

A MESSAGE FROM THE HEART,
by Sensei Bruce Perkins, Simcoe.

Dear Karateka,

I feel that I must take this opportunity to sit down and reflect on the impact of the loss of Sensei Peter Ciolfi to the Shintani Karate Federation.

Before you can even begin to imagine how much Sensei Ciolfi will be missed, you have to ask yourself what it was that made him so special. For those of us that were fortunate enough to have been able to spend some time on or off the floor with him there is no explanation required. It is for those who did not have this opportunity that I will try to explain why he was so special.

I could fill an entire page with words of praise that would all be accurate, but I think Sensei Tom Mattie said it best in his eulogy, "he was a Saint."

Sensei Ciolfi gave his time freely to anyone who asked. He took the time to share his knowledge and experience with white belts and black belts alike. During his competitive days he took the time after each match to tell his opponents how they could improve their fighting skills. He told them this in order to make them better and this in turn forced him to improve in order to remain the best. It was often heard to visualize this soft-spoken person with humble mannerisms turning into pure dynamic energy as he exploded toward his opponents, scoring at random.

During many of the executive meetings Sensei Ciolfi would sit there absorbing the conversation that was taking place and then when he spoke, he always found a unique way to find something good about a difficult situation. He had a way of making everything seem okay. He gave everyone around him a feeling of confidence, you just knew everything was going to work out.

If there is one person that reflects Sensei Shintani's teachings and what Wado Kai truly represents, humble strength and pure honesty, it is Sensei Peter Ciolfi.

My sympathies go out, not to those who knew Sensei Ciolfi, but to those who didn't know him. They will never know the importance of what they have missed.

To those who did know Sensei Ciolfi you can draw strength from your time spent with him, and hopefully this will help you to face the future both on and off the dojo floor with a little more confidence.

On behalf of all the students of the Shintani Karate Federation, I would like to thank you Sensei Ciolfi for everything you have given us.

May you rest in peace.

Respectfully,
Bruce Perkins.

HEARST WADO KAI KARATE CLUB
Hearst, Ontario

Marie-Pier Girard is a nine year old karateka. She has been involved with the sport of karate since the tender age of four. She enjoys karate and has benefited greatly from this discipline. Marie-Pier understands that there can be no success without effort. Karate has taught her to accept criticism and advice, without feeling depreciated and also to maintain a positive attitude. This has helped in forming her self-esteem.

Karate has become a way of life for Marie-Pier. She tries to apply it to all aspects of her life, be it at home, school, or in other sports. She is dynamic and doesn't lack courage. She likes to share her knowledge with others. She is in superb physical form. She loves physical activity. Marie-Pier practices many sports; in the wintertime she plays hockey and in the summer time she swims, plays baseball and soccer.

Marie-Pier chose the name: "No Catche" for our club's mascot. No Catche is a Japanese word meaning winner. She chose that specific name because she feels that the members of the club are all winners. She bases this belief on the fact that our club always offers a good performance at every competition it attends. Marie-Pier is proud to be a member of Hearst Wado Kai under the guidance of Sensei Roger Deschamps. Her ultimate goal is to one day have her black belt.

A STUDENT WITH A VISION,
THE FAMILY THAT KICKS TOGETHER, STICK TOGETHER.
By Mathieu Deschamps, 8 years old, for public speaking grade 3
Clayton Brown Public School.

Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls,

I was raised in a family of karate. My mom is a black belt and teaches me the technical part of karate, one of this big part are the kata which I enjoy very much. My Dad, the Hearst Wado Kai instructor teaches me the kumite (combat form) which I do really well in tournaments, you should see all my trophies. My sister is also in karate, while I was a white belt my sister was a yellow belt. Now with hard work and a lot of courage, I've managed to catch up to her and we are both orange belts. My next goal is to pass my brother Yannick, who is a blue belt. It is very possible because he goes to school out of town in Belleville. One day I'll be replacing my Dad because he is getting ver old. Ha! Ha!

KATA PRACTICE TIPS,
By Jeff Gervin, Brooks Alberta.

Performance and understanding of kata constitute a major component of any traditional martial art. Prior to the development of rules and etiquette for tournament fighting, kata served as a means of measuring a karateka's speed, power, technical ability and fighting prowess. Regrettably, emphasis on kumite and other contemporary "no rules" fighting events has caused kata to become secondary in importance in the minds of many karate practitioners. Many modern karateka have unfortunately abandoned serious study of kata all together. In Wado Kai, the student strives to perfect ten "core" kata that serve as a basis for learning the style. I hope that the following comments will assist the karateka in improving the quality of his or her kata.

- 1) Remember that a kata is a fight, not simply an exercise: the movements of the kata must be quick, powerful and decisive. It is not enough to merely learn the basic movements and shuffle through them at a grading or a tournament. Strive to imagine your opponents and the meaning of your blocking and attacking techniques. The kata will become easy to remember and rewarding to practice.
- 2) When learning an unfamiliar kata, perform the movements slowly and carefully until your technique is flowing and natural. This will require many repetitions. Speed is not desirable at this stage and will only hinder development of good technique. Once the kata has been memorized in proper sequence, speed and power should be increased to about half of your maximum output. Again, practice until fluency is second nature. Finally, execute the kata in sequence as quickly and powerfully as you can.
- 3) Practice familiar kata exactly as outlined above; proceed slowly at first and pick up the tempo until you are performing as if you were at a grading or tournament. If the techniques become too sloppy, slow down and correct yourself. In any case, end the workout with a slow rendition of the kata or katas practiced.
- 4) Learn proper kata sequence. The "sequence" of a kata refers to the way in which its movements are clustered together into meaningful blocking and countering units. Pauses and "gathering techniques" between sequences are usually emphasized. Long pauses at inappropriate moments during the kata must be avoided. If you are uncertain about kata sequence, ask your instructor.
- 5) Remember to breathe! Proper breathing is essential if technique is to appear graceful and rhythmic. Obviously, a good level of cardiovascular fitness assists in this department as well. Inhale through the nose and exhale through the mouth, if possible. I usually inhale while moving and exhale while blocking or striking. Take a complete breath at every pause during a long kata.
- 6) I encourage student to learn as many of the "supplementary" katas as possible. I believe that each kata was formulated to teach a certain lesson or fulfill a specific objective. Studying as many kata as possible in detail can only enhance one's development as a karateka. To study a kata superficially, however, is useful only as a physical exercise.

I hope that the preceding comments might assist the karateka in his or her development of kata expertise. Do not be misled by those who claim that the value of kata is purely aesthetic; I believe that kata practice develops much needed technical proficiency, speed, and endurance required for kumite. Martial artists who refute the study of kata as a training tool for kumite are probably not “pushing” themselves to practice their kata in the fluid, explosive manner of Wado Kai.

The fighting techniques of a master and his attitudes toward conflict in general are embodied in the kata practices in his style of karate. It is for exactly this reason that kata training is crucial; if we are to be called Wado Kai karateka, our techniques and spirit must reflect Sensei Shintani and Ohtsuka. Kata is a direct and vital link to these masters to be cherished and never forgotten.