

The History of the Southern Clubs.

Mr Kris Herbison

Mosgiel club

The Mosgiel club was opened in 1985 training ITF style, with Dave Hastie (I Dan) then Donald Pete (I Dan) as head instructors. In 1987 the national body that the Mosgiel club was affiliated to, Chan's martial arts, changed styles to Choikwang-Do but the club decided against this change and reverted back to an ITF syllabus but with Choikwang-Do techniques as no instruction in ITF techniques was available. Then in late 1990 Mr. Paul McPhail conducted a seminar for the club on ITF techniques. Then in early 1991 the club joined ITFNZ under Mr. Grant Evans (I dan).

Because of the extreme change of style involved in changing between Chan's and ITFNZ a lot of members of the new Mosgiel left and the number of members' dropped. Mr. Evans struggled to introduce the new techniques and to keep the existing members from leaving. Then due to a change in jobs Mr. Evans passed the running of the club over to Ms. Caroline Seleag, head instructor

1993-4. Then Ms. Seleag also started a new job in Greymouth and started the Greymouth club, now run by Ms. Sonya Smith (I Dan) and Ms. Natalie Ewean (I Dan). The new head instructor was Matthew Tait who was later expelled from ITFNZ for severe misconduct both in and out of the Do-Jang. While Matthew was head instructor it was another hard time for the Mosgiel club and the number of active members dropped to 6 members. Mr. Evans now had the difficult task of rebuilding the club back to its former population of members and level of expertise.

In 1994 Mr. Jake Pearson (I Dan) started at Otago University studying physical education and Japanese. Mr. Pearson began training with Mr. Evans (II Dan) at this time and really helped in the building of the club and in the training of members. Mr. Pearson also had a good knowledge of ITF techniques and assisted in the change over from Choikwang-Do to ITFNZ. The club is now doing well in the expert hands of Mr. Evans (III Dan) with the assistance of Mr. Pearson (III Dan) and other well-trained black belts with over 30 members of a high standard.

Dunedin Club

In 1996 Mr. Pearson started a club in Dunedin because both himself and other members had been traveling out to Mosgiel twice a week and he decided that more people would start Taekwon-Do if it was more accessible to them. Mr. Pearson now has a large club with about 30 members of top-level martial artists, two of which went to the first development camp. The two clubs are very close together as far as members are concerned and social events, trainings, camps, and sports events for the "Golden gumboot" are a regular occurrence. This social aspect of these Taekwon-Do clubs is what makes the Dunedin and Mosgiel clubs such strong clubs with a large number of members who will stay for a long time and maybe start there own clubs and run them in this fashion leading to a better organisation for everyone.

United club

During 1995 one of Mr. Evans black stripes, David Scott, decided that he wanted to open up a club of his own as the Mosgiel do-jang was too far away from his home and traveling was difficult. However, ITFNZ would not allow a black stripe to open a club, as prescribed in the constitution. Mr. Scott approached South Pacific Taekwon-Do and they allowed him to open a club and sit his first dan earlier than ITFNZ would. So Mr. Scott changed affiliation to South Pacific, got his black belt and started a club. After two years of training Mr. Scott left South Pacific, as he thought they were not giving him enough support, even though he was the only club in the south island. Mr. Scott approached other organisations including ITFNZ and was finally accepted into an Australian organisation, this situation was worse than before as there was even less support for him. Now devoid of any leadership, or senior dan black belts to grade his students, Mr. Scott began conducting his own gradings. Soon his students became unsatisfied with this and began approaching Mr. Pearson at the Dunedin club and a number joined the club. Finally Mr. Scott left his club and Ms. Teri Woods took it over and following the other students' example she applied to join ITFNZ and was accepted in the middle of 1998.

The "Pain Weekend"

Traditionally leading up to a black belt grading the student intending to grade trains most weekends. However, when one student, who I shall call "Goldie", began training for his first dan grading, he had trouble lowering his intake of intoxicating substances, so during his training sessions he had an aversion to moving, noise, and light, not to mention the extreme nausea that often follows such binges. This led to Goldie being pushed harder than usual, usually past the stage that the nausea overtook him, as he needed learn what it took to be a black belt with a good social life. These training sessions continued for a lengthy period of time and it became accepted by the participants that this was a good thing. Consequently when the next 'victim', who I will call "Vincent" decided to grade to his second dan. He was surprised on a Saturday morning, a couple of weeks before his grading, by Mr. Evans and Goldie, now a black belt, showing up at his flat and taking him on a camping trip/ training session. This 'training session' is now what is simply known as the "Pain Weekend", due to the fact that the participants go through a lot of pain and stress during the day.

This experience is believed to assist the participants during the grading by being worse than the grading and since they survived that they can do anything. The pain weekend is now a tradition in the deep south and all those intending on sitting a dan grading must complete one of these weeks two weeks before their grading. Including the author of this article.