

AKKA NEWSLETTER

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SOKE'S CORNER

BY: RAY FERRELL, NIDAI SOKE

As I write this, I am happy to say that I already see some positive changes taking place. What I would like to see for the upcoming year is a renewed commitment to the Art of Shorinji Torak-en Ryu that we all so cherish! We need this throughout the entire organization, but especially observed at Headquarters Dojo (hombu) in Charlotte, NC. Currently, a handful of people have made a tremendous effort to get the Kai back on track, and most of these individuals are located outside of Hombu. However, most of the active yudansha and a majority of the advanced kyu ranks are located within the hombu dojo in NC. We need these people to step up and take over the initiative. The effect of this concentration of students in one location can be significant. The initiative and creativity needs to be taken upon by each member who is truly committed to this Art and Organization. There also needs to be a renewed commitment to the training itself. This includes supporting the Kai during seminars where most of my own teachers, who have been training for 40-50 years each, are present and offering to share their vast amounts of knowledge. They will

not be around forever so take full advantage of the opportunity to learn from them while you still can. Summer Camp will be held this year at Catawba college from 6/5/09 – 6/7/09. We need to have as many people in attendance for this as possible, so I am personally asking everyone to plan on attending this event. Let's make 2009 a pivotal year in AKKA history and renew our commitment to the organization and to our own training.



Nidai Soke Ray Ferrell,
Kudan

BOOK REVIEW: “SECRETS” OF EFFECTIVE OFFENSE

BY: JEREMY HOLLOWAY

Soke Cherry, they stole your concepts!” I said to Soke Cherry after reading the book “*Secrets of Effective Offense*” by Marc MacYoung. I had recently sent Soke a copy to see what he thought of the book and to show how similar the concepts were to Shorinji Toraken Ryu. He replied “They’re not my ideas, (MacYoung) just figured out the same things I did”. After thinking about this, it really makes a lot of sense. The fact is: The truth is simply the truth; it is independent of “discoverers”, systems, or media attention. It has always been there waiting for us to figure it out. If we keep an open mind we just may be able to learn something.

A concept (or a system of concepts) is considered more valid if two or more people arrive at the same conclusion independently. As you read this book, look for similarities between our system and MacYoung’s ideas. Just as two languages can convey the same information,

MacYoung’s presentation of the material is a different approach to familiar concepts of the Shorinji Torakenryu system.

One of the best attributes of the book is that it is written in an informal manner which is pretty easy to follow. Although MacYoung talks about the idea of “fence”, which is sometimes confusing, once you understand what “fence” is, you should have no problem. MacYoung presents the concepts in a straight-forward writing style which is easy for the reader to understand. It is more like discussing martial arts with a friend than it is listening to a dry lecture. The book is thought stimulating and not boringly dry. He presents concepts in concise and easy to understand ways.

For example, he agrees that real self-defense (as we all know) is not full of fancy moves, but is based on simple effective techniques. As he states in his book, “You don’t hear too many people going

around talking about how great gravity works”. If something works, it just works; the truth is the truth. With his physical techniques MacYoung prefers balance disruption of an opponent over pain compliance. He sees it as a more effective way to neutralize an opponent’s aggression. He also teaches avoidance and awareness as the primary measures against a real attack (this should sound familiar).



Another concept I found interesting in the book is his concept striking. MacYoung states that if the strike is performed correctly it will feel different. Instead of getting

the feedback of the strike in your muscles, you will actually feel less. This is because your structure (through proper bone alignment) is channeling the energy from the strike instead of going into your muscles. Although it may feel as if you are not striking the target as hard, you are actually doing it more effectively, but not feeling the results of it.

In the book he gives numerous drills on how to improve your striking as well. The book is not just theory; he gives you numerous things to try and think about.

All in all, the book is an excellent read. I have read it twice and still refer to it occasionally. It is an excellent reference book and will stimulate your thinking about martial arts like no martial arts magazine can. I can guarantee you most will appreciate his straight-forward writing style and no-nonsense approach.

And besides, the book is selling on Amazon.com for under \$4.00, so you have no excuse not to buy it.



SOKE FERRELL PROMOTES AKKA IN EUROPE

BY: RAY FERRELL



I recently made another trip to Europe at the end of 2008. As most of you know I have been traveling to Europe now since 2001, making several trips a year since. This has all been in the attempt to propagate the Shorinji Toraken Ryu system into a recognizable and practiced Art around the world. To accomplish this goal, I have taught Seminars in Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Germany, and Belgium. In conjunction with my efforts, Shihan Zingg and I have taken a team to the World Kempo Championships each time since 2003. Our teams achieved outstanding results, given the size of our team was significantly smaller and less funded when compared to most of our competitor's teams. Shihan Zingg singlehandedly took the 2008 team to Portugal and performed extremely well. I have increased my efforts in the last 15 months, making a total of five trips to Europe in this time. During my last visit, AKKA achieved a huge milestone in making my vision a reality. AKKA now has its very first tested Dan rank in Europe.



Above: Dr. Feri (L) and Soke Ferrell (R)

Below: Soke Ferrell (L) awards Shodan to Dr. Feri (R)



Every trip to Europe I have spent time with Dr. Ferencz Toth, known to most as Feri. Feri was already an accomplished Martial Artist, and during this last trip I had the pleasure of testing him for 1st Degree Black Belt in Shorinji Toraken Ryu Kempo-Karate. He did very well and I was pleased with his knowledge of the Art and with the proficiency in which he demonstrated the techniques. Tamas Lengel, who is a leader in the Kempo circles of Hungary and responsible for the majority of my trips to Europe, will now begin to learn the Art as well and hopefully will be the next person to test for a Dan Rank. Dr. Feri will oversee the Art in Romania and Tamas will oversee the Art in Hungary. We also have a gentleman in Slovakia named Robert who is interested in learning the art as well. Please extend a warm welcome to the international additions to the AKKA family and may the future hold many more training experiences together with our international friends and family.



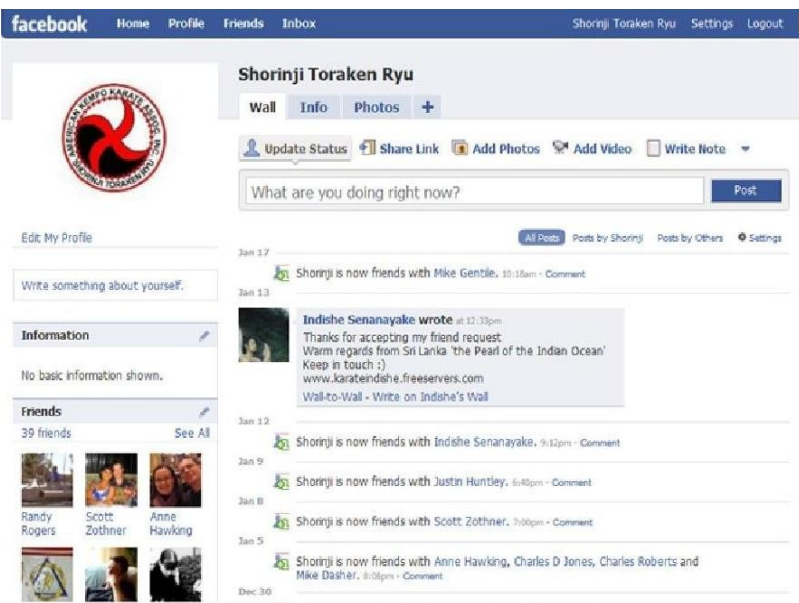
AKKA IN CYBERSPACE

AKKA has bridged the divide and is now perpetrating itself throughout cyberspace. This is all in a recent effort to utilize the benefits of the Internet to promote the Art of Shorinji Toraken Ryu.

In addition to the latest activity on the main website at www.TorakenRyu.com, AKKA has also spread to Facebook and Youtube.

AKKA's profile page on Facebook is **Shorinji Toraken Ryu** and there is also a group page called **American Kempo Karate Association**. Both are identifiable by the AKKA logo as the main picture.

The Youtube page is **AKKATorakenRyu**. AKKA is undertaking an endeavor to convert its massive VHS library to digital format, but this lengthy process might not yield significant results for another year or two. Therefore, we

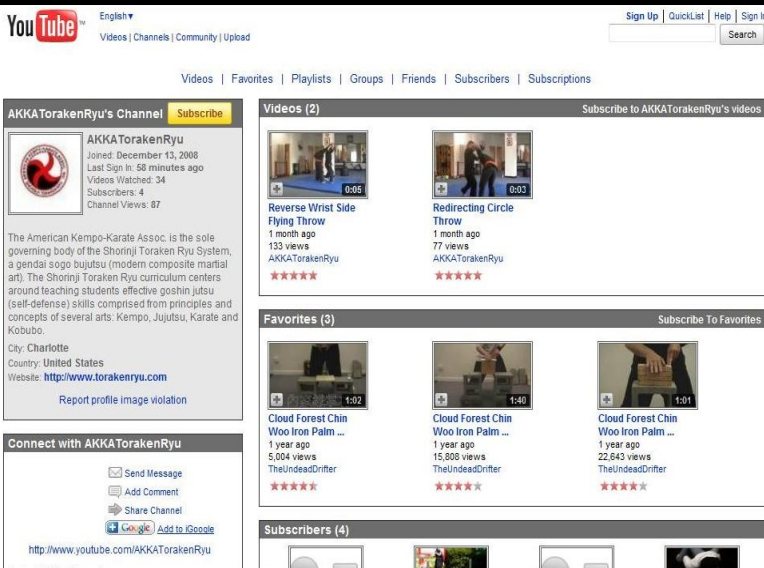


are currently in need of media and video contributions for these pages.

If you have a Facebook page or Youtube account, please send us a Friend Request, join the AKKA group on Facebook, or subscribe to our Youtube account. This is an ongoing endeavor so please check back and support AKKA on the Internet!

AKKA has also established a central email address at TorakenRyu@gmail.com. So if you have media, articles, pictures, or other relevant information please share it and submit it to:

TorakenRyu@gmail.com



YUDANSHA PROMOTIONS

Congratulations to Abigail Ruffle who earned her shodan on December 20, 2008. She said the test flew by and she doesn't really remember much of it, except for her match with Shihan Caldwell.

