

TRUENEWS - OVERLAKE

The TRUE way of the warrior is honor, strength, and love.

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Stances

SBN Jennifer Berg

Stances. Why do we have them? Why are they so important? Sure we all know that Tae Kwon Do rhymes with "long and low," but are there more reasons that we emphasize long, low stances? The answer, of course, is *yes!*

The importance of stances is emphasized in many styles. Although the names of the stances and the precise details of them are different, they form the foundation for nearly all styles, from Tae Kwon Do to Karate to Muay Thai Kickboxing - and more. Stances are the starting point and cornerstone upon which every technique is built. They provide students with the foundation to produce powerful techniques.

I will often tell students that stances are a link to the tradition and history of our style. I've also talked about how stances - done correctly, long and low - help build the leg and core muscles that will help us kick and jump higher and harder. These are true statements, but the purpose of stances is far more complex than any of those. Low stances create a lower center of gravity, building strength to develop balance while our bodies are in motion. As we practice, we begin to learn and understand weight distribution. Making the stances longer helps with flexibility, providing a greater range of motion in our movements.

Beyond all of that, though, we should remember that Tae Kwon Do was designed initially for use in combat. Though we practice for many different reasons - fitness, self-defense, fun - that doesn't change the original purpose of martial arts. Stances help us learn the correct distribution of bodyweight for kicking, striking, and defending and we can also use the leg position to control the opponent's motion.

We have several different stances in our martial arts. Each one has its own purpose and application. If a move is performed from front stance, then the technique is typically a strong forward or backward action that requires the bodyweight to be forward - think of middle punch, high block, or reverse elbow strike. Side stance provides a strong base for lateral strikes and defenses like side knife hand strike or side outer forearm block. It is no coincidence that all of our guard techniques are performed from back stance; back stance was traditionally the primary fighting stance. If you take the time to look at and analyze each technique in our forms, you will find similar purpose for every stance we learn.

Naturally, the stances we do in our forms are not the exactly the ones we use in sparring. Our fighting stance is higher and shorter than most of our other stances. This, too, is common across styles. It is frequently considered a more advanced way to perform our stances. Even though we fight in a more natural stance, we still apply our basics in everything we do. Practicing our basic stances allows us to have the agility to move with balance and speed in our fighting stances, and also to bring our centers of gravity low when we need balance or move in for a throw or takedown.

The takeaway from all this? We should practice our stances vigilantly, with the knowledge that they will improve our martial arts in many ways. Our forms will be stronger - and our sparring will, too!

Sources:

Hwarang, 6/25/2015. The Importance of Tae Kwon Do Stances. Retrieved from <http://tkdplanet.com/importance-taekwondo-stances/>
Enkamp, Jesse. The Stances of Karate - Form, Function and Footprints. Retrieved from <http://www.karatebyjesse.com/the-stances-of-karate-form-function-and-footprints/>
St. Pierre, Marc, 12/14/2009. The Importance of Stances in Shotokan. Retrieved from <https://neskdo.wordpress.com/2009/12/14/the-importance-of-stances-in-shotokan/>
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Upcoming Activities for April/May

April 1st	Arnis Seminar, 10:00 am (no make up class)
April 3rd - 7th	Spring Break Camp, 9:30 am - 12:30 pm
April 13th - 14th	Spring Break Mini-Camp, 9:30 am - 12:30 pm
April 21st	Tae Kwon Do Test, 6:30 pm
May 6th	Arnis Seminar, 10:00 am (no make up class)
May 26th	Tae Kwon Do Test, 6:30 pm
May 29th	Memorial Day, TMA Closed

NOTABLES

CONGRATULATIONS STUDENTS OF THE MONTH – ISAAC MULLINS!

Isaac started training ten years ago, and has long been quiet, attentive student who works steadily to improve. He is always a pleasure to teach and it was a great delight to see him test last month for his Advanced Brown Belt. Keep up the good work, Isaac!

Welcome Our Newest Students

Amit Attota, Ella Foley, Hannah Foley, Mukhsina Nabieva, Mukharram Nabieva, Skylar Velasco,
and Corinne Velasco

Arnis Promotions for March

Yellow Belt: Isabella Guo, Shivani Jayaprakasam, Robert Nguyen, and Theresa Wegener

Green Belt: Barbara Espinoza

Brown Belt: Isaac Mullins

Provisional Black Belt: Apuroopa Kavikondala

1st Degree Black Belt: Richard Nguyen

Tae Kwon Do Promotions for March

Adv White Belt: Mylie Johnson, Mithil Mukesh Kumar, Itai Rozner, and Ethan Zheng

Yellow Belt: Vitaly Krivosheev, Lohitaksh Maheshwari, and Pratyush Maheshwari

Adv Yellow Belt: Zoe Mayclin

Green Belt: Gavin Cooper, Shivani Jayaprakasam, and Robert Nguyen

Adv Green Belt: Isolde Ansell and Scott North

Blue Belt: Barbara Espinoza and Nithyasri Prakash

Adv Blue: Noya Bar-Nathan, Mayukha Kannadaguli, Simon Mullins, and Harvey Yang

Brown: Sagnik Sinha and Evan Spangler

Adv Brown: Isaac Mullins

April Training Anniversaries

One Year: Gavin Cooper

Two Years: Rachel Benincasa and Robert Nguyen

Four Years: Noya Bar-Nathan, Shira Levi, and Adi Megiddo

Seven Years: Rakesh Velagapudi

Nine Years: Kira Eng and Reed Wessling

Twelve Years: Vidhi Jain

Thirteen Years: Illaria Wessling

Twenty-two Years: Jennifer Berg

Thirty-three Years: GJN David Barrett

April Birthdays

Aafreen Aafreen, Ben Banai, Ganesh Chittella, Paul Cullivan, Sierra Harden, Vidhi Jain, Atishay Jain, Karol Jamison, Vitaly Krivosheev, Nancy McKinley, Anya Nanda, Richard Nguyen, Lisa Owen, Siddarth Shankar, Sagnik Sinha, Chris Spangler, Howard Stein, Kristiina Tulleau, Nicola Tzenov, Theresa Wegener, and Raina Wu

We apologize if any of the above information is incorrect. Please submit corrections, in writing, at the front desk.