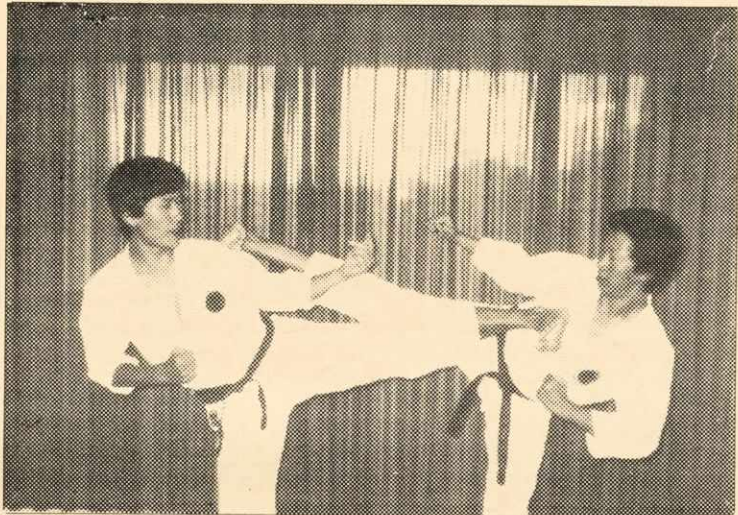


A forceful yet gentle activity



If you've ever wondered about the martial arts, this might be a good time to consider karate here at Dalhousie. The Dal Shotokan Karate Club, a non-profit organization, offers qualified instruction for beginning and advanced students alike.

In an effort to promote the club each fall, a demonstration is organized by the Chief Instructors. This year's demonstration takes place Tuesday, Sept. 12, at 7:30 in the Studley Gym dance studio. Beginner classes start the following Sunday at 11:00. Cost for Dal students is \$35 per term.

Beginning students need only wear comfortable work-out clothes for the first few months, though karate gis have to be pur-

chased before the first grading, which will probably take place in late November.

A typical karate class is a dynamic work-out, which the instructors consider necessary in order to stress both the physical and psychological benefits of karate. Classes often begin slowly, with students doing a number of slow stretches. Next it's on to basics, with students performing a wide variety of punches, kicks, and blocks. Katas, stylish fighting sequences against imaginary opponents, usually follow.

Sparring is very limited, and strictly controlled. Despite karate's violent reputation, contacting your opponent is prohibited. Free-sparring is only done by

brown and black belts.

The class usually ends with a vigorous warm-down. Self-defence techniques are taught just before finishing.

"It's a great work-out," one brown belt says. "It emphasizes everything: flexibility, cardiovascular endurance, stamina."

Judging by the energy expended in one recent class, karate students are in very good condition.

The Dal Club has been operating on campus in its present form for over nine years. Chief Instructors of the club are Tony Tam, a Halifax lawyer, and Danny Tam, a local dentist. Both are ranked sandan by the JKA (third-degree black belt), and both are Dalhousie graduates. Though their teaching methods vary, they provide a comprehensive and in many ways complimentary introduction to Shotokan Karate.

"Our club emphasizes basic training and kata," Tony Tam says.

Sensei Tam is six-time kata champion for the Maritime region. Tam says that the club is very much concerned with the spirit of karate, and his classes reflect this focus.

Notable about the club is the respect shown for both the teachers and other students. In Shotokan Karate a student's behaviour, both in and out of the dojo, is governed by five cardinal passages that highlight the true nature of Karate-do. These pas-

sages, handed down by the great karate master Gichin Funakoshi, are recited at the end of each class:

- Seek perfection of character*
- Be faithful*
- Endeavour*
- Respect others*
- Refrain from violent behaviour*

Modern karate has an interesting history. Its beginnings are traced to the tiny island of Okinawa, where it was practiced secretly for centuries. Its popularization began in 1921, when Gichin Funakoshi, a young elementary school teacher, traveled to Japan to demonstrate Okinawa's indigenous fighting art for



the Crown Prince. The future Emperor was so impressed with Funakoshi's ability that he asked the teacher to introduce karate to the people of Japan.

Funakoshi understood the significance of this task, embracing it whole-heartedly. He hoped one day to see karate practised throughout the world. With over 3,000,000 students currently registered with the Japan Karate Association, Funakoshi has

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meetings on
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earned the title of "Father of Modern Karate-do."

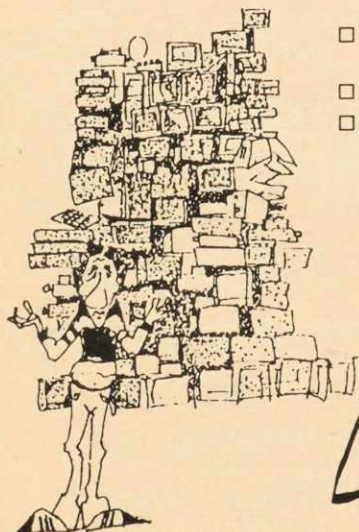
Shotokan is an appropriate name for the style of karate popularized by this great master and studied here at Dalhousie, for it emphasizes the dual nature of this dynamic martial art. The Shotokan emblem is a tiger, which most practitioners assume relates to the rapid, decisive techniques utilized by well-trained karate students.

But this is only a partial truth. Shoto literally means "pine waves." Funakoshi used to travel to Mount Torao — the tiger's tail — to relax and meditate. While there, he was inspired by the gently rustling pine trees, and took the pen-name Shotokan for his poetic writings. And so it became the name for the martial art he practiced, defining the dichotomy that is karate, at once both a forceful yet gentle activity.

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