



□ **Grandfather Richard Russell, 71, has been learning and teaching the Korean martial art Chongshin Do for the past 21 years, and has now reached the impressive rank of 2nd Dan black belt. The art is an amalgamation of jiu jitsu, tae kwon-do, and aikido.**

The pensioner, from Great Barr near Birmingham, had to overcome 5 hours of intensive training and an assessment before being awarded his new belt.

He said, “At the time that I passed the examination I just thought I’d done it and it didn’t really sink in. It was only when they gave me the belt that I felt really chuffed.”

Mr Russell has two children and two grandchildren, and has had to overcome several setbacks in his martial arts endeavours. The most notable of these was when he cracked a bone in his neck while performing the sport five years ago.

However, he has no intentions of giving up any time soon, saying that he “absolutely loves it. It’s part of my life.”

He is now primarily focussed on being an instructor at his school, rather than fighting in tournaments himself.

Mr Russell said: “The youngest pupil is a young boy of four, who comes along with his mum. And then there’s me. So there’s quite an age range. I haven’t come across anyone near my age though. Most people have given up before they get as old as me.”

His inspiration story began when he was aged 50, and was told that he had high blood pressure.

The retired lorry driver had had a leaflet for the club posted through his door a few days previously, so when the doctor told him that the way to lower his blood pressure would be exercise, he turned up at the club.

“I had no idea what I was letting myself in for, and it was hard because I was already 50. But I’m a stubborn old bugger, and I’ve been going back ever since,” he explained.

** - <http://www.maionline.co.uk/techniques-training-styles/styles/11142-british-pensioner-may-britains-oldest-martial-art-instructor>