Sensei Andy Franz's dojo





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SENSEI ERNIE MOLYNEUX

IOGKF VICE CHIEF INSTRUCTOR

To all IOGKF members,

I hope your training has not been affected by the rocky start we have had to this year and the latter part of last year.

Nakamura Sensei and most of the IOGKF seniors and officers have been working tirelessly to keep things on an even keel.

There are many IOGKF events planned right up to the end of this year, students from any country may attend any of these planned events. In fact we have just returned from a world event in the Dominican Republic. The Gasshuku was a great success with many countries taking part.

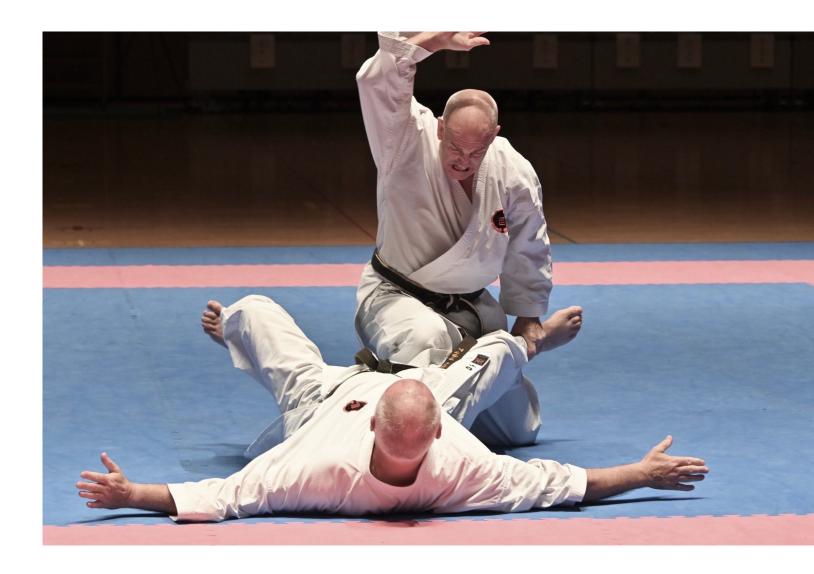
The IOGKF unlike many karate organisations has its main emphasis on training, that's why we have so many Gasshuku's all around the world. We don't focus our attention just on competition.

We have a remarkable chief instructor in Nakamura Sensei and every senior and country chief instructor have 100% trust in him to take IOGKF in to the future.

I would just like to wish you all well, keep training hard and stay safe.

Regards,

Ernie Molyneux



FLEXIBILITY & STABILITY & STABILITY & STRENGTH PT. II

Written by Sensei Linda Marchant (EGKA)

Strengthening and stretching

As promised last time, I'm going to cover some static stretching and strengthening exercises that you can bring into your training to improve performance and recovery.

What does strengthening involve?

Strengthening is making the muscle and bones stronger using resistance training with your own body weight or external weights. It is essential that you balance this training and include all the muscle groups to ensure that the weaker muscles do not overcompensate, and lead to a risk of injury.

To get the most out of strength training, you need to load the muscle until you cannot

perform any more repetitions (muscle fatigue). This encourages muscle growth and efficiency, which you will experience when you find that you can manage the weight more easily. Then you can increase the weight.

As we get older, maintaining muscle mass and strength becomes even more important for overall health, particularly because it helps delay the onset of arthritic conditions and osteoporosis.

Stretching

Static stretching involves stretching a muscle to near its furthest point and then holding that position for at least 30 to 60 seconds. This type of stretching elongates specific muscle groups and helps to improve circulation, flexibility and mobility. As a result, you will



also notice an improvement in balance and reduction in aches and pains.

Static stretching is also important if you sit all day then go training. The muscles' length and muscle tendon will be unprepared, and you may be at risk of being injured.

CARE – stretching for too long and too often can result in muscles becoming too loose when others are too tight, leading to a greater likelihood of sprains and strains. Expert supervision is needed for the more complex routines, but here are a few simple examples.

1. Standing using a partner to stabilise

- key point is the back is straight and standing leg has a micro bend in the knee
- a. body and feet facing front towards your partner, one leg on your partner's shoulder at a height where you can feel some tension/slight discomfort but not pain (your partner could be seated on the floor of standing up). Hold each leg for 30-60 seconds and repeat up to three times..
- b. turn sideways, outer foot will pivot in the opposite direction to partner, place one leg (as per mawashi geri) on your partner's shoulder, height and time as above.

2. Seated

a. Both legs out in front, place hands behind you and use your finger tips to gently sit up straight and tall, pull

- your toes towards your head, hold for 30-60 seconds.
- b. Both legs out in front, bend one knee and draw the leg up into the side of the other leg. Use your hands behind you to sit up. Lift your arms above your head to draw up the spine and fold forward grasping your leg as far as you can , ensure that your heart is looking forward and allow your gaze to look along your outstretched leg. Hold for 30-60 seconds, gently pull back the arms, unfold your leg and switch legs.

Supplementary exercises, junbi undo and hojo undo for strengthening

Once again, you'll be pleased and not surprised to hear that we don't need to start researching too hard for all the strength exercises. We already include them in our training regime, and you can spice them up by adding some weights.

We know from our history that Miyagi Chojun Sensei researched the Junbi Undo set from discussions with doctors and physios, and in the 21st century, these exercises are still considered significantly beneficial in your well-being routine.

Both the British National Health Service (NHS) and Heart foundation (BHF) recommendations on their websites include these basic routines that you will recognise in our Junbi undo:

- 1. Mini squats or knee bends can be supported using the back of a chair
- 2. Calf raises (up on the ball of your feet)
- 3. Toe raises (back on your heels)
- 4. Sideways leg lift hip strengthening either with support or free standing.
- 5. Leg extension straight leg behind

...and these exercises are in our general training:

- 6. Toe walking at least 10 steps
- 7. Heel walking at least 10 steps
- 8. Sideways walking 10 steps to right, then left (using resistance band around the top of the thighs)
- 9. Wall press
- 10. Biceps curl with weight
- 11. Sit to stand from a chair (getting up off the floor is the more advanced version!)

In the more advanced section of the NHS and BHF recommendations we can look at our supplementary exercises and hojo undo to find all these lovely things! Add weights and karate techniques to some (to promote resistance not failure), to enhance your training.

- 1. Squats add weight
- 2. Pushups perform with a partner for foot weight on the shoulders, then swap
- 3. Plank and side plank body only is enough!
- 4. Crunch and bicycle crunch as per plank
- 5. Mountain climbers try a set of four then standing up to spring into, for example, zenkutsu dachi, oizuki
- 6. Deadlift increase repetitions/weight
- 7. Glute bridge add weight using small barbell in each hand resting on the hip
- 8. Bent over row increase weights
- 9. Hollow body hold (superman) body only
- 10. Leg lifts ankle weights
- 11. Skipping weighted rope

What else can we do?

There are of course, many exercises that you can discover by researching on the internet, but you will soon see that they boil down to the core groups of exercises above.

If you look at different sports and other moving arts there are exercises and routines

that complement our karate training regime.

Dynamic training

Impact practice that supports our fighting regime can be found in Judo exercises for breakfalls and throws, hold downs and escapes. Rugby fitness training include weight training drills, some high intensity fitness routines or try Ergo Rowing for interval training.

All these can also be found in other fitness programmes, and you can get some ideas:

- 1. Cross FIT e.g. 20mins of 5 pullups, 10 pushups, 15 squats or weighted routines
- 2. HIIT (high intensity interval training) e.g. using a stationary bike pedalling fast for 30 seconds, then pedal slow for a period, for 2-4 minutes, or perform squat jumps as quickly as possible for 30-90 seconds, rest for 30 seconds repeat 3-4 reps

Body maintenance

In my view and experience, body maintenance is part of our training process and is included fully in the following systems:

- Yoga, Yang (the more dynamic and active forms)
- Yoga, Yin (holding poses for longer periods to stimulate the connective tissues).

- 3. Ballet practice of the Barre (supported movement that builds strength, flexibility and posture)
- 4. Pilates (all body strengthening with emphasis on core strength).

All these exercises help stretch out and strengthen muscles and tendons using your own body weight with vital release of muscles, as a whole system.

WARNING - If you don't know, don't guess! It can be dangerous for your and others' health. If you do want to try out advanced exercises, the best way is to attend additional classes either online or in person for professional advice.

And finally....

We are all keen to improve our karate techniques, fitness, strength and flexibility and it takes time, patience and practice. Try to keep it simple, but challenging, varied but regular and you will soon feel the benefits and for longer.

From my observations, there is a rhythm and process in our karate training life, as we are all at different stages. Not everyone has standard-issue bodies and some people have very different ways of seeing the world, so you have to tailor your training to suit that. In my training, I try to enjoy every day that I can train, do my best to work as hard as I can, take care of any injuries and schedule complete REST so that I can train for longer!



Gambatte!







WRITTEN BY SENSEI ANDY FRANZ (IOGKF USA)

My karate journey started in 1992 when I was able to go with a friend and his family to their karate school in the neighbouring town of Yakima. My parents weren't very excited about me being in Karate, because they thought it was too violent. In order to train I had to pay my own way and find my own rides. At the time it was \$25 a month to train. I mowed lawns, washed cars, stacked wood and just about any other chore I could find that would pay a few dollars for me to be able to go. My Sensei, Kyle Sonnabend Liberty, was very gracious as there were some months I came up short.

During the school year, we would walk to a church that was close by and my friends mom would pick us up, and take us into town for training. But during the summer when school was out, I would ride my bike 6 miles to my friends house so that I could catch a ride.

Two years after I began, our dojo made the switch from USA Goju to Okinawan Goju-Ryu and the IOGKF. It was not long after we transitioned that we hosted a Gasshuku with Nakamura Sensei as the guest instructor. This was 1994. I remember how dynamic he was at that time.

Fast forward a few years, I was going to college and was now teaching part time at the dojo. Sonnabend Sensei was reducing her time teaching so we were picking things up where we could. I would train 4 hours a day and teach 6 classes a week. When I think back on it now, it was a really great time of my life.

One day Sensei pulled me aside and asked

me to take over the school. But I had already made a commitment to move to Spokane the following fall to continue college and had to decline. It was one of the hardest decisions I would ever make. While in college, I continued to train and even taught a few students. It was a lot of fun steaming up the dorm lounge windows.

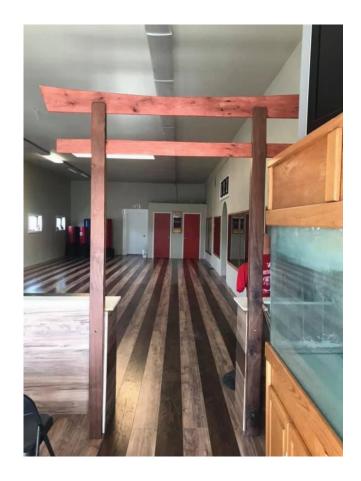
In the early spring of 2004, I moved back to Selah for work. To my surprise there was a Goju School now in Selah. So I decided to stop in and see what was going on. When I entered a found an old friend of mine running the school. We had both trained under Sonnabend Sensei. As I looked around I noticed that some of the equipment and the mirrors were from the old dojo. Sensei Kyle had decided to retire and had sold all of the dojo property to one of her other students, and here it was!

My friend very quickly talked me into watching class and eventually teaching a class here and there. By the end of summer I was a partner in the business. In the fall of 2004 my business partner moved to Florida giving me the school. So here I was, the sole owner of a 450 square foot dojo 9 months after I had just moved back home.

It was a rocky start, I had to change class times because I was working full time and couldn't teach the early classes anymore. Plus, I was thrust into the financial side of the business rather quickly as I had only been teaching before. After catching up on a few bills, I was confronted with a pretty unsettling phone call. All the equipment, the matted floor and yes even the mirrors, were actually on loan to my old business partner, and since he had

left town the owner wanted them back. So I did some quick bargaining and was able to keep the floor for three months and buy the mirrors. But all the equipment walked out the door. I was left with one kicking shield, a heavy bag that I pulled out of storage and a focus mitt.

At this time, I changed the name of the school, I called it Goju-Ryu Karate of Selah after Sonnabend Sensei's school, Goju-Ryu Karate of Yakima. Over the next year the school began to pick up and I made a deal with the landlord to expand into the space next to me. My students came to help. We were closed for a week and when we re-opened we had gone from 450 square feet to 1800 square feet. Over the next few years the dojo grew from 30 students to 80 students.



The dojo stayed in that space for a total of 13 years. Hundreds of students passed through its doors. There was even a 2 year period where I lived in the school because my life outside the dojo had hit a rough patch. But the dojo took care of me. In 2017 my wife Lisa came to me with exciting news, a dream space had opened up in the building next to us, and after a visit with the landlord and my senior students we decided to move.

The challenge came when between our old space and our new one, we only had a 3 day window to move, which included construction and laying 2500 square feet of flooring. So once again the dojo rallied and over the Halloween weekend, we ripped out carpet, built walls, changing rooms, moved all the equipment and laid all the flooring.

We even found time to hand out candy to all the kids!

We've been in the new space for just over 5 years. Almost lost it to Covid, but squeaked by as we dropped down to just under 30 students with online training. Now we are back in full force. We offer 28 classes a week have grown to just under 150 students and have an online program that is slowly growing. We've had the pleasure of several instructors from around the USA come by and teach and have even had a few Canadians sneak across the border from time to time.

Next year, we will have been open for 20 years. We would love for you to come by, train and become part of our dojo's family.



TRAINING GOJU-RYU



TRAINING GOJU RYU – PREGNANCY, POSTPARTUM AND BEYOND

Sensei Shenae Lambert 3rd Dan, IOGKF Australia (AOGKF)

Introduction

Congratulations! Chances are, if you are reading this article then you have just found out you are pregnant, you are moving along through your pregnancy or you are looking to get back into training during the postpartum period.

I recently gave birth to a beautiful baby girl. One of the first thoughts I had when I found out that I was pregnant was how can I continue to do Karate?



I have been training in martial arts for the past 18yrs and it is such a huge part of my life. I knew that keeping physically fit and active throughout my pregnancy was vitally important and going to the dojo was what I wanted to be able to continue to do. I love the physicality of free sparring and partner training but knew that being pregnant would require me to put this on the back burner for a while. I approached training with a new mindset where I would focus even deeper on improving myself rather than keeping up with the class or competing against others.

When looking for advice online, I realised there was little information specific to Karate and Goju-Ryu itself. I decided to take this on as a personal challenge. I spent a great deal of time researching a lot of information from a variety of different sources and worked closely alongside a women's health physiotherapist to adapt and modify my Karate training. The biggest piece of advice from medical professionals is **once you find out you pregnant, it is not the time to start a completely new activity.** If you have been doing Karate for quite a while, it is something that your body is used to so therefore continuing to train with modifications and adaptations can happen safely. Of course, this is extremely general advice, and every pregnancy is different so **please ensure you do seek out your own advice from your medical practitioners**. Below, I share my Goju-Ryu training journey throughout each stage of pregnancy, sharing general advice and information that I found helpful for me in the dojo.

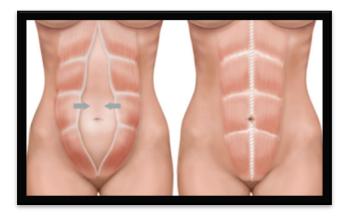
General Guidelines

- Monitor your body heat. You can work up a sweat but shouldn't be too red faced or drenched in sweat. If it is a hot or humid day, put on a fan or air-conditioning and ensure you stay hydrated.
- You should be able to talk, but not sing. Ensure you can hold a normal conversation during your training and use this as a guide to know you are not overexerting yourself.



Diastasis Recti

- Diastasis recti happens when the midline of the abdominals starts to stretch, causing a separation where your abdominal muscles should meet.
- It is important to look after your abdominal muscles during pregnancy to avoid causing a large separation to occur.
- Avoid sit-up type motions (e.g. when trying to get out of bed, roll to the side instead), heavy lifting and crunches/planks
- Focus on good posture, strengthening your pelvic floor and deep abdominal muscles and if you are worried, book a consult with a women's health physio.
- Most women have a gap during pregnancy but don't realise the extent of it
 until postpartum. Anything wider than the width of 3-4 fingers with a bulge is
 considered abnormal and should be checked.



Stretching of the linea alba. Image credit: newhealthadvisor.com

First Trimester

Jumbi Undo and Hojo Undo

- Continue stretches as normal
- Continue light weight training exercises
- Consider supplementing more strenuous activities with better alternatives. See a guide that worked for me below.

Kihon

• Continue as per normal.

Kata

- If you have been training awhile, maintaining the same kata training intensity is something that you should be able to do comfortably.
- I sought advice from Sensei Mistry around Sanchin and Tensho. I dropped intensity of these katas to 20-25% during my first trimester.

Bunkai/Kakie

- Train slowly, only with a partner you trust to avoid accidental contact
- No twisting, throwing or break falling

Kumite

• Stop all contact training immediately. Replace contact sparring with shadow sparring or pad/bag work.

AVOID/MONITOR CLOSELY	BETTER ALTERNATIVES
Full push ups	Knee/Wall push ups
	Leg Extension from all fours
	Tricep Dips
	Four Point Superman (opposite leg and arm extensions)
Full planks	Clams/Side planks
Full Sit-ups	Crunches
Double leg raises	Bridge Hold
	Bridge Pulses
	Bridge with leg extensions

Considerations for Supplementary Exercises



Bridge with Leg Extensions





Leg Extensions from all Fours

Second Trimester

Jumbi Undo and Hojo Undo

- Continue stretches as normal but be aware that the hormone relaxin is starting to flood your body so ligaments and muscles may become looser.
- Continue light weight training exercises.
- Consider supplementing more strenuous activities with better alternatives. See a guide that worked for me below during this trimester.

Kihon

 Monitor how your body is feeling when kicking and using hips to generate speed and power

Kata

- Kata training was one of the main things I was able to keep at a high intensity in my training. I have been doing Goju-Ryu katas for such a long time and my body is very used to these movements.
- I continued to practise the breathing and the form of Tensho and Sanchin, but after seeking advice from Sensei Pervez Mistry, I no longer tightened my tanden at all once I entered my second trimester.

Bunkai/Kakie

- Train slowly only with a partner you trust to avoid accidental contact.
- No twisting, throwing or break falling.

Kumite

Continue to replace contact sparring with shadow sparring or pad/bag work.

Considerations for Supplementary Exercises

AVOID/MONITOR CLOSELY	BETTER ALTERNATIVES
Full push ups	Knee/Wall push ups
	Leg Extension from all fours
	Tricep Dips
	Four Point Superman (opposite leg and arm extensions)
Full planks	Side plank/Clams
	Wall/Knee plank
Full Sit-ups	Opposite arm and leg extensions (on back)
	Bridge Hold
	Bridge Pulses
Double leg raises	2 point kneel squats
	Squats (and variations)
Star Jumps	Star Jump movement with just arms
	Crab steps side to side
	Lunges
Burpees	Walk feet back and forward and no jump
Mountain Climbers	Walk feet back and forward



Four Point Superman (Opposite arm and leg extensions)

Third Trimester

If you are starting to have more problematic back or pelvic pain, it is important to avoid exercises standing on one leg, exercises that require you to split your legs wide apart and jumping/dynamic exercises.

Jumbi Undo and Hojo Undo

- Continue stretches as normal but again be aware that your ligaments and muscles may be extra loose due to relaxin entering your system. Target areas that are sore and use this time as an opportunity to focus on your pelvic floor.
- Stop weight training rely on body weight activities only for strength training
- Consider supplementing more strenuous activities with better alternatives. See a guide that worked for me below.

Kihon

- Monitor how your body is feeling when kicking and using hips to generate speed and power
- Go at your own pace, instead of trying to match a class and be in tune with your body to avoid doing exercises that cause pain or discomfort.

Kata

• Once I hit the 34th week in my pregnancy, I dropped back my kata training from around 85% intensity to about 60%. This continued to drop as I reached full term.

Bunkai/Kakie

• Independent training – doing bunkai with low intensity and visualising the attack in front of a mirror worked well for me.

Kumite

- Shadow sparring
- I stopped doing focus mitt and pad work at week 34 of my pregnancy

Considerations for Supplementary Exercises

AVOID/MONITOR CLOSELY	BETTER ALTERNATIVES
Single leg squats	Squats
Single leg standing hip raises	2 point kneel squats
Lunges	Wall Squat Holds
Star Jumps	Crab Walk
Pigeon Pose	Squats (and variations)
Star Jumps	Crab steps side to side
Full push ups	Knee/Wall push ups
	Leg Extension from all fours
	Tricep Dips
	Four Point Superman (opposite leg and arm extensions)
Full planks	Side plank/Clams
	Wall plank
Full Sit-ups	Opposite arm and leg extensions (on back)
	Bridge Hold
	Bridge Pulses
Double leg raises	2 point kneel squats
Burpees	
Mountain Climbers	



Two Point Kneel Squat



Postpartum Period

It is extremely important that you take the time to rest and recover properly after giving birth. A women's body has undergone a huge trauma during the birthing process. I found light walking the best exercise to slowly build my body back up during the postpartum phase. I had a six week check up with my GP and women's health physio before returning the dojo. To begin, I focused on reimplementing the steps above in reverse. When I went back to training, I began by following my third trimester guidelines before moving to second and first trimester guidelines shortly after. Just like everyone's pregnancy and birth is a unique experience, so is the postpartum period. It is extremely important to seek quality advice, be in tune with your body and know your own limits.

Conclusion

Our baby is currently 4 months old and I would say I am back training at around 75%. My biggest struggles have been building up my abdominal strength to help generate whole body power throughout my movement and techniques and building glute strength to help with the speed, height and precision of my kicks. I have

embraced the challenge of getting back into partner work and the physicality of sparring and break falling. The experience of training throughout pregnancy and beyond has given me a new appreciation for the strength and resilience of my body. I was extremely lucky that I enjoyed a pregnancy that enabled me to train regularly and without too many limitations and a postpartum period that has allowed me to get back into things relatively quickly. I credit this to traditional karate and its ability to train my whole body to help keep myself fit, healthy and strong. I believe my pregnancy journey may not have been as smooth as it was without the years of training I had done in the past. It has been a journey I have enjoyed and a challenge I have relished as it made me think and reconsider my training in so many ways. Never give up!











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