

Ahmad A. Mazhari, Hachidan

(8th Degree Black Belt)

Active Experience: 60 Years

4th Generation Karate Master

Chief Instructor, Shotokan Karate Center

International Certified Instructor, Examiner, Official Judge

Favorite Techniques: All Techniques

Specialized Techniques: Jab, Reverse Punch, Back-fist Strike, Spinning Back-fist Strike, Front Snap Kick, Back Kick, Foot Sweep

Born in 1950 in Tehran, Iran, world-known instructor Ahmad-Ali Mazhari encountered karate at the age of eight through his older brother, who lived in England at the time. He started imitating so-called karate movements and techniques that his brother picked up from a few training sessions, but mostly films. Young Mazhari was just captivated by the movements — they appeared very unusual yet fascinating to him. He started regular karate training in 1965, comprised of a mixture of Okinawan styles at an immature level.

Being a perfectionist, he always strived to gain as much karate knowledge as possible, at that time only available through books, films and magazines. With a connection to Japan through his brother's business affiliates, young Mazhari was more or less familiar with the world of Japanese martial arts.



Soon after, at a karate social gathering, he saw the film of a Karate World Championship in Japan with a match between the world-known Master Keinosuke Enoeda and Mr. Hiroshi Shirai. It was love at first sight, as Mazhari Sensei puts it; Master Enoeda just mesmerized him with his movements and ferocious attitude.

After a short period, the Iran Karate Academy (Rezayar) started offering Shotokan and Wadorio styles at a primary level. Mazhari Sensei started training at the Academy. Because of his enthusiasm and perseverance and the lack of experienced instructors, he also started teaching Shotokan. In 1971, he opened his private dojo. Mazhari Sensei's trainings, to this day, are known for their intensity and have always attracted only very serious practitioners. Throughout these years of teaching and training in Tehran, Mazhari Sensei's continued wish was to find and practice with Master Enoeda.

By then, Mazhari Sensei knew many old time Japanese instructors and had practiced with many well-known karate legends, such as Mr. Mikami, Mr. Okamoto, and Mr. Abe and his assistant, some of whom conducted seminars at the Iran Karate Federation; yet none could keep him from dreaming to meet and train with Master Enoeda, whose fiery spirit, magnetic character, and formidable techniques truly spoke to Mazhari Sensei. Because of this, Mazhari Sensei handed over his Tehran dojo to his senior students and moved to London, England to begin training with Master Enoeda. Only knowing that Master Enoeda was in London, Mazhari Sensei set out to find his long

desired master- the kind of quest that one only reads about in stories of a distant past. After years of yearning tirelessly, in the mid 1970s, Mazhari Sensei began his training at the JKA central dojo in London and became an active member of the JKA and KUGB, under Master Keinosuke Enoda, the Tiger of Shotokan Karate. For those who do not know, the 70s era gave birth to the best karateka of the world and Master Enoda's Marshall Street Dojo was the most famed and fierce dojo in the world. There, Mazhari Sensei trained alongside the best of the best, under Master Enoda. Mazhari Sensei remained with Master Enoda from that time until Master Enoda's passing in March of 2003.

In the late 1970s early 1980s, due to changes in the Iranian political landscape and the subsequent difficulties in obtaining visas, Mazhari Sensei had to leave England. In 1980 he moved to Greece while awaiting his permanent residency visa to the United States, where most of his family members resided. From 1980 to 1982 he continued to teach at a JKA affiliated dojo in Athens, until he migrated to the US in 1982 and settled in Northern Virginia (NOVA). Mazhari Sensei lived closest to the ISKF headquarters in Philadelphia, but followed Master Enoda's recommendation and continued his training in New York under Master Masataka Mori, the world-renowned Master Teacher of Shotokan Karate.

Mazhari Sensei became an active member of the North Atlantic Karate Association (NAKA) under Master Mori and an official member of the All American Karate Federation (AAKF), under the leadership of Master Hidetaka Nishiyama. Master Mori immediately enlisted Mazhari Sensei in the extremely prestigious JKA Instructor Training Course; Master Mori's course, in particular, was acclaimed for its rigor and intensity.

For an inherently loyal person like Mazhari Sensei, having to switch to a new karate master was not an easy undertaking. It was even harder to maintain the delicate balance of attending to two equally loved and admired masters, who were also close friends with one another- especially when they were both present at seminars and camps. Throughout the years Mazhari Sensei practiced with the best of the best in the world of karate — Sugiura Motokuni, Taiji Kase, Hiroshi Shoji, Hirokazu Kanazawa, Takayuki Mikami, Hiroshi Shirai, Toru Yamaguchi, Keigo Abe, Katsunori Tsuyama, Masaaki Ueki, Masao Kawazoe, Yoshiharu Osaka, Norimasa Hayakawa, Hiroshi Shoji, Yukichi Tabata, Takashi Naito, Katsuhiko Tsuyama, Satoshi Miyazaki, Shiro Asano, Masaro Miura, Akio Nagai, and Matsuo Kon — but he stayed true to his only two direct Sensei's, Master Mori and Master Enoda.

Mazhari Sensei established the first JKA affiliated Shotokan karate dojo in Northern Virginia in 1982. It was named Shotokan Karate Center (SKC) after Master Enoda's dojo and in the memory of his years of practice in London. Mazhari Sensei completed all JKA courses to the highest level. His dojo remained one of the most serious, dedicated and active dojos in the organization. Mazhari Sensei continued his affiliation with the Japan Karate Association until 2006, when he finally separated from the JKA. Mazhari Sensei was welcomed by many well-known organizations throughout the world, led by senior Japanese instructors, but after being with two of the absolute best, The Tiger and The Master Teacher of Shotokan Karate, Mazhari Sensei did not seek any such affiliation. Many of Mazhari Sensei's students continue to practice and/or teach karate throughout the world. Mazhari Sensei's students were always among the top medalists in championships and brought back numerous titles, cups and medals for SKC throughout the years. Mazhari Sensei maintains the belief that the purpose of karate practice is not to achieve the short-lived title of a champion, but to reach the highest level of humanity.