



TANG SOO DO
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Newsletter



Autumn 2018

What is it like to be a Tang Soo Do Instructor?

For this newsletter, we have a theme all about our instructors from various classes and regions. I asked three of our highly experienced instructors what it is like to be a Tang Soo Do instructor. All of them gave very different, but interesting, answers...

1) Why did you want to become an instructor?

SaBomNim Dove: I became a Kyo Sa by default Mr Webster. In 1990 I was asked to assist at a class in Coventry and things simply evolved from there. My evolution into a Kyo Sa came about because my original Tang Soo Do Kyo Sa had quit the organisation in 1992. A few of us opened classes at that time. I in Kenilworth on the 5th of October 1992 followed swiftly by a colleague in Rugby and the following year another colleague opened up in Southam. At that time it was, in the main, young men training. Aged between 17 to 35 I would guess. We trained a lot and became very close socially as a result. I was training five nights and teaching two every week. That 'total immersion' is a great way to reach your potential and truly embed technique. I travelled very frequently to train with senior Masters. The senior in our area was then an E Dan.

SaBom Preston: One of my passions is acquiring knowledge and then sharing it with others. Which is why I also became a school teacher. Also training for a long time it feels right that I share this with others rather than keeping it to myself.

SaBom McCoy: I don't know that it was a conscious process. I thought that everyone trained to get their Dan, become an instructor, and then help others do the same.

2) How long have you been an instructor?

SaBomNim Dove : So... a Kyo Sa since Oct 92 making it 26 wonderful years. I had 35 beginners at my first class of whom 11 made it to their first belt test three months later. Your question made me wonder how much time I have spent teaching? A quick and rough calculation showed me that I have taught a little shy of ten thousand five hundred hours. I hope that doesn't sound like showing-off but it does suggest that Tang Soo Do has something worthwhile to share.

SaBom Preston: I have been a class Instructor since the age of 17, teaching my Instructor's classes when required. However I opened my own classes with my own students in 2008.

SaBom McCoy: I actually started assisting in class as a green belt. I officially received my Kyo Sa certification a few months after testing for Cho Dan.



Master Preston



TANG SOO DO 武 Newsletter



3) How did you become an instructor, what was the process?

SaBomNim Dove: A good question, back then we did not have a process as we do today. You simply opened a class and if it took off then it carried on. If it bombed then it closed and you considered your next action. The problem with that 'straight into the deep end' approach is that the group can gain a reputation for inconsistency and look as though it lacks tenacity. Especially these days when people have so many options, keeping the door open for long enough to succeed really is the order of the day. Although we can never ensure the success of a new class we can at least say that the Instructor has undergone the rigorous observation, direction and assessment of their class instruction by experienced observers.

SaBom Preston: I started by teaching small groups within a class. Helping students learn their Hyung and as an aside to their test; their success would also reflect how successful I was in teaching. This then escalated to teaching a class. In 2008 I moved to Milton Keynes and opened up my own classes. To achieve the rank of KyoSa I had to have my own stand alone students test under SaBomNim Dove. The process could be defined as 'learn by doing'.

SaBom McCoy: The process just seemed like a natural course. Taking on more of the responsibilities of class, and finally teaching my own students. Testing for Kyo Sa was done when I was a Cho Dan in Santa Maria California so that I could officially teach for the U.S. Tang Soo Do Moo Duk Kwan.

4) Are there particular character traits you need to become an instructor, if so, what are they?

SaBomNim Dove: Tenacity, a thick skin, patience and strength. People follow strong leaders. Strength, in this instance, comes from experience and comprehensive familiarity with your art.

SaBom Preston: A great question; yes there are. To become an Instructor one must have confidence; in themselves and in the curriculum they are teaching. Also one should be enthusiastic ; their energy can feed a class the energy needed to get through a lesson if it is physically demanding. The final key characteristic is patience; some students may take time to assimilate information and put it into practice. An Instructor should see this and work with this student accordingly.

SaBom McCoy: Every instructor is different but I believe to be a good teacher, you not only have to know your subject, but you have to care about the success of your students.



Master McCoy with class



TANG SOO DO 武 Newsletter



5) Do you enjoy being an instructor rather than a student?

SaBomNim Dove: We are all students Mr Webster. I am proud to tell you that my mentor is DoJuNim Khalid of Glendale, Arizona. Beyond that I am not entirely sure that I can answer you as separating the two states of being. Here's why = In 1994 or 5 my then Instructor told me there comes a point beyond which personal progress is not possible without teaching. In other words unless we analyse our own technique sufficiently by delivering it to others after deconstruction and segmentation improvement will slow to a stand still. My experience since then has backed up his assertion to the full. Teaching also demands, assuming that you care about what you teach, that we seek answers for the tough technical questions that our students will bring to class. That is the essence, the distillation of service in that the question moves and improves both the inquirer and the recipient.

SaBom Preston: As I say to my Instructors in training; an Instructor never stops being a student. We are all students in the first instance and an Instructor in the second. I cannot find it within myself to say I prefer one over the other because I am both.

SaBom McCoy: I do enjoy being an instructor, but I also enjoy the rare opportunity to just be a student. Regardless, it's important to keep a student mind. Always be learning.

6) What are the most rewarding parts of being an instructor?

SaBomNim Dove: In short; seeing people overcome obstacles while knowing that will bring strength to their lives. In full; students need obstacles, hurdles if you will, in order to gain a sense of achievement. Without that sense of achievement there can be no growth in confidence (the best form of self defence). It is the certainty of achievement that results in the growth in confidence. It is the 'I can do because I have done' knowledge. In the main our hurdles are belt tests and Championships. For the latter it is true to say that it really is the taking part that makes you a winner. Not the winning. If you are nervous and you still go for it you will grow as a practitioner and strengthen your resolve. That growth lasts a life time and can never be taken away. That sort of life skill is beyond value and, I believe, is why loving parents pay for Martial Arts classes for their children. Seeing that evolution in your students is reward enough for anyone Mr Webster.



Master Dove with students at a recent tournament

SaBom Preston: Watching my students grow; both with age and skill. I have had a few students go from Tigers to Dan grade and it has been great watching them develop. I also find I enjoy my conversations with students and being able to help them with their questions.

SaBom McCoy: Knowing that you are at least a small part in passing on, and keeping alive, knowledge. It's also nice when, years later, former students tell you that you had a positive impact on their lives.



TANG SOO DO
武

Newsletter



7) What are the most challenging parts of being an instructor?

SaBomNim Dove: When I see someone who is more than capable, perhaps possessing a natural ability, and they do not want to make the most of it! 'Lazy talent' as I call it. Equally when students do not or cannot realise their progress regardless of the fact that it is pointed out to them. These frustrations come out of caring about what we do and caring about the well being of students.

SaBom Preston: The first is establishing yourself. I spent my first few months in an empty DoJang whilst trying to advertise and get the classes known in the local area. An inspirational senior from many years ago once said "stay where you are and they will know where to find you". Since then my classes grew and word of mouth really helped. Yes I ended up moving around the area to find the best locations, but people knew I was in MK.

Another aspect I find challenging is seeing students' faces when they have received a referral. Referrals are necessary when students do not make the required standard for a rank, but delivering the sad news can be challenging. I have seen Instructors in the past want to pass students because they do not want to share the news of a referral which puts the integrity of every rank in question. Our students can be proud of their rank progress as we will refer if we need to, despite it not being enjoyable for either Instructor or student.

SaBom McCoy: I think the challenge must be the same with any subject in that you have to be a good communicator. You have to find ways to teach a variety of skills to different people, but on a level that each can understand and grasp.

8) How do you organise teaching a class of different ages and ranks?

SaBomNim Dove: OK, I have to be honest here; I do not prepare and/or organise unless it is a Dan Clinic for which I arrive with a rudimentary plan of activities. Over the years I have found that it is more equitable to begin a class and then react to the needs of those present. Sometimes by asking and sometimes by observation. Ultimately everyone needs good basics and core fitness so some things must remain constant. That is especially true as most students do not train frequently enough to reach their full potential. That is not to say it is out of their grasp, just that it may take a little longer to progress and slow progress has lost us a lot of Members over the years. That is another reason I prefer to deliver a reactive class.

SaBom Preston: This is a fantastic question. Experience really helps. In general my goal is to ensure every student has picked up something new. It could be part of a new form or an enhancement of a technique. To enable better training I rotate my seniors to share knowledge with small groups and then at some point the seniors train together when the juniors are practicing under my supervision. I have been in classes where the class ranks ranged from 10th Gup to 5th Dans, the Instructor passed comment on the fact he wanted everyone to learn something new. This sparked my desire to learn this skill as one day I could be doing the same.

SaBom McCoy: That is a difficult question. That is always going to depend on the students involved.



TANG SOO DO 武 Newsletter



9) What is it like trying to juggle other things in your life with being an instructor?

SaBomNim Dove: Without wishing to sound glib, it's easy. Nothing planned gets in the way of my teaching.

SaBom Preston: A lot of people ask me this when they see me arrive at the DoJang from work. I have to balance family time with being a school teacher and being an Instructor, more recently becoming a parent also. This can sometimes feel like an impossible task. I think the important parts are knowing your limitations and family first. Do not open 4 classes if you cannot maintain 4 classes. I am very grateful to SaBomNim Dove and also to my students. SaBomNim has been extremely patient with me and supportive of what I am trying to do. Naturally I have had to slow down as I learn how to be a good father on top of a new job and my SHK commitments. My seniors have been great in covering classes on occasion which can enable me to spend a rare morning/evening with my family and my students understand this also. I sincerely do not think I could do what I am doing if it was not for the support from my family and from everyone here.

SaBom McCoy: For me, it is like anything. It comes down to time management. You only have so much time so only do what you have time to do well. Make time to do something that relaxes you as well.

10) Using your experience, what advice would you give to up and coming instructors, or even fully established ones?

SaBomNim Dove: Honestly..... learn to love it. Although you can use your mood to alter the dynamic of a class if needed it is always best to start with a warm and open heart. People will learn and grow with your care and enthusiasm. Feel the love.

SaBom Preston: My first advice is remember you are a student first. You are always learning. My second piece of advice would be make sure you commit to what you can do long term. Being an Instructor is not just having a class for 6 months, it is potentially having a class for the rest of your Tang Soo Do career. Daunting as that may sound, its rewards are amazing. My third and final piece of advice is be you. I have seen students try to mimic their Instructor with little success. If you use your own personality combined with your training, everything will feel more natural. Of course there can be slight changes in persona according to the situation, however it should not be all the time.



SaBom McCoy: Try to avoid politics. Find a way to stay in love with the art that brought you to teaching.



TANG SOO DO 武 Newsletter



Dan Testing Day

On the 20th October 2018, a Dan day took place. We had a variety of Dan grades testing as well as 1st Gups (myself included) testing for 1st Dan, and some class members pre-testing in readiness for their 1st Dan test. This was a very successful event with participants leaving with either with a new belt, or a new rank. Congratulations to all those who passed and thanks to anyone who came along to help out.



I would also like to thank Master Preston for hosting the day and organising the very nice meal afterwards despite being very busy with his new family. This was very much appreciated by us all.

Mr Tuffin Jr (someone who graduated to Cho-Dan) has agreed to write a piece for this article on his own experiences testing for Cho-Dan as well as the preparation and mental approach required for this. It's a really great piece that we can all learn something from:

Hello all, I'm Mr Tuffin Jr., and I passed my Dan grading on October 20th 2018. This was actually my second attempt at grading for Chodan, after I received a referral. The first Dan grading I attempted was in April 2018, and I wasn't really ever in the right state of mind to pass, as I was extremely negative going into the grading and that negative mental state really showed in my training, and I therefore received a referral as it seemed as if I wasn't really there, and I could not deny that myself. I also really felt estranged going into the hall as I wasn't particularly confident with myself. Afterwards, I really realised that physical preparation wasn't the only part of passing a Dan grading, and that I would also have to prepare myself mentally to get into the right state of mind and concentrate on what was at hand.

Something that really helped me to prepare before my Dan grading was music, as I had a long car journey from Region 1 to Region 2 (Rugby to Milton Keynes), and I played some music that would get me in the right state of mind for the Grading, as it helped me to take my mind off of my nerves, and to just zone out and enjoy myself before the Grading. This meant that I could maintain a positive mentality throughout, and therefore I was much less self-critical of my mistakes and I could move past them without getting too stuck in them and losing concentration.

Another thing that helped me to prepare for my Dan grading was practising my techniques at home, as before my previous grading I did all of my training in class, and none of it at home as I was too confident in my own ability. The referral was also a good example of a bad situation that you could look back on and find a way that you could positively improve yourself. A way that I found was the fact that I didn't know how the grading was going to be, nor did I find out what a speed break was before I graded, which wasn't a good idea. All of my personal improvements and realisations after my first Dan Grading really helped me, and I managed to achieve the highest Dan Bon on the day (UK 1802), which is easily one of my greatest achievements.

Thank you for reading.



TANG SOO DO 武 Newsletter



SHK Invitational Tournament 2018

It has been four years since your organisation has hosted a Tournament so this long overdue event offered a new experience for many Members. The 8th Saenghwal Hohup Kwan Tang Soo Do Federation Invitational Championships was held at the RHS in Rugby on Saturday 27th October 2018. Over forty Members took part in the event and all went home with medals and a Certificate of Participation.

A special thank you to the patient family supporters who assisted us in sticking to a tight three hour schedule.



Sparring Competition



Team Forms

As a result of the very positive feedback received after the day, we will be repeating the event in November 2019.



Special commendation goes to the 'BJS Crushers' for winning the Team Hyung event and to Olivia Davey (pictured) for receiving the Moo Do Award.



All of those who took part are entitled to add their time of participation (three hours) into their monthly training record in their Tang Soo Do Passport for October.



TANG SOO DO 武 Newsletter



2019 Fund Raising Seminars

It is not long now until 2020, which is a big year for your Federation. It will be the year we hold our KoDanJa ShimSa (Masters Grading). To mark the occasion; we are honoured to inform you that DoJuNim Khalid is making the trip back to the UK to participate. In an effort to afford such a special occasion; Master Preston, on behalf of the candidates, is hosting a series of seminars in 2019 as fundraisers for the event. The dates are as follows:

Saturday 16th March,

Saturday 15th June,

Saturday 7th September,

Saturday 7th December.

The seminars will begin at 13:30 and finish at 16:00 and cost £25 each per person. The location is Longueville Hall, Whaddon Road, Newton Longville, MK17 0AT.

The seminars will study many extra-curricular topics taught by the various candidates. It is not to be missed.



For information on this as well as other events, check out his Website at <http://www.martialarts-miltonkeynes.com/>. Also, if you know anyone in Milton Keynes, encourage them to check out his classes.



A triumphant return

Maria Fisher (after 10 years of absence) has made a triumphant return to the world of Tang Soo Do.



She trained from the age of 13 to the age of 17 with the international Tang Soo (Soo Bahk) Do federation, under the tuition of Master Carder in Hertfordshire. After this, she moved away from medical school, and was therefore unable to continue training.

She now as a obstetricatrician and a Gynaecologist in Coventy. She found she was "missing training" and that she also "needed to find something to help me get away from the stresses at work"

After a 10 year hiatus, she has re-joined Tang Soo Do through the Saenghwah Hohup Kwan Kenilworth class, and did so in August of this year. Since then she has been certified as a Dan grade in the Kenilworth class.

Lest we forget

On Sunday 18th November, from 11am, Mr Whitmore took part in a Salvation Army concert with the intent raise awareness of and remember those who died in the First World.

This took place by Kenilworth Memorial.

They had two weeks rehearsal prior to this, so they came well prepared. Well, mostly. Wreaths of poppies kept getting blown away by the wind, however, Mr Whitmore said that, felt that there was a certain responsibility to attending. He told me that he feels that it is important to remember those who lost their lives in world war one for our freedom, particularly as the word 'army' is a part of the Salvation Army's name.





TANG SOO DO
武

Newsletter



Publishing Perfection



Gavin Denton 4th Gup has had success this year. He has achieved his first author publication in the journal of the intensive care society. It was a controversial paper, but well received. It also increased the profile of his intensive care team on a national level.

Well done, sounds worthy of recognition.

Duke of Edinburgh



Diana Azhari (1st Gup) of the Kenilworth class has completed a duke of Edinburgh award, and did so in October. This involved two nights camping in the Cotswolds as well as a 40km walk. This was a thoroughly soaking experience that also included her group getting chased by a herd of cattle and losing their map. A fun but damp experience.

Sounds like a really fun experience, well done!

Future Genius?



On the 15th
November, Nikilan



Successfully built a paper windmill model and won an award for it. This was a project he received in class and did as homework. It took him half an hour to make. One problem that he faced consistently was that the blades kept falling off, however this was something he did fix in time. Before his class left for the day, he received an award for efforts, and rightly so. He said that in receiving the award, he felt "really happy".

Steve Jobs, your fired!

Job success



At the end of October, fellow Tang Soo Do Member Richard Davies (1st Gup) successfully applied for a new Job in st stephens clinic in Hemsworth. He works in administration, organising files for clinics. So far so good, he's getting along well with everyone there and is enjoying the new job.

Well done, hopefully the computers are not slow!



Deal or No Deal? (Finance Apprenticeship)



On the 6th of November, Mr O'Hagan (1st Dan) was offered a finance apprenticeship With Perry Appleton group. Working with private clients and with corporate and commercial insurance was something that had peaked his interest. He viewed this as a foundation for his new career in this industry. The apprenticeship will last 18 months. Once he has taken the foundation in insurance exams next year, he intends to make progress towards CII (Certificate In Insurance), the next attainable qualification. His advice for anyone starting an apprenticeship in any industry is "in whatever industry you choose to work in, make sure it is a field you enjoy firstly and if so then put the effort in and work hard. You will always reap the benefits of working hard no matter what you choose to work hard in".

**Edited by Louis Webster (1st Dan), news collected through Louis Webster and Gavin Denton (4th Gup). Don't forget to email me if you have any news items for the next newsletter:
websterl4202@gmail.com**

Merry Christmas and happy new year to all!

SAENGHWAL HOHUP KWAN TANG SOO DO FEDERATION