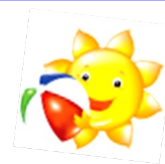




ZenQuest Martial Arts Center

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An Okinawa Karatedo Association, Demian Mata Jiu-jitsu Network and Siyodtong Boston Affiliate

NEWSLETTER August 2022



Riding the Bike

Studying a martial art involves learning a lot of physical movements and strategies. We learn stances and footwork, defensive movements, and attacking strategies...and how to coordinate those things together in a way that makes sense and functions properly. With hard work over time we can master these movements and become a living vessel of our chosen art.

There are actually a few steps involved in learning the techniques in a martial art. The first is to define what the movement is and how to do it. Usually, an instructor will demonstrate the move and explain it in detail. Some people will learn more visually or by watching the movement. Others learn more by auditory or by listening. Sometimes instructors will actually physically move the student's arms or legs through the technique. This is especially helpful in cases where there is a language barrier or the student is impaired in some way.

Once we're able to duplicate a movement we typically must use our conscious mind to execute the move and "think our way through it." We must be careful to remember the different parts of the strategy and execute them in the correct order. Our movements are driven by the thinking part of our brain.

The next step in learning a move is to build muscle memory in the technique. We do this by executing the movement based on our knowledge of it with the 'motor brain.' This is the part of the brain that controls our muscles without really thinking about it...the part that learns to ride a bike. During this time we start to feel comfortable with the move and that we're starting to get it.

Before long we can simply execute the movement well based on 'muscle memory' or our motor-brain's familiarity with it. This is the last step in mastering a certain strategy in our art. The move will become something we can execute on instinct without thought. We should continue to monitor the technical aspects of the move but focus more on maximizing things like timing, rhythm, flow, optimizing speed and power, distancing, and application. This is, of course, important in real world application where we would not usually have the time to think our way through an application.

As we gain more experience in this we will usually get better at learning, and be able to pick things up faster. We may be able to get to a point where we skip over a step or two and simply learn a new move or make adjustments to what we already know on the fly. We can permanently



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Schedule Adjustments

Like many other businesses ZenQuest was forced to close completely for four months in the early stages of the pandemic. We did our best to provide some online classes and support videos and, thankfully, many students continued to support the gym during that time. In July of 2020 we reopened for in-person classes with modified classes and several safety precautions in place to keep our students safe. As the situation slowly improved we've gradually loosened our safety measures and returned to more of our pre-pandemic practices.

Now, with COVID metrics trending down and more minor strains dominating new cases we will be making some adjustments to our class schedule soon. These will include the following:

- ◆ Adult classes will be one hour in duration. This includes all Adult Karate, Muay Thai and Jiu-jitsu classes. Monday evening Strength & Conditioning will remain at a 45 minute duration.
- ◆ The time between classes will generally be reduced to 15 minutes. This is due to further reduction in sanitizing the rooms between classes.
- ◆ A 'Tigers' children's Karate class will be added on Mondays at 4:15 PM. This is to accommodate the current demand for that group.
- ◆ A 'LEJJ' or Law Enforcement Jiu-jitsu class will be added on Fridays at 9:15 AM. This is to accommodate the expansion of that program and offer another alternative for those students.

Our children's classes will remain at a 45 minute duration for now. This is based on the proven success of this class length and consideration of relative attention spans of children in the modern era.

These adjustments will take effect when classes resume after the Labor Day holiday on Tuesday, September 6th. New class schedules will be available on Thursday, September 1st. For any questions or changes in students' classes, please contact us.

Staying Cool

In recent years the heating and cooling systems at ZenQuest have required a lot of repair. With no less than three aging systems in the building, it's been a struggle to keep them functioning properly so that students can train in a comfortable environment. The pandemic also complicated things, resulting in a situation where only one of the air conditioning systems was working.

In March of this year we began reaching out to HVAC contractors to have the system on the east side of the building completely replaced. After delays due to supply chain and labor force issues we are happy to report that a new system has finally been installed. This will greatly improve the cooling in the reception area and men's locker room, and relieve the stress on the system on the other side of the building.

We also recently installed a window unit in the front training room and covered some of the windows to cut down on solar heating. These steps should result in a more enjoyable climate throughout the facility.

We are also still perusing the permitting required for expansion of the back training room. The plans for the work have already been completed and we will begin work as soon as the permits are secured. Once that is in place the actual work should only take days to complete.

Essentially, the space between training rooms that was our fitness room pre-pandemic will become part of the room primarily used for Jiu-jitsu and Thai Kickboxing classes. This is because of the fact that the fitness room was historically under utilized and the growing need for additional training space.

The work will be done in a way that does not disrupt the class schedule at all. Based on the timing of the permits the project will likely be completed some time in September.



IMPORTANT DATES



Thursday, August 11: No pm Muay Thai or Jiu-Jitsu Classes

Friday, August 12: No am Jiu-jitsu Class

Professor Demian Maia Seminar:

August 13, 11:00a - 2:00p

(NO regular classes after 10:00am)

Kru Mark Dellegrotte in September

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Bryan Betters 8/1

Jake Coan 8/4

Aiden Moraes 8/6

Neil Von Flatern 8/7

Alexander Bock 8/8

Elias Casey 8/9

Iris Davis 8/9

Beckett Lyon 8/9

Tom Jacoby 8/11

James McPartlin 8/11

Michael Reis 8/12

Matthew Farnham 8/13

Simeon Joffe 8/14

Phoebe Porter 8/15

Tyler Woodbury 8/16

Ozryell Scipio 8/16

Matthew Flynn 8/18

Derek Roberts 8/22

Ryan Johansen 8/23

Glenn Giumarra 8/24

Miriam Gluck 8/24

Amber Nivelu-Huerta 8/25

Mercedes Howell 8/28

Nathan McCarthy 8/31

Karl Beauchaine 8/26

Sebastian Chavez-Norbury 8/26

Layla Valenzuela 8/21

Marcello Gallo 8/28

Jaxson Granger 8/30

NEW STUDENTS!

Welcome: Jonas Guttierrez, Michael Rynn, Simeon Joffe, Eowyn Pergola, Simon St. John, Joel Ospina Cruz, Jacob Barbour, John Mazzeo, Bryan Betters, Bradley Wheat, Kyle Dube, James Losaw, Anthony Lizotte & Cheryl Callahan

Welcome Back: Katie Soules, Isaac Cornellier, Mercedes Howell, Joe Pellegrino, Jeff Bradford

RECENT PROMOTIONS

TIGERS:

7kyu - Holden Keiper

DRAGONS:

4kyu - Enzo Dort, Nico Dort, Jordyn Simmons

9kyu - Jonah Frank

COBRAS:

1kyu - Arianna Noyes

4kyu - Devyn Fillio

UECHI:

4kyu - Susan Doerr, Zachary Kmetz, Michael Siktberg, Audrey Chagnon

5kyu - Ruby Littman

PYTHONS:

1 stripe yellow/white - Ayden Jezak

2 stripe white - Antonio Carlino

1 stripe white - Easton Tatro, Hayden Haecker

JIU-JITSU:

4 stripe white - Marcus Drake, Jackson Reis

3 stripe white - Jemimah Levi, Tom Hedges

2 stripe white - Luke Pires

1 stripe white - Will Ezell

MUAY THAI:

Blue - Sadie Giumarra

Terminology

Memorize

Japanese: Anki Suru

Brazilian: Memorizar

Thai: Sutzam

**“Best Martial Arts Academy”
ZenQuest Martial Arts**



*Berkshire Eagle's
Readers Choice Awards
FIVE YEARS
RUNNING!*



LEJJ Report

The second session of ZenQuest's 'Law Enforcement Jiu-jitsu' training is underway. The new LEJJ cohort began on Monday, July 25, with about 25 enthusiastic participants on board, including 8 new officers from the Pittsfield PD.

The program focuses on minimizing risks for officers and the people they deal with in the physical interactions required of law enforcement officers. Strategies in LEJJ are primarily based on the principles and techniques of Brazilian Jiu-jitsu, but also incorporates defensive and control tactics from other martial arts.

LEJJ training has already proven itself to help officers perform their duties safely. This is based on data and feedback from the Pittsfield Police Department, where the bulk of LEJJ participants are employed. The training has also shown to improve things like officer stress levels and confidence, improving their overall health and well being. Ultimately, this also leads to better service for the community. Programs like LEJJ have consistently shown to be beneficial around the country.

A program like LEJJ had been on the drawing board at ZenQuest for some time. What made it possible was a shift in thinking about how this affects officer interactions in the line of duty. Now that there is proof and positive data nationally that shows that this kind of training works, agencies are making it easier for these programs to happen. Liability insurance companies are now even partially funding these programs.

With the expansion of the LEJJ program, ZenQuest will soon add another LEJJ class on Friday mornings at 9:15 AM. This will help accommodate the officers' busy schedules and provide them with additional training when possible.

Thanks to all of the participating officers and supporting students for helping to make LEJJ a success. Special thanks to Chief Mike Wynn for his support in the continued development of the LEJJ program at ZenQuest.



(Continued from page 1) **Riding the Bike**

change something quickly without a lot of thought or processing time.

Some arts have ways to help this 'muscle memory' learning process along. For example, in arts like Uechi-Ryu Karate the student is taught to coordinate their breathing with the movements they're learning. Since breathing can be voluntary and involuntary (with thought and without), the student will make stronger connections between the thinking part of their brain and the bicycle riding part.

Sparring and sparring drills are also an essential part of learning to execute our movements instinctively and without thought. When sparring or rolling we need to train ourselves to be in the moment and completely clear our minds. We should shoot for total immersion, and act and react quickly based on our training. Eventually this will enable us to execute technical strategies without any thought or hesitation as opportunities for them happen.

Over time, the instructor may provide more details on a move the student is familiar with to refine the technique further. When this happens, we need let go of any negative feelings of going backwards in our training and simply make the adjustments. In truth, these are opportunities to make our art more perfect. We should listen carefully to all of the information the instructor provides based on their own years of training and experience.

As we accumulate strategies and experience in our art, we will get better at learning. We will learn new techniques and make adjustments to known ones quicker. We may get to a point where we can see something once or twice and just have it.

Eventually we will master our chosen art and become a living vessel of all of the principles and strategies in it. We will know the basic applications of each and have an intuitive sense of making it all work in real time. As in bike riding, our bodies will be ready for unexpected twists from moment to moment while enjoying the highest levels of the activity.

A photograph of Demian Maia, a professional MMA fighter, wearing a white gi. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a serious expression. The gi has a black and white logo on the chest and patches on the shoulders. He is holding a black and red object, possibly a piece of equipment, in front of him.

Demian
MAIA

Saturday

August 13

11 AM to 2 PM

\$130

**\$120 Preregistration
until August 11**

ZenQuest Martial Arts

Lenox, Massachusetts

413-637-0656

zenquestmac.com

