

**PAN-AMERICAN GOJU RYU KARATEDO  
SEIWAKAI NEWSLETTER**

**全米剛柔流空手道  
誠和会社内報**

**Dedicated to Traditional Goju Ryu Karatedo  
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All issues of the Pan-American Seiwakai Newsletter can be found online at:  
<https://www.seiwakaiusa.com/pan-american-seiwakai-newsletters.html>

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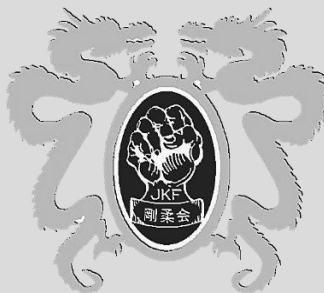
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## **Kawase Hasui: Spring Rain at the Sakuradamon**

### **Pan American Seiwakai Newsletter Table of Contents**

#### **Pan-America Seiwakai Past Events and News**

- **My Evolution as a Sensei by Vassie Naidoo – Page 3**
- **Karate Debuts in Canada Games by Jason Simmons/SaltWire Network – Page 5**
- **Great Lakes Seiwakai Seminar – Page 6**

#### **Seiwakai Around the Globe**

##### **Upcoming Events**

- **Seiwakai International Seminar Dates 2023 – Page 10**

##### **Past Events and News**

- **S.I.W.A.B. Virtual Seminar by Emily Mata – Page 11**
- **Congratulations to Students Who Received Certificates from Scott Reed – Page 12**



## My Evolution as a Sensei By Vassie Naidoo

It took many years for me to develop the teaching skills that I have today, and I hope that my experiences can help others to reflect upon their teaching style and make adjustments to their procedures and methods.

When I first began teaching in California, I taught as I had been taught in South Africa and Japan where the sensei was respected because he was the sensei. Conditioning was brutal and so was the kumite which we did at every class.

However, in California students didn't stay long when I taught that way. At first, I wasn't particularly concerned, but after an in-depth dinner conversation with one of my students, I saw the need to change my attitude and change my teaching methods. I had to if I wanted to become a more effective teacher.

I realized that I had to show respect to my students and to their needs in order to gain their respect as a sensei, and I had to be humble. I had to do my own rigorous self-training and conditioning out of class. In class, I had to watch my students to make sure that they were understanding proper technique. This meant that I had to not only demonstrate proper technique to my students, but I also had to explain why techniques needed to be done that way.

I couldn't simply say "Do it this way" without explaining and demonstrating why it needed to be done that particular way. Recently, I taught an entire class on Gakisai Dai Ichi where my students were paired with each other so that they could better understand what they were doing in the kata and why they were doing it that way.

One of the most important things that I have realized as a sensei is that when your students leave the dojo, they are still your students. You are still in their lives, and they are still in yours. As a sensei, you must be artful about helping your students to resolve conflicts that occur in their lives and relationships in and out of the dojo. An instructor who believes that they are not playing a part in their student's lives when they walk out of the door probably viewed them as customers when they walked in the door.

Additionally, there are still many things that I do the old-fashioned way. I teach with authority, demonstrate with authority, and count with authority. Even when my students are counting, I want them to do it with authority too. Students will not learn if these things are done in a wishy-washy manner.

My evolution of becoming an instructor didn't occur overnight; it has taken many years. I received my 3<sup>rd</sup> dan and my teaching license (#113) from Gogen Yamaguchi Sensei in 1980, however it was when I received my 6<sup>th</sup> dan that Tasaki Sensei looked at me and said, "Now you're a real instructor." My learning of how to be an effective instructor didn't stop when I received my Roku-dan from Tasaki Sensei. My learning continues today; I regularly focus and reflect upon improving my teaching strategies.



Fujiwara Shihan's teaching has also evolved over the years. He once told me that when he received his Hachi-dan, Tasaki Shihan looked at him and said, "Now you're on your own", and only later did Fujiwara Shihan begin to understand what his teacher meant by that statement.

When Fujiwara Shihan presented me with my Hachi-dan, he said the same thing to me – "Now you're on your own." This meant that there were certain things I would have to figure out for myself in my personal Karatedo, in my teaching, and in my life. I have begun to understand some of this, and I will continue to work on understanding more of what Tasaki Shihan and Fujiwara Shihan meant.

My evolution as a Sensei continues.



## Karate's Debut at the Canada Games



**By Jason Simmonds/SaltWire Network**

“For me, it’s a dream come true,” said Craig Vokey, president of Karate Canada. “It’s a little tick off the bucket list of what we wanted to accomplish.” The emotion in Craig Vokey’s voice illustrated the magnitude of the moment.

Karate made its debut at the 2023 Canada Winter Games in Prince Edward Island, and the first-ever medals were presented on Feb. 20.

The road to this week has been a long one for Karate Canada. Vokey, who is originally from St. John’s [Newfoundland] and now lives in Sudbury, Ont., said a 2009 application for the Canada Games resulted in karate ranking 35 out of 35 sports. “That is not the good end of 35; that’s the bad end,” said Vokey.

Work began to improve all areas of the federation. Slowly and steadily, changes were implemented. As a result of that work and dedication, approximately 70 athletes – aged 16 and 17 years old – are competing in a Canada Games.

Vokey went on to say karate is not an expensive sport, athletes don’t require a specialized arena or too much specialized equipment and it features gender parity.

“Obviously, it’s my passion,” said Vokey. “There are lots of opportunities and it’s a really nice sport. “And do you know what? You can learn a little self-defense, too.”

## Great Lakes Seiwakai Gasshuku, Shinsa, and Shiai March 17, 18, and 19



**Friday Evening in Ohio at Toledo School for the Arts with Black Belts, Brown Belts, and Invited Guests.**



**Saturday in Michigan at Bedford's Douglas Road School with all Ages and All Grades**

More than 60 people attended one or more of the seminar sessions which were held in two different locations in the greater Toledo area. Attendees came from Michigan, Ohio, Tennessee, and Ontario, Canada.

A special thank you goes out to Vassie Naidoo Shihan, Vice President of Seiwakai International, who flew in from Los Angeles, California to teach the seminar. Another huge thank you goes out to Craig Vokey Shihan, President of Seiwakai Pan America, who came in from Sudbury Canada to assist with the teaching. Another thank you goes out to Mark Cramer Shihan, President of Seiwakai USA, who hosted the seminar and also assisted Vassie Shihan.

It is important to acknowledge those who came in from afar with some of their students to participate in this event. Elizabeth Ubalde, Paulo Cardoso, Josephine Cardoso, Charles Fink, Angelo Panoussis, and Donna Benoit all drove in from Canada. Russ Costello drove in from Tennessee giving the seminar a truly Pan American flavor.



**(Above)** Vassie Shahan teaching and demonstrating proper technique in a self-defense application of mawashi-geri.



**(Above Shinsa Panel (above):** L to R Elizabeth Ubalde, Paulo Cardoso, Charles Fink, Russ Costello, Angelo Panoussis, Donna Benoit, and Chris Perry  
 Congratulations to those who successfully graded: (Shodan) Henry Conklin, Jacobi Edge, Judah Patchett; (Nidan) Bryan Jansen, Jason Strzesynski; (Sandan) Linda Rose



The banquet was held at the Mongolian Grill and was a huge success. Nearly 70 people were in attendance to enjoy the food and libation.

**Below are Photos from the Great Lakes Seiwakai Friendship Tournament**



Additional tournament photos are available at the following website:  
[https://photos.google.com/share/AF1QipO0rBR6o-SzUrLIDeFvjLpCOuIA\\_ZSiyF4c1OQm-2206b6MpsEBFbbSFUfWRJJeKZQ?key=M0RQRDhPSG1yV3IFZUN3alc0bXhETF9HUVN6bTRR](https://photos.google.com/share/AF1QipO0rBR6o-SzUrLIDeFvjLpCOuIA_ZSiyF4c1OQm-2206b6MpsEBFbbSFUfWRJJeKZQ?key=M0RQRDhPSG1yV3IFZUN3alc0bXhETF9HUVN6bTRR)



# Seiwakai Around the Globe



## Goju Ryu Karatedo Seiwakai International

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**Satoru Takahashi**



**Vice President**

**Vassie Naidoo**



**Vice President**

**Ben Mare**



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Africa**

**Gurmit Singh**



**Director  
Europe**

**Abel Figueiredo**



**Director  
Europe**

**Pal Gila**



**Director  
Europe**

**Glenn Stephenson**



**Director  
Oceania**

**Craig Vokey**



**Director  
Pan America**

**Eddie Liu**



**Director  
Asia**

*“Lead them by political maneuvers, restrain them with punishments: the people will become cunning and shameless. Lead them by virtue, restrain them with ritual: they will develop a sense of shame and a sense of participation.” Confucius 孔子 (Koshi)*

## Dates for Seiwakai Seminars for 2023



### Australia:

- Sydney: Seiwakai April 18 & 19
- JKF Goju Kai, April 21 & 22
- Fujiwara Shihan Departs Akita April 16, and Departs Australia April 24.

### Portugal:

- May 19, 20 & 21

### Japan 2023

#### Seiwakai Seminar in Omagari, Akita Prefecture, Japan

- August: 9 through 15
- First Half: 9, 10 & 11
- Free Day :12
- Second Half: 13, 14 & 15

#### Travel Day to JKF Goju Kai Events in Osaka – August 16

- JKF Goju Kai Seminar and Shinsa: August 17 & 18
- JKF Goju Kai Tournament: August 19 & 20

### South Africa:

- September 2023 (Specific dates will be determined later.)

### Pan America:

- USA November 10, 11 & 12

### In Europe

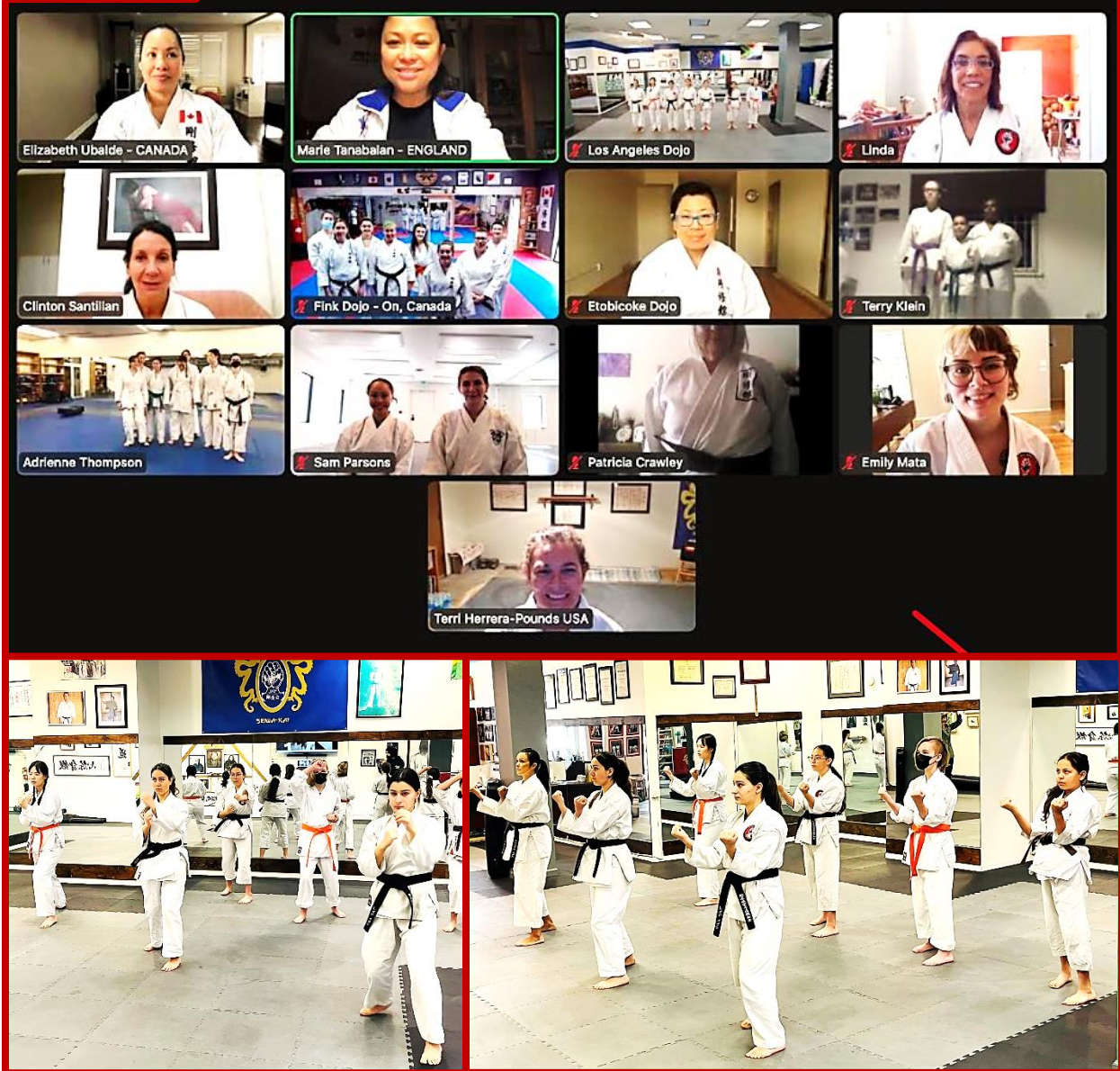
- One year in London and the next year in another European Country and has to be determined by the 3 Europe Directors
- 2024 will be in London.

### In Canada

- Toronto and Calgary will alternate.
- 2024 will be in Calgary (only if every Seiwakai Dojo in Canada is invited).

# Seiwakai International Women Advisory Board Seminar

From Emily Mata



A special thank you to the Seiwakai International Women Advisory Board (S.I.W.A.B.) for hosting the Goju Ryu Online International Seminar this past weekend. A huge appreciation to the students that came to this event!

The S.I.W.A.B. seminars that took place on March 5th, 2023 covered both kata and kumite techniques for all levels of women karateka. Dojos from South Africa, the United Kingdom, Canada, Slovakia, and the United States joined virtually to learn and train together.

In the first session, Jessica Vetrivano 4th Dan Seiwakai began the seminar with a series of 15 moving kihon combinations that help prepare us for Kata movements. Then using Gekisai, Saifa and Seiunchin Kata, Jessica took students through some of the basic conceptual bunkai of parts of the Kata. Then she broadened this into the many bunkai variations possible for these moves, demonstrating a wealth of understanding. The basics of break falling, and takedowns were also demonstrated. We all benefited from the depth of Jessica's knowledge in this area and the challenge for us all to think more broadly about bunkai for all our Kata.

Vivienne Kiss 3rd Dan Seiwakai, 4th Dan German Karate Federation, presented the second half of the session with a fascinating and potentially painful look at a large range of pressure points in the human body. We all tested these points on ourselves, and Vivienne cleverly demonstrated on her assistant just how we can use them in a kumite context. Such a wealth of knowledge and practical application.

In the second session, Emily Mata Sensei, Seiwakai 4th-dan, kicked off the seminar with instruction of the kata Sanseiryu. She broke it down by section and took everyone through each part of the kata multiple times, working the class up to performing Sanseiryu at full speed and power.

After kata, Elizabeth Ubalde Sensei, Seiwakai 6th-dan, led the class through three different four-direction kumite drills. Each drill utilized complex foot movement and quick, effective hand techniques, and each progressed in difficulty. Practitioners were encouraged to execute these techniques with a partner if they were joining from a dojo.

Overall, the two sessions linked together perfectly with many new applications and techniques to practice and teach.

We are so grateful for all of the wonderful karateka who joined us for our session and hope that the knowledge that was shared will be valuable to everyone who attended. We hope to see the same faces, as well as new ones, in the future. Remember these sessions are open to all women karateka no matter age or rank. Please reach out to the SIWAB if you have any questions at [siwab2019@gmail.com](mailto:siwab2019@gmail.com)

# Congratulations to Students upon Receiving Certificates

From Scott Reed



Congratulations to the students who recently received their Dan grade certificates directly from Japan.

- Yondan - Taylor Read
- Sandan - Andrew Wells
- Sandan - Selwyn Knoetze
- Nidan - Ashley Read
- Shodan - Craig Wilkinson