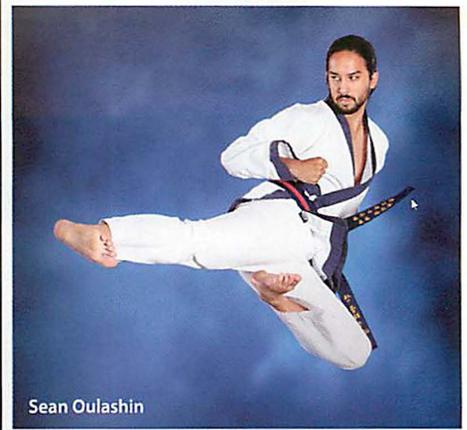




athlete of the month

By Dylan Koller



Sean Oulashin

C A M A S

SOO BAHK DO



Andrew Okerlund

The ancient Korean art of Soo Bahk Do dates back more than 2,000 years. While other disciplines like Tae Kwon Do have branched off with a more contest-driven format, Grand Master Hwang Kee would tell you Soo Bahk Do is not a sport, it is an art. Focusing on the philosophy of Moo Duk Kwan, a school of thought to stop inner and outer conflict while developing virtue, Soo Bahk Do is the movement that guides the mentality. This martial art truly is a mind/body practice with a focus on personal achievement rather than competition.

Anna Oulashin started training Soo Bahk Do in Hawaii in the early '80s under the tutelage of Master Robert Shipley III. When work brought Master Shipley to the mainland, Anna continued her training until she too moved to the mainland for a business opportunity. After living in multiple locations along the west coast, she eventually settled in Northern Oregon. Coincidentally, Master Shipley was living in Vancouver, and in 1990, he opened a studio in Camas, and the pair were reunited in their training and friendship. When Master Shipley moved again in 2000, Master Anna Oulashin, with the assistance of Master Chuck Smith, took over and has been operating Camas Soo Bahk Do ever since.

As Master Oulashin, Anna sees the potential in every student that walks through the door. She jokes that she's thought about retirement so many times, but then that new student walks in and she thinks, "OK, this'll be the last one." She's trained multiple students from elementary age to the day they leave for college, and has even had the honor of teaching the children of former students.

Truly though, it's the building of self-worth that makes the art so special and keeps Anna from retiring. The spark of confidence that comes from increasing your vertical, lasting an extra minute on the jump rope, or perfecting a new technique can ignite the change that'll last a lifetime. The fusion of mind and body, the focus on virtues, and the support of a Master whose biggest joy is her student's success are why Camas Soo Bahk Do has been a valuable part of this community for the past 31 years and will continue to change lives for the better.