

**PAN-AMERICAN GOJU RYU KARATEDO
SEIWA KAI NEWSLETTER**

**全米剛柔流空手道
誠和会社内報**

**Dedicated to Traditional Goju Ryu Karatedo
ISSUE 23: March/April 2017**

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Cherry Blossom and Two Carp, Bakufu Ohno (1888-1976)

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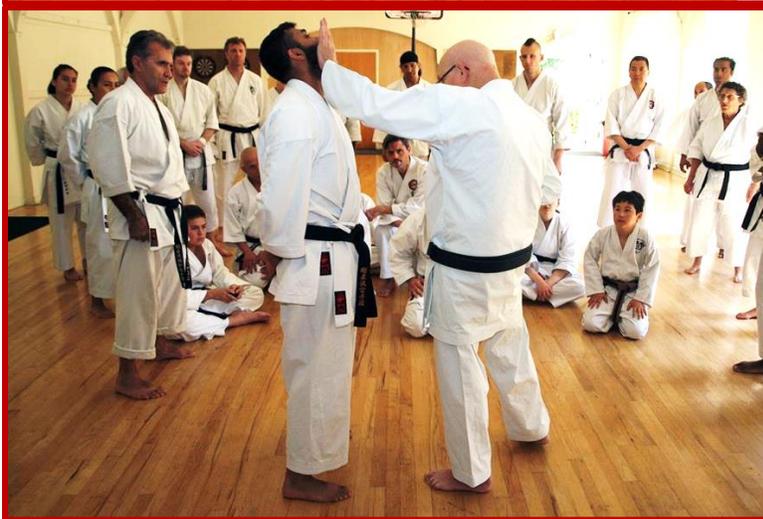
Traditional Seiwa Kai Goju Ryu Kumite Seminar

By Johnpaul Williams



Shihan Leo Lipinski led a very informative traditional kumite seminar March 10th, 11th, and 12th in Santa Monica, California. The seminar was hosted by Shihan Vassie Naidoo. Shihan Leo Lipinski extensively explained kumite theory and detailed relaxation principals applicable to Jiyu Kumite techniques. In addition, we were provided in-depth details into the principles of successful Tensho based Kumite which was developed by Tasaki Shuji, the founder of Seiwakai.

By Des Tuck



It was a great privilege to have my Sensei since 1970, Leo Lipinski, travel from the UK to Santa Monica, California, to share with us his immense knowledge of the unique Gojuryu kumite style he learned from the late Tasaki Sensei, a devastating fighter with skills that combined sophistication and simplicity. We in Seiwa Kai USA are truly grateful for his dedication to us and his willingness to spend these precious few days in order to improve our skills. We focused heavily on the little details in basic movement that enable effective technique.

Happy 70TH Birthday to Vassie Naidoo Shihan
From Your Pan American Seiwa Kai Family and Friends





How Much Is Enough? Musings on Training.

By Jim Pounds



“To win is simply to prove the practice, the hours and hours of practice. That is the way to gain the most confidence because you know you are working harder than anyone else. You put in more time than anyone else.”

~ Seiji Nishimura (Former All-Japan National Team Coach)

I’m often asked how much training is sufficient.

That’s a difficult question to answer, because to answer it correctly you must start with the goal in mind. In other words, what are you training *for*? The answer varies when you establish the goal and then work backward. The first priority is to look at what you are trying to accomplish. The answer I would give to an elite practitioner training for the USANKF Nationals would be different from a middle-aged man training to stay in shape.

I will first say that, in my humble opinion, the *minimum* training regimen for a karateka would be three times a week. Without that frequency, it is difficult to fully master the art. Furthermore, training less frequently can be harder on us physically, because infrequency never allows our bodies to get “in the groove”, and creates continual aches and pains - and injuries - when we go from inactivity to hard-duration. High performance engines need to be revved regularly or they gunk up. For many of us, our group training schedule is only two days per week. It therefore goes without saying that self-training – training outside the dojo - is required.

So what are you wanting to accomplish? Start there.

It’s helpful to look at how other athletes – distance runners, for example – train. If they are training for an upcoming race, the frequency and intensity of their workouts increase in the months ahead of the race date, with a slight tapering off just before the event. But this doesn’t mean mindlessly plodding along at one speed while upping the mileage. They vary the workouts with a combination of hills, speed work, long runs, intervals, and cross training. And rest. The idea is to improve performance by improving all facets of their physical, mental, and psychological aspects. They know the distance, the pace, and their own abilities. They can influence pace and their ability through scientific, regular training.

During the off season, they continue to train, but typically without the same intensity as for a race. And they work in more cross-training to round out their fitness level as well as to stay fresh mentally.

How does that relate to karate training?

If you are working toward a competition date, a major training (a *Gasshuku* in Japan, for example), or a grading, then you should get with your Sensei several months ahead of that date and work out a training schedule. The best way to do that is to visualize your desired performance and preparedness on that date. Now, with the help of your Sensei, make an honest assessment of where you are now. Then you will see the improvements necessary within the time you have to make them. That will make you prioritize. Create a training schedule and stick to it. You start with the result in mind.

Training for an event is perhaps easier than keeping your regimen fresh for the long run. As George Leonard said, *“If the goal is mastery, then nothing less than a lifetime is required.”* Taken at face value, that’s a daunting proposition for many people. It may be necessary to reframe how you think about training for the long term. You must train regularly and begin to appreciate the nuances of your improvement. Mastery is a long-term commitment.

There’s a major difference between someone who says “I train at karate” and another who says “I *am* a Karateka.” If you *are* a karateka, there is no trying to be, because you already are. And if you are, training is simply part of your daily routine, just as praying is something a monk does. It is part of your existence just as breathing is. I don’t get up in the morning and think “Oh darn, I have to eat today. What a pain.” I eat because I’m a living organism and that’s what we do. I don’t think about breathing. I breathe because I’m alive. I train because I’m a karateka.

I’m not suggesting every day you should immerse yourself in hard training. Smart training is on-going, but integrates hard and easy, just as Goju Ryu integrates the hard and the soft. If you do only train 3 days a week, you might want to train for intensity in the two classes and then train less strenuously in your self-practice. Or, you may choose to make your third day another intense self-practice of bag work, kata, etc. Then on your “off” days, simply run Sanchin and Tensho several times with some stretching. The trick is to do something daily.

I’m sure you get the idea. I can say without doubt that I train differently at my age than when I was in my twenties. I see that I benefit also from easier physical, but perhaps more mentally challenging, workouts. I’ve also incorporated yoga and weight training on my off days. I quit running out of necessity. I’m always adapting. But just as you do, I still have important trainings, gradings, and an occasional competition to look forward to. It’s important to have future goals. Start with the end in mind and work backward to where you are today. Then divide the time between now and the event into daily increments of scientific improvement.

The rest of the time continue to “chop wood and carry water” as the Zen koan says. Train because you are a karateka. Just like breathing. And remember:

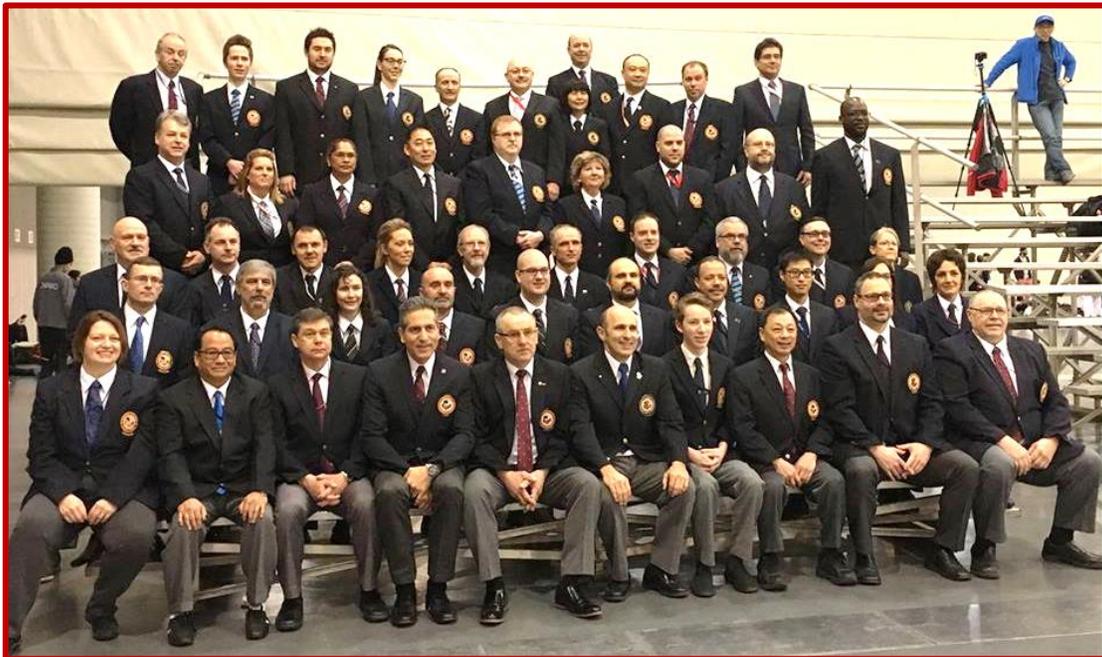
“There are no shortcuts to anyplace worth going.”

- Beverly Sills -

Goshukan Seiwa Kai Canada: By Benoit's Martial Arts



Marissa Meandro (with Craig Vokey, President of Karate Canada) competed at the 2017 Karate Canada National Championships in Quebec City. She earned a silver medal in the girls 14-15 age division. We're all proud of your accomplishments. Keep the great work!



Hats off to these officials of the 2017 National Karate Championships, including our very own Sensei Ian Boyne. This event was held in Quebec City over the weekend of February 24th-26th.

Karate Fact or Karate Fiction

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When I first began to study karate in 1971, there was preciously little historically accurate information written in English about the martial arts in general and about karate in particular. In place of an accurate history of karate, we were often told what turned out to be martial arts myths on a variety of subjects. Similar to the so-called urban myths of today, these stories were told and retold in the dojos throughout the karate community until they gained a life of their own.

This phenomenon was prevalent not only in Western nations but also in Okinawa and Japan. Gichin Funakoshi Sensei explained this: “In the past it was common to embellish stories about the martial arts until they were just short of myths.”[i] As we know, there are popular television shows and a number of websites which are dedicated to researching popular urban myths and either confirming them or discrediting them. This same type of research can also shed light on many of these martial arts myths and confirm them as true or expose them as false.

Martial Arts Myths Busted

Below: A young Miyagi and Kyoda training without gi or belts



One of the most frequently told karate stories dealt with the development of the karate black belt. This story explained that in antiquity a karate-ka (karate student) started out wearing a white belt and that over time it gradually darkened as the karate-ka gained knowledge and experience. Since the belt was never washed, it turned darker and darker until it eventually became black signifying that the karate-ka was in possession of true knowledge.

Whereas this and many of the other myths proved to be both entertaining and philosophical, they also proved to be false. The truth of the matter is that originally, no black

belts were worn in karate. In fact, no karate gi was worn either; practitioners wore short pants and were bare-chested. Karate black belts and uniforms were first adopted in the 1920s and had nothing to do with the story that we were told. The true history of karate’s adoption of the black belt proved to be much less philosophical and entertaining but much more informative of the social-cultural climate of Okinawa and Japan at that time.

In the martial arts, there were no black belt dan grade until the late 1800s. It was then that Jigoro Kano, the founder of Japanese judo, created the belt system which originally included white and black belts (kyu and dan grades). This purpose of this system was to differentiate between students who had taken their first and subsequent steps in training.[ii] He also developed the judo gi from the traditional Japanese kimono which had been previously worn, and it became the first modern martial arts training uniform.[iii]

In the early 1920s Okinawan karate was taken to main islands of Japan. However, all Okinawan arts were looked down upon by the Japanese people as being primitive and savage.[iv] Practicing karate naked to the waist and without an organized ranking system only reinforced these beliefs. Consequently, in order for karate to be accepted in Japan as a sophisticated Japanese martial art, the teachers of karate adopted a number of changes aimed at making Okinawan Karate uniform with other Japanese martial arts. This included adopting Jigoro Kano's system of belts and wearing the gi that he developed.[v]

I can also remember being told that karate was taught to the common people of Okinawa because they were forbidden to possess weapons. By the use of their empty hands (karate) and with the assistance of simple farm tools they were able to defeat the sword-wielding samurai who controlled their island.

Research does reveal a ban on weapons in Okinawa, and most historians agree that it was the impetus for the development of Okinawan karate.[vi] However, karate was not customarily taught to the common folk. Originally, the people who learned karate were members of Okinawa's noble class, and for the most part the common folk were excluded from karate training: "Karate was something that only the rich (meaning the nobility) could afford to learn. Commoners arose before dawn and toiled in the fields farming or on the sea fishing all day long... There was no time for midnight karate lessons at a family tomb, nor was there any money for tuition." [vii]

Furthermore, much of the weaponry that they wielded turned out to be imported from China or copied from the Chinese martial arts.[viii] As it turns out, even this widely believed story about Okinawan commoners learning karate to protect themselves from the Japanese Samurai turned out to be among the martial arts myths.

Other martial arts myths told of karate masters who were so skilled and powerful that they were able to kill tigers with their bare hands and single-handedly eliminate a gang of thugs who were robbing people from two cities. Although these and similar stories circulated for many years and were believed by many karate students, good old-fashioned historical research turned up absolutely no evidence that such events actually occurred.

Peter Urban wrote an account of an incident that supposedly occurred in China where Gogen Yamaguchi Sensei had been sent during the Second World War. He was on a political mission for

Japan and was captured by the Chinese. After being arrested as a spy and tortured for several days, the Chinese decided to execute Yamaguchi Sensei in a most horrific manner. His captors put him in a cage with a tiger that they had starved for three days. Upon entering the cage, Yamaguchi Sensei kicked, punched, and choked an adult tiger to death. As a result of this incident, the Chinese became fearful of Yamaguchi Sensei and the extradentary powers that he possessed. When he was subsequently released, his captors breathed a collective sigh of relief.[ix]

Below: “Go ahead. Make my day!”

There are several problems with Mr. Urban’s account. First of all, Yamaguchi Sensei never mentioned this event in his autobiography, and Mr. James Genovese, who trained with Yamaguchi Sensei in Japan, insists that Yamaguchi Sensei denied that this event occurred.[x] Finally, many wildlife experts do not believe that it is plausible for an unarmed human to kill an adult tiger.[xi] It appears as if this account is nothing more than an Urban myth.



Like Yamaguchi Sensei, Chotoku Kyan Sensei also appears to have been the subject of embellished karate myths: “Many stories are told of Kyan’s fighting ability and fighting tactics and as always happens, fantasy gets in the way of reality.”[xii] There is an often told story regarding Kyan’s fighting abilities and tactics which is certain to have some degree of embellishment included in it. According to one of the most popular versions of this story, a gang of thugs was harassing and attacking people on the road which connected Naha with Shuri, Okinawa. The thugs demanded a toll for safe passage, and the local police forces were unable to bring the situation under their control. Since the authorities were unable to ensure the safety of the public, the locals persuaded Chotoku Kyan to help get rid of the gang. One night, he walked alone along the road carrying two chickens – one under each arm. Four men accosted him and demanded money and the chickens.[xiii]

Kyan explained to these men that he had little money. He also told the thugs that his mother was ill and that he needed the chickens for broth. The hoodlums reiterated their demands and threatened Kyan with a sword. Immediately, Kyan flung the chickens at the robbers.[xiv] “At the instant he flung the chickens, he jabbed his hands against the two men in front of him, poking one in the eye and the other in the throat. Both dropped on the spot. He kicked the sword bearer in the groin and turned to face the hooligan in the back of him... As Kyan advanced, the tough broke and ran... The street had become safe for travel again.”[xv]

Even though it would be nice to believe that these events actually happened, it appears as if fantasy has gotten in the way of reality. Whereas no one is questioning the actual abilities of Chotoku

Kyan, this story is not entirely believable. It is difficult to accept that a single unarmed man succeeded in eliminating an armed gang of armed thugs where the police forces of two cities failed.



Above: Chotoku Kyan

Other versions of this story seem to have less embellishment in them. In one of the other variations of this story, Kyan and two of his karate students were walking along a road. Kyan, who was involved in the local sport of cock fighting, was carrying a prize fighting bird under his arm. The two of students wanted to test their teacher's skills so they picked a fight with a group of young men, and then ran off, leaving Kyan alone to defend himself. With only one free arm and his feet, Kyan was victorious in the confrontation.[xvi] Whereas this version is less fanciful, it is more believable.

It is important to be able to separate fact from fiction in these martial arts myths, but it is also important to understand the message behind the myth. In the past, myths were designed to teach a moral lesson such as emphasizing the virtues of hard training or depicting good triumphing over evil. Hence, persistent training leads to the acquisition of knowledge (a black belt), and a skilled yet moral karate teacher can defeat a gang of evil thugs.

Modern Martial Arts Myths

It is also important to point out that martial arts myths are not a thing of the past. Some myths have developed recently. However, the purpose behind these myths is entirely different from the myths of the past. They have nothing to do with teaching a moral lesson. These modern exaggerations include everything from spuriously claiming to win world championships and having nothing to substantiate the claim, to constantly maligning traditional Karatedo and claiming to be the only person in the world who understands the true mysteries of karate. These modern myths are designed to deceive students and/or to line the pockets of unscrupulous martial arts instructors with the money of people who didn't take the time or the effort to research the instructor or dojo.

It is obvious that not all martial arts stories are true. Whereas some are false, the message behind the myth expresses a moral lesson, and it is important to understand the purpose of this lesson. In other words, know the historical truth, but don't miss the moral message.

Other exaggerations in the martial arts are created for personal and/or financial gain, and are the very antithesis of a moral message. Consequently, good old-fashioned research will help in dispelling these misrepresentations of the facts and help with keeping from getting deceived by a charlatan or ripped-off by an unscrupulous karate instructor.

End Notes

- [i] Funakoshi, Gichin, *Karate-Do Nyumon*: page 13
- [ii] Ohlenkamp, Neil Ohlenkamp, Neil: "The Judo Rank System" JudoInfo.com. <http://www.judoinfo.com/obi.htm> (Last modified March 25, 2007.).
- [iii] Lowry, Dave (2006). In the Dojo pp. 39–42
- [iv] Rabson, Steven, JPRI Occasional Paper No. 8 (October 1996)
- [v] Miyazato Eiichi: *Okinawan Den Goju Ryu Karate-do*: page 34
- [vi] Funakoshi, Gichin, *Karate-Do Nyumon*: page 19
- [vii] Goodin, Charles: *Dragon Times*: Vol.19 page 9
- [viii] Cook, Harry: *Cook, Harry: Shotokan Karate*, page 7
- [ix] Urban, Peter: *The Karate Dojo*; page 106-108
- [x] Noble, Graham *Dragon Times*: Vol. 8; page 31
- [xi] Noble, Graham *Dragon Times*: Vol. 8; page 31
- [xii] Cook, Harry: *Shotokan Karate*: pages 42-43
- [xiii] Kim, Richard: *The Weaponless Warriors*: pages 60-61
- [xiv] Kim, Richard: *The Weaponless Warriors*: page 61
- [xv] Kim, Richard: *The Weaponless Warriors*: pages 61-62
- [xvi] Cook, Harry: *Shotokan Karate*: pages 42-43

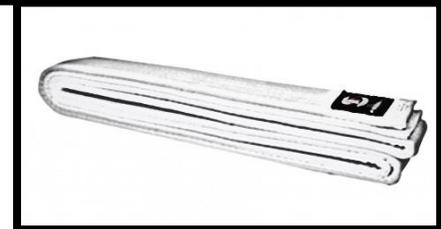
Seiwa Kai Humor



First I joined an American karate McDojo, and got a black belt.



Then I joined A Seiwa Kai dojo, and felt like I deserved a white belt.



Seiwa Kai Around the Globe



Seiwa Kai Goju Ryu Karatedo International

Goshukan South Africa

By Gary Mahnke

Goshukan Gauteng shows its strength at Gauteng Provincial Championships this past weekend under instructors Marius Madgwick and Tarryn Madgwick. Well done team!



Seiwa Kai Iran

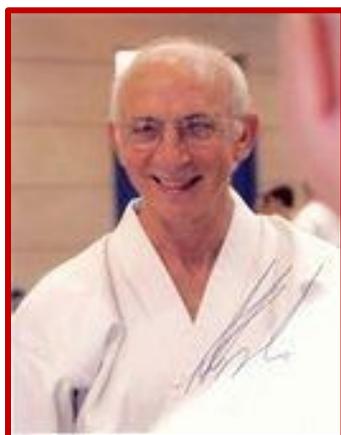
By Nabi Ebrahimi

Iran Seiwakai Goju Kai Karate Team. First place in Iran supper karate league 2016 & 2017.



Seiwa Kai in the WKF European Championships

By Leo Lipinski Shihan



Seiwakai East Slovakia is getting great results in WKF Europe Championships. Feri Kretovic from Kosice in East Slovakia had one of his students achieve 3rd Place.

Here is the report I received:

There were 44th EKF Junior, Cadet, and Under 21 WKF European Championships last week [February 17-19] and one of my students Viktoria Pilarova gained 3rd place in category Under 21, -68kg kumite.

Feri Kretovic is still a coach for the Slovak Junior team. Rasto Mraz, who used to be a coach for the Slovak team, used to work under Feri's leadership until they both retired from that position. My congratulations to Feri and Seiwakai East Slovakia.

I must also congratulate [Ondrej Cítenyi](#) also from Slovakia (Nitra) for his WKF refereeing and judging achievements.

Finally, I must also offer late congratulations to Seiwakai Iran. Two of the teams that were winners in the World Championships which were held in Germany a few years ago, were from Seiwakai Iran and were led by Ebrahim Esfandiari. The Japan team came second in that World Championships, and I am a little surprised that there was no report in the Gojukai magazine. Ebi is legal advisor to The Iran National Federation. I would like to see Mr. Esfandiari become a legal advisor/special consultant in Europe and eventually for Seiwakai International. Ebi Esfandiari was himself a member of the Iran kumite team many years ago, and he is now attending many seminars in Europe and Japan.

Seiwa Kai England Seminar With Leo Lipinski Shihan

By Anita Rose Faulkner

Photo by Richard Hang Hong



A big THANKYOU to everybody who made the trip to Worsall this weekend for our fourth annual seminar with Shihan Leo Lipinski. We had participants from Newcastle, Manchester, Liverpool, as well as our own students, 38 people over the two days. We were given lots to think about covering kata, kihon, randori, kumite, footwork, weight shifting, and precision work, focusing on the importance of target accuracy. Also, we covered a variety of kata including Shisochin, Kururunfa and Superinpei.

The seminar was varied and gave everybody a lot to work on. We couldn't run these seminars without the support of those who make them happen so we would like to thank everyone who came, the success of the weekend was down to all of you and it was a great pleasure for us to have you all with us. We hope to see many of you again in Blackpool at Sensei Jamies for the next one.

Seiwa Kai South Africa By Ben Mare



Seiwakai South Africa with the National Federation including aKSA President Sonny Pillay and SASCOC board member.

Seiwa Kai Hungary

By Maria Bruszt

Do not forget Hungarian Sewakai Seminar with Shihan Leo Lipinski in April 05-07. All of you are welcome.



**Magyar Goshu-kan
Karate Do Szövetség**

Leo Lipinski szeminárium

**2013.04.05-2013.04.07
in Pécs**



**Shihan Leo Lipinski
8. dan**

Fee:

- **40 EUR** /person/total seminar
From Friday to Sunday.
- **10 EUR**/person/1 training, *if you do not want to do or can not to do karate every day from Friday to Sunday.*

Training:

- Friday: 19.00-21.00
- Saturday :10.00-12.00,
15.00-17.00
- Sunday: 10.00-12.00,
15.00-16.30 (training+belt exam)

Accommodation:
Gábor Fekete: dnoire@freemail.hu

Training place:
• Testvérvárosok Terei Általános Iskola (7632 Pécs, Testvérvárosok tér1.)

How to apply and deadline:

1. e-mailen a goshukan@gmail.com the submission of names of candidates) to **2013.04.03!!** (*Helyszíni jelentkezés: 1.000 Ft felárat jelent!*)
2. You can pay on the spot. Cash.

Everyone is welcome:

Paul Gila

Seiwa Kai Russia
Seminar Goju Ryu Karatedo Seiwa Kai
By Vasily Zyukalin



May, 12, 13 and 14, 2017

The seminar will be held in Domodedovo city,
Moscow Region.

The heads of the seminar Seiichi Fujiwara
Hanshi, President Goju-ryu Karatedo Seiwakai,
8th Dan, Leo Lipinski Shihan, Vice President
Goju-ryu Karatedo Seiwakai, 8th Dan.

Cost of Hotel from 2600 rubles per night,
including meals.

For any questions contact to Vasily Zyukalin.

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