



Gentry Martial Arts

News March 2026

Congrats to our newest lil dragon graduate: Gareth Toms and Jencyn Lee

Upcoming events:

- March 6th TKD testing-no TKD class
- March 13/14th Kristian Woodmansee returns for our BJJ program (details below)
- March 21st Kids Stop Bullies FAST 9:00-11:30
- March 21st Black belt prep 12:00-1:30
- March 21st Stickfighting 1:30-4:00

Spring break week: There may be some class adjustments/cancellations as we do our HKD field trip—watch for updates on viewpoint and announcements in class.

- April 18th GMA hosts USHF seminar
- April 25^h World Tai chi celebration 10:00-11:00
- April 25th Black belt testing and BB stripe testing
- May 2-3 GMA hosts Dr. Yang seminar

Kristian Woodmansee visit

Our BJJ coach will be returning for his annual visit: Friday night classes on March 13th will be gi for both kids and adults and will be promotions night. Additionally, he will be doing no gi seminars on Sat the 14th. Kids will be from 10:30-12:00 and adult 12:00-2:00. There is no cost for Friday night classes and cost for Sat seminars is 20.00 (adults without logic memberships will be 75.00 for the weekend)

Spring Break Social Media contest:

Going somewhere on spring break? We want to see you represent. We will be holding a contest over spring break. Take a picture in your best martial arts pose with your exotic surroundings (even if it is just around town). Pics in uniform or GMA swag will be given more consideration. Tag us on Instagram or Facebook. Best pic(s) will win a prize!

Quotes of the Week

We are late starting our focus points, so we will continue with those, and after that, we will be going over some of our favorite sayings from Grandmaster Choi.

Training Anniversaries:

Mike Dodge (BJJ 19 yrs.)	Nathin Plummer (TKD 8yrs.)	Alysha Patel (TKD 8 yrs.)
Mikenna Kirk (TKD 5 yrs)	A J Starodub (TKD 4 yrs.)	Ryder Morris (TKD 2 yrs.)
Sarah House (LD, TKD 2 yrs.)	Isabella Shrake (TKD 2 yrs.)	Gareth Toms (LD 1yr.)
Jon Henry Payne (LD 1 yr.)	Dillon Dudley (BJJ 1yr.)	

Don't forget GMA website, Facebook, Instagram,

Follow us on Instagram @Gentry_MA for lighter notes. And you can also subscribe to our YouTube Channel

Birthdays:

Jenna Berry	3/03	Lori Overby	3/04	Haylie Pries	3/04	Rosie Baker	3/04
Evelyn Kaufman	3/06	Dennis Smith-Hamblen	3/06	Bryan Bolin	3/07	Eliot Hogan	3/08

CJ Smith	3/10	Janie Bradley	3/14	Mckinley Morgan	3/14	Aleah Spires	3/14
Lyle Britton	3/16	James Martin	3/17	Alaynah Gregory	3/18	Abby Watkins	3/20
Maya Mras	3/21	R J Arney	3/23	Josiah Mitchell	3/25	Nolan Eirhart	3/25
Matson Green	3/28	Lise Roberson	3/29	Rinlee Mullikin	3/31	Paisley Hansel	3/31

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

- March 1, 1907 (-Feb 2, 2003) GM Won Kuk Lee (founder of Chung Do Kwan) birthday
- March 10, 1940, Birthday for Chuck Norris
- March 11, 1967, Birthday for Renzo Gracie
- March 19, 1931, Birthday for Ed Parker, Sr. (Famous for Bruce Lee demo and taught Elvis Presley)
- March 24, 1950, Birthday for Peyton Quinn—Reality based training pioneer, influence on FAST program.
- March 10, 1921, Chojun Miyagi and Gichin Funakoshi (important to our line) hold the famous demonstration for the future Emperor of Japan—putting Okinawan Karate “on the map.”
- March 20, 1971, South Korean President Chung-Hi Park declared TKD as Korea’s national sport.
- March 30, 1990, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles debuts in theaters—creating a craze.
- March 31st, 1999, The Matrix debuts in theaters—changing the way movie fights are done, and changing perceptions of what we do!

Congrats to the York brothers, who came back with 5 gold and 2 silver from the last Fuji tournament.

The Slippery Slope Between Abuse and Teaching in the Martial Arts

The Martial Arts school is a safe place for men, women and children. Instructors should not use their authority to abuse members. –random, typical media post.

Recently, accusations of misconduct were directed at a famous BJJ competitor and instructor, who we were proud to host, for seminars several years ago, and with whom we still had a peripheral connection through our relationships with other top competitors and instructors who were connected with him. Several of our friends in that position have distanced themselves from him. I am not going to address this incident further, but rather, I want to address the viral social media backlash and virtue signaling that came about from it. Everyone and their brother, whether related to or impacted by this specific situation or not, was quick to post some type of statement that they don’t stand for such behavior.

Here is My official statement—Ditto. And to bend the golfer Bobby Jones famous quote, I will also add don’t rob banks. I don’t mean to belittle the seriousness of such actions (possible crimes,) but my point is that if you need to make a statement on your Instagram page to reassure or convince people that you don’t really condone such behavior, then you have some issues to deal with in your own house instead of piling on somebody else’s sins.

A much better version of this PSA is the one where people use this alleged situation to educate and point out that the power structure and hierarchy in martial arts creates a situation conducive for such abuse to occur and can even attract certain predators for that reason. It is a very regrettable but very good and accurate point. One I don’t feel like elaborating on here. So, now that I have said what I don’t want this rant to be about, let me finally tell you what I want to focus on—using these incidents to create a slippery slope where practically everything that happens in martial arts training is abuse.

Who gets to define appropriate levels of contact? How do you determine what is “safe” training in a combat sport? I agree that unnecessary injuries should be avoided, and CTE is a real thing, but as they say, you can’t make an omelet without breaking some eggs. How do you learn how to block legitimate head shots without actually having someone trying to kick/punch you in head. Cooperative drills only go so far. How do you say you know how to fight if you have never been hit...and how hard? Is it abuse to hit someone harder than they feel is necessary, but they are naïve about the level of force they are going face?

I had one negative course eval because she witnessed me knock a petite young woman down---we were teaching how to intercept a haymaker. I exclaimed that feebly putting up your hands wouldn’t work it would result in getting run over. The girls equally petite partner was swinging an arm without any intent or body weight behind it...they thought they

were doing it right. I showed them it was wrong and then made it better. Was I being abusive to knock her down, or was I doing my job and preparing her? Opinions apparently vary.

What about body conditioning? We have laughed that some of our students—particularly females-- have been called into the counselor's office at school because of bruises on their arms and asked if everything was ok at home. Or wives have to wear long sleeves so people don't make assumptions about their husbands. But maybe it won't be a laughing matter when a counselor or physician determines it is abuse, no matter where it originated and gets the authorities involved. Does anyone think that is unthinkable in today's society?

Is it abuse to have a rape survivor, who says she wants to defend herself, have someone in her guard? I have had self-defense students exclaim, "you mean we have to lay on each other?" when introducing ground fighting. Yes, trauma is real and we need to be careful and considerate...but what if the training proved too much and the survivor changes her mind....was it abuse to try to help her through it when it turns out she wasn't ready?

Is it instruction or abuse? What about drilling until they puke? What about when we took eye of the tiger into the snow barefoot (not unlike many pioneers who trained all winter long in dochang with no heat in post war Korea). Can't take kids in the snow? What about in the rain? Conditions change significantly when you can't see well in a downpour, and your footing and grips are unstable. I get parents might not like a drowned rat getting back in their car, but it is a valid lesson. But what happens when a Karen is worried little Jimmy is going to catch a cold?

Similarly, a lot of combat sports are divided by weight classes, and tournaments are also usually split by rank or experience levels. That makes for more fair competition, but life and self-defense isn't fair. So, is it abuse to make someone spar someone much bigger in TKD or BJJ? Learning how to adapt to size differences, both bigger and smaller, different body types and differences in reach, etc., is an important skill set in the overall scheme of things. Certainly, we expect someone with a physical advantage to adjust the level of contact or intensity accordingly, when say, sparring a younger child. But what if they still play a little too rough in the opinion of lil Johnny's mother? A lower rank can learn a lot from getting destroyed by someone better than them, or they can have their feelings hurt (or both). If it isn't "fair", does that mean is it abuse?

What about corrective measures? We are supposed to have a culture of discipline and enforce rules. Here again, I have had instructors who found creative ways to "correct" behavior that would have DCS called today. Though the statute of limitations has run out (I think,) I won't share details, but one colleague in particular will tell you he is a much better person for "having the ADHD beat out of him." [his words, I can hear people getting offended as I write this]. While that might be a bit much, what about pushups? And there is kinesthetic correction—some people need physical feedback. One of my teachers had his hand broke with a stick because it was sticking out too far from behind his block...hit on purpose to prove the point. I was sometimes hit with a shinai (lightweight bamboo slits) to fix my technique. Now I hit with pool noodles. But when any type of corporal punishment is increasingly considered abuse, when will this type of instruction be viewed in the same vein?

Does it apply to mental abuse as well. Martial arts is about pushing through both physical and mental boundaries. We have our "eye of the tiger" class (similar to the concept of shugyo) that is designed to push our black belt candidates mental limits. Would some consider that mental abuse?

Is failing a test traumatizing? Or not being allowed to in the first place...other kids got to test, it isn't fair that my son is told he isn't good enough to test, even though he won't fix what we tell him, doesn't practice at home, or it just doesn't come as easily to him. Afterall, we don't want to hurt little Timmy's self-esteem.

And then there is our self-defense classes, where dealing with verbal assault is part of the programming, because evil people usually aren't very polite. Parents want us to prepare their teenagers for real world encounters, but don't want them exposed to real world threats. I had a college administrator basically tell me I should try to teach my students how to deal with being triggered without actually triggering them—which I suppose is kinda like learning how to swim without getting wet. To be sure, many people have had to deal with some really crappy things, and we should absolutely be considerate of those things the best we can. No matter how much we try to explain our rationale for adding this realism, and that it is for them to succeed in our objective, some people will still take offense.

This is part of a larger, disconcerting trend in today's society. As previously pointed out in a different rant, people increasingly view language as a form of violence that justifies a physical response. Hearing a viewpoint you disagree with is now considered triggering. These are terms widely associated with "abuse."

Perhaps I wasn't the most charitable in interpretation of the cited social media post; perhaps they were being specific about sexual predation. When does using your expertise to properly teach become using your authority to abuse? Who gets to decide where the line is? The "expert"?—I agree that sets us up too easily for abuse. Is violence or abuse,

like beauty, in the eye of the “beholder”? —I fear that sets us up for ungrounded accusations by naïve bystanders. What I really fear is that the slippery slope we seem to be on will water down the martial arts until they are harmless, and when they become harmless, they will also be useless.