

That was in 1967...

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This is not first time Karate shows a reluctance to comply with the rules of propriety vis-à-vis its practitioners. Somewhere there are still real warriors, masters of shadows beyond our understanding of art, if one takes time to take a look...

Emblematic figure of Kata in world, Jean Pierre Fischer is part of this exceptional generation Karatekas visionaries. Competitor for over 15 years, and it is likely to remain with his teammate Jean-Michel Blanchard, contestant who lasted longest at highest level...

Countless stages since he runs his sports career has helped to maintain myth that is not ready to shut now, it is part of Federal Experts renowned world. Many technicians France after teaching for years is that influence of Federal Expert 8th Dan of Fédération Française de Karaté et Disciplines Associées – FFKDA, Vice-World Champion Team Kata and ex-Trainer of France Team Kata, is very important...

Fischer, they are also products! Books, of course, but a series of DVDs which have sold thousands of copies and remaining still excellent media for rough or revise Shōtōkan Katas. Traveling around world and regularly, Jean-Pierre Fischer Karate has a very open, which some consider a bit too academic. But it is true that there are faster in starts, balance and locking techniques have matched their high accuracy. Perfectionist at heart he remains a marvel of pure technique. Proof of its effectiveness and its vast expertise and above all the efficiency that is very particular. Jean Pierre Fischer is a pillar of Martial Art that has to examine in detail. Close Up!

Guy Sahri: You're all alone come to Karate?

Jean Pierre Fischer:

No... Let's say that before not to know karate I was in swimming and a little boxing. In fact it's through a friend who practiced at time that I discovered Karate. I went and, indeed, I developed a taste right away...

« I'm still here... »

Guy Sahri: When you invest 100% in this Art?

Jean Pierre Fischer:

Let's say I'm deeply invested in practice of Karate in 1970 when I started in a small club, US Monnaie, in the 5th arrondissement in Paris. Thereafter, I went to the army for 1 year. When I returned from army in 1971. I started Karate at Mr. Taiji Kase. Then I really discovered practice of Martial Art in to invest maximum. At this time I'm still here, but period of competition is far behind me. I only get involved for my students who want to do...

Guy Sahri: Apart from your daily practice, have you kept in touch with your former teachers?

Jean Pierre Fischer:

I have no contact with my first teacher. As against that since I go to Japan I met several Sensei of Japan Karate Federation – JKA, including Mr. Hideo Ochi who I work for over 25 years and Mr. Mugita Sugimura roars with whom I keep excellent contacts...

« *Becoming a single student...* »

Guy Sahri: For many years you go back you train in Japan every year. What are your benefits and drawbacks?

Jean Pierre Fischer:

For over 20 years I will be three weeks per year train in Japan. Earnings: « regenerate » me in a sense, become a mere student instead of teaching all year. There is no particular disadvantage because we are in a universe that is Karate. It is true that in France many people are wondering as well: « But why Jean-Pierre Fischer will happen every year to train in Japan? »...

From moment we do not take this step is that we have nothing more to learn and I think that moving is always an advantage to take... When we see some Federal Experts who are recovering more involved, do more training this reflects a « large » discomfort in Federation whatsoever...

« *Train every day...* »

Guy Sahri: Is there a difference in daily practice, i.e. that which is practiced every day between Occidental Karate and Japanese Karate?

Jean Pierre Fischer:

(Laughters)... It is no great difference in practice if we speak of Traditional Karate apart from Competition. I will tell you frankly that Karate is the same almost everywhere... As I said before only difference in Japanese Karate is that Instructors of Japan Karate Federation – JKA train every day 1 hour or 90 minutes, depending on their availability. They express an instructor for them. They challenge every day. Voila, « the » big difference. Otherwise Karate is still very basic in its practice...

« *Now problem of « Dan »...* »

Guy Sahri: Senseï Taiji Kase told us that ideal progression is 5 years for Black Belt Karate-Do. But this only fixes memorization of basic techniques. Often in Japan, 3 years is sufficient to get this grade, but the daily training is 2 to 3 hours. 1st Dan Black Belt is considered equal to a bachelor's degree that opens door to higher education. What is your real problem Dan?

Jean Pierre Fischer:

If we take a person who trains an average of two hours per week and a person who put 5 years or more to spend his 1st Dan this is logic somewhere. If you train 2 to 3 hours per day is quite normal for 1st Dan obtain after 3 years. It is still three times the same training. When I signed with the number of licenses required for passage from 1st Dan, I have won in 2 ½ years, but I was training more than 3 hours per day. Indeed rise was faster than the average. Now problem of « Dan » not « Dan », but professors and their students. It sends a little like customers, more to « business » than to advance Martial Art. This is true when clubs come to pass each grade with students who may not have required level, it is to « insult » to their students to help them, and finally at end of it does strictly nothing... If we send students in a passing grade is that they are ready! They can make mistakes at Katas of Kihon Kumite or it can happen, stress, but at least they are mentally fit and must get it right the first time.

« *It was street Faubourg Saint Martin...* »

Guy Sahri: Do you remember your 1st Dan?

Jean Pierre Fischer:

(Laughters) I remember perfectly. It was street Faubourg Saint Martin in Paris at Dojo Central at that

time was a Boxing Center. There were 90 people who came that day. I remember that everyone had executed Kata basic and I was only one to provide « Kanku-Dai ». President of Jury was Mr. Hiroo Mozizuchi currently 9th Dan Karate, 8th Dan Aikido, 8th Dan Jujutsu, 7th Dan Iaido, 3rd Dan Judo and Expert Federal FFKDA. And it's true; I still greatly enjoy each of our meetings. It reminds me that he granted me my 1st Dan. It was really a great moment! I do not know if now, for practitioners having 1st Dan mark this as much as we do at that time. Be 1st Dan, to be Black Belt Karate was something very strong!

Unfortunately Grades passages are somewhat « tainted » because we see more and more of 6th Dan 7th Dan « at any price » and that the meaning of Grade Transition for me is different. I think we should review and strengthen its powers. I think there's a lot too. The fact that senior practicing little or not at all, this is not normal to give grades as easily!

Guy Sahri: You think it « desecrated » too Passage Grade for a profit?

Jean Pierre Fischer:

Yes absolutely. If we take on Paris, not region, a passing grade of 160 is normal to see 190 people... It is far too commonplace and effectively on this type of review. I hope we return to more quality and quantity as desired by President of Fédération Française de Karaté et Disciplines Associées – FFKDA, Mr. Francis Didier...

« O Senseï Funakoshi was pioneer of Karate ... »

Guy Sahri: What do you think of evolution of Shōtōkan in recent years and high postures practiced by Master Gichin Funakoshi, until the current style?

Jean Pierre Fischer:

If you look in past Karate has not changed from days of Masatoshi Nakayama. Shōtōkan is a style that is still practiced today. Spurred on by several students whose Masatoshi Nakayama, Yoshitaka Funakoshi's son Gichin Funakoshi decided to include exercise of freedom struggle in his teaching, as well as several new kicks such as « Yoko Geri », « Mawashi Geri » and « Ushiro Geri ». Compared to old style, positions became more and more low split, almost crushed to ground, attacks longer and more powerful concept of « Chi-mei ». The « Chi-mei » is a principle that is found in several Martial Arts and is to be able to kill in one shot (Ikken-Hissatsu) with or without a weapon...

At that time Karate was just a Budō, this was only later that drift towards a more sporting. There was at that time a form of « Shiai », « Kokan-Geiko » who was ancestor of current competition. The « Kokan-Geiko » (courteous exchange training) was a meeting between teams Dojos rivals, a practice common before 1940. These exchanges courteous regularly degenerate into bitter confrontations and out of control...

Taiji Kase one day we told her encounter with son of O Senseï Funakoshi: « When I started practice of Karate, it was explained to us « Seniors » O Senseï Funakoshi was pioneer of karate in many areas. But they said that evolution, revolution and development of it was made by his son Yoshitaka. He had Karate faster, stronger, and more dynamic. Sensei Yoshitaka Funakoshi looking for reality, effectiveness if technique works effectively against attacks. But important thing to understand is that evolution of Karate O Senseï Funakoshi brought Okinawa, that was until Karate Senseï Yoshitaka Funakoshi, was possible thanks to concept of « O-Waza » (technique long distance) with maximum power and speed »...

« That is the « big » modification... »

Guy Sahri: What could be said of modification changes that competition has driven? Finally is this a good or bad?

Jean Pierre Fischer:

I would say that in competition there was no so much on safety practices and improving sports as karate itself... If you look carefully Katas are no longer practiced at all in same way it did 20 years ago. You can take an example from Athletics in 100 meters. In 1896 Athens Olympic Games test « Queen » had been won by American Thomas Edward Burke in modest time of 12 seconds. At last Olympic Games 2008 in Beijing, Jamaican Usain Bolt beat world record and smashed clock to 9 "69! This means that within a century it descended almost to physical limit of what human beings could imagine...

Similarly for katas as « Unsu » for example, 20 years ago they practiced between 56 and even 60 seconds, now it is down to 45 seconds! It is a performance but it is not at all same fight. Working on « high » but not « low », it works « form » but not « substantive ». While it aspect athlete should not be neglected but Kata has lost too much of its « aura » and that is « big » change. This means that it « eats » techniques, there is no work and hips because it is sad that in Karate at base, using mainly hips and upper limbs. Everything is offset by gesture, not substance, i.e. a dynamic whole body. Question is whether we Kata return to a fairer, more on substance than on form, I do not think at level of competition. As against it in clubs will be obliged to work on « substance », i.e. Traditional side. Unless you have only clubs competitors...

« It was not my objective... »

Guy Sahri: As a former Elite Athlete, what sport that has given to you in your daily life?

Jean Pierre Fischer:

(Laughters) As a former elite athlete sport has not made much... We must realistically, at that time about 10 years of Equip of France, I never really had any financial assistance from Fédération Française de Karaté et Disciplines Associées – FFKDA, except once, and that no has not changed things and even my life! I was not competition « for » competition; I was in competition for power forward. This is a little different at moment where young Elite Athletes are only entitled to results. It is true that it worked for me in High Level and so much better, but it was not my goal to move forward in life...

« In my time we were both... »

Guy Sahri: What can one say of Sport Karate and what is your position on this?

Jean Pierre Fischer:

I think Karate Athlete is a very good thing. In this connection result of training for competition is an advantage. This allows you to do certain things and thus to test Kumite whose goal is to reach partner without being hit as Kata, is to appear before a jury trying to convince...

Without « old fashioned » for a number of years we see more and more people to specialize in Kumite and Kata. In my time we were both Kata and Kumite in same competition as other former companions of French Team who are now Federal Experts although it worked better for them than Kumite and Kata.

Guy Sahri: In your Club, in Paris Budokan 13 privileges you teaching Kata and Kumite?

Jean Pierre Fischer:

Within club I do not favor Kata and Kumite. There are as many courses as Kumite Kata... I try to supplement my teaching, a wide range of tools in order to advance student to feel good in his head as in his body...

« Having free somewhere... »

Guy Sahri: What Karate can give us is knowing that as a Fighting Sport and a Martial Art when we see so much violence in the world?

Jean Pierre Fischer:

Karate in 2009 might be asked whether it was good... But I think in world we live in and current conjecture is very difficult, very stressful. Violence within a society can be defined as a chaos, a transgression of individual standards. In my view, it may be an interview or a dynamic imbalance. Violence has also been interpreted as destabilization of social system that fails to stabilize face of internal and external. But these approaches are very general as to definition of violence. We limit our discussion to violence in the world of sport in general and in the Martial Arts...

What characterizes aggressiveness and violence in these two areas is that they take place within a framework of rules, clearly delineated set. Sports and Martial Arts have in common to have enacted an « ethos », a moral attached to their practice, and since their origin. I would say that Martial Arts through sport have avoided violence repeatedly to transform property. Violence is now a part of voltages across social and are still as much a part of nature of things. It appears that while some refuse to obey social rules, dispute institutions. Once these challenges reach a certain threshold, violence is state policy in danger. Yet it is also a basis for personality of every individual. If sport has long been glimpsed as a perfectly healthy way to regulate violence, Martial Arts have a power infinitely greater and this, I can see that compared to members that we have here. We have doctors, lawyers, professors, workers, students etc. Everyone has Club to find something, try to sublimate, leaving in better days. It gives me great pleasure to review starting with a smile, to be released somewhere in the world of weight and feel effective. Training enhances quality of exchange, loyalty and confidence and this remains most important to me...

« It takes its full dimension... »

Guy Sahri: If someone wants to experience the deeper meaning of Karate, how should he live?

Jean Pierre Fischer:

(Laughters) As he wants... Practice of Karate is like life. We must live with sincerity. From moment we saw Karate and it takes its full dimension. It's same thing when it comes in a class, we practice at 100%. In life it is same we have no regret if we have to do things properly

« We must and we have an obligation to be correct... »

Guy Sahri: What is role that Karate has left in your life? Does this support was a way of life; you have helped to express yourself in society?

Jean Pierre Fischer:

Karate has given me a balance in my everyday life. When we talk about teaching responsibility is same. We try to provide some technical students trying to answer their questions. You must be exemplary self. This is the first directive. Student who comes in Dojo identifies with his teacher. We

must and we have an obligation to be correct at all levels in our practice. It is true that this is not case for some professors, but for my part I try to be blameless in my teaching...

Guy Sahri: What are your future projects?

Jean Pierre Fischer:

(Laughs) I have a lot... the main is to continue to train students to continue to practice, to go to Japan every year, spread word Karate in hope that Karate continues to evolve in right direction it does now despite difficulties we face in sports policy at all levels...

« Continue what we tried, the old... »

Guy Sahri: In conclusion, would you advice to give to practitioners around the world?

Jean Pierre Fischer:

Practice with authentic enthusiasm. Try for yourself and if you want to become Professor of Sport and continue what we tried, the old, to convey what we build and continue for so many years, do not just repeat what has been discovered...