

The T.K.D. Flash

A Publication of the Association of Academies of Martial Arts

Volume XVIII, Number 5. The Flash is published by the Academy of Martial Arts, Inc. Offices at 752 Lake Shore Road, Grafton WI 53024. E-Mail: fmvh@execpc.com. USTF Region V site www.ustf-region5.org Persons submitting letters to the editor or reactions to published articles will be deemed to have consented to their publication unless specifically specifying otherwise. The editor reserves the right to edit any submission prior to publication. Persons submitting articles and photographs represent that they have the right to publish the submitted material.

The Region 5 Regional Black Belt Test for 2006 will be held on September 16 in DesPlaines. Master Earl Weiss will preside. Instructors, contact Mr. VH fmvh@execpc.com for more details. Students, your contact should be with your instructor.

Big Dog will march in the Cascade Township 4th of July parade.

The Fourth Annual USTF West Virginia State TaeKwon-Do Tournament, Promoter Sadan Tony Henderson, Tournament Director Odan Jeremy Kempka, will take place at Bluefield WV on Saturday May 20. For more information contact Dr. Henderson at 304-324-1000 or e-mail taekwondo@citlink.net

A.M.A.C.-Middleton held its Movie Night on April 28th.

A color belt test will be held at Big Dog June 10.

Steve Osborn, Michigan Director, conducted a three day black belt workshop, one day in February and two days in March. There were participants from the following schools: Cadillac YMCA TKD, Lone Wolf TKD, Liberty TKD, Tri-State TKD, and Big Dog TKD. The workshop covered the USTF Testing Syllabus content from 10th gup through 4th dan, including patterns, fundamental techniques, step sparring, and hosin-sul. Also addressed were important aspects of the student-instructor relationship and respect. The intent of the workshop was to promote a sense of unity and fellowship within the state while helping to further the USTF goal of greater uniformity between its members.

Put aside the week end of July 15, 16, 17 for a big **TKD Week End** in Madison. Sponsored by the Region and AAMA, promoted by AMAC Middleton. Friday night: USTF Referee Course. Saturday: **Regional USTF Tournament**. Patterns, Free Sparring, Team Patterns. Saturday evening, **Black Belt Blitz Workout** with Mr. VH for Second Dans on up. Saturday night schools owners' dinner and distinguished guests (informal). Sunday, **"Strategic Free Sparring" Seminar** with Mr. Jeremy Kempka (5th Dan, NC). Sunday afternoon, **AAMA Awards Picnic**, all you can eat short of a thermonuclear event.

Cadillac YMCA TKD, Lone Wolf TKD, and Liberty TKD collaborated in an intra-state community service fund raising project among USTF members. The project raised money to purchase water purification systems for those living in countries that do not have real access to non-polluted water. It is estimated that each year approximately two million people die from illnesses related to contaminated water, water they are forced to drink. The three schools raised \$1,900 and this money was presented to Cadillac Rotary, which in turn matched the amount bringing the total contribution to \$3,800! This will be enough to purchase water purification systems for 76 homes. The water purifiers can easily last 50 years with minimal maintenance, and when there is a water purifier in one home it is likely that people living close by can benefit from this as well.

On April 29 and 30 a Class C Instructor Course will be taught at Sereff TaeKwon-Do. For those of you who have not had the experience, this is a great opportunity. Master Mike Winegar will instruct. All Gup level materials reviewed in great depth. This is a guaranteed excellent experience. Contact Mr. VH for more information.

On June 24 a Ho Sin Sool Seminar will take place in Utah. Call USTF HQ for more info.

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18 students tested on the gup levels at Grafton on April 26. Msrs. Tom Martin and Hasan AbuLughod were at Corner. Chief Presider was Mr. Mike Van Pietersom, assisted by the Grafton faculty.



Ben and Carl Bauman before a recent test. Which one is dad?

WHAT GUPS AND DANS THINK

By Steve Osborn

This article is a summary of a research project that examined what students and instructors believe to be important in building character and promoting the strengths of students, two objectives Hong Hi Choi (the founder of Chang- Huhn Taekwon-Do style) stated as essential to Taekwon-Do.

A 46-item survey was developed and completed by 50 gup- and 50 dan level members of the United States Taekwon-

Do Federation. Respondents rated each of the items on a seven point scale, the higher the rating number the greater the degree of importance assigned to the item. The mean or average score on each of the 46 survey items was compared between the gup and black belt groups. Then the dan group was sub-divided into Novice (1st - 3rd dan), Expert (4th - 6th dan), and Master (7th - 8th dan) groups, whose mean scores were compared between one another and with the gup group.

Findings revealed a very strong agreement between the gup and dan groups, as well as between all black belt sub-groups and the gup group. Results were highly consistent regarding what is seen as important or not important factors in the building of character and bringing out strengths of students. When one group rated an item in a higher or lower direction, so too did the other group(s).

The survey items were then placed into one of four categories: (1) student's perception of instructor (e.g., student sees instructor as helpful, as friendly, as honest, as knowledgeable), (2) characteristics of the student (e.g., the student practices, likes the instructor, is respectful to the instructor), (3) characteristics of the instructor (e.g., the instructor likes the student, is on time for class, is respectful to the student), and (4) characteristics of the

student-instructor relationship (e.g., the student-instructor agree upon goals, there is a close bond between the instructor and student). Mean scores on the items within each category were compared between the groups.

Again, findings showed a strong and clear association between the groups as the differences between the mean scores for all groups on all category items were surprisingly small. Gups and dans have very similar ideas about what are and are not important factors in Taekwon-Do training.

On the full survey, both gup and dan groups assigned a score of 6.0 or higher to 12 items:

- *The student trusts the instructor
- *The student sees the instructor as knowledgeable
- *The instructor respects the student
- *The student sees the instructor as helpful
- *The student is willing to comply with the instructor's direction
- *The student sees the instructor as honest and forthright
- *The instructor praises and encourages the student
- *The instructor is on time and present at class
- *The student believes the instructor can help in achieving his or her TKD goals
- *The student is comfortable asking questions

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*The instructor is accepting of students from very different backgrounds

*The student sees the instructor as effective at teaching skills

The only item receiving a score of below 2.0 by all groups was 'The instructor openly discusses his or her religious beliefs'. Other survey items receiving relatively low ratings by all groups were (in rank order):

*The instructor has formally written lessons plans

*The instructor is seen as a leader in the community

*The instructor likes the student

*The instructor asks the student what s/he would like to work on in class

*The instructor calls if a student stops coming to class

*The student experiences the class as strenuous and a hard workout

*The instructor encourages student involvement in community service activities

Given the degree of similarity between the groups, it is possible to predict (with a reasonable degree of accuracy) what a first year student of Taekwon-Do is likely to believe to be important thirty to forty years later. There is stability among the items across a large span of time, indicating that there tends to be minimal change in such beliefs even with decades of

experience in Taekwon-Do, and life. Finally, the findings from this research project lend empirical support to many of the writings of the martial arts masters on which student and instructor characteristics are seen as important in Taekwon-Do training and the building of character.

This research project was undertaken as part of advancement to fourth dan. For a copy of the survey, specific data results and the complete paper please contact Steve Osborn at sosborntkd@hotmail.com

[A Response::Thank you, Dr. O. I think the "no change" thesis to be remarkable. I'd be intrigued to know if one were to seek a parallel demographic, e.g., basketball players and their coaches, one would get similar results. Then what might happen if we studied both groups taking into account those who had studied but dropped out, e.g., the less successful players or those who just didn't stay with the field studied years later. Obviously, a rich vein.]



A study in concentration, Rachel Liebelt powers her way to her Red Belt.

One Step Sparring: An Underutilized Teaching Tool

By: John Firmiss

[Editor's Note: This essay, substantially edited from its original form, was submitted by Mr. Firmiss for his Fourth Dan testing. Mr. Firmiss has suggested several unique values to the study of One-Step sparring and suggested two helpful approaches to helping students utilize its substantial benefits. The editor is in substantial agreement with Mr. Firmiss as to his perception of the value of free sparring. Perhaps the reader can suggest additional drills and approaches.]

When I began to study Taekwon-Do as a youth in 1978, I was hooked by its power to change the mind and body. I wanted to do the things I watched my heroes Bruce Lee and Chuck Norris do in the movies. Many of us thought Free-Sparring was the most fun because of the competition. But the form of training that I think taught me the most, back then and even now, is One-Step sparring.

In recent times One-Step sparring has seemed to take a back seat to other forms of training. So what happened? My thought, in a word, is economics. There is the need to keep students interested and new ones coming in the door. Since Patterns, Free-Sparring, and breaking are the agenda for tournament competition, more class time now is geared toward them. But none of these exercises furthers the pursuit

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of Taekwon-Do's ultimate goal as satisfactorily as does One-Step sparring.

By applying the 9 points of pattern training and the theory of power, patterns teach the student to move with grace and power. Additionally the student hones good classical technique. Unfortunately, the student's opponent is a mere specter. To get the most out of patterns training the student must be patient and diligent enough to move beyond memorization and on to visualization of the imaginary adversary. But step sparring offers the defender a live attacker.

The kind of Free-Sparring that students engage in for competition is pure sport. The rules that govern Free-Sparring severely limit techniques and areas of attack. This to me makes Free-Sparring just about as unrealistic as it gets. It must be made clear here that I am not suggesting that there is little benefit to be gained from our current form of Free-Sparring. Free-Sparring is a great exercise to teach mobility and application of series of combinations in a fluid and fast moving situation. But I maintain that a much richer teaching tool is available in One-Step sparring.

In practicing One-Step sparring the participant can work toward Taekwon-Do's ultimate goal of a one-strike victory. In this arena the participants can use any attacking tool and engage any

vital area of the opponents body, and in turn, the defender can counter with the tremendous arsenal available to them. With step sparring, the diligent student can experiment and gain insight as to the purpose of each technique. From this foundation the great expanse of Taekwon-Do techniques lies open to us. Regrettably, I have seen this high level of sparring reduced to canned routines only to be learned for testing.

I believe One-Step sparring should be explored beyond the routine and special emphasis placed on applying a great variety of techniques such as low kicks to the knees, elbow and knee strikes to specific target areas with their purposes in mind. Critics of formalized step sparring (often of patterns practice as well) might say that it is of little value because many times step sparring is practiced with little to no contact, or that the classical techniques are not practical for real combat. It is true that when taught to a beginner, step sparring must be approached in a way where students do not hurt each other and emphasis is placed more on distancing and good form. But by the time One-Step sparring is introduced the student is no longer a beginner and can control technique better. One way to make this exercise akin to combat is to have students wear sparring gear so One-Step sparring sequences can be performed with some contact. Both must still exhibit good control

because many of the techniques could still injure, even with padding. But now the participants can explore the thousands of combinations of attacks and defenses taught in Taekwon-Do with new insight. I would limit this exercise to only black belt students due to the extra control needed to prevent one from losing sight that the padded attacking tool is still dangerous. The natural progression of this exercise would be for the sequence to evolve to the original attacker defending the counter attack and so on. The students would learn to defend attacks that might be foreign to them if the only Free-Sparring they knew was learned in the tournament ring.

One other exercise I like to do that is suitable for all students is to ask them to show the class a routine neither they nor perhaps the class has done before. The catch is that they must explain first the vital area they are targeting and why the attacking tool they intend to use is the appropriate one. In this way the student may many times come to the realization that the routine was either not targeting a vital spot or with a poor choice of attacking tool.

I have concluded that One-Step sparring is indeed one of the more underutilized teaching tools available to us to further the pursuit of one of Taekwon-Do's ultimate goals. The pursuit could take a lifetime to achieve, and perhaps the best outcome is never to having to discover in life that we have mastered it.