

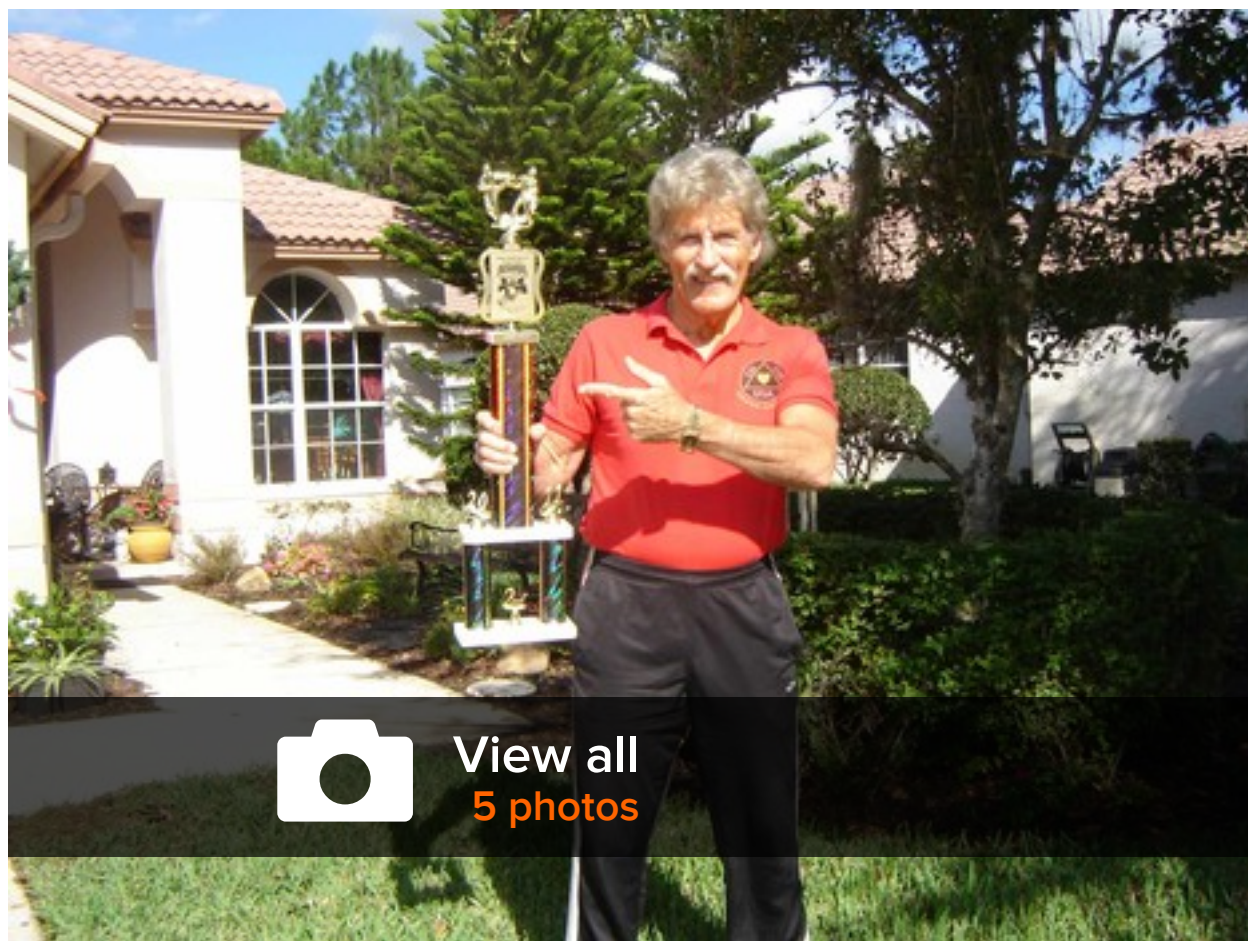
SPORTS / RECREATION / COMBAT SPORTS

# The oldest fighting champ Dennis Kelly is still fighting and winning

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After winning 11 National and 5 World Championship titles in Karate, the *Action Martial Art Magazine's* "Hall of Famer" Dennis Kelly hung up his gloves and retired in 2008 at age 70.



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Master Dennis Kelly  
*Dennis Kelly*



*Dennis Kelly*

But last year, he came out and participated in three tournaments in Florida: the **Gator Nationals** in Daytona Beach on May 14, **the U.S. Open** in Orlando on July 13 and **the third Pan American Internationals** in Miami on November 11. Contact Karate sparring can get dangerous or bloody. It is considered a young sport and the highest age group for competition is 50+. No doubt Dennis Kelly was the oldest contestant. Nevertheless, he placed 4th, 3rd and 2nd in those tournaments respectively, which probably made him the oldest fighting champ ever.

One may wonder what Dennis's winning secret is. As a child, Dennis was clumsy and not athletic at all. His parents jokingly made fun of him and his coach gave up on him. At age 35, he was heavy and got a doctor's warning to lose weight or die from heart attack soon. He decided to study Taekwondo and won medals at the **Henry Cho** Tournament in New York in 1977 and 78 consecutively. He was proud and brought his medals to school hoping his teacher Master Lee would praise him. The modest Korean teacher did not appreciate his attitude. He challenged Dennis. In 5 seconds, the 65-year-old teacher brought him to his knees and humbled him immediately. Dennis begged to know the secret of his amazing power. Master Lee told him that he would not be interested in learning this form. At his sincere and persistent request, Master Lee finally met with him privately and taught him a Korean form of **Qigong** with soft music playing in the background. From that point on, Dennis was on the way to the fountain of youth and strength. Later, he studied authentic Chinese Qigong and Yang Style **Tai Chi** as he continued with Karate practice.

In 1998, he was bestowed with the title of Grand Master by Action Martial Art Magazine for his accomplishments in both hard-style Karate and Tai Chi/Qigong. Kelly was selected by the **International Fitness Professional Association** (IFPA), the **National Association of Professional Martial Artists**

(NAPMA), Tai Chi USA, and SomaLife International to be their International certifying body for instructors of Qigong and Tai Chi.

Kelly's book "[The Six Steps to the Fountain of Youth](#): How to Slay the Dragons of Aging Without Drawing the Sword," his Qigong and Tai Chi videos and his relaxation tapes were sellouts on the [Home Shopping Network](#). His acclaimed "Six Steps" are exercise, supplements, nutrition, relaxation, psychological state (or attitude) and happiness. He shares these with his students. By following the "Six Steps," one can enhance his benefits of learning Tai Chi/Qigong. It holds true too that Tai Chi/Qigong practice can improve the results of the "Six Steps."

[Todd Yoder](#) is a pro American football player for [Tampa Bay Buccaneers](#), [Jacksonville Jaguars](#) and [Washington Redskins](#). In 2003, when he was on the Buccaneers, they won the Super Bowl.

Grandmaster Kelly worked with Todd for six months. Todd recently said, "I am very pleased with the results that I received from my work with Master Kelly. We used physical exercises like Chi Kung (Qigong) and Tai Chi along with goal setting and guided imagery. I obtained more flexibility and fluidity, gained mental sharpness and focus. I had fun and believe will help me on and off the playing field."

Inspirational speaker and trainer [Tony Robbins](#) praised Dennis for his success and attributed it to Dennis passion and commitment to add value to people's lives.

With the help of the National Parkinson's Foundation, the University of Southern Florida did a fundraiser and hired Dennis to do a one-year study program to teach Parkinson's Disease (PD) patients and their caretakers Tai Chi/Qigong in 2006. It turned out to be a huge success. No one quit the program. Patients reported no more trembling after the program. Consequently, eight additional grants were received in Florida to continue classes in New Port Richey, Spring Hill, and North and South Tampa. You can see a video on the left-hand-side for this program. Impressively, a blind person also joined one of the programs hosted in Spring Hill.

Grandmaster Kelly's success stories are not just limited to the above. With his accomplishments, he could enjoy his retirement without working so hard. So why did he come out to fight again? His answer is straightforward. His second book "[Tango Man](#)," an autobiography, is coming out along with a movie with the same title and story. He wants to use the tournament wins to promote them. Through his book and movie, he hopes to deliver a clear message that "there is a champion born inside each of us."

At age 73, 5'9" and 165 pounds, he is a lean mean fighting machine and still can do the splits, heavy presses, powerful punches and high kicks. He recommends that everyone practice Tai Chi/Qigong to find the fountain of youth.

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