



KDA Today Fall 16/17

Karate Do Academy, Westlake, Ohio

Karatedo.net

QUOTE "A black belt Is a white belt that never gave up" author unknown.

Hello KDA! As the new 2017 KDA newsletter editor I would like to introduce myself. I am Quin Miller, I am 13 years old and have been in karate for about eight years and am a purple belt. I was chosen by sensai Jim to be the new editor for 2017.

Just to kick off the newsletter this is a drawing by Gianna Crimaldi (Blue)



NEW BLACK BELT

In October Jerry Bradnan took his test to go from brown three to black. The pre test was taken on the sandy shores of Lake Earie and the official was finished two weeks later in Bay middle school. If you said that getting a black wasn't easy you would be right. Heres what Jerry had to say about it.....

Earning a Black Belt by Jerry Bradnan

Most of us have earned a belt or two during our time at the Karate-Do academy. When we test for our first belt, it all seems overwhelming. Trying to remember the various techniques, requirements, and Japanese translations, not to mention the way we conduct our test. It seems impossible; at least it did to me.

Over time, as we grow, each belt testing process becomes easier, because we get used to the rhythm of the test. We mostly need to focus on the requirements, because we have been through the ceremonial aspects of the test repeatedly, so it can become second nature, to a degree.



When it came time to prepare for my black belt test, it was like testing for my orange belt, because the process had changed drastically. There was more to the test than just memorizing Japanese and practicing kata. I now had to think about why I was doing what I was doing. What does karate mean to me, and how would I prepare for the next level?

Fortunately, I had help, as we all do along the way, from the other Sensei's in the school.

Sensei Randy helped me by offering to teach me a kata from Shoryin-Ryu (yes, to earn a Black Belt, one requirement is to learn from another marital arts system). He also took time during the weeks leading up to my test, to help me practice and coach me on the testing process.

Sensei Chris was patient with me, helping me review other various requirements, and coaching me through kata. In addition, Sensei Jim took time to answer questions and explain the process. Earning a Black belt is not a solitary effort. Thanks to all for their help, or I would not have made it through successfully.

In addition to training and practicing all the elements of our system, to earn a Black Belt, one must demonstrate all techniques, and prepare a

formal presentation, demonstrating techniques from our Martial Arts system and others. This, too, was a



departure from the typical "process." Scary!

For those who have not observed, nor participated in the Black Belt testing process it takes place over several weeks. The first week is the pretest, and like all pretests, the student demonstrates all requirements. For Black Belt, that means ALL requirements. From White belt to Black belt. This all takes place on the beach, on the rocks and in and around

the water. In addition, the pretest can last from two to two and half hours. It is grueling. I learned that when you are physically exhausted, your instinct kicks in. When that happens, everything happens from memory, including bad habits. This is one reason repetition and constant correction is so important.

The second week is the formal presentation. This is a demonstration of techniques from our system that are chosen by the student. An agenda is assembled by the student and then submitted to the Senseis and it must meet with their approval. The elements of the presentation consisted of various Katas from our system, a Kata from another system, and a Self-defense demonstration against two or more attackers. In addition to the pretest and the formal presentation, I was required to write an essay and submit it to the Senseis. My essay was about my journey in Karate and it forced me to think about my experience with Karate and what led me to this level.

There is also required reading. I had to read the book *Living the Martial Way* By Forest E. Morgan. This was a very interesting book, and it explained a lot about the core components of our school, and the origins of some of our curriculum. I would recommend you read this book, even if you are not testing for your Black Belt. The book is a good tool that helps to explain having focus and honor in anything you choose to do. Whether you are in school, playing a sport, growing your professional career, or studying martial arts. These concepts can be universally applied.



At the end of what seemed to be an impossible task when first approached to pretest for Black Belt, it all came together and I was successful. I will also add that it took nearly 10 years from attaining rank of Hachi Kyu 8th Class (Orange Belt), to completing all requirements to achieve Shodan 1st Class (Black Belt).

10 years may seem to be a long time, but do not focus on the time; focus on your goals. Treat each goal as step to a higher achievement. Reach each goal, and you too can one day achieve Shodan 1st Class.

Never give up.

PROMOTIONS

Paul - Orange Belt

Nicholas - Orange Belt

Dean - Orange Belt

Alanya- Yellow Belt

Quentin- Yellow Belt

Nolie - Yellow Belt and Green Belt

Anne - Green Belt

Olivia - Green Belt

Lia- Green Belt

Michelle - Blue Belt

Helen - Blue Belt

Vivek - Purple Belt

Seamus - Purple Belt

Quin - Purple Belt

Andrew - Purple Belt

Sensei Jerry - **Brown 1** and 1st Degree Black Belt

From sensei Jim...

From Sensei Jim:

Let me first congratulate Quinn on being the new editor of our school newsletter. You can submit articles, drawings, or any ideas to him at any time and they will be considered for the next edition.

Recently I was asked by a student the origin and history of the karate uniform (gi) and belt. Not being sure, I did some research and this is what I found. The correct Japanese terms are uwagi or jacket, zubon or pants, and obi or belt. The term gi has been condensed to mean the entire uniform. As far as the origin of the gi in karate training, it appears its roots do not go back too far. In fact, Sensei Funakoshi, who is considered the father of modern karate and is credited with bringing it to the United States, trained in only shorts and t-shirt while living in Okinawa as a young man. He was introduced to the judogi on traveling to Japan by a close friend Jigoro Kano who had adapted the Japanese kimono with heavier material suitable for Judo training. They were originally a coffee color, but turned white after many washings. When Sensei Funakoshi came to Japan in 1922, Kano persuaded him to wear the gi for a public karate demonstration. He took the gi back with him to Okinawa and modified it to be thinner and lighter and began offering them to his students.

Today the gi is traditional worn for 5 essential reasons.

1. To remind the karateka that they are in a different place from where they work or play. The dojo is a special place of karatedo training and other considerations are to be left at the door.
2. The gi and belt allows at a glance to see rank and instructor. The organization and ranking system is an important part of karatedo as is attested each time we line up.
3. The gi signifies commitment to the art, much like the military uniform signifies commitment to a branch of service and country.
4. Of course the gi has come to be practical, hard wearing, and basically comfortable for karate training. This allows for longer training sessions.
5. Finally, wearing the gi shows knowledge and respect for the art. This is why we insist your gi is clean, fits well, and is properly worn at all times.

I hope this answers some questions you may have about your gi and what it symbolizes. It may also explain to you why your instructors are so insistent about how it is worn and why you NEVER forget your belt for class.

In other KDA news, we are looking forward to Kime on February 25, at Memorial Hall in Rocky River, from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM. Everyone is expected to be there and be ready for 3 full hours of hard work.

And also another congratulations to our newest blackbelt, Sensei Jerry Bradnan. His accomplishment was well earned over many years and we are lucky and proud to have him as an instructor and example of true karatedo character and spirit.

So until the next edition of KDA Today, see you in class.....Kiai!!!!!!

Student Articles...

Stances (Dachi)

When I have the chance to teach other students I find a common thing that many have to work on, stances. I see letter A shaped horse stances and wobbly forward stances. At first bending your knees for a while can be uncomfortable, but after some practice it will become easier.

Stances are the foundation of everything you do in Karate and they give you most of your power. So if you know personally that stances could be something that you need to work on then you should consider this. For five minutes every day or whenever you think about it just “sit” in a deep horse stance. This will build up your thighs so that some stances will be less uncomfortable. When your stances are deeper you won’t be wobbly and your strikes will be more powerful.

By Zeylen

I have been doing karate since I was about 5 years old. I am now 12 1\2 years old and at a blue belt level. My favorite part of karate is doing kata forms. Out of the kata forms I have to say karumpha seems to be my favorite and strongest one. I practice with Sensei Jim (Sensei Nanu) every week on Wednesdays, Saturdays and sometimes Fridays. Even though my weakest thing we do is the inside series. I know deep down one day it will click and it may become one of my strongest. As I am always told by teachers, parents, and instructors just stay positive and just keep practicing and you can be successful.

I do see a lot of potential in myself while I am trying to teach the younger belts. I seem to be learning more and catching any mistakes i may have been making. Also it helps me with my speech and communication along with social skills. All I have to say is that spending time with Sensi Jim, who is also known as my Sensi Nanu, is going to bring wonderful memories for me in the future. In my eyes he is an inspiration to all of us and is a man we should look up to. I am very thankful for all the encouragement and positive/negative feedback I get from everyone who works with me. That includes my mom who has joined in on doing karate on Wednesdays and any other times she can. It brings such a good bond between us because we feed of each other and help one another on how do the different katas, take downs, the different series, etc.

FROM: Gavin

One final note from the editor...

Thank you to all who contributed to the making of this! Thanks to Sensei Randi for hooking me up with templates and articles and to everyone who wrote an article. Karate is an art. It makes you safe if a bad situation. It's a fun and rewarding art and to everyone (especially the lower belts) stick with it!

From: Michelle Weber

I was recently reading through our Handbooks-and came across "Funakoshi's Six Rules of Karate-Do". I was unfamiliar with Funakoshi, so I did an internet search and found out that he is known as the "Father of Modern Karate". So, what are his six rules, and how can we apply them to our modern practice of Karate?

Rule #1: ***Be deadly serious in training.*** Sensei's communicate this during class by reminding us to make every move powerful and as though it is our last and "visualizing your opponent". If we do not take practice seriously, it will be impossible to be able to defend yourself against an actual attacker.

Rule #2. ***Train with heart and soul without worrying about theory.*** This, to me, means that it is important to commit the techniques we learn to memory so that they become automatic. While our bodies will never be fully conditioned to execute perfectly, it is important to keep practicing and not rely on just being able to count to 10 in Japanese.

Rule # 3: ***Funakoshi says that "the kibatashi (horse-riding stance), for instance, looks extremely easy but the fact is that no one could possibly master it even if he practiced every day for an entire year."*** This is how you realize that it is important to master the basic techniques you learn in your first weeks as a white belt, as they are essential for the rest of your Karate practice. Progress depends not only learning new stances, strikes, and katas, but also on continuing to hone basic techniques. It is truly the foundation for anything else that you learn on top of it.

Rule #4: ***Avoid self-conceit and dogmatism.*** Dogmatism is "the tendency to lay down principles as incontrovertibly true, without consideration of evidence or the opinions of others". This is different than being proud of being a student of Karate. You can be proud but not boastful. It is important to have an open mind – you have 2 ears, 2 eyes, and one mouth. Listen and watch more than you speak and you will be greater for it. This is a good rule about Karate and life in general.

Rule #5: ***Try to see yourself as you truly are and try to adopt what is meritorious in the work of others.*** Watching others practice is, in itself, learning. We do demonstrations in class so that we can see what other students are doing well and take them as lessons in our own practice. When you are given a critique in class, you should not deny or ignore it but apply it to your own practice and improve.

Rule # 6: ***Abide by the rules of ethics in your daily life, whether in public or private.*** Follow these rules in your daily life, not just in Karate class. Think about how to follow them when you are at school, at a meeting at work, playing with your friends, having dinner with your family, shopping at Target with your mom, or playing a sport with your teammates. All the time. By yourself or with others.

BOBS CORNER...STRIKING POWER

How many times have you been told to generate more power in your strikes? Maybe the "how to" of generating striking power wasn't explained.

I attended a seminar at another school recently and I really enjoyed how the instructor explained the "how to" of generating striking power with jabs and cross punches. I would like to share it with you..

Equipment: It would be great if you have a mirror you can watch yourself in. Also, workout pants with stripes going down the outsides of the legs. If you don't have striped workout pants, maybe put a piece of colored tape on the outside leg of your karate pants for the drill.

Stance: Start in a fighting stance. Remember that a fighting stance is a bit narrower and legs closer together than a forward balance stance. It's your choice of whether you have the left leg forward or the right leg.

Hand position: If your left leg is forward, a jab is a strike with the left hand and a cross punch is a strike with the right hand. If your right leg is forward your right hand is jabbing and left will cross punch.

Balance: It's important to be on the balls of both of your feet in the fighting stance. This isn't kata, so avoid being flat footed and in a forward balance stance.

Drill: If using a mirror, please be far enough away that your jab will not contact it.

Whichever foot is forward, extend the same side fist to jab. As your fist goes out, pivot on the ball of your front foot so the stripes on the side of your pant leg (lead leg) show in the mirror. Do not worry about speed at this point. Better to work on coordinating the outgoing jab with pivoting on the ball of your front foot.

Whichever leg is back, the same side hand will be used for the cross punch. As you extend your fist, pivot on the ball of your back foot so that the stripe on the outside of your back leg show in the mirror. As I mentioned before, worry about coordinating the outgoing cross with the pivot of the back foot. Speed will come with practice.

Once you have put some time in practicing on your own, I would recommend trying the techniques on a bag or focus shield under the supervision of a KDA instructor.

Train smart and stay healthy,

Bob

