



ISKF Alaska Region Newsletter

*Alaska Shotokan Karate since 1981
December 2008 Issue*

The Year In Review

2008 has been a year of great accomplishments and great change. Perhaps the most significant event from the standpoint of our entire ISKF organization was the fact that the first ISKF World Shoto Cup tournament was held in Toronto, Ontario, in October. Participants from many countries vied for medals, although Japan was noticeably absent.

According to the ISKF organization's web site (www.iskf.com) 43 countries are members of the ISKF, including countries from the Pan-American continents and islands, Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. More countries apply every month for membership, and Sensei Okazaki is very busy with managing this growing organization and traveling to promote it. World-wide, the ISKF has over 50,000 individual members.

The ISKF accepts membership from countries all around the world. In the past, countries outside of the Pan American region were only allowed an affiliate or associate member status with the ISKF in accordance with JKA rules. Now, any country is able to become a full-fledged member and participate in all ISKF events.

The second ISKF World Shoto Cup will be held in Barbados in 2012.

Locally, we established a new instructor training class on the second Sunday of every month. This class is led by a rotational system of instructors, including Sensei Nakazawa, Sensei Pinch, Sensei Holness, Sensei Andrews, Sensei Jones and Sensei Tavoliero. This class is designed to have each instructor share his or her understanding and knowledge of the art of karate. Each of our regional instructors have strengths, and the ultimate goal of this class is to improve and standardize the level of instruction for the entire region.

We have also had several new dojos join our ranks. These include the Gambell dojo led by Yuka Ungwiluk; the Bethel dojo led by Ted Berry; the Homer dojo led by Martie Krohn; and the Eagle River-Alaska Club dojo lead by Catherine Pinch and Mike Tavoliero.



Featured Dojo

This month we are featuring the Gambell dojo, led by Yuka Ungwiluk.



Yuka was born in Anjo City, which is located between Tokyo and Osaka. She started her Karate training in Japan at Shizuoka University, near Mount Fuji. Her first Sensei was Toshihiko Satsukawa. He has his own dojo, and she and her other college mates went to his dojo to train. He is in Sensei Kanazawa's organization.

Yuka had a consuming interest in Alaska Native culture, particularly the Eskimo way of life. She was also interested in the animals that live in Alaska.

Knowing nobody in Alaska, she traveled from Japan to Alaska by herself in 1997. She had read an Alaska tourist book while living in Japan, and featured in this book was an inexpensive hotel in Fairbanks. The hotel owner's wife was a native woman. Yuka thought, maybe this woman and her husband knew a native family she could stay with so she could learn about the native lifestyle. She went to the hotel and asked the owners who they knew that might let a young Japanese girl live with them for a little while.

The owners were very accommodating. They asked around, and contacted the sister of the man who would become Yuka's father-in-law about the Japanese lady who wanted to stay with a native family. That woman asked her brother in Gambell, who said yes, so she went to live with his family, and that is where she met her future husband.

She now works as a Personal Care Attendant, taking care of an elderly woman in town, as well as her mother-in-law.

She trains in the morning in the school gymnasium after dropping her two sons off at their classes. Mostly, she trains by herself. It can be quite lonely sometimes, with nobody to work out with. She has several beginner students who train with her on Saturdays. They train for free because people in Gambell live a subsistence lifestyle, and they don't have much money. She doesn't think anyone would show up if they had to pay for classes.



Some of them don't have any running water for washing. At first she gave students gis to wear, but some of them ended up with food stains and dirt or got lost. Now she brings the gis to the gym for the kids, and take them home to wash after training."



She started her dojo about 5 years ago. Yuka trains Monday through Friday on her own unless she has something else she has to do. When the school gym is closed, she goes to a mountain and trains outside. She also practices on the beach when the family goes on hunting trips while her husband and children are out hunting. She is glad Karate is an art that can be practiced anywhere.

Yuka would like to thank the school principal and express her appreciation for being able to use the school gym for her training and to teach the karate class. She is grateful for the karate kids who are willing to learn from a different culture and acquire new skills. She is also grateful for the people in ISKF who are keeping the club going and Sensei Satsukawa in Japan who has always been Sensei to her.



This year the village caught two whales on their whale hunt!! This is very good, as it means a great deal of food and supplies for the year. The photo shows some of the people from Gambell pulling a whale onto shore.

ISKF National Tournament

November 15 – 16 in Los Angeles, California

This year's National Tournament was quite special, as several of our youth competitors participated in the Nationals for the first time ever. The Youth girls' kata team did very well and several of the kids competed very strongly on an individual basis. The hard training of the months before Nationals really paid off, and they all were inspired and energized to try even harder for next year's nationals.

Results:

- M. Tavoliero/D. Rogers/M. Crotty – 1st place Senior Men Team Kata,
- Mike Crotty – 2nd place Senior Men Kumite;
- Phillipia Holness – 1st place Senior Women Kumite and 3rd place Senior Women Kata,
- Ben Cheeseman– 1st place in Collegiate kata;
- Phillip Murray– 1st place Junior Kumite,
- Elle Gray – 2nd place Junior Kata and 2nd place Junior Kumite,
- Rebekah Martin – 3rd Place Junior Black Belt Girls Kumite
- Amber Nakazawa/Janet Hagensieker/Jennifer Frazier – 3rd place Women Team Kata
- P. Holness/A. Nakazawa/J. Hagensieker – 3rd place Women Team Kumite

Other accomplishments at this event:

- Special congratulations to Steve Weaver who was there to accept the 2008 National Meritorious Service Award for the Alaska Region from ISKF President Judge Ribner.
- Tony Nakazawa and Mike Tavoliero passed the ISKF B level judge test.
- Dan Rogers passed the Yondan test.
- Amber Nakazawa and Ben Cheeseman were named to the ISKF USA National Team for 2009.

- Of special note: Scott Toms and Joe Foltz made the final 8 in men's individual kata – a fine accomplishment given the high level of competition in the Men's Kata division.
- Also Sensei Catherine Pinch was the MC for the Finals Day Competition.

In addition to those mentioned above, the other ISKF Alaska participants included: Alaska Team Coach Charles Holness, Joe and Heather Foltz, Andrew Tooyak, Haley Carr, Dana Gay, Lance Davis, Doug Murray, George Haynes, and Lynette Nakazawa. The ISKF Alaska was also lucky to have our own cheering section with CJ and Danielle Holness, Haley's, Dana's and Elle's moms as well as Rebekah's aunt cheering on the Alaska group.





Thank you all for the fine job in representing ISKF Alaska at the 2008 ISKF Alaska National Tournament. And a SPECIAL THANKS to George Haynes for making the long trip to LA and serving as the special ISKF Alaska photographer. George's photos are available at <http://501blues.smugmug.com/>

The 2008 ISKF World Shoto Cup Tournament

by Sensei Tony Nakazawa

Toronto was the center of the ISKF world for a few days in October. Ben Cheeseman and Amber Nakazawa were honored to participate on the American team. Amber and Ben went out in the second round of the individual events - they had fine performances, but as you can imagine the competition from Canada and also the rest of the ISKF countries was top notch. The kata of the day was Unsu with that kata winning the women's (Novak from Canada) and men's individual events (Jumbo from US). The last event and the highlight was the team kumite event. The U.S. and Canada competed for first place. Ben was on the U.S. kumite team that lost in the finals to Canada. The matches were close, but in the end Canada's kumite team prevailed. I brought back some video clips and pictures to share with our ISKF Alaska group.

Overall, Canada, as the host, had outstanding participation and performance from its members, and with ISKF now being truly international....there were teams from South America, Europe, Asia and Africa. A Canadian First Nations demo energized the finals day with a circle dance involving 200+ dancers and karate-ka....lots happened and it was all exciting. Also, Sensei Pinch's book about Master Yaguchi sold out and they were asking for more!

Sensei Cline and Beckie Brocies say hello to all. Master Okazaki and Master Yaguchi, with the first ISKF Shoto Cup behind us, have done an outstanding job in leading ISKF in a new direction!

Kata Bunkai

As most of you know, a kata is a pre-determined sequence of movements simulating defense against one or more opponents. As one performs a kata, one should be thinking about the application of the kata techniques. Shotokan katas use stances, shifting, and arm and leg techniques

to defend and counter-attack. Punching, kicking, pressure point attacks, blocks, and other techniques are all used throughout the Shotokan kata. There are not many “right” applications; any given kata movement is open to one or more interpretations.

As a beginner, it is best to keep your bunkai simple. A block is a block; a kick is a kick. However, as you become more advanced, you might change a blocking technique to a strike or a joint lock, or perhaps a throw. Sometimes a finishing technique that is not strictly part of the kata is needed to complete the defense; when you are applying kata, this is ok.

Sensei Yaguchi always says that “doing” the kata is different from “applying” the kata, and you should never mix up the two. A kata, correctly performed, has a very strict and predetermined sequence of moves. A kata bunkai can be quite different depending on the interpretation of the karate-ka.

There is a wealth of information and ideas available on the Internet and in martial arts books. It is important to understand the bunkai of your kata, but it’s also important to try new ideas and keep your mind open.

Keep Training.....



What is Master Funakoshi’s first Niju Kun? I hope someone remembers it as it was our theme for 2008 – it was “Do not forget Karate begins with a bow and ends with a bow.” If not, please look back and review the concept of respect, for yourself and towards others.

Now we are going into 2009, our training theme and the theme for our 2009 camp is “In Karate, never attack first.” *Karate ni sente nashi.* As we go forth in the New Year 2009, the year of the Ox, we will see that this principle of never attacking first is practical not only as a core value of our seeking non-violence, but it also applies in our everyday life, in business and politics. A person has a limited view of the world if they think that consumers and voters and the common person in the street does not appreciate quality, dignity and respect.

And so, as 2008 ends we look forward to 2009 and towards next January’s kangeiko training, please reflect upon Master Funakoshi’s second Niju Kun.

Season’s Greetings and Best Wishes for 2009.

Sensei Nakazawa

Send suggestions for articles or submit your article to Sensei Catherine Pinch, ISKF-Alaska Newsletter Editor, at catherinepinch@gmail.com

Calendar and Upcoming Events

ISKF-Alaska members in Anchorage, Eagle River and Mat-Su: To get ready for the rank testing, all 4th kyu and above (adults and youth) **are required to attend at least one session per month for a total of four sessions** before they will be allowed to test for rank. The focus will be on advanced kihon, kata and kumite. If you have any questions please see your instructor. Below is the schedule:

Saturday Training 9:00 – 10:30 AM

January 17	Boys & Girls Club
January 24	AMAA Friendship Workout at Boys & Girls Club
January 10	Eagle River AMAC Dojo
January 31	Kangeiko at Eagle River Dojo 7:30 -9:00 am
February 7, 21	Boys & Girls Club
February 14, 28	Eagle River AMAC Dojo
March 7, 21	Boys & Girls Club
March 14	Eagle River AMAC Dojo
April 4, 18	Boys & Girls Club
April 11, 25	Eagle River AMAC Dojo

Upcoming Events in 2009

January 11	Instructors' Training at Eagle River Dojo
January 24	AMAA Friendship Workout at Boys & Girls Club (9:00-10:30)
January 31	Kangeiko at Eagle River Dojo 7:30 -9:00 am
February 8	Instructors' Training at Eagle River Dojo
Feb 27 – Mar 8	Fur Rondy and Karate Demonstration Team
March 8	Instructors' Training; Judges' Clinic at Eagle River Dojo
March 28	ISKF Alaska Regional Tournament (Anchorage-Spenard Rec Center)
April 12	Instructors' Training at Eagle River Dojo
April 18	AMAA State Tournament at UAA
April 23-28	(tentative) Master Yaguchi KYU and Dan Testing
May 10	Instructors' Training at Eagle River Dojo
May 16-17	AMAC Spring Recital
June 12-19	ISKF Master Camp
July 12	Instructors' Training at Eagle River Dojo
August 13 – 16	Alaska Summer Karate Camp
November 14-15	ISKF National Tournament in Cherry Hill, New Jersey

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Upcoming Events in 2009

Jan 24 – AMAA Friendship Workout at B&G Club Dojo 9:00-10:30

Jan 31 – Kangeiko at ER Dojo 7:30 – 9 am

March 8 – Instructors Training and Judges' Clinic at ER Dojo 1-3 PM

March 28 – ISKF Alaska Regional Tournament, Anchorage (Spenard Rec Cnt)

April 18 – AMAA State Tournament at UAA

June 12-19 – ISKF Master Camp

Aug 13-16 – Alaska Summer Karate Camp 2009

November 14-15–National Championships

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○ Saturday Training at Anchorage Boys and Girls Club Dojo 9:00-10:30 am

Saturday Training at Eagle River AMAC Dojo 9:00-10:30 am

□ Monthly Instructor Training at Eagle River Dojo @ 1-3 pm on 2nd Sunday of month