

The 2013 Myuna bay training camp was the first camp that I had ever attended in regards to martial arts, so I had no idea what to expect, apart from hard work and a lot of fun. It was much more than that for me as I'm sure it was for others. I got to meet amazing new people who also share the love and passion for Tae Kwon Do and experience other martial arts and the camaraderie of everyone no matter the level or experience.

The facilities that were provided by Myuna bay sport and recreation were excellent, they were clean and tidy and provided plenty of rooms with bunk beds, each with their own bathroom, there was a common room, with a tv and sound system and kitchen allowing for snacks and relaxation between the program.

I arrived late to the initial warm-up session but was able to witness something truly incredible that set the tone for the rest of the camp. Over 40 people, sweating, punching and kicking their way through the class and the focus they had was truly a sight run by Master Peter Hartman (4th Dan). It really bended people's minds to try and do the patterns in reverse and was very amusing but interesting to watch. As the class concluded and Master Ron (6th dan) welcomed and opened the camp was followed by an IMT war cry that could have woken the dead, everything tingled after that.

As everyone returned to the lodge, all of the students, parents from the clubs across NSW including a member from QLD (Brock Carlsen-Wareham) were immediately treated like a giant family, there were no awkward moments or introductions, everyone was wanted and expected to be there, something I haven't experienced on such a large scale in a long time. I was told the kids were going to be up the latest on Friday night, turned out it was the adults (if you could call us that if you saw us) giggling and carrying on like the oldest of mates.

We were woken by Master Ron at 6am for Yoga, which was particularly early for someone coming out of a university style lifestyle, but there is no rest for the wicked. The yoga was an excellent way to start the day and stretch your mind and body for the experiences to come. All of the main meals were provided by Myuna bay in their large dining hall and there was plenty of good food, catering for all dietary requirements and the family mentality was only strengthened after every meal, as we became soror and soror.

We then went for Systema workshop with Master Calvin Smith, which was truly an experience out of this world. Systema provides a mental and physical foundation that teaches you how to manage pain and efficiently counter and remain in control in the situation, something very different but truly incredible. His friend Bob kept everyone on their toes moving and breathing (a long double ended rope).

After lunch the group was split between black tips and above had an assessment period to see if they are ready to be "green-lighted" for progressing onto the next grading, which pushed students on all aspects of their ability and to show the five fundamental characteristics of an IMT student, Perseverance, indomitable-spirit, Integrity, Self-Control and Courtesy. Everyone else went to archery under instruction of the camp staff and had a wonderful time relaxing, bonding and attempting to shoot targets. This was a major hit not just with the kids but the adults as well.

After a short afternoon tea we commenced with sparring (one of my favourite things) and began going at it for a solid hour. In a normal class you might spar 3-5 times, in small space on a mat. This was another experience, having more than 50 people sparring at the same time including the instructors over an entire hall was incredible an incredible sight to see and be a part of. As everyone limped to dinner with a smile from ear to ear the mateship and IMT spirit only became stronger, you wouldn't have believed that it had been raining the entire weekend, I don't think anybody even noticed, they were too busy enjoying themselves.

The night of instruction concluded with further work for the black belts on their Dan Forms and the others were encouraged to try some ground work with Poon, which ended up a semi tournament style wrestling match to the delight of everyone watching. Everyone returned to the lodge for some well-earned rest and wound down watching a movie.

Sunday started with more yoga which really helped with stiffness from the previous day's activities and prepared us well, I think a few people were a little tired as they didn't make it, but we cracked on anyway. Some of the parents joined in, stretching muscles I don't think they knew they had but it was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

After Breakfast we worked on Bo or Staff work. This was something I had very limited exposure to and thoroughly enjoyed being exposed to another element of martial arts and constantly broadening the horizons of things you can do. This was followed by Amok knife fighting and self-defence followed by focus pad drills to finish.

The weekend was then wrapped up with a big lunch and awards given out to Carla Gates and Matt Serreta Best effort for the weekend and Carlo Bradoc directors Tenats award for Displaying the 5 elements of TKD the whole weekend. It was truly one of the best weekends I have had in a long time something I definitely needed, even with all the bruises and injuries. The weekend would not have been possible without the incredible instructors, students, parents as well as the staff at Myuna Bay coming from all over to truly make it an amazing experience that I have no doubt in my mind I'll be back next year for more.

Kind Regards,

David Lotzof