



NEWSLETTER #68

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ANOTHER JOURNEY BOOK ON THE WAY

If you were fortunate enough to have bought a copy of the original Journey Book published in 2001 at its original price, keep it because it's worth a lot more now than when you purchased yours. If you can still find one that is new, you'll pay about three to four times the original price. I wish I could say that all is not lost and that another printing is in the offing, but that is not the case. However, there is a NEW Journey Book in the formative stages.

Mr. Tom Bleecker is in the process of interviewing and transcribing the stories of two dozen new candidates, this time mostly from the European branch of Kenpo, but including South America and other locations around the world. These are the men, due to Mr. Parker, who were most responsible for the emergence and proliferation of Kenpo in basically the rest of the world. Among them will again be a few of those in the original Journey book of which, I am proud to say, I will be included.

Tom Bleecker is the captain of this ship and as so it was his responsibility to create the theme. He produced a list of questions that were either given to each candidate or will be asked of them in his interviews. I got mine and responded to a number of them. Here is my first response to Mr. Bleecker's interview questions.

This might not be what is finally published because it will need to fit into the overall theme and spirit of the book but because you might never get to see this, or even the final version, I've decided to publish it here simply because there are a number of relevant points of historical interest, to those who are interested in such things, that might not ever be published anywhere else.

Give it a read and see what you think

Honoree Profile of Chuck Sullivan for the International Journey Book

One of the first questions Mr. Bleecker asked me in regards to this book was; When you first joined the Karate school, did you have any expectations about becoming a part of the group or were you mainly interested in taking lessons and leaving it at that?

Good question.

It's a good question because so much has changed since I joined the Ed Parker Kenpo Karate School located in South Gate, California in February of 1959. It was a different world then.

In reality, I had no expectations whatsoever since I had no way of knowing what to expect in the first place, because this was almost before there was a "first place" to begin with. The art of Karate, even the word, was completely unknown in the United States at that time, with the exception of a handful of people who had found Ed Parker before I did. And when I say a handful, I mean probably not more than a few dozen at that time.

I won't try to pinpoint the actual numbers but just to round it off, let's just say that the sum total of people involved in the art of Kenpo Karate when I discovered the art was probably not more than fifty people and some of those had already come and gone. So when talking about the beginning, this was almost as close as it gets.

When I began in South Gate, California, the school had been an Aikido School run by a member of the United States Air Force who was stationed nearby. It was his plan to open a school wherever he was stationed and then when he was transferred to another duty station, he would turn it over to his most senior student to carry on his work. However, in this particular situation he didn't have a student with enough experience so he did the next best thing, he contacted a practitioner of another martial art and offered him the school at a bargain price, and that man was Ed Parker and the art was Kenpo Karate. Mr. Parker performed a demonstration for the Aikido students and quickly converted them, all of them, to Kenpo. This was just a scant couple of months before I discovered the place.

Within a few months, Mr. Parker realized that the school was not going to make it for a variety of reasons, mostly financial, so he closed it and invited the students to continue their studies with him at his Pasadena, California school, if they so desired. Most of us went, some for only a short time and a few for the long haul. Whereas the

South Gate school was only a couple of blocks from my house, the Pasadena school was seventeen and a half miles each way, on surface streets with traffic signals and all. The freeway didn't run through the city then as it does today, so the trip was about a forty minute drive, each way.

One of the things I distinctly remember about signing up was that Mr. Parker actually conducted an interview before he accepted me as a student. One of his first questions was "Why do you want to study this Art?" I guess my answer was satisfactory because he allowed me to study with him. Another thing that I remember was that the dues were on a month to month basis, but there was a contract involved. Not the usual sort of contract where you agreed to pay a certain amount of money for a given number of lessons. That kind of business came years and years later. This was another matter altogether. I had to sign what amounted to a contract with Mr. Parker and his Kenpo Karate Studio that *I would not teach* what I was learning to anyone outside my immediate family members.

I happily signed my name and I remember thinking that I was being admitted into an exclusive club, not just a school but more of a secret society where what we did was to be held closely by us, and us alone. I had a feeling that this is the way it had been in the islands when Mr. Parker learned the art. I never discussed it with him and within a very short time nothing about that promise was ever mentioned again. Commercialism took over where privatization had prevailed. It became more important to get people into the school, not make it difficult for them to join.

So when I started, practically no one even knew what Karate, or Kenpo, was all about, but within a few years, when this exotic Asian Art had been discovered by the television and movie industries, **everyone** was aware of what it was. Once it was put out there on TV and in the movies, it spread like wildfire. I can't really think of anything else in my lifetime that grew in popularity so quickly, with the exception of the Hula Hoop. Within a few years there were huge tournaments being held featuring something that people had never even heard of just a short time before, and it was those tournaments that also helped it gain in popularity so quickly. As a matter of fact, Mr. Parker was asked by one of his long time students, Mr. Tom Bleecker, the author of this book, "Mr. Parker, if you could change anything about your life what would it be?" His answer (after a long pause) "I would have slowed everything down. It all just went too fast".

But speaking of tournaments, let me tell you what it was like to be involved in the biggest tournament of its kind in the world up until that time. It was the First International Karate Championships held in Long Beach, California on August 2, 1964.

I was appointed as Chairman of the Demonstration Committee, which I learned was a committee of one, *me*. It was to be my responsibility to have those presenting demonstrations ready at the designated time between the matches at the finals for the big evening event. But I was pressed into service in a multitude of ways during the day as well, running from one thing to another solving problems. It was a nightmare that started several days before we got to the actual day of the Tournament. Nothing seemed to go the way Mr. Parker had planned. First of all, there were about five to ten times the number of competitors that he expected and some had come from far flung places to compete, so there was no turning them away at the last minute; we just squeezed them in wherever we could. It was a mess. People were fighting out of their weight divisions, some of the divisions were disastrously overloaded while others were pathetically light. Some people were highly trained while others were pitifully undertrained and the number of knockouts was unacceptably high. Some practitioners were greatly controlled while others had no idea of what control was all about. The day was chaotic to say the least.

The Big Show in the evening was to take place in the very hall where the multi-ring elimination matches were taking place during the day, which meant that the seating for the evening had to be set up during a break between the two events. The problem was, there was no "break". The eliminations dragged on and on until the seating for the evening began squeezing them out. The judges and referees began setting up makeshift rings under and behind the bleachers that the facility crew was setting up for the evening. The elimination matches were still being fought while the people were beginning to file in for the finals and the evening show.

In their haste to get the seating set up for the evening, someone had forgotten to number the seats and rows, so that when the people who had bought the more expensive seats came and actually counted the rows and seats, and found what they most closely figured was their seats, there was someone already sitting in them and they refused to move because it had become a free-for-all and it was strictly catch-as-catch-can, first-come-first-served and that's the way it finally played out. There were just about as many near-fights in the stands as there were going on under and behind the stands while the eliminations continued. But somehow a semblance of order was maintained and everybody found a seat somewhere. I doubt that anyone got the one they paid for, but at least they were all finally seated. This was just about two hours after the show was supposed to have begun. To say the natives were restless would be the understatement of the decade.

Mr. Parker had hired a band to entertain the crowd with a little soothing music, but all the bandleader knew about the event was that it had something to do with a Hawaiian gentleman (Ed Parker). So he just had his boys keep playing the Hawaiian War Chant piece of music, of which I heard one spectator say to another "If they play that song one more time I think we're gonna have to kill that bandleader". It was just about that time when someone walked up to me and said, "Well, I guess that does it -- Ed Parker just passed out!" I asked where he was and the guy told me. I got there on a dead run and found Mr. Parker sitting in a chair looking for all the world like a breathing cadaver. I had never seen him look that bad. He was drained of color, his sunken eyes were as bloodshot as they could get and his cognitive abilities seemed severely hampered. He knew who I was but it didn't seem to matter to him what was going on around him.

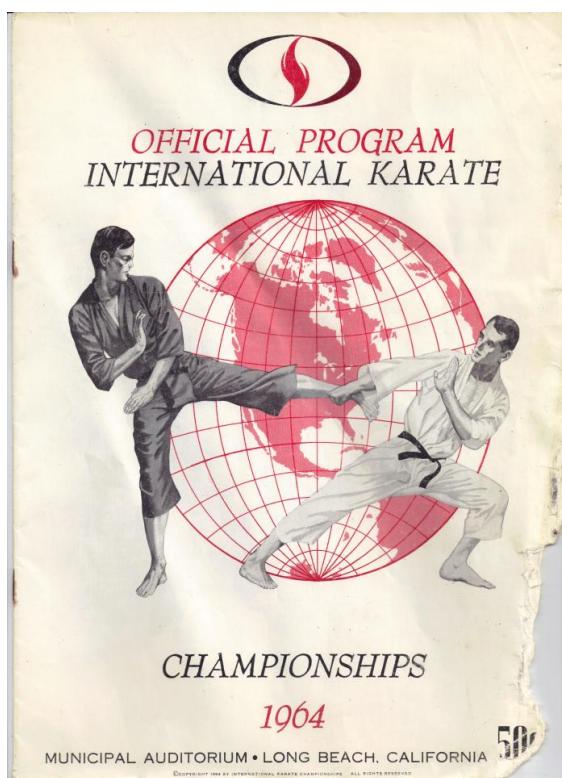
Because I knew that we were in a world of trouble time-wise, I suggested to Mr. Parker that we cut the demonstration we had planned to do that evening. He said, no, just divide the things that he was going to do between Dave (Hebler) and Dan (Inosanto) and myself and do the demonstration. He said that there were a lot people who came just to see it. Being that I had created our demonstration in the first place, I had no trouble in knowing what to do. Dave and Dan didn't find it quite as easy but we did it and it went off better than I hoped it would.

As far as Ed Parker passing out, I learned later that he had not slept for the previous 80 hours or so. He told me later that he tried but every time he laid his head on the pillow he thought of something else that had to be done and he had to get up and do it. He sometimes typed long lists of the names of competitors into elimination charts that had to be redone later anyway. The whole experience was a nightmare. Ed Parker simply ran out of gas. He gave it everything he had, and then his body and his mind just quit. He was accustomed to hard work and stress but not at that level and eventually it was too much for even him. Anyone else would have gone down at least a couple of days earlier.

When I got back to the announcer, he was in a panic and ready to leave. He told me that if we didn't get started, he was afraid the crowd was going to turn really ugly and that he was actually fearful that a riot might break out and chairs could start flying. I couldn't spot anyone who really had the authority to say "Let's go" but I knew that if someone didn't give the go-ahead pretty soon there could be big trouble. So I walked over to the bandleader and told him that as soon as the announcer announced it, to have his guys play the National Anthem. I remember the look of relief on his face as he said, "Thank God". I walked back to our announcer Ron Bozarth and told him to

announce the National Anthem. Without a beat he picked up the mike and in his best, rich, baritone voice he said, “Ladies and Gentlemen, please stand for our National Anthem. Silence fell on the crowd and the band struck up the Star Spangled Banner. I have never heard applause at the end of the National Anthem like I did that night.

Once it got started, it kind of ran itself. I was all over the place, telling everyone from Tak Kobota (whom I remember pounded on his knuckles with a sledgehammer) to Bruce Lee (who wowed the audience with his blinding speed and awesome power) when it was their turn to perform. The judges and referees all did their jobs brilliantly, so the rest, as they say, is history. Mike Stone won the Grand Championship that evening and we actually got out of there with a couple of minutes to spare before Ed Parker would have to have paid a penalty for going over his allotted time as per his contract with the Long Beach Municipal Auditorium. It was just before midnight – what a day.



This is the cover and the inside cover of the Program for the 1st IKC – sorry about its condition. It has only been hanging around for the past forty-seven years. Don't know what chewed it up.

This was at a time when Ed Parker and I were partners in a Dojo in Southwest Los Angeles and were such close friends that I could have asked him anything I wanted and he would have given me an answer, so I did. I was curious about how he came out financially on the venture and he told me that it didn't come out nearly as well as he had hoped. He had lost about eighteen hundred dollars and in 1964 that was a decent down payment on a medium priced house in the Los Angeles area. That was really a substantial sum of money for the time, and if it had been me it would also have been my last foray into such a business venture. Once burned, twice shy. ***But not Ed Parker.***

Mr. Parker spent the next year going to every tournament he could find, no matter where it was being held in the United States, and it was usually at his own expense unless someone would invite him to be the Head Referee/Judge. Then they might pay his transportation. It was generally a one day affair, so he'd arrive in the morning and leave the same night which meant a lot of overnight redeye flights. He told me that he wanted to see how other people ran their tournaments so as to improve upon how he was going to run his the following year. I doubt that he spent more than a dozen weekends at home with his family during that entire year and I can only imagine what the expense was likewith all that flying around the country, but he was bound and determined to make the International Karate Championships the biggest and best tournament in the world, and he succeeded. But not the next year or even the year after that, it took several years. The second IKC was a little more organized and if the same amount of competitors would have showed up it might have gone off okay, but again, the competitors far outnumbered his expectations and when the size of the crowd grew so did the problems.

That was the year I was the Tournament Director. The job was much more than I had anticipated because of the size of the turnout, but I did get one thing accomplished that was near and dear to my heart. I got shoes introduced to the tournament. It had never made sense to me that we worked out in our bare feet. Even from the beginning it didn't make any sense. If you wear shoes for everything else you do why wouldn't you wear shoes to fight in? That, plus I kept getting my toes busted and then couldn't work out for a period of time which irritated me to no end. Not to get into a long dissertation about shoes versus bare feet but as Tournament Director I thought I'd run it up the ol' flag pole and see who saluted. It didn't go well. There was quite a hue and cry from the traditionalists in attendance. I believe the more progressive thinkers thought it to be a good idea but didn't want to incur the wrath of those macho bare footed traditionalists so they all stood rather mute, but the numbers on each side of the issue were about equal. So to break the tie, one of the traditionalists suggested we ask two of the Senior

Japanese Black Belts, who Mister Parker had invite as judges, what they thought of the idea.

His ploy was obvious because these two Japanese gentlemen were of the most traditional background I could think of. The guy who suggested it knew it and so did his buddies who were backing him up, but there was nothing I could do about it once it was out there. I figured I had been outmaneuvered and my expectations weren't very high as we went to get their opinion. Through an interpreter, they were asked if they thought soft shoes should be allowed for the fighters, to reduce the chances of foot injuries. They put their heads together and after a short conference one of them turned to us and said, in almost perfect English, "Good Idea". You should have seen the shock on the faces of those opposed, it was priceless. I would like to have seen the look on my face too, because it blew me away when they went for it. So, shoes were allowed in the second International Karate Championships in Long Beach, California in August of 1965. Of course, by the next Internationals that was all but forgotten and not mentioned again, for at least the next twenty years or so. I believe the expression "winning the battle but losing the war" would be appropriate in this instance.

But getting back to Mr. Parker. When I asked him how he made out that second year, he told me that he broke even and the year after that when I asked him again, he said he made back the eighteen hundred dollars he lost the first year. I quit asking after that. I couldn't even imagine going through what he had endured for those three years and being dead even at the end. The fact that he ultimately made a lot of money when the International Karate Championships enjoyed their heyday during the '70s and '80s is due only to his dedication, perseverance and just plain hard work. I personally have never known any other man in my eighty years with the kind of determination that Ed Parker had. He was truly one of a kind.

This is just a taste of what it was like for me in the early days with my friend and partner Ed Parker. I could easily write an entire book about those days and my relationship with the man.

Had Mr. Parker lived, I would love to have seen where he would have taken the system. For many years it just kept growing and growing with a preponderance of techniques being added annually. But eventually he did scale the syllabus back from 32 techniques per belt level to 24, and then shortly before his passing it became 16. I wonder how long it might have taken to finally get it back to a manageable 8 to 10 per belt level. One of Mr. Parker's favorite sayings in the early days was, ***"I'd rather have ten techniques I can fight with than a hundred that fight me."*** I believe he was in the process of getting back to that philosophy.

It was a philosophy that made perfect sense to me from the first time I heard him say those words, and I never lost sight of it. Yes, it was great fun to learn all those fantastic techniques that he added to the system, but in my heart I always knew that when the chips were down, I'd be relying on the strength of the basics that he had relentlessly drilled into us in those early days, plus the knowledge that he instilled in us by teaching us the use of our bodily weapons and the targets we'd be striking to do the most damage in the shortest amount of time. And how did he teach us those things? With the techniques, of course. Did he ever tell us that we were restricted to a particular technique in a particular situation? No. He used to say, "These are only ideas, and from them you'll get what you need, when you need it." For every technique he'd say "This is not the only way, it's only a way."

Because Vic LeRoux and I were going to teach our syllabus on video, we knew that an overabundance of techniques was not an option, so before we ever presented the system to anyone, we spent a full two years doing nothing but reconfiguring the techniques so as to include all of the concepts and principles of Kenpo along with the usage of all of the weapons we had learned from Mr. Parker and all of the targets his techniques taught us to strike. Not that the techniques that Mr. Parker had taught us were not perfect for the way he was teaching them, they were. However, if he had needed to teach them in the format we intended to teach them, he would no doubt have done some reconfiguring as well.

In the process of teaching, either one-on-one or in a multiple person class situation, as an instructor, we can drift from one subject to another randomly, knowing that eventually we will cover all of the subject matter. When a question from a student comes up, it's easy to get off the subject at hand and go into an explanation for the new topic. When you're teaching on video, you have a very strict regimen and it's followed to the letter. The way we know the student has gotten it is because the test he or she must perform has that explicit move or set of moves within the test and everyone takes precisely the same test for each belt level attained. That way everything that's taught in the syllabus is covered in the required test. Our belt tests also include (in the later stages) the borrowing, blending and combining of the targets and weapons upon disruption of the given technique to create a new technique upon demand as the situation calls for it. We take every opportunity to practice spontaneity.

Ed Parker gave us all of the tools to work with. He gave us all of the principles and all of the concepts to create any combination of moves we might need in order to defend and prevail. He also taught us how to block so effectively that our blocking alone could be enough of a deterrent to get us out of trouble. I remember him saying on many

occasions **“Your weapon is my target”** meaning that if you were to take a swing at him he would punish your arm so severely you probably wouldn’t wish to, or possibly even be able to, use it to attack him again.

I know firsthand how devastating his blocks could be. To my knowledge Rich Montgomery, the first man to be promoted to Black Belt by Ed Parker and myself, the fourth man to be promoted to Black Belt by Ed Parker, were the only two people to actually freestyle with him. I did it on two occasions, both times when it was just the two of us after class. It was one of the most thrilling, probably one of the scariest and absolutely one of the most memorable times of my life.

If I could speak to him today, I’d tell him that I wish we could have grown old together and I believe he would have had as big a blast as I did at the First Kenpo Black Belt Combat Zone which was hosted by five of his Black Belts, pictured below, held in his honor at the SeaPort Marina Hotel in Long Beach, California this past August.



Vic LeRoux – Chuck Sullivan – Bryan Hawkins – Bob White – Mike Pick



It was attended by over a hundred and thirty Black Belts and we had posters of Ed Parker photos plastered all over the place, because if it wasn't for him, none of us would have been there in the first place. As the Father of American Karate, he will always take his place at the head of the table, as the ***ETERNAL SENIOR GRAND MASTER OF KENPO.***

Thanks for everything Ed, I miss you.





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.

Sally Schweitzer	Redondo Beach, CA, USA	BROWN BELT
Anna Aquaro	Redondo Beach, CA, USA	YELLOW BELT
Susan Schneider	Redondo Beach, CA, USA	YELLOW BELT
Rayna Williams	Redondo Beach, CA, USA	ORANGE BELT
Daniel Rodriguez	Redondo Beach, CA, USA	BLUE BELT
Ravi Patel	Redondo Beach, CA, USA	BLUE BELT
Justin Piopongco	Redondo Beach, CA, USA	GREEN BELT
Steven Economos	Redondo Beach, CA, USA	GREEN BELT
Courtney Griner	San Angelo, TX, USA	PURPLE BELT
Herb Starlin	Las Vegas, NV, USA	GREEN BELT
Efrain D. Rivera	Moca, Puerto Rico	BROWN BELT
David Giomi	Las Vegas, NV, USA	GREEN BELT
C.J. Schaylo	Cypress, TX, USA	BLUE BELT
Kent Holland	Green Valley, AZ, USA	PURPLE BELT
Alexander Rodriquez	Moca, Puerto Rico	YELLOW BELT
Jomar U. Hernandez	Moca, Puerto Rico	YELLOW BELT
Yahir X. Reyes	Moca, Puerto Rico	YELLOW BELT
Kevin Morales	Moca, Puerto Rico	YELLOW BELT
Jose Ruiz	Moca, Puerto Rico	ORANGE BELT
Louis Matos	Moca, Puerto Rico	PURPLE BELT
Jeremy Zeno	Moca, Puerto Rico	PURPLE BELT
Lorenzo Santiago	Moca, Puerto Rico	BLUE BELT
Christian J. Serrano	Moca, Puerto Rico	BROWN BELT
Cobe Jephta	South Africa	PURPLE BELT
Rick Hernandez	Vass, NC, USA	PURPLE BELT
Dave Williams	Vass, NC, USA	PURPLE BELT
Gabe Dominguez	Vass, NC, USA	PURPLE BELT
Sam Ward	Vass, NC, USA	ORANGE BELT
Sam Buie	Vass, NC, USA	ORANGE BELT
Allen Skipper	Vass, NC, USA	ORANGE BELT
Jeffery Hewes	Battleground, WA, USA	ORANGE BELT
Eric J. Rodriguez	Edinberg, TX, USA	PURPLE BELT
David Garza	Edinberg, TX, USA	PURPLE BELT
Francisco J. Espinosa	Edinberg, TX, USA	PURPLE BELT

Bianca Cruz	Edinberg, TX, USA	GREEN BELT
Arturo Cruz	Edinberg, TX, USA	GREEN BELT
Nick Cruz	Edinberg, TX, USA	GREEN BELT
Daniel Alvarado	Edinberg, TX, USA	GREEN BELT
Adria Nelson	Cleveland, TN, USA	PURPLE BELT
Israel Gonzalez	San Jose, CA, USA	ORANGE BELT
Courtney Griner	San Angelo, TX, USA	BLUE BELT
Armando Deloa	Bellflower, CA, USA	10th Degree Black Belt
Howard Singer	Garden Grove, CA, USA	10th Degree Black Belt
Jeff Salzman	Irvine, CA, USA	7th Degree Black Belt
Robert Temple	Santa Monica, CA, USA	8th Degree Black Belt
Efren Palacios	Bellflower, CA, USA	6th Degree Black Belt
Ricky Hurtado	Bellflower, CA, USA	3rd Degree Black Belt
Marco Palacio	Anaheim, CA, USA	1st Degree Black Belt
Robert E. Lee Hill	Ventura, CA, USA	1st Degree Black Belt
Shaun Aghili	St. Albert, AB, CAN	7th Degree Black Belt
Chris G. Georgas	San Pedro, CA, USA	7th Degree Black Belt
Efrain Rivera Miranda	Moca, Puerto Rico	3rd Degree Black Belt
Gary DiPadua	Johnston, RI, USA	6th Degree Black Belt
John D. Loucks	Bakersfield, CA, USA	1st Degree Black Belt
Jacob B. Loucks	Bakersfield, CA, USA	1st Degree Black Belt
Jocelyn M. Loucks	Bakersfield, CA, USA	Junior Black Belt
Michel Arcand	Quebec, QC, CAN	1st Degree Black Belt
Bradley Gray	Lompoc, CA, USA	1st Degree Black Belt
Jacob Schlosser	Lompoc, CA, USA	1st Degree Black Belt
Bill Mathews	Bakersfield, CA, USA	2nd Degree Black Belt
Leanne C. Mathews	Bakersfield, CA, USA	2nd Degree Black Belt

