



DECEMBER 25 GMA NEWSLETTER

Congrats to our newest black belts: Mr. Caden Howe and Miss Noel Voorhees

Upcoming events:

- Dec 6th Demo team 9:00-10:30
- Dec 6th Leadership team outing 10:30-12:30
- Dec 6th BJJ blue belt prep and class 1:30--?
- Dec 8th Little Dragon Testing (white/yellow 4:15-5:30; orange and up 5:30-6:45)
- Dec 13/14 GTU TKD training (BBC)
- Dec 16th GMA Xmas Party and Awards Banquet at fairgrounds 6:00 pm (no classes)
- Dec 20th Black belt prep 9:00-10:30
- Dec 20th Hapkido black belt testing 10:30-?
- Dec 20th Demo performance at MHS halftime. Demo meet here to practice 7:00 pm
- Dec 23-26 NO CLASSES—Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays
- Dec 23rd TKD 12 hour challenge 9:00 am--9:00 pm
- Dec 29th classes resume
- Dec 29th Tai Chi curriculum camp 9:00-3:30
- Dec 30th Winter Weapons Camp—Irish Walking Stick 9:00-3:30
- Dec 31st-Jan 1 No Classes—Happy New Year-- BJJ open mat will be discussed in class for Jan 1 training
- Jan 3rd Catch up Camp 9:00-11:30
- Jan 3rd Spar Wars Kendo/movie choreography night 5:00-9:00

See our Winter Camp schedule below**

Xmas Party, Dance and Awards Banquet

This year's Christmas party/awards banquet and dance has been scheduled for Dec 16th at the Morgan County Fairgrounds. Arrival and set up will be from 5:30-6:00. Following the awards, there will be some games and a dance that will continue until 8:30 or 9:00 pm. This is a chance to join in some fellowship, recognize some key students and parents. There will be a pitch in for dinner, and signups will be posted soon. We also need a very close idea of people attending for seating arrangements. No classes will be held that day. We hope everyone will be able to share in our annual event. We also need sign ups to set up at the fairgrounds that morning.

And the NOMINEES are:

This year we are announcing those students who are nominated for our yearly awards:

Student of the year: *Eliana Gluff, Aiden Maxwell, Miylah White, RJ Arney, Gideon York*

Black Belt of the year: *Jonas Stewart, Eli Voorhees, William Yoshida*

Most Improved Student: *Ethan Ennis, Jamie Kirk, Abby Watkins, Ryleighann Kennedy, Nellie Bales, Dessy Rodebaough, Leia House, Alex Jones, Gus Alvey*

Competitor of the year (TKD): *Jonas Stewart, Jenna Berry, Jaxson White, Miylah White, Isach White*

Competitor of the year (BJJ) *Ezekiel York, Brycen Byrum, Colt Goforth, Colin Stevens,*

Winter Camps Coming Up Fast

Rather than having the kids sitting around stuffing themselves with candy, we take the vacation time to offer something special. Don't forget you can also make it a X-mas present, and you can put the gear under the tree!

As always, we will be using the winter break in the school calendar to offer some unique camps during the holiday season. Rather than having the kids sitting around stuffing themselves with candy, we take the vacation time to learn something special. Don't forget you can also make it a X-mas present. Sign up at the front desk.

TKD 12 hour challenge Dec 23rd: Can you rise to the challenge? Our instructors have come up with a 12 hour (9:00 am to 9:00 pm) TKD session with hour long sessions that not only go over the basics and rank material, but lots of equipment, supplemental exercises, and fun competitions.

Winter Weapons camp— Irish Walking Stick (Shillelagh) Dec 30th While similar to other weapons we teach (stick, cane, etc) it is also unique in other ways. Guest instructor Patrick Kelly, who spends a lot of time in Ireland, will



help us dive deeper into a weapon that complements or hapkido and stick programs, or just anybody else with a little Irish temperament.

Tai chi curriculum camp. Dec 29th. We will be do a review/refresh as much of the tai chi curriculum as possible. It is not an attempt to teach everything, just to take an inventory and remind everyone of lots of things we haven't had a chance to do in a long time.

Spar Wars Kendo/Saber Night We will also be having a SPAR WARS/ parents' night out on Sat, Jan 3rd from 5:00-9:00. Jedi and light sabers were largely based on Eastern martial arts themes and the art of Kendo. The night will include pizza, basic kendo instruction, sparring and games, and we plan to teach a choreographed light saber duel which you can film. The event will include an action flex light saber that is safe and durable for actual sparring (but unfortunately not cheap—this is an actual training weapon with a Star Wars theme). Participants are encouraged to dress up in a Star Wars theme as much as they want. There will need to be a minimum number of sign-ups, which must be done in advance to get the light sabers. Previous Spars Wars night or Weapons camp participants who already have the light saber will obviously get a huge discount. You can order the saber for Xmas!

Catch-up camp Jan 3rd As always, we are offering people a chance to get back into the swing of things and catch up on missed classes over the holidays in our TKD catch up camp. All rank material will be covered in this 2.5-hour intensive course which also counts for three classes—we keep it very affordable to let everyone be able to catch up or simply get a jump start on training in the new year.

Please Plan ahead for Xmas Items

If you have any last-minute Christmas shopping to do (don't we all) or need that stocking stuffer or whatever, just a reminder to please plan in advance. Many of our suppliers go out of stock of seasonal items and we want to make sure we minimize the delays in getting any special orders to you! *The last day to order Xmas items to ensure shipping (assuming availability) is Dec. 9th. Keep in mind, some things are already back ordered past the holidays.*

Give another person the chance to “be more” this Christmas.

Don't forget that you can get a gift certificate for a uniform and month of classes –130.00 value, for only 35.00 cost to you (BJJ uniforms more). If you know anyone who has ever “thought about” doing martial arts, or if there is someone you know who “this would be good for,” this is your chance to get them off the fence and really reap the benefits of training.

Quotes of the Week: This month, with goal setting around the corner in Jan, we will be talking about the differences between the habits and behaviors of successful people and unsuccessful people.

Training Anniversaries

Kylie Yoshida (TKD 17 yrs.)	Casey Lafary (BJJ 3 yrs.)	Connor Ennis (TKD 3 yrs.)
Isach White (TKD 3 yrs.)	Miylah White (LD, TKD 3 yrs.)	Haylie Pries (TKD 2 yrs.)
Eliana Gluff (TKD 1 yr.)	Nellie Bales (TKD 1 yr.)	Liam Shepperd (LD 1 yr.)
Brenda Huter (HKD/TaiChi 1 yr.)		

GMA Wishes a Happy Birthday to:

Simon Blair	12/02	Joseph Runnebohm	12/07	Ethan Ennis	12/08	Gareth Toms	12/10
Noelle Cooley	12/11	Luna Walker	12/12	Elliot Heady	12/13	Casey Lafary	12/13
Lily McDonald	12/14	Wyatt Kincaid	12/17	Carson Clark	12/17	Noel Voorhees	12/19
Naomi Gaudet	12/21	Levi Elmore	12/21	Eli Voorhees	12/25	Jaxson White	12/25
Mrs. Yoshida	12/26	John Gens	12/29	Faowyn Mascoe	12/29	Aiden Maxwell	12/29
Kai Morgan	12/31						



Class Cancellations for Holidays, class adjustments, and general policies

- No class on Tuesday, Dec 16th on account of the Christmas party...see you there.
- Holiday class cancellations: No class on Dec 23th-Dec 26th on account of Christmas. Classes will resume Dec 29th. No class on Dec 31st-Jan 1st on account of New Year's. No Fri morning BJJ or HKD on Jan 2nd. Evening classes meet. *Both Kids BJJ and Evening Taichi will have a make up class on Tues, Dec 30th at 7:45.*
- Also, a reminder of our general policy regarding severe weather. We try to follow the lead of local schools—if they cancel school that day, cancel evening events or let out early, so do we. If there is a morning delay, we will meet as normal. This applies to universal problems such as snow and ice, not things like flooding or other issues that may be more regionalized. The only exception to this may occur when the school cancels in advance of a huge storm and the forecast is *clearly* incorrect, or when crews have all day to work on the roads. When in doubt, simply call, check the website and Facebook, check your email for announcements.

Tournament results

We had 18 students take home a total of 24 medals at the Crays Covid Cup tournament in Noblesville: good balance with 12 forms and 12 sparring medals. Congrats to the following:

Jenna Berry	2 nd Forms	2 nd Sparring	Dessy Rodenaugh	3 rd Form	2 nd Sparring
Nathin Plummer	2 nd Forms		Aiden Maxwell		3 rd Sparring
Jonas Stewart	2 nd Forms		Eliana Gluff	2 nd Forms	3 rd Sparring
Caitlin Gibson		3 rd Sparring	Liam Canada	3 rd Forms	
Evalyse Jones	3 rd Forms		Jaxon White	3 rd Forms	3 rd Sparring
Miylah White	1 st Forms	2 nd Sparring	Nolan Tupper		
Isach White	3 rd Forms	2 nd Sparring	Alex Jones	3 rd Forms	
RJ Arney		3 rd Sparring	Clara Gibson		3 rd Sparring
Michael Heady	1 st Forms	3 rd Sparring			

BJJ Competed in the New Breed Tournament, and despite having only a few kids compete, they still took third in team points!

Cameron Gregory: Double Gold Colin Stevens: Double Gold Brycen Byrum: Double Gold
 Ezekiel York: Bronze (gi) & Silver (no-gi) Gideon York: Bronze (gi) & Gold (no-gi)
 Colt Gorforth: Gold (gi) & Bronze (no-gi)

Is This a Fake Review or Are We a “Fake Dojo?”

We recently had someone leave a review that left us confused. For starters, we haven't had someone by that last name in our school for 8 years (last in 2017), and even based on the content, we aren't sure who his son might be and thus be able to speak about his specific situation. Our staff suspected a troll, possibly even an AI generated one, based on the way it is written. You can read the uninterrupted review and my formal response on google (I played nice and agreed to disagree on a few points). Below is a broader dissection, which includes what I *wanted* to write (ok, *closer* to what I wanted to write.) If there is a silver lining, it does give us an opportunity to discuss martial arts pedagogy, both traditionally and currently, and to elaborate at least a little bit about our approach and philosophy.

<<Nobody cares to see the little Junior dragons break boards. >> Our lil dragons break boards one time, after over a year, as part of their requirements to graduate. Based on how all our parents video this part of practice, I think many people do care. Clearly, he doesn't, but quite frankly, we don't care whether he cares. I have spent entire rants on the value or benefits of breaking boards, both physically and mentally, and why we continue to do it, and so I won't rehash that here.



My guess is if this is indeed a real father—his son sucked at breaking (possibly quit over it?) nor did they gain appreciation for what would be learned and instilled by rising to the challenge.

>>> Anyone knows that when you're teaching little kids how to do martial arts, the first step in doing so is flexibility. So when they're actually learning the moves they're being able to pull them off correctly.>>> I am not sure what the first part even means...I don't think they mean physical flexibility, but if they do, young kids should be the most naturally flexible population there is, although admittedly I have bemoaned the fact that this is increasingly less the case. Regardless, there are few martial arts techniques that require enhanced flexibility to be able to perform...and certainly not those in the preschool program. In order for younger kids to perform moves correctly, it is more common that they need to develop coordination, strength, and proprioception instead of flexibility, and a lot of our dragons program emphasizes those elements.

>>> And when you're teaching kids you should pick out and point out individual strong points and let the kids practice that until they can't get it wrong tell it becomes instinctual. It's absolute nonsense to learn a bunch of moves you don't pull off correctly. >>>

Wow. So individualized training based on personal attributes is a thing. Stories (legends) abound of the master picking the correct animal style for the student and having them develop their personal fighting style. But such individualized training was also highly intensive between a dedicated master-student relationship, likely well after the foundation had been laid. To be completely honest, in the age of commercialized martial arts, it is a lot less feasible, and if we are just motivated by money now, I wonder what he would say about how much such a tailored program would cost. Still, we certainly address individual proclivities when it comes to sparring styles in both BJJ and TKD, and we take into account personal differences in our Hapkido program as well. But this is usually after their game has started to develop, and *certainly* after the person has. Are we supposed to guess as to whether a small child is going to have a growth spurt and end up with long legs or not? It would be hard to determine how their personality and temperament will turn out when it is still being formed. And what if, for example, they most closely identify with a T-rex...or Spiderman...cause you know...they're 5 years old. Am I supposed to work with that? How are we supposed to have any idea what they are good at, if they don't learn the general foundations first?

Whether something is going to “work” for somebody is a valid but complicated subject. While at a BJJ seminar, when a particular move is taught, our instructors might all look at one individual who is most likely to immediately incorporate it into their game, as if the move is tailored for him. Sometimes it just clicks like that, but what about the times when it doesn't? And there are those times when it just doesn't connect, but how long do you keep practicing before you just throw it out and say it doesn't work for me? 10 reps? 100? 1000? Many students have blamed the technique as being flawed (at least for them) instead of blaming themselves for not working hard enough to get good at it. Early in my BJJ studies, I can remember commenting to myself that one particular move was too complicated to be of value. It is a very basic move, one of only a handful I teach in my college self defense courses...but it takes more than 10 minutes of practice.

Now how do you take those factors into account when it comes to a small child?

<<<<< Kids don't need to learn a whole bunch of stuff. They just need to learn a technique and be able to pull it off 100% perfect so they can use it in the realworld situation and that's why this place is just a fake dojo just to grab money.>>>>

And this is where we are gonna have to disagree the most. We think that kids need a strong foundation and children shouldn't be primarily focused on individualized study to maximize “combat effectiveness” or whatever you want



to call it. As they grow and progress, students will naturally transition into more personal tendencies. But asking small children to have self-directed, individualized training to develop some unstoppable technique (against who, another 6-year-old?) is laughable.

We have always been quite transparent that when it comes to our preschoolers, our focus is on developing the attributes (such as focus, discipline, control, as well as balance, coordination, fitness, etc.) that they need to not only be successful in their future martial arts careers, but also in school, life, etc. We have never had someone come in wanting their small child to hone their real-world combat skills, but plenty come in because they want their child to BE MORE in the life skills and attributes mentioned above. I think we do a pretty good job of delivering on that front, so I don't think it is a money grab when we fulfill the goals that our parents wanted, and to develop some decent martial artists with strong foundations in the process.

>>>> I am a black belt myself and also a former instructor and that's why I took my son out there>>>> If this black belt instructor is so opinionated that we are doing it wrong, I am not sure why a) he signed his son up in the first place and b) why he isn't training his own son.

As mentioned before, we are not even sure a real person wrote this review, let alone a real black belt. But some of the comments aren't so farfetched in the realm of keyboard warriors, who can write something just coherent enough to make it seem like they have a point. Again, if there is a silver lining, it gives us a chance to provide more detail about us, and it gives us a chance to distinguish ourselves from the "real dojo" this guy envisions.