

Teacher Deplores Violence

'Karate Benefits Are Mental'

By SP5 JACK HUMMEL

HQ., U.S. I CORPS (Group), Korea (IO) — Karate instructor Pyong Soo Kim sat methodically pounding a four-inch board with the edge of his hand in the Camp Red Cloud gymnasium.

The sixth-degree black belt's American students would not arrive for another 30 minutes. It gave the instructor time to talk about his favorite subject.

"So many Americans who come to Korea get the wrong idea about karate," he said. "Their exposure to the martial art is limited to demonstrations that emphasize strength.

"Naturally, they associate the breaking of a tile or the splitting of a plank with violence and destruction," the current regional editor of American Black Belt magazine said. "This is the

wrong impression."

If his students learn nothing else, the former member of Syngman Rhee's special security police force insists that they understand the true purpose of karate.

"When a student first comes to me, he has visions of taking on three or four musclemen at one time and defeating them all," Kim said.

"I try to make him understand that the mental benefits of karate outweigh the physical," he went on.

Kim emphasized that karate condemns the use of violence. It stresses physical fitness and self-defense, but only to produce two mental characteristics: patience and self-confidence.

"Do you know what action I take when I encounter trouble?" he asked. "If at all possible, I run away."

"You see, I have no reservations about my ability to handle a troublemaker," explained the 28-year-old graduate. "I know what my hardened hands and sharp reflexes can do. I have nothing to prove by fighting."

Kim cannot measure his destructive potential. He stopped fighting opponents in controlled sessions when he acquired his third-degree black belt. At that stage of development, a student's body is rated a lethal weapon. A sparring match could easily result in accidental death.

But daily exercise has kept Kim's reflexes as sharp as ever.

"I was accosted once by a man carrying a knife," he related. "Even before I realized what was happening, my hand came down across the back of his neck."

The would-be robber dropped like a stone and Kim fled the scene in terror. He was afraid he had killed the thug.

Unfortunately, as Kim is quick to point out, karate skills cannot be acquired overnight.

"Even with expert instruction, it takes years to become proficient," he explained. "In many cases, American students do not have the patience needed to continue when progress is slow."

Still, he added with satisfaction, the student carries home with him a basic understanding



USA
PYONG SOO KIM
Stresses Mental Benefits

BLACK BELT

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BLACK BELT CEREMONY — In Korea, 1st Dan Black Belt by Korean Kang Karate exhibition by instructors at Academy. Photo was taken after bl Gen. Boye, Mr. Park of Kang Duk W are in the rear.

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