



NEWSLETTER #59

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Amendment to the IKCA Bylaws Passes with Ease

The Amendment to award a Degree in Black Belt to those who earn Certified Instructor Status was passed almost unanimously, with only one dissenting vote, and that's exactly why we designed the IKCA Bylaws the way we did. So that everyone would have a voice in what happens in their Association.

This was the first Amendment put to a vote by the IKCA Members in years, and the first to pass in an even greater number of years. In fact it's only the second Amendment to pass in the history of the IKCA. Which kind'a tells you that the Bylaws must have been pretty well written in the first place. At least that was our intention.

In planning and writing the IKCA Bylaws, we made every effort to predict any contingency that could conceivably arise in the future and we had the great fortune of witnessing our mentor make all of the classic business and organizational mistakes, plus several that were specific to a Karate Association alone, so we had advanced knowledge of what we needed to include and what we needed to avoid.

One of the things Mister Parker lacked in was his planning was a chain of command and the orderly passing of that command into the future, both near and forever. His lack of it is what fractionalized Kenpo and forced it to stagnate, and limp along without clear direction, let alone competent leadership, which it has done ever since his passing. It broke the organization's back and left it splintered and in pieces with each piece just a fraction of the original and going off in a direction of its own with no destination in mind

but with a dogmatic determination to change nothing, add nothing, delete nothing or improve anything, just keep on doing everything the same as they always had. Why anyone would think that Mr. Parker would have done that is unclear to us. But with the leadership gone one could only suppose that they felt they had no other choice.

Karate Connection Kenpo will ultimately emerge as the clear leader in Kenpo because of the Bylaws that were written at the beginning, which were designed to ensure that it would self-perpetuate, and the people we have coming up within the organization that are dedicated to that perpetuation.

One of the International Kenpo Karate Association's (IKKA) rules, which Mister Parker created, was that no one could promote any closer to their rank than two degrees. It would seem this was his way of guaranteeing his dominance and control. It also guaranteed that the system would fall apart and vegetate upon his death. Which it did. What a shame! Thank you, Mister Parker, for making the path of our journey so much easier.

Now please don't misunderstand, Ed Parker was not prone to making mistakes. On the contrary, he did a fantastic job of creating an Association and running it, but because he had absolutely no previous experience in how to do it or even in seeing how anyone else ran theirs, or what errors to avoid, naturally mistakes were bound to be made. Plus, you've got to remember that during the creating of his Association he had taken on numerous other responsibilities, like creating and refining the system and teaching it, and writing and publishing several books on the subject, while creating and running the biggest karate Tournament in the world, while managing and feeding his five kids and planning for their college educations and at the same time being a mentor to his flock of students plus being a father and husband.

Unfortunately, he needed a thirty-hour day and a nine-day week to get it all done and that just didn't happen. But I must say that I personally have never known another man who took on so much and did it so well. At least up to a point, because we all have our limits and when you exceed that limit things are bound to happen, which is another thing I learned from Mr. Parker. Never take on more than you can handle. Unfortunately,

sometimes you don't realize you can't handle it until things are falling apart, and then it's too late. A little bit of planning is a lot easier than a whole load of repairing.

Then there's luck. The Karate Connection was indeed fortunate because when we decided to do what we did the technology was ready for us, and we were ready for it. Had video been available when Ed Parker was starting out, he would have put his system on that fabulous medium, like we did, and it would have been preserved forever. But even then, mistakes could easily have been made. If he had done it too soon it might have been done haphazardly, and in too much of a hurry, trying to be to be first to capture the market.

When Vic and I put our system on video, there were plenty of people with videos already on the market but we wanted ours to stand out and be exceptional, so we spent two years in preparation before we shot our first frame of video. For two years we culled through everything we had ever been taught by Mister Parker and everything we had stolen along the way by way of observation of other people's styles and systems, so that by the time we let the camera roll we had put together a comprehensive and complete stand-up fighting system that included every Kenpo Basic, every Kenpo Concept and every Kenpo Principle necessary. We included everything of value, but left out the weak and the redundant. We also had the good fortune of having been in the art for thirty years for me and over twenty for Vic, so we had a substantial background from which to draw and it's that two years of preparation that has allowed the system to endure and it's the video correspondence with our students that has allowed them to stay current with the small modifications that have taken place over the past nineteen years that it's been in existence, no major changes, just a few small adjustments.

WHY THE AMENDMENT PASSED

There were so many points in favor of the idea, it's a wonder that it wasn't suggested a lot earlier. Number one, which anyone who has certified will attest to is the fact that it has, without a doubt, made him or her a far better martial artist with a greater understanding of everything from the basics to the finer points of the techniques, to the free-flowing follow-ups, to freestyle fighting, to the needs and functions of the Master Form and finally the increased ability to break things down for better understanding and

comprehension for their students and for themselves as well. And now there's the added incentive of receiving another degree on their Black Belt, as it should be and should have been all along.



TEACHING ***is the*** ***Ultimate Learning Experience***

I remember in the early days what a privilege I considered it to be asked to teach. It was the high point of my early martial arts career. It was more important to me than receiving my Black Belt. I worked for my belt but intuitively knew that in time, with hard work and dedication, my time would come as it would for everyone who was willing to do the work, but being up there in front of the class was something that in the very early days was unthinkable. When I began the art, Ed Parker was the only person who stood in front of the advanced class. Then one night he was called off the mats and he appointed Rich Montgomery to carry on until his return. I remember thinking, "Wow, what an honor", and in time Rich began taking over more and more in Mr. Parker's absence. Then one night Rich was called off the mats and I just happened to be the most senior person there after him, so I was called upon. I can't tell you what a feeling that was. I couldn't even remember the twenty-four mile drive home. I couldn't even think about anything else for a week. I had been up there in front of that class. I thought it would probably never happen again where I was the most senior person there, but it happened that night, and all was well with the world.

But in time it began happening more and more. If Rich wasn't there, oftentimes I would be called upon to conduct the class in Mr. Parker's absence, even though I might not be the most senior member of the class. I can only suppose that with my Marine Corps experience of calling close order drill, my voice had a persona and command that impressed Mr. Parker.

Then came the break-up of 1961 when the senior belts of the school were lured away by another instructor. When I was the only one from that group to stay, Mr. Parker asked me if I could conduct two full classes, two night a week, until he was able to form a new advanced class. How do you think I reacted? That's right, I jumped right through the phone and was the dojo before he could change his mind.

That's when I feel I made the greatest advances in my Kenpo career to that date. I was a Brown Belt at the time and along with my new position came a surge of self-assuredness that I had never known before in the art, which I've always felt carried over to my personal life as well. It forced me to rise above myself because I was now being asked questions that I had to respond to in a manner consistent with a Kenpo Instructor. Suddenly I had the responsibility of teaching what I had just recently learned myself and I had to do my best to gain an even greater understanding of the material, which forced me to reexamine everything I had been taught, to analyze it and understand it beyond what I would normally have done. What a tremendous learning experience that was.

I felt then, and feel today, it was that experience which probably cemented my affiliation to the art. I began to understand so much more because I was forced to break things down for people that I would never have done just for myself. Suddenly I was responsible for getting the message across to the people coming up behind me in the art and I could no longer afford to simply accept everything I had learned at face value, I had to think about each and every thing I said in the class. I had to make sure I was teaching the basics correctly and without bias. Suddenly I had to be able to teach things that I didn't much care for on a personal level but might be of great benefit to someone in the class. I had long felt that not all of the techniques Mr. Parker was teaching us necessarily worked for me but at that point I realized that I now had to be able to teach them for the benefit of others and further understood why they were in the system.

CERTIFIED INSTRUCTOR STATUS

These are certainly the best of times to be a Kenpoist, especially if you're already a Black Belt. If not, like I said, do the work and you will be. But now you have a built-in opportunity to become an instructor. All you need is one student. Would more be better? Oh yeah, of course it's be better, but in reality all you really need is one, and that one can be as close as someone in your own family. I know, a lot of people shy away from trying to teach anything to a family member but it's there if you want it. It's up to you to decide just how badly you want it.

Teaching is simple. All there is to it is learning the material yourself and then showing it to someone else. You are of course going to have to understand it to the point where

you can break it down and then break down the breakdown, and believe me when I tell you, it will make you a better martial artist along the way. Far better! What better way of understanding something then having to explain and demonstrate it to someone else. You'll be amazed at how your brain will search for an answer when you're under the gun. You'll come up with things you didn't even know you knew and later you'll think, "Hey, that was pretty cool, I was asked about something that I wasn't sure of, but the more I talked and demonstrated it, the more I realized that I actually did have the answers."

We have people certify and then come back and tell us that it was the most rewarding experience they've ever had. Not only did they bring someone from novice to Black Belt but they've improved their own skills and understanding ten-fold along the way.

NO NEED TO WAIT

These days you don't need to wait for someone to choose you to take over teaching a class for a while. Now, all you need is at least one person who's willing to take a chance on you as an Instructor and you're on the road to becoming one. And as far as receiving another degree on your Black Belt, that's the best idea ever.

For one thing, it eliminates the fact that some instructors have students of the same rank, at least for a while, within each three-year promotion period. If that's a little confusing, allow me to explain.

Say for instance you get your Black Belt and start right off becoming Certified. Within a year or two you could conceivably have a student ready for Black Belt and when they get their First Degree Black Belt, you'd still be a First Degree Black Belt yourself for a least another year or possibly more before you'd be eligible to test for your second degree, so you and your student would be the same rank for the period. That doesn't seem right, does it? I'm sure that's, at least in part, why the membership decided to pass the amendment. Now, in addition to the patch designating that you are a Certified Instructor to be worn on your uniform, you get to add another stripe to your belt.

The IKCA wishes to thank Mr. Bill Parsons of Triangle Kenpo Institute in Raleigh, NC for his extraordinary foresight and effort in compiling the statistics necessary to fully

understand and appreciate just how difficult it is to become a Certified Instructor. This task wasn't easy because so many of the Black Belts are listed more than once on the IKCA Family Tree. If they were promoted by an Instructor who was using them to Certify they are listed under that Instructor plus they will be on the Main Trunk of the Tree as well because they tested and were promoted by IKCA Headquarters for each belt level. Black Belts who study under an already Certified Instructor and are promoted by that Instructor up to Brown Belt and the promoted by the IKCA to Black Belt will be listed under that Instructor only and not be on the main trunk, unless they also tested for each belt level with IKCA Headquarters as well, which some Instructors chose to do even though they aren't required to do so.

At the time of this compilation of statistics involving the Black belt population of the IKCA (we received it on 4-28-09, There were a total of 453 Black Belts, of which there were 56 Certified Instructors, which computes to 12 percent of the total population of Black Belts. Not a high percentage by any means, which speaks to the difficulty of attaining that status. But then, no one said it was going to be easy, all we've ever said is that it's possible. The rest is up to you.

Not everyone can attain that status and not everyone wants to. Again, it's a personal decision. There is no requirement to become Certified. Some people are private practitioners and do not care to teach what they know to anyone else, which is absolutely up to the individual practitioner. Some people don't have anyone available to them or the time to teach even if there is someone. A number of people have started the Certified Instructor's Program only to get partially through it and never to complete it, many I'm sure, through no fault of their own. People move, people lose interest, some find it too difficult and quit so the Instructor is forced to look to another. Which brings up a point that you should remember if you do take on the challenge of becoming Certified. You don't need to start the program and complete it with the same person. In fact, you could use a different person for each of the belt levels if you choose to or if you need to. We don't always have the luxury of having the same person throughout the process and the IKCA knows that, so we've made that provision. Just as long as you bring someone up to each of the belt levels and that person passes his or her test is all that is required.

The Next Generation

Doug Meeks of Napa Valley Martial Arts is the first of the next generation of Black Belts to be promoted to 10th Degree Grand Master Status. It happened due to the passing of the IKCA amendment.

The promotion took place at the Napa School on May 3, 2009 and was attended by a collection of Black Belts from all over California, Oregon, Washington and Canada. We apologize to all those living further but this was almost a spur of the moment decision. This was to be Mister Meeks' Ninth Degree promotion but because of the timing of the passing of the amendment it was decided that both promotions should take place simultaneously.

Several people from around the country had already flown out for the 50 Year Celebration in February, but had we known these two events were to be so close together, we would more than likely have scheduled them at the same time for the convenience of those who would like to have attended both but couldn't necessarily bear the expense of an additional trip to the West Coast.

Both the 50 Year Celebration and Grand Master Meeks Promotion and celebration were indeed momentous occasions. They were historical and while the Anniversary was a party with a day of Kenpo thrown in as a bonus, the Promotion was a historic event for more than simply Grand Master Meeks' promotion.

Because of the number of Certified Instructors in attendance it literally became the **largest promotion of upper belts in the history of Kenpo** and there were only a fraction of the qualified personnel in attendance. The remainder of those receiving their promotions will be done by mail over a period of time, when each request is received and processed, so if you are already a Certified Instructor, contact Vic and get the ball rolling on your bonus degree.

We won't be the least bit surprised if there is a negative response from some in the Kenpo community for this mass promotion, but it isn't the fault of the IKCA that we are

the only organization in existence to have a Certified Instructor's Program in place and that the overall membership saw it fitting and proper to reward these special individuals with another degree on their Black Belts for this exceptional achievement.

As to the promotion of Doug Meeks to Grand Master, it could not possibly have happened to a more deserving, qualified or better representative of Kenpo than Grand Master Meeks. From the very beginning of his association with the IKCA, he has given it his all in his teaching and the mentoring of his students. No one in the Art is held in higher regard and we are proud to know that the reins of this organization will ultimately be in the hands of such a qualified and honorable individual.





PROMOTIONS



We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your promotion. We know what kind of dedication and perseverance it requires to earn rank in the Martial Arts and we wish to pay our sincerest respects to you for having shown what it takes to appear on this list.

Howard Singer	Garden Grove, CA	9TH DEGREE BLACK
Brad Endean	Prichard, BC, CAN	3RD DEGREE BLACK
Hugo Garcia	Lakewood, CA	5TH DEGREE BLACK
Steve Schleicher	Woodgate, NY	BLUE BELT
Chris Witzigman	Woodgate, NY	PURPLE BELT
Desi Altamirano	Beaumont, CA	ORANGE BELT
Christopher Marr	Germantown, MD	ORANGE BELT
Tyrel Leitzell	Salinas, CA	BLUE BELT
Patricia Miller	Northport, AL	GREEN BELT
Phil Musgrove	Northport, AL	ORANGE BELT
Joshua Pestaner	Germantown, MD	BROWN BELT
Joseph Pestaner	Germantown, MD	BROWN BELT
Andrew Jackson	Germantown, MD	BROWN BELT
Joey Cadena	Edinburg, TX	5TH DEGREE BLACK
Joey Cadena	Edinburg, TX	6TH DEGREE BLACK
Sandra Cadena	Edinburg, TX	5TH DEGREE BLACK
Damion Linke	Australia	4TH DEGREE BLACK
Marty Laprelle	Napa, CA	5TH DEGREE BLACK
Kian Tavakoli	Napa, CA	3RD DEGREE BLACK
Greg Satterfield	Torrance, CA	7TH DEGREE BLACK
Chris Moises	Vallejo, CA	3RD DEGREE BLACK
Christian Santos	Vallejo, CA	3RD DEGREE BLACK
John Leon Guerrero	Vallejo, CA	3RD DEGREE BLACK
David Shawn Lee	Reno, NV	ORANGE BELT
Jon Medeiros	SearSPORT, ME	GREEN BELT
Natascha Hedrich	Pritchard, CAN	PURPLE BELT
Robert Brassard	Warwick, RI	ORANGE BELT
Roy Altman	Tinley Park, IL	BLUE BELT
Nicoli Hedrich	Canada	YELLOW BELT
Adam Jolly	Ferndale, WA	GREEN BELT
Gabriel Jolly	Ferndale, WA	GREEN BELT
McKenna Jolly	Ferndale, WA	BLUE BELT
Eli Jolly	Ferndale, WA	GREEN BELT

Alessia Vittone	Torrance, CA	PURPLE BELT
Timothy Clark	Orland, ME	PURPLE BELT
Dale Dennett	Napa, CA	PURPLE BELT
Spencer Re	Napa, CA	PURPLE BELT
Jose V. Gonzaleez	San Jose, CA	BROWN BELT
Jeff Gollehon	Vass, NC	ORANGE BELT
Garrett Gollehon	Vass, NC	ORANGE BELT
Mark P. Mitchell	Vass, NC	ORANGE BELT
Doug Meeks	Napa, CA	10TH DEGREE BLACK
William E. Melendez	Bakersfield, CA	3RD DEGREE BLACK
Ben Muni	NSB, FL	BROWN BELT
Michael Lieber, Jr	Woodgate, NY	BROWN BELT
Kathleen McDougal	Woodgate, NY	PURPLE BELT
Brayden Poste	Woodgate, NY	YELLOW BELT
Nikolas Hughes	Woodgate, NY	YELLOW BELT
Rick Cancino	Vallejo, CA	1ST DEGREE BLACK
Dan Ogletree	Bakersfield, CA	2ND DEGREE BLACK
Dan Ogletree	Bakersfield, CA	3RD DEGREE BLACK
Andre Lannertone	Mukilteo, WA	5TH DEGREE BLACK
Marvin Rivera	Lompoc, CA	1ST DEGREE BLACK
Sally Schweitzer	Redondo Beach, CA	PURPLE BELT
Robert E. Lee Hill II	Garden Grove, CA	ORANGE BELT
James Paule	Vallejo, CA	ORANGE BELT
Mark Schadwald	Vallejo, CA	ORANGE BELT
Randy Hogg	Napa, CA	ORANGE BELT
Bill Snowden	Napa, CA	PURPLE BELT
Alejandro Guerrero	Napa, CA	BLUE BELT
Jorge Calderon	Napa, CA	BLUE BELT
Zack Lund	Napa, CA	BLUE BELT
Mario Guerrero	Napa, CA	BLUE BELT
Efren Palacios	Bellflower, CA	5TH DEGREE BLACK
Brenda King	Vallejo, CA	5TH DEGREE BLACK
Doug Wheeler	Huntington Bch, CA	7TH DEGREE BLACK
Lance Meltzer	Napa, CA	6TH DEGREE BLACK
David Little	Orland, ME	6TH DEGREE BLACK
Jennifer Thomas	Torrance, CA	3RD DEGREE BLACK
Andrew Croniser	Woodgate, NY	4TH DEGREE BLACK
John Brand	Bakersfield, CA	2ND DEGREE BLACK
Dan Maher	Boonville, NY	6TH DEGREE BLACK
Hugo Garcia	Lakewood, CA	6TH DEGREE BLACK
Jerry Brooksher	Pittsburg, KS	4TH DEGREE BLACK
Armando Deloa	Bellflower, CA	9TH DEGREE BLACK

