

Getting his kicks out of karate

By STEPHEN FROST
Herald Staff Writer

When was the last time you did pushups on your knuckles or had a karate instructor dance on your stomach while you attempted to do leg raises? It's been three years since I subjected my rather frail body to the rigors of a karate class, and if it had not been for a rather insistent sports editor it would have been a longer time still.

The last time I worked out was at the old Kal-Shin club that was located on Armstrong Ave. The head Sensi (instructor) was Glenwright Hillock whose unorthodox style and furious workouts were a tough act to follow. In those days I was in moderately good shape; that is to say I could kick, punch and block with the best of guys and gals in the class and still manage to quaff a brew or two later.

After having been away for a year it was pleasant surprise to that karate was still alive and well in Georgetown and being run under the auspices of the recreation department. Kent Robinson, brown belt and black belt Angelo Egizii do the instructing.

Thursday at seven o'clock I dutifully presented myself at the Gordon Alcott arena for what I had hoped was going to be a relatively easy work out.

LARGE NUMBER OF GIRLS

One of the things I noticed was the large number of girls in the class. Not only were there a large number (half the class) but they all seemed to be in very good shape and serious about the instruction.

In my experience only a small number of women were ever interested in karate, and of those very few were in good enough shape physically to last through a strenuous workout. All of these girls, most of them high school students, were in excellent shape.

Two of the girls I talked to, sisters Maureen and Rosemary Gale, were involved not only in karate, but were



Lynn Cartwright demonstrates a front side kick for a flinching photographer while the rest of the class works out in Alcott Arena.

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The black belt, Angelo, was very understanding after I had explained my presence and allowed me to leave the floor to take pictures; something that isn't normally done.

Karate in Georgetown is fairly good, Angelo feels, even though most of the people participating have very little experience. But of the people that do attend the workouts regularly, most have a good attitude.

When asked about grading for belts Angelo said, "It's far better to stress a good attitude than to stress a high degree of proficiency. If a member of the club has a good attitude and has trouble with his kicks he may still get his belt. If a student is great in the areas needed to obtain the next belt but has a poor attitude towards working out, and karate in general, then he may be held up."

One thing he liked about karate being looked after by the



Noell Jefferson, left, defends herself with a front snap kick against Rosemary Gale trying to attack.

recreation department is the cost. The students pay \$35.00 for ten weeks instruction with classes being held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7 to 8:30 p.m. As far as I know that is the cheapest karate around.

Most women traditionally take karate to protect themselves from overly aggressive males and from assault by would be assailants. I assumed that this would probably be the case with these young ladies. This wasn't the case.

Angelo feels mental attitude after you get a belt is also very important. It is a sign of maturity if the newly graded student doesn't feel that his new belt puts him above other belts lower than him.

"What I remember most about receiving my black belt," he said "was that finally I was on my own. Once you receive your black belt your duties become more those of an instructor rather than those of a student, although black belts are also able to train for a higher degree of black, second Dan, third Dan, and so on.

One of Angelo's interests lies in the area of diet. He himself is a good vegetarian and feels this helps him as far as his mental attitude goes.

The way I felt after this workout, I will be a long-time student before I become an instructor.



A front kick to the stomach is an ideal way to keep assailants at bay. Demonstrating is black belt Angelo Egizii, right, to Ron Wodhams.

on the high school basket ball team and track team, played badminton on Wednesdays and went jogging each day.

Noell Jefferson also participates in many sports, her favorite is swimming.

Most of the girls weren't concerned about self-defense aspects of karate, but instead were there to keep the winter blaws away and stay in shape for summer sports. Obviously these girls were in better shape than your average disco queen.

Dave Joachim, a green belt instructor, gave the class their warmup calisthenics which consists of varied exercises, not the least of which are pushups on your knuckles. The girls don't have to do the pushups on their knuckles the way the boys do, as the tendency is to shy away from women with hands that look as though they could break boards like matchsticks. They are required, however to try the pushups on their finger tips and backs of their wrists.

At the end of 45 minutes we were deemed sufficiently loose enough to begin the basic kicks and punches. Not only was I loose but totally exhausted.

After attempting some new punches I thought it was about time I retired to take a few pictures, all the while hoping our sports editor had given me a roll of film with plenty of exposures on it. He had.

For the next half hour I took pictures of the more ambitious men and women snapping kicks and throwing punches; occasionally trying a few kicks myself. It's amazing just how bad your balance deteriorates after a long layoff.

Terry Campbell, who has a green belt and worked out at the old club, told me that after a layoff he finds it only takes about a month to get back in shape. He must know what he's talking about as recently he came in second at a Shi-Ai (tournament) in Toronto.

Also working out at the arena is Lynn Cartwright. She is a brown belt and often helps with teaching and you can bet it's a true pleasure to have her beat you.

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