



Sensei Speaks

Sensei Speaks—2019 Midwest-Okinawa Connection

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The 2019 Midwest-Okinawa Connection was a very successful and exciting event. The camp was held at The Gospel Martial Arts Union Headquarters and as always they treated us like royalty. Dr. Johnny Russell (Shidoshi) and his people go all out to ensure that we will want for nothing while using their facility.

For those who don't have or want to spend money for a hotel, they have lodging space at the facility. Mr. Culpepper and his students took advantage of the lodging over the weekend. That has been a tremendous cost saving for many in the past.

On Saturday, GMAU students served lunch to all who attended the camp. The menu for us was chicken, corn bread, and green beans. They also served refreshments and a dessert with the meal. This was totally unexpected even though they did serve the Black Belts and instructors in the past. It was a very good lunch that everyone enjoyed. Dr. Russell has always kidded me about the fact that I love chicken and he really took advantage of an opportunity. I was flattered that they provided food for the entire camp. I am very thankful for the Gospel Martial Arts

Union and the many things that they do.

I will forever remain indebted to the GMAU and their cause. Dr. Johnny Russell and all of the members are special. Whenever there is anyway that I can help them I will give them my best.

Special points of interest:

- *Maximizing energy in the performance of Kata.*
- *Learning to defend yourself through Yakusoku.*
- *Student Of The Month—it is special.*
- *Who won Bicycles at the Kobayashi Nationals.*
- *Learning about your Sensei and his life..*

Spring Smash Competition

The Spring Smash is a premier event hosted by My Michael each year. He has gone all out each year to ensure that it brings out many competitors for the event. This year there were good numbers of students attending the event from the surrounding states. Really important is the fact that Mr. Culpepper brought twenty three students from West Plains, Missouri. Mr. Culpepper re-

cently purchased a bus for he and the students to travel on and it is an 8-hour drive to get here.

All of our students who competed in the 2019 Spring Smash did very well. Xavyn Pugh and Derek Brading had Grand Championships at the event. Mr. Culpepper and his students did very well at the event and I am very proud of that group.

Youth Kata Enhancement Class

At the 2019 Midwest-Okinawa Connection. There was an array of classes that were a bit different from previous camps. This was an opportunity to get some extra training to our youth. Having put that on the itinerary I was able to select the perfect instructor for the class.

I selected Sensei Steve Franz for that task. I don't believe that there could have been a better person for that task. Mr. Franz has been excellent in keeping his students as

top performers at tournaments and therefore solidified my choice in selecting him. He also has a great rapport with the youth and communicates very well with them.

I don't think that the kids really knew what to expect out of the class as they joined it. However, they were not in there very long before the smiles began surging forward and their energy level heightened. Mr. Franz simply had them take some things out of their kata and

work on them as he made suggestions. Before you knew it they were beginning to put things together as he had suggested and their performance started upward. They did not become perfectionists in one class but they certainly made some great strides.

All of the kids competed in the Nakazato Cup Competition For Youth. This was a test to show what they had learned. I saw an instant improvement of the kids.

System Study—Yakusoku Kumite

We got the 2019 camp started on a really good note. That is, we began the camp by reviewing the Shorinkan Yakusoku. The majority of the senior students have a really good grasp of the Yakusoku. However, the idea was to set the pace for working two man drills.

The yakusoku kumite introduced by Minoru Sensei have been an obsession for

quite a while and everybody is pushing to get them. During my April trip, we had the opportunity to review these with Sensei. As we have gone to Okinawa and reviewed these we have observed some minor changes. These are fairly simple but difficult to learn. All of the students who have done them seem to be well pleased in working them. We will be focusing on all of these to

ensure that all of the senior students will have a good grasp when Sensei gets to see us do them again. We have no idea when that will be but hopefully soon.

We will begin incorporating yakusoku kumite in our Black Belt examinations this year. Regardless of what level you will test for yakusoku kumite will be required.

Student Of The Month

It is considered to be something special when I have selected someone as ***Student Of The Month***. I have no idea of what the student feels or even thinks. Normally, this is a matter of valuing or devaluing the recognition and what it stands for. I have often said that I would have the students make the selections but they are not

here regular enough to see all of the students and how they participate in class.

The one student who has really been showing up for class and being a strong class participant is **Ayden Miles**. Mr. Miles has good tenure in the class his maturity is showing. By this it should be known and recognized that **Mr. Ayden Miles is select-**

ed Student Of The Month. He regularly in class and ready for what the class has in store for him. He readily adheres to rules and instructions of the dojo. He has also maintained good attendance in school with good grades. Mr. Miles is in his training program for Black Belt and should test in December. Congratulations Mr. Miles.

"There is no single optimal path for the soul. There are many optimal paths. With each choice you immediately create numerous paths within a choice, one of which is then optimal."

They Do Grow Up You Know!

That is a statement that is often made at home, at church, and in the dojo. Certainly it is made in many other circles and most generally by adults. We watch our kids, grandkids, great grandkids, and students as they get taller but we tend to always keep them under our wraps.

Well, we have just had one to get married. I have watched him over the years as he accepted manhood and all of the manly responsibilities. Just recently he was

married to a beautiful young lady and they made a beautiful couple. I will expect nothing but the best for them. We love them and will cherish their future endeavors.

Warrior Gasshuku—Milwaukee, WI

My friend and brother, will be hosting his annual Gasshuku on Father's Day weekend. For all of those who have attended the Gasshuku you already know what a wonderful time it is. I think that it is one of the greatest training sessions that we have during the entire year.

Many of you may not know it but Kyoshi Stolsmark was

promoted to Ku-Dan in Kobudo while we were on Okinawa during the month of April. I am very proud of him and the path that he has traveled over the years as he has trained. We met when he was very young and of course he is one of the few who followed his passion and been rewarded for it.

Most important is the training at his Gasshuku which is

to be held June 14th, 15th, and 16th in Milwaukee, WI. As usual I will be leaving on Thursday night after class is over.

I have a few people who will be attending the Gasshuku but I would like to have more. Kyoshi had good support here for our camp and I would like to reciprocate. That is how we grow our attendance in everything.

"Your choice comes in knowing appropriate timing, clear motivation, and trust."

Kobayashi National Karate Championships

It is amazing that the time is has already come and gone for the Kobayashi tournament. I say it all of the time and it is true that time flies when you are having fun. The tournament was scheduled for Saturday, June 1st, at Carver Center located at 1030 N Purdum Street.

The Tournament is especially noted for youth grand

championships. There are three bicycles given away each year. These grand championships are for kata. The age groups will include first place winners in the 10 years and under; 12 to 13 years; and 14 to 17 years. The kata competition has become very intense in the kid's divisions and makes for quite a bit of excitement. In

the years that we have done the tournament students have done very well. This year Xavyn Pugh and Wyatt LaMons were bicycle winners. Last year Emma LaMons was a lone winner from the Dojo. My special thanks to all of the competitors.

Anyway, thanks for all of your help and support.

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"The place where karate begins and ends."

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Special Events

June 1st—Kobayashi Nationals Carver Center

June 4th—Kid's Chanbara

June 9th—VA Appointment 9:30

June 12th—Brn/Blk Belt —Evening Only

June 10th—Leave for Camp via Peoria, Il

June 14th—Camp Begins Milwaukee, Wi

June 15th—Camp

June 16th—Camp Ends

June 16th—Happy Father's Day

June 18th—Kid's Chanbara

June 26th—Brn/Blk Belt 10:00-11:00am & 7:00—8:30pm

Karate History—Sensei

Few will know that I suffered a bout with Jaundice and Hepatitis just before graduating high school. Actually, I became sick immediately as I came home from my Prom. This came very close to keeping me out of the military. I was back and forth to the Induction Center five times before I was finally inducted.

For most it would be difficult to imagine what this was like for me. My parents had to sign for me to get into the military when my dream was about go down the drain. During those trips back and forth I was afraid but certain

that I would not get into the military. However, I know that it was divine intervention that got me into the military. God has a way of working things out for us.

After getting into the military I was determined to make a better life for myself. I did not want to live my adult life like that of my father. My father was good and spent lots of time with me. He always worked jobs that did not pay very much. He always encouraged me in school and said that he did not want me to travel the road that he traveled.

Basic training took place

at Lackland AFB, Tx. Military buildup was underway and training was cut to eight weeks. There was lots going on between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. That period was known as the "cold war." I completed basic training and was stationed at Maxwell AFB, Al. Being raised in the south made that an easy assignment for me. I was assigned to the Motor Pool and did not know how to drive. Primarily I was a military taxi driver. I learned to drive using a mop bucket. There were no automatic transmissions. I did well on that assignment and left for Okinawa in May 1966.