

My Story So Far

Mr Wayne Ebert

I started training under the youthful influence and instruction of Mr Andrew Salton, then a 1st degree, in Levin in June of 1986 under Master Yun.

Upon moving back to my home town of Lower Hutt in the January of 1987, I contacted Mr Brian Addeley and trained in Naenae for 1 year with him.

Brian handed his club to Mr Les Wong in 1987 and I trained with Les for a further 2 years gaining my Red Belt.

It was at this time that I was playing top level soccer and the commitment to soccer was too great, so I gave in and concentrated on soccer, putting my TKD studies on hold.

I returned to TKD approximately 4 years later. When training for cricket, I noticed a TKD class on at the same time. I took a look and got interested again and introduced myself and the next week I was under the watchful eye of Mr George Tolley.

I had to re-learn most of my patterns again but after a short while I felt confident enough to put on my Do-bok and belt and came to class as a re-born red belt. This changed in December 1994 when Mr Harry Hemana graded me for my Black stripe.

I had never had such a physical grading but my soccer fitness got me through. I had the bug again and only one thing was on my mind now, a Black Belt.

Soon after this I got a serious soccer injury that would hinder me for the rest of my active days. I tore cartilage and chipped a lot of gristle and bone away from my right knee. I would have to learn how to do TKD with no right knee shock absorbers. (surgeons term). This continuously causes my knee to inflame and water appears on the knee which limits my stretching, kicking and running abilities. I learnt what I could do and what my limits were. With this in mind and a focus still on my goals, I proceeded with training and another step towards 1st Degree.

4th August 1996, Grading day for 1st Degree.

A strange occurrence happened that day. With this being the biggest grading to date that I would be put through, I found myself with no nerves for the first time. I look back now and think a major part of the reason was that I had prepared very well for that and was ready for the test.

After grading to my 1st degree under Mr Philip Swanson I have had two further knee operations in 1996 and 1998 to no avail.

Black Belt onwards: 1996 – 1999

Once I had achieved my 1st Degree, it wasn't till then that I realised it was a new beginning. You don't really think beyond your black belt until you actually have one.

My initial thoughts were of total achievement and honour to myself. Then I started to think about what now?. I stayed in this mode for some time. (6 months)

I believe now looking back and reflecting on the past, that the real turning point was when I walked out of the SPTKD meeting with the other, now ITFNZ members in Mr Blair Martin, Mr George Tolley, Mr Harry Hemana. This was the time that it felt like I had something to offer more than just being a student. I had been a black belt in SPTKD without feeling like I was one.

I suppose I had always wanted to have my own club but was in no hurry to get it. A thought without being a goal to achieve.

Now the Academy had given me a boost and I set my goal to become a 2nd Degree and then look at the new club issue. TKD had helped make me what I am as an adult today and my persona. So I owe it to myself to find out more about the philosophies and pass them on to others who may need and want the help.

The reason I wanted to be a 2nd Degree before opening a club is purely a personnel view as a black belt. That many people can become a black belt, I hear of it taking some arts 6-12 months to grade to black. I know now , compared to what I knew in 1996 when I graded 1st Degree that my knowledge and understanding of TKD has more than doubled in that time.

Having that knowledge to call on gives me the belief in myself that I could be a good instructor and I had done so far what I never thought I could or would achieve from the age of 12, when I first saw martial arts on TV.

Because I truly believe that if I say I'm going to achieve something and have the guidance of those who have been there before then possibility becomes reality.

My injury came back to haunt me with my application into the Police force and my surgeon was required to guarantee my knee for a period of time which he could not do and this put a stop to a new job and career.

1999 and beyond

The date was set for May 10th, 1999 for my 2nd Degree grading. It was to be held in familiar surroundings at the club I trained at. I was graded under the ever so watchful eye of Mr Harry Hemana, who had taught me a lot in the years previous. I again had prepared well and the nerves had once again gone to be replaced with cautious confidence and enthusiasm. It was a huge relief to pass this test as this set up the next phase in my TKD life.

To open a club to call my own is a big commitment and not something I would take lightly. From the beginning of the 1999 year I had started to want it more and more and received a big boost with my wife saying that she will attend to all the admin and finance woes that the club may bring. I would have the final say but it does allow me to concentrate on instructing not administering. I would also look upon the then Academy committee and other clubs to support me in the early stages of setting up my own club.

I opened the Lower Hutt Academy Club in October 1999, and after mail drops and school drops etc I had 20 people turn up to the first training of which 7 were from other Academy clubs closer to their home. I still have a number of those students now and expect to see a good showing at the ITFNZ Black Belt Grading in November for Wellington.

The next big turning point happened less than 6 months after starting up my club and that was the merging of Academy TKD into ITFNZ. I was unsure what this would bring and at the time was been asked to also join another TKD organisation. I sort guidance from a man I have the utmost respect for in Mr Hemana and freely joined in with ITFNZ in February 2000. I immediately set about training my students up for the new syllabus to have a good showing in the first grading of the year. I also went and made myself known to Mr Bryon Cummings who has a club less than 1 kilometre from my own. We also organised a couple of combined trainings to interact as clubs. I am very pleased with the ITFNZ system and people, but on occasion I also have seen how political it can be!!.

I have grown my club into a strong little club with very much a family atmosphere in it. I still have a few students from the first training night and look forward to their rise in TKD. I have found that every year it gets busier and busier with 3 children of my own (1 training) a busy demanding day job and a commitment to my students in TKD along with other sporting interests from within my family. But despite that I love what I do and wouldn't give it up easily.

This year I have made a commitment to myself and my students that to better myself and to help them as students I would set my goal to be grading with a number of them in November. I still have to see my Surgeon in January to get an assessment of new treatment to see if there is anything that can be done. I currently am in the worst position I have been in with my knee since I first did it. I have trouble running across the road at present without a limp or hobble. This frustrates me greatly as I am an active person and not being able to even run or walk long distance is very annoying.

I have now seen the surgeon who has said the Arthritis in my knee is still active and will continue to bug me in years to come and as I am too young for serious treatments he has no option but to leave it as is or until something more serious happens to it. His suggestions to help make it through were to bike or swim to build muscle in the quads. This I plan to do.

I feel that since I have opened the club I have grown in knowledge again, thanks to the help around the region and the available resources such as my own "Bible" and CD Rom.

I am my own person and have a belief that you put back into something what you get out of it. This is evident in my own involvement in Teaching at school with sports and also teaching soccer with the local club (Petone) whom I played for also.

This same belief goes into training also with the theory "you get out, what you put in" going a long way to the way I teach my students and generally lead my life.

I am very hopeful that we can have a black belt grading in November. With all going to plan I expect to have 6 grading for 1st degree, 1 grading for 2nd degree and myself for 3rd degree. I hope that other clubs will be able to make up the minimum 10 requirement needed for a grading.