

Andy Verkaik
Thru

P.O. Box 521
kittredge, CO. 80457
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Fiction Editor
Black Belt
1813 Victory Palace
Burbank, CA. 91504

Dear Editor

How does a boy in Martial Arts work for black belt? With all good times and bad times, the boy explains "One's Life in Martial Arts."

I hope this short story will come to your satisfaction.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,

Andrew Verkaik

P. O. Box 521
Kittredge, CO 80457

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ONE'S LIFE IN MARTIAL ARTS
by
Andrew Verkaik

My name is John Hwitt. I have blond hair and hazel eyes. My height is about five feet seven inches and I weigh about one hundred and fifteen pounds. I've been studying Tae Kwon Do under the instruction of Mr. Reed for about three and one half years now. I've reached Red Belt. Next rank for me will be black belt.

I started Tae Kwon Do in a little town in Colorado. I was eleven years old when I first started. I thought Karate was the greatest thing in the world, that was the main reason I joined. I didn't know what style or association it was, as long as it was Karate.

White Belt

White meaning "absence of color". As a white belt, I learned all the basic kicks and punches and the first two katas. I thought that was great, but as I watched the black belts practice, I wanted to do all the stuff they could do. I studied the black belts' movements and techniques and tried to do what they did but it seemed impossible for me.

Yellow Belt

Yellow belt meaning "the rising of the sun," or just starting the Martial Arts. After the first four months of going to Karate, I have now achieved rank. Being a yellow belt made me feel good because of the color on my belt. Although it wasn't that great because I learned what was new to me was a new kata and some new self-defense technicals. Although that's all I should be learning at yellow belt.

About that time of being a yellow belt, my instructor, Mr. Reed and I started to become good friends. We would go with each other on weekends and sometimes I would work for him. I also met a lot of other friends at Karate.

Mike, who is the same age as me, came to the Rocky Mountwin Academy of Martial Arts from another karate school down in Denver. When Mike came to the Academy of Martial Arts, he was a yellow belt like me. I was glad he was the same belt as I. Now we could start achieving rank together if we stayed or kept up with karate.

Todd, another one of my good friends, started Tae Kown Do about two months after I started. At first, when he joined I disliked him very much. I didn't really have a reason to dislike him, I just did. After we started to talk to each other, I started to like him and the next thing I knew, he was one of my best friends. Ever since we joined, I have been a rank ahead of him.

Yellow Stripe

After another three months of Tae Kown Do, I tested for yellow belt with a black stripe and passed. That was when I started feeling great about myself. I was able to do more and learn more. I enjoyed it. I learned a new kata which made it the fourth kata I knew. I liked that kata more than any one I had already learned. It had more movements and was more complicated.

While I was a yellow belt with a black stripe, I entered my first tournament. I was scared to spar in my division and I wasn't high enough

rank to do a weapons kata, so I just did kata. I did the highest kata I knew and liked, which was called peon one. I was up against about twelve people and got a third place trophy. After that, I was more confident about karate. Knowing I was achieving my goal in karate.

Green Belt

Green belt meaning "Grass rising from the ground," or beginning to learn and understanding the Martial Arts. As more months went by, I tested in front of a board of black belts like I always did. I passed and got a green belt. Each time I received a new rank, I felt more and more confident. I knew I could go for the next rank.

When you're a green belt, you get to learn a weapon. Out of all the weapons to choose from, I chose a weapon called the Sai. One of the reasons was I liked the Sais a lot, and another reason was I wanted to learn a weapon nobody else knew but Mr. Reed. Mike was a green belt also but he was going to learn the ascrima sticks and Todd was going to learn the Kamas, once he reached our rank. So, I decided to learn the Sai.

About my first month of being a green belt a new kid about my age entered the Academy. Peter is his name. He's about nine months behind me in rank. After about a month of knowing him we became best friends.

The second time I entered a tournament, I sparred, did weapons kata, and kata. In sparring I was beat real bad, in weapons kata, I received a second place trophy. I was real happy except for sparring.

Blue Belt

Blue belt meaning, "The Sky," knowing all the stuff you learned but you find out how much more you need to learn. Waiting another six months I tested for my blue belt. I knew then that I was a little closer to achieving my goal, black belt. That doesn't mean I'd quit when I got there, that just means that that's the goal I'm trying to achieve.

Learning a new kata and much more started to get me confused. I had to learn a lot more, and also remember all the basics that were taught to me in the past. I learned my sixth kata and was well into learning jump and spin kicks.. When doing newer and harder martial arts, I started to worry about whether or not I could remember all of it in testing for my next rank. I then started taking things one at a time, and ended up having no problems remembering.

Blue Stripe

As you may know by now every three to six months there is a testing for me and other students in the school. After three more month I tested for blue belt with a black stripe. I didn't have much trouble with it as I thought I would.

I entered another tournament. Most tournaments are held in a high school gym or a big arena. This time I recieved first place in sparring, second place in weapons kata, and first place in kata. So I was very happy about that.

Red Belt

Red belt meaning "Blood." You could draw blood if you really had to. Testing for red belt was probably the hardest test I ever had to test for.

When I did pass I felt that I was only a short time away from my goal. Going to more tournaments I progressed in competition, and in confidence about myself. This would be the longest time I had a belt since I joined Karate. Waiting eight months of being a red belt, I learned much more and felt I was ready to test for my black belt.

Now, with the approval of Mr. Reed, I'm going to test for my black belt in a month, along with other people in the academy. I am sure I will achieve my goal and my new rank, a BLACK BELT.