

Region 7 Black Belt Camp 2004

Things weren't looking too good on Friday morning. It was dismal and raining. By mid-afternoon, there were tornado warnings out in neighboring Spartanburg. The Annual Golf Tournament was cancelled.

Around 5:00 p.m., students started arriving in Daniel Lounge at Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina to check in at the fifth Region 7 Black Belt Camp.

At 7:00 p.m., Sam Dan Joel Gilreath presented the rules and regulations for camp at Furman. Camp officially began with the bow-in ceremony. The visiting Masters were introduced. There was Master Strong from Region 6 and Masters Robinson and Mimidas from Region 8.

Master Dunn picked the team leaders, E Dan Ann Bowers, Sam Dan Daniel Leon and E Dan Eric King. The team members were then assigned to each team leader and the competition began. Each team had to come up with a team name and a slogan. They were as follows: Ms. Bowers rolled along with "The Wave," Mr. Leon had the "War Lords," and Mr. King led the "Mighty Ducks." The War Lords were the younger of the camp attendees.

Mr. Gilreath did an excellent job in leading a discussion on "What it means to be a Black Belt." In a concurrent session, the Chief Instructors were learning how to develop a business plan with E Dan Harry King.

On Saturday morning, everyone dressed in camp t-shirt and Do Bak pants, lined up in the dayroom for Ki Kong training. Sam Dan Jim Mars and Cho Dan Bo Mary Mars taught together. Mrs. Mars explained while Mr. Mars demonstrated and counted. After warm-ups, Ki Kong and longevity exercises, all teams lined up in the court yard and sounded off their team names and logos. The War Lords won the right to lineup first for breakfast. (Throughout camp, each team marched to the cafeteria in the order assigned by Master Dunn.)

After breakfast, there was little time to waste. The team leaders went with Mr. Mars to become familiar with the rooms each team was to use for the next 3 training sessions. Team 2 and 3 worked with Mr. Gilreath in the dance studio practicing hand defense and with Mr. Leon who taught the competition bong form, Bong Moo Mihn. After the two sessions were over, Teams 2 and 3 swapped with team 1 in the student activity center where they had studied Kuboton and gun defense. It was a long hike between buildings and the teams had to hustle. It sure did help to march to the cadence of E Dan Charles Dunn. In the student activity center, Sam Dan Wilson Smith taught gun self-defense and E Dan Bill Jones taught advanced Tonfa skills.

The teams reassembled at the court yard and sang the Association anthem for the rights to line up first for lunch.

After lunch, everyone lined up in the court yard in full Do Bak and marched to the water fountain for pictures. It was hot as the sun decided to shine after a full day of rain on Friday. After pictures, everyone marched back to the dance studio where Master Strong taught expanded one-steps, Master Robinson taught street self-defense, Master Mimidas taught Jung Bong defense and Master Dunn taught a sword form to the teams. Everyone enjoyed working with the visiting masters and experiencing the different ways they taught the same stuff you do all the time.

After training, it was back to the dorm where the teams changed into street clothes before marching to dinner. After dinner the teams reassembled to play volleyball. All teams played each other. "The Wave" won bragging rights for the next year. The "Mighty Ducks" came in second and the "War Lords" came in third. From there, the teams hurried to change back into Do Bak for the evening activities.

After assembling back in the day room, all Sam Dans went with Master Strong to the court yard to train and the rest of the camp stayed with Master Robinson. Master Robinson conducted floor work...his way! The room was small, and it was packed. We could only do 2-3 steps in either direction. After he instructed 2-3 hand techniques, everyone was down to do 15 pushups, then up...smiling, for more techniques. For each set up pushups, the class was instructed to do different types of pushups, 3-finger, back of the hand, etc. Then it was on to kicks. After 2-3 kick techniques, it was down for 40 sit ups. Each time we did sit ups, it was a different kind...feet on the floor, feet in the air, crunches, etc. He was a great instructor. At the end of the training, everyone was wiped out, and sweating like dogs! He asked for different strength training techniques he could take back to his school. Several students offered something special that they practiced in their Do Jang.

It was then time to assemble on the court yard with Mr. King for static knife techniques for those students 17 years and older. He taught how to escape a knife attacker who had you up against the wall with the knife to your throat to or held close to your throat. He demonstrated how you could hold off a large attacker with basically three fingers and a locked arm position.

Everyone then changed back into street clothes for a pizza party. During the pizza party, students asked the Masters questions. At first the questions were slow, but then they started to flow and the session ran over the allotted time. We really got a feel for each visiting Master and what kind of person they are. They said their goodbyes as they would be leaving very early the next morning.

Sunday morning started early, as did Saturday. Then everyone assembled in the parking lot for a shortened version of Ki Kong training. Master Dunn treated everyone to the sound of the Region 7 drum as they performed the upper forms to the beat. It is a good way to teach focus and concentration. After a short lesson on marching by Mr. Charles

Dunn, the group marched to the dinning hall for breakfast. After breakfast, the group had a little breathing room to pack, cleanup and reassemble in the dayroom for check out and graduation.

Everyone received a certificate for participating. Master Dunn commented on how the visiting Masters were very impressed with the respect shown to them, the organization and leadership at our camp. Everyone said their goodbyes until next year and headed home.

E Dan Ann Bowers
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