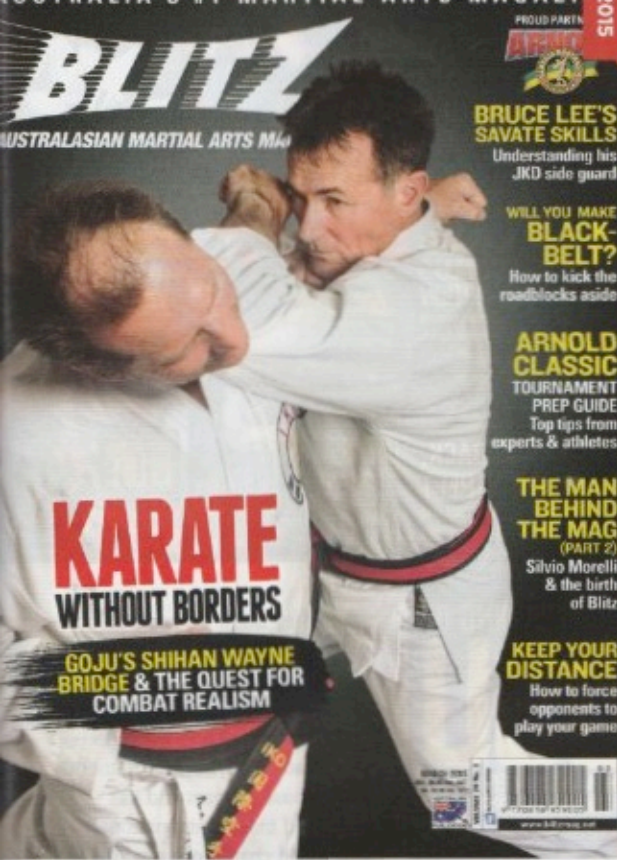


FEATURE STORY

30 YEARS & KICKING

PART 3 A LOOK BACK ON 30 YEARS OF *BLITZ*



KARATE WITHOUT BORDERS
 GOJU'S SHIHAN WAYNE BRIDGE & THE QUEST FOR COMBAT REALISM

PROUD PARTNER
2015
BRUCE LEE'S SAVATE SKILLS
 Understanding his JKD side guard
WILL YOU MAKE BLACK-BELT?
 How to kick the roadblocks aside
ARNOLD CLASSIC TOURNAMENT PREP GUIDE
 Top tips from experts & athletes
THE MAN BEHIND THE MAG (PART 2)
 Silvio Morelli & the birth of Blitz
KEEP YOUR DISTANCE
 How to force opponents to play your game



HOLDING COURT
 KYOKUSHIN KARATE MASTER & BARRISTER TREVOR TOCKAR

This way, those art forms will survive and thrive.

2015
29#3 - WAYNE BRIDGE, 8TH DAN KYOSHI, GOJU-RYU KARATE

Even before the 1990s, and since my start in martial arts in 1970, I'm sure that every martial artist has asked, and continues to ask, the same old question: "Will this really work?"

Since my beginning in karate, it's been about studying the basics and solidifying it into a style, which can be driven in three directions, by the style and by the instructor:

- The art/kata (forms)
- Sport karate/competition
- Self-defence/reality

So, which direction do most instructors follow? Or do they teach all components?

For me and my close colleagues, we were always questioning technique and wondering if it would 'fit' any situation, so that was the major direction to follow throughout my journey. After studying Japanese karate, kung fu,

boxing, Thai boxing principles, kickboxing and venturing into Brazilian jiu-jitsu to round it off, I kept asking the same question: will this work in most situations? I still follow that same principle...even more so now.

Overall, I think most traditional martial arts styles are struggling to maintain their tradition and lineage values in competing with the new trend of cage fighting, where wrestling is now a need-to-do thing in cross-training. A lot of the younger generation may grow up with a traditional style and then venture toward the latest trend — some will stay with their traditional art, but I believe very few.

Another consideration is the 'global information factor' and the military influence on self-defence styles infiltrating into the traditional styles. I believe martial arts have become just like the fitness industry: it's all falling into a cross-training category. I think this has affected traditional styles to a point...for the individual it depends on their needs and wants from their training.

I come back to the question, what is the instructor's direction

in teaching his or her art? Is it the 'art' side, the sport or self-defence? I think a good instructor can teach all of the above and cater to the students' desires, or otherwise direct them toward their chosen journey.

In closing, my journey now concentrates on focus and intent. I think the military styles have brought me back to this old area of focus, which may only be revisiting the original lessons of protecting oneself, which combat is all about.

'One good, focused strike, well practised with intent' can serve most situations.

29#11 - TREVOR TOCKAR, 6TH DAN SHIHAN, KYOKUSHIN KARATE

Since I came to Australia in 2001, a lot has changed, and nothing has changed.

The basic philosophy and culture of Kyokushin karate remain the same, and the principles espoused by Sosai Mas Oyama remain intact. Hard training, strong spirit, real fighting and good attitude remain the focus. The changes that have occurred simply reflect natural

progression and development, with greater understanding of optimum training techniques for increased speed, power and stamina.

With all the challenges that we encounter in the modern world, the more I understand and appreciate the core values of Kyokushin karate. Unfortunately, however, it has also become apparent to me that there are some people who have sacrificed these values on the altar of their own egos and who simply pay lip service to these principles. I think that it is this problem that has caused so many splinter groups to have emerged, with their own self-appointed leaders. This dilutes the potency and legitimacy of the art. I understand that this is a problem that is being experienced by all of the major styles of karate.

Compared to 30 years ago, I believe that the martial arts scene is much more of a commercial enterprise. In the early days, the student pursued the teacher. Today, it appears to me that it is often the teacher who pursues the student.

There have, however, been many positive developments, and the rise of Eastern Europe and Russia as martial arts powerhouses has certainly raised the bar at tournament level. As far as Kyokushin karate is concerned, I can say that the International Karate Organisation Kyokushinkaikan under Kancho Shokei Matsui has



certainly grown from strength to strength and is a bigger and more organised body than it was in the 'old days'.

It is my firm belief that karate has so much to offer at so many different levels that it will always remain relevant and popular.

2016

30#3 – STEVE HARDY, 4TH DAN KYOKUSHIN KARATE

I have been training and teaching Kyokushin karate for over 40 years, and over that time I have realised the positive impacts that Kyokushin karate has on an individual. I've seen children growing into adults and observed how their martial arts training has positively assisted in their lives, their health, their achievements in the work place and their self-esteem. It has confirmed for me that the philosophies of Kyokushin karate — that is, learning the qualities of self-discipline, perseverance, self-respect and respect for others — are the cornerstones that equip you for life. In today's era, these qualities are more necessary than ever.

Kyokushin karate adheres to a strict moral code and training principles, and its reputation as a realistic and disciplined martial arts system has kept quite a good profile over the years. Around 30 years ago, Kyokushin karate was one of the only full-contact styles available. I understand that the choice that people have of different martial arts styles now makes it a more competitive market place.

In some cases, people are looking for a quicker result, and the fact that many martial arts gyms offer more than one style encourages the student to cross over and train in more than one discipline.

Marketing strategies play more of a role in capturing potential students, so one can only hope that the credentials of martial arts schools can match their marketing savvy. You will always find that some instructors will follow the trends in what is popular in order to keep the students coming in the door, but there are still many defying the trends and teaching good quality martial arts.

30#5 – JIM CASEY, 7TH DAN KANCHO, KENSHINKAN KARATE

Since first appearing on the front cover of *Blitz* mag back in 2000, Kenshinkan International Karate has grown to be respected throughout Australia. The foundation and philosophy of Kenshinkan remains very much the same as it was back then, being derived from traditional Kyokushin budo-karate. I have been blessed to have had a long career in the martial arts, starting way back in 1970 as a student and instructor under Sensei Frank Everett, who was at that time Queensland Branch Chief for Kyokushin Karate for many years.

Kenshinkan karate is a practical form of self-defence, emphasising (at initial stages) kicks, punches, blocks, kata and body movement. It is an intense physical activity, which benefits all students through mental conditioning. Our style instills and develops a strong spirit through the hard training, conditioning and fighting that students undertake; it teaches students to keep going even

when they think they can do no more — this is *osu*, the spirit of perseverance.

Kenshinkan has a strong team that has competed in the NAS (National All Styles) tournaments for the past 23 years and has produced many state, national and world champions over the years. Our dojo also has a strong family base of young students. I have found over the years that the younger generation is becoming more unhealthy and lazy due to a lack of interest in sport — many would rather sit at home and play games with their smartphones or spend their time on social media. That seems to take up much of their time and affects their capacity to make a commitment to the martial arts...but martial arts teach children discipline and direction in life while they are also getting fit and having a lot of fun. We run a special class for those kids who have learning difficulties; our family gets great pleasure and satisfaction from seeing these boys and girls gain confidence, courage and strength, and learn to stand up to bullies.

At 64 years of age and having taught martial arts for the past 47 years, I would like to think I have matured as a person, instructor and father, and gained insight through my martial art teachings. As Sosai Mas Oyama said, the martial way begins and ends with courtesy, therefore be properly and genuinely courteous at all times. ■