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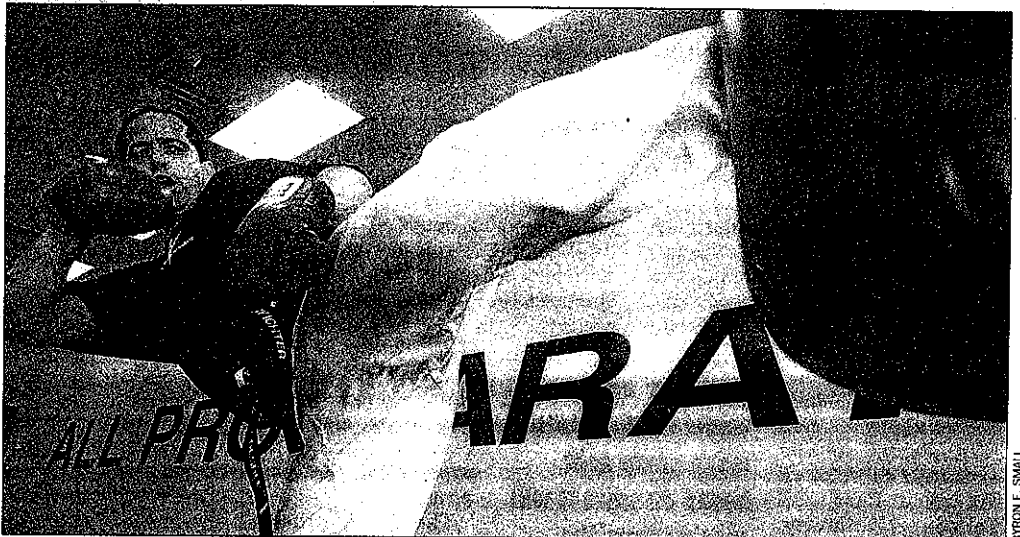
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People In The News

Attorney sees similar focus in court, karate dojo

EXECUTIVE HOBBY

Cary Ichter of Meadows, Ichter & Bowers P.C.



Just for kicks: Cary Ichter says the focus he gained practicing law has helped him achieve a black belt in karate.

By Lillian Lee
STAFF WRITER

During the day, Atlanta attorney Cary Ichter can be found sparring in court. But after work, he often heads for another arena, the karate dojo.

According to Ichter, the managing partner of Meadows, Ichter & Bowers P.C., he can see combining the two interests into a new discipline, "karate law."

"We could settle disputes by having each side send in a fighter and whoever wins the fight, wins the dispute," he mused.

Named one of the top 300 lawyers by Best Lawyers in America magazine, Ichter has been practicing litigation since 1984. Ichter earned his bachelor's degree at West Georgia College before attending the University of Georgia School of Law. With two other lawyers, he founded Meadows, Ichter & Bowers in 1992 with the goal of providing quality legal services to clients.

Ichter's interest in karate stemmed from his grandfather, an Irish amateur boxer who taught him fighting basics. As a teenager, Ichter also took some karate classes but stopped after moving from North Carolina to Georgia. When his 30th birthday rolled around, he realized that if he didn't learn karate then, he likely never would.

Ichter practices a modern form of karate that incorporates traditional karate style with American boxing techniques.

He said the focus he gained through practicing law helped him achieve black belt level in karate.

"They both require intense focus and if you fail to provide appropriate focus in either situation, you get your butt kicked," he said.

Ichter, 43, received his first-degree black belt in 2002. On average, it takes four to six years to reach the first black belt level; however, it took him 13 years to obtain it.

"In order to get your black belt, you not only have to defend yourself in sparring and become an effective fighter, you also have to learn katas," he said.

Katas are a prescribed sequence of strikes, steps and blocks that may cover 50 different techniques.

"I was never a big fan of the katas and it wasn't because I hated to do the katas. It's just whenever I got into the karate studio, I wanted to spar," Ichter said.

Through hard work, Ichter is now an assistant instructor at All Pro Karate off Georgia 400 in Sandy Springs.

Goran Lozo, the chief instructor of All Pro Karate and Ichter's sensei, or teacher, is impressed with his spirit and commitment.

"Cary shows that someone who is successful in one field can also use the same principles to be a success in another," he said.

Ichter's karate regimen includes going

to the studio in the mornings, on the weekends or whenever he has free time after work.

Besides his affinity for karate, Ichter also has a passion for running. He said the two help him stay focused.

He said two of his greatest personal challenges were completing the New York City Marathon in 1991 and the Medoc Marathon in France in 1996.

In addition, after joining the Atlanta Committee for CARE, a private international humanitarian organization based in Atlanta, he started the annual marathon Runners Care.

Despite diverse interests ranging from running to law, Ichter's passion for karate is clear.

"Karate is a place where health, discipline, self-confidence and honor intercept. And if any of those things mean anything to you, you should give it a shot," he said.

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