



*Editors note: All articles are written by GM Todd unless otherwise noted.*



**Birthdays in July:**

Happy birthday to the following students of Axe Taekwon-Do: Mr. Garber, A. (2nd), Mr. Fisher (9th), and Ms. Kelly (30th) . Three students who are no longer training with us and we would love to have back in the class, Mrs. Matos Hetrick, Mr.

Grgas and Mr. Palmer. Please let me know if I am missing anyone who has a birthday in August.



**Axe Taekwon-Do Promotion Testing—August 29, 2024—Offutt YC**

The next scheduled testing will be on August 29th at the Youth Center. We will pass these forms out to those eligible by August 8th. We want all fees and forms returned by August 27th. If you have any questions please contact

me, Grand Master Todd, Sr. Master Bushor or Master Bowling.

**6 week SELF DEFENSE COURSE**

**AXE TAEKWON-DO**  
Taught by Grand Master Ricky Todd

**\$50** per person

Adults & youth ages 6 and up

Learn defensive kicks, strikes, escape techniques and more

Every Tuesday starting **AUGUST 20** 5:30 - 6:30 PM Youth Programs

**Must register on CYPBMS 402-294-5152**

**Self Defense Course**

I will be teaching a self defense course starting on August 20th, this course will run at the same time as the 530 class but I will move to the other end of the gym. I would appreciate you passing this information out through your social media or to your friends. I have been fortunate that this program has brought several students into our regular Taekwon-Do program. Typically this program encourages people to join our Taekwon-Do classes. We need to work on getting our class size back to the pre-covid numbers.

**Shoe Policy**

A reminder that the Youth Center has a policy on wearing shoes anytime you are outside of our training area (gym). If you leave to use the restroom please wear your shoes. In addition to the policy it is unsanitary for you to be barefoot in the restrooms.

**Spectators**

Several years ago there was a policy limiting spectators in the instructional classes. This has not been a rule for many years. Please feel free to invite family, friends and potential students to come and watch a class. Often, this is the best way to encourage someone to join the class.

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**Calendar Dates 2024**

- Aug 20—Self Defense Course
- Aug 29—Axe TKD Testing
- Oct 20—Sereff Tournament
- Oct 31—No class Halloween
- Nov 21 —Axe TKD Testing
- Nov 28—No class Thanksgiving
- Dec 14 or 15 —BB Holiday Lunch
- Dec 19—Class Holiday Party
- Dec 24,27 & 31—Holiday Break



### *September 1*

Previously I sent an email and several newsletters informing you that the Youth Center must discontinue the family rate for classes. After discussion with the Youth Center Director, it was decided we would lower the individual rate from \$75 per month to \$70 per month. However, the \$70 per month applies to all students regardless of family size. We researched other Military Programs, and the family rates are being discontinued. I do believe that we have a great martial arts program here with Taekwon-Do and that is still a bargain compared with other local martial arts programs. Typically, the cost of classes per student “off base” ranges from \$125 to \$275 per month per student. Again, you may find examples of schools that charge “initial” rates that look good at first glance, but you must commit to multiple months in a contract that raises pricing.

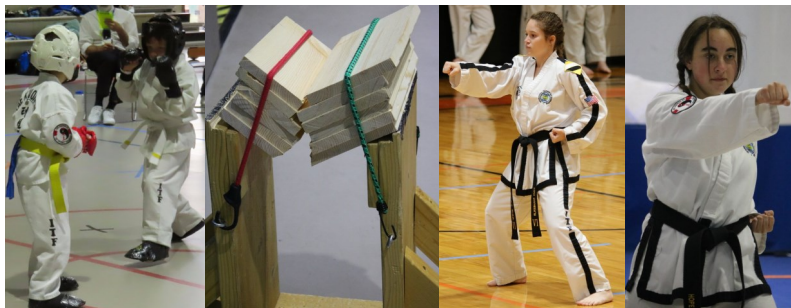
### *Technical Clarification—Straight Finger Tip Thrust*

I have discussed this many times concerning proper preparation for the straight finger tip thrust. I continue to see black belts teaching this incorrectly. The preparation is with the palms up and near the mid rib area, slightly clenched and then the thrusting hand must travel in a straight line until full extension. It does not start with the hands pointing to the sky and then traveling in a downward arc. Part of the continued issue with this preparation are there are several incorrect photos in the TKD Encyclopedia. The Encyclopedia has thousands of pictures and they are not all correct. If you have any questions please see me.

### *Sereff TKD Fall Championship—October 20, 2024—Broomfield, Colorado*

The USTF Sereff TKD Fall Championship in Broomfield, Colorado. The event will be on Sunday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024. It will be held in Broomfield High School from 9 AM – 430 PM. This tournament will feature over 45 divisions including individual sparring and patterns. There will be team breaking with 5-person teams. All information is included on the forms which are on the Axe TKD website and were included in the group mailing.

You can travel with the group or on your own. We will let you know where you can stay if you want to stay with the group and you will be responsible for booking your rooms. Again, let me know if you will attend and if you need assistance with rooms and/or rides. Since this tournament is on a Sunday I plan to leave on Saturday and return on Monday (we can alter this schedule if necessary, to include returning on Sunday). The flyer and registration forms are available for download at: <https://www.axetkd.com/PDF/Tournaments/STKDTourn.pdf>.



*Art or Way: (Reprint) (Part 2 continued)*

This is an article I wrote in 2004 but I think it is worth reading again. For some of you it is probably the first time you have read it. I have edited it as my writing style has changed over the last 20 years.

I am going to briefly discuss the art or way of Taekwon-Do in my opinion. The DO in Taekwon-Do is translated as the art or way. To continue...

We strive to be a complete martial art, and this is why the discipline is strict. This is also why you must study your required mental knowledge and work hard. In the past, a green belt possessed the skill to survive an attack. Today many black belts in other styles would not survive an attack due to poor training and not taking martial arts seriously.

Many people see martial arts as physical exercise. There are now many classes for Tae-Bo or kickboxing where the instructors have no martial arts experience. This might be good for aerobic exercise but some of these classes advertise they are teaching self defense. Students that are in these classes might be able to kick and punch but do they understand how to generate maximum force or strike vital points to disable an attacker? No, and they are not practicing martial arts, they are simply kicking and punching.

Some people claim to be black belts in different styles or want to study different styles. Why? It will take a lifetime to master any martial art to the point of being able to react naturally, understand all techniques, and be able to explain the technique and demonstrate and teach it fully. Every martial art has strong points; they are all only as good as the instructor teaching it. You may like the throws or falls in Judo, if so then dedicate yourself to that art. You can't become good at both Judo and Taekwon-Do. I have talked with some of these instructors that claim to have black belts in different styles and some stated they only do this for fun.

We don't practice Tae Fun Do, we practice Taekwon-Do and it has to be serious. When you first start training at the white belt it might be for fun, but by the time you reach the green belt, it has to be more than fun. You have dedicated many hours of practice, missed other events in your life, spent money, and studied hard. It must be for the art or way and making yourself a better person, not just for fun. Taekwon-Do is also not for just getting in shape. Our moves are designed to be explosive and actually energy-conserving. Sparring might be aerobic but usually, you only spar for a two minute round. Getting into shape is not the purpose of Taekwon-Do. Its purpose is for self defense, develop self confidence, being able to handle yourself in stressful situations, and being able to react naturally in a self defense situation.

We take Taekwon-Do seriously and insist that students take the art very seriously. We expect students to be loyal and dedicated to the art and their instructor. In the past it wasn't discussed if you would be at class, you would be at class if you wanted to be part of the class. You didn't join the class, you were accepted into the class by the instructor and if you trained 3 days per week, 2 hours per class, you were allowed to stay in the class. You were not allowed to stay in the class because you paid your tuition. You were allowed to remain in the class because the instructor trusted what he was teaching you would be used properly and you were deserving of learning this technique. This unfortunately has changed, and students may feel they can not show up at class or fail to call to inform their instructor why they won't attend. We do understand other commitments, family, school and other sports, but do expect students to keep us informed.

*Art or Way: (Reprint) (Part 2 continued)*

Testing is another area where some styles have basically promoted students because they show up to class and pay their test fees. Belts are not given in our class for this reason. Belts are awarded because you deserve to learn more. Your belt signifies that you have learned and earned up to a certain point in our art. It also means we trust you to learn more. You may see arts that promise a black belt in a certain number of months. How can you do this when all students develop at different rates? We usually state it takes around 3 ½ years. Some will take more. Those that receive a black belt in lesser time without truly understanding their art will cheapen the image of the black belt. It has come to the point where it is almost embarrassing to talk about being a black belt because there are so many people that are not serious about the martial arts that have been “given” black belts. We still take pride in our black belts and in any student that we award, not “give” this rank. If you earn your black belt with us you will feel a tremendous sense of pride and accomplishment.

I am not making a statement that we are the greatest instructors, but I am trying to show that we are a martial art and it takes dedication, time, and a tremendous amount of mental and physical effort. I am not trying to discourage anyone, you can have fun with Taekwon-Do, but you must be serious about training and the art.

I am also not asking for or expecting blind obedience to your instructor. In the past when an instructor asked a student to go to an event, attend a weekend tournament, or something similar a student was honored and made a solid effort to attend. You must be willing to attend some of these events to progress in the art. You will learn a tremendous amount by traveling and observing other people and how they teach or practice. When I tested for red belt and black stripe I traveled 600 miles on a weekend for testing. Now there are more black belts available and not many have to do this, but I never questioned the distance or spending my time in the pursuit of becoming a better martial artist. I didn't hesitate to spend the time, I knew that I wanted to progress and learn more.

I also traveled from Wichita Kansas to Hahn Germany to test for my black belt. I flew commercially at my own expense and spent 30 days training with my instructor. This was to honor him and show him that I was a loyal student and thankful for him showing me the art, allowing me to progress, and trusting me enough to teach me additional techniques. I also wanted to show him what I had learned in the 3 ½ years that I had been training. I never once regretted the amount of money or time spent on this testing. It was important to me in my pursuit of the art or way.

A serious student of Taekwon-Do will try to practice hard and live by the tenets of Taekwon-Do and the student oath inside and outside the school. Practice courtesy, integrity, perseverance, self control, and indomitable spirit. Continue to challenge yourself both physically and mentally in your pursuit of the art or way of Taekwon-Do. If you do this, you will be separated from those who simply go through the moves of a martial art and define you as a martial artist practicing Taekwon-Do.

## Axe Taekwon-Do

Axe Taekwon-Do was formed in 2004 at Offutt Air Force Base. Grand Master Todd and Master Bushor formed Axe Taekwon-Do which is an authorized school under the United States Taekwon-Do Federation.

USTF Taekwon-Do has been active at Offutt Air Force Base, Youth Center since 1988. The classes were originally founded by Mr. Vince Dowd, a 3<sup>rd</sup> degree black belt from Colorado. In 1989, the late Sr. Master Gary Meek took over the classes and renamed the school Meek's International Taekwon-Do. In 2004, the school was renamed Axe Taekwon-Do and Grand Master Todd and Master Bushor took over teaching.

Classes are taught on Tuesday & Thursday.

Beginners: 5:30—6:30 pm

Advanced: 6:30-8:00 pm

Offutt Air Force Base Youth Center  
Building 5085  
Bellevue, Nebraska  
Phone: 402-294-5152

### Direct Contact Instructors

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### *Summer:*

You may have noticed that class sizes are smaller when school was out for the summer. Summer vacations, sports, and camps were all competing for your time, so it's important to keep up with your Taekwon-Do practice. Taekwon-Do is excellent for improving balance, endurance, and confidence, and I encourage you to continue participating in other sports and activities. However, I also want to remind you to return to your Taekwon-Do training as well. When you can't make it to class, remember that you can still practice at home. We expect you to attend 85% of the available classes to be eligible for testing, but I understand that schedules can be hectic. I hope to see you in class

### *Future Events—2024*

**August 29:** Axe Taekwon-Do Testing.

**October 20:** Sereff Taekwon-Do Tournament, Broomfield, Colorado

**November 21:** Axe Taekwon-Do Testing.

**December 14 or 15:** Black Belt holiday luncheon

**December 19:** Axe Taekwon-Do holiday party

### *Future Tests—2024*

All color belts are considered for testing and promotion quarterly in February, April, August, and November. There are many factors that are considered before we allow a student to take a test. I am providing the following tentative dates for black belts. It will provide the black belt student with a goal, but I will decide, based on your skill, attitude, qualifications, and attendance.

**November 21**—Mr. Buckley to 5th degree black belt and Ms. McDermott to 3rd degree black belt.

The above black belt names are simply a forecast of potential dates, this can change depending on the student's attendance, health, etc.

