

# SKIF-USA Newsletter

A publication of SKIF-USA

## SKIF-USA Announces 2009 Seminars & Events



### Kancho Kanazawa's USA Summer Tour Has Been Set For June 2009:

Kancho Kanazawa and Nobuaki Sensei will be traveling to the following USA dojos in June 2009. More information on training times and registration will be posted on the SKIF-USA website at [www.skifusa.com](http://www.skifusa.com) when it becomes available from the sponsoring dojos.

### SKIF-USA Seminar by Kancho Kanazawa & Nobuaki Kanazawa Sensei:

#### Rochester, New Hampshire

June 20<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>, 2009

Hosted by

Rochester Shotokan Karate Club, Sensei Steve Warren

Maine Shotokan Karate Association, Sensei Mike Cook

New England Shotokan Karate, Sensei Jim Shea

### SKIF-USA Seminar by Kancho Kanazawa & Nobuaki Kanazawa Sensei:

#### New Brighton, Minnesota

June 23<sup>rd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009

Hosted by

Wisconsin Shotokan Karate – Sensei Glenn Stoddard

Peak Performance Shotokan Karate-Do – Sensei Chris Johnson,

Sensei Lynda Crimmins

### SKIF Seminar by Kancho Kanazawa & Nobuaki Kanazawa Sensei: Sacramento, California

June 27<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>, 2009

Hosted by SKI- USF

### SKIF Seminar by Kancho Kanazawa: Honolulu, Hawaii

June 29<sup>th</sup> – July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2009

Hosted by SKIF Hawaii

#### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

SKIF 30th Anniversary 3

National Tournament 4

2009 SKIF-USA National 5

Houston Seminar 6

Master Nishiyama 7

Effective Jyu Kumite 8

Training Notes 9-10

Newsletter Editors:  
Clay Morton  
Glenn Stoddard  
Lynda Crimmins  
Chris Johnson

---

## **Other Seminars & Events set for 2009:**

### **Ozawa Cup International**

Las Vegas Shotokan Karate  
Las Vegas Nevada  
April 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>, 2009

### **Eight Annual SKIF-Hawaii Goodwill Tournament**

Honolulu Hawaii  
May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2009  
Manoa Recreation Center

### **ISKF Masters Camp**

Philadelphia Pennsylvania  
June 13<sup>th</sup> – June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2009

Kancho Kanazawa will once again be a guest instructor at this ISKF event. Members of SKIF are welcome to participate.

### **SKIF-Montreal Seminar by Nobuaki Kanazawa Sensei:**

**Montreal, Quebec, Canada**  
June 13<sup>th</sup> – June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2009  
Hosted by - SKIF Montreal

Nobuaki Sensei will be conducting training classes with SKIF Montreal while Kancho Kanazawa is at the ISKF Masters Camp

### **10<sup>th</sup> SKIF World Tournament**

July 23<sup>rd</sup> – July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2009

Hosted by SKIF Greece. SKIF-USA will be sending a large team with members from throughout the USA.

---

## SKIF's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary a Special Celebration Tokyo, Japan October 23-25, 2008

By Clay Morton & Glenn Stoddard

Over three hundred members of the Shotokan Karate International Federation (SKIF) from over 30 countries gathered in Tokyo, Japan to honor the organization for 30 years of excellence in karate-do, and to help celebrate Kancho Kanazawa's 77<sup>th</sup> birthday. This gala event was very well organized by SKIF leaders and instructors, and particularly by Manabu Murakami Sensei.

Seven members from the SKIF-USA attended this fantastic event, including President Francis Fong, General Secretary Glenn Stoddard, board members Mike Cook and Clay Morton, and Victor Takemori, Lisa Turner and Stephen Ferando. From Canada, our fine northern neighbors, Senseis Kenzo Dozono, Roger LeGace, Rick Valiquette, and Michael Hurtibise attended the celebration.

On Wednesday the Americans and Canadians were able to do some sightseeing in the outskirts of Tokyo. The group greatly enjoyed seeing Master Funakoshi's shrine in Kita-Kamakura along with several temples and the Diabutsu in Kamakura. In the evening the group went to train in the Hombu dojo. Many other karateka that were there for the celebration had the same idea because the dojo was packed with locals and foreigners alike. Kancho taught the class with help from Ryusho Suzuki Sensei and Shinji Tanaka Sensei. After the class, everyone was invited to enjoy some refreshments while socializing with old friends and meeting new ones. Everyone gathered and sat on the dojo floor while drinking some of Japan's finest beverages and local finger foods. Kancho looked as if he enjoyed the informal social time very much.

On Thursday the training began. In the morning Suzuki Seiji Sensei taught a two-hour referee seminar on kata judging under the SKIF competition rules. Thursday afternoon Kancho, Nobuaki Kanazawa Sensei, and Tanaka Sensei taught kata and kihon ippon kumite. Nobuaki Kanazawa Sensei demonstrated the kata Gankaku Sho. Then Kancho

taught this kata step by step, explaining key points along the way. After the kata was taught, Nobuaki Kanazawa Sensei demonstrated the bunkai with Tanaka Sensei, Suzuki Sensei, and Daizo Kanazawa Sensei. The bunkai for this difficult kata was well done and very fascinating to watch. Then Tanaka Sensei demonstrated Kanku Sho. After the demonstration Kancho taught this kata step by step, with Tanaka Sensei demonstrating the bunkai afterwards. Nobuaki Kanazawa Sensei, then, demonstrated Unsu, followed by Kancho teaching this difficult kata with some interesting details on the finer points of the kata. After the bunkai was demonstrated, Kancho asked Clay Morton to demonstrate Unsu. Kancho then had some suggestions for improvement for Mr. Morton. Following a short break, Kancho taught kihon ippon kumite. He made sure that the participants paid close attention to the small details of the different attacks and defenses.

On Friday morning Suzuki Seiji Sensei went through the fine points of kumite judging under the SKIF rules. In the afternoon session, Daizo Kanazawa Sensei demonstrated Enpi while Kancho taught the kata. After this instruction, they demonstrated the bunkai with great precision and spirit. Then Emi Komatsu Sensei demonstrated Gankaku with impressive speed, balance, form, and grace. Kancho taught the kata while Komatsu Sensei demonstrated the bunkai with the other instructors. After the kata portion Nobuaki Kanazawa Sensei led the participants through several jiyu ippon kumite drills. The group was awed by his impressive ashi tobi geri and uraken uchi from jyu ippon kumite chudan defense number five.

A special dan grading was held on Saturday at the SKIF Hombu dojo under Kancho's watchful eyes. That evening the combined SKIF 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and 77<sup>th</sup> birthday party for Kancho was held at the Keio Plaza hotel. It started with an official welcoming line with Kancho and all the

high ranking dignitaries of the SKIF. Once everyone was inside the ballroom, the gala celebration began and everyone was able to enjoy an open bar and taste the many different kinds of excellent Japanese food that were spread out on large buffet tables. This gave the participants a chance to mingle and socialize with each other in celebrating the great success of SKIF. Several other high ranking senseis and dignitaries, including SKIF President Takao Hiranuma, spoke with great respect for Kancho and the Federation. Each country present was able to present Kancho with a gift and had a chance to pose for a photo opportunity to commemorate the special moment. As the evening was winding down and people were leaving the ballroom, it was evident from the smiling faces that everyone was very happy and proud to have been a part of this special event and to belong to the SKIF. The SKIF has often been referred to as a "family." For those who were lucky enough to participate in this event, this notion was confirmed and it is clear that it is being fostered by the leadership of the SKIF and realized by each member.



## SKIF National Tournament September 25, 2008 By Clay Morton

The 2008 SKIF National and Open Championships were held in tropical Miami, FL on September 25. This year's tournament was special in that participants from four different countries attended. A 25 person team from Venezuela came to take part in the weekend under the direction of SKIF Kodokai Sensei Alejandro Castro. Two members of SKIF Denmark were in Miami on their honeymoon and decided to join in for the karate festivities. What a great sign of having karate being part of a married couple's life: a karate seminar on their honeymoon. Several members from Montreal came down to the warm weather for the tournament. And a strong competitor from the Bahamas competed in the senior black belt division. Besides these international competitors, many SKIF members from around the country came to support SKIF-USA. People came from San Francisco, Minneapolis, New York, Maine, and Houston.

The weekend started on Friday afternoon with a technical seminar conducted by Sensei Manabu Murakami. Over 100 participants gathered for the seminar. After kihon training, Murakami Sensei broke the training up into three different groups. Sensei Castro taught kumite techniques, Sensei Stoddard taught the kyu grades, and Sensei Murakami taught advanced kata. Sensei Murakami went over Gojushiho Dai and Jion. The corrections were very informative.

The tournament started at 9 am the next day. Around 250 people gathered for the tournament. Many spirited

karate-ka performed kata and kumite with great focus and intensity. Many volunteers helped judge, score keep, and perform other jobs to help the tournament run smoothly.

After the tournament a large group of instructors gathered with Sensei Murakami for dinner at a fantastic meal in the harbor with local music playing. It was a nice way to relax and say farewell to friends after another great SKIF event.



## The 2009 World Karate Championship USA Team

Mike Cook	Coach	Maine Karate
James Shea	Coach	NE Shotokan
Shadi Barazi	Coach	Shotokan Karate-Do Center
Vincente Gonzalez	Judge	SKIF Florida
Jerry Concha	Masters	CSUN Karate
Penny Karpovsky	Masters	CSUN Karate
Robert Plotke	Masters	CSUN Karate
Steven Taback	Masters	CSUN Karate
Lorri Porter	Masters	Independent
Gina Santori	Masters	Independent
Stephen Ferrando	Masters	Long Island Shotokan
Aldwyn Lawrence	Masters	Long Island Shotokan
Charles Macolino	Masters	Long Island Shotokan
Lisa Turner	Masters	Maine Karate
Paola Ferrario	Masters	NE Shotokan
George Goshadze	Masters	NY Shotokan Karate
Lynda Crimmins	Masters/Coach	Peak Performane Shotokan
Alison Chakoumakos	Masters	Rocky MTN Shotokan
Eddie Robinson	Masters	Shockness Shotokan
Wayne Shockness	Masters/Coach	Shockness Shotokan
Deddy Mansyur	Masters	Shotokan Karate-Do Club
Jeremy Slater	Masters	Shotokan Karate-Do Club
Paul Danos	Masters	SKIF Lauderhill
Julio Gomez-Silva	Masters	SKIF Miami
Jimmy Wong	Masters	SKIF Miami
Francis Fong	Masters	SKIF-Salt Lake
Ahcene Briguene	Masters	U.S.K.A.
Glenn Stoddard	Masters/Coach	WI Shotokan
Aric Dent	Senior	Adventure Karate
Paul Gale	Senior	CSUN Karate
Andre Jean-Bart	Senior	CSUN Karate
Saad Patail	Senior	CSUN Karate
Stephanie Uehara	Senior	CSUN Karate
Igor Dyachenko	Senior	D-Dojo
Clay Morton	Senior	Independent
Michael Mondello	Senior	Long Island Shotokan
Nina Ibarra	Senior	NY Shotokan Karate
Shireen Fung	Senior	Shotokan Karate-Do Center
Ruben Fung	Senior	Shotokan Karate-Do Center
Mae Koh	Senior	Shotokan Karate-Do Center
Alex Ndem	Senior	Shotokan Karate-Do Center
Anne Marie Lorion	Senior	SKIF Miami
Stephanie DePreta	Youth	Long Island Shotokan
Matthew Ferrando	Youth	Long Island Shotokan
Michael Fung Quee	Youth	Long Island Shotokan
Ian Fung Quee	Youth	Long Island Shotokan
Frank Lulley	Youth	Long Island Shotokan
Felipe DeLaCruz	Youth	SKIF Miami
Adrian Delgado	Youth	SKIF Miami
Alejandro Guvira	Youth	SKIF Miami
Christopher Macedo	Youth	SKIF Miami
Sebastian Madero	Youth	SKIF Miami
Livio Zanardo	Youth	SKIF Miami

## Murakami Sensei's Houston Seminar a Big Success

February 28<sup>th</sup> – March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009  
By Lynda Crimmins

Manabu Murakami, Sensei, 7<sup>th</sup> dan, from SKIF General Headquarters in Tokyo, Japan, traveled to Houston, Texas to teach a special seminar over the weekend of February 28 to March 1, 2009. The seminar was hosted by SKIF-USA Board Member, Shadi Barazi, Sensei, 6<sup>th</sup> dan, and Chief Instructor of the Shotokan Karate-Do Center in Houston. Also hosting the seminar was Kirish Daylami, Sensei, 6<sup>th</sup> dan, also a top instructor of the Shotokan Karate-Do Center in Houston.

Although this was an open seminar, a number of the SKIF-USA National team members and coaches were in attendance to train with Murakami Sensei.

Saturday started with two sessions of brown/black belt training followed by dan grading and two more training sessions in the afternoon. The morning sessions focused on basics and kata, including a brief review of the fine points of the five Heian kata, Tekki Shodan, Bassai Dai, Enpi, Jion, Kanku Dai, and Nijushiho. In the afternoon, Murakami Sensei taught a variety of kihon and kumite drills. While practicing gohon kumite, Murakami Sensei had the defender attack at count four. The original attacker finished (count five) with one last attack. As simple as this change sounds, there were quite a few missteps in the beginning!

Sunday morning arrived a little too early for some! Both sessions (morning and afternoon) involved 2 sections – all levels and brown/black only. The morning session included target practice using belts for mae geri followed by jun

zuki, yoko geri followed by uraken, gyaku zuki followed by ushiro geri and also ushiro mawashi geri, and mawashi geri followed by gyaku zuki. The session ended with kumite timing and speed drills. For some of the SKIF-USA Team members there was even an old fashioned 'slaughter line'!

In the afternoon, the real fun began! We started the session by going through all of the Heian katas first on the left side (normal) and then on the right side. We then partnered up and did Heian shodan 'opposite'. With this version, if one person moved their left leg, the other moved their right leg. If they moved their right leg, the other person moved their left leg! To accomplish this, not only did you have to turn differently but sometimes you were stepping back rather than forward. As difficult as it was to make the adjustments, it was also a lot of fun trying!

Murakami Sensei also taught a three-way kumite drill using Jiyu ippon jodan defense #1 and #3 as well as mae geri #1. The defender was in the middle with an attacker in the front and back. The first attack was from the front and used the jodan #1 defense. The second attacker followed with a mae geri countered with the mae geri #1 defense. The first attacker then did another attack again with tsuki and the defender countered with the jodan #3 defense. The final attack (from the 2<sup>nd</sup> attacker) was a chudan tsuki countered with a gedan barai and gyaku tsuki. All the defenses were at 45 degree angles with much 'spinning' and pivoting required! The session ended with the advanced kata, Chinte.

The weekend wasn't all work, as many of the participants were able to socialize with each other after the

training on Saturday and Sunday for dinner at local restaurants. This enables those who participated to have a great chance to visit with new and old friends - the best way to end a wonderful karate training weekend!





## SADLY, MASTER NISHIYAMA PASSES AWAY

By Glenn Stoddard

Sadly, the President and Chairman of the International Traditional Karate Federation (ITKF), Master Hidetaka Nishiyama, passed away at the age of 80 on November 7, 2008. Master Nishiyama was a world renowned karate master well known for his steadfast dedication to the preservation and protection of traditional karate-do.

Master Nishiyama dedicated his life to the principles of budo. As a Charter Member of the Japan Karate Association (JKA) and founding President of the Japan Karate Association International of America and the International Traditional Karate Federation, he had great influence on the modern day practice of traditional karate-do.

Born in Tokyo, Japan, on October 10, 1928, Master Nishiyama had a long history of martial arts training beginning at a very early age. He began training in Kendo under the instruction of his father at the age of 5. When he was 10 he began training in Judo and in 1943 he joined the Shotokan karate dojo where he achieved his first degree black belt in 1946 from Master Gichin Funakoshi. He was later named captain of the Takushoku University Karate Team and was co-founder of the All Japan Collegiate Karate Federation. He attended Takushoku University and in 1951 he co-founded the JKA and was elected to its first board of directors.

In 1960 he published the book: *Karate: The Art of Empty-Hand Fighting*. This book is still in print and remains one of the most authoritative writings on karate-do. Along with photos of Master Nishiyama, the book includes many photos of Master Hirokazu Kanazawa, now Kancho and Chief Instructor of SKIF, and Master Teruyuki Okazaki, now Chief Instructor of ISKF.

Upon hearing of Master Nishiyama's passing, Kancho Kanazawa wrote to Master Nishiyama's family and to the members of the ITKF, as follows: "It is with great sorrow and shock to hear of the passing away of my great Karatedo Senpai HIDETAKA NISHIYAMA, Chairman of the International Traditional Karate Federation. Please accept my heartfelt condolences and sympathy to his family and to all the members of the International Traditional Karate Federation."

On behalf of SKIF-USA, we hereby extend our condolences to Master Nishiyama's family and to the many dedicated members of the ITKF. Many of our SKIF-USA members have trained under Master Nishiyama and have the utmost respect for him and his students. We will all miss you Sensei and we thank you for your instruction and efforts to advance traditional karate-do!

OSS!

## TEN PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE JYU KUMITE

By Glenn Stoddard

Karate free sparring (jyu kumite) involves the application of the mind and body using karate techniques in a competitive contest between two karateka. The objective is to score effective techniques against the opponent's openings without being scored upon. Jyu kumite involves a highly complex set of interactions between two people which makes it difficult to practice and teach. Following is an outline of ten principles for effective jyu kumite:

### I. State of Mind.

a. There are three different stages of consciousness and awareness during jyu kumite. They are: (1) zen-shin ("preparatory mind"), which is the mental state one should have when first facing an opponent and first studying his or her posture, mental attitude, and physical attributes; (2) tsushin ("the state of mind one has when setting up and executing a technique or techniques"); and (3) zanshin ("post-action mind"), which is the state of mind one must have of continued awareness after a technique has been executed, and in anticipation of the opponent's counter-attack.

### II. Posture (Kamae).

a. Eyes should face forward and gaze through and all around the opponent.

b. Stance should be free and natural (jyu dachi) with weight on balls of feet and weight distribution constantly changing slightly so as not to be caught "flat footed."

c. Upper body should be straight with hips at about 45 degrees and weight and power centered in lower abdomen (hara).

d. Guard hands should be in front of body, with front hand higher than rear hand and pointing toward oppo-

nent's upper lip and rear hand pointing toward opponent's solar plexus; arms should be kept relaxed but in place and not moved up or down except when blocking and attacking.

### III. Techniques (Waza).

a. Use simple, effective attacking techniques with speed, power, accuracy, focus (kime), draw back (hikite) and mental continuation (zanshin).

b. Use defensive blocking, throwing and jamming techniques (where allowed) only if there is no chance for escape, as shifting out of the range of an attack is the best defense.

### IV. Distance (Maai).

a. Understand and monitor the three types of distance: (1) actual distance between you and your opponent; (2) your own effective distance; and (3) your opponent's effective distance.

### V. Positioning.

a. There are generally eight effective angles (tenshin) for attack and defense based on the angles of movement traditionally found in karate kata. These same angles should be used in jyu kumite to evade and launch attacks and avoid simple forward and backward movement when sparring.

### VI. Targeting.

a. Attack only effective target areas: head and neck (jodan); abdomen above the belt; chest; back and side of body above the waist (chudan).

b. Use effective angles against openings for attack and defense (see above).

### VII. Opening (Kyo).

a. Strategically, you must find or

make an opening in the opponent's defenses to score and you must keep the opponent from doing this to you in order to avoid being scored upon. The concept of kyo is central to effective strategy in jyu kumite.

b. Three types of kyo may exist: (1) psychological opening; (2) opening in stationary posture; and (3) opening during movement.

### VIII. Strategy and Tactics.

a. To create an opening use the following tactics: feinting, shifting, switching stance, stealing distance, creating false opening, breaking balance, sweeping, throwing, use of combinations.

### IX. Rhythm (hyoshi).

a. Use harmony and disharmony of movement and breath control to your advantage.

b. Read opponent's rhythm, use a rhythm the opponent cannot anticipate, then upset opponent's rhythm to create opening for attack.

### X. Timing.

a. Generally there are three types of timing in jyu kumite: (1) initiate first attack (sen no sen); (2) initiate counter attack after opponent has initiated first attack (go no sen); and (3) initiate attack simultaneously with opponent's attack (deai).

Finally, while there is no substitute for experience and diligent training, the ten principles described above are essential for effective jyu kumite.



## TRAINING FOR KARATE JUMPS

By Glenn Stoddard

Many karate kata include at least one jump and kihon training also often includes performing jumping kicks, such as nidan geri (jumping double front kick) and tobi geri (jumping side thrust kick). While some karateka are able to learn these jumping techniques on their own without much difficulty, they are difficult for many people to learn. Following are some training tips for developing better karate jumping techniques which have been effective for me and my students.

First, shift your weight and load the driving leg slightly just before the jump or jumping kick and then push off sharply to go up into the air.

Second, for the jumps in Heian godan, Enpi, Kanku Sho, and Meikyo, as you go up in the air quickly pull your legs up underneath you and try to bring your heels up to touch your buttocks for just an instant at the highest point of the jump, then quickly put your feet out and down to land softly on the balls of your feet in the next stance. The same principle applies to the jumping kicks, except that with nidan geri you want the first kick to go out and snap back just as you begin the kick, then you want the second kick to go out and snap back as you reach the highest point of the kick, and then both legs to go out and down quickly so you will be able to land softly in front stance. With tobi geri, the same principle also applies but the driving leg pulls up under you and you touch

your buttocks with the inside of the foot and ankle at the height of the kick, while the kicking leg sharply extends out to the side. Both legs then quickly go out to make for a good stance upon landing.

Most people who have trouble with jumps have difficulty with the lift off and with pulling their legs up underneath themselves, because they are afraid they won't get their legs out to "catch" themselves in a stance at the end of the jump. Thus, the fear of a poor landing is what holds them back from making a strong jump up in the first place. To overcome this I recommend initially working on loading the driving leg and then just pushing off to get the feel of the liftoff without worrying about getting the legs up underneath or landing properly. This should be done several times in a training session just to get the feel of the upward push.

Next, I recommend doing the whole jump but keeping it relatively low and then landing in a good stance. After several low jumps, I recommend trying to push higher and working on pulling the legs up underneath and then quickly extending them for a safe landing. After doing this a few times in the air alone, a good way to train this is with a partner who will carefully swing his or her belt low to the ground and underneath you just as you go off the ground. This provides a strong incentive for you to lift your legs up upon jumping.

Another good way to practice jumping is to use a solid step or block and jump off of it onto a lower floor one or two feet below the level of the step or block, landing in stance. By doing this, you have a little more "air time" to lift and then extend your legs to land and this will build confidence in your ability to lift your legs up and get them out in time for your landing.

Finally, jumping techniques can be especially dangerous if not done carefully and correctly. Therefore, is important to be very careful when doing the above types of exercises.

## The Importance of Having a Beginner's Mind

By Paul Walker

As a karate instructor or high-level practitioner of the martial arts it is often useful to remember where we came from and how we got to where we are. Our journeys were not always easy and our students deserve to hear about our own mistakes and experiences to show that we too are human and that we went through many of the same struggles that they are faced with. Here is one such story from my own development as a martial artist.

One hot and humid summer evening's lesson during my stay in Japan, Ichihara-sensei (one of my instructors) was teaching us *oizuki* (front punch) when it suddenly hit me like a sledgehammer. No, not the punch thankfully, but a realization - I guess you could call it a moment of inspiration. I had been training in Karate for about 14 years at the time and I suddenly realized that I had been making a basic error in the execution of the front punch.

It doesn't really matter anymore what the mistake was as I have since corrected it, but the real lesson I learned that night was something much more than a minor technical adjustment. That night under the watchful eye of Ichihara-sensei I was reminded of the importance of having a "Beginner's Mind."

It happens to all of us periodically and usually when we least expect it. I'm talking about those moments when our confidence along with our egos takes over and suddenly we feel like we're

invincible. We have mastered a particular skill and now, knowing everything there is to know, (or so we think) we become self-proclaimed experts, willfully demonstrating the infallibility of our technique to others. Right at that moment something happens to bring us back down to Earth. For example you're a good golfer and suddenly and inexplicably you hit an "air shot" or you're playing soccer, and faced with an open goal just six yards out you completely miss the ball and fall flat on your behind with the grace and poise of a 1-year-old just learning how to walk.

Back in the *dojo*, a senior ranked student performs a front kick and slips and falls over for no reason. He gets up really quickly hoping nobody saw and mutters about some undulation in the perfectly flat wooden floor. Trust me, I've seen this kind of thing happen again and again and it always reminds me of the importance of having a "Beginner's Mind."

If you watch any serious beginner in any activity you usually see great concentration, heightened awareness and a real drive to succeed. Although they know their techniques aren't perfect, their mistakes are usually due to a lack of knowledge rather than a lack of focus. We "experienced" practitioners of Karate should learn from this and should try to think back to that special feeling that we also had as beginners. That exciting feeling of learning something new, of learning the next sequence in a *kata*, of successfully blocking an opponent's attack, and of ending a

fight against a black belt and being able to say you were on the floor just five times instead of the usual ten, or better still that you actually put the black belt on the floor too!

A "beginner's mind" means that you still realize you have a lot to learn, it means that you're open to criticism, but maybe more importantly the next time you fall flat on your face, you'll get up with a smile rather than an attitude!



---

## **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS TO SKIF-USA**

New Dojo: SKIF Lauderhill, Paul Danos Sensei  
American Tiger Karate Academy Inc, Patricia Pusateri Sensei

New Independent Member: Richard Georg Jr, Rockledge FL

---

## **NEW IN THE SKIF-USA CATALOG**



Competition Savvy: The Guide To Becoming A Champion  
By World Champion Dr. Clay Morton

This book is an insightful read into the training principles of World Champion Dr. Clay Morton, developed over 23 years of training for peak performance.

"We came back from (the tournament) after a grueling all day affair (there were about 250 participants) with 4 first place trophies, 2 seconds and a third! PLUS...the Tournament Grand Championship! All because... we read Clay's new book...COMPETITION SAVVY! ...and put to the test, some of his suggestions for winning! They worked!" Sensei Mike Cook, Maine Shotokan Karate Association-SKIF

---



**SKIF-USA  
RANK CERTIFICATES**



**SKIF-USA  
SPORTS TOWEL**

See all of the SKIF-USA merchandise catalogue online at:  
[www.skifusa.com](http://www.skifusa.com)

