

Technical Excellence in Kumite

The “technique” facet of karate is just important to the mastering of the martial art as is speed and conditioning. Tournament competitors in even the black belt division have been disqualified during their matches for slovenly technique that has come to be known as “street fighting” among the referees. It is sad that such a thing is possible, and it is truly embarrassing to see someone who has achieved the highest belt level flailing away in the ring like a petulant child.

One reason for this sad state of affairs seems to be poor instruction. The vogue these days seems to be throwing on a black belt and immediately opening a school. There is nothing wrong with charging a fair price for a commodity, but when that commodity is not offered, it becomes unethical and even criminal. Of course, some people will never be able to become good teachers, and this includes even the best black belts. But the ability to transmit knowledge to others should be part of the requirements in making dan rank.

Another reason for poor technique would be the common malady known as “instant expertitis”. It’s hard to put a finger on the cause, but many people in this country are opposed to putting in the time it takes to accomplish expertise in anything, including karate. One of the first things a student wants to know upon enrollment is, “How long will it take to become a black belt?” It is the instructors’ duty to see that these attitudes are changed and replaced by dedication and discipline in the mental, physical and emotional spheres.

The final reason is probably sheer laziness on the students’ part. Good techniques in karate are difficult to learn and difficult to keep. It is little wonder, then, that most students will except the effort to learn. Unless the instructor has at least a spark of true desire with which to work, the lazy student will never master technique.

Excerpt from the book; **Winning Tournament Karate** by Chuck Norris
Ohara Publications, incorporated 1975 –Library of Congress Catalog Number: 75-5497

About the author; It is occasionally cited that Norris made history in 1997 when he was the first Westerner in the documented history of Tae Kwon Do to be given the rank of 8th Degree Black Belt Grand Master. However, Norris appears to have been misled about this as there were at least two other U.S. Black Belts (Charles 'Chuck' Sereff and Edward Sell awarded TKD 8th Dan several years prior. On July 1, 2000, Norris was presented the Golden Lifetime Achievement Award by the World Karate Union Hall of Fame.

His tournament record, based on tournament matches, is estimated to be 183-10-2, though some sources list it as 65-5. Norris won an estimated 30 or more tournaments, beating an average of five opponents per tournament. At the New York tournaments, he defeated 12-13 opponents per tournament.