



The Canadian Isshinryu Way Everything Karate & Kobudo

Isshinryu Canada

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Working Together

The Isshinryu community does a great job of sharing information and working together. This happens at all ranks, students help each other out, just as instructors help each other. To me this is one of the best parts about Isshinryu in Canada.

This isn't just Isshinryu in Canada though, it extends through Canadian exports around the world, but also includes our many friends south of the border. This newsletter features two contributions from Karateka in the US. This sharing is greatly appreciated and only helps to emphasize how great the community is.

The challenges for this newsletter are along this same idea. Not only should the higher ranking members of the community help and support others, it can happen at every rank.

Please take the time to read the challenges and do your best to make it happen. Encouraging and training with others is a great way to improve your skill as a Karateka.

This will be the last newsletter before the summer, the next is in September. I hope everyone has a great summer and continues their training. Isshinryu is an all year, every day activity you can do for a lifetime.

Keep up the training!

Essential Isshinryu has been Released!

For more information on the first Canadian Isshinryu book, visit www.essentialissheinryu.com!

ATTENTION NEEDED!

Do you know of someone great in Canadian Isshinryu? If so, please e-mail Sensei@issheinryu.ca with the contact details to be profiled in future newsletters.

Upcoming Events

Seminars

Hanshi Mady in Thunder Bay—June 11th

Tournaments

AOKA Championships—Chicago, IL—August 28/29.

Other

Inside this Issue:

Motobu Choki 2

Dojo Kun & Kenpo 3
Gokui

By
Richard Ruberto

Promotions at TIMA Dryden 4

Update from Grand Master Kobylanski 5

Teaching Karate: Ideas to Ponder 6
By Jesse Hill

Striking in a Self-Defence Situation: Hitting Someone Bigger Than You 7
By Jeff Long

Core Conditioning 8
By Tim Leonard

The Challenges 9

The News 10

Live for the moment!



Kyan Chotoku

Understanding the history of Isshinryu and karate can provide the Isshinryu Karateka with a greater knowledge of the masters of Karate and their contributions to creating Isshinryu. Understanding the people involved leads the student and instructor alike to a deeper respect for the evolution of the art.

Motobu Choki (February 1871- September 2nd, 1944)

Who he was

A student of Matsumora Kosaku and part of a well known martial arts family. As second son he distinguished himself for his fighting skill..

Key Instructors

Itosu Anko—Brought Karate into the school system and already profiled, you should read the previous newsletters.

Matsumora Kosaku—Top martial artist in Tomari, and already profiled, you should read the previous newsletters!

Key Students

Nagamine Shoshin— Founder of Matsubayashiryu and well known Martial Arts author.

Shimabuku Eizo —Younger brother of Shimabuku Tatsuo, the youngest Judan (10th Degree Black Belt) and current head of Kyan's Shorinryu lineage.

Chitose Tsuyoshi—Founder of Chitoryu and grandson of Matsumura Sokon.

Shimabuku Tatsuo—Founder of Isshinryu Karate.

The Individual

Rather than outline the training and many details of his life, which exceeds the space allocated for this article, I will instead share a specific incident from his life.

In 1921, Motobu moved to Osaka Japan and took a job as a guard for a large company. One weekend in November of 1924, he traveled with a friend to Kyoto to witness a fighting competition. While there a large foreigner decided to challenge the local population. The foreigner was quite bold and was mocking the audience. This was not acceptable to Motobu. Motobu's friend made arrange-

ments with the ring announcer for the challenge to be accepted and Motobu entered the ring.

The foreigner towered over Motobu and it looked like Motobu stood little chance. For the entire first round Motobu simply evaded the foreigner's attacks. Midway through the second round, seeing an opening, Motobu let loose a loud Kiai and struck the man on the temple, crumpling him to the ground. The crowd not being familiar with Karate had no idea what had just happened but were astonished with the effectiveness of the technique.

One of the most remarkable parts of the story is that at the time Motobu was no longer a young man, but aged 52. As a result of this incredible match, Motobu gained significant notoriety in Japan including a special article in King Magazine in 1925.

The popularity of Karate allowed him to teach in Tokyo and at local universities. While Funakoshi Gichin was younger and more idealistic in his teachings than Motobu, it was Motobu who did a great deal to draw attention to the effectiveness of the art. Motobu's skill will be remembered for a long of time, as well as his contributions to the art of Karate.





Promotions from TIMA Dojo in Dryden

The karate-ka of the TIMA Karate Club have been busy over the past several months working towards their next promotions. Under the guidance of their Sensei's the students of both the Little Dragon's and the Adult/Youth group have dedicated themselves to improving their skills in order to achieve their next belt level. There have been several promotions of students in the last several months (top picture – Back row Senseis Rick McGogy, Scott Wyder and Ron Dennis, Front Row Leland MacDonald, Connor McFayden and Sensei Brenda McGogy – bottom picture Back Row, Senseis Rick McGogy, Ron Dennis, Brenda McGogy and Scott Wyder, Front Row Aidan Scott, Joan Scott, Dustin Laundry, Devon Stanley), with more to come as the students continue to work diligently towards their goals.

On April 4th, 2011 there was an interclub tournament with the Dryden TIMA Club and then on April 30th, 2011 a tournament was held in Kenora. The TIMA Club was well represented at both tournaments and all students showed great courtesy, respect and sportsmanship towards the other competitors.



April Promotions

Adults:

Julie Laurendeau – Green Belt, Heather Spoozak – Blue Belt, Nicki Zilkalns – Blue Belt

Youth:

Ryle Reynolds – Orange Belt, Nathan Ho – Blue Stripe, Hannah Stanley – Blue Belt, Payton Zilkalns – Green Belt, Florence Sirois – Green Belt, Liam Woods – Green Belt, Dawson Mackie – Brown Stripe, Lindsay Coles – Brown Belt, Marcie Coles – Brown Belt, Steven Dormer – Brown Belt, Andy Pham – Brown Belt, Liam McFayden – Brown Belt, Desiree McGogy – Brown Belt, MacKenna Mackie – 1st. Black Stripe, Sarah McCarthy – 1st. Black Stripe, Kaylee Spalding – 1st. Black Stripe





Update from Grand Master Kobylanski

Hello to all of our Canadian brothers and sisters. It has been a long time and I would like to take this opportunity to let all of you know the status of the AOKA. Grand Master Young has had the website revamped and I encourage all of you to take a moment to visit and let us know what you think.

Although we will not have a tournament again this year, GM Young is hosting an AOKA workout weekend in the Chicago area at the end of August (26-28). Please mark your calendars and try to participate.

The Southeast has been very active keeping Isshin-Ryu alive and kicking. This past weekend, we held

a small Isshin-Ryu only Black Belt tournament. Special thanks to Masters Boykin, Grismer, Riddle, McLaughlin, Gribble as well as Sensei Ciprich, Gyr, Oshita, Stainback, Smith, Sain and Edinger for their assistance in making this an enjoyable event. The competition consisted of Kata, Weapons, Kumite and Team Fighting.

After the competition, everyone enjoyed some pizza and old fashion camaraderie. This is a tight knit group of Black Belts that usually participate in at least two major seminars per year and assist at the annual Kyufest Tournament that is held in the Fall.



Celebrate Canada Day in Ottawa

By Tim Leonard

Open invitation to all Isshinryu karateka to come to Ottawa to celebrate Canada Day and then come to the annual Toshikai Break Your Bones BBQ on July 2nd. More than 500 lbs of wood, cement and baseball bats will be broken into itsy bitsy pieces while celebrating yet another great year of training at the Toshikai dojo (total of 14 years). For a viewing of some past BBQs, check out www.toshikai.ca. If you can make it down, please contact Sensei Tim Leonard at Tim.Leonard@toshikai.ca



Teaching Karate: Ideas to Ponder

By Jesse Hill

Teaching karate is an important part of every karateka's journey. Not only does it ensure the continuation of Isshinryu from one generation to the next, by teaching one can come to a greater understanding of the techniques we use and enables us to articulate the mechanics and subtle details of each technique. There are many approaches to teaching and the purpose of this article is to simply discuss a select few ideas about teaching karate that I find effective and wish to share. First I will further discuss why and how teaching impacts the instructor's karate.

I think teaching a technique is a true testament of how well you know and understand it. To teach any technique well you must break it down and look at each of the pieces that make up the whole. Then you must decide what level of detail is appropriate to use based on the rank of the student(s) you are teaching. Beginners need to worry more about the bigger movements within a technique and as they advance the finer details can be introduced and their karate becomes more refined. The great thing about teaching is that your students can often bring up viewpoints you hadn't considered yourself. Some people get annoyed with students who ask a lot of questions, but I take it as an opportunity to up my game. Sometimes you will be asked a question that you don't have an answer ready for, and that's okay. I find the best response is usually "that's a great question, let's think about it and we can discuss it later." It's very important to make sure that "later" does actually come and the question gets answered, whether you just need a couple of minutes to reflect on it yourself or if you need to ask your Sensei or a peer for their opinion and get back to the student the next class, if you don't revisit a serious, honest question it can undermine your credibility as an instructor.

When teaching a kata you are forced to consider exactly how your body should move during each sequence. Not only do you need to explain the mechanics of a block or strike, but you need to connect the techniques together and mention timing and focus. I had an experience recently teaching Chinto where I needed to really analyse each minute part of a specific technique in order to figure out why I thought the students I was teaching looked a bit off when performing that part of the kata. It took a combination of close observation of how each student was moving and repeating the technique myself while focusing on each part of my body involved to come up with the answer. So a technique that I was quite comfortable doing

turned out to be one of the more difficult ones to explain at first because I hadn't "unpacked" it as thoroughly as I thought I had. That was just the latest in an ongoing series of discoveries I have made through teaching Isshinryu that has improved my technique and my articulation of how the technique works. Now let us look at the act of teaching Isshinryu in more depth.

Teaching karate is an interesting endeavour, and one that I find incredibly rewarding. In fact my early teaching experiences as a sempai actually became a large influence on my eventual decision to pursue a career in education. Through my teaching I have grown in several different ways. As discussed above, teaching improved my own karate but also helped me understand what it means to be a leader and a role model. Over the years I have taught many classes comprised of many different groups of students and some of my lessons have been awesome and others were pretty rough. Through it all I was learning, I reflected upon what worked and what didn't in each class and tried to make sure I improved for next time. It's a practice I still follow after every class I teach. Next I'd like to discuss another aspect of teaching karate from a practical viewpoint.

Obviously a central tenet of karate instruction is practice and drilling. I have extolled the value of practice in a previous newsletter. In order to have techniques ingrained into our muscle memory we must perform them countless times. As we have all no doubt experienced, constant repetition can get boring sometimes. This doesn't mean we should just play games all the time: that too would get boring eventually. But what we need to do as instructors is get creative with our drills sometimes. It's very easy to say "just go over your katas for the next 20 minutes" however this will not usually result in twenty minutes well spent in productive practice, especially with our younger students. A better strategy might be to have a set number of times to go over the kata (ie. 5-10) and then moving on to some drills that concentrate on specific techniques within the kata. Proper stepping is always something students can work on, so I will often have students make their way around the perimeter of the dojo using only particular stances. Even this is a more mundane example of changing things up but you could easily add either a competitive component (I'd go with "best stance" rather than making it a race) or a workout aspect (horse stance can be the basis of an ex-

(Continued on page 7)



Teaching Karate: Ideas to Ponder

By Jesse Hill

tremely tiring workout).

At times it is important to push through the boredom of an activity and just "suck it up" for lack of a better term. As an instructor it is our job to decide when those times are appropriate and when we should switch to another activity. This requires an awareness of your students and their performance. If the students seem lethargic and are only going through the motions rather than performing good kata it may be time to try something different for a while. Another good thing about drills with a narrower focus is that once you've tried them for a while you can have the students work on incorporating what they learned in the drill into their kata, so in the end you can still spend the desired amount of time working on kata but have it be a more productive class. I used kata spe-

cifically as my example but the same principles can be applied to any other aspect of Isshinryu training be it basics, kumite, kobudo, or even grappling.

These are some of my thoughts about teaching karate. I hope you found something interesting or at least something to think about whether you agree or disagree. As an educator embarking on the beginning of my career I spend a lot of time thinking about teaching and learning and I am forever thankful that my love of teaching and my love of karate can be so complimentary.

Striking in a Self-Defence Situation: Hitting Someone Bigger Than You

By Jeff Long

I like to follow a personal rule that anybody who wants to fight believes they're going to win, either because they know how to fight or they are bigger than you. So in any situation outside of the Dojo I want my Karate to be quick and effective, to the point, one or two strikes, no more than a few seconds; the last thing I want to do is a trade blows with somebody. Attacking the proper targets is important for this, relying on skill and practice rather than brute force.

The groin is a target that everyone knows; it typically doesn't take much to hurt somebody when striking this target. It is also a target that I hope everyone in Isshinryu Karate knows how to hit, the maegeri to strike upwards from underneath. This crushes the testicles, sending pain through the spermatic plexus into the abdomen; this being a pain technique, it is not necessarily a fight stopper. As mentioned, the front kick is an effective way of doing this, but it is also rather well known. Alternatives to the maegeri are the knee kick, a low upward moving palm strike (found in Kusanku and Sunsu), and an upper cut (best used while in close and grappling). A violent and prolonged squeeze (with a twist, remember, they were going to hurt you first) will cause a man to black out, a good way to get out of most grappling situations. Groin attacks will work on women as well despite what is often depicted on TV, due the high amount of nerve endings in this area. As

a warning, it should be noted that these techniques can cause permanent injury.

Moving upwards, skipping the body for now, we have the neck. When attacking the neck, my preferred target is the carotid arteries, located on the sides. These arteries carry oxygenated blood to the head and neck. Baroreceptors are sensors located in these blood vessels, detecting the pressure of the blood flowing through them. Placing pressure on this area, with such techniques as a headlock, causes the baroreceptors to signal that blood pressure is too high, causing the body to lower it; this is what renders people unconscious. Striking this area causes this to happen as well, resulting in dizziness. Technique that works well towards this end is the knife hand strike, straight from the Isshinryu basic shuto uchi shuto uchi. Not much force is needed either; a small child could stagger an adult with this. I prefer to hit this spot with a variation of the spear hand, "missing" with my fingers so the ridge of strikes the side of the neck. This removes the swing arc of the shuto uchi, allowing it to slip passed someone's guard. This allows it work better as a direct attack compared to the chopping knife hand which works best following a block or parry.

(Continued on page 8)



Striking in a Self-Defence Situation: Hitting Someone Bigger Than You

By Jeff Long

The head is mostly likely someone will attempt to hit you, and with good reason; even an ill placed blow to the head can leave someone shaken. My preferred targets are the temples and the ears. The temple is located on the side of the head behind the eyes, where the bones of the skull are flat; meaning that the vibration from a strike here will go straight through to the brain. Typically, a strike landed here will cause a person to be disoriented or to be rendered unconscious. Since it is on the side of the head, swinging or hooking strikes work best if the attacked is directly in front of you, such as a hook punch or a shuto uchi. Striking the ear disrupts the vestibular system, located in the inner ear, which contributes are sense of balance; striking here, again with a hook punch or a shuto uchi, or even

a simple slap, will leave an attacker disoriented and open to a harsher follow up technique. Other spots, just as the nose and jaw seem to be hit and miss. Hitting someone square in the face, breaking their nose, will cause their head to snap back and their eyes to water. However this will not make them unable to fight, though perhaps unwilling. Hitting someone in the jaw (the base of the mandible) will knock their head back, clack their teeth together and possibly knock them out, but it may also not. Making the temples and ears more reliable targets.

Arnis Grading

Isshinryu Karateka in Windsor have been continuing their training in Modern Arnis and several have received promotions.

Ken Steele—Nidan (2nd Degree Black Belt)

David Kaselica—Nidan (2nd Degree Black Belt)

Shihan Robert Markovich—Sandan (3rd Degree Black Belt)

Congratulations to all three of you!

Core Conditioning By Tim Leonard

The Toshikai Dojo of Ottawa recently held a workshop on core conditioning on May 6th. Instructor Roman Jahoda from Austria was in Canada doing various workshops on his program called Complex Core Conditioning. Roman is a judo blackbelt as well as a physical therapist who has developed 1200 different core conditioning exercises. At our workshop, he taught us about 20 of them. One thing that impressed me doing the workshop was Roman's emphasis on quality of movement. His teaching was deliberate and alternated between a series of complex coordination exercises and core strengthening. Further, Ramon was insistent on developing the core with specific exercises that alternated between the abdominals, obliques and then the back.

The seminar reminded me of just how important core conditioning is for marital artists. Every time

a karateka works out, he or she must focus on the core. Every time we kick or punch, we use our core. It is vital to how we generate our power and speed. Now if you are like me, I will often get my students to crunches or sit-ups but not a lot of exercises are done for the obliques or the back. This creates a imbalance between the muscle groups and the body may not be functioning a effectively as it could. Bring on the core exercises!!

Check out this website to learn more about complex core www.complexcore.at



The Challenges!

Working together isn't an option part of training in Isshinryu or any martial art. If you don't have training partners (and good ones) you'll always be held back in your training and understanding of real life situations and reactions.

The summer challenges always need to be big ones, it will be over three months until the next one so I've got to make it count. Additionally, many dojo's run fewer classes over the summer months so extra training is important.

So, the challenge is... At least once a week, get together with another Karateka and help each other. I'll provide some specific suggestions below for each aspect of your training.

Karate

For your karate training, it should be the most straight forward to practice. Fighting is always a favorite activity to practice with a partner, but basics in partners is a very effective way of drilling fundamental skills.

Another great way to work with a partner is to have them review your technique. Even if you have access to a multitude of mirrors, you do not have the best view of your own technique. Look at each others technique and provide constructive criticism. Don't be shy about pointing out areas to improve, everyone needs to improve so the more help you provide, the better your partner will get.

Last but not least of course is bunkai. Understanding the techniques is the key to true Karate training. Working with a partner gives you the opportunity to try out your techniques and find out what will actually work and won't work. As you get better with bunkai, you can advance to thinking about how your opponent would react, and any changes that might require to your technique.

Kobudo

Just like for Karate, everything applies to Kobudo!

When it comes to fighting, I'm a big fan of back and forth practice where partners take turns attacking. This is an excellent way to simulate real fighting without as high a risk of injury.

Summer's also a great time to practice sand throwing with your bo/eku and sai throwing!

Training

Training in the summer is always more enjoyable for us in the cold north. Being able to run outside is a lot more enjoyable than running inside (or trying to run through the snow in the winter. And strangely enough, it's even more enjoyable and a lot easier if you run with a partner.

It helps to find a partner around your own level of conditioning, but you can adjust for that if needed, run faster!

Sprint drills usually work best with a partner, and are excellent for simulating the actual endurance needed in a fighting. Being able to run a long time at an even pace is great, but for fighting going fast, then slow, then fast again is a lot more realistic.

When doing sprint drills with a partner, you can take turns leading so the back person is in chase mode so the sprint ends when they catch up, you can race to a specific point or use the other person as a timer to control your breaks, resting while they run and running while they rest.

They key is to encourage your partner and use them to help push yourself.

Looking to step it up? Why not do the sprint drills up a hill!



Black Belt Promotions

On June 10th, Hanshi Mady will be conducting Black Belt level gradings in Thunder Bay, ON. The test requirements include fighting and breaking for everyone.

I'd like to wish everyone grading the best, it'll be a rough night I'm sure, and invite anyone who wants a good show to come out and watch. Grading will

be at West Thunder Community Center that Friday evening.

Hope to see everyone there!

Coloured Belt Promotions

Chitora Dojo—Thunder Bay, ON April 21st

Sarah Williams—Orange (Gokyu)

Nicholas Titan—Orange (Gokyu)

Colin Nagy—Yellow (Rokyu)

Yellow Stripes

Sierra Long

Madison Roeck

Alyssa Lahti

Hannah Dahl

Douglas Deschenes

Ashley Hortis

Lukas Hortis

Sarah Galick—Yellow Stripe—January 27th

Competition Results & Promotions

This past Sunday, March 21st, was a good day for the Toshikai Dojo in Ottawa. Jack Lafleur entered his first open tournament in blackbelt traditional forms, blackbelt weapons and blackbelt continuous sparring. For his efforts, he was awarded second place for Sunsū, first place for Tokomine no kun and first place for sparring (fight ended on very nice hook kick). Congratulations Jack!

That same evening was testing night at the Toshikai dojo. Two new white belts, Tracy Cunningham and Kevin Harman, received their yellow stripes for their performance of the basics. Mario Drouin is proudly wearing a new orange belt (gokyu) for his display of Seisan, Seiuchin and Naihanchi. Andrew Tam was promoted to sankyu (blue belt) for his display of

kata up to Chinto and Kyan no sai. It was especially nice to see the kata of Andrew Yip as well as he is back training after taking a two year leave. Kompai to all!!





Contributors



Editor & Author—Chitora Dojo

Mike Fenton—Thunder Bay, Ontario
Mike lives with his wife Kyla and has been training in Isshinryu karate for over 25 years, and has been an instructor for over 20 years. He is currently head instructor of Chitora Dojo in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Author—Chitora Dojo

Trevor Warren—Thunder Bay, Ontario
Trevor lives in Thunder Bay with his wife Maria. He has dedicated a great deal of his time to teaching and his own training with the realization that hard work is the key to success.



Author—Chitora Dojo

Justin Johnson—Thunder Bay, Ontario
Justin has been training Isshinryu Kobudo about 10 years and soon after also began studying Karate. He is currently preparing for this Shodan in Karate and shortly thereafter in Kobudo.

Author—Toshikai Dojo

Andrew Tam—Ottawa, Ontario
Started martial arts at the age of six in 7 Star Praying Mantis Kung Fu in which he attained his 5th degree black sash. Andrew also has a black sash in Wing Chun Kung Fu. For the last couple of years, Andrew has trained at the Toshikai Dojo where recently attained green belt in Isshinryu.



Author—Any Dojo

Authors are always wanted! Consider taking the time to submit something to the newsletter.

Karate Terms in this Newsletter

Bunkai—Taking to Pieces, commonly interpreted as the application of technique.

Chinkuchi—Bone, Sinew and Energy

Chudan—Middle Level

Dojo—School

Furi—Swing

Jo—Short Staff

Jutsu—Technique

Ka—Person / Practitioner

Kama—Sickle(s)

Kami—Divine Spirit

Keri—Kick

Kihon—Exercises

Kime—Focus

Kobudo—Ancient Martial Way, the term used to describe all the weapons in Isshinryu and Karate.

Kumite—Free Fight

Mae—Front

Makiwara—Striking Board

Mushin—No Mind

Naha—Port city on Okinawa

Sama—Honorific suffix applied to a name, denotes respect

Shiko Dachi—Horse Stance

Shozenkutsu / Seisan Dachi—Small forward stance

Shuri—Capital City on Okinawa

Tonfa/Tuifa—Baton with Handle

Uchi—Strike

Uchi Hachi Dachi—Inner Eight stance

Uke—Hard block

Yudansha—Black Belt

Zenkutsu Dachi—Forward Stance

It is important to familiarize yourself with commonly used Japanese words. Try to memorize all the words each time and you will soon have a large "karate" vocabulary.



Submissions

Article Submission

Articles are welcome from anyone and everyone. They can be about anything related to the Martial Arts, a technique you think is just great; A better way to do a technique; History of a Karate Master; a tournament trick that works well; ANYTHING!

All articles are appreciated as e-mail. You can send it to your instructor to proof read and send in, or directly to me. (Mike (at) Isshinryu.ca) or (sensei (at) Isshinryu.ca)

You can even include pictures if it helps your article!

Dojo Directory:

Any student is welcome at anytime to visit any dojo. Before class, always introduce yourself to the Sensei of the dojo and tell them who your current Sensei is.

For a full dojo list visit Isshinryu.ca We are getting too many to list here.

Affiliate Cities!

Abbotsford, BC

Contact: Mike O'Leary

Brandon, MB

Contact: Richard Wharf

Contact: Buzz Cox

Calgary, AB

Contact: Charles Boyd

Cookstown, ON

Contact: Harri T. Makivirta

Dryden, ON

Contact: Rick McGogy

Hope, BC

Contact: Norm Losier

Kenora, ON

Contact: Steve Davis

Contact: David White

Ottawa, ON

Contact: Tim Leonard

Quebec

Contact: Pierre Parenteau

Saskatchewan

Contact: Brian Smout

Sioux Lookout

Contact: Jim Sapay

Thunder Bay, ON

Contact: Mike Fenton

Contact: Trevor Warren

Vancouver, BC

Contact: Rachel McGovern

Windsor, ON

Contact: Albert Mady

Winnipeg, MB

Contact: Brent Horton

Canadian Isshinryu Abroad

Berlin, Germany

Contact: Ryan Boesche

Stow, Ohio

Contact: Albert Pecoraro



It's been two months, and I'm still jealous.