

AMERICAN KARATE DO SHOTOKAI

January 2015 Newsletter



Message from the President

Dear Karateka,

Welcome to a new year and our 3rd decade of KDS in America! It is exciting to be offering four weekend courses and three week-long courses this year--how things have grown! We are also functioning under our new grading standards and under many with new leadership responsibilities.

Thank you all for helping what started as a very small club turn into

a national organization by supporting the group and by your diligence and hard work in what is a very physical practice developed by Mitsusuke Harada Sensei.

Let us make him proud by enjoying a great year of growth through practice and friendship.

Sincerely,

- Jeremy D. Crook, 4th Dan

President American KDS

Recent Gradings — Congratulations!

Jeremy Crook—4th dan
Jared Greenwald—2nd dan
Fei Han—1st kyu (brown)
Peyton Harriss—2nd kyu (green)
Chris Hirsch—2nd kyu (green)
Danny Prejean—2nd kyu (green)
Rebekah Call—3rd kyu (orange)
Weifang “Vivian” Chen—3rd kyu (orange)
Robert Pardue—3rd kyu (orange)
Stanislav Ponomarev—3rd kyu (orange)
Jordan Webb—3rd kyu (orange)
Lorin Hendricks—4th kyu (red)

Jason Poole—4th kyu (red)
Anna Reid—4th kyu (red)
Tharinda “Seth” Witesekera—2nd kyu (red)
Amanda Crook—Yellow (youth)
Zachary Hawkins—Yellow (youth)
Wesley Crews—Red (youth)
Abigail Henkel—Red (youth)
Ian Henkel—Red (youth)
Isaac Henkel—Red (youth)
Christian Thompson—Red (youth)
Courtney Wilson—Red (youth)

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Upcoming Courses

- February 27–28, Provo, UT (2nd dan Simon Prince and 1st kyu Clancy Passey)
- March 27–28, Albuquerque, NM (4th dan Jeremy Crook and 2nd dan Dustin Passey)
- May 15–16, Idaho Falls, ID (1st dan Tony Dunlop)
- July 13–17, Alberta, Canada (4th dan Jeremy Crook and 1st dan Peter Enyeart)
- July 20–24, Ruston, LA (5th dan Bernard Matthieu)
- October 19–23, Ruston, LA (5th dan Marie Kellett)



AKDS News

American KDS celebrated an important milestone this year, as we celebrated our 20th anniversary with a weeklong course in Ruston, Louisiana, from October 13th to 17th, 2014. 5th dans Roy Margetts and Mark Hallam came from the UK to run the course, and we owe them our gratitude for everything we learned.

Many historic changes were made at the 20th anniversary course as part of a global push to give more autonomy to national organizations. AKDS can now grade practitioners up to the 2nd dan level, and we have also revamped and simplified the organization of kyu grades, removing the former yellow and blue belts. Grades now proceed as follows: white (5th kyu), red (4th kyu), orange (3rd kyu), green (2nd kyu), brown (1st kyu), and black (dan).

We are also introducing "Instructor Certification." To obtain a brown or black belt in AKDS is a high achievement. All AKDS brown and black belts are acknowledged on a special page on our website, and starting in 2015 we will also be listing which are certified. To maintain "certified" status an AKDS karateka simply practices regularly and attends at least two courses each year. We encourage you all to practice with us diligently and help us grow!

Finally, we'd like to announce the new AKDS leadership structure, effective October 2014, as shown to the right.



Jared Greenwald, our new 2nd dan, gets up close and personal with 5th dan Roy Margetts at the 20th Anniversary Course, held in Ruston, LA, in October.

AKDS Presidency

President



Jeremy Crook
4th dan

Vice President



Dustin Passey
2nd dan

Secretary



Peter Enyeart
1st dan

AKDS Technical Group



Simon Prince
2nd dan



Jared Greenwald
2nd dan



Kyle Brunner
1st dan

AKDS Administrative Group

Website, Equipment Orders, Communications,
Store, Finances, Public Relations, Social Media, etc.



Clancy Passey
1st kyu



Gina Cooley
1st Dan



Chris Hirsch
2nd kyu

Our Mission

We seek tranquility in the midst of conflict or danger and strive to control our bodies, minds, and emotions to be able to avoid conflict when possible, defend ourselves when necessary, and protect others when able.

Discipline. Integrity.
Respect.

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Brief History of KDS and AKDS

Our founder, Mitsusuke Harada, was born in 1928 and began training at the Shotokan under Master Funakoshi and his son Yoshitaka in 1943. In 1954 he received his 5th dan certificate, signed by Master Funakoshi, and with his blessing went abroad to teach karate. He settled in Britain in 1963 where he has taught ever since. Today he continues to teach and personally practice with his students around the globe, and was granted the title of MBE by Queen Elizabeth in 2007.

KDS was first brought to America in 1994 by Adrian Hutber, who founded the club at Brigham Young University with Jeremy Crook and Matt Spackman. There are now KDS instructors actively teaching throughout the country; see www.shotokai.org for details.

Meditations: Karate for Life, Life for Karate

"Meditations" is a column that will appear in each issue of the newsletter with rotating authorship, and will serve as a showcase for the unique insights of individual practitioners of our art concerning what karate has meant to them both inside and outside the practice hall. Topics may be technical or philosophical: anything related to the practice of Karate-Do Shotokai is fair game! This issue's column comes to us from Peter Enyeart, 1st dan and AKDS Secretary, currently teaching in Boston.

To me, karate is not just about fighting. Karate teaches us to use our bodies effectively, and combat is the application we use since it provides such a clear test of our capabilities. But if you're paying attention, daily life provides many opportunities both to use and to apply karate.

For instance, how do you normally walk? Jeremy Crook, our president, likes to call the standard way humans walk "controlled falling." The reason we walk that way is because it's energy efficient, but if something happens to knock you off balance you'll find it's not so stable. So, try an experiment and apply some karate to your everyday walking. Stop using your legs like stilts, and start using your muscles like shock absorbers. Relax your shoulders and let yourself sink a little into your legs with each step. If you're like me, you'll be surprised how quickly you feel more grounded and confident (especially if you're trying to move around your house at night without turning the lights on). And if it requires a bit more energy to walk that way, well, we Americans aren't so great about burn-

ing all the calories we consume, anyway.

If you find yourself having to open heavy doors on a regular basis, stepping through with a slight *zenkutsu* feel with your arm properly extended (a collapsed arm structure is a common problem when people struggle to push open doors) will send you right through. If you go to pull open a door and it turns out to require a little more force than you expected, a quick drop into a high *fudodachi* will do wonders. If you ever take public transport and have to stand, try doing it without holding onto something for support. You don't have to drop far to become much more stable, but the difference between that state of stability and the higher posture we usually stand in is extreme.

You can probably think of many other examples from your own life. Constantly looking for opportunities to practice will make you much more aware of your body and your environment. As this becomes a habit, it will feed back into your practice, and you'll find it easier to be in the proper body condition when a punch comes flying at your face during *kumite*. Applying the principles behind the different stances to everyday situations also prepares you to start leaving the training wheels of formal stances behind. And thus not only will karate benefit your everyday life, but your everyday life will benefit your karate.

If you would like to write a Meditations column, email Peter Enyeart at peter.eneart@utexas.edu.