



Ronin Karate Club Keep Up Karate – Coming Out of Lockdown



Activities During Lockdown (April – August 2020)

During lockdown we delivered a variety of classes and sessions online to the members using YouTube, WhatsApp and Messenger. This helped keep our members active and engaged and also helped us to stay in contact with them during lock down.

While in lock down we looked at the Scottish Government Advice and guidelines and update our risk assessments and health and safety protocols to ensure we deliver our activities within the guidelines to ensure everyone is as safe as possible at our sessions.

We also continued to work with Glasgow Sport who has helped us through a very difficult time for our club. Glasgow Sport has;

- Signposted us to the appropriate guidelines , advice and COVID officer training for sports clubs
- Provided Covid Recovery Funding **#Ready, Steady Go Again** funding – this helped us to purchase the much needed safety & hygiene materials and also new equipment to ensure we meet the physical distancing requirements
- Glasgow Sport also helped us find new venues; initially we started doing Karate in the park and Glasgow Sport helped us find a suitable outdoor park space where we could train and helped find indoor venues locally that we can use



Consulting our Membership

Glasgow Sport helped pull together an online membership questionnaire to help us find out how they are feeling and how the club can support after the initial COVID 19 lockdown. We asked our members the following to find out how they are feeling about returning to sport, 22 members responded the following is a summary of their feedback;

- **How do you feel about returning to practical sessions within a group setting?**

"I know I need to be more careful to avoid contact with others due to medication. However I trust the coach to be able to manage social distancing.... Would be fine as long social distancing in place similar to schools and other places... I cannot wait to return to practical sessions with our club!... Excited, I can continue working on my skills and also get help from others... Feel happy and look forward to it ... Can't wait to get it back together ... Eager to get started... I am looking forward to it... Absolutely fine, we have to try to get back to some normality as life does and have to go on... Nervous."

- **Do you think the club has enough safety measures in place?**
 - 17 members indicated Yes to this answers and 2 members Didn't Know
- **How likely are you to return to practical activity once the Scottish Government has indicated it is safe to do so following the recommended guidelines?**
 - 18 members responded that they were highly likely to return to practical activity and 1 member was unsure if they would return.
- **Is there anything the club can do to help you return to practical club activity?**
 - 4 members wanted more information on new COVID 19 procedures and protocols and 7 members wanted more information on where and where sessions will be taking place. A member had commented *"the club is doing all it can"*.

Starting Back After Lockdown

Based on the feedback we received and the relaxation of the lockdown we were able to start back with outdoor Karate in August and in September we were able to start indoor classes. Since starting back we have received the following feedback;

"I think that it has been good coming back to karate because it gives me something to do on an evening and its good to be around people again socialising"- Under 16 member Ronin Karate Club.

"Loving being back to karate, it has helped my mental health and social anxiety ... it has helped me gain some prosperity and control my hand and eye coordination as I am severely dyslexic ... seeing my friends again has helped me greatly .. the safety measures Charlie has put in place has also made me feel comfortable coming back."

"Continued my understanding of karate, seeing others helping me to socialise again, I feel a sense of community when I am here, it's good for my health and fitness levels especially being in lockdown ... it is a welcome distraction from COVID."

"I really enjoy being back at the club, it's a good bit of normal in all this crazy ... even gladder to see some of my Karate friends again."



“Getting back to Karate has strengthened not just my mental health but also my physical ... seeing Charles and my friends is keeping me going.” – Scott, Ronin Karate Member

“As a senior member of the club coming back has been good for my mental and physical health, it has also been good to socialise with others ...I feel happy when I am do karate ... I am also keen to back learning how to coach others .” – Hugh, Ronin Karate Members and coach in training.



Challenges and Looking Forward ...

Our club has been able to survive the COVID pandemic so far ...

Volunteer Retention, Recruitment and Training

Some of our volunteers have not returned to the club, this represents a significant challenge as they were invaluable to the running and development of the club. We are looking to train and recruit new coaches but this takes time.

Keeping up with the tiered system

We will have to work hard to keep up to speed with the tiered system. This is a challenge as we do have some members from local authorities out with Glasgow. If the tiers change then we might have to change our approach, we might need to take a more blended approach to teaching karate.

Costs and Funding

Due to venue availability we have had to find other arrangements and venues which are more expensive than what we had in place pre-COVID, so our running costs are higher. As a volunteer led club we have always thrived at keeping our costs low as possible to remove the cost barrier

Sustaining Membership

With the increase venue hire we have reluctantly increased our membership costs, we don't want costs to be a barrier particularly with so many people in financial hardship. We did have a vibrant adult section (over 18's) in our club, due to COVID and the restrictions we are unable to include them in our classes and activities. At the moment we are trying to survive and ride out the pandemic, we are hopeful we can keep going and come out the other side of this.

