



Katsu-Mi Kai Shotokan Karate

December 2008

NEWSLETTER

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Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year
from Senseis Mark, Steve and Lionel
LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ALL IN THE NEW YEAR

St Ives Gasshaku Weekend Training Course

ST IVES was the venue for the first Gasshaku held by Katsu-Mi Kai Shotokan Karate. Sensei Mark Carroll, Sensei Steve Manning and Sensei Lionel Wheeler, along with other seniors from Katsu-Mi Kai, travelled to St Ives, Cornwall for a weekend of training and there was also a good turnout from SKC St Ives members.

The entire course was based on the bunkai of the kata Heian Shodan and some could be forgiven for thinking it was 'only' Heian Shodan, 'only' the kata you learn for red belt – but how wrong they would be.

The first session started with punching oi-tsuki – a basic technique one would think – but one actually made up of five separate techniques of varying range, ura-tsuki, tate-tsuki, choku-tsuki, step forward oi-tsuki and gyaku-tsuki. This was then practiced with a partner who moved backwards each time to accommodate each punch. This breaking down of each move of

the kata was explored in depth, in this way, throughout the whole course. Padwork was also used on several occasions to allow more contact.

On day two, Saturday, the class was joined by more students and the lesson started with an essential recap of the first day.

Saturday was as intense and thought provoking as Friday's session. It would be a bit misleading, and any amount of words insufficient, to try to mention every technique practised and every planned scenario and view point provided by Sensei Carroll. There was such a vast amount of knowledge and experience passed on by all three senseis, to leave out any would be an injustice.

Each technique was fully explored from every angle. One block, for example, could be just that or, as in this case, a multitude of defence and attacking moves. Students soon realised one of the many rea-

sons that a single kata must be practised and studied over and over and that no kata is easy, more... that all kata have a serious message.

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Sensei Carroll receives his 6th Dan at St Ives.



SENSEI Mark Carroll demonstrates a technique (left) and (right) the seniors assist the kyu grades.



St Ives Gasshaku Weekend Training Course

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Even though the sessions were intense, some students were smiling and swapping ideas during the breaks, so hard work was also shown to be a pleasure.

Sensei has never tried to 'lay down the law' regarding bunkai, just to show his view and provide a platform for other views - another way to study kata for yourself. He always mentions and demonstrates that he too is always reassessing his bunkai.

Talking of demonstrations, to be on the end of sensei's technique is definitely a way to 'feel' the bunkai. I'm glad he has such a high level of accuracy.

The final day recapped all we had practised, dojo kata, dojo bunkai and street bunkai, giving the students such a wide and open view of Heian Shodan.

To finish, a short course for referees and judges was given focusing on the kyu grade competition to be held on February 7. A much underrated and unpopular task, judging and refereeing is anything but easy and with the hopes and aspirations of competing karateka at stake, it is not a responsibility which appeals to many but is essential to ensure competitions can go ahead. This brief look into this world confirmed what a difficult and thankless task it is.

The final event of the course saw Sensei Carroll awarded his 6th Dan by Sensei Lionel Wheeler. This had been unanimously agreed upon by the senior members of Katsu-Mi Kai.

KN/STM

2009 EVENTS

KYU GRADE COMPETITION

at Matravers School, Springfield Road, Westbury, Wilts.

Saturday 7th February (10 am til 6 pm).

There is a one off payment of £10.00 to enter as few or as many events as wished. Dan Grades must attend to act as referees and judges as part of their NVQs

KATSU-MI KAI KYU GRADINGS

to be held at Melksham for anyone wishing to attend/grade.

Training on these gradings begin at 7 pm
Wednesday evenings
11-3-09, 10-6-09 & 16-9-09

COURSES & DAN GRADINGS

to be held at Taunton 1 pm til 5 pm
Wellsprings Leisure Centre, Taunton
17-1-09, 2-5-09 & 25-7-09

WEEKEND COURSE AT ST IVES

9th/10th/11th October (to be confirmed)

BUNKAI COURSE Warrington 12-10-08

SENSEI Mark Carroll was invited to take a kata bunkai course in Warrington by Sensei Andy Wilkinson 4th Dan who had been put in touch with Mark through some of his associates who had purchased kata bunkai DVDs.

Sensei Carroll was accompanied by other Katsu-Mi Kai members, Senseis Lionel Wheeler, Steve Manning and Martyn Chapman to assist with the instruction.

The course was designed to illuminate the bunkai for kata Heian Sandan. Sensei Carroll first gave his introduction on Habitual Acts of Violence and how kata practice can deal with various scenarios which may arise.

The course was very well received by the students who took part. Their grades were predominantly senior dan and kyu grades. The techniques were thoroughly explained and clear demonstrations were given at every opportunity to make the message - that kata is a very relevant form of training and only limited by the imagination of the person practising it - as

clear as possible.

Some of the students in the class were very unsure at the start but everyone soon adopted the mindset that Sensei Carroll put forward and did their utmost to take on board the ideas and the techniques that were involved.

Whilst Sensei Carroll took the focal point and led the class, Martyn and Steve paired up with the seniors to assist them to understand and explore the concepts being put to them.

The feedback from the students on the day was very good with many people keen to say that they had learned something new. The seniors at the course usually trained together on a weekly basis and were looking forward to exploring the ideas Sensei Carroll had shown them.

Everyone had a great time meeting Sensei Wilkinson and the other karateka before the course to make new friends and discuss training ideas and the Katsu-Mi Kai karateka look forward to meeting them all in the future.

SRM



SENSEI Carroll, with the aid of Martyn Chapman, uses focus mits to illustrate a point at Warrington (top left). Karateka get to grips with kata bunkai applications (top right). Sensei Carroll and Sensei Manning work on the mats with the class (left).