



TRADITIONAL KARATE CENTER  
3217 Lake Ave. Wilmette, IL 60091 847-251-1600

# FIVE RINGS

## NEWS AND EVENTS

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 2 SPRING 2003

### NEW DOJO FOR TRADITIONAL KARATE CENTER

On Tuesday February 18, the students of the Traditional Karate Center said good-bye to the New Trier classroom and moved into their new dojo at 3217 Lake Ave. in Wilmette. All of the students are very happy and excited about the beautiful new space that includes a new matted floor, a 40 foot mirrored wall, and hand-made makiwara. The classes have been very vigorous and the training and spirit level of the students in the new dojo is at an all-time high. Sensei Scott and the TKC Fundraising Committee would like to thank

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*The TKC Yudansha (Black Belts). Sensei DeSardi far right.*

### NEW TKC BLACK BELTS

At our new dojo on Sunday, February 23, Nissa Board and Gary Kromelow successfully challenged and passed their Black Belt exams. Head judge was Sensei DeSardi, Chief Instructor of the Midwest Shotokan Karate Association. Also judging were Sensei Scott and Sensei Sweetow. Congratulations Nissa and Gary on becoming

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TRADITIONAL KARATE CENTER  
**FIVE RINGS**  
NEWS AND EVENTS

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 2 SPRING 2003

Dear Students, Friends, and Families,

It is a great pleasure to bring you this Spring Edition of *Five Rings*, the Traditional Karate Center newsletter. We will have one issue per session/season in this new and improved format to help keep you up to date with the news and events related to our dojo and its members. As you all know by now, we have moved our karate program to our new location in Wilmette and all of the classes have been running better than ever before. If you haven't already, please check the new class schedule which includes beginner's only classes, parent and tot classes, and special Sunday classes and seminars.

The recent dojo fundraiser was a great success and I want to thank all of you again for showing such generous support and enthusiasm.

It was a special honor and privilege to have Nissa Board and Gary Kromelow earn the first black belts in our new dojo. All of their years of hard work and dedication clearly showed on their exam. They did an outstanding job. Congratulations Nissa and Gary!

We are very excited about the upcoming *Bring a Friend to the Dojo Day* on Saturday, May 17 from 2:00-3:00PM. For more information on this event please pick up a flyer from the dojo.

*Sensei Scott*

## AN INTERVIEW WITH SENPAI VLADIMIR

By Ronda Korzon

Interview with Senpai Vladimir Rubinshtein, 3/8/03. Translated by Anatoly and Eugene Zarkhin.

Senpai Vladimir was born on January 13, 1956 in a small town in Belaruse, which was then a part of the Soviet Union. He is the only child of Raisa and Avraham, who are now deceased. He began his karate training in the summer of 1979. He was 23 years old, recently married, and a brand new father. His teacher was Michael Spivak, a 1<sup>st</sup> kyu brown belt who had studied Shotokan Karate in Minsk, the capital of Belaruse. Sensei Spivak moved to Senpai Vladimir's town and opened his own small dojo, attracting 20 to 30 students. Classes were formally taught in Japanese with explanations in Senpai's native language, Russian.

For the first full year of his training, Senpai learned only basic kihon: stances, punches, and blocks. He did not learn his first kata until his second year of training. Often he would practice in front of a mirror at his home, doing a hundred repetitions of punches and blocks. A dedicated stu-

dent from the beginning, Senpai would bring his new baby daughter to the dojo three times a week in order to continue his training.

After three years of training, Senpai Vladimir earned his green belt, and he started teaching his own classes. At this time, a law was passed prohibiting Martial Arts training throughout the Soviet Union except for the police and the KGB (Russian version of the CIA). Senpai taught his karate classes "underground", constantly changing locations. He continued this way with five or six students until 1985 when he heard that his name was on a "black list". The penalty for being caught practicing Martial Arts was a year in prison. He completely stopped his training at this time.

In 1990, Vladimir, his wife, and daughter relocated to Hadera, Israel, a mid-sized town between Tel Aviv and Haifa. In the summer of 1994 he began karate training again under the direction of Sensei David Dagan, a 4<sup>th</sup> Dan in Goju Ryu karate. Senpai



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## KARATE COMPETITION

By Jilly Plonsker

Ever since I have started competing, I have been in the same division as a girl named Lauren. She was never very nice to me, and she had at least five siblings. Every tournament, her mother could be seen walking around with tons of gold medals around her neck. Lauren, like me, competes in both kata and kumite. The bad part for me is that she always does really well. In all of my sparring matches against her, I have never won, and have almost always run into her reverse punch which knocks the wind out of me. At every single tournament, she performs the kata Senpai, which is an advanced kata that I do not know. She again, usually wins with it.

I learned how far my practice and ability could take me at the 1999 AAU State Tournament.

When I was finally called to staging about one hour late, I went to the small gym where the staging was taking place. Even after we were called, they didn't have us sit down or even put everyone in the order that we would perform. The AAU Tournaments have the infamous reputation of running very behind schedule. Even though this has been hard in the past, I never stopped competing. Even though winning a tournament is a really rewarding feeling, losing is the even more influential experience. In every tournament I have lost, I have gone back and watched the video, tearing apart my performance.

Every time I find my mistakes, I correct them. Tournaments are learning experiences, not chances to show off.

This particular tournament was very slow. When my name was finally called, I waited for about forty-five minutes in seiza position. Soon they told us to get comfortable, but we were not allowed out of the straight line we were sitting in. This time, we were stuck for about two hours, not allowed to stand up or really move very much either.

At last, we were led out to the ring. It felt really good to stretch my legs and get out of the staging

*continued on page 17*



## OUTSTANDING STUDENT AWARDS SPRING 2003

### Emma Drucker

Outstanding Student Profile

**Birth date:** 9/19/88

**Age:** 14

**Years training in Karate:** 7 (half my life!)

**Parents' names:** Harry and Beth

**Brothers' names:** Nat and Will

**Pets:** One dog named Savanna

**What town do you live in?** Wilmette

**Name of school:** Wilmette Junior High School

**Favorite book:** *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Sensei Scott's favorite book too!)

**Favorite subject in school:** Writing

**Most important experience in Karate:** My orange belt promotion

**Favorite part of Karate training:** Partner drills

**Favorite kata:** Heian Nidan

**Favorite kumite technique:** Round-house kick

**Short term goal in Karate:** 1st kyu Brown Belt

**Short term goal outside of Karate:** Complete a bike trip

**Long term goal in Karate:** To help someone else achieve their goals

**Long term goal outside of Karate:** Backpack around the world.



## Andy Weissler

Outstanding Student Profile

**Birth date:** 5/19/91

**Age:** 11

**Years training in Karate:** 5 1/2

**Parents' names:** Jay and Laurie

**Sister's name:** Hannah

**Pets:** Fish (1 Betta named *Sensei*)

**What town do you live in?** Winnetka

**Name of school:** Skokie Middle School

**Favorite book:** *The Lost Years of Merlin*

**Favorite subjects in school:** Math and Science

**Most important experience in Karate:** My first class

**Favorite part of Karate training:** kumite

**Favorite kata:** Tekki Nidan

**Favorite kumite technique:** 2-step

**Short term goal in Karate:** Earn black belt before high school

**Short term goal outside of Karate:** Improve handwriting

**Long term goal in Karate:** To always try my best

**Long term goal outside of Karate:** Get more organized



## TRAINING WITH THE MAKIWARA

By Sensei Scott

There are two makiwara training boards installed in the new TKC dojo. Makiwara is a resistance board used for punching, kicking, and striking practice. Makiwara range from simple padded boards that are affixed to a stationary support in the ground or on the wall, to elaborate spring-loaded mechanisms. Training, by repetitively striking a makiwara, is used by some to simply condition the hands and skin to impact. Others use makiwara training to accustom themselves to the experience of actually hitting a target with proper body action and connection (an understanding and feeling that is not possible to get from simply doing techniques in the air without resistance).

As with other forms of training, makiwara training should be started slowly, and softly, to avoid injury, and to establish the proper technique. The urge to simply hit the board as fast and as hard as possible should be avoided at all costs in early makiwara training. Speed and power should be gradually increased as the condition of the body improves. Concentrated attention must be given to maintaining proper technique and form during makiwara training.

Children should avoid all types of makiwara training and should not start such training until after adolescence. Adults with existing arthritic conditions or previous breaks and fractures to the hands and feet

should also avoid such training. Please consult a senpai or sensei on proper makiwara training before you start. When done correctly, makiwara training is an invaluable part of traditional karate training, but like all forms of martial arts activities, when done incorrectly, it can lead to serious injury.

### Student Code

I will develop myself in a positive manner and avoid anything that could reduce my mental growth or physical well-being.

I will develop self-discipline in order to bring out the best in myself and in others.

I will use what I learn in class constructively and defensively to help others and myself.

### Instructor Code

I will teach every class with respect, patience, and enthusiasm.

I will lead by example.

## KARATE TRAINING ALWAYS PAYS OFF

By Jessica Lindstrom

Karate is not just about learning how to throw a kick or a punch. It's about learning to protect yourself and about learning to have a good attitude. A few weeks ago I was in my math class at school and we were collecting information on who could balance on one foot with their eyes closed. There were only three other people in class, besides me, who could balance on their right foot with their eyes closed. And I was the only one in the entire class who could balance on either her right or left foot with eyes closed. At that moment I knew that it was from my karate training. Karate always pays off, and in many ways other than self-defense. It teaches you that you can accomplish anything with the correct mind set and a good attitude.



*Sensei Gichin Funakoshi, the founder of Shotokan Karate, circa 1920.*

### WORDS TO LEARN

Kime (kee-may): a Japanese word that refers to the synchronized timing of body, mind, spirit, and breath in a single focused karate technique to accomplish the maximum power possible in that technique.

Musubi-dachi: Bowing Stance  
 Heiko-dachi: Ready Stance  
 Zenkutsu-dachi: Front Stance  
 Kiba-dachi: Horse Stance  
 Shiko-dachi: Square Stance  
 Neko-ashi-dachi: Cat Stance

### NEW DOJO

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

all of students, families, and friends of our dojo for your generous help and support in making the dream of our own dojo space a reality. In addition to a new and improved dojo we also have a new and improved class schedule, including Sunday Advanced Class and Sunday Sparring Class. If you haven't already, please check out the new dojo schedule.

## APRIL 19 PROMOTION TEST RESULTS

Janine Axelrod	purple belt/5th kyu	Katy Ivankovich	provisional yellow
Rachel Becher	orange belt/ 3 stripes	Lukas Ivankovich	orange belt/8th kyu
Sam Becker	high purple/4th kyu	Anthony Ivankovich	green belt/7th kyu
Olivia Bellair	yellow belt/9th kyu	Sophie Ivankovich	green belt/7th kyu
Tommy Carroll	green belt/7th kyu	Raisa Katz	orange belt/8th kyu
Adam Chodos	yellow belt/9th kyu	Jennifer Labrie	yellow belt/9th kyu
Lorna Cohen	blue belt/6th kyu	Jessie Lindstrom	brown belt/3rd kyu
Roxy Cohen	blue belt/6th kyu	Stormont Mahoney	yellow belt/9th kyu
Carley Cohen	blue belt/6th kyu	Liam Mahoney	yellow belt/9th kyu
Natalie Damon	brown belt/3rd kyu	Arthur Manion	orange belt/8th kyu
Kyle Doren	high purple/4th kyu	Adi Margalit	green belt/7th kyu
Hannah Doren	high purple/4th kyu	Ethan McCune	yellow belt/9th kyu
Allison Doren	high purple/4th kyu	Colin McCune	orange belt/8th kyu
Daniel Eichengreen	blue belt/2 stripes	Will Rosenberg	provisional yellow
Jake Fernandez	blue belt/6th kyu	Melanie Samuels	yellow belt/9th kyu
Matthew Filip	orange belt/8th kyu	Eric Samuels	purple belt/5th kyu
Charlie Filip	orange belt/8th kyu	Natalie Sawyer	orange belt/8th kyu
T.J. Florence	orange belt/8th kyu	Zack Stuckman	yellow belt/9th kyu
Charlie Goldberg	provisional yellow	Elliot Taylor	purple belt/5th kyu
Alec Gorman	purple belt/5th kyu	CeCe Trompeter	brown belt/2nd kyu
Lindsay Gorman	high purple/4th kyu	Taylor Trompeter	brown belt/1st kyu
Dennis Hall	green belt/2 stripes	Sam Tullman	yellow belt/9th kyu
Corey Hall	purple belt/5th kyu	John Welch	orange belt/ 3 stripes
Cole Hamilton	orange belt/2 stripes	Jordyn Winston	orange belt/8th kyu

CONGRATULATIONS EVERYONE  
ON YOUR NEW RANKS!



## WELCOME NEW STUDENTS!

The TRADITIONAL KARATE CENTER would like to welcome the following new students to our dojo:

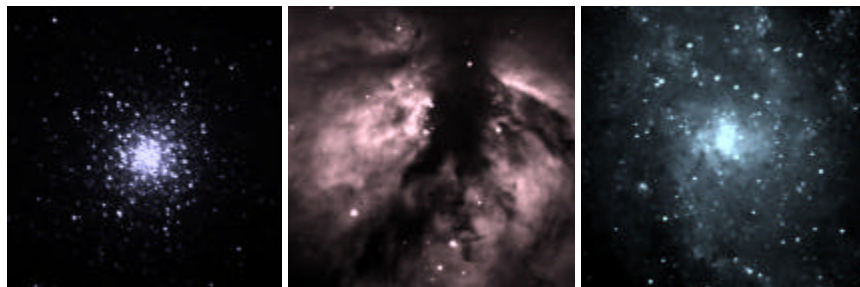
Marc Croghan	Andrew Mitchell
Tom Florence	Eli Mitchell
Charlie Goldberg	Issac Moldofsky
Drew Hessler	Ethan Moldofsky
Jill Hessler	Kim Moldofsky
Elisabeth Ivanokovich	Ethan Pressl
Nathan Lee	Nathan Reiff
Jeremy Lee	Patrick Sokolowski
Liam Mahoney	Rose Spady
Stormont Mahoney	Sam Tullman
Nina McCune	

### DOJO KUN

- ☐ Refrain from impetuous and violent behavior
- ☐ Respect propriety
- ☐ Cultivate the spirit of perseverance
- ☐ Be faithful and sincere
- ☐ Exert oneself in the perfection of character

## SENPAI MARK'S ASTRONOMY

The images of distant galaxies below were taken by Senpai Mark Schneider. Did you know that Mark is currently finishing his Master's Degree in Astronomy! He is in his last year of a three year on-line program from the University of Western Sydney. He will be graduating in June of this year. All of these images were taken digitally using a 16" refractor SCT telescope. Thanks for sharing these cool images with us Mark!



## THOUGHTS ON BECOMING A BLACK BELT

By Ronda Korzon

Training and testing for my shodan exam was an experience I'll always treasure. It was joyful and painful, simple yet difficult, positive and negative—true yin and yang.

The joyful part is obvious—finally hearing from Sensei that I was ready to test for my black belt. The painful part was realizing how much I still did not know. I gave myself constant reminders that shodan rank was truly a beginning, a time to start tearing down my technique and rebuilding it with all that I have learned.

I found getting myself to train very simple. I was always VERY motivated and trained 6 or 7 days a week during the 2 months prior to the exam. The hard part was not getting frustrated and forcing myself to work on the weakest areas of my ability. This required true discipline and focus. I found myself setting small goals, for example doing 30 hook kicks, 30 back kicks, etc. each time I trained, no matter what.

One of the many positive aspects of both training and testing was knowing exactly what I was required to know and perform—no tricks, no surprises. True, I spent many hours each day going over bunkai to every kata, but I can say it has been very helpful in my training. The negativity I experienced had to do with the tremendous pressure I was

feeling in preparing for my exam. I had many sleepless nights.

The exam itself seemed very difficult and quite challenging. It required a great deal of stamina and strength. Even though we knew exactly what we were expected to do, there was very little rest, if any, between drills. The kumite portion of the exam was somewhat different from what we had expected, and it got very intense. It was critical to keep a positive attitude.

Throughout our years of training, Sensei has taught us so many valuable lessons about the importance of solid basics, spirit, respect, courtesy, control, and facing fears that I felt very prepared to meet the challenges of becoming shodan. Arigato goza machte (thank you), Sensei.

## NEW TKC BLACK BELTS

*CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1*

the newest members of the TKC's Yudansha family (Black Belts). Check out some exciting photos from their exam on pages 14-15. Ronda Korzon, Gary's wife, tested for her Black Belt over a year ago. She writes about her experience on becoming a Black Belt. (this page above)

## WORDS FROM GERMANY

By Will Drucker

Well, this will be my first entry ever into the dojo newsletter since the beginning of my training in 1994, so I hope I get it right... As most of you know, I used to train at the dojo with my sister Emma and my brother Nat until I left in August to spend a year abroad studying in Germany.

In our many years of training, we have learned what karate is really about, and it has helped us lead our lives in a different, more disciplined, respectful, and perceptive way. Unfortunately, many people are not aware of the true meaning of karate. They believe that it is just a violent sport, where all the students do is learn how to fight. This is, of course true, in a way. We do learn how to fight; fight back, that is, when there is no other option of escape.

Throughout my years of training, I have been taught how to judge a situation for its danger and how always to be aware of my surroundings and be ready for anything that could happen. We have all been taught to avoid conflict and use force only as a last resort. In one of my karate lessons, I remember Sensei Scott asking the class what they would do if they found themselves in a dangerous situation. Many people suggested, "walk away", or "only fight back if someone attacked", etc. When everyone had finished,

Sensei told us that, though we had answered well, we were all wrong. He told us that if there is a dangerous situation, we should never have been there in the first place. Everyone had to agree that *this* was the correct answer.

This mentality of awareness and pacifism has served me well and given me the self confidence to make decisions on my own. This aspect has especially helped me adjust to my life in a foreign country. At times it was hard and discouraging trying to fit in with a new culture, but I just remembered the discipline that I learned in karate, focused on my objective, and pulled through. Because of this, I have had a much easier time getting to know people and felt much more comfortable and satisfied with the decisions I have made. Everyday life can be daunting at times, but karate has taught me many lessons that not only relate to self-defense, but to life in general.

**Linear Communications**   
Jay Kim  
3217 W. Lake Ave., #6-C  
Wilmette, IL 60091  
847.853.3500  
847.853.8054 Fax  
Store Hours  
Mon - Sat: 10 am - 7 pm  
Sunday: Closed

SUPPORT OUR GREAT NEIGHBOR!!!

PHOTO GALLERY - BLACK BELT EXAMS  
Sunday, February 23.  
Nissa Board and Gary Kromelow



*Gary Kromelow and Nissa Board doing kihon.*



*Nissa Board performing kata.*



*Gary performing kata.*



*Gary sparring Mark Schneider.*



*The judges: (from left to right)  
Sensei Sweetow, Sensei DeSardi,  
Sensei Scott*



*Nissa Board receiving her  
Black Belt from Sensei DeSardi*



*Gary Kromelow receiving his Black Belt from Sensei DeSardi*

*INTERVIEW continued from page 4*

trained four to six times weekly, earning his shodan in 1997 and his Nidan in 1999. Still an extremely dedicated student, Senpai trained every day for one year prior to earning his black belt, taking the key to the dojo so he could train on the days it was closed. Before emigrating to the United States in 2001, he was training for his third degree black belt.

Upon moving to Wilmette, Illinois in 2001, Senpai Vladimir visited many dojo and observed many teachers. He chose the Traditional Karate Center and in March of 2002 he began training under the direction of Sensei Jordan Scott. Here are some thoughts from Senpai Vladimir Rubinshtein:

**Q. What is your favorite way of training in karate?**

*A. I like kata training most. In my Goju Ryu training, we had no kumite training, no sport sparring with points, only randori—realistic fighting, beginning slowly and then speeding up.*

**Q. What is your favorite technique?**

*A. Uraken Uchi (back fist strike)*

**Q. What is your favorite stance?**

*A. Sanchin-dachi (hourglass stance)*

**Q. What is your favorite kata?**

*A. Seipai Kata. It is the one I was practicing for my 3<sup>rd</sup> Dan.*

**Q. What is your philosophy about karate training?**

*A. I like very strong kicks and punches. Karate should not be ballet; it should be powerful. You need a strong body to perform strong karate.*

**Q. What advice do you have for beginning karate students?**

*A. Work, work, work. Pay attention to the application of the technique. If it is a strike, make it count. If it is a block, make it strong. Quality is more important than quantity.*

**Q. What is your favorite thing about Traditional Karate Center?**

*A. Sensei Scott. He is a perfect trainer. He has a very great personality for teaching and he is a master at what he does. I have seen a lot of masters, and Sensei Scott is at a higher level than them all. His style and philosophy are different than what I am used to, but it is something I deeply respect.*



*Dojo fundraiser raffle (top) and youth advanced class.*

*KARATE COMPETITION continued from page 5*

gym. My relief didn't last long. I soon found out that we had to wait for two other large age groups to perform and receive their scores before my age group went. Then I would have to wait while the lower belts went.

I was only a blue or green belt at the time, and had prepared Heian Yondan as my primary kata with Heian Sandan as my back-up kata. When they called my name on deck, I had butterflies in my stomach as I stood and walked to a corner to stretch and get ready. Lauren had gone before me with her usual kata, Seipai. It was, of course, very precise and strong. I went right after her with Heian Yondan. Following my announcing the kata was a series of instinctive moves. I had practiced this kata so many times that I didn't have to think. Thinking is the worst mistake you can make. At a tournament, especially if you are nervous, thinking during the performance can only throw you off. Everything has to be instinctive.

I found out afterwards that my score was tied with Lauren's. We would have to perform our back-up kata. This was nerve-racking, but at the same time exciting. I had never tied before, and especially not with Lauren. I performed my kata, Heian Sandan, and took my seat. Lauren went right after me. I went down a kata, but she moved up one, doing another very difficult kata. She did not know it very well and hesitated once. I won, winning my first gold

medal ever, and against her! I was *really* excited. This was a major accomplishment, and I was very proud, but I wasn't done. I still had kumite which was my weak spot in my karate. I was crushed, and I came in second place (out of two people).

Over the last few years I have worked with several Sensei on my kata, but especially kumite. I have reviewed countless tapes of the tournaments and had many private lessons perfecting my sparring. It has not yet been perfected, nor do I ever expect it to be, but I have improved it and have learned a lot.



*First day of cleaning and moving in the new Dojo. Left to right standing: Lindsay, Nissa, Michelle, Gary, Adam. Left to right seated: Thea, Mark, Missouri (Sensei's dog!), Ronda, Janine.*



*The new Dojo.*

## TRADITIONAL KARATE CENTER

### **Instructors/Active Yudansha**

Sensei Jordan Scott  
Sensei Paul Sweetow  
*(alphabetically)*  
Nissa Board  
Richard Ellis  
Nancy Kaplan  
Ronda Korzon  
Gary Kromelow  
Adam Kromelow  
Jilly Plonsker  
Vladimir Rubinshtein  
Thea Sawyer  
Mark Schneider  
Michelle Schneider  
Andrew Schneider  
Steven Schneider

### **Dojo Coordinator**

Ronda Korzon

### **NSSRA Instructor**

Michelle Schneider

### **Head of Fundraising Committee**

Linda Hoffman

### **Marketing Committee**

Nancy Goldberg  
Lindsay Gorman  
Linda Hoffman  
Nina McCune  
Julie Becker  
Laurie Weissler  
Ronda Korzon  
Michelle Schneider

### **Midwest Shotokan Karate**

#### **Association Chairman**

Sensei Anthony DeSardi

### **Newsletter and Web Site Design**

Sensei Jordan Scott

### **Newsletter Editor**

Enid Scott

For Information on contributing to the next issue of *FIVE RINGS*, or for extra copies, please contact the TRADITIONAL KARATE CENTER

847-251-1600





## IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

### Bring a Friend to the Dojo Day

Saturday, May 17 from 2:00-3:00 PM.

### Summer Session Dates

May 19 - August 17 (no classes July 3rd - 4th)

*Summer Registrations are now due.*

*Please get your registrations in early!*

### Knife Defense Seminar

with Sensei Alberto Lopez

Saturday, May 24 from 1:00-3:00 PM

Please see Sensei Scott for more information.



The dojo has a new web site. Check it out!

[WWW.TRADITIONALKARATECENTER.COM](http://WWW.TRADITIONALKARATECENTER.COM)

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