

USJK

Bushido International Society

Newsletter



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IN THE NEWS

Trias International Society Member Profile:

Mr. Tom Benich:

In October of 1979, Sensei Benich (3rd Dan) came to Painesville, Ohio and opened the original Koroshi School of Defense on North State Street. At that time, all that the students knew about Mr. Benich's instructor was that he was a retired Navy Commander by the name of Mr. John Kistler and that he was a very hard teacher.

Sensei Benich once told his students that the reason he got started in karate was one day he saw the class being taught by Mr. Kistler and being unimpressed, he conveyed his perceptions to Mr. Kistler.

Mr. Kistler replied that if he could make it through his workout, he might take Mr. Benich on as a student. Mr. Benich went on to relate that it was one of the hardest workouts in his life, and he went on to become a student of Mr. Kistler.

Mr. Benich, who received his 3rd Dan from Mr. Robert C. Moore, was a high school art teacher in Cleveland, OH and trained at the American Martial Arts College under the instruction of Mr. Moore, 6th Dan in Korean Kong Su Do – at the time also known as Ji Do Kwan.

At the same time, Mr. Benich was very active in the United States Karate Association and a member of the Trias International Society.

In 1972, Mr. Benich started training under Mr. I. J. Kim in Akron, Oh in Song Moo Kwan who subsequently promoted Mr. Benich to 3rd Dan as well.

Some years later, Circa 1975, Mr. Benich moved to Florida and did not return to Ohio until the early 80's. Mr. Charles Brown spoke to him on April 18, 1982 at the North Coast Karate Championships and served on a judging panel with Mr. Benich for kata. In conversation, Mr. Benich indicated that he would like to get all of the Black Belts from Koroshi together to review kata.

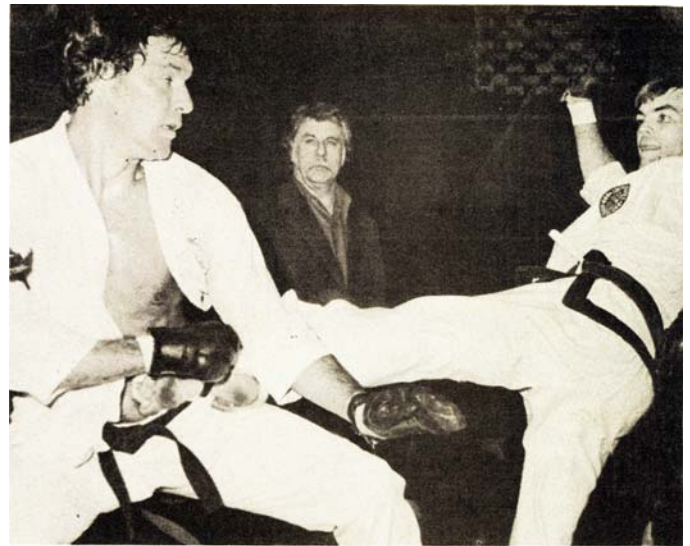
Sadly, that was the last time Mr. Brown, or much of anyone else, would see Mr. Benich for he was killed in a plane crash the very next day – April 19, 1982.

Exerpt from letter addressed to Mr. Charlie Phillips from Mr. Charles Brown

Dr. John Kistler, Professor of History, Navy Commander Retired, was born in Ludington, MI in 1919 and began his world travels at the age of 18. He was a naval aviator and has been around the world at least 7 times while involved in World War II, Korea, and the Vietnam conflicts. He began his study of Tang-SooDo during the 1951 Korean conflict and acquired his Black Belt in 1964.

Subsequently, Mr. Kistler began instructing students at Miami University in Oxford, OH in 1964 and continued there until 1969. Following retirement from active military duty, Mr. Kistler began a teaching career at Flagler College at St. Augustine, FL in 1970 and instructed there until his retirement in 2000.

Excerpt from History American Tang Soo Do Club at FCCJ



That old-timer, Parker Shelton, continues to fight and win. Here he meets Tom Benich, who finished the year with the top fighting award of the U.S.K.A.

Excerpted from "Official Karate" - Summer 1976



Tom Benich leaves the ground as his kick is caught by Parke Shelton. (Photo by Mary Townsley.)

Excerpted from "Official Karate" - Summer 1976



Mr. Chuck Chirdon's principle instructor, Mr. Tom Benich, received his Black Belt in Tank Soo Do from Commander John M. Kistler at Miami University. Mr. Benich went on to work under Mr. Robert C. Moore in Ji Do Kwan in the Cleveland Ohio area for many years and then eventually began instruction under Mr. Ill Joo Kim in Song Moo Kwan in Akron Ohio. It should be noted that Mr. Robert Moore and the Ji do Kwan system had a major influence in the origins of the Koroshi School of Defense system taught by Mr. Benich and that many of the top practitioners of this system in Ohio; Mr. Al Fuzy, Mr. Curtis Herrington and Mr. Paul Ornowski, maintained close contact with Mr. Chirdon and the Koroshi team over the years.

Mr. Benich's training, and subsequently Chuck's training, was heavily influenced by other systems such as Shuri when they both worked with people like Mr. Jim McLain in Bedford Ohio as well as through the other top Okinawan practitioners associated with the USKA - United States Karate Association.

Additional influence came through Mr. AlGene Caraulia, founder of the Karate Institute in Cleveland. Mr. Chirdon participated as a team member of the Cleveland Black Belt Team, with Mr. Benich, under the direction of Mr. Caraulia.

Mr. Chirdon continued to instruct and operate the Koroshi School of Defense with Mr. Benich, Mr. Melvin Russell, Mr.

Bob Breedlove and Mr. Craig Clinton after his promotion to ShoDan and then Ni Dan while competing nationwide with Mr. Benich and Mr. Clinton in both point contact and full contact tournaments over the next 8 years.

One of the most exciting times was the 1975 Midwest Karate championships in St. Louis where Mr. Benich, Mr. Chirdon and Mr. Clinton all placed 1st in their respective weight classes.

Another time, Mr. Chirdon and Mr. Benich were seated fighters in the first Battle of Atlanta hosted by Mr. Joe Corley.

Towards the end of this heavy time of competition, the original Koroshi dojo was closed so that Mr. Chirdon, Mr. Benich and other black belts could have the time necessary to pursue career objectives more aggressively.

Excerpt narrative from Mr. Chuck Chirdon

Picture Perfect:

“Quote”



Washington vs Cleveland NKL 1971

M. Cole, J.Jones, Jeff Smith, John Worley, Jhoon Rhee

Phil Cunningham, Art Simmons, Jim Larocco, Mike March, Larry Lunn, Ton Benich, Algene Carulia



[L-R] Mr. Robert C. Moore, Mr. Tom Benich, Mr. Curtis Harrington & Mr. Paul Ornowski – Photo Courtesy Mr. Fuzy

“Quote”



Tom Benich is a twenty - seven - year - old Sang Moo Kwan stylist who holds the rank of third - degree black belt. His wins in karate tournaments have been against some of the "big guns," whom he both respects and enjoys fighting. His fighting style is

one of an aggressive clasher who will take the chance of getting tagged while he is laying in his kicks and punches with everything he's got. Sometimes this approach is to his advantage, but there are times when his aggressiveness causes his being

disqualified or scored upon by some "flippy" technique.

Tom began karate when he was nineteen years old at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. His ROTC Commander, John M. Kistler, dared him (continued on page 60)

Images & Narrative Excerpted from "Official Karate" - July 1975

to take the karate class, convinced he couldn't take the exercises. Well, on his first day in class he did pass out, but he kept coming back and made it to shodan in the spring of '68.

Tom graduated from the university in 1969, majoring in art and education. From there he went to Cleveland Heights where he taught for four years in the junior high, eventually becoming the department chairman. At the present time he is a technical representative for the Fason company, which makes pressure sensitive paper for labels.

Tom also has a part-time dojo, the Koroshi School of Defense in Painesville, Ohio. Here he has trained some of the toughest tournament fighters in the midwest area; among them Victor Hale and Chuck Chirdon.

Among Tom's wins and awards are the Ohio State USKA Champ for '70 & '71, 1st in lightweight division of the '74 Gateway Open, 1st in lightweight at the 7th Midwest Karate Championships and number 2 in kata and kumite in the '72-'73 USKA national point standings. Many of Tom's wins are in weapons kata, which he performs with remarkable dexterity and ability.

In spite of Tom's appearance (he's rather husky through the shoulders) he weighs in at 164 lbs. and he intends to keep his weight at that level. He has fought the heavies, though, some of the toughest being Parker Shelton, and Everett Eddy. He has also squared off against such champs as Jeff Smith and Fred Wren.

Tom has no real gripes about the karate scene. He just worked hard to achieve his success. "It was a hard road getting to where I am," he states, "I busted my butt from the beginning and I got busted many times for my efforts!" His main objective at this time is to be the USKA's number one fighter for the '74-'75 season.

In this series Tom demonstrates a favorite fighting technique with Doug Davenport (one of the late Jim

Kennedy's black belts) from Kokomo, Indiana.

Starting an opposite fighting stance to his opponent (his right leg facing his opponent's left), Tom then lunges forward with a punch to the face and another punch off the reverse hand to the same area. He then grabs the forward arm his opponent is attempting to guard with and strikes him in the neck with a roundhouse kick. Then, still holding on to his arm, he turns his back and finishes with a rear heel kick to the throat or face.

Narrative Excerpted from "Official Karate" - July 1975

Martially Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "H Eugene Talbott". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

H Eugene Talbott
President, Bushido International Society