



Episode 323 – The Benefit of Tracking Things in Martial Arts | whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com



Jeremy Lesniak:

Hello! Welcome, [whistlekickmartialartsradio](http://whistlekickmartialartsradio.com) episode 323. Today, we're talking about tracking things, the importance of data, the importance of statistics as it relates to life, as relates to martial arts and we're even gonna throw in some stuff if you have a martial arts business, some things that I think you might consider. My name is Jeremy Lesniak I'm the founder of whistlekick I'm your host for this show and I've been in business since I was 14? Man I've barely earned a paycheck ever. I always pay myself, I've always worked my own way there's something about that that just seems very martial arts to me, I was. Well you know what I'm getting ahead of myself, I'll get into that in a moment, man I'm fired up for this one. If you want to check out the show notes whistlekickmartialartsradio.com, all of our stuff that we do is it whistlekick.com and you can what can you do? You can leave us a review maybe over at iTunes and say hey I like the show or if you don't say that too, though I'm going to guess, if you're listening to the show you probably enjoy it because why would you listen if you don't? That would be strange. I think we all know, I love the show because I get to talk to amazing people, I get to talk to all of you about this great stuff, fun topics and yeah I'll be honest I enjoy talking. If you've ever seen me at an event or something I probably talked your ear off, that's okay. Hopefully that's okay cause I try to make sure that I'm a good conversationalist, it's not easy word to say.

Alright, let's talk about the subject, let's talk about data and statistics and numbers and all those things you know why I love them because they don't lie. If you track the right things, if you track them in the right way it's objective. I love objectivity. The more objective something is the easier it is to understand



Episode 323 – The Benefit of Tracking Things in Martial Arts | whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com

the less arguing less interpretation that is needed. Now of course there is no such thing as far as I'm concerned is being truly objective the moment that we filter anything through our own thoughts or perspectives or senses, there become, there's an element of subjectivity. And if you can't tell this was really the heart of my work in philosophy in college this whole objective versus subjective notion of truth. Got really fired up about that stuff, I don't get to talk about it too much anymore but here we go with the subject to get to work it in. I mentioned a few weeks ago that over at Martial Journal we had a piece from Louis Martin talking about the fights he watched on YouTube and trying to pull some statistical data out of that and he's working on or maybe even just released a follow-up something on another subject and he really found that he digs that whole objective lens into martial arts and I love that because it's something that we don't get to do too often as martial artist. Now, I would encourage that all of you find ways to do this. And I don't mean that you conduct some kind of big research study is heeded but especially if you're a higher rank to observe what's going on with lower ranks maybe even on a night were you're not required to instruct, sit on the side with a clipboard or something. What techniques do people use in free sparring or when people go to choose a stance, what percentage go left versus right and I'm not saying that that actual number is what's important, it's the mindset. The ability to step outside your subjective beliefs your preconceived notions and observe the world through an objective way. Be willing to let go of the things you think you believe and look at what's actually there can be pretty eye-opening sometimes, you can't do that with statistics with observation sometimes you have to test theories. We're really talking about being a bit more scientific in our martial arts practice whether that's our own personal practice or the way that we teach things what if you have a, for lack of better word let's call it a fitness challenge. What if you do certain things across a 30 day cycle and you're recording data of your students what if, what if it's push-ups? What if you kinda escalate the amount of time spent on push-ups or any other particular movement at the beginning of the month and then you do it, have some kind of testing at the beginning and end of the month and see what the impact is. You may not even tell your students that you're doing this. There's all kinds of ways that you can use data in martial arts and the way that you get data is by tracking things. Do you track how often your students go to class? There are patterns there. If you track your enrollment over the course of several years you're going to see cycles. You'll see that certain months out of the year in most schools it's the beginning of the school year but some people are used to making changes here in the United States. You're going to see higher enrollment you probably see lower attendance over the summers, over holiday breaks. And if you are a school owner you can use that data to predict your income. I see a lot of martial arts school owners on social media, complaining. Complaining about the way the summer goes. Complaining about their personal financial position because they don't have enough income coming in. I'm sorry, you knew that was going to happen it happened the last 10 20 30 years, you should be budgeting for that. If you don't want that to happen there are ways that you can combat that. But the first thing is to track it to know what's going to happen. I lose 30% of my students over the summer, I have on average 10 new students start every September, you know whatever this if you work those numbers you can start to understand what's happening with your martial arts school, with your martial arts business.



Episode 323 – The Benefit of Tracking Things in Martial Arts | whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com

As a student there are things that you can track for yourself. You probably know that if you work on a form more you get better at it. Routine it helps, right, practice. How many times do you need to practice that form before you feel competent enough your next testing will you could wait until the last minute and try and do it you know a thousand times in a week. Or you can practice it once a day, three times a week, I don't know what that is. But if you're tracking it you'll know hey over the last three months I've done this form a hundred times I feel pretty good about it. You can't truly understand something unless you can measure it. How much better would it be if you can measure the force, the speed of your techniques. You know that when you make adjustments you'll know hey this has an impact. I would encourage, I would suggest that anything you can do to track, to gain data about your personal martial arts training or your martial arts school is worth considering. I'm not going say it's all valuable, I'm not going to say it's all equally valuable but it's worth considering.

One of the things that has been bothering me as someone who is engaged in a business that needs to understand the martial arts landscape is the lack of good data. When I present to potential investors or when, people just come and ask me how was the martial arts industry doing? I only have anecdote for them, it don't have good data and after several years of that I kinda have this Epiphany, well we have enough reach now that we might be able to get some data. We can help martial arts school owners the martial arts industry overall by collecting data from martial art schools we have access to and sharing that data with all of them, so here's what we did we constructed something that were calling the whistlekick report. Super simple. You fill out really quick survey, it's anonymous, we take that data we crunch it, we spit back out to at the end of the month that's it. Take you to three minutes and you start to understand where does my martial arts business fit in the overall martial arts landscape. If you are tracking things it's also helpful to know are there outside pressures affecting what's going on with my efforts. Let's say your martial arts school and you typically get , let's use an example from before, you typically get 10 new sign-ups every September as part of back to school and then the next year without realizing that you're doing anything different, without really knowing anything you get 20. Wow I mean that's great news but why am I the only one that saw an increase here maybe you asked some nearby school some friends but maybe they don't track. Maybe all they have is anecdote for you. Well, now you're going to be able to see, oh hey overall the entire martial arts industry saw more sign-ups this quarter. I'm right in line with everything else or what if it goes the other way? I saw 10 sign-ups but the typical martial arts school saw you know five that's helpful in your business a martial art schools business. It has to be. Even if it's a nonprofit, even it's a business even if it's a club, it's a business whether or not your collecting money it's still a business. So knowing what's going on is really helpful. On top of that I'm really looking forward to being able to share this information beyond the schools, to let everybody know what's going on with the industry. Because I think that that's important for us as we make decisions not just here whistlekick but for all the other martial arts related and even adjacent businesses out there. Is the martial arts industry growing I can't honestly say it is right isn't, I think it is, but I want proof and that's why we're doing whistlekick report.



Episode 323 – The Benefit of Tracking Things in Martial Arts | whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com

Now if you want to participate or you want to get access to that data, head on over to whistlekick.com go to the more tab you'll see the whistlekick report in there, separate page that will drop you out to a survey monkey link, it is free to participate. I wanna underscore it is anonymous even if you do fill out the box at the end offering up your email address because that's how we're gonna send you the data. We are not posting this data publicly. We'll do some reporting on it and we'll offer up some statistics but were not going to send the whole thing out publicly. This is the only way you're going to get this in full is if you fill out the survey and then we're gonna email to you but were not to do anything that email address other than send you that information and let you know when the next survey is. We're not sending your regular newsletter were not spamming, we're are not doing a darn thing you can unsubscribe it anytime, super easy. You can read more about that over there on that page we didn't even make a separate website for that's how gritty and simple this is. You fill out a survey to take a couple minutes, seriously just couple minutes like 5 to 15 questions depending on which survey we're doing. We've got three were to rotate through, get feedback. I'm stoked for this I really am. Now if you are not a martial arts school owner, you might be thinking Jeremy, how does this even impact me? How does this relate to me? Well, I think everybody wants to know what's going on with the martial arts industry, even if you don't that's fine, I do and I think most of the listeners out there do because were passionate about the martial arts. We care we want to know is martial arts growing or is it shrinking. At the heart of it that's what this data is going to be able to tell us. So head on over whistlekick.com hit the more tab find the whistlekick report and even if you don't you can watch we will release some of that data publicly after we get out to all the people who fill it out. There'll be a some lag time there. If you have questions for me if you have concerns, if you want to know hey Jeremy why is whistlekick rolling out all these business services the last few weeks, well we're just trying to serve our community. We've got a lot out there for individual martial arts practitioners. We're trying to get some attention now to the schools to the business side of things because that's one of the avenues that were trying to grow. Again, I don't really hide anything, our business model is pretty transparent just how I like to do it. So go ahead and email me if you want jeremy@whistlekick.com find us on social media we are @whistlekick everywhere you can imagine. You can find the show notes for this as well as any other episode whistlekickmartialartsradio.com and of course if you know other martial arts school owners, please let them know about the whistlekick report the more data we get in there the better it is for everybody, the more data points means more accurate information, better actionable information for everyone. I want to thank you for tuning in, thank you for your time, for your patience, for your support means a lot to me. And until next time, train hard, smile and have a great day.