



# ISKF SPOTLIGHT

Spring 2015 INTERNATIONAL SHOTOKAN KARATE FEDERATION

## Last Call to Attend Master Camp 2015 and International Goodwill Tournament

It is not too late to sign up for Master Camp. Starting June 12, hundreds of people will descend on Camp Green Lane just outside of Philadelphia, PA, to train with some of the greatest Shotokan masters in the world. This is truly a camp every serious karateka should attend at least once. We say this every year (and it's true) in an effort to get more people to experience this amazing camp and yet we still have people who continue to put it off.

If you are among those who return year after year, try to encourage others from your dojo or region to attend. Master Camp is not just for black belts, adults, or those who return year after year. In fact, Shihan Okazaki asks us to spread the word to all our dojo members.

This is the time for everyone to regroup and refocus their training. Classes are arranged so that everyone gets training specifically geared toward their level. Classes are held for every level of karateka. Beginners are especially lucky because they have smaller

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**ISKF MASTER CAMP 2015**  
INTERNATIONAL GOODWILL TOURNAMENT - JUNE 12 - 19

CHIEF INSTRUCTOR:  
**TERUYUKI OKAZAKI, 10th DAN, ISKF/US**

GUEST INSTRUCTORS:  
**YUTAKA YAGUCHI, 9th DAN, ISKF/US**  
**MASARU MIURA, 9th DAN, SKI/EUROPE**  
**SHUNSUKE TAKAHASHI, 9th DAN, TSKF/JAPAN**

Red seal at the bottom right of the tiger illustration.

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# The 49th Annual Master Camp is for all Karateka

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class sizes. They can receive more individualized instruction and have a unique opportunity for more interaction with their instructors.

Whereas black belt classes can average over a hundred students per class, beginners may only have 20 to 30 students in a class. Intermediate classes are also smaller. This is the perfect camp for the beginner-to-intermediate student to take advantage of their rank for great instruction.

## What's in it for the kids?

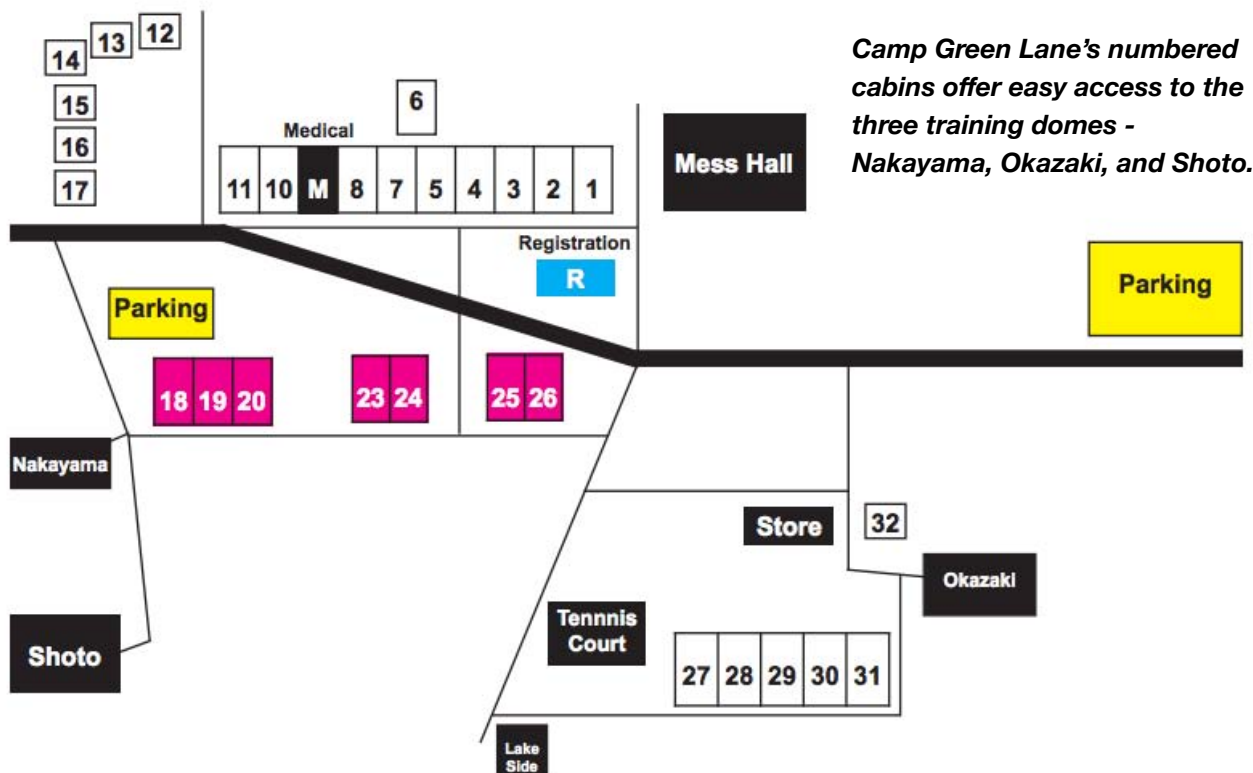
The number of kids attending camp is growing. In addition to training, there are other fun activities for everyone. Ping-pong tables, tennis courts, basketball courts, miniature golf, and a swimming pool are available for all to enjoy. There are also lake

activities, like canoeing, that require adult supervision.

There is a youth Shiai on Saturday for kids from around the globe to test their skills. The youth competition is no less impressive than what the adults display on Thursday. In fact, many of these kids go on to be very competitive adults.

Each year sensei tasks the camp committee to make improvements to the overall camp experience. Sensei wants every aspect of the camp to be memorable, from the level of training we receive from the masters, to the daily activities to the goodwill tournament and final reception.

Come and enjoy all that the 49th Annual ISKF Master Camp & International Goodwill Tournament has to offer. For more go to <http://iskf.com>.



**Camp Green Lane's numbered cabins offer easy access to the three training domes - Nakayama, Okazaki, and Shoto.**

# Master Camp Interview - Shihan Hideo Ochi

*Master Hideo Ochi (JKA/Germany), 8th Dan, is a former Japan Karate Association (JKA) World Champion in kumite and kata. He was born in 1940 and began training at the age of 14. Translation by Tatsuun Ryu.*

In part two of our interview with Master Ochi, we discussed topics covering bunkai, tai sabaki, and the Shotokan tiger.

**Spotlight:** When should you begin teaching bunkai to students? If you are teaching heian nidan to beginners, should you teach them the bunkai? What are your thoughts on teaching bunkai to kids?

**Sensei Ochi:** It's case by case; it depends on the level of the student. If you think they will understand it and can do it then you should teach it. Usually it will be hard for beginners, especially kids, to understand and do proper partner work. This makes teaching bunkai difficult. If they know how to block or know how to move well, then they can start to understand bunkai.

You have to look at the individual and see if they can do it. Watch the student, and see how they are, then you will know. It is up to the instructor, if the instructor sees that the person has technical skills then the instructor can teach the student. Most people, if they know the kata well, if they do it over and over with no problems, then they should be able to do bunkai for that kata. If you can master the kata

then bunkai should come easy. You need to do the kata many, many times though.

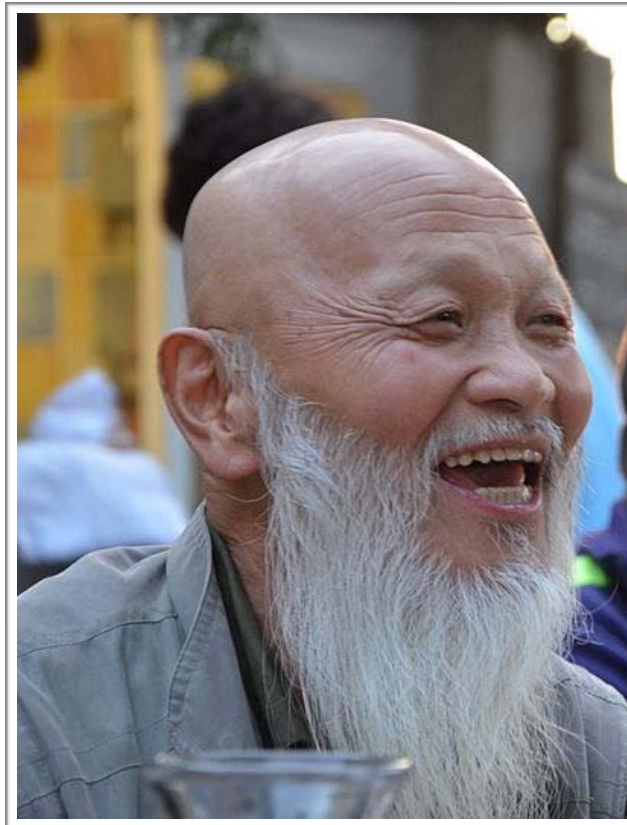
**Spotlight:** In today's class you talked about tai sabaki and space sabaki, how everything is sabaki. Can you explain what that means?

**Sensei Ochi:** There are many meanings for sabaki. It can mean to open or to filet, like to fillet a fish. Just like you open the fish, your body opens. You have to

tell your body to open or move to evade a hit. For example, in Nijushiho the first move is a shift, an escape from your opponent. You move your body or shift so that is tai sabaki; you also are creating distance between you and your opponent that is a form of space sabaki. So with one move you can create two possible openings, when you shift back you are creating a space or opening to protect yourself and your block should create an opening in your opponent. The next move is your strike. There is no third chance in Nijushiho. First, there is the shift, then there is the block, then the third technique can be a killing blow. If you can do

sabaki, body shift and then attack, then you can defend yourself against an opponent. Sabaki means you are saving your life. Any move you use to protect or defend yourself is sabaki. Sometimes you can just shift the body without always having to move your legs. You can open the body by elongating the distance between you and the opponent. You just

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**Hideo Ochi, Karate Shotokan Instructor - JKA (Japan Karate Association). -- France/Penes tin**

# Master Camp Interview - Shihan Hideo Ochi

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need to shift the body enough to adjust to whatever the situation is. You can escape then attack.

**Spotlight:** Sensei, earlier you spoke of the Shotokan tiger, which Master Funakoshi used as the symbol for our art. We know the tiger was chosen for its power. What other reasons do you think it was chosen?

**Sensei Ochi:** Yes, exactly. Why use the tiger? Why not use an elephant or some other animal that is strong and powerful? The tiger was one of the most powerful and strongest animals in Asia. Of course, the elephant is big and strong but it is also very slow. It does not have the speed and agility of the tiger. The tiger has so much speed it can travel more than a 100 km a day and come back. That power and speed, and endurance, in an animal is what Master Funakoshi wanted to show. The tiger is strong and powerful, and it is fast and stealthy. This is like karate. Karate has soft and hard techniques, and quick and slow movements. In karate, we have shorei and shorin katas. The different types of kata highlight the differences in movement. Karate embraces some of everything.

**Spotlight:** Why do you think he used the circle around the tiger?

**Sensei Ochi:** The circle constricts the tiger when it acts badly and is agitated. As the tiger gets bigger and full of himself he is restricted by the circle and can no longer move. The circle will close in on him. When the tiger is calm, the circle feels larger. The tiger represents the person or karateka and how they move in life. When the karateka becomes full of himself and forgets about humility then the circle feels small. It is the same as when you contribute to society the circle is bigger. You are doing something good. The circle also represents the circle of life. There is no beginning and no end; it is continuous as our training should be. As we

learn and grow in our karate training, we must always return to the beginning.

This reinforces our foundation and makes our karate better. In Japan we say, "Shoshin ni kaeru." We always must return to the beginning, to our roots, our foundation, and make it stronger. Master Funakoshi also studied Zen and he said often that he was just like the tiger in the circle. When he experienced enlightenment, he could feel the circle start to enlarge around him giving him more space.

**Spotlight:** Sensei, thank you so much for speaking with us today. It is always a pleasure and enlightening.

**Sensei Ochi:** You're welcome, anytime.



## Spotlight on YOU!

Want to write an article for the Spotlight? Do you have a fun karate photo taken at Master Camp, a tournament, or your club that you'd like to share? We are looking for interesting articles and photos. **Send your article/photo to the [iskf@iskf.com](mailto:iskf@iskf.com).** Please include your name, name of dojo/region/country, and best way to contact you if we have questions. Do NOT submit photos taken by someone else unless you have a signed consent to publish.

Thanks!

# The Journey to Shodan: From Training to Filming “Looking for Mr. Miyagi”

The intense training required to learn karate and earn a black belt is hard enough without the added pressure of being the subject of your own movie. David Liban took on that dual challenge to chronicle his journey to Shodan in the documentary “Looking for Mr. Miyagi.”

Liban teaches film and television production as an associate professor at the University of Colorado in Denver. He has written, edited, and produced a number of documentaries. At age 46, Liban began his ISKF Shotokan training with Sensei Gary Swain, 7th Dan, at the Shotokan Karate at Lone Tree dojo in Lone Tree, Colorado.

Having gained 30 pounds since his college days and “feeling his age,” Liban set a goal of earning his Shotokan black belt before age 50. “I knew I should be enjoying life, but I felt like the world was closing in on me,” Liban says in his film. “I needed a change, and for me, that change was karate.”



***David Liban trained for more than two years under the glare of movie lights to make a documentary about his path to Shodan.***

Liban also set a goal of making a movie to tell the story of his personal training and development. At age 47 he began work on the film, which follows his progression from testing for 3 kyu (January 2012) to his first Shodan exam in front of Yutaka Yaguchi Shihan, 9th Dan and ISKF Vice Chief Instructor. Besides



***The documentary “Looking for Mr. Miyagi” was released in 2014***

having cameras follow his training for about two years, Liban also wrote, directed, produced, and edited the movie.

For the film, and to augment his training with Sensei Swain, Liban requested and was granted interviews with a host of ISKF instructors including Teruyuki Okazaki Shihan, 10th Dan and ISKF Chief Instructor. He also interviewed David Jones, 7th Dan and President, ISKF Canada; Bruce Green, 7th Dan and an ISKF instructor in Boulder, Colorado; and Kris Haight, 6th Dan and an ISKF instructor in Seattle, Washington.

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# “Looking for Mr. Miyagi”

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Their insights and reflections about what it takes to study a martial art are interwoven into the story of Liban’s Shotokan training, and his work with university fitness researchers and physical trainers (including other martial arts).

Sensei Swain described Liban as an “instructor’s dream.”

“David is always in class and trains like nobody else,” says Sensei Swain. He has great spirit and never gives up. He just keeps going.” Sensei Swain said he enjoyed seeing the final movie and that Liban’s story will be familiar to anyone who studies karate. “In essence, the journey is the same for all of us. We’re just in different places at different ages. We all have our own challenges and getting to Shodan helps us work through some of these.”

In the film, Liban uses pebbles dropped into glass jars to represent his training. One hour of training equals one pebble in a jar. It’s a constant theme throughout the movie to hear the clink of stone against glass. Liban says he collected close to 500 pebbles strewn along his path from 3 kyu to Shodan.

A husband and the father of two young boys, Liban also faced the issue of integrating his personal and professional lives with karate training and a physical fitness program. But through it all, he achieved his goal of becoming a Shodan in December 2013 on his second attempt,

although it was just a little after his 50th birthday. He has lost more than 15 pounds, is now more physically fit than he has been in years, and he says the mid-life crisis that pushed him into karate is behind him.

“What I learned is that a belt doesn’t mean anything,” Liban says. “It’s all a matter of how you view yourself. I’m more humble, patient, and even



*David Liban (left) sparring during the making of “Looking for Mr. Miyagi”*



*Filmmaker David Liban*

keeled now.” Liban says he owes a lot to Sensei Swain. “He’s a great instructor,” Liban says. “We have a lot to learn from mentors, even at age 50.”

And most important of all, Liban says he continues to train on a regular basis.

Liban estimates that about 10,000 people have seen “Looking for Mr. Miyagi,” which can be purchased at Liban’s website for the film at <http://www.mrmiyagi.net>. The 2014 movie has been well received and has earned a 9.1 out of 10 rating from users at IMDB.com

## **Correction**

The last edition of the ISKF Spotlight incorrectly identified Dawn Rivard who placed 3rd in the 45+ years Kumite Black Belts Senior Division as a member of team USA during the 12th ISKF Pan-American Karate Championships. Rivard proudly competed with team Canada.