Roy Fuller, Renshi
FEATURES

KARATE OLD SCHOOL
An interview with Wado-ryu karate 7th Dan Roy Kears on the inner workings of Wado

KEEPING IT REAL
The story of Wing Chun kung fu master Rick Spain, who started again with Kyokushin karate

HIT IT!
Mannie de Matos shows how to adapt your focus-mitt training drills for street reality

ROBSON AND GOLIATH
The story of young Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu master Robson Moura and how he became world champion

FACING REALITY
Career bouncer and R-SUIT founder Deane Lawler offers some drills to prepare you for the realities of a weapon assault

BODY BY MUAY THAI
Model and actress Tami Phoenix tells how her Muay Thai training regimen keeps her looking fit

HEART OF A CHAMPION
Karate fighter Amber Wilson reveals her secrets to winning a National All Styles Champion of Champions title

TRADITIONAL WEAPONS OF THE NINJA
A look at the kusarigama and its deadly capabilities in the hands of the ninja warrior

A FAMILY AFFAIR
An interview with inspirational karate instructor Roy Fuller
A family affair

An interview with Kyokushin karate sensei Roy Fuller

Sensei Roy Fuller has karate spirit and life experience in abundance, and is still in pursuit of both at 76 years old. Proof that martial arts training can indeed be a lifelong pleasure and passion, the inspirational instructor was recently awarded his 5th Dan in karate by Australian Martial Arts Association (AMAA). Sensei Fuller took some time out to chat to Blitz writer and WA AMAA rep Kyoshi Gary Simpson about his long history wearing the gi.

INTERVIEW BY GARY SIMPSON

ROY, can you share with us the daily routine that keeps you so fit and active?

Apart from my karate training, which I do every day, I train at the gym four times a week and swim for aerobic exercise. You don't overheat when you are swimming.

Good point, I'm sure that our
readers would like to know something about your youth and how you got started in martial arts. Can you give us a brief overview of that?

I commenced school at the outbreak of WWI. At the time my family was living at Hornchurch, which was 15 kilometres from the centre of London and next to the RAF station, which was a fighter command station.

No sport was practised for many years due to the frequent bombing raids. It was a terrible period. However, towards the end of the war schools in the area started competing in sporting events. At this time, at the age of nine, I started boxing. A year later I was inducted into the schools boxing team. Boxing was widely accepted in those days. There was no headgear or mouthguards available then. Only gloves. You just got into the ring and slashed it out. Today it would be considered unacceptable.

Or illegal, especially with the wide-ranging duty-of-care provisions we have today – not to mention insurance and the propensity these days for people to go to civil litigation over even a minor injury. Tell us more, Roy...

The competition between schools was fearsome. The local doctor would attend together with the local vicar.

Why the vicar?

It was a church school. I was also a member of the church choir. The vicar was probably concerned I might end up with a thick lip and not be able to sing in church on Sunday. I'm not really sure why the vicar was always there. Maybe he just liked boxing... I just don't know for sure.

Anyway, frequent nosebleeds and cut lips were the order of the day. Today it would be considered brutal, but back then it was just accepted. I carried on boxing while still at school.

He sat down and drank what looked like a glass of whiskey. The owner of the boxing booth offered £1 (a large sum in those days) for anyone who could go three rounds with his boxer. Our school champion took up the offer. Comparing the two, it was obvious that the boxing booth man did not stand a chance. The difference between them was enormous – age, physique, condition, skill, you name it. This was going to be a slaughter. We all eagerly watched as the bout began.

Our much-admired 20-year-old school champion got knocked out in less than one minute by this very unlit boxer. As a 14-year-old it was the biggest shock of my life. I couldn't believe it!

Never underestimate anyone. Good point. So, boxing was your initiation into the pugilistic arts. How did that transcend into the Oriental martial arts? Just after WWII ended, a local judo club started. It was called The Bell School of Judo. A few mats were placed along the driveway of the instructor's house. He was the only person to wear a gi at the club; it was everyone's ambition to own a judo outfit but due to rationing, including clothing, none were available. The only exception was the instructor, who bought it before the outbreak of war. The rationing of everything continued pretty much until 1954. There wasn't much of anything that was freely available in those post-war years.

That was all in the UK. How did you end up in Australia?

At the age of 18 I got called up for national [military] service. I continued boxing for some time while in the Royal Air Force. I came to Australia for the first time in 1956 and served at Maralinga while working for the atomic weapons research establishment. I immediately fell in love with Australia and migrated here in 1971 with my wife and two young children.

How did you become involved in martial arts?

In 1960 I took an interest in Kyokushin karate, mainly because of the exploits of its founder, Sosai Mas Oyama [best known for fighting bulls bare-handed, and never refusing or losing...]

Fuller with his oldest & youngest members: Irene Nowicki & twins Ava & Mackenzie Mitchell

www.bltzmag.nz
SOMA can provide training, tournaments, gradings (after a qualifying period and assessment) and a whole host of other benefits. For more information about how you or your martial arts organisation can join the Society of Martial Arts please contact admin@societyofmartialarts.com