

We will be modifying our Kick'n Kids class schedules starting in January in an effort to reduce class size due to our continued growth.

Tuesday & Thursday classes will change as follows:

- 5:30PM - 6:30PM Kick'n Kids (Beginner 1: Ages 6-8)
- 6:00PM - 7:00PM Kick'n Kids (Beginner 2: 2Ages 9-12)

The exercise/character development portion of the class will run from 6:00 to 6:30, with the younger class getting instruction prior to exercise and the older class receiving instruction after the exercise component. Adult classes on Tuesday and on Thursday will start at 7:00PM. Monday classes are unchanged.

"KID-SAFE" BENEFIT TOURNEY - JAN 30



We are planning a "Kid-Safe" benefit martial arts tournament on Saturday, January 30, 2010. Schools from across the state will be invited to attend and have their students participate in a fun, family-friendly environment.

We'll have competition in open-hand, weapons, and musical forms as well as point sparring. Watch for details at the dojo, and make plans now to participate in this upcoming tournament.

MAX TAP EVENT - JANUARY 30

MaxTapMMA will be bringing mixed martial arts to Russellville on Saturday, January 30 as a fund-raiser for our "Kid-Safe" program.



Boxing, grappling, kickboxing and mixed martial arts will be featured in a 22' octagon cage. We are in need of several volunteers people to help us with this venue, so if you are interested in helping, please let one of the staff know. Tickets will go on sale in early January, so stay tuned for more information.

SOKE KUBOTA - IKA SEMINAR (APRIL 10)



Grandmaster Tak Kubota, founder of the IKA (International Karate Association), will be traveling to Russellville on Saturday, April 10 for a day of joint training with other IKA schools in the region.

Soke Kubota is a world-renowned karate instructor and the creator of the "kubotan" (a 5" cylindrical self-defense weapon) used by law enforcement and self-defense enthusiasts around the world. He is also known globally as one of the premiere law enforcement defensive tactics instructors teaching his own "Kubo-Tactical Defense." Make plans now to attend.



No First Attack in Karate

By: Sensei Iain Abernethy

In recent years there has been much debate as to the legitimacy of pre-emptive striking. Some support the method stating that action is always faster than reaction, and emphasize the importance of seizing the initiative in high-risk situations. Others object to the method on ethical grounds. Gichin Funakoshi's famous quote, "Karate ni sente nashi" or "There is no first attack in karate" is normally used to justify this stance. As a traditional karateka, it is my belief that training should revolve around self-development & self-defense, and should effectively promote both. We do not wish to produce training grounds for thugs nor do we wish to fail to equip our students to deal with society's violent minority. The issue of pre-emptive striking is certainly controversial (as I found out after I included it in my book 'Karate's Grappling Methods'!) One thing that both camps agree on is that fighting is to be avoided whenever possible, it is what to do when fighting cannot be avoided that causes the debate. There can be very few martial artists who believe that the individual has no right to fight back, the question seems to be at what point is the use of force legitimate?

I believe that "Karate-do ni sente nashi" and the pre-emptive strike are in no way mutually exclusive and can exist side by side. To my mind once an assailant has decided to attack us, the attack has begun and we are well within our rights to use whatever methods are appropriate to ensure our safety. Obviously we can't read our opponent's mind so we must look for physical indications that an attack is imminent. Behavior such as threatening body language, verbal threats, raised voice, excessive swearing etc. If an individual is behaving in an aggressive way whilst attempting to invade our personal space then there is a strong possibility that their verbal aggression is about to escalate to the physical. This verbal assault is an attack in itself and waiting until the attack becomes physical is foolhardy in the extreme. (Read Geoff's excellent books "Three Second Fighter" & "The Fence")

In his book 'Karate-do Kyohan' Gichin Funakoshi wrote, "When there are no avenues of escape or one is caught even before any attempt to escape can be made, then for the first time the use of self-defense techniques should be considered. Even at times like these, do not show any intention of attacking, but first let the attacker become careless. At that time attack him concentrating one's whole strength in one blow to a vital point and in the moment of surprise, escape and seek shelter and help." This is exactly what many of those who teach the pre-emptive strike recommend. It is interesting that the preceding quote states, "...at that time attack him..." as opposed to, "...at that time wait until the assailant attacks before countering..." It would seem that once all other options have been exhausted, Funakoshi had no problem with the pre-emptive strike as a means to facilitate escape. I believe the pre-emptive strike to be a "defensive" method in so much as it is a way to avoid the unprovoked assaults of others. Striking an individual when they did not initiate the assault would undoubtedly be a violation of karate-do ni sente nashi, however, I feel that being pre-emptive, when one is convinced that the aggression of others can in no way be avoided, is ethically just.

Another reason that acting pre-emptively is often scorned is the fact that all the kata begin with a defensive technique. Much has been written about how this underlines the importance of not striking first. Indeed all the katas do begin with defensive techniques, some of which are pre-emptive! The opening salutation and movement of Passai (Bassai-Dai) is a good example (see page 112 of the KGM book). The opponent has merely acted in an aggressive fashion (shaking their fist) and the kata regards this as justification enough for action to be taken. There are many other examples of the katas being pre-emptive (Page 45 & 124 are good examples).

The practice of pre-emptive striking can be found as part of everyday practice within Wado-ryu (whether it is recognized as such is a different matter). On the Wado-ryu syllabus we can find 'Tobo-Komi-Tsuki' which is a head punch that is delivered from natural stance before assuming a fighting posture. The technique has no preceding block and would appear to be contrary to 'karate-do ni sente nashi' if the prevailing interpretation of 'there is no first attack in karate' were correct. I believe that Otsuka meant for this technique to be used as an assailant was preparing to launch an unprovoked attack and by including it in his style acknowledged the importance of practicing such methods. Otsuka - like Funakoshi - also emphasizes pacifism and the importance of avoiding conflict wherever possible, and in no way advocates striking an individual whom is not preparing to launch an attack. In his book 'Wado-Ryu Karate' Otsuka wrote, "There is nothing as unfortunate as finding one's self in a situation where he must

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International Karate Association

January, 2010

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 CLOSED FOR NEW YEARS	2 10:00 MMA
3	4 5:30 Kick'n Kids (A) 6:30 Adults (A) OZARK: 6PM	5 5:00 Lil Dragons 5:30 Kick'n Kids 1 6:00 Kick'n Kids 2 7:00 Adults (B)	6 6:30 Jujitsu 7:30 MMA	7 5:00 Lil Dragons 5:30 Kick'n Kids 1 6:00 Kick'n Kids 2 7:00 Adults (B)	8 7:00 MMA	9 10:00 MMA
10	11 5:30 Kick'n Kids (A) 6:30 Adults (A) OZARK: 6PM	12 5:00 Lil Dragons 5:30 Kick'n Kids 1 6:00 Kick'n Kids 2 7:00 Adults (B)	13 6:30 Jujitsu 7:30 MMA	14 5:00 Lil Dragons 5:30 Kick'n Kids 1 6:00 Kick'n Kids 2 7:00 Adults (B)	15 7:00 MMA	16 10:00 MMA
17	18 5:30 Kick'n Kids (A) 6:30 Adults (A) OZARK: 6PM	19 5:00 Lil Dragons 5:30 Kick'n Kids 1 6:00 Kick'n Kids 2 7:00 Adults (B)	20 6:30 Jujitsu 7:30 MMA	21 5:00 Lil Dragons 5:30 Kick'n Kids 1 6:00 Kick'n Kids 2 7:00 Adults (B)	22 7:00 MMA	23 10:00 MMA
24 31	25 5:30 Kick'n Kids (A) 6:30 Adults (A) OZARK: 6PM	26 5:00 Lil Dragons 5:30 Kick'n Kids (B) 6:30 Adults (B) 7:30 Martial Fitness	27 6:30 Jujitsu 7:30 MMA	28 5:00 Lil Dragons 5:30 Kick'n Kids 1 6:00 Kick'n Kids 2 7:00 Adults (B)	29	30

NATIONAL TRAINING CAMP : JULY 29 - 31 (DOWNTOWN SHERATON, NASHVILLE TN)



2010 National Training Camp

2010 United States Martial Arts Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony

Make plans now to attend the 2010 National Training Camp, to be held from Thursday, July 30 through Saturday, August 1 at the Downtown Sheraton in Nashville TN. Some of the world's top instructors will be teaching a variety of open hand and weapons workshops, providing a unique opportunity to train with the "best of the best".

So how much do I need to start saving to attend the National Training Camp next year?

Camp Cost: \$150 Hotel: \$120/Night (4 Nights) Hall of Fame Banquet: \$60

Rooms at the Downtown Sheraton have 2 double beds, plus a pull-out sofa, so up to 6 people can sleep in a room.

Assuming 4 people to a room, here is how the costs break down:

\$150.00	Camp Participation Fee
\$125.00	Hotel (4 People to a Room, Inc. Tax)
\$ 60.00	Hall of Fame Banquet
\$ 20.00	Self-Parking (Covered / Monitored)
\$355.00	Estimated Total Cost (Does not include fuel or food cost)



"Superfoot" Bill Wallace
Undeclared World-Champion
Special Guest Instructor

That's only \$60 a month (January - June) to attend the National Training Camp, Grandmaster's Council, and 2010 Hall of Fame Induction Banquet. There are several local restaurants nearby, and many who attend the venue pack snacks, fruit and drinks. You're just minutes from Music City, the Opryland Mall, the Nashville Zoo and across the street from the Veteran's Memorial and TN State Museum. Plus the Memphis River Walk and River Museum at Mud Island are on the way home (Exit 1, Memphis).

Start saving your money and block this weekend on your calendar now and make plans to attend the 2010 National Training Camp.

utilize martial arts to protect himself. The objective of martial arts training is to train hard and yet search for a state where martial arts need not be used. Hence, one must seek the path of peace and desire that path as well."

Acting pre-emptively has always been a part of Budo. In the classic text on strategy 'Go Rin No Sho' or 'The book of the five rings' Miyamoto Musashi tells us of three methods to forestall the enemy, one of which is, 'attacking on the enemy's preparation to attack.' This is exactly what we are doing when we deliver a pre-emptive strike. If we attacked when the enemy was not preparing to attack, then we are acting in a manner inconsistent with the ethics of the martial arts. If, however, the opponent is preparing to attack then we are simply gaining the initiative and ensuring our safety.

Once the initial strike has been delivered we should seize the opportunity to flee. If we continued to strike the opponent we would be morally (and legally) in the wrong as well as putting ourselves at risk should the opponent have accomplices that we were not previously aware of. The pre-emptive strike should not be used to settle arguments or as a means to weaken an individual to enable us to give them "a good kicking." What we are taking about is the legitimate use of a pre-emptive strike, when no other options are available, to distract the assailant in the instance of unprovoked attack in order to facilitate escape. If the pre-emptive strike is used in this way than I believe it is in no way contrary to 'karate-do ni sente nashi' (and - judging by the quote from Karate-do Kyohan - neither did Gichin Funakoshi).

Should we not gain the initiative, and the chance to escape that it provides, we will be forced to fight (it we are still able) and that could result in far greater violence being committed either to our opponent or ourselves. As true martial artists we should always desire to cause as little damage to our opponent as is necessary to ensure our safety. If we do not act pre-emptively, we will be forced into a position of having to do ensure the opponent cannot function, as opposed to mealy being sufficiently stunned to ensure effective escape.

Another vital consideration is the strong possibility of multiple opponents. If we do not seize the initiative in this situation we are putting ourselves at great risk. When setting the standard of 'karate-do ni sente nashi' I do not believe that it was the intention of the masters to ask us to act in a manner that would give societies violent minority the advantage, but to ensure that we do not become part of that minority. Some would say that by striking first we are 'lowering ourselves to their level.' I strongly disagree with this statement as when a true martial artist is forced into the position of having to use a pre-emptive strike it will be with a sense of regret. They will have done everything possible to avoid and defuse the situation and now must use force if their safety is to be assured. Compare this with the assailant who is using force for personal enjoyment or financial gain, who will feel good about the infliction of pain, and far from avoiding violence, has actively sought it out!

To my mind 'karate-do ni sente nashi' is a reminder for us to always avoid violence, to never fight as a result of ego and only fight to ensure our safety (or the safety of others) in the instance of unprovoked attack when no other options are available. I do not believe the intention was to demand that a woman who has just been informed - by a knife wielding assailant - that she is about to be assaulted, and who has no means of escape, must wait until the knife is actually thrust towards her before she may act! Striking on the opponent's preparation to attack, when we can not initially escape, is a just and legitimate method, it is supported in the writings of past masters, contained within the katas and (to my mind) is fully consistent with 'karate-do ni sente nashi.'

Upcoming Events

2010 Events

- January 30: MaxTap MMA Venue - Russellville AR
- January 30: "Kid-Safe" Benefit Martial Arts Tourney
- Russellville AR
- April 10 : Soke Takayuki Kubota Seminar (Russellville)
- July 29-31 : IMAC National Training Camp (Nashville TN)
"Superfoot" Bill Wallace, Special Guest

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