



# GMA News June 21

## ***Congrats to our New Black Belts:***

GMA is excited for a new crop of black belts: Mr. Preston Santiago, Mr. Malachi Watkins, and Mr. Eli Thompson join Mr. Skopecek and Ms. Gunn as new cho-dans, and our newest 2<sup>nd</sup> dan is Mr. Nico Inman.

## ***Break-a-thon Results***

Thank you to everyone who worked extremely hard to make our break a thon and annual picnic a success. Our final tally was approximately \$1200. Thanks to all the parents who also helped serve or set up, etc. to make the picnic awesome.

## ***SUMMER ATTENDANCE REWARD and Referral Program***

As usual we have our summer attendance reward program starting in June. Look for details on how you can be a part of a celebration at the end of the summer for strong attendance during the hot summer months.

## ***Upcoming Events***

June 2-3	German Longsword camp 9:00-3:30
June 5	Leadership Team 1:00-2:30
June 5	BB prep 2:30-4:00
June 7 <sup>th</sup>	Hapkido testing in class.
June 11 <sup>th</sup>	TKD testing (5:30 no class)
June 12 <sup>th</sup>	Lil dragon testing (beg 9:00-10:30; int/adv 10:30-12:00)
June 13 <sup>th</sup>	In house white belt BJJ tournament 1:00-?
June 14-18 <sup>th</sup>	TKD day camp 9:00-3:30
June 19 <sup>th</sup>	Demo Team 9:00-10:30
June 27-July 1	Lil Dragons camp 9:00-1:00
July 5 <sup>th</sup>	Limited schedule to give our staff the Independence Day holiday. Watch/listen for adjustments.
July 6-7	Hapkido day camp 9:00-3:30

## ***Fathers' day invitation***

After inviting the mothers to join the kids in class for Mother's Day, we would be in trouble if we didn't offer the same to our fathers. Dads, Grand-dads, etc. are welcome to join their kids in class the week following Father's Day—June 21-24.

## ***In house White Belt BJJ Tournament***

We will be simulating a round robin tournament for those white belts who are interested in competing but want to understand what they are getting into a bit better. Cost is 25.00 and must be pre-registered. The entry fee is refundable upon competition that day. Arrive around 1:00...we hope to start at 1:30. We will also have a kid's division if there is interest.

## ***Training Anniversary***

Congrats to those students who are celebrating a year or multiple years of training with us:

Noah Wilson (TKD 17 yrs., BJJ 12 yrs.)

Andy Farmer (TKD 8 yrs.)

Megan Brook (TCC 4 yrs.)

Soliel Sparks (BJJ 6 yrs.)

Kirby Brester (TKD 3 yrs.)

Caitlin Gibson (TKD 3 yrs.)

Nathan Crowe (BJJ 1 yr.)

Adrian Britt (LD 1 yr.)



### ***Happy Birthday to these students***

Cooper Glunk	6/10	Daniel Hanscom	6/11	Nassim Florestant	6/12
Atley Bandy	6/12	Larissa Poorman	6/12	Fisher Dunscombe	6/16
Freddy Bower	6/16	John Hirt	6/21	Sara Voorhees	6/21
Adam Bandy	6/23	Silas McCalden	6/25	Eli Dyer	6/26
Declan Williams	6/26	Kayla Bush	6/27		

### ***Please keep us posted.***

*A reminder as summer approaches: if you have vacation plans, we would appreciate being kept informed, so we don't worry if we miss you in classes. Fridays are great days to make up any classes that you missed while on vacation. Thanks.*

### **This Month in Martial Arts History** (selected from "Dates with Destiny" in *Martial Arts Success* by John Corcoran.

June 15, 1917      Birthday of American jiu-jitsu pioneer Wally Jay  
June 1961      Black belt magazine is founded.  
June 1978      "Good Guys Wear Black" first features Chuck Norris as the star  
June 22, 1984      Karate Kid debuts—forever changing the perception and demographics of martial arts in America.  
Karate II and III are released in June 1986 and 1989, respectively. As well as the remake in 2010.  
Other June movie releases include Mulan (1998) and Kung Fu Panda (2008).



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### **Are MMA Fighters Really Fighters if they Don't Really Fight?**

I recently watched an excellent example of the difference between martial sport and self-defense that should be a cautionary reminder to many. In the debut of the ONE mma promotion on a major network, Eddie Alvarez was disqualified for hitting the back of the head of his opponent with 2-3 punches. He had done an excellent job of gaining positional advantage on the ground, but the position limited the strikes to little more than arm swings that whipped around to the brain stem. I am sure his hands are heavier than most from there, but it was not a power shot at all. Yes, his opponent, himself a highly trained martial athlete conditioned to take punishment that would destroy normal people, still left on a stretcher, and Alvarez was disqualified for doing what wasn't allowed.

Last month I wrote that while terms such as sparring, fighting, and playing are often used interchangeably by some, they can also have quite different connotations to others, and I would assert we should use the terms playing/players to describe your everyday martial artists, competition/competitors for more serious combat sport, and reserve fighting to describe true self-defense situations. Admittedly there is indeed overlap, and I am guilty of blurring the lines myself.



While I am certainly a fan, participant, and proponent of combat sports for their many benefits, including some that also have applicability to self-defense, the Alvarez fight is a reminder as to why I also feel those distinctions must be made. Some say MMA is the same as or close to self-defense, but here is a case where rules were in place to prevent serious damage to a vulnerable area and what happens when even a minor strike hits one of those targets. These are the exact targets that our self-defense students should be focused on striking (when legally justified.) While I want our students to be the best martial athlete they can be, our students training for self-defense should understand that they don't have to be a UFC fighter to effectively use those vulnerabilities. And we must keep in mind combat sport has modified techniques and rules to limit permanent damage.

In one of my college courses, I devote an entire lecture detailing many of these distinctions, so we can go deeper than my summary below...but here are few examples.

Combat sports can be habit forming. You become conditioned to protect certain areas and not others. Stances do not protect the groin because it isn't a target. I watched a brutal Kyokushinkai match (some consider a very formidable, effective style) where the punishment to the body was amazing, but a punch strayed high and clipped the chin of an opponent exclusively protecting the body, dropping him like a sack of potatoes. Protective gear compounds the problem, letting people get comfortable taking shots that would be change the outcome without it. Competitors can get in the habit of stopping after landing blows, or when your opponent falls, or even worse, expecting your opponent will do the same. You can be conditioned to let go after a "tap." I have seen competitors turn their back to avoid blows to scoring areas (an ill-advised strategy outside this of this scope) or purposely fall to avoid being countered and get a reset.

Combat sports can result in a distortion of technique. To become more efficient at playing the game as constructed, techniques have been modified and new technique evolved for different purposes. I was just at a TKD sparring clinic where they were adapting not only strategy but also technique to the new electronic scoring system. In basically games of tag, speed can become the over-riding factor. Some of the new moves and positions in BJJ are to be marveled at from a creativity and artistry standpoint, but they have little value outside of those grappling conditions.

I am certainly not the first to make this point. Given that many people have perceptions (or romantic fantasies) about how martial arts has been handed down over the centuries, perhaps what might be more surprising is just how this same debate was raged throughout history. Nor is it really limited to one combat sport or art:

#### On Judo

To receive Ippon, it was all or nothing. Today not only have the criteria for ippon been reduced—requiring less force and less speed—but two other scores lower than wazari are now awarded. Of course, competitors have adapted to these new scoring options by designing their techniques to achieve these lower scores...and has reduced the emphasis on "ippon judo." Today you can be a winner without ever taking ippon. —Daigo Toshio.

In competition and in fighting, feeling proud of yourself after winning by inconveniencing your opponent does not fulfill the spirit of judo. If you do not win by using waza superior to those of your opponent or by turning his waza against him, this cannot be said to be true victory. —Jigoro Kano

#### On Boxing



Too many amateur instructors have forgotten entirely that the purpose of boxing lessons is to teach a fellow to defend himself with his fists, not to point him toward amateur or professional competition with boxing gloves. To a menacing extent, the purpose of fistic instruction has been bypassed by amateur tutors, who try to benefit themselves financially, indirectly or directly, by producing punchless performers, who can win amateur or professional bouts on points.'- Jack Dempsey.

### On Fencing

The high degree of science that fencing has reached today might never have been attained if the failure of every delicately executed attack with its feints and deceptions had meant a punctured lung instead of a point for the opposition—Cass.

English sword master George Silver in 1599, bemoaned the Italian school of fencing with rapier, commenting that “They teach men to butcher one another when at home in peace, wherewith they cannot hurt their enemies abroad in war.... Fencing, in this newfangled age, is like our fashions, every day a change. \*

Some assert that the Spartans thought the combat sports of the ancient Olympiad were distractions from true war arts training—like pushing trees over in the phalanx. Even the most traditional and preserved sword traditions of Japan at one point or another had to internally deal with the clash of the old ways versus new training methods (armor for training, practice weapons, sparring, etc.)

The closest I ever got to “losing it” in combat sports was at a TKD tournament where multiple opponents from the same school repeatedly grabbed my leg and used it to their advantage and the infraction was ignored by the center ref. I remember explaining I will play any game they wanted to play, but we had to play the same game. As fired up as I was, it was still just that, a game of tag mostly with our feet. Call it a match or competition. But calling it a “fight” isn’t quite accurate, and I cringe when people use superlatives of “battle” or “war.” We need to keep in mind why these distinctions exist and matter, and train accordingly with those differences in mind.

\*Perhaps the most interesting thing about this quote is the fact that the term newfangled was being used over 400 yrs. ago, proving that term is anything but.