



Sept 24 NEWS

Congrats to Annika Gray on her promotion to black belt

Congrats to Oakley Phelps on graduating lil dragons

Upcoming events:

****** No, We do NOT have class on Labor Day ******

Sept 1 st	Paragon Parade 6:00 (arrive Paragon Elementary 5:30)
Sept 2 nd	No Classes. Happy Labor Day
Sept 7 th	Catch up camp 9:00-11:30
Sept 7 th	Demo team 12:30-2:00
Sept 7 th	Stick fighting 2:00-4:30
Sept 14 th	Blue belt BJJ session 9:00-10:30
Sept 21 st	Tai chi field trip 10:00-12:00
Sept 23 rd	Possible Lil dragon testing 4:15 (no beginning class) listen for announcements
Sept 28 th	Demo Team 9:00-10:30
Oct 4 th	TKD testing 5:30, no class
Oct 5 th	Demo team 9:00-11:00
Oct 5 th	Black belt prep 11:00-12:30
Oct 5 th	Stick fighting 1:00-3:30
Oct 5 th	possible BJJ tournament (FUJI)
Oct 12	Fall foliage demo 6:00 pm
Oct 13 th	Fall foliage parade

T SHIRTS FOR FALL FOLIAGE

Additionally, as usual we will be wearing our Hero in Training T Shirts for the fall foliage parade. We will order some extra, but we really would appreciate it if the majority would pre-order to make sure we have the right number/sizes. Please order by Sept 16th in order to guarantee we have one for you.

Catch up camp!

Summer disrupts routines, and we have lots of students who need a little extra help to get back into the swing of things. Others just want some extra help with their testing requirements. Or if you just want to get a head start on new stuff or extra practice....whatever your goal, we are offering a mini camp that is solely focused on rank requirements to get people polished up on their core material. We keep it super cheap to give as many people as possible a chance to catch up, and also counts for three classes! Sept 7th. Cost is \$20.00

GMA Wishes a Happy Birthday to:

Kylie Yoshida	9/1	Kris Mallng	9/6	Norah Vaught	9/7
Auburn Smith	9/8	Clay Thacker	9/8	Sara Moore	9/13
Nash Perry	9/18	Caden Howe	9/21	Wyatt Northern	9/23
Malachi Watkins	9/24	Gabe Wilson	9/26	Donovan Sieg	9/30

Training Anniversaries — Special congrats for everyone who is celebrating a year or multiple years of training.

Maya Mras (TKD 6 yrs.)	Caleigh Allender (TKD 5 yrs.)	Kellan Gray (LD, TKD 5 yrs.)
Patrick Hersman (BJJ 5 yrs.)	Silas McCalden (TKD 4 yrs.)	Cameron Gregory (KBJJ 3 yrs.)
John Hambrick (TKD 3 yrs.)	Bryan Bolin (BJJ 3 yrs.)	Ethan Jackson (TKD 2 yrs.)
Jonah Lieffers (LD, KBJJ 2 yrs.)	Grace Lieffers (LD, TKD 2 yrs.)	Nick Lieffers (BJJ 2 yrs.)
Camden Christian (TKD 2 yrs.)	Ronnie Sachs (LD 2 yrs.)	Michael Heady (TKD 2 yrs.)



Braxton Kirk (LD, TKD 2 yrs.)
Makynleigh Sanders (LD 1 yr.)

Avery Jette (KBJJ 1 yr.)
Brighton Sanders (KBJJ 1 yr.)

Gary Sanders (BJJ 1 yr.)
Asher Maxwell (LD 1 yr.)

Quotes of the week/ Mat Chat

As anyone who has been with us for over a year may recall, September is the month we do our Random Acts of Kindness Campaign. As will be explained in class, this is a response to the President's call following the terrorist attacks of 9-11, and it is our way of showing a little patriotism, remembering the tragedy, and helping others at the same time.

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

Sept 14, 1902 (Oct 7, 1994).	Carlos Gracie Sr. birthday—founder of BJJ
Sept 15, 1938,	Fumio Demura –Karate Master, author—greatly influenced Mr. Sieg
Sept 1954	CDK member GM Tae Hi Nam breaks 13 roofing tiles in front of President Rhee, compelling President Rhee to order all ROK army troops to be trained.
Sept 14, 1961,	Pivotal meeting in the government ordered unification of the kwans under the later named Korea TKD Association.
Sept 9 th , 1966, Sept 1, 1973,	Bruce Lee debuts on TV as Kato in the Green Hornet, and Enter the Dragon opens, resp.
Sept 17 th , 1988,	TKD unveiled as a demo sport in the Olympic games in Seoul—huge demo in opening ceremonies.
Sept 2000	Unified rules that govern modern MMA are adopted.
Movie debuts: ---The Protector (Tony Jaa), Fearless (Jet Li) Rush Hour (Jackie Chan) Kickboxer and Knockoff (JCVD)	

Being a Fan of Combat Sports is Hard*

*I don't mean like it is hard to be a fan of the Cincinnati Reds or IU football.

Fans of combat sports had the potential to be pretty busy this past month. The Olympics displayed TKD, Judo, Wrestling on arguably their largest stage. The sport of Brazilian JiuJitsu had its eyes on Vegas with two major events--the ADCC and the upstart Craig Jones Invitational (CGI)—on the same weekend, both delivering very notable matches. For those who are involved in these sports, these were memorable events. For everyone else in Vegas, they were probably wondering what convention was in town that had so many people with deformed ears attending.

Sadly, with perhaps the exception of boxing and maybe MMA, combat sports have never gotten the traction as spectator sports. Obviously, I am biased, and I have written elsewhere on why we can make the case that combat sports are the most challenging sports of all, but it has not translated into fandom. You weren't going to see TKD in the primetime slot of Olympic Coverage. The BJJ events were streamed online only. The CGI had hundreds of thousands of live viewers on YouTube (as I was watching), and now over a million. But that obviously pales in comparison to even preseason NFL games that don't matter and don't feature star players.

It is clear that the only people watching those BJJ events are people who do BJJ, and the only people who got up at 3:00 am to watch TKD in the Olympics are people who do TKD. Martial arts are still a fringe activity, and they don't really have casual fans. No one is calling into sports radio to discuss any of those combat sports events. And that is part of the problem. Increased popularity requires hype, discussion, and debate. Whose better? Who is a bad style match up? Etc.



With such little exposure it is hard to get to know the personalities. Occasionally there might be a feel-good feature on a combat sport athlete...but none of them are a household name that people would have opinions about and root either for or against. Most fan allegiance is because of vicinity, nostalgia, or some other emotional attachment. It is hard to form any of those connections if you don't know anything about the athletes.

For example, it was easy to cheer for Josh Hinger at ADCC, as he has trained on these mats and our team just trained with him in Philly a matter of weeks ago. Even though I may not be an acquaintance of others that I was rooting for, I still had an emotional connection...their teacher is a friend of my teacher, or whatever. But honestly, there were a lot of competitors that I was not familiar with. I didn't know their story; therefore, I was far less engaged with their matches, and less inspired to watch at all.

And that is the problem. Our sports certainly have inspiring stories and moments. (Lucas Barbosa just won CGI with a dislocated shoulder—that is pretty epic!) But no one knows or sees them. A common theme during coverage of a notable Olympic athlete is how, when they were a little child watching the Olympics, a previous champion inspired them. How at 8 years old they decided they wanted to be like (fill in the blank). And now, they are inspiring the next generation. Unfortunately, I am pretty sure few 8-year-olds were up in the middle of the night to see TKD or Judo live. It is easy for a child to say that when they grow up, they want to be like Peyton Manning, Steph Curry, Messi, Simone Biles, or Caitlyn Clark; it is not easy to say they want to be Kristina Teachout (the lone USA TKD medalist, that I bet most TKD practitioners can't name). Without endorsements, branding, or just plain exposure, it just isn't cool to follow these guys.

For martial arts to grow, we need to find ways to get our athletes in front of the casual observer and have more of a potential to inspire the next generation. Ninja turtles, Power Rangers, and Cobra Kai might pique interest, but they aren't serious role models, and no one will seriously strive to emulate them like they would true champions.

This might also be a case of "careful about what you wish for." Martial arts and combat sports already suffer from some negative side effects of commercialization...how much more so if things really did take off? One of the great things about our sport is I could hang out and talk with likes of Josh Hinger a few weeks ago, and I didn't need to fight through an entourage of security to do it. But as I believe in the power of martial arts to change lives, I wish they would become more mainstream so we could reach more people. And that requires more fandom. If I could just get those sports radio producers to let me talk on the air....