



Episode 19 – Hanshi George Alexander | whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com



Jeremy Lesniak:

Hello everyone and thanks for tuning in for episode 19 of whistlekick martial arts radio. The only weekly podcast dedicated to bringing you amazing stories from traditional martial artists. I'm your host Jeremy Lesniak and I'm also the founder of whistlekick, makers of the best sparring gear on earth as well as great apparel and accessories all traditional martial artists. You can learn more about our products, like our shin guards that are double layered and pre-shaped so they protect your shins and stay in place over at whistlekick.com and you can learn more about the podcast including all of our past episodes show notes for this one and a lot more, all for free over at whistlekickmartialartsradio.com. We've started adding something new to the show notes, for each movie that our guests recommend, were checking both Netflix and Amazon prime to see if they're available and providing that information. It's a small thing, but for those of you with an account on either it should be worthwhile so check out those show notes. And while you're on our website, don't forget to sign up for newsletter full of information discounts and useful martial arts content. And if you're an android user, you can now pick up our free android app over to Google play store. It's an easy way to stay connected to the show it's completely free. And now for the review of the week, and this one's entitled impassioned and educational and it comes in from J Bauer 1282. Great show, I was involved in martial arts as a kid and though I didn't follow through for long, I loved it. This podcast reminds me of all the reasons I love martial arts makes me want to start up again. Well, thank you Jay Bauer and hopefully this podcast does motivate you to get back in



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the martial arts. Don't forget if we read your review on the air, email us and we'll get you a free pack of whistlekick stuff. So, keep those reviews coming, we really appreciate them. And now to this week's episode, this week were joined by Hanshi George Alexander a shorin ryu practitioner and president of the international shorin ryu karate kabuto Federation. His martial arts history dates back to 1964 and he's been very active ever since. Along the way he's trained with some amazing people and racked up a long list of ranks held in different styles. He shared a lot of wonderful stories and I thoroughly enjoy talking to him. Hanshi Alexander represents the old school of martial arts well and is truly passionate about sharing his knowledge and experience. And with that, Hanshi Alexander welcome to whistlekick martial arts radio.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Thank you very much for having me. My honor to be here in cyberspace or radio program.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Little bit of all the above.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Okay.

Jeremy Lesniak:

So why do we start by jumping into it? Tell us a little about your history with martial arts and how you got into it and why you got into it?

Jeremy Lesniak:

Sure, sure not a problem. It's a long story. I've been doing this for over 50 years. So yeah, I got a pretty fair amount of history here but my dad was in World War II, he was in the Army Air Corps before they called the Air Force and he had learned combat judo. I guess that's what we used to call it back then, it was before karate was invented and so, I [00:03:12.46] very much of it in the United States that this would be like the late 50s, I guess 58, 59, 1960, somewhere in there. So, what most military people did back then was like, was combat judo which was basically jujitsu self-defense type stuff and so he started teaching me that. So, I kinda got into the jujitsu judo aspect but then, karate sort of came along, came on the scene. There was a guy named Bruce Tegner who had these little books out he actually Bruce Tegner did the very first ever martial arts demonstration on the Arthur Godfrey show. Okay, so we had to watch that when, wow, that kicking and punching, you can break boards, you can kick and break



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boards, you can kill somebody with one blow. I'm like whoa. I need to learn that okay. So, that was there, that was a fascination. And then later on, I went in the Marine Corps as a baby, I was only 17 years old. I've looked back on those pictures now, I go my god at 17 and so you know, I started training in shorin ryu karate in 1964 in the Marines. And I got to go to Okinawa, I got to go to mainland Japan and it just sort of evolved from there, I mean I was hooked on it. I saw guys in my pajamas jumping around, I was like man that's for me. I got hooked on it, I've never gotten out of it. You know, my theory is once you're an athlete, let's just call martial arts athlete, once you've done that and you're used to it [00:04:54.03] and of course the Marine Corps didn't help because yeah now it's all about physical activity and PT all this kind of stuff, I think you're hooked as a lifelong athlete and martial artist and if you quit training you, especially after you had 20 years or so and it, you're gonna can return into a quivering mass of jelly that's my philosophy and you're gonna sit on the couch and you're going to be a massive jelly. You're gonna be Jell-O sitting on the couch so I think you are a trapped, you have no alternative. But the positive thing is, I mean it's you know, I'm 68 years old now and I can do stuff that the average 68-year-old person has absolutely no possibility of doing. So, and I feel good about that. So, what that means is your health really you wind with the health benefits that they're talking about in the martial arts. You know you read all these goofy books way back when say oh the great grandmaster, he was sickly as a child but through martial arts training became strong and that story is repeated every martial art. But anyway, yeah there are certainly elements of truth in that and then if you look at that Okinawan people who many of them live to be over 100 years old. And then you go why wonder why that is? Well, diet exercise, those people I mean there was one sensei in Okinawa who is 99 years old and he was still doing martial art demonstrations, amazing. And so, it's diet exercise and a sense of community, that's the other ingredients and so 38 people out of every 100,000 in Okinawa live to be a centegenarian, tin other words, over 100 years old. Mainland Japan too. The folks of the folks their cause that's changing now they have fast food there before, they were just eating fish and rice and vegetable so that had no heart disease. Now that that's changing a bit, they did get bigger and taller because they have more protein in the diet but you know, now this subject to the evil, the health evils that we have here at the West. So, anyway I kind of digress there sorry.

Jeremy Lesniak:

That digression is the name of the show, that's what we do here. I served you a little bit of a question on a plate and let you run with it as you want. Do you have a particular diet? You mentioned diet several times there.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah, I'm well you know, I'm serving to the energy shake slightly I've been doing that you know, the protein shakes or whatever, I do that. But yeah, I mean, I stay away from fast food like McDonald's or you know not to slander them I'm sure it's wonderful for the economy but yeah, I stay away from my



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fried food, I stay away from fast food. I don't need any of that stuff. But the main thing is you know chicken and fish, that's good source of protein and then fresh vegetables and now the rage is the organic stuff, the rages oh that's organic and this and that, but you can you can go in the some of these grocery stores and it says organic but I wouldn't, I would place a lot of confidence in that you know it's just marketing right so what it organic mean, no one even knows what that means. But anyway, the bottom line is free of pesticide. So just like in Europe you know, they like in Italy let's say, they use fresh vegetables, they go to market every day get the vegetables you know. That's what you want so if you can do that, it's harder to eat that way and it's more expensive actually but you're gonna be healthier so that you know, that's the main thing on diet again. Again, it's not rocket science, they have all the stuff on TV and take these pills and you lose weight, do this and do that. You don't really need to do any of that, what really requires this discipline because it's like you see that bag of potato chips or the chocolate chip cookies or a gallon of chocolate ice cream and it's like wow let's consume. But you know, you had to have the discipline to stay away from that and try to eat more clean as they call it in the bodybuilding industry I guess. But yet you will be healthier if you do that. And other thing is I'm kind of an anti-smoking Nazi as well along with the health food thing. It's like yeah, if smoking or die and if you don't die you going to get COPD, you get emphysema and your quality of life is not going to be good. You can get, the thing when nearly when you're young, you can get away with all that stuff and you think I'm invincible, I'm healthy, I'm in this fantastic physical condition and I can run 5 miles or 10 miles and I can spar all day and I'm fast as lightning and I'm strong and I'm indestructible and [00:10:01.41] to but that doesn't last forever. Eventually, you have to pay I mean, nothing's free. Right, my old economics teacher used to say that everything has a cost associated with it so that's all true. But so, it catches up with you. So, it's very easy to see the look of older people and the ones that have had a cleaner lifestyle, healthy, exercise etc. There and no smoking and then of course drinking is a no but let's not go there. But anyway, yeah, they're healthy and so if there are 60 or 70 years old, how they looked pretty good? And then you see other people that are in their 50s and they look ready for the home, you know. So, what's it about? It's about clean living. Of course, it's about genetics as well. I know I'm supposed to be talking about martial arts here but you got me going. Your genetics you know [00:10:58.45] hand of cards right. And whatever was in that hand that's what you gotta play. Some people have better genetics than others and they will do well. I'm kinda fortunate and that my people had pretty good genes I mean as far as the muscle density, athleticism and stuff like that I got the legs of a Roman soldier and the upper body ever Scottish Highland warriors, so it kinda worked out pretty good for me. So, but some people don't hand that. You can see they again, there in their 50s or 60s then you look at me to pack his guys broken down couldn't do anything. So, genetics or component, clean living, exercise and diet that's the other side of it. So eventually you have to get there here if you're serious martial artist and want to be, seek the way of perfection that type of thing. So that's my take on that.

Jeremy Lesniak:



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Yeah, but that that goes back to your kind of your initial language in talking about a martial artist as an athlete and it's something that I find very interesting and in this isn't something that we talked about on the show before but I'm very passionate about exercising. Anyone that knows me knows I'm passion about exercising not just martial arts but you know the hiking and I'm in the weight room and other things like that. And if you look at most physical pursuits they get that they look at that whole equation and it is something that I find interesting in martial arts that so for you people, proportionally,

Jeremy Lesniak:

You're talking about the what I call it super Don's now. Those are the guys of the 10th degree black belt and the red belt and a big fat stomachs.

Jeremy Lesniak:

I wasn't limiting my comments to them but there are

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah that's the super don

Jeremy Lesniak:

You know, I still don't want to tangle with them. But you don't see that type of physique in other athletic pursuits.

Jeremy Lesniak:

No, because you have to be in in better shape. Your muscle to fat ratio has to be better. You know, these guys from Kenya let's say that run 26 miles. Well, you have stomach like that you can't run 26 miles that way you know. So, and also, the way I feel about it is your physical fitness and your physical prowess and your presentation of your martial art, the way you hold yourself, your bearing etc. That's kind of the responsibility of being a super Don. So, I'll give you an example, Ron Van Cleef, you see, you know who he is a black Dragon?

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yes, I know that name.

Jeremy Lesniak:



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God thank you, thank you for saying that. He is like 70 years old and still looks in very good shape. Very good and I can't think of anybody else off the top of my head that's the super don oh there's another guy Ronnie Kluger in Israel. He's in very good shape. I'm sure we get if we thought long enough we could think of other people and that are there and that they didn't look good, they looked the part and that's my take on it. I think if you're representing yourself as a master or now everybody's a Grand Master and [00:14:30.11] founder and she whatever Doctor sorry. And everybody's that. So, if that's what how what you're holding yourself out to be, you need to look apart, that's my take on it. It just irritates me and I see people with a big fat stomachs and this and that, they're really are shape and they representing himself to be masters and grandmasters, whatever. Anyway, that's our industry, we'll call an industry, that's what was stuck with. So, the best that all we can do on an individual basis is try to represent the martial arts as best we can. That's my idea.

Jeremy Lesniak:

I agree.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Okay.

Jeremy Lesniak:

So that might've been the longest answer we've ever had to the opening.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Pretty funny. I can be long winded.

Jeremy Lesniak:

I got all the time in world.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Actually, I tell you I let this's might be a good juncture to plug my book. I finished the book last year, December, like just six months ago or something like that, call seeking the way my life in the martial arts it's an autobiography type thing. You know, it's got a lot of interesting stories and I think in one of that, one of the interview questions is what give me some fascinating story from your martial arts career that



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and there's plenty of that we'll touch on one of those there. But anyway, I did finish that, finish that book and it does have a lot of really, really good stuff in it so we'll get to that.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Okay. Well, our next question is about martial arts stories and why don't you give an example of a great one that they may be as in the book and not that I brought you on to promote your book, but I am happy to promote your book. So, you know maybe that'll inspire some of the listeners to go out and pick up a copy.

Jeremy Lesniak:

It's on Amazon.com and in lulu.com and it's also on yamasato–videos they can get it there. But anyway, yeah, I got a lot of fascinating stories in there. I think they're fascinating anyway, but I'm prejudiced cause I wrote the book. You know I'll tell you one. You know, a lot of people know me as a karate guy. Oh yeah, that's guy does Okinawan karate or this or that or something and maybe people don't know that you know, I did Kendo for 35 years, right? And so, you know I did all over the place and I did fought in Japan, fought many top guys in Japan, blah blah blah. But anyway, not to blow my own horn too much, you know I did the kendo so here's the story. I'm sitting in my dojo one night, this is in Lake Worth, Florida had a small dojo there, a guy walks in just before class is about the start one evening and he is so big he has to kinda duck his head to get in the door and I'm like this guy is have behemoth. I'm looking at the guy I'm like holy cow, what is this guy? Surely this guy, doesn't need karate, look at the size of this guy. He comes in very nice now soft-spoken, real gentleman, well-mannered and said I understand you teach kendo and then I go and I said yeah, I do. I got to have some lessons, is that okay? And so, we'll gonna call him what I call him in the book, Vito I think. Cause they're not using his real name. Anyway, so I called him Vito and so the other guy does kendo with me for about a month or so and he wasn't bad but he was huge, he wasn't bad and then I said well Vito what you do for living? He said well I'm in security, I'm like, okay I don't know what that means exactly but alright fine. And he said, I worked out of South America and Central America and stuff like that. Oh, okay and then he goes you know they killed one of my guys down there. Really? What happened there? Well they stabbed them and they shot them. I'm thinking and so he said were gonna get that guy. So, I assume what he meant was the authorities are going to pursue the guy an arrest them, that's what I thought he meant. So now he's training a month and he goes, I wanna learn the other stuff the eido and kenjitsu I wanna learn this. I said, okay sure I'll show you the eight now directions of cutting and some techniques and stuff like that fine. Kasagiti, lapel cut when you cut down on an angle anyway at someone's neck. So, I show him all that stuff and then another month or so goes by and he's not bad he's kinda got a handle on it and then he goes well, I got down to Guatemala but I'll be back in about three weeks. So, I went, okay. True enough three weeks to the day the guy comes back, he brings me a gift which is this very delicate Chinese tea set, I'm like wow. It is kind of interesting it's almost like a Zen thing and I mean he uses huge



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gargantuan guy, a bodyguard or whatever he is and that he's bringing this very delicate little gift and I noticed had a Nick on his elbows was cut, and I said what, Vito, what happened to your elbow there? And he said well you now I ducked behind a tree and a guy kept me there with a machete I'm like really? And then he goes yeah, and he said you know that cut you taught me [00:19:52.35]. Yeah kind of lapel cut downward cut between the neck and the shoulder. He said that works I buried my sword all the way into this guy's sternum. And I just looked at that guy in shock like you're kidding me. You know he didn't know what to say. I was like a whoa. So that was it, he was done. I yeah, I didn't know what to say the guy. He was done he just wanted to learn kendo iaido kenjutsu so that he could go down to Guatemala and avenge his guy in a duel. He fought this other guy, the guy had a machete, he had a katana. He had a Japanese sword and he killed the guy and then he was done. He didn't need to take lessons anymore because he only took lesson so that he could have enough skill to fight this guy in a duel and kill him. I was like wow. Later on, I started asking around town about him I found someone that knew him and I said to you know Vito, and he said oh yeah Vito, he's a hitman if you want somebody killed, just talk to him. I'm like what, I couldn't believe it I was like flabbergasted. This is in the book, but to this day I still remember that guy pretty well but I damn sure didn't use his real name in the book. I'm certain he's still alive he might come after me. Anyway, that was a shocker, that was kind of guy that was an interesting one. I must say, I don't, I've had people yell learn karate and martial arts stuff in my school or my dojo and go out maybe do bar fighting or some like that, which I eventually kick them out and then kicked them out for other psychological reasons but I never read never really had anybody just straightforward, let me learn some martial arts okay, when he goes kill somebody with it, come back here with a gift thank you very much. Never had that happen before, never.

Jeremy Lesniak:

How did you, how did you feel after that? You know as, I mean it in the arts were taught, I mean universally, this stuff is for when you need it only not to initiate.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah well, that was a bit more of an aggressive stance, what he was more like a samurai wasn't he? He is more let you know the, a vendetta. You know that's more like the samurai or some other, you could, maybe the Mafia, I don't know. The guy was Italian I gotta be careful now. The guy was Italian. Actually, used to be Frank Sinatra's bodyguard as well. Oh yeah and so, there's some more stories in the book about that will go into that now but there are a few more stories about him, pretty infamous guy there. But yeah so, his behavior, you know, can you fault that from a modern point of view? From bu jit bu do let's call it the way of martial arts or you're pursuing it for meditation purposes, spiritual purposes, health purposes yeah. You really not out to kill anybody. Are you? But from a jut su standpoint or a samurai standpoint yeah, that's it's battlefield stuff, it's you know, you're try to kill somebody, you're not, you know you don't have dojo precepts or code that you're really going by that says nonviolence



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anyway. So yeah, he was more like a samurai. But you wouldn't think that that doesn't exist and that went away I don't know what the turn-of-the-century or something, the 20th century has gone. But yeah, you don't encounter that very often modern society. Certainly, I did. So that was a real shocker. That stayed with me you know, that certainly stayed with me. But that's one story and then I don't know there's lots of others, that book has got 78 chapters and it's 718 pages long and a lot of people are kidding me about it and said, Gandhi only wrote 716 pages did you write you more pages just upstage Gandhi. No, I didn't, but the end of it is some scholarly papers on the martial arts and in the rest of his autobiography stuff. So, there's lots of stories and tales like that like that in there.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Cool. I'm gonna have to check that out. So, you you've trained for a for a long time. You said something about more than 50 years. So certainly, you've had a lot of martial arts influence. I mean, you've influence a lot of others but you've had a lot of martial arts influence on your life and who you are as an individual. How would you say that you've become a better person, and you can define that however you want, from your time in the martial arts?

Jeremy Lesniak:

Well you know, I taught a lot of people and I've seen the effect of it especially on kids. I taught kids for about 10 years, cause you know you need kids class to pay the rent, your dojo to be... But yeah and I saw the psychological development and not only in just kids and adults too. I saw that psychological development that was taking place and you know I even used to say to parents, you realize that the dojo is the only place your child can get any real discipline and they look at me like a little dumbfounded at first and I said you know, they can get it in school and I can't get it home, this is the only place. And realize you know at that time this is like an 80s and the 90s, yeah, I ran my kids class like Marine Corps boot camp. They mess up, I just looked at him in a drop or doing push-ups I didn't have to tell them to do push-ups anymore or I'd say you know, get down the push-up position and I'll let you know when you can get back up and stuff like that. And one of the things I got from that is little kids innately know that they need discipline. I might sound a little nut now like Charles Manson or something, but anyway, this is my take on it is where I think without being a psychologist, they innately know they need discipline. And so, will you whip some on and they can benefit from it, not abuse or anything like that, I never had kids, I sparred with him all the time but I never you know go up to a kid and punch him in the stomach because he was in the wrong stance or something like that. Sounds [00:26:12.33] in this day and age this must sound like madness but this is how goes and so, you know they know that they need discipline and they will respect you for giving it to them and they'll turn out to be better people, better citizens. So that was kind and I must say that was gratifying. Gratifying to do that, really... I've not only done that in the martial arts, I'm also University professor, they asked me how I did all this in one lifetime but it has something to do taught the Marine Corps of brainwashing and overachieving. But you know I used to



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teach a maximum-security prison upstate New York. I talked to political science, the history of Japan and the history of modern China and those guys they're the ones I caught, my situation there was those people were New York City gang bangers. They were, it was a, it was for juvenile offenders, guys that were up from all the way up to 18 maybe 20 or even 21 and they would get transferred to a real prison. But all these guys were you know gang banger type guys and they were, every one of them was in for violent crime and man I that was a really hard job I taught fitness there, because I couldn't teach martial arts, I couldn't karate or jujitsu cause they'd use it on the guards. But I used to teach tai chi there and like chi gun, like a fitness type thing, with little yoga thrown and whatever. And so that was difficult, that class was hard. It was hard to control those people, because they've no respect for you and this is an example of what happens when there's no, there's a breakdown in the family unit and these guys a [00:27:58.02] and so but when, in the college program, when I started teaching there, that was a little safer environment. They could let their guard down a little bit and it was amazing what they didn't know about society moral behavior etc. And after a few semesters, I watch those guys develop psychologically yeah, that gave me a warm, fuzzy, feeling deep inside. I mean, so there's I think maybe what I'm saying is that the reward of teaching is a great one. I'm definitely here You know one of the challenges and in conducting these interviews is that I don't really get the bit the ability to hit pause and take stuff in like the people listening and sometimes I listen to somebody say something very poignant like you've just done, it kinda leaves my wheels turning and so I've gotta pull myself back out of that.

Jeremy Lesniak:

I say yeah as an interviewer. If go to silent you know for a few seconds, I'm gonna end up editing it out so no one will know but you and I but it's a compliment.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah okay great thank you, thank you.

Jeremy Lesniak:

You're welcome. So that that's on one end of the spectrum, we talked about the positive there and I'd like to kind of sorry go to the other end and think about all the low point in your life something challenging or difficult that your martial arts training, skill, upbringing helped you overcome or move through. Can you tell us that story?

Jeremy Lesniak:

Sure. I mean there's a number of things I can think about there but, I mean one thing was just well maybe getting from college. Because my undergraduate degree is in business administration,



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accounting. If you can believe that, I actually work for CPA firm for a couple years after college and you know, blah blah blah. So that's not the people the other, I don't look like an account with big thick glasses back in a room with a bunch of numbers on a calculator but you know, I get to do that for a while. Took me eight years to get out of it. But anyway, so that undergraduate curriculum was that was tough and so the discipline that I got and the fortitude and that, I think I got a lot of that from the martial arts and I said I must succeed here, I cannot fail and it helped me to drive through and get it all done. I really did. So, I would say that's an attribute and help the economy to accomplish something there.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Okay. So now let's talk a little bit about your training and who you train with. I'm sure there's a lot of that in your book, I'd like to, like to forget for a moment the people that you trained under directly, the people you would've called sensei. Other than them, who would you say had the biggest influence on your martial arts?

Jeremy Lesniak:

I can think of people on top of my head. Sensei Fumio Demura in California. I always looked up to that guy, that guy had so much physical skill. And if you meet him, he's nice guy. He is very approachable, he's very personable, he's a good man, he is excellent. He played the double for the Mr. Miyagi in the original karate kid movie, you know who I'm talking about now.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yup.

Jeremy Lesniak:

I think he is a real shining example of somebody to look up to. Another person is essentially Chuck Merryman. He is an old, I guess [00:31:51.23] he's an old gojiru guy and he was my Coach for a lot of competition stuff that I did in the AAU and all that sort of thing. And yeah, he was a generation or so ahead of me, 10-15 years ahead of me or whatever. I think he's in his 80s now and yeah, I saw him help a lot of people. He would go out of his way often times and help people, I guess but [00:32:22.24] problems or you know, their martial arts, their competition stuff or whatever they were doing. So yeah and then he is to organize trips Okinawa all the time, I went to Okinawa with him. He was just very, very influential on me I think. And good man, good man. And certainly, and was my coach and his wife is a Lou Merryman and she's an excellent coach too. She's an excellent martial artist herself so yes, I would say those two people from your Fumio Demura sensei and the Chuck Merryman. Yeah, they are very



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influential on me. I mean there's many others, I mean, I'm trying to say not say who you asked I say don't say who you directly trained either you would call your sensei or teacher or whatever. So those are people that I, not really train under directly but guys that I people that I know.

Jeremy Lesniak:

How about competition? Was that ever a big thing for you?

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah. Here and there I mean, I kind of, my approach to martial arts was different because, I approach that originally as the young Marine that was my take and part of the pursuit of that, was that I want to be the complete warrior. So not only do I know how to fire a rifle and [00:33:58.24] I can March with a 100-pound pack on my back and run up and down mountains and do all this kind of stuff and be skilled with the weapons like you know, automatic rifle m16 and m60 machine gun, a grenade launcher. Not only can I do all that I need to be skilled in hand-to-hand combat to be the complete package and we did training in hand-to-hand combat actually, they do a lot of that now the Marine Corps has their own hand-to-hand combat system. So, you know jujitsu and karate, I perceive that as part of my repertoire and not necessarily point competition or even kickboxing. I mean, I just that wasn't, I guess that wasn't on the on the menu at that point, any idea of that, I had no idea of pursuing that but then of course later on, you know in the 70s and the 80s, I did do some competition there and then I bailed out of it for 15-18 years something like that. I think a [00:35:05.01] and so might my little, in my little mind I said to myself I'm going to be the great grandmaster, the super don and sit back and say yes these are my students and look how wonderful they are. So, I was doing that and then I had a kid who started training with me when he was five and he and his dad also had the kid running 5 miles, sounds like child abuse oh here we go. And you know he had a batting cage in the backyard the kid was lifting weights in the old man's dream, this is in the book I'm sure, the old man's dream was to have that kid play for the New York Yankees because they were from the Bronx. So that's fine so between the old man and me the poor kid never had a chance unfortunately, for fortunately rather, the kid was very coachable and was a very good athlete and so by the time he was 15, I had him fighting against guys that were world champion, he fought a kid one time from South Africa William Victor who's probably still around and William was 19 at the time, very mature fast as lightning incredible and the two of them went at it in my dojo one time in West Palm Beach Florida and they practically went through the glass window several times, it was an amazing fight. And so that kid Got very good and I said okay I'm going to make, he's in two- three years he's a world champion. And then what happened was he bailed out on me, he said well I signed a contract, I'm gonna play professional baseball, I was like what? So, I was kind of disturbed by that but you know what, his old man wants him to play for the Yankees, he's going to make a lot more money as a professional baseball player that he is a karate instructor. So, alright, do your thing but I said, you know what if you don't compete dammit, I will. So now I'm like 50 years old when this is happening



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right. And this is why I hooked up with Chuck Merryman and we said, let's devise a strategy, you need to start competing in this tournament and then that tournament and then our stepping stones to get to the nationals and to get the world championships. So that's what we do we do is devise a strategy over about a two-year period for me to compete in you know a more intense or more loftier national, international and world championship like [00:37:39.52] stuff to get to the top and one of the, this kind of a long-winded intro, and one of the deals and again this ii on the book was likely the 1997 AAU nationals. Yeah, I competed in the mat and the kata division was amazing because it was about 30 people in that division or may be more. I mean that's big, huge, right? And the way it played out it was like, when your competing in kata you want to be one of the last guys the next-to-last or something like that could if you're the first guy it's very subjective, right? It's like one judge thinks he got an 8.5, another judge thinking that a 7.5, another judge thinks you had a 9.95 and the average so scores together well, that's kind of ridiculous but so it is subjective. So, what happened was, so the strategy in that type competition is you want to be next to last because the first guy then not sure what the heck's going on so they usually judge that guy kinda low cause they're not sure what's happening and eventually sorts itself out. So that that worked really well for me, it played out like a movie and I want that competing the last guy, was a guy from Los Angeles [00:39:02.56] from Los Angeles and man, he was good. His problem was we tied and they said okay do it again. And I said same kata? They said no, different ones and I said no problem. So, I had an a and a B and I used to practice these on Sunday at my day off and id run a mile on the beach, do kata and then run a mile back, that was my day off. Anyway so, as it turned out, I won. I got a kind of a low score subjective on the first one which was a mistake and the guy realize it was a mistake and the second time around he gave me a higher score, blah blah blah I won. But anyway, was kind of like a, kinda like a, like a movie script though I [00:39:43.58] karate kid thing. So that was quite enjoyable. Another thing I used to do in the 70s and this is or maybe even in the 60s, before we had the safety gear and stuff like that, I should put a piece of white adhesive tape around my right hand and then that way they could see if I did backflips for reverse punch that white tape makes it she'll show up, it's amazing how that works but, your eye will follow that tape and you could see that if somebody's scored with a blow or whatever. But anyway, so what I'm not sure I'm regretting this but I kinda wish I had done more kickboxing. You know, I've done some of that and I teach kickboxing but you know, Joe Lewis and Bill Wallace those guys were kind of heroes to me I guess. Heroes I don't know if that's the right word. Joe Lewis about you was about three years ahead of me and he was the first world kickboxing champion in 1975. You know he was a Marine, he was in Vietnam the same as I was and all of these kind of stuff so, he was sort of a hero or somebody to look up to. And so, I kinda regretted, but my fascination was all, was really traditional karate you know, what are these kata mean? Who invented them? What's the history behind all this stuff? So that kept me so fascinated, still does actually for so many years, it was difficult to pursue other things so I mean, I've studied judo, jujitsu, karate, Okinawa kobudo and kendo. And actually, some Chinese, a little Chinese stuff, tai chi and that kind of thing. And so, I didn't leave much room or time to pursue other stuff to pursue kickboxing actually. So, I don't know, maybe that's not a, not a bad thing yeah, I keep you get your brains beaten, maybe that's a good thing.



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Jeremy Lesniak:

There's always more and I think that it's...

Jeremy Lesniak:

There's no end to it, you just hit the point there is no end to it, there's no end to learning.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Right and I think that that says something for the mindset that a lot of martial artists have. The desire to learn and keep learning and it's that desire that creates so many different styles and sub styles because people find what works for them and they adapt this and they take that and I think that that is beautiful and it's one of the things I really enjoy about martial arts. And you're actually you know, you mentioned two legendary names and I was actually lucky enough just about a week and half ago to record an episode with Bill Wallace and it just aired four days ago. So, your you're in good company there for sure.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Oh, good yeah good man good man good athlete, good man. Joe Lewis unfortunately is not with us any longer. Yeah, he got a brain tumor and passed on to the big dojo in the sky but yeah, he certainly was another legend. And then we were talking about genetics earlier, that guy, he just had the genetics. If you've ever seen some of the old footage, not even the kickboxing stuff but from, oh man the Long Beach international, Parkers Long Beach internationals or something and the guy was a force to be reckoned with. He was a big strong guy and was fast as lightning. Anyway, that's stuff good to watch, oh which brings, oh that's a segue. We were gonna mention another thing that we can talk about earlier which was you know, I started a company about 25 years ago called yamasato videos and produced over 200 martial art videos some of them are me. But you know, I got a lot of other people involved in different projects and was able to get their martial arts on DVD for distribution and that sort of thing and that you know, we still have that company to this day. And so, you know fitness was a good thing. Historic footage, I put out a lot of historic footage, I'll give an example, one is on judo and yuzo mifumae, it's a judo DVD that he did and that guy's a legend, he's probably like the best judo man in terms of throwing that ever lived and a lot of people look up to that guy. Any way 110 pounds and people can throw the guy he was like holding to an empty towel or something like that. That was good to get that kind of historic footage out there. So, yeah, I feel good about that. We did some wing Chun [00:44:33.15] just goes on and on, it's over 200 dvds. And so, a lot people say, you know a lot about the martial arts, why is that? Number one, I'm obsessed. Number two, by doing the all those videos and producing all that stuff I learned a lot, I learned a lot of history, I learned a lot of techniques, I learned a



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lot of stuff from watching all these different styles in all these different people doing that sort of thing. So, it was good, it was good educational process too.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Cool. And you got to meet a lot of amazing people I'm sure through that.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah, I did. I did.

Jeremy Lesniak:

That's fun. But is there anybody that you didn't get a chance to train with you would've like to?

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yes, I had in kendo, Dr. Gordon Warner and I'm surprised that more people don't know who he is or was or whatever. But they just don't. So, if they're in martial arts or just jumping around with a little bow or something they're not going to know who he was but here's the take on the guy, he wrote the first book in English, let me put it this way. He wrote the first book in English on kendo called this is kendo, published in 1964 and his story is a really interesting one. I didn't meet him until he was about 85 years old and I worked with him, didn't do much actual physical stuff but he was like a mentor for me. And so, his story is the interesting he started taking kendo in Los Angeles like in the 1930s like whoa. Didn't know they had kendo in the 1930s but they did, there was a dojo in Los Angeles he did that then he went to Japan and he stayed there for a year and he trained in kendo and he did what was called a shugyo, which means off stair training. He just traveled around like on a pilgrimage from dojo to dojo in Japan and fought each dojo. And then the war, the anti-American sentiment started to build up in Japan and the war, World War II, was looming in the in the background there and he said you know, I need to get the hell outta here. So, he left, went back to Los Angeles and then the war erupted, December 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor so what did he do? He joins the Marine Corps and they sent him to the Pacific and he could speak Japanese so he was kind of helpful in that regard but during the battle of Saipan, he lost his leg. His leg was blown off and in an ironic twist of fate, a Japanese corporal who was not in the American Marine Corps, not in the army of Japan, saved him, put a tourniquet on his leg and dragging behind a bulldozer and protected them from fire. So anyway, he, I guess he got discharge at some point. He got a prosthesis for his left leg and but that could not stop him from practicing and even competing in Kendo with a wooden leg and I used to tell my karate students that stop crying about bumps and bruises because this guy had his leg blown and he still practice the rest of his life and competed. He was a really interesting guy, he was a university professor as well and he's kind of like an



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icon in Okinawa in some circles because after World War II, somehow, you still in the Marine Corps, I don't know how we pull all this off but he was in charge of the civil administration of the island. That at the battle of Okinawa which took place from April to June in 1945 devastated that island. It's amazing their culture even still exists, I mean it was flattened right just bombed and you know naval gunfire blown the beach and then they had the battle which lasted two, three months, two and a half months. And so, after the battle, he made sure those people got medical attention, food, water and all that sort of thing. So, in era, he was a bit of a hero in Okinawa as well. So, but like I said, I didn't need him until he was about 85 years old and he was still practicing kendo up until that time, but then he had to stop because he had an automobile accident and they put a rod in his arm and he could bend his arm anymore he stopped practicing. But I got a lot of stuff from him, I got a lot of interesting techniques in modern kendo and then also you know, I got a lot of the Musashi stuff from him, Musashi, Miamoto Masashi everybody clenched and quote him all the time and all the sort of thing. The [00:49:34.41] the book of five rings and all that and I had a conversation with the and he didn't like to be called sensei, he liked if you call Dr. Warner so that's how we call him. And so, I suggest that you know it's too bad Musashi style didn't live on, he said, oh but it did. Isadi, what do you mean? Yeah there's three dojos in Japan that practice Masashi's stuff. I said, how many more? So anyway, he had a lot of the information he showed me all that stuff I got this called, niten ichiru, two sword styles or two heavenly style something like that, so I got a lot of that information from him which, who even knew that that existed? So, he was a guy I wish I could've spent more time on the dojo for with him but he was older he was at the end of his life and I was still kind in the middle of mine. So anyway, yeah that's my regret that I didn't train.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Those are great people,

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah yeah. Legends, legends. And I feel bad that more people don't know about him. But again, he is in the book I got pictures of them in the book and all that sort of thing.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Well after this at least a few more people will know about it.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Absolutely.



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Jeremy Lesniak:

How about more on the lighter side of martial arts. Do you have any favorite films, martial arts films?

Jeremy Lesniak:

Well, I'm a fan as a video guy do you know? I think I mean, jeez. Oh man, there's so many you know, I was just talking about something yesterday, the 13 assassins and some samurai films said oh yeah, and the guy showed me a clip of it I said I haven't seen that one. It's a sword stuff, if you talking sword stuff, god lone wolf and cub, the baby cart movies. A lot of people didn't know about that. Those are 6 films I think and they're incredible and their [00:51:44.50] hacking of women ninjas and it's got a little kid in a baby cart, mother fighting and anybody wants to see that, those are great movies. Of course, the classic enter the Dragon from Bruce Lee. I mean that changed everything, that guy was 30 years at least ahead of his time, I mean he, started doing mixed martial arts before anybody, where everybody went whoa the [00:52:09.27]. I can remember, listen to this, I can remember when judo guys kind of despised karate guys and this is because judo came to this country first and was pretty well established that in the Air Force, the strategic air command, Gen. Curtis Lemay they were in Japan and I saw judo and I said, man this is good for discipline, physical fitness so he had all these air forces guys training in judo like crazy and then I came back to the United States and it took off judo was a big deal. The judo chop, you know that was kinda part of it but then when like in the late 50s and early 60s when karate started to become popular in the US, that you know guys would resent that. This is odd to me, this is so strange, right? They kinda resented that they were like we have all those kicks and punches and chops and stuff. We break boards, we have all had in judo you know. Because karate was sort of out sensationalizing judo that's what was happening. But now look what's happened it's all come full circle and you got MMA which will, that every technique for any martial art you can think of, they can use it if it's an effective it's in there. But there was a kind of resentment between the two arts but I think that's gone now, I mean people that practice judo oh yeah karate, cool. Oh yeah aikido, that's cool. Okay kendo, that's cool.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Were they resentful because judo was here first?

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yes. It's established first, established first and it had the limelight and karate started to upstage them and steal the show. So, I saw some of that I was like oh karate okay right we have all that in judo. And if you look jigoro okano's book, judo kotokan illustrated in the back in the 1967 edition has a guy doing a reverse punch, prior that, that wasn't in there. That's the basis of my argument. Yeah, that wasn't in



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there. Another guy that I wish I trained with Don Drager. I was in Tokyo and at the Kotakan and I was supposed to meet him, there's another guy today somebody said was on Facebook or something on the Internet and there was a picture of Don Drager, he was another guy, he was a Marine, he was a major in the Marine Corps for the Korean War and then retired to and live in Japan the rest of his life and just did martial arts. He did Kendo, he did kenjitsu, judo, he is fantastic in judo and he was a big robust guy, 61 62 very muscular, kind of a German guy from Wisconsin or something like that and he wrote 33 books. He wrote the first book in English on ninjitsu, and he wrote some other books, oh man modern budo and bujitsu of all those books. And so, he was quite the guy, I was scheduled to meet him at the Kotakan and something happened and I was at kotakan and he didn't show up or something happened. I don't know, he another meeting or had to go somewhere something like that and yeah, so I regret not meeting him and not being able to train with him. He was quite the guy and but again sad, people today, I wonder how many people will be interested, people listen to this, how many people today would go oh yeah Don Drager Andrea I remember who, I know who he was or I've seen his books or something, I was flabbergasted some guy on Facebook that guy has got a good build, who's he? I'm like, how could you be in the martial arts and not know who Don Drager was. I don't know, that's like, how could you be in physics and not know who Einstein was, to me but I got that jaded point of view here I guess you know.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Well there's definitely a gap I think between what you might call the old guard and the new guard and I consider myself on the end of the old guard. My lineage is I'm Young and 36 but my lineage you know is pretty short. There aren't a lot of steps between me and when martial arts came to America. But we're promoting a seminar with Bill Wallace and in the work that I'm doing to promote that, I'm running into a lot of people that don't know who he is.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Wow. His head quarter page ad within Black Belt Magazine for 10 years 15 years, I have issue Black Belt Magazine has had an ad for Bill Wallace's videotape so that produced a lot of his notoriety. Kickboxing in the 80s really took off. It started in the 70s when it really took off and so his notoriety comes from those two things the popularity of kickboxing in the 80s and then the video stuff and black ads in Black Belt Magazine. But now I mean you got MMA guys, you even got a lot more water under the bridge since that. So yes, if you got like a new generation of martial artist they go, whose Bill Wallace? Is don Drager? Who's who some of the, some of the original you know, some of the original more original guys. You know they just, they just don't know and so to me being somewhat of an academic you may have picked up on that by now, yeah study you're art, study the history know where it came from, this is going to help you understanding techniques, applications etc. So, I don't know, I'm just thinking of as if you're more of a complete martial artist, you need to know what the hell you're talking about. And so what my deal is, you know I have a group probably ISKKF, International shorin ryu, karate, kobudo federation and



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yeah, we have a training manual, complete training manual for the whole thing, we have in instructors or written examination. So in order to be an instructor, you have to take an exam that has 125 questions on history, exercise, physiology, dojo etiquette, all this, all the subjects so that you are qualified to teach. You know, I feel strongly about that cause a lot of people they're teaching stuff and that's like yeah, the kids 11 years old and he's peach and [00:58:48.50] the kid's eleven standing there like Napoleon teaching these other guys out [00:58:54.07] yeah so being qualified as a teacher that's important. So yeah and so it all works together I think, you need to know the history of you're art and some of the people of gone before you and what they did and what they developed. But you know some of the traditional guys, are there so steeped in tradition, yeah that they can't move on and that's you now, that's not good either because the martial arts have continued to evolve and all we can do is go where, it's like a river man, once thrown into the river, were going with the current that's it. You don't really have a choice and so a lot of people are the traditional people all that MMA stuff that's lunacy, it's just young guys with testosterone beating each other's brains and yeah but it is a martial sport. You know, I mean there was a conductor from the New York Philharmonic Orchestra and what did he say? We are about Mozart, he said you know we are bound by tradition but were not slaves to it. I always was remembering, that's cool. You know, we are bound by tradition but were not slaves to it and you know that the other expression is there's nothing new under the sun, I mean the first Olympics was in 689 BC and that's, and they had MMA. That's what they did. You know [01:00:23.50] thing it's all power pankration means all powers in Greek. And so what that meant was it was grappling and striking in one martial art, it was basically. So we've come full circle, in fact I wrote an article about that in Black Belt Magazine 10 years ago or something, martial arts comes full circle or back to the future or something like that. That's what it was, it talking about how it's to become a martial sport that's Full Contact just like pankration in the old days. And so well what happened was after the early part of the 20th century, you had karate which is mostly striking although they originally had that have a lot of grappling in it. You know, I teach a lot of the grappling from karate kata and stuff like that and then judo evolves out of jiu-jitsu which was mostly grappling, throwing and grappling. So you can in modern kendo is like a stick, it's a bamboo stick it's not a real sword. And so they evolved into martial sports and they went their separate ways but originally you know, a samurai we will use that terminology a warrior you know, he had to be skilled in everything. He needed and had no grappling striking and how to handle and applied techniques with all kinds of weapons, but see is the modern era approach and it was no longer, warfare, well, the gun's what changed everything, the invention of the gun, that changed everything, prior to that, you had to you had to know how have physical skills and in striking grappling and as well as all kinds of weapons. Anyway, so that how the evolution of it and if you step back and look at the big picture may be you appreciated more. Yeah, I'm a fan, I don't do MMA but I'm, but I'd pick kickboxing over jiu-jitsu. So I got a couple MMA moves in me, but yeah, I certainly do that I and I don't really teach MMA but I'm a fan of it, I like what I like, the top echelon guys, that's interesting to watch. So yeah, I like it but I don't have a grudge against it because it's different from what I do.

Jeremy Lesniak:



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Well, you know I think I've kinda got two things on that. First, I enjoy watching it where I have a hard time watching it is when the showmanship becomes about the ego and it becomes like professional wrestling when they get beat up and everything, and I don't enjoy that. I like watching us in fact I prefer watching amateur stuff because after beating the snot out of each other these will get up and hug and say I know that was a great fight and you know as a lifelong martial artist, I enjoy that sentiment that these two stepped into a ring to better reach other.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah you know, I have a short chapter in the book I think, something like that and I fought a guy, a Spanish guy, in California one time and yeah, we beat the bajesus out of each other and when we were done, we were like hey man, that was awesome thank you, that was a good fight. Because you know, as a martial artist if you're competing against somebody else like that you, if you have a better opponent it's gonna bring out more in you also, you can't have an experience like that a good experience like that without that opponent, you must have them. So that's why you should have respect for your opponent. But yeah, I can remember a situation like that in California and yeah, we beat the bajesus out of each other and right afterwards it was like that was really good was it, yeah. So we developed like an instant camaraderie over that and so and so yeah that I hear what you're saying that this thing wasn't like boxing where they have a press conference and they set it up and then wind up fighting before they ever get the ring, boy that's a long way from the dojo [01:04:34.52] of nonviolence you know, of having a character, being sincere, putting forth effort in and all this kind of stuff. Yeah that's a lot different and that's the difference between mixed martial arts and traditional martial arts, traditional they have that they have a code and with that code actually [01:04:55.44] in terms of karate when they came from, neo-Confucian ethics adopted by, if you go back in the history of Okinawa, Karate Sakugawa and then matsamura, they are neo-Confucian ethics and that was a pledge the original dojo kun precepts was a pledge, sometimes signed in blood like if go to the ninjitsu history they had, when you signed up he had to cut your finger and when you sign the contract you had to seal it and blood and you had to agree to go abide by the principles of that dojo which was nonviolent in other words, don't use it against them I'm not gonna teach you the stuff for you on the bars and beat up other people, which a lot of people did. But you know, that was the original concept and yeah, you don't have that in MMA at all. They have no code, there is no tradition, there is no history, there is no code. It's only 20 years the UFC just celebrated their 20-year anniversary, which I can't believe it's already that long but it is.

Jeremy Lesniak:

I've actually, years ago I read an article that I you know, really resonated with me to say but I think we could avoid a lot of the animosity by just changing one of the letters and that acronym is that of MMA, MMC mixed martial combat. And I think a lot of the traditionalists would be able to look at very differently.



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Jeremy Lesniak:

Oh I see what you're saying, yeah okay.

Jeremy Lesniak:

You know because I think that, you know and I see it too you, know one of the, I've once left a martial arts school because I didn't have enough tradition for me. There wasn't, there wasn't the bowing, there wasn't that sense of respect I mean they were excellent martial artist was a Brazilian jujitsu school and they were very very good at what they did and I learned some wonderful things, but I missed that sense...

Jeremy Lesniak:

I had a student of mine had the same exact experience and he said to me Hanshi, they don't have the code, they don't have the dojo kun, they don't have the respect for each other, they're like street fighters, they're thugs, I said, you get the hell out of there. I think it's not a traditional dojo, it's kickboxing, it's MMA, it's Brazilian jujitsu or whatever, yeah, they just don't have a code, it's street fighting. It was a bunch of street fighting thugs that were in it. Yeah, they're not gonna bow in every respect that's what it is. And that's probably the main difference really, I would say. But also, I realize that's a huge business, and it's entertainment and so it's not a martial art really, it's entertainment you are truly a martial sport, martial art implies self-defense, discipline etc. It's a martial sport is what it is and it's a huge business so yeah, it's entertainment they get a guy now Connor McGregor, it's like professional wrestling the guy you love to hate one of those guys right? So it's, and that hypes it up and you know the masses are stimulated by that so that's you know, that's the advertising, that's promotion, that's what happens there. So yeah, I don't fault that I mean I'm kind of, I'm maybe I'm more mellow now un my old age but yeah, I don't have a problem with it but I do what I do but it's not bad.

Jeremy Lesniak:

We all do what we all do. Different aspects to the martial arts call that one of them because they're different kinds of people and different things resonate for different people.

Jeremy Lesniak:

That's true. Well you know I was gonna mention a couple other things. We talked about seminars and camps and stuff and yet I still do seminars that teach sword stuff karate and jujitsu and travel around. Actually I taught on [01:08:48.26] Italy for 10 years I lived in Italy for 10 years but I went there like 2-3 times a year, every year for about 10 years so I kinda know that country like the back of my hand. Lot of



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fun a lot of excellent martial arts. All other Europeans holy cow, they got some great martial artist over there. And then so you know, I travel around do seminars, I take a trip to Japan once a year, have a small group do that and every year we have a summer camp which we are [01:09:19.37] in a week. And people from around the country, pretty much guys that are instructors in our group and stuff get together and we have a good time by doing the Okinawan kata right on the beach so that'll be fun. And then I also mentioned we have a website worldbudokan.com which is got some good information on it. And then the video production company is still going, yeah yamazatovideos.com still have, like a said earlier over 200 titles and a lot of that is preserving a lot of this old historic footage again, like aikido weishiba sensei doing aikido, mifune doing judo and you look back at some of these old guys, the forerunners of what we have now and in our age, you can even see the excellence you can see where it comes from and you go wow, that's how it's actually supposed to be done. Not discounting the evolution of martial arts and man I'll tell you what, I have witnessed that is man. From when I started martial arts to now, exchange vastly in many ways and one way is the evolution and a lot of traditionalists wouldn't admit this, but the martial arts have evolved and change for the better. I mean, there's these kata demonstrations and competition that you see in Japan a world competition, the level of athletic performance is way beyond what it was like even in the 80s. I mean, there's a gal I saw on Facebook and she's doing a traditional kata, t[01:11:17.19] and she has all these dominoes laid out like thousands of them right, in rows, as she does the cop and she goes through the entire thing and doesn't touch one of them because her movement and placement of the fee is so exact that she goes through the whole thing, that's a bit, extreme but you know, you look at it you go wow, that's discipline, that is perfection of form and that's the discipline, that's the mastery of traditional martial arts coming from a battlefield entity where you're just a jitsu where you try kill somebody to a real art to discipline that requires a high level of skill. So I appreciate that. That's now I kind of add you to that and that's a good thing. But anyway, so I helped capture a lot, hopefully I present you a part of my life is capturing all that stuff and preserving that footage. I put a lot of time and energy into that and so you know maybe in the future, may be 20 years from now, 50 years from now somebody will go back and go oh yeah look at all the, but I know it's a lot of this is on YouTube now. They've grabbed a lot of my footage and stuff and put it on YouTube and some of its copyrighted some of it isn't you know I mean it's just old stuff and that's on there so you could you can see it on their, which has hurt the video business by the way. I used to ship hundreds if not thousands of dvds to Europe every month and when I saw YouTube come out, I said boy this is going to be the death of that business. Well, didn't kill it but it hurt it substantially because now you can go on YouTube and look up any kata, any martial artist any, anything you want. I think there's one on how to fold napkins for dinner I mean, you can look that up if you want, this is all sorts of things on them. So, in a way that's a good thing because people want to get educated, they have access to the material it's really good also academically if you want to look something up or do research, it's right there. And I used to be like I have a little grudge against that, because the research I did was before the Internet was invented, that sounds bizarre press and weird to some people, anyway, before the Internet was invented right. So I'm like yeah, I had to work really hard to find this information, I mean getting books in Japanese and then getting them translated or translating them, that was really



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hard work just to get a little morsel or shred of information. Now you can go on the Internet just type it and you get everything you want. T [01:14:18.33] little problem with that and say hey, you don't have to work as hard as I did. But that's true, that's evolution of society, the digital world etc.

Jeremy Lesniak:

And of course you know while some of the aspects of the videos that you have me be out there, I'm sure few if any of them are out there completely and none you know in the whole catalog is an out there, so if anyone is interested in your videos or you're book or any of these other things you've mentioned, were to have the show notes that whistlekickmartialartsradio.com so people can go there and we can hook you up with

Jeremy Lesniak:

That'll be great.

Jeremy Lesniak:

And I'm gonna try to find the video that that woman doing the kata with the Dominos.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah, look for that yeah that's on Facebook, that's on YouTube or whatever. That's pretty amazing but yes you see these gals from Okinawa, now it's mostly women I mean, some of the guys sure are very good but the women just have an elegant presentation of these kata, and these Japanese women I guess their butts are so low to the ground or something into the deep stances and make them look gorgeous. And now I train with a guy this is in the book also in the 70s, the early 70s, Mike Foster. He was a guy that lived in Japan and was a very accomplished karate guy. All southern Japan karate champion in 1965, terrific guy and man that guy, fight he was just amazing. Had this amazing skill, this explosive stuff, he never telegraphed technique that he did. He was a really tall, he is about 6'4-5 which was huge back then and the guy was fast as lightning and a I was like wow. It was great to watch that guy fight, I sparred with him a couple of times. He checked me in the head and I never even saw it coming until I saw his foot flashback on the ground, I was like wow. On our class here but I did get them was like a flying Superman punch, it was a flying [01:16:22.59] and now but I did get him with that. But anyway the that the point is this is, that guy was quite amazing in his day and yeah just somebody great to watch but here's the main point salient point is he was a great fighter but I saw him do a kata once and I was like whoo man [01:16:45.15]. I see why that guy doesn't compete in kata, I mean it just didn't look right. I mean the guy was like 64 65 just didn't look right. And you see these pretty little Japanese



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Okinawan girls doing those forms and you're like man that's perfection. But yeah, he just didn't have the bio type for it, just it didn't look at all I was like whoo. But you know, you wouldn't say that to his face,

Jeremy Lesniak:

Not a good an idea.

Jeremy Lesniak:

The guy was amazing. Good thing to, good to watch people that really adapted whatever they do in the martial arts, which could be many different things you know.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah. Well, Hanshi Alexander, were gonna start to wind down now but do you, I mean, you shared a tremendous amount with us today and I really appreciate it. You've had some great stories and wove a lot of incredible insights and recommendations and thoughts into you're words and I appreciate that. But do you have any parting advice for the people that are listening?

Jeremy Lesniak:

Parting advice. Well you know it the martial arts are lifelong endeavor. I don't think you want to approach it as a dilettante. In other words, people younger doing basket weaving one day, volleyball the next day, taekwondo the next day and then something like that and so that's more of a frivolous approach. I don't think it it's not a frivolous approach, it's a lifelong thing that requires discipline. But what you get from it, is you're going to get you know the health aspect we talk about that, you're gonna get certain psychological development insight strength or courage of your convictions. There's many things that you get from the martial arts, so I'm just saying have an open mind and stick with it. Train hard stick with it for life.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Very well said.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Okay okay.

Jeremy Lesniak:



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Well again I just want to remind everybody that they can check out the notes whistlekickmartialartsradio.com and I really appreciate you being here and in talking with us.

George Alexander:

Great Jeremy was absolutely my pleasure thank you so much.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Thank you for listening to episode 19 of whistlekick martial arts radio. Thank you to Hanshi Alexander for his time and his wonderful stories. If you like the show please describe so never miss out the future and if you could help us believing a five-star review wherever you download you're podcast, it would make a difference. Those reviews help new listeners find the show, and you might hear us read yours on the air. If we do go ahead and email us at info@whistlekick.com and you'll get a free prize pack including a shirt, water bottle, stickers and more. You can check out the show notes with links to everything we talked about today whistlekickmartialartsradio.com and while you're there, if you want to be a guest on the show or you know someone that would be a great interview, please fill out the guest form and don't forget to subscribe for newsletters you can keep up on all things whistlekick. If you wanna follow us on social media, were on Facebook, twitter, Pinterest and Instagram all with the username whistlekick. While you're at it, check out the great stuff we have whistlekick.com gear, shirts, pants and more all made for martial artists by martial artists. Until next time, train hard, smile and have a great day.