

IAMA International Association of Martial Artists

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Having been asked to write this article based upon my own training regimen in the Martial Arts Karate/Judo, one has to understand the motivations of a young Marine (s) in the days of the Cold War and right after the Korean War.

Yours truly's mentality was to be the best Marine I could be and meant to be the best fighting machine outside of Pratt Whitney and Grumman.

The Way it Was! GA in TRAINING!!!

In those days at best - Judo was being picked up by "some" of the Marines lucky enough to be in "garrison" (home base-administratives, security etc.) enough to get out to town local or foreign to train in Judo (circa 1956 plus).

When the "Fleet" Marines returned to garrison and might have some leisure time to go to the Gym (if there was any), and perhaps work with and learn Judo second handed from some of the people that went to town to train.

When I was rotated to Japan, there was a Judo Dojo right outside of the main base. Smart Sensei knew the Marines would be a good market except when they shipped out.

Alexander mosied on down to the Dojo on some of those precious hours off duty to train in Gotemba, Japan, by Mount Fuji. It was good! It was contact, it was useful Hand to Hand Combat of the times. This included at the time what was know as Atemi-waza (striking vital points). At one point in time a word entered conversations. The word was "Karate", the Art of Maiming or Killing an opponent. Very palatable for the Marine mentality.

When asked of the Sensei in Gotemba, if he knew Karate, his answer was, yes! But, he would not teach it to the Marines because they would go out in town and use it on

"each other". C'est la gare! No Karate in Japan for us at that time, however our Judo became an effective asset to our Hand to Hand Combat methods. Being shipped down to Okinawa - enter Karate! As in Japan, not much time for the "Fleet" Marines to go town side to train. But, we did what we could. And...the Sensei in Gotemba was right!

We went out to town and used it on each other! It was under the heading of "practice". Being good Marines, we would never leave our buddies laying there, we would always pickup and shake hands. We all respected a Good Fighter! After all, Combat may not be far away. You don't want to sitting in a Fox-hole and have some "grunt" shuto you from the rear when you got hostiles to your front. Again, Training up to be the "Ultimate Weapon", as training ensued and yours truly rotated back to the U.S., I was lucky enough to have a pocket of ex-"Jar Heads"/Marines, rally in my hometown in Jersey City N.J. to train up in a special storefront club on Mercer Street. As I joined this group, it turned out that we had very capable members of the Isshinryu System that had enough Mat-time to be formidable Martial Artists in total. Continuing with "The Way of the Warrior" mentality, as many of our Marines had, we trained hard, fought hard (There was nothing Sport about Karate in those days-it was Survival and the "Art" of Maiming or Killing an opponent), and prevailed.

When the deed was done, meaning many of our number trained up to a point of serious proficiency, some left for various sectors of the U.S. to start there own Dojo's. Yours truly remained in Jersey City where I grew up and continued to Train. My Training involved firstly-fighting anybody, anywhere, anytime And, I did a lot of it.

This was my most effective way of training and learning, by feeling it! If it worked, you knew it because there was a casualty count. Control in those days wasn't even discussed. The only control that counted was to control the hit to target with a measured strike that would either "Break" or "Incapacitate".

I don't think at that time anyone really wanted to Max-out on a strike that would go to the internals (Fatal), unless it was a Defensive/Survival situation. But, yes we would hit to a level that would/might break the opponent wherever. If you didn't pack the gear in those days, it was best you stayed off the mat. You see, in the fight (hard-core, not for points) is where the real essence of the Art of Karate-Do comes into focus. You fight so much, you develop the "feel" for the hit, the "Sixth Sense Ability" to read the opponent before he/and yes, she, even moves, the "Fluid Movement" to compound impact and confuse the opponent. These are things only to be learned by doing it "right". And..Right! by Karate/Martial Arts standards is not always (if ever) acceptable to the Liberal mentality.

But!...these same Liberal mentality types will look to you to Save their unworthy derrieres when it hits the fan. Right? Of course right! It's rough, tough, aggressive, and dangerous in conflict. And...the Benefits are plentiful. You are Fit, Good to Go, Healthy, and chances are if you are "that good", people will see it in you, and-leave you alone! And...you can reap the benefits of your training and perhaps never have to use it in conflict.

The George Foreman "Look" has worked for me many times. Further in training-up, when it came to hand conditioning (almost a dead subject, yes-a bit crazy!), we would hit the Punching Boards ad infinitum (Brick Walls were not out of the question either) until the knuckles were calloused and built up to be ballpeans (like hammers) for the focused hit. I have in the past been considered relatively good at breaking techniques and on my best day could "legitimately" break a 2" by 4" by 2'6" with one strike, 1 "legitimate" Red Construction Grade Brick with one strike.

When you see someone stacking up to break or if it looks unbelievable, it is! You betchaduppa. There are so many ways to Doctor these building materials for the flake's. Sorry to blow your cover guys. I would go out into the woods and fight the tree's, using them to simulate opponents all around me. I even had a person stop by my dojo one day (after twenty years), and he said, I am from Connecticut and I saw your name on a sign and I never forgot your name.

Quote: " I was walking through the Woods one day in Connecticut, and I heard these noises, and coming to see what they were, I saw you barefoot in the snow, in your Karate suit, punching and kicking the trees". He wanted to stop in and say hello again. When I made a movie "Avenging Force", it was on a ship. I had some free time. That's time to work out. So...I got an idea! The area where we would next be shooting, there was a bulkhead (wall), so, I started using the wall as a Punching Board. I hit the wall many time to wear the paint off it (kinda rusty) and when we shot that paintless section, that was "my" signature on the wall(?). In training, I jog, always have. I run either to the "Recon" Cadence or to Gusto "Bagpipe and Brass Band". These rhythms set you up to go forever (almost).

At this point in time, I train to "Maintain" and get longevity out of the anatomy. I now train in primarily "Attack Patterns" for strategic defense purposes. I am no longer interested in back and forth sparring scenario's or fighting a long extended battle. At this point my training is (as always when it's business) Hit Fast, Hit First, Hit Hard.