

## Comparisons - JION Karate Ganderkesee & JION Karate Ashburton

Ganderkesee, a small North German, Lower Saxony town, between the cities of Bremen and Oldenburg, is of similar size and has about the same population as Ashburton, in Canterbury, New Zealand.

Initially, JION Karate Ganderkesee held training sessions on 2 evenings per week, once in the town centre and once about 6km outside town, in the village of Immer. Not long after opening in Ganderkesee, JION's membership grew and training was increased to include Sunday morning sessions.

JION Karate Ashburton also began training on 2 evenings and now trains on 3 days per week, in 2 different locations.

Groups in Germany were split into kids 4 – 14yrs and adults 15yrs+, this is also true of the groups in Ashburton. All groups training twice a week.

In Germany, karate fitness tests were available for kids and youth up to the age of 14years. On successful completion of various physical tests and a longer distance run (within a set time limit), students were awarded a badge according to the level achieved. The badges were nationally recognized and test results were sent to the governing karate body.

Here in New Zealand, JION has established its own version of these fitness tests and designed a badge specifically for club students. The tests are directly comparable to those in Germany. The Karate Kids New Zealand badges have been designed by Thorsten & Jacqui Windhorst and the colours of the badges match the colours of the grading belts.

After just 3 years, JION Ganderkesee began introducing its members to regional training seminars and competitions and a couple of years later had some students selected onto the regional "talent squad".

It was therefore of no surprise to the Windhorst team, that JION Ashburton would also be involved in competition and inter-club friendly training sessions. JION Ashburton has also enjoyed success in regional, national and international competition, with some members as well as both senior and junior instructors being selected onto the NZ national team.

JION has hosted seminars with top National Team Coaches and competitions, such as the Ashburton Open. We have invited local clubs to friendly inter-club sessions and worked closely with Karate New Zealand to promote karate on the South Island holding an annual 2-day Gasshuku in Ashburton.

In Germany, JION visited many seminars and had long-term friendly connections to clubs in various German and UK cities. We remain in contact, around the world.

There are many more comparisons which can be made between the clubs, the students and their supportive families, but suffice it to say, JION International Karate Dojo has a truly international flare, combining traditional Shotokan Karate training, with physical fitness training, fun & games for all the family.

