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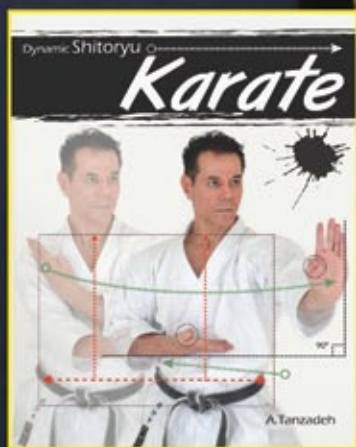
MAGAZINE

## MIKIO YAHARA'S APPROACH TO TRADITIONAL KARATE

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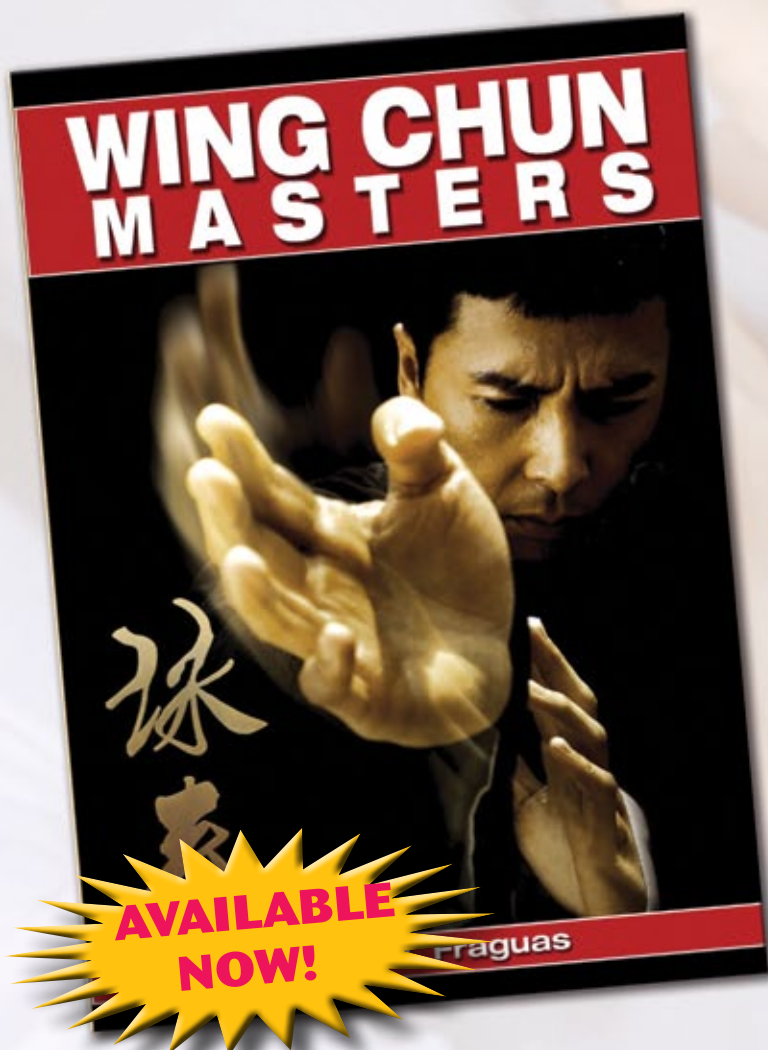
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# WING CHUN MASTERS

**By Jose M. Fraguas**

Through conversations with many historical Wing Chun figures such as the Grandmaster Yip Man's sons; Yip Ching and Yip Chun, and other top disciples of his like Wong Shun Leung, Willian Cheung, Victor Kan, Leung Ting, etc...the information in this book has never appeared anywhere before. The author, Jose M. Fraguas proudly presents "Wing Chun Masters", with an amazing repertoire of great masters and teachers of the art of Wing Chun Kung Fu.

In this volume, interviews with the world's top masters like the "Kaiser of Wing Tsun", Keith R. Kernspecht, and leading world instructors like Augustine Fong, Samuel Kwok, Francis Fong, Jim Lau, Gary Lam, Stephen Chan, etc, have been gathered to present an integrated and complete view of the "Beautiful Spring-time" Chinese art of fighting, philosophy, and self-defense.

The late Master Jim Fung and outstanding world teachers like David Peterson, Robert Chu, Tony Mas-sengill, Leo Au Yeung, Randy Williams, Chow K. Chung, Gorden Lu and legendary fighter Emin Boztepe, amongst others, explain the many concepts and principles of the art in a clear manner that everyone can understand. Packed with dynamic photographs, this book presents the ins-and-outs of the philosophy of the art of Wing Chun.

This volume contains intriguing thoughts, fascinating personal details, hidden histories, and inspiring philosophies, as each master reveals his true love for the art and a deep understanding of every facet associated with the practice and spirit of the Chinese art of Wing Chun Kung Fu as a way of life. This invaluable reference book is a "must have" addition to your personal library.

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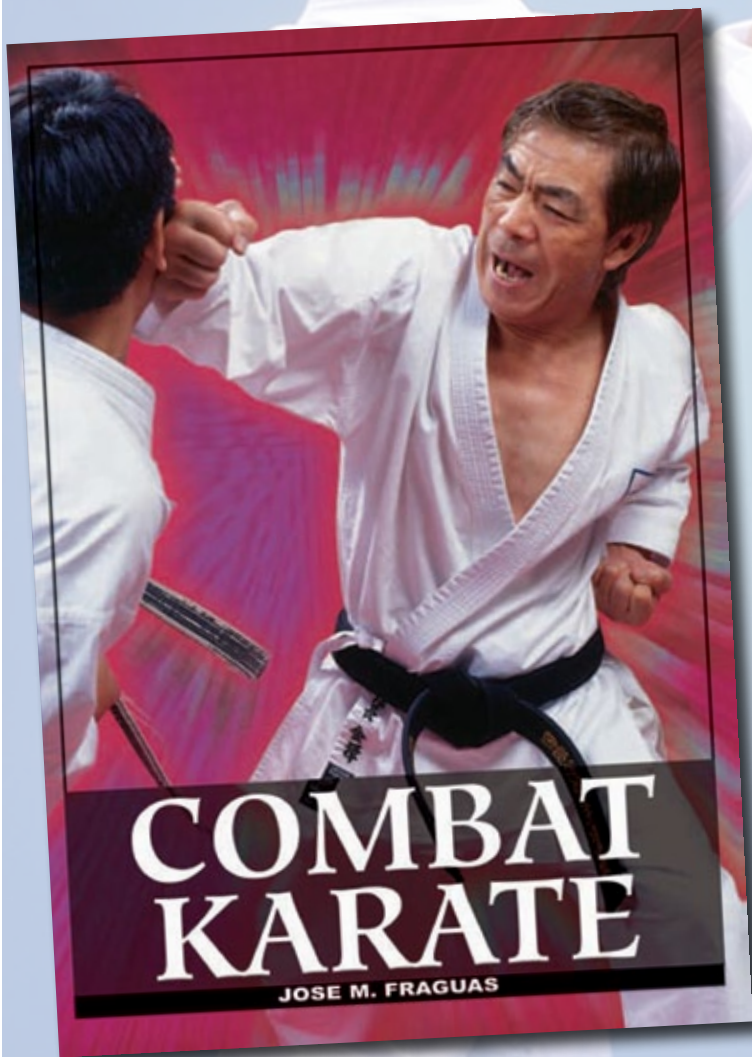
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At **MASTERS MAGAZINE**, we are constantly looking for ways to build a better and more practical platform for our publication and advertisers. We have been preparing this change for more than a year in order to expand our circulation and reach more readers and martial artist around the world and finally ... **HERE IT IS!**

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**“Yahara Sensei synthesized his learnings via the establishment of a truly authentic school of Traditional Japanese Karate, which he named World Federation (KWF).”**

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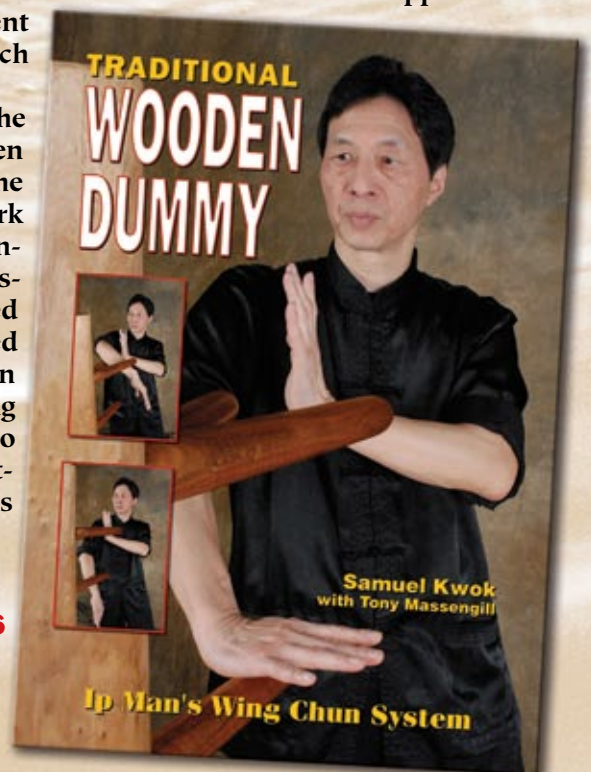
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While this book is about the Ip Man's method of Wooden Dummy training, many of the elements described in this work can be adapted in order to enhance the training of other systems as well. Those interested can use the methods presented here as a conceptual foundation to guide them in incorporating Wooden Dummy training into their personal training no matter what system of Martial Arts they follow.

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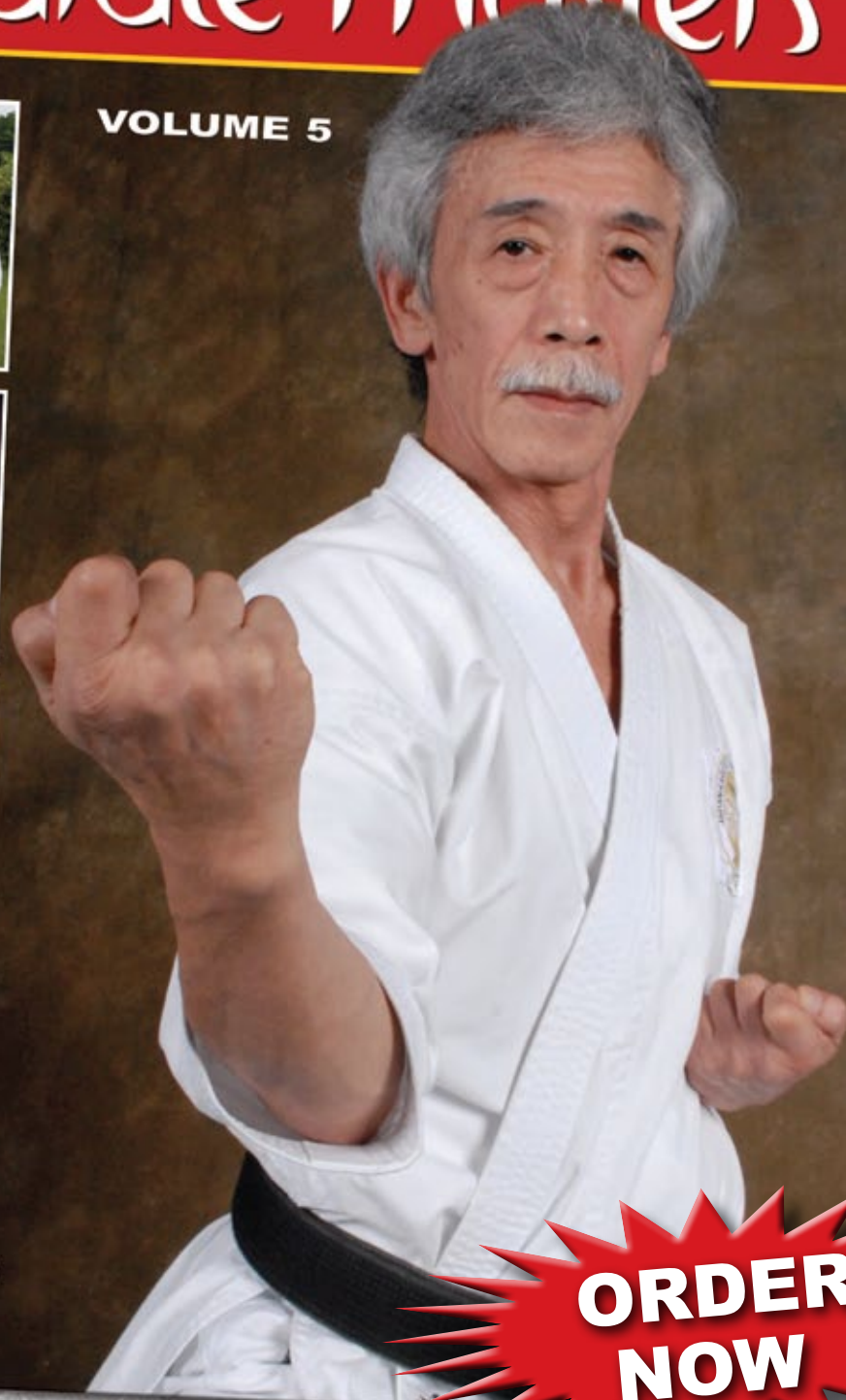
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# KAZOKU

## Open Mindedness

By Jerry Figgiani

Looking back at my years teaching martial arts, one thing hasn't changed...the importance of being able to convey to my students the value of being open to new ideas and concepts. As instructors, we all tend to speak the same language; we have to understand that sometimes there are multiple approaches to the same idea. Students are sometimes able to grasp these concepts by hearing the same idea presented in two different ways. I have personally experienced this with my students. One example, is a flow drill which I teach. In the drill, it is important to keep the hands up in position to deflect and counter as the drill is being performed back and forth. I was constantly reminding one of my students, Rick Kaufman, to keep his hands up in this particular drill. At a seminar we both later attended in Canada, the instructor giving the seminar was teaching the same flow drill. When he noticed my student and I working the drill together, he came over to make some corrections. The first thing he said to Rick was, "You must keep your hands up." That was a pivotal moment in my student's understanding of the technique...he left the seminar understanding the technique a little better. We still laugh to this day about it, but it was the small reinforcement which made a big difference.

Over the years, I have exposed my students to many different instructors in the martial arts. They have always been given the opportunity to attend seminars with me and some have even been able to travel throughout the world with me. I feel this is very important for their growth and understanding. Diversity in instruction sometimes makes a different impact on the student.

Recently, I was invited to teach a seminar in Ireland hosted by Kyoshi Patrick Beaumont, the direc-



tor of Matsubayashi International. What impressed me more than anything was Kyoshi's willingness to expose his students to as many instructors as he can. I am proud to say I have followed many great instructors who Kyoshi Beaumont has hosted, such as: Soke Takayoshi Nagamine, Hanshi Phillip Koeppel, Dan Smith Sensei, and Kimo Wall Sensei to name some of the many who have taught in front of Kyoshi Beaumont's students. The open mindedness and willing to learn new ideas was also shared by Kyoshi Dumitru Alexandru from Romania. These instructors and students made me feel at home as I expressed my concepts and ideas in kata and bunkai. This open mindedness is how traditional karate can grow strong again. It is very discouraging to hear about senseis who won't allow their students to attend seminars without them. Although I understand the importance of not exposing your students to someone who is unethical, it is important to afford students the opportunity to broaden their horizons and sharpen their skills. It's like the old saying, "Sometimes you have to let them go in order to let them grow." 🐾

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## Fighting Back

By Rick Brewer

**E**arly in my training, I was impressed that karate for the masters was their way of life. I had read about Masatoshi Nakayama having been in an avalanche, and that doctors credited his high state of karate fitness for saving him. I was very impressed and inspired. The karate way of life was a fascinating source of strength to face extraordinary real-life challenges.


Long, long ago, I was at that “feeling invincible” time of life; as decades flew by, my how things changed! Back then, “challenges” meant learning a new kata, sparring, competitions, rank tests, earning Shodan, and the like: all tough stuff, right? But as I strapped on a teaching career, raising a family, paying off a mortgage, being a cancer survivor, and more: The REAL-LIFE challenges that karate training, karate philosophy, and karate attitudes helped me face became a mine field! The karate formula for building inner strength seemed to work. The bigger the problem, the harder I trained; karate fueled my engines to face life’s roadblocks. I’m not preaching, saying I always succeeded. But when I was knocked down, karate resilience helped me bounce back.

There are legions of you right now who are battling back from all manner of illness and injury. Nowadays at least, for painful, worn, and crumbling joints, hip and knee replacements work. When I first met the legendary Stan Schmidt, he had been crushed in a car crash in South Africa and had both hips replaced. Once, while in his hospital bed after surgery, he was moaning with excruciating pain. A night nurse came in and asked, “Aren’t you supposed to be a karate man, tough and everything?” That pushed his buttons. He asked for a small flat rock for

his bedside. When he hurt, he would hold his rock “makiwara” and punch it, very feebly at first, but gradually harder and harder. He renewed his karate spirit as his body mended. During Schmidt’s frequent long plane

rides, his hips would stiffen up. Taking care not to scare his fellow passengers, he went into the tiny restrooms and quietly did Tekki kata without moving his legs. Then, in class, he had us “feel the joy” by doing the Tekki kata ourselves without moving our feet. My first try was, well, “interesting.”

As I started this column, I was recouping from my own hip replacement. It was tough, but going pretty well. Without warning, I was confronted by a serious potential killer. I had a migraine that persisted for over a week that I had attributed to weather changes. It continually increased: never wavering. I taught a very high-spirited Dan-level class. I remember thinking that each kai hurt me like a big bell in my head! I saw my doctor the next day, and suddenly found myself in an ambulance headed for an ICU equipped with neurosurgeons for an “intervention.” I was having a massive brain hemorrhage. My life was on the line. My head felt like it was going to explode. Since my neuro responses needed checked every few minutes, day and night, real painkillers were out of the question. I was in excruciating agony for the next four days and nights. Minutes seemed like hours. Deliriously, I clung to some of my favorite phrases; “Seven times down, eight times up”, “In karate there are no limits,” “The higher the water, the higher the boat.” To relieve pressure, they drilled a hole in my head that felt like a bomb going off. I was not at all macho. Twice during all this, patients near me “coded” and died. This was the real deal. Stakes were high.

Days later, sanity slowly returned. I was so fortunate to have my wife, kids, and my “karate family.” My students who’ve trained with me many decades supported me in finding my way back. Internalized karate-do is a truly powerful reservoir of strength in time of need. 

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## Antonio Oliva

By GUILLERMO ACUNA and EFREN HARO

**S**ensei Antonio Oliva is great, he is a giant of Kumite and his greatness is his great humility, his charm and also he is very smart. His height is measured from his feet well planted on the ground, all the way to his humanitarian spirit.

Thirteen years ago, we met Sensei Oliva. He brought a book under his arm, "Supreme Combat; for us the book has become a literary jewel. He also brought with him a revolutionary Kumite Training System, both innovative and original, and extremely effective, as well.

In a recent visit from Sensei Oliva to Los Angeles, CA, we participated in his seminar, and then invited him to Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico to a Karate event organized by Sensei Guillermo Acuna and Sensei Efren Haro, Directors of PROYECTO K, as part of their initiative to promote Karate Seminars both, in California, USA and Baja California, Mexico.

The event was graced with a great assistance of trainers and high endurance athletes from Mexico, Canada, Peru and the USA, all of whom demonstrated a great level of interest in Oliva's Combat System.

Antonio Oliva teaches tactics and emotics of Kumite, an area of expertise well researched by him and with a great show of his own dominance of the techniques. With terminology in our Spanish Language, his own drawings, icons and symbols, he reinforced his teachings. It is to be admired that we are talking about his very own system which is original, clear and to the point... very different than the Go No Sen and Sen No Sen Japanese systems.

With all the above, Oliva came to revolutionize a strategic-tactic Combat System, and an in a superb, passionate and high level teaching styles, he came to show us a new perspective in Sports Kumite.

Oliva's system has 3 distinctive factors that were not considered before: SMP (SMT). In other words, the competitor of Kumite is made of SENTIMENT, MOVEMENT AND THOUGHT. Oliva uses those 3 components to develop and then to apply his sport combat theories with great success. Furthermore, he goes deeper to define each factor, the behaviours on the tatami, the way he manages the elements of combat, strategies to overcome and win and also an emphasis in the way we communicate. Each person has a Dominant





factor, a Complementary factor, and a Harmony factor. This is known as the theory of DCA (DCH). Once Sensei Oliva explained these concepts to the audience, all his system made sense and became much easier to apply.

In the SMP system, psychological, motor and emotive aspects are tools that help everybody to fit one way or the other. This is Oliva's genius, his own ability to observe human behaviour, and to emphasize our capacities to synthetize in order to increase the chances of success. Human beings think, feel and move, and Oliva brought everything together to the game, he has answers for each individual case.

Oliva has the humility to say he doesn't know everything, asked for feedback, while at the same time he have the authority to ask us to be creative, original and authentic in our Karate performance, encouraging us not to be bad copy cats of good champions, while motivating us to work from the bases.

We had the opportunity to participate in 3 sessions each with different content, yet equally intense and congruent; He teaches according to the level of the participants. Antonio Oliva shares everything and he

is grateful for the participation of teachers from Baja California (Tijuana), where he was able to bring us all together almost as a General and us his soldiers getting ready for battle.

He leave us with great after taste of his visit. We have become more inquisitive with ourselves and are hungry to know more about this system.

There is no doubt in our minds that Sensei Oliva is a great genius of the strategy of Kumite. He gave us homework in the form of a personal compromise with our Karate practice. 🐘

# Patrick McCarthy

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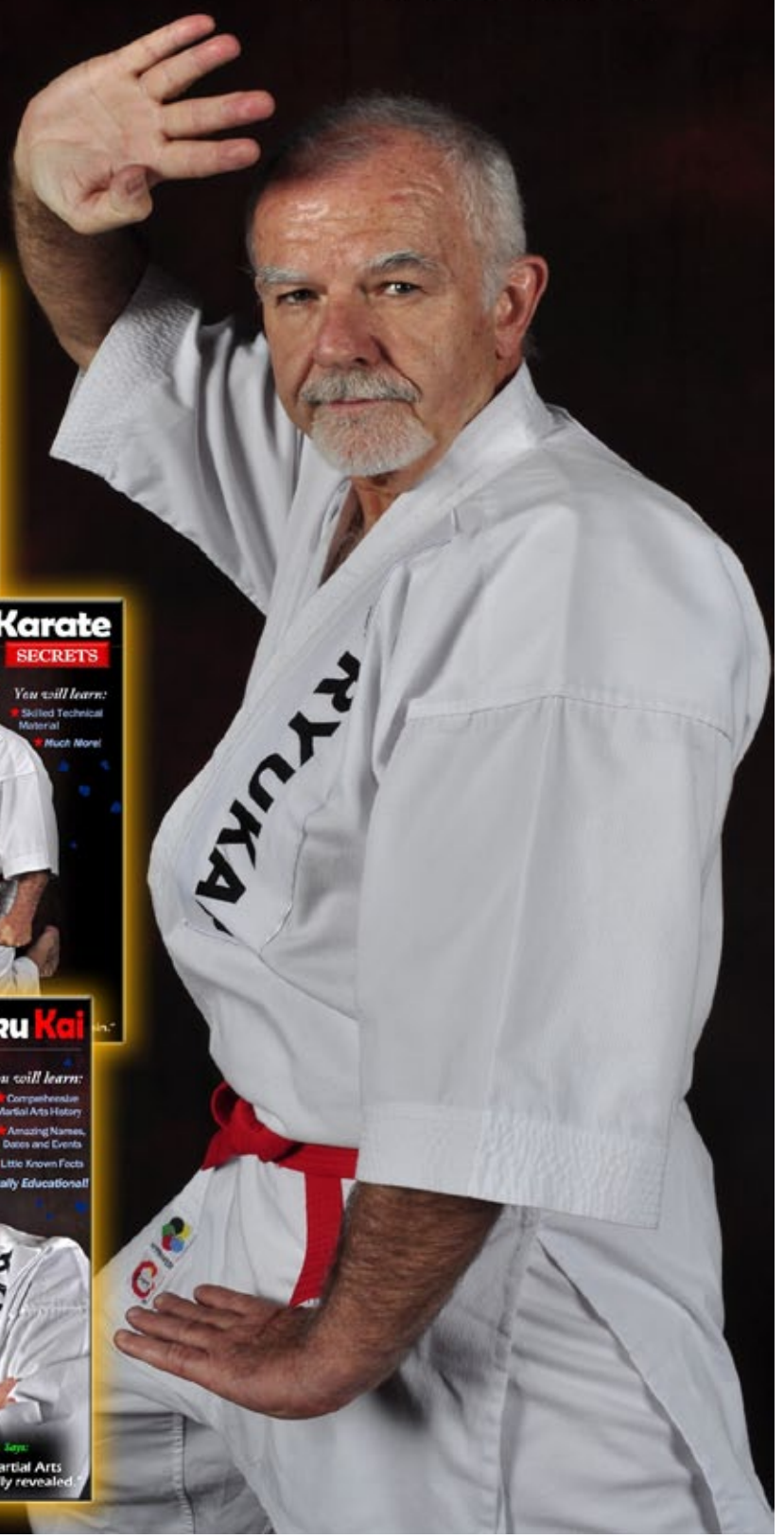
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## THE COACH WITHIN

### TACTICAL ACTIONS

By Jose M. Fraguas ·

Photos by Shelley Lipton

**S**port karate tactics are the proper application of karate techniques with precision to score points and not be scored against. On the average it takes from five to seven years to master the basic actions and footwork necessary to become a really competent competitor. This is a time of drilling with a coach and working independently to make essential actions muscle memory. In order to be practical and effective they must become instantaneous reflexes rather than the competitor having to think about each one as a possibility and then implement it. In other words actions become instinctive rather than a selection process..



As an action takes place it must be executed in the most economical fashion possible. That is it must be executed at the correct distance, the correct timing, and with no wasted motion. To accomplish this all actions have to have been practiced through drills and actual competition so that they become absolutely relaxed and fluid. By experience after both training and competition an athlete learns not only how to evaluate his opponent but also his own action-responses as well.

A karate champion is a tactical competitor. When he approaches the competition area he already has a plan in place. Tactical competitors are trained to follow through with a series of strategy-based actions that provide necessary information for both winning on the mat and success in the competition. A champion begins a match with what are called reconnaissance or exploratory moves. These test the opponent for patterned responses: attack situations, action preferences, footwork patterns, type of parries and blocks, type of counterattack, and responses to sudden changes in distance or timing. Such reconnaissance moves can include: attacks, false attacks, feints, changes of timing, footwork variations, attempted attacks or counterattacks, parry and counter exchanges, invitations, and responses to what are called "second intention" actions.

It is also advisable as a part of the reconnaissance procedure to observe potential opponents as they train or warm up with their respective coaches. Routine drill responses and actions will follow through in a match situation. In pool bouts also take the time to watch them to compete. As this is being done check to see if by any body language (posturing) they telegraph their intentions prior to attacks, etc.

Champions conceal their intentions and mislead their opponents. The easiest way is during the reconnaissance phase of the match to respond in patterns other than normal routine and in so doing set the opponent up for responses that will not come, or footwork or feints that either will not be used or be implemented in ways other than expected.

[www.usankf.org](http://www.usankf.org)



Experienced competitors also make use of their feet. The attacking limb is delivered and withdrawn by the action of the feet. Changing tempo or cadence, and distance as using the width of the match area have a profound impact on the outcome of matches. In addition, it is advisable drive the opponent rather than being driven by him.

Body Evasions or Displacements and their accompanying footwork can be very effective as deceptive tactics especially if executed and timed to the very last cadence (part) of an incoming attack. They can also be used very effectively to intercept. Although technically considered as defensive actions, they can occasionally be used offensively to launch an attack at close distance.

Feints are also very effective tactical deceptions. Feints are always best delivered if accompanied with an acceleration or broken (rhythm) tempo/cadence footwork.

Karate champions use distractions or other methods to hinder the opponent's game. Using time between rounds in direct elimination matches by interaction with a coach so that the opponent at least thinks that either a definite strategy is being discussed or that he is the subject of conversation can also have a


demoralizing and distracting effect on an opponent.

Tactical competitors control the bout by making the opponent respond by attacking or defending at inopportune times. In addition a quality competitor uses as little energy as possible by setting up situations that cause the opponent to act or react and by so doing using their energy reserves. When it comes down to it in the end a match or a tournament can easily be won or lost because of energy reserves.

Lastly one of the most important karate strategy applications is the concept of "Second Intention Actions." To make the opponent do what you want him to do is to control the bout. Second intention is a coordination of both body actions and footwork to elicit a specific reaction from the opponent. The best and classic example is to initiate a short attack with no intention of scoring. The opponent predictably makes a parry followed by a counterattack. That counterattack is the setup action. It is parried and a counter-attack counter riposte is launched to score. Any action that elicits a predictable response from an opponent is second intention whether it involves



just a body action or combines body action and footwork. "All" high level competitors fight in the second intention. It is one of the most important lessons that a trained intermediate level competitor can learn. To learn it however an athlete must have a good practical application knowledge of technique.

Tactically it can be said that a karate champion is not just a well-trained athlete or technician, but firstly is an astute student of human nature. 

# MIKIO YAHARA'S APPROACH TO TRADITIONAL JAPANESE KARATE

*The Martial Art of the Single  
Overpowering Strike*

By KWF Japan

**T**he Karatenomichi World Federation (KWF) was founded by the legendary Traditional Japanese Karate Grand Master Mikio Yahara together with KWF Deputy Chief Instructors Akihito Isaka and Malcolm Dorfman. Today KWF is a Tokyo-based non-profit organization with branches in over 50 countries and territories. For further background on KWF, please see [www.kwfjapan.com](http://www.kwfjapan.com).







## The Martial Art of the Single Overpowering Strike

### The Meaning of “Bujutsu”

Yahara Sensei believes that most “so-called Karate” today has lost track of its origins, namely, “Bujutsu” (Martial Arts) and “Budo Seishin” (Martial Arts Spirit). Karate, sadly, has largely turned into a sports-like competition in which individuals purport to “fight to win points”.

Indeed, KWF represents a well-defined form of “Bujutsu Karate” (Martial Art of Karate) that does not slavishly adhere to old forms of Karate per se. Instead, KWF’s emphasis on “Ichigeki, Hissatsu” (Single Overpowering Strike) “Bujutsu Karate” synthesizes Traditional Japanese Karate practices with modern concepts of physiology and psychology (on a non-contact basis).

### Yahara Sensei’s Karate Journey

Yahara Sensei was born on April 4, 1947, in Ehime, Japan, and as a youth was introduced to Karate when his father took him to a local Karate tournament. After graduating from Kokushikan University, he became an instructor in the Japan Karate Association (JKA). Yahara Sensei has in truth set out on a lifelong journey, searching for the roots of Karate, studying under Japan’s great Shotokan Karate masters, carefully testing the deepest insights of each, winning numerous matches and championships, and always striving to answer the basic question of what is Karate.

Yahara Sensei synthesized his learnings via the establishment of a truly authentic school of Traditional Japanese Karate, which he named Karatenomichi World Federation (KWF). “Karatenomichi” means the “Way of Karate” (also called “Karate Do”). Indeed, KWF Karate is the sum of Yahara Sensei’s journey, which ultimately led back to the original principals of the Way of Karate, and is the root from which KWF Karate has grown and the bedrock on which KWF Karate has been built the world over.

### KWF Core Principles

In practice, KWF Core Principles focus on “KWF Bujutsu Karate Waza” (KWF Martial Art of Karate Techniques). Just what are KWF Core Principles? First and foremost, to deliver a (non-contact basis) Single Overpowering Strike, the corresponding muscles and joints of the body must in a single instant become compressed to their very limits.





Such stored power, or energy, is further optimized through the body's five-point kinetic chain of motion dynamics, next focused on a single target, and ultimately released at maximum intensity.

How is such maximum power achieved? The KWF 3-Fold Method of Generating Maximum Power ("Tsuyoi Kime Waza No Santen Rikiho") holds the answer: Power of Hip-Rotation Compression ("Koshi No Hineri Ni Yoru Asshuku Ryoku"); Joint Bending-Extension Power ("Kansetsu No Kusshin Ryoku"); and Whole-Body Rotational Power ("Zenshin Kaiten Ni Yoru Enshinryoku Giho").

Further, to deliver maximum power in accordance with the KWF approach, it is crucial that several important factors are aligned: Correct form; contraction and expansion of the human body's kinetic chain of dynamic motion and power; utilization of the body's center of gravity; adjustment of timing and distance; explosive release of energy as a Single Overpowering Strike; and, a focused clarity of mind, which, as discussed below, is known in Flow Psychology as "Being in the Zone".

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**“To deliver maximum power in accordance with the KWF approach, it is crucial that several important factors are aligned.”**

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## The Martial Art of the Single Overpowering Strike



### KWF Kata

Yahara Sensei's approach to Kata (Form) is distinctive as well. In point of fact, all KWF Kata must be performed as "Bujutsu Toshite No Jissen Teki Kobo" (Real-Life Martial Arts Offensive and Defensive Combat (or real-life sparring context)). This approach requires several things. The first requirement is a correct understanding of "Kata No Bunkai" (Application (Deconstruction) of the Kata). Accordingly, each KWF Kata is performed according to its real-life sparring context. In contrast, many Karate practitioners today seem to simply memorize rote moves, or to rely on fancifully impractical interpretations of the techniques involved.

As in Kumite (Sparring), throughout each KWF Kata KWF Core Principles are employed to optimize the body's five-point kinetic chain of motion dynamics and finally to release the strike or block at the point of maximum intensity.

In point of fact, Yahara Sensei has contributed to the repertoire of Traditional Japanese Karate by developing a new Kata called "Santen Rikiho", which puts the KWF 3-Fold Method of Generating Maximum Power into practice.

### A Successful 2015 KWF World Conference

As KWF's major biennial event, the 2015 KWF World Conference was held over the three days of September 25-27, 2015 as hundreds of KWF practitioners and spectators from dozens of countries participated in events in Chitose, Japan. Over the first two days, KWF Core Principle Technique Seminars focused on "KWF Bujutsu Karate Waza" (KWF Martial Art of Karate Techniques). The 2015 KWF World Cup took place on the final day where the critical factor determining success in all KWF Kata and KWF Kumite match-ups was whether KWF Core Principles had been properly utilized or not. In short, it was impossible



to succeed in either the 2015 KWF World Cup Kata or Kumite competition by showing off seemingly “cool” or “flashy” moves that ignored KWF Core Principles and therefore lacked maximum power.

### **Upcoming KWF International Seminars**

In addition to the KWF World Conference, Yahara Sensei regularly conducts KWF International Seminars, the objective of which is to further global understanding of the Martial Arts Spirit and KWF Core Principles. With upcoming seminars scheduled in Italy, France, the United States, and elsewhere, further information may be obtained from your local KWF affiliated organization.

### **KWF's Way of Karate as a Traditional and Modern Way of Life**

According to Yahara Sensei, “In ‘Bujutsu Karate’, via the concept of ‘Gishin Ichinyo’ (Unity of Technique and Mind) we learn to train and discipline both our mental outlook and physical skills. By perfecting our ‘Bujutsu Karate’ skills, we come to understand how to prevail and how to proceed on a calm and steady path. By making the Martial Art of Karate a lifelong undertaking, we come to realize that The Way of Karate can very positively enhance our journey through life”.

While fundamentally a traditional Japanese martial art, viewed as an expression of what Harvard Professor E.J. Langer terms “Mindfulness” or what Claremont Graduate University Professor C.M. Csikszentmihalyi refers to as “Flow Psychology” (also known as “Being in the Zone”), as practitioners study KWF Karate as the art of the Single Overpowering Strike, they learn to infuse their every moment with such decisiveness, which is the key to the Way of Karate and to an enlightened spirit.

Practicing the concept of Unit of Technique and Mind, and recognizing the positive correlation between physical activity and mental agility, as shown by the research of Harvard Professor J. Ratey, M.D. and others, KWF is a supporter of and contributor to the Special Olympics ([www.specialolympics.org](http://www.specialolympics.org)).

Finally, Yahara Sensei emphasizes that, “The quintessence of KWF Karate is profound, and as such is a lifelong undertaking, never fully mastered, but instead always open to new discovery. As we seek to make both the spirit and techniques of Karate part and parcel of our lives, I sincerely invite you to take the journey of the KWF Way of Karate together with us”. 🐢





Patrick McCarthy, 9th Dan Hanshi, is a well-known historical researcher, international seminar instructor and former tournament champion who has written several books, including Tuttle's best selling Bible of Karate: "BUBISHI." Director of the International Ryukyuu Karate Research Society, his writing has appeared in many publications around the world. A leader in Kata application practices, his insightful and innovative books and DVD's are clear and to the point. Whether you are a student or instructor of Koryu Uchinadi or any other Karate tradition, the material found on any of the IRKRS DVDs will enhance your understanding of kata application and the underlying principles of Karate as an art.



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# VERNON RIETA

## *The Shaolin Journey*

By Jose M. Fraguas

**V**ernon Rieta's journey to kung-fu mastery is a story of physical dedication, mental toughness, and spiritual enlightenment.

After years of up and downs in the way of Shaolin, Rieta keeps walking the same path, immersing himself in the practiced of his beloved art. According to Rieta, being all Chinese, part Chinese, or any nationality should not matter. If you can understand that everyone is created equal, what difference does outside appearance make if the spirit, mind, and body are truly in love for the art of kung-fu. "In analyzing Shaolin kung-fu, I felt we should organize a group of kung-fu practitioners who can contribute and see the big picture. My main concern is not to become a millionaire from teaching kung-fu. If that were my biggest concern I would have truly failed. We might never become financially rich at this art, but the chance to explore a treasure of knowledge has always been what drives most teachers."

With one foot planted in the past and the other rooted in the present, Rieta is considered by many to be one of the best hung gar kung-fu instructors in the world. But Vernon Rieta's goal has never been to glorify himself, but rather to preserve all the knowledge passed onto him by his teachers in order to perpetuate the art of the Shaolin Temple.

"Coming from a pure art background," says Rieta, "I can appreciate the uniqueness of being different. The future should be an extraordinary adventure that can signal rare and fantastic visions of the accumulated kung-fu knowledge sitting at our doorstep. Those leaders among us should be able to locate and learn from such contributing individuals, teachers and masters. The on-going effort to probe our personal intellect, physical abilities, and spiritual powers should not cease in our lifetime because of internal or external limits. The word "kung-fu" literally means "hard work," and working at what you like best can bring a true happiness that should be shared with the rest of the world."

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## The Shaolin Journey

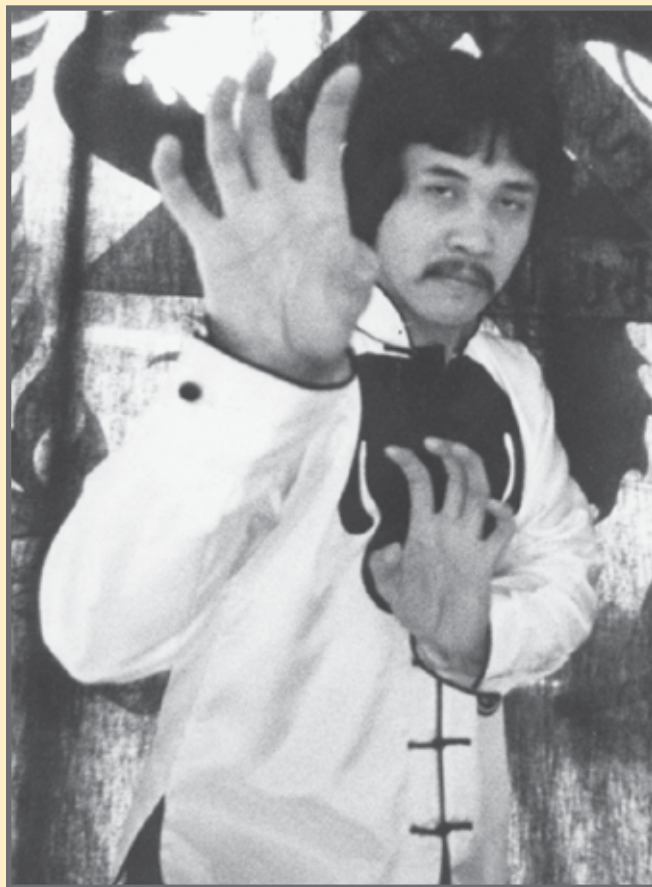
**Q: How long have you been practicing martial arts?**

A: I would say around 41 years, since 1961. I was 11 years old when I formally started and I was strongly influenced by my older brothers. Being 6 years old, I saw one of them tear a nickel in half with his bare fingers. Seeing one other brother do kenpo karate forms, and then hearing fight stories from my other brother's beach boy days in Hawaii was also very formative for me. Growing up in Hawaii, a multicultural society with Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Thai, Okinawan, Samoan, American and Hawaiian all living together, made it possible for me to experience all the different cultures and all their versions of martial arts. My neighborhood of friends and family has shaped, exposed and influenced me a great deal.

**Q: How many styles have you trained in?**

A: I have studied many Chinese kung-fu styles, but mainly the Southern-style five families comprised of mok gar, fut gar, hung gar, choy gar and lau gar. I've also learned choy li fut (long-hand style), paqua (eight diagram palm), tai chi chuan (yang style and ng style), monkey, white crane and praying mantis. Most of the kung-fu schools would mix different kung-fu styles and made them available to all the students. The other styles I was exposed to were Japanese Zen archery and judo, Filipino kali-escrima, muay Thai and Brazilian capoeira. All of these styles take years to master, but trying to acknowledge their history and main techniques has been an enjoyable part of the research. Much has been gained by an open-minded attitude that gave me no prejudice. The one style that I truly enjoy is hung gar, because of its accumulated history. I could never run out of material to extract from it. It is the one style that has always taken me to phenomenal introspection and has been a home base for my years of study. Between my teachers, friends, students and research, I have gained a wealth of information that has contributed to my own comprehension.

My first teachers were my older brothers. All of them took some sort of martial arts style - from Okinawan karate to kenpo karate to pure street fighting. I could not help but see them use some techniques from these arts. My formal introduction to kung-fu was with the Jing Mo Kung-Fu Association (Chinese Physical Culture Club). The teacher was Master Lau. He was teaching five families style - mok gar, fut gar, choy gar, lau gar and hung gar. I was a member of many other kung-fu schools in Hawaii, like the Kung Ming Tang Association, and many others. In my younger days of kung-fu training I was such a fanatic I would go to as many kung-fu schools as



I could squeeze into a week. Three separate schools within the week - Monday and Wednesday, Tuesday and Thursday, and Friday and Saturday. I concealed my connection to the different schools until the Chinese New Year came along and the various associations would require the students to shake the lion head for the Chinese New Year celebration. I would not show-up for Chinese New Year events! But when I was younger I had my share of shaking the lion head during Chinese New Year. I absolutely enjoyed the fireworks, the excitement of being with my friends, and doing kung-fu demonstrations at community celebrations.

After Master Lau, my first teacher, died, I found Bucksam Kong's school in 1965. I really liked him. The style he was doing was hung gar kuen, which was very familiar to me because it is a southern style very similar to my previous method. It blended perfectly into the other styles I was practicing. I stayed with him for many years and eventually helped him to open his mainland branches of siu lum pai in California. Being 21 years old with my own school was a heavy task. The people would come up to the office and ask who the head in-

structor was - I would always get a stare. Most people always look at knowledge as coming from someone who is older. I felt so guilty for being so young that I made the students call me si-hing, instead of the proper protocol of sifu. I managed to train 180 students by myself. I taught every day for 6 years straight, with schedules from 8:30 AM to 11:00 PM, sometimes six days a week! These extensive and continual days helped me to closely examine how and what I was teaching. Whatever it was that I would be demonstrating for the upcoming months had to be planned in advance so I could research everything I had in my curriculum. It truly made me think for myself and made me stronger as a teacher and as a researcher. My own curiosity made me question what I was teaching and made me more of a perfectionist. This helped me to answer any questions that the students might throw at me regarding kung-fu.

Even when I had my schools, I was still going to see, learn and study many other styles like jiu-jitsu, escrima, Japanese archery, muay Thai boxing, Hawaiian lua and capoeira. I began to understand human physiology and see the common cord that combines all the abilities we have in our bodies. Like any student finishing university and earning a degree, the journey had just began. Now it was time to fully understand knowledge and think for myself. When exploring physics, I often read about Albert Einstein and physics books to find the answers to my questions. Some times we don't realize that we are what we are because of the people who came before us, and because of our own experiences and development. My fine arts background helped me to think three-dimensionally and see what others don't when looking for techniques that are hidden in the forms. To view what kung-fu is all about in the present, we should understand why it was created and the manner we received it from past masters.

**Q: Were you a natural at martial arts?**

A: Yes, to a certain extent. Some movements came very easy to me and some others I needed to practice over again until I could satisfy myself with my level. I think the best part of me has always been my memory. I could learn a whole kung-fu form in one class session. This was truly helpful for me, because I could retain many forms from different schools and teachers. I was like a collection book, storing information I could extract data from and then cross-reference movements to different arts. Of course, analyzing teaching methods and researching philosophies came later. The video camera was not invented when I first started, so having a gifted memory helped my study of kung-fu vastly. That unique skill gave me the ability to learn and study many forms. Being able to execute different kung-fu styles at will made it possible for me to sharpen related moves when prac-

ticating a form or a technique.

**Q: Who would you like to have trained with that you have not?**

A: The monks at the Shaolin Temple. It would be nice to meet and train with the kung-fu masters who dedicated their lives to the study of this great art. It would be wonderful to meet the founder of the Shaolin Temple, the great Tamo.

**Q: What would you say to someone who is interested in learning martial arts?**

A: Martial arts imitates life in many ways. You are there to learn about your mind and how the human body works. Learning how to defend yourself is a given in martial arts, but the real experience comes from the other aspects such as harmony, persistence, confidence, humility, self-respect, courage, and the pursuit of perfection. Walking with your body, mind and spirit eventually becomes a way of life. You will find yourself dealing honestly with all your own shortcomings. Staying the course no matter what steps into the road in front of you is the first movement of your journey. Competition might make it exciting but between the trophies and medals comes self-satisfaction. When you see yourself growing old and stop accepting challenges, it comes



## The Shaolin Journey



another part of your journey to succeed as a human being. Martial arts has always given me all the rewards I need to be fulfilled. You will not be disappointed in martial arts if you give them a chance.

For me, kung-fu is an endless fountain of knowledge and wisdom. Trying to understand what make us live longer and healthier is just one stop on that trek. You never stop learning about yourself and the things that make your body perform at remarkable levels of skill. The exploration of the mind gives me much excitement. To wonder and conjure up places and things that can be possible with the power of the mind is just incredible. The fruit of the garden is our body and the glow of our effort is the soul.

**Q: Do you think kung-fu in the West has caught up with the Orient?**

A: I think we need to develop more educational skills because this will give us a more academic status to match the status kung-fu has in the East. Making a living teaching kung-fu has given me the opportunity to devote an extensive amount of time toward education. By doing kung-fu everyday, you will increase your skills more rapidly than if it is practiced occasionally. The assorted ways that kung-fu

is taught in the East and West are very different. If you're learning kung-fu in Hong Kong it is very limited when it comes to workout space, but each student gets better attention from the teacher.

In the United States you have huge facilities, more group activities, and more private lessons for people who can afford them. The open interaction with other students makes for an open forum that increases kung-fu knowledge - the East doesn't have that. Whenever you fund teachers (sifus) you support their own study as well as provide the training facilities necessary to broaden, advance, and refine the art. The many schools and full-time teachers help the students also. Fighting rings, kung-fu apparatus and punching bags all become a common environment that bring out the best of the art. Seeing the martial arts in books, events, competitions, and movies has made the West vital to martial arts growth. This has helped to increase the kung-fu foundation in the West. To be totally honest, I would have to say kung-fu development depends on each individual, teacher, and school regardless if you are from the West or East.

**Q: Do you think there are still pure systems in kung-fu?**

A: I think some accumulated knowledge might have gotten watered down. But if there is one place we can draw information from, it is from the old kung-fu masters. I think we all strive to study a pure system, but we should always include the present and the future. But I am convinced that the ancient forms in kung-fu are universal and can be used by all.

**Q: Do you think different schools of kung-fu can co-exist?**

A: I think every teacher can shed a different view on the same style. Each instructor will teach what he thinks will make his student a better practitioner. It is like standing on top of a mountain with ten people. Each one would give a different opinion on what the best view was. No one would be wrong but they would all help each other to see different things. I feel certain that the contribution of different schools is a great asset to everyone.

The main difference is that each style has its own method of training, and each school teaches ways that are unique to their own style. Everyone's priority is different. If you focus on health you might change your style to fit your age. All forms of knowledge are good and the journey is always more important than the destination. Human physiology is the same no matter what style you practice. I look at the applications common to all human traits, condition, mannerism,

emotions and attitude. This help to disband the blinders you wear when switching styles or schools.

**Q: What is your opinion of sport competitions like kickboxing and the UFC?**

A: Sport is really about challenges in a friendly environment. There are many differences between a sport and real fighting. No one dies or get seriously injured in a sport except accidentally. The possibility to compete in an event gives you just another road of development. Rating your skill against someone else has always been what drives perfection. What you have to remember is that this is not the only method that can drive perfection. There are many traditional ways as well.

**Q: What is the philosophical basis for your martial arts training?**

A: The study of Chinese culture has helped me to look at the philosophical principles related to kung-fu. The vast history of China is what makes kung-fu unique. China's culture, symbolism, mythology, philosophies and religions have created a wonderland to explore and ponder. You have a Buddhist thought, Taoist thought, Confucius thought and many mixtures of them. When I first concentrated on the meaning of kung-fu, I realized that the experience would lead me to investigate Chinese culture. The one thought that echoes most loudly in my mind is that true self-cultivation brings enlightenment. As Lao Tze said, "correct persistence brings good fortune," and "an enlightened person will carry things out to completion." The words of Chinese philosophers and scholars has always been an inspiration to my training.

**Q: Is it necessary to engage in sparring to achieve fighting skills?**

A: I certainly feel any fighting experience can contribute to your fighting skills. There are two schools of thought - one can move when the apple hits your head, or one can look up and move before the apple hits your head. Both manage to accomplish the job of moving but the one that can surpass any physical limit is the mind. The mind has the power to create scenarios that you might never experience in real life. When it comes to the mind we seldom voyage beyond what is given to us from our teachers. Let's look at form training, for example. I think most people do not feel it is vital to giving you fighting experience. But forms training can be used to train for a real fight by using the imagination to match a real fight scenarios. Students often do not make this mind/body connection. The use of a person in front of you is very important for timing, accuracy and a real life experience, but I do not think the training should stop there if you are looking for real self-defense moves.

The Chinese use a lot of visualization when describing martial movements. They took on the mannerisms of certain animals to help make that mind/body connection. When imagining a crane fighting, you have to become light, stand on one leg, and be ready to strike with the beak. The tiger will leap on an attacker and claw the victim, and a leopard will strike from above or behind.

A kung-fu fighter can practice his fighting every time he uses to conjure up an opponent. Western boxers do it all the time when they shadowbox. Reality starts in the mind and can affect your body if your practice is done without any limitations. The many fighting forms of kung-fu have document these ideas and principles. That inventory of knowledge and history should be dissected and analyzed better, and is the one place most practitioners have overlooked.

**Q: Did you have an experience that inspired you to train?**

A: I remember in 1966 when I was practicing kung-fu at a Buddhist Temple in Hawaii - the Nuuanu Temple. I to class early and saw a monk in the kitchen preparing dinner for the other monks. So I thought this would be a great opportunity to ask a real monk about kung-fu. I approached him and asked if he ever did kung-fu. He replied, "Everyday." The he left to serve the dinner. I finally saw the head monk who



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spoke English quite well and asked him about the monk in the kitchen. "His kung-fu must be really great." I said. The head monk smiled and replied that he was the best cook at the temple. That one reply taught me that any great skill should be considered "kung-fu." I now regard everything I do and can master as "kung-fu."

**Q: What does the practice of kung-fu mean to you ?**

A: Kung-fu is a deep part of my life. But sometimes you feel that you will never master it because your body and mind change as you grow older. How I practiced during my teens is different from what I did in my 20s, 30s, 40s, and 50s. What I find interesting in kung-fu is that all the knowledge that has been passed down is contained in the forms. This boundless amount of treasure had made me anxious to open the forms and dive into the minds of the old masters. The ability to practice independently without holding someone responsible for my exercise is a great help. I also like the idea of living a longer and fuller life by practicing a healthy form of exercise. Kung-fu has been a significant way to help me to achieve these multiple goals and control my own destiny.



**Q: Do you think it helps to train with weapons?**

A: Yes, quite definitely. I think it completes an evolution to engage in weapons. It will develop different timing and give you functionality. The ability to know the vulnerable parts of the human body is also part of weapons training.

Striking with a sword is much different than using a staff. The chain whip will give you a understanding of circular movement and the double swords will make you aware of your footwork. The 18 weapons of kung-fu are a unique assortment of tools that can change your physical abilities and create mental discipline. First comes the mind, then the body, and later the weapons as an extension of the own body. At the very end, of course, comes the environment.

**Q: Should an instructor's personal training be different than their teaching schedule?**

A: All training should be individual. The ability to achieve greater skill lies in your personal needs. A class session will involve several people, but you are there for your own personal growth and achievement. The sifu's ability to instruct and execute moves needs to be enhanced by class participation. So each student needs to participate fully in order to progress individually. My teaching schedule has always focused on a multiple-year curriculum. My personal training time, on the other hand, is for my own personal needs. But when you have a curriculum of sixty sets, and the technical level varies from student to student, you will find yourself switching sets to make the teaching spontaneous and challenging for everyone.

**Q: Do you have any general advice to pass on martial artists?**

A: The most important thing to know is that you have given knowledge as well as received it. After spending years training, your abilities to think on your own and make contributions are an important key to the success of the next generation of teachers and practitioners. Albert Einstein said, "Imagination is more important than knowledge." I have to agree with that. It's nice to explore the frontier of the mind. We all need to grow and advance. I'm not saying to give up traditional martial arts, but just to look closely at what you have in your possession. Sticking to the same route is safe, but venturing outside that route could give you new experiences that you could share with other martial artist. Take the time to explore the forms of the past, for it is the door to knowledge. To perform kung-fu is nice but, to be kung-fu is divine.

**Q: What are the most important qualities of a successful martial artist?**

A: Have a good character with strong moral base, persistence, courage, understanding, humility, patience, and self-control. Persistence is the path to any success, but it mental

or physical. Courage allows you to take a step beyond the ways of your average day - to be unafraid to try new ways. Be humble about yourself and not be too eager to prove something right or wrong. Control of your anger - don't criticize less-than-perfect performance or behavior from others. Patience will allow you to work through any problem, and humility will keep you from looking down on others just because they are not exactly like yourself. These traits are special, but like anything in life, you have to work at them and practice in order to succeed. These are just some of the steps in becoming a successful martial artist that I think carry through to other parts of life.

**Q: What's your opinion of supplementary training?**

A: I have always known that cardiovascular exercise is important. I integrated cardiovascular exercises into my workout long ago with kung-fu principles, and it worked perfectly. The idea of stretching and weight training take on entirely new meaning when done with kung-fu as its base. The resulting method must be focused on making your martial arts skill complete. I believe when you go shopping you must pick the right ingredients in order to create your desired meal. I do not see supplementary training as a problem if you do it the right way.

**Q: Have you felt fear in your training?**

A: I haven't felt fear with any training that I've done. The only time I had a glimpse of fear was when I was a novice. I had to fight someone bigger and I was afraid of his strength and size. I have friends who stopped practicing kung-fu because of the fear of hurting their body through chi kung practice. Internal exercises should always be done with an experienced sifu. One thing I always remember is that when the door swings open it can also do harm as well as good. If you went to a doctor for sickness or injuries and he gave you the wrong prescription, then it might do more harm instead of good. The only one who knows if it feels good or bad is yourself. This inner power to distinguish the difference requires a perceptive mind.

**Q: What keeps you motivated after all these years?**

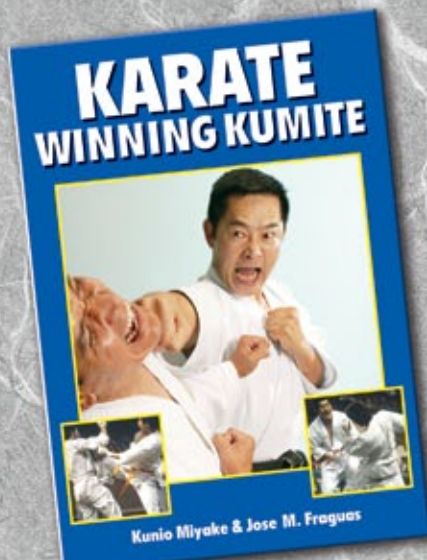
A: My strongest motivation has been to be the best and to find knowledge. To be perfectly honest, I never found anything that comes close to making me feel as contented as kung-fu. It makes me feel good after the workout is done and it exercises my mind to when I try to understand what makes these techniques work. The chi kung part of kung-fu emphasizes various health benefits and the information contained in the many forms of hung gar and kung-fu in general would take a lifetime to extract. The acoustic form in hung gar has taken many years to understand - not to mention the five emotions part of the form. When you had a place like the Shaolin Temple, where people could share and exchange



knowledge and learn together, you can see how knowledge would grow. The picture of a old Chinese sage reaching for that last book of knowledge seems to exemplify my own personal attainment and drive to reach perfection. I may never attain it but I will never stop learning or trying.

**Q: What is the future of martial arts?**

A: Like any art form, it will be up to the new martial artists to break the mold into another dimension. If you look at the many ways martial arts has contributed to mankind, you will see that it is a great part of our past. The power to physically defend ourselves and our families, cities and countries against all enemies put this art form in a different place. It has helped us to succeed in understanding our own bodies, to create positive minds, and push us towards exercise for health and longevity. To be one with our body, mind and spirit is truly what drive us to be alive. The efficiency to live a fuller and longer life makes any knowledge handed-down even more important. The possibility to create and expand our perception using martial arts is one great way for the future generations to grow kung-fu. Because of modern technology, we can better communicate between students, teachers, cities, countries and the world community. All this has all helped to improve the old and given us power to extract past knowledge through research. What a grand future awaits all martial arts' players who unite together for common knowledge. 🐉

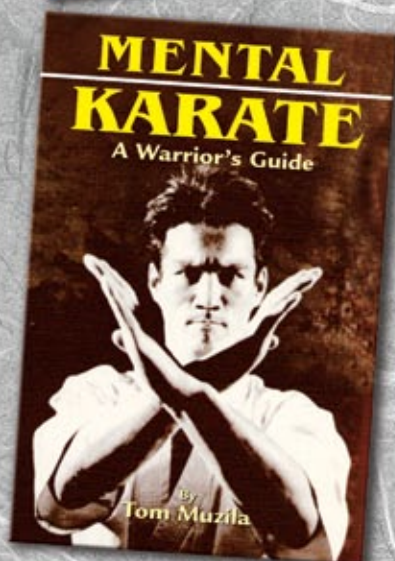


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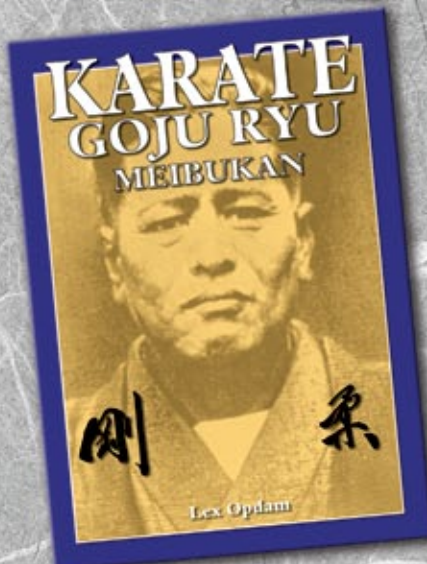


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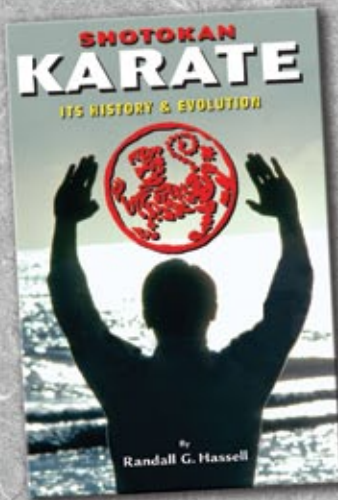
## **KARATE GOJU RYU MEIBUKAN**

**By Lex Opdam**

This work reflects the system of education from the School of Dai Sensei Meitoku Yagi named the Meibukan. The Meibukan, in an educational sense, originated from the teachings of "the Empty Hand" that Chojun Miyagi adopted in his Goju-ryu Karate system and passed over to his student in turn, Meitoku Yagi. Sensei Yagi developed the system further and gave these teachings a personal interpretation. The reader will find many historical photographs of great Okinawan Goju-ryu karate masters who were the pioneers of this unique martial art. The syllabus in this book serves as a technical manual in which history, origins, practice, and techniques are arranged in an orderly way, allowing the identity of the style to emerge. This syllabus offers deep background that not only will serve beginning karatekas by giving them a rational framework to grasp this martial art, but also more experienced karatekas, who may reinforce or augment their existing understanding of the style's unique subtleties.

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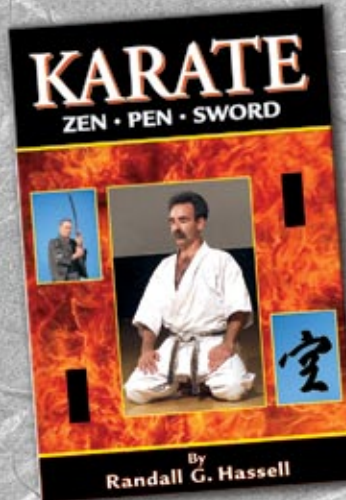


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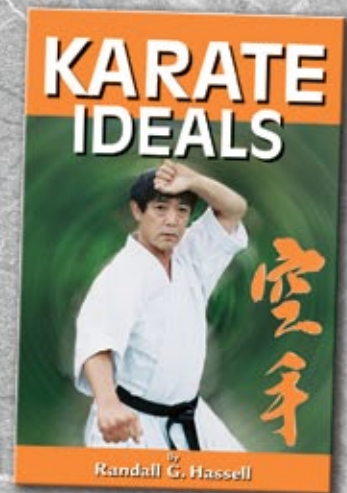


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This vivid introduction to the physical, spiritual, and educational aspects of Karate explores the many facets of the art of the "empty-hand," from the beginning stages to the advanced practitioner, used by the masters during practice and study. This is an invaluable learning and teaching resource for all students and practitioners of the art of Karate and its philosophy. Written by one of the leaders of Japanese Karate in the U.S., this book helps to define and spread knowledge about karate without compromising its intrinsic philosophies and spirit. This great series of lessons from Karate teachers and martial artist who have devoted their lives to instruction is a fascinating book that demands to be read more than once.

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# SENSEI A. TANZADEH

## “Dynamic Shitoryu Karate” Book

By Jose M. Fraguas

### Sensei, what pushed you to write this book?

In the 42 years of my training experience of different karate styles and Shitoryu in particular I studied and collected a vast amount of books and publications written about karate. And I realized that even with that decent knowledge accumulated through the years there is no informational and practical source that can be recommended used as a complete reference for Shitoryu karate. I was very much motivated to fill the gap especially for Shitoryu style after having a deep practical understanding and essence and roots of this style. My book is not meant to criticize the books that have been published in this area before. Some of these books are very informative and give a good focus on fundamentals and basics as well as quite a good overview of katas and other aspects that karatekas need to know. However during my trips to different countries I noticed that karate practitioners are in need of one harmonized source that can refer them to all karate practical aspects and help them to standardize their techniques and trainings. This standardization has not received enough attention in the past. So, what pushed me to write this book was basically an idea to create a reference source of standard techniques and combinations being easily used by all shitoryu practitioners in training sessions as well as to have a demonstrative guidance for other karate styles and disciplines to facilitate their understanding of shitoryu karate.

### What do you think this book brings to the Shitoryu reader that other previous ones haven't?

Many might know and if not I will share the fact that I have one of the largest collections of books in Martial Arts and particularly in Shitoryu. All these books deliver very positive and useful points. As I mentioned when replying to your previous question some of these books have focused only on Katas, some on fundamentals and basics of Shitoryu

karate. But being at the side of a trainer I always wanted to have was a book in Shitoryu that will bring up a complete consist of all the karate art aspects including Katas (Basics and Advanced), techniques, how to do the stances, and so on. It should be a book that could be used very easily by practitioners, instructors and coaches as well as officials or other styles of karate. Therefore I tried to compile and present all the techniques and important basic and advanced katas for shitoryu karate in one book in a most detailed way and accompanied the explanatory data with a lot of computer graphics that I believe would make the understanding of the book easier with no need for translation of the texts of the book.

### What kind of research did you do to prepare for writing the book?

In the past few years I tried my best to research and study a huge amount of information that came to me through the books collection, publications and magazines in Shitoryu karate as well as other karate styles in English, Spanish, and French and even in Japanese. And at the same time I kept training and applying all these aspect at my technical seminars with different groups of practitioners. My source number one was books of Master Kenwa Mabuni. My ultimate goal was to understand the goals of great Masters and writers of the books and what was their approach in transferring their knowledge to practitioners. I also did a lot of research of other styles of karate such as Shotokan and Gojuryu, Shorinryu, Uechiryu and Wadoryu. I have to admit there are all very valuable books and contributed a lot to my understanding. I learned a lot from them. With all that I still realize there is a lack of source as “whole” with technical details and graphics explaining the fundamental, techniques and katas in a comprehensive way, a book that could be a perfect reference for practitioners. I

Dynamic Shitoryu 

# Karate



was driven by idea to use the accumulated knowledge and experience and maybe improve what others tried to do – that’s how I wrote Dynamic Shitoryu Karate.

**Would you explain a little bit about the process from the original idea to the actual printed book?**

The idea of writing the book came to me around 6 or 7 years ago. I started my research and found out what had to be done to write such a book in terms of proper photography, computer graphics, and page layout and so on. I had

numerous consultation sessions with different experts to understand the steps needed to be taken as well as the very process of writing a book. After collecting all these very important details I started the photography in the studio and at the same time the computer graphic process. It took me 3 years to be able to have this almost 500 pages book that includes the fundamental and basic techniques of Shitoryu karate, 4 mandatory katas that are in fact based on 4 Okinawa karate systems, and also basic kumite techniques to be printed.

# Dynamic Shitoryu Karate



## Where people can find the book and get a copy?

To make it easier for people to get a copy of my book, there is a dedicated URL located at: <http://dynamicshitoryukarate.com>. People from all over the globe can purchase a copy of the book online by going into the website. The payment gateway and Credit Card processing will be done through PayPal which is one of the most secured online application processing and those who are interested can do their purchase with complete peace of mind.

## Any projects in writing any more works?

Yes, I do have a lot more projects in mind.

Two of the major ones are books that I am currently working on and will be publishing by next year or so. They will provide the information on

1) Heian or "Pinan" katas that I will present with more details, photographs and graphics.

2) Shitoryu 4 Shitei Kata which is very important to all shitoryu practitioners for all schools and Dojos. These katas are from the 4 major Okinwan systems such as Shurite, Nahate, Tomarite and Crane fist. Also in this book I will get into more details about Bassai Dai, Seienchin, Matsumora-Rohai and Nipaipo. As I mentioned I will try my best to publish these 2 books in the next 12 months or so. 🐢

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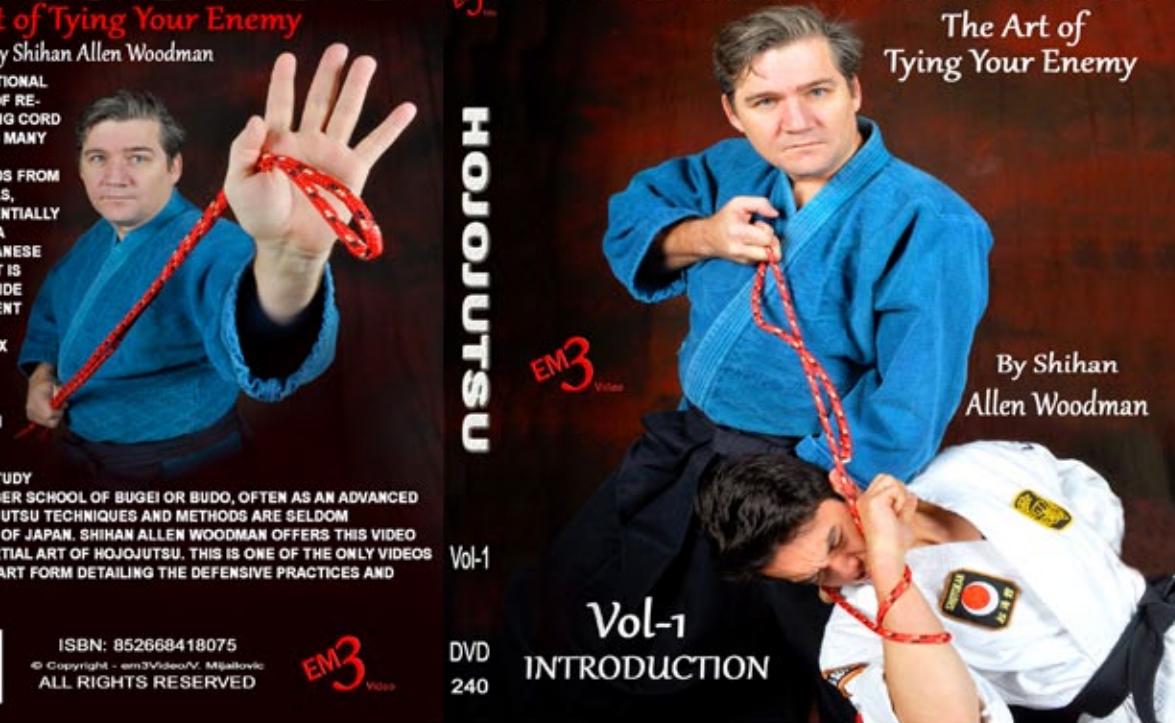
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INTRODUCTION





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## SANDOKAN

*The Cutting Edge Martial Art*

Grandmaster Les Kiersnowski started his martial arts adventure in Europe at age 7. He started with fencing and Kyokushin, which he continued to age 14 achieving his black belt in the Kyokushin System. At that time he moved to the United States. He began his studies in the art of Judo, Vovin training. Grandmaster Les travelled competing in many invitational open competitions. Through travelling and meeting several masters and Grand-masters he was introduced to Ed Parker's art of Kenpo. Thus began his Kenpo training. Sandokan System is a sought after art by many that are training in the blade art as well as law and military personnel. Sandokan System is taught and in several different countries such as Canada, Poland, Germany, Switzerland, Brazil and in various schools in the United States under SANDOKAN INT. FED.

Grandmaster Les Kiersnowski has his own line of weapons, which were designed by him for the Sandokan System by using physics, anatomy and geometry. The Sandokan designed weapons in any art because of their exceptional maneuverability and the angles of cutting edge design. Grandmaster Les Kiersnowski is considered one of the foremost authorities in blade weapon combat. He is the founder and 10th degree black belt in the Sandokan Martial Arts System. He holds a total of 6 black belts from a variety of Karate styles, which include Judo, Kenpo, Kyokushin, Sanda, and Modern Aikai. Grandmaster Les is a member of NAPMA (North American Federation of Martial Arts) and holds a seat on the Board of Directors. He has been certified by the International Federation of Martial Arts as an International Referee. Grandmaster Les Kiersnowski has been appointed as the head coach of the Army Clubhouse for the US National Karate Team, who were victorious in the 2008 and 2007 World Cup. His outstanding winning competition team: Team Sandokan were National Champions in 2008 and 2009. He was inducted into the NAPMA Black Belt Hall of Fame in 2008 and World Karate Union Hall of Fame and the IKCO Hall of Fame in 2007.

In 2012 Grandmaster Les was inducted into the USA Martial Arts Hall of Fame as a Progressive Martial Arts Master of the Year. In 2013 he was inducted into the World Karate Union Hall of Fame. The Worldwide Martial Arts Council recognized Grandmaster Les Kiersnowski as a Grandmaster of the Martial Arts in San Diego, CA on October 1st, 2013. In Cleveland, Ohio on October 12, 2013 GM Les was inducted by the International Circle of Masters as a Sandokan Grandmaster of the year.

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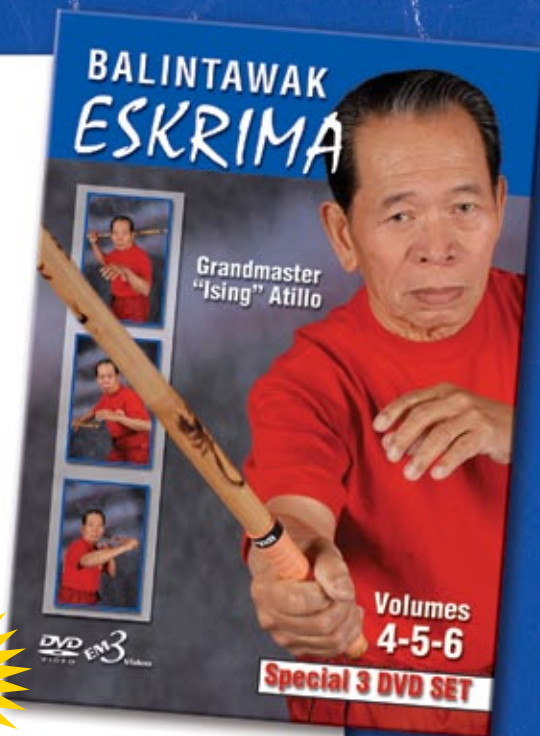
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# GIRON ESCRIMA

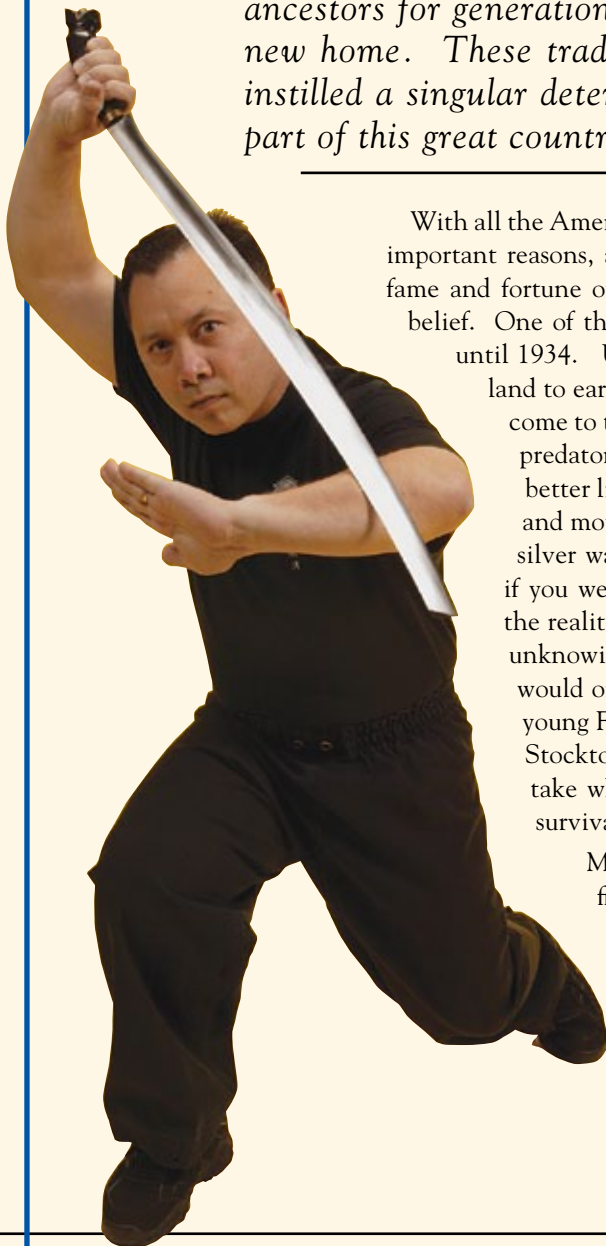
## Tools of the Trade

By Antonio E. Somera

**F**or nearly 100 years Filipinos have been immigrating to the United States. They brought cultural skills and their native arts along to maintain their civilization and to begin to cultivate a new working society. Many of the traditions that were handed down to them from their ancestors for generations became the focal point of their existence in their new home. These traditions of a love of liberty, equality and fraternity instilled a singular determination within the new immigrants to become a part of this great country and society called America.

With all the America's allurements, Filipinos migrated to the United States for variously important reasons, among them education, economics and adventure and to seek their fame and fortune of their all American dream which would bring them riches beyond belief. One of the largest waves of Filipino's to American started in 1906 and lasted until 1934. Upon gaining freedom from Spain the Filipinos embarked into a new land to earn their fame and fortune. Many of those Filipinos were encouraged to come to the United States by American teachers and misleading advertising by predatory employers and different shipping companies which promised a much better life in America. Stories were told of gold and silver that lined the fields and mountainsides ready for the harvest. Unfortunately, this tale of gold and silver was in reality a story of backbreaking farm labor that only was offered if you were lucky enough to find work. Unfortunately as history has proven the reality of coming to a new land to seek there riches was paid back to these unknowing young Filipinos ranging in the age from 14 to 22 years old, this would only hold for them the demand of stoop labor in which many of these young Filipinos found in the fields of the San Joaquin valley and in particular Stockton California. During these times work was hard to find and you would take whatever would come along. In most cases work was just enough for survival and always just enough to make it through one more day.

Many Filipinos of this new generation would eventually find work in fields as farm labors and in particular the fields of the San Joaquin Delta near Stockton, California. In 1930 California had the largest population of Filipinos in America with just over 30,740 Filipinos. Stockton California would dominate with the most Filipinos in California and at one time had the largest population of Filipinos





# Tools of the Trade

in the United States and so earned the nickname of “Little Manila”. The work these young Filipinos found was in the asparagus farm labor camps in which they would work countless hours of long hard backbreaking stoop labor and was so difficult that many people would not attempt to try this type of work. Immigrants, some who had been doctors or professional men in the Philippines, found themselves working in peat dirt that was itchy to the skin and burning to the eyes. These laborers would need to start their day in the early morning hours and had to endure the intense heat of the sun and the back breaking pain of running up and down miles of asparagus rows cutting it for our own human consumption.

These labor camps were often lawless and dangerous places. Fortunately, along with their strong will and hope the Filipino immigrants brought with them their proven systems of self defense. History has proven that all the many different cultures in the world have had their own different martial arts and Filipinos were no exception. In self defense the Filipinos applied their own types of weaponry that grew from their own type of domesticated tools, farm tools and implements.



TECHNIQUE 1



One of the tools of the trade is called the “asparagus knife” and in those days this was the tool of the Filipino. The asparagus knife consists of a round steel shaft that is one-half (1/2) inch in diameter and 16 to 20 inches long. It has a handle for grabbing on one end and a razor sharp flat tip 4 to 6 inches long and 2 to 3 inches wide on the other end which made this invaluable tool in the length of 20 to 30 inches long depending on the user. This tool was used for thrusting into the ground and precisely cutting the asparagus grass. After using this tool for hours upon hours, days upon days, weeks upon weeks these young labor warriors would become experts in the thrusting and cutting style of Sonkete (poking) much like the style of European fencing. Although some Filipinos would have some background in fencing and swordsmanship, they would practice their techniques on the application of precision thrusting and cutting while they earned an honest living in the fields of Stockton, California.

The style of Sonkete is one of the 20 styles that encompass the Giron® Arnis Escrima system. Estilo Sonkete is a thrusting and poking style using rigid weapons such as bolo knife, baston (Escrima stick), dagger, asparagus knife or any type of weapon that can be used for poking or thrusting. This style is used for thrusting the weapon into an opening in the opponent’s guard. This is accomplished in several ways. First, you can parry the opponent’s oncoming weapon with your left or right hand and thrust your weapon into the created opening. Second, you can block the on-coming weapon and slide your own weapon along your opponent’s defense until the point of your weapon makes contact with your opponent’s body. Third, you can evade or side step left or right while thrusting your weapon into the body of your opponent. Fourth, as you opponent attacks you can deflect the oncoming blow and follow with the point of the weapon sliding it pass the opponents guard until it meets the target of the opponent’s body.

The use of the asparagus knife is not limited to just the Sonkete style of poking and thrusting. This unique weapon can also be used in confrontations of normal applications of weapon fighting. It is an excellent weapon that can be used for cutting and

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**“The style of Sonkete is one of the 20 styles that encompass the Giron® Arnis Escrima system.”**

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## Tools of the Trade

**“A style that is called Estilo Elastico can also be an accommodating style to enhance Estilo Sonkete.”**

slicing. The tip of the weapon with its flat razor sharp tip is an object that commands the respect of a bolo knife or machete. Depending of the use of this weapon and the position of attack, it can be very difficult to see the flat tip. An experienced escrimador, a practitioner of the Filipino Martial Arts, can manipulate the position of this bladed weapon to use it to his advantage, more like the use of a sword. It is a very fast weapon with the ability to poke, thrust, cut and slice. Using this type of cutting and slicing can be very effective. First, you can strike the oncoming weapon to divert the course of the blow and return the strike using the razor sharp end to disable your opponent. Second, as your opponent attacks you can apply blocking techniques to utilize the shaft or the shank of this weapon, your follow up or counter strikes would be the use of the tip to cut and slice the opponent. Third, when your opponent starts the attack you can deflect an oncoming direct blow and force the oncoming strike to miss its intended target. In

most cases the deflection serves its purpose best when done with a twist of the body. Your follow up strike or counter striking will be done with the flat edge of the weapon. Fourth, you can evade or move out of the path of an oncoming strike. This will not require the assistance of the asparagus knife. But for the maximum amount of protection an evasion is best done in conjunction with the weapon. Your follow up strike can now be a direct strike to the opponents nearest point of vulnerability. This will incorporate the Giron ® Larga Mano striking system.

The Estilo Sonkete system can also be used to protect you from intruders that are trying to make their way into your home or office. Because of the thrusting and poking style you do not need a wide angle of striking patterns as in the case in many deliveries or angles of attack. You can stand in a doorway with a right foot lead using the Sonkete method to drive your attacker away or to keep your opponent at bay until help can arrive. Also in the outdoors and in different terrain, this style can maintain a defensive and offensive position by positioning your body between two objects, for instance in a parking lot between two cars or at a park or in your front yard between two trees. This style can restrict the opponent's aggression to just a narrow pathway of attack. By using this theory you can eliminate attackers from your left or right side and focus on the forward attacker. This can give you the opportunity to maintain a position of offense by using the poke or thrusting style of Sonkete. Lunging forward and leaning backwards along with a weapon of any length or without a weapon in hand you can play this style with powerful counter striking and pin point accuracy.

A style that is called Estilo Elastico can also be an accommodating style to enhance Estilo Sonkete. Estilo Elastico, which means the rubber band style, can be used to increase the reaching ability and accuracy of Estilo Sonkete. This is a common fighting method among Filipino bolo men, who can use this stretching ability forward to reach their target and to lean backwards out of the opponent's line of attack. Fighters who indulge in this method are usually veterans of a few encounters. Their style varies from long distance fighting techniques, retreating techniques, or consequently both are woven into the Larga Mano (long





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## TECHNIQUE 2

hand) style. Estilo Elastico complements most combat methods especially Estilo Sonkete.

Although there have been many stories of fierce battles in the Filipino farm labor camps using these types of weapons, nearly all confirmations were between only two combatants. The two combatants were also allowed to choose their seconds to handle any problems that may arise or to take care of the wounded combatants. I have been told that these encounters were unspoken laws between the two warriors and was never brought up in conversation or bragged about. I was further told that the loser would disappear and was never heard of again. This reminds me of a saying that my teacher Grand Master Leo M. Giron would say was the slogan of those that train in the art of Arnis Escrima back in the days of yesteryear, “Don’t brag about what you know, you are liable to get a stick shoved down your throat”.

Another tool of the trade used for self defense would be the grape knife. The grape knife is a very small and short tool with an inward curving blade that could be maneuvered through the woven vines of the grape plant. Many of these short and deadly weapons would be two to three inches long with a slight hook or curve on the end so that the grape bunch can be hooked at the vine that is on the end of the grape knife and then cut with precision accuracy without damage to the grape bunch or grape vine. These small hooked tools would be held using the reverse grip. The tool was so small it could be concealed without very much effort. After a long hard day in the grape fields

# Tools of the Trade

these young Filipino men would clean up eat there dinner and dream of going into to Stockton, CA for some fun and pleasure. But only a select few would go deep into the grape vineyards to play with the very tools they used during the day of harvesting grapes.

In the Giron ® System we would use this grape knife in the style of Cadena de Mano and an unlisted style from the Giron ® Master Fan called Tabot. In some martial art styles this tool would be a near fighting weapon called Karambit. The tool would be put into your palm both in forward grip much like if you would hold a dagger but the most common and most deadly is the reverse grips much like an ice pick.

Grand Master Giron would relate this to Filipino Boxing in which had made a great impact to American contractors that came to the Philippines directly after the short lived Filipino American war of 1898. These American contractors would come to the Philippines looking for young Filipino men to work in horrible living conditions and in the fields as cheap labor in order to harvest the rich farmer's crops. During the American contractors visits to the Philippines they would witness during Sunday afternoons the traditional chicken or cock fights but also Filipino Boxing style that is now known



TECHNIQUE 3





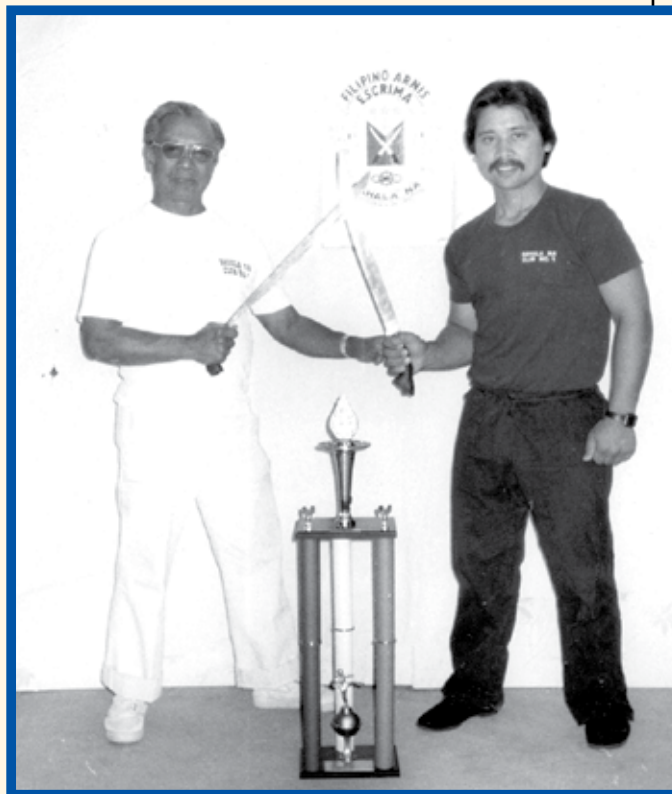
as western style of boxing. The Filipino Boxing style was taken from Filipino's that would box using a reverse grip, derived from holding a dagger in both hands, and would incorporate the punch and cut method of fighting. The American contractors were so amazed by this boxing style of Filipino's that they came back to America and contacted boxing promoters to return to the Philippines and watch this new style of boxing. One by one the boxing promoters would recruit these Filipino boxers and bring them back to American to show off their skills against European bare knuckle boxers. This Filipino style became what we know now as Western style of boxing.

From my research I found out that no two experts would be in one camp and most of them possessed a secret fighting style or folklore system called anting-anting, a magical power that was given to them by elder Filipino man. This magical power was handed down to them to keep the Filipino Fighting arts alive and is handed down from generation to generation. This mystical type of playing (training) was the most feared among the Filipino's because they would use prayer in their system to give them super human power. This power was only to be used for good, not evil, and would be the most sought after training of all without ever speaking of it.

Also, many times there would always be one expert in each camp. Knowledge of who the expert was became much like a secret code amongst the camp workers. In many cases there would be one expert that would work many days or weeks in the camp until he would find a younger Pinoy to share his knowledge and skill. The expert Filipino would keep quiet and watch to find a match somewhat like himself that was loyal, hard working and most of all a person that would not brag about his ability. The story was also told to me that there would be times that this expert would show one person the skill he possessed and that the expert and young Pinoy would become lifelong friends in which they would both travel together to different camps working together side by side. After each day of work they would go deep into the grape vineyards, pear orchard or behind the barn or bunk house of the asparagus camp to play (train) in the deadly arts of Filipino Escrima, Arnis and Kali.

One well know expert that comes to mind is a man that was one of the teachers of world famous Martial Artist Daniel Inosanto. He was a World War II veteran and war hero named Manong Juan Lacaste. Manong Lacaste was known for his super human powers and as an expert in Filipino Martial Arts to the Stockton Filipino community. Guro Dan, in seeking out his out his Filipino Martial Art roots, was urged on by his teacher and best friend Bruce Lee to go back home to Stockton California. Guro Dan's mother and father were pillars of the Filipino community and was very well know by the city of Stockton, had natural connections to these hidden treasures like Manong Lacaste. His father ran a very successful Filipino Labor business and his Mother Mary was a school teacher to many of the young Pinoy's teaching them English and working for the school district.

Because of the research and study conducted by Guro Dan Inosanto many other Filipino Martial Art Masters and world icons in Filipino Martial Arts have become known. Respected men from the Stockton area such as Pepe Montano Arca and Vincent Arca emerged as leaders and experts in the Filipino Arts. Giants like Angel Cabales, the man responsible for the emergence of Escrima in the United States was also from the



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**“This mystical type of playing (training) was the most feared among the Filipino's because they would use prayer in their system to give them super human power.”**

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## Tools of the Trade

Stockton area and a member of the Gran Oriente Filipino Inc. Lodge. Another, Regino Ellustrisimo was expert in the Bohol method of Escrima. Ellustrisimo claimed to have a power which enabled him, by putting his hand on your head, to know if you would be a good person to learn the deadly art of Escrima.

Leo M. Giron, a World War II hero that was a secret operative hand selected by General Douglas Macarthur was another master from the Stockton area. Giron was a member of the first group of Army commandos called the 978th signal corps. Leo M. Giron is also known to all as the Father of Larga Mano in America. His environmental training gained in the war is an invaluable perspective and personal knowledge has given much to the arts as a whole. Giron is a true combatant of hand-to-hand combat and an expert in terrain fighting. Leo M Giron was a member the most powerful Filipino Lodge on the west coast, the Legionarios del Trabajo in America in which he would hold many high positions. Giron would hold the office of Supreme Minister longer than any other member of the Legionarios.

Another Stockton martial expert was Juanito Lacaste. Lacaste was an expert in stick, dagger, long blade and empty hands. His expertise in hand trapping and checking and inner achievement of the martial arts such as love and peace towards all mankind and proper morality won him many devoted followers. Manong Lacaste was a member of the Filipino Federation, which even today is a very strong and wealthy Federation.

Jesus Ragail Corales, a well know figure in town due to his working in the many different Filipino labor camps, was a master exposed to a number of Filipino Escrimadors.

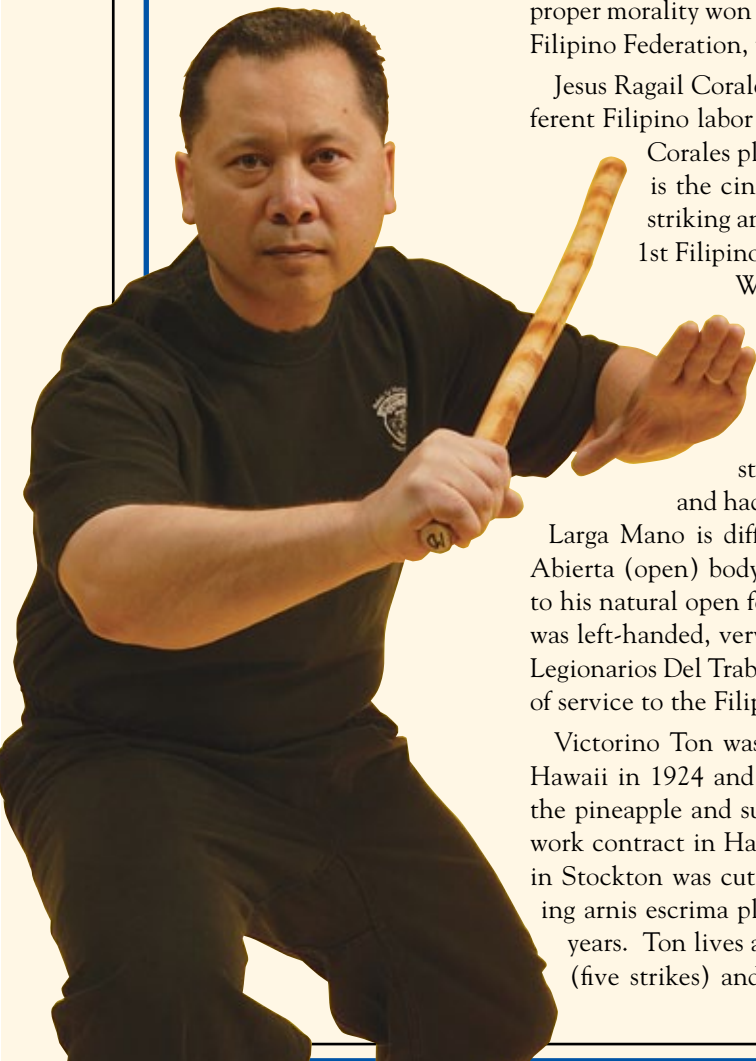
Corales played the cabaroan, or new system, of Arnis Escrima. His specialty is the cinco tero style or five strikes and also the Redondo style or circular striking and close quarter hand to hand combat. Corales was a member of the 1st Filipino Regiment and served in the invasion of Lyette, Philippines during World War II.

Corales is also a member of the Filipino Lodge of Caballeros de Dimas Alang.

Joe Arruejo Pacpaco also played the cabaroan or new style of Arnis Escrima. His style was Larga Mano or long hand/weapon style. He also played Abierta or open body style of Arnis Escrima and had an empty hand style that is similar to Cadena de Mano. Pacpaco's

Larga Mano is different from Leo Giron's Larga Mano. Pacpaco incorporated the Abierta (open) body footwork to his Larga Mano. Pacpaco's footwork was attributed to his natural open foot movement. Joe Pacpaco had a very unique gift of playing. He was left-handed, very graceful and to the point. Pacpaco was also a life member of the Legionarios Del Trabajo and member of the Worshipful Mabini Lodge with over 60 years of service to the Filipino lodge.

Victorino Ton was born June 29, 1895 in Lapaz Abra, Philippines. Ton arrived in Hawaii in 1924 and then came to Stockton, California in 1930. Ton first worked in the pineapple and sugar cane plantations in Hawaii for 6 years. After completing his work contract in Hawaii he moved on to Stockton, California in 1930. Ton's first job in Stockton was cutting asparagus. Victorino Ton to my knowledge is the oldest living arnis escrima player in America. At the time of this article Ton is currently 109 years. Ton lives at a Filipino lodge in Stockton California. Ton plays the cinco tero (five strikes) and incorporates blocking and counter striking. He started playing




with sticks in the Philippines at the age of 10 this would be 1905. This was without a doubt one of the most fertile times of Escrimadors in Philippine history due to the Filipino revolution. Ton is truly a son of the revolution that fought against the Spaniards during the Philippines revolution to gain their freedom from Spain. Manong Ton is a life member of the Legionarios del Trabajo in America and is a member of General Lim lodge with over 60 years of service to the Filipino lodge.

Max Sarmiento is a highly skill empty hand expert and is credited of being among a group of Filipinos that brought together the first Filipino Martial Arts school open to the general public. The school opened with Sarmiento, Angle Cabales, Leo M. Giron and Dentoy Revillar. Max Sarmiento was a member of the Filipino Community and a Filipino activist.

Dentoy Revillar the top and senior student of Angel Cabales and man highly creative in his own right and without a doubt one of the top instructors in Escrima in the Cabales and Larga Mano systems.

Gilbert Tenio is expert in a number of Escrima styles and is proficient in disarms. Manong Gilbert Tenio was a member of the Legionarios del Trabajo in America.

All of these Filipino Martial Art world icons called Stockton California their home. And this is but a small example of all the Filipino Masters of that original generation from the area presently known as the hot bed of Filipino Martial Arts in the world. These are the names and faces of those that we are privileged to know. Now you need to ask the question how many of those names and faces of history did not tell anyone of the secret unknown masters of the Filipino Martial Arts? How many masters did not find the one young Pinoy to pass on their secret and ancient fighting art of the Philippines.

In honor of those that planted the seed of martial knowledge in the new world called Stockton California, and in honor of those men lost to history, it is now our turn to play and train in the arts of our forefathers. We must find the one deserving person to plant the seed so that we will ensure that our fore fathers art will continue to live on. In this way we may live with the same dignity, using all the tools and gifts left to us by our beloved teachers. 

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*Author Antonio E. Somera was a freelance writer from Stockton, California. Somera held the rank of Grand Master of the Bahala Na Filipino Martial Arts Association. Somera also held rank in Pencak Silat Manda Muda under the late Pendekar Herman Suwanda. For more information on Giron Arnis Escrima systems seminars, workshop and affiliate training certification programs visit our web site at <http://www.bahalana.org> or write to Bahala Na, P.O. Box 8584, Stockton, California 95208.*



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**“We must find the one deserving person to plant the seed so that we will ensure that our fore fathers art will continue to live on.”**

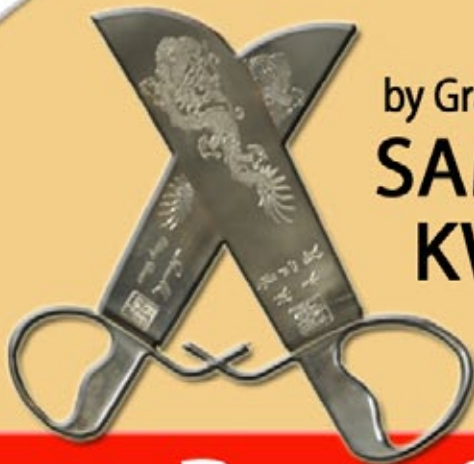
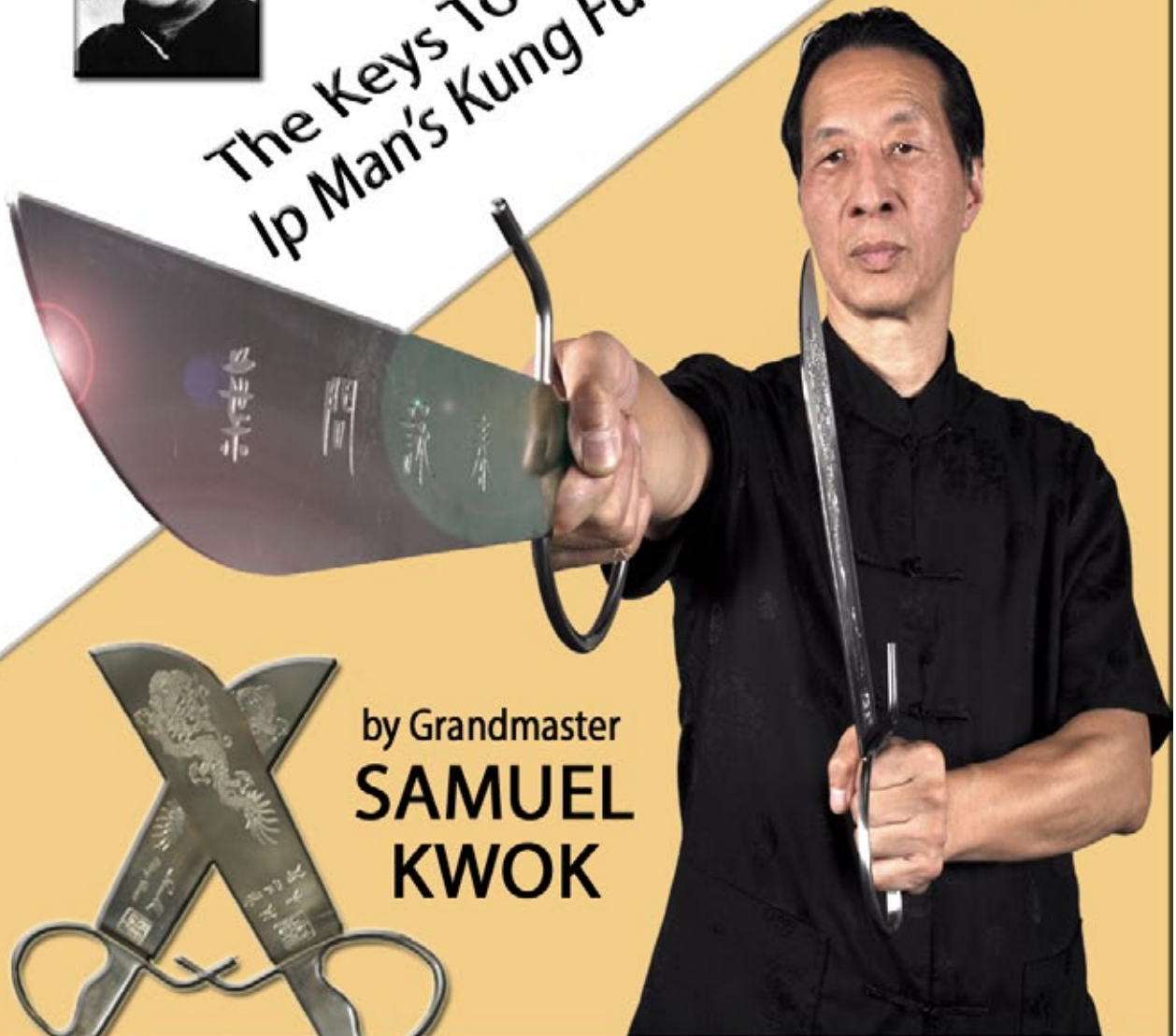
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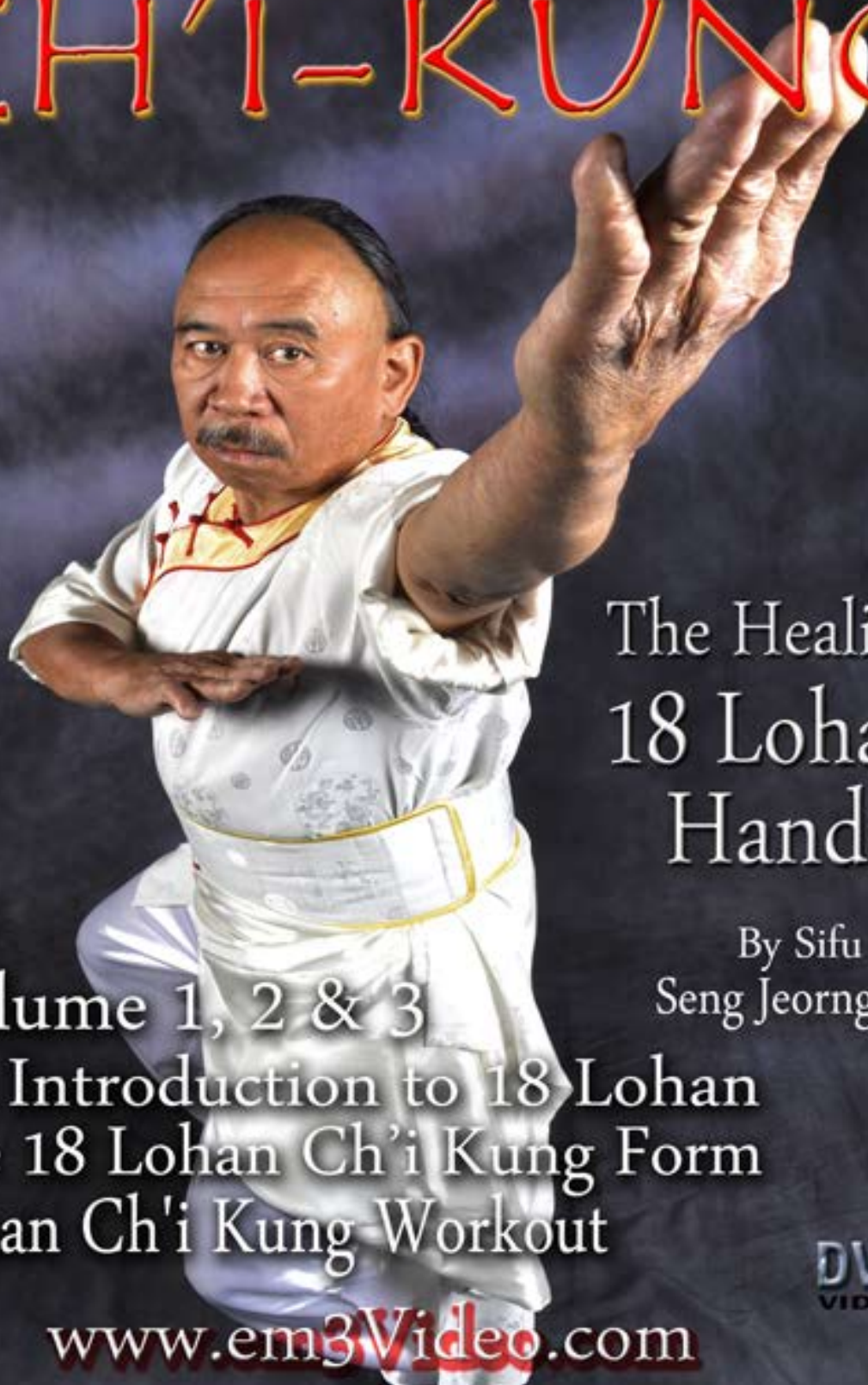
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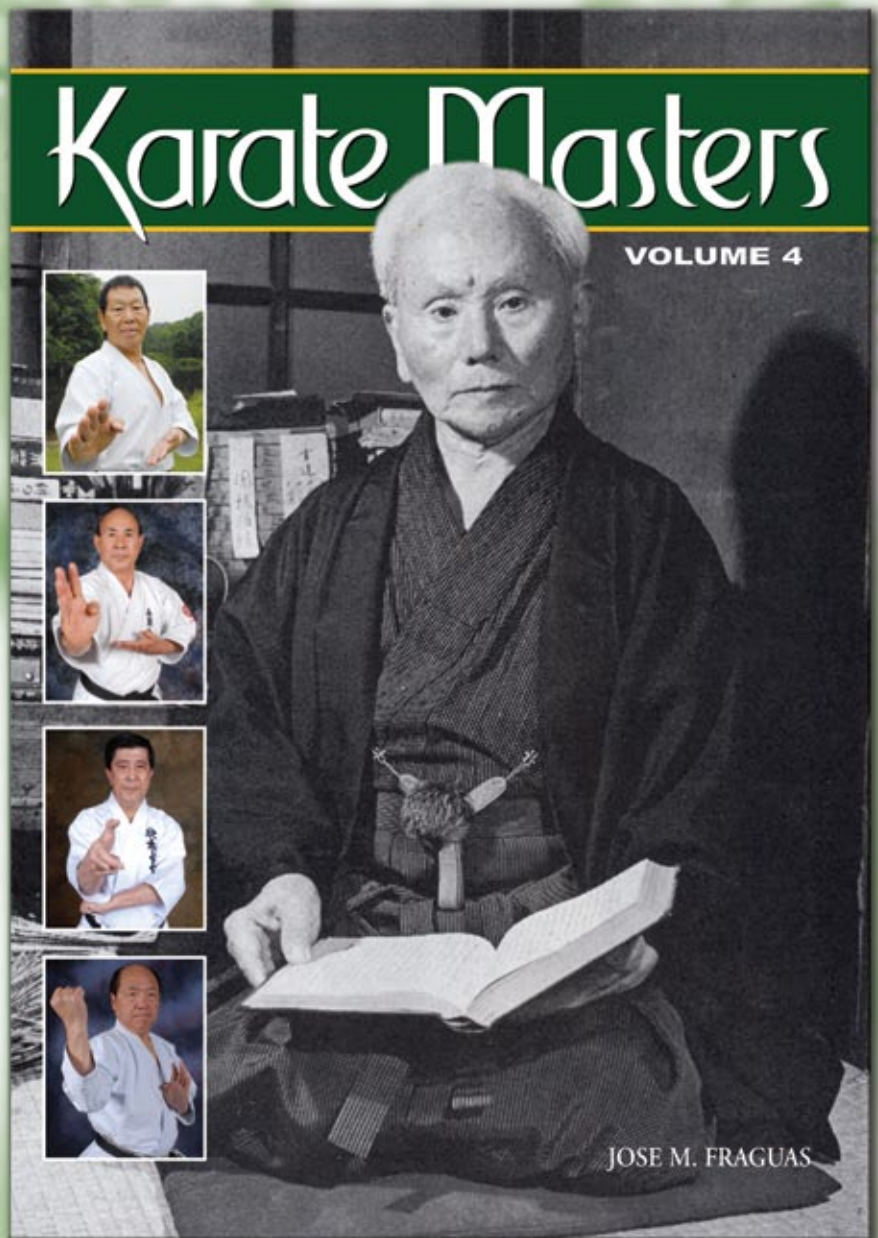
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THROUGH DECADES OF DEDICATION AND HARD TRAINING, SENSEI OPDAM HAS GATHERED AN IMMENSE AMOUNT OF INFORMATION THAT TRANSCENDS THE PHYSICAL ASPECT OF THE ART AND MANIFESTS IN THE MOST TRADITIONAL KARATE-DO PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE. HIS ULTIMATE GOAL IS PRESERVING THE TRADITION AND ENSURING THAT IT IS AVAILABLE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS. THIS KARATE INSTRUCTOR DISPLAYS THE QUALITIES OF EVERY STUDENT'S DREAM TEACHER, NOT ONLY IN A PHYSICAL AND TECHNICAL SENSE BUT ALSO IN AN EDUCATIONAL APPROACH TO THE DEEP KARATE TRADITIONS AND PHILOSOPHIES.





# Through the Eyes of a Master

**“I have trained in many different martial arts styles and systems other than karate.”**

## *How long have you been practicing karate?*

After a period of intensive training and high level of competition as a junior in athletics between the age of seven and twelve, which positively influenced martial arts training in later life, I encountered my first training in the martial arts in 1980 at the age of thirteen. At that time I quite athletics because of the strong competitive elements which I did not like anymore and in combination with my fascination of the martial arts, I was inspired and started searching for a martial arts teacher. This brought me to my first physical encounter with the martial arts in the form of the Indonesian martial art Pentjak Silat. My teacher George de Groot was of Indonesian origin and taught the TRI-Bhakti style, one of the many styles of this gracious art.

In 1984 I was working out with a friend in a gym and during the training we got into a conversation with a man who gave karate lessons. He invited us to come over and watch his lessons. Having only experienced Pentjak Silat, I was impressed of what I saw. Before long, we decided to join his karate school. Described as a Kempo school, the school was in the process of switching over to Goju-ryu, a hard-soft style of Okinawan karate. Here, after my initial introduction into the Indonesian martial arts, my karate practice started. So, until this day I have been practicing karate for 31 years.

## *How many styles have you trained in and who were your teachers?*

I have trained in many different martial arts styles and systems other than karate. Next to karate the Russian Systema (Combat Sambo) has had the greatest influence upon my current martial arts practise. The foundation of my karateroots come from the Okinawan karate-style of Goju-ryu..

As I mentioned before, in 1984 I started practising karate. This was under my first karate teacher, Sensei Harry de Spa in Nijmegen. Sensei de Spa was the Dutch Chief-instructor for the International Okinawan Goju-ryu Karate-do Federation (IOGKF) at that time. I have trained under and with Sensei de Spa until the beginning of 1993. I trained very diligently and intensively and tried to get familiar with other karate-styles, training methods and teachers from all over the world. This search for education and knowledge I continued for many years.

Within the IOGKF I periodically received instruction from the founder of the organisation Master Morio Higaonna, who promoted me a Nidan in 1990, and met and received instruction from several foreign Chief-instructors from England, Germany, Israel, France and other mainly European countries.

Together with additional training like weight training, I put a lot of effort in developing my martial art, from which karate was and is a part of my martial way. Martial arts like kobudo, aikido, kung fu, tai chi, fighting sports like kickboxing and other more police and military orientated martial systems formed my additional martial training. My effort in the service of my martial way went also as far to investigate the human body and its biomechanics resulting in being a certified fitness instructor and having acquaintance with some yoga, qi gong and shiatsu to broaden my understanding of the human body in training and different Eastern and Western cultures and practices.

At the beginning of 1993 I quit the IOGKF because of personal differences with my teacher and overall views of the organisation which no longer aligned with the way I see and choose to engage martial arts. After participating at a Meibukan Goju-ryu training-camp in June of 1993 in Israel under Master Meitatsu Yagi, son of Grandmaster Meitoku Yagi, I joined the International Meibukan Goju-ryu Karate-do Association in August



1993. In december 1993, during my intensive visit to the Headquarters of the Meibukan in Okinawa, Japan, I was appointed by Master Meitatsu Yagi as the Dutch Representative of the International Meibukan Goju-ryu Karate-do Association. My dojo became the Dutch Headquarters of the organisation.

In 1995 I visited karate pioneer Master Anthony Mirakian, the Overseas General Manager for the Okinawan Meibukan Goju-ryu Karate-do Association. Master Mirakian was appointed with this honourable position by Grandmaster Meitoku Yagi in 1972 whereafter Master Mirakian formed his branch of Zen Bei Okinawa Goju Ryu Meibukan (All American Okinawa Goju Ryu Meibukan Association). In his role Master Mirakian was given the responsibility by Meitoku Yagi in overseeing Meibukan Goju-ryu outside Japan. From my position as representative, but also personally because it came to my knowledge what an unique karate-pioneer and master he was, I had to meet this master. In that time I also became aware of the politics within the Meibukan organisation and decided to join Master Mirakians branche. After two very intensive training periods in 1995, I was accepted as his student and in 1996 became his Personal Representative for The Netherlands for Okinawan Meibukan Goju-ryu Karate-do. At the same time my direct college, Sensei Hing-Poon Chan became the Personal Representative for Canada. Unique for the both of us since Master Mirakian never appointed anyone else in the world with this honour. I represented his Overseas Branche in the Netherlands officialy untill juli 2013. Sensei Mirakian honoured me with the title Renshi and promoted me throughout the years from Sandan, 3th degree black belt untill Rokudan, 6th Degree Black belt in 2006. Two years ago, on my request and in compliance with Master Mirakian, one of my students, Sensei Pascal de Haan, succeeded me. Sensei Pascal de Haan was promoted by me untill Sandan, third degree black belt and was promoted by Master Mirakian after my succesion to Yondan, 4th degree black belt.

From the time I have studied actively under Master Mirakian since 1995, I kept on studying and training under and with all kinds of martial arts teachers in Europe and North America. In North America Master Mirakian introduced me to many of them. Also often Master Mirakian invited other masters and teachers of different martial arts and systems to his dojo to teach. Throughout the years Sensei Fred Lohse was one of those who taught kobudo (Matayoshi-style) on a regular base at Master Mirakian's dojo and I was also fortunate to receive instruction from him in this armed art. I have received Sensei Lohse also in my dojo in the Netherlands to instruct my students and myself in kobudo and some White Crane Kung fu. Sometimes there were also closed meetings in de dojo of Master Mirakian with only one or two students and Sensei Mirakian himself. I remember in 2002 that he told me that he had invited some Russian Systema practitioners in his dojo. Unfortunately I was not present at that time, but Sensei was impressed of the system's natural body mechanics and showed me some filmfootage of this martial system. Triggered, this lead me to visit seminars in Europa of Systema by Mikhail Ryabko, Vladimir Vasiliev and others and engage even more in this martial system after experiencing it first hand from the masters.

So, from the point of karate styles, Okinawan Goju-ryu gave me my base from which I received instruction within two different international Goju-ryu organisations with two mains teachers being Sensei Harry de Spa in the Netherlands and Master Anthony Mirakian in the United States of Amerika. Over the years I have trained in a more and more eclectic way, to broaden my horizon developing myself both in skill and knowledge, but more important spiritually. Many other teachers, but also a lot of students and other people have crossed my path and all have influenced my live, one way or the other. For me personally, a visual artist by the late Klaus van de Locht, who studied theology and philosophy and was not engaged in martial arts, has influenced my martial art and way of live in a profound way. My personal contact with him in the nineties was intense talking about daily life, but mostly about art and what it meant for us as human beings. He was a true guide to me.



# Through the Eyes of a Master

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**“In the beginning I had a realtively tough learning school. Full blown punches at the solaris plexus and black-and-blue testicels to learn why some techniques worked and some not.”**

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*How were your beginnings in the art of karate and your early days in karate?*

In the beginning I had a realtively tough learning school. Full blown punches at the solaris plexus and black-and-blue testicels to learn why some techniques worked and some not ..., weekly bruises on the underarms and legs doing bodyconditioning and sparring and occasionally a broken rib and a cracked finger or toe. But all together no Spartian school, but a regular dojo where you would find serious and dedicated students, where the concept of blood, sweat and tears was put into practice in the right way.

The first few years until receiving my Shodan, 1e Dan black belt, was physically hard work. This continued, but I did get used to it and my body and mind liked the challenge, although injuries were never fun. Repetitions of techniques over and over again, a lot of body conditioning and body work like push-ups, sit-ups, squats, jumping jacks etc.. I remember being a white belt doing 10 regular push-ups. Within three years during a regular training I would do 100 full extended two knuckle push-ups after each other. The spirit in de dojo was very good. In these first years there was a strong bound between my fellow karatedoka's and with a select few we would train outside the dojo in parks, homegardens or nearby forests where we kicked trees and doing other fysical stuff, not always taking care of our bodies being the temple of our mind. At the time I was a brown belt, I trained 5-6 times a week for 4-6 hours a day karate training, weighttraining and other additional training. This tight training regime I continued for several years.

My teacher Sensei de Spa was keen on both the physical, pedagogical and philosophical aspects of the martial arts which triggered my own quest. He was also a bouncer at a dancing a few days a week during his time as an pedagogy student in his thirties. In my young eyes at the age of 20, he managed to guide this practical experience into additional elements incooperated into the self-defence methodes he taught and that were technically in line with Okinawan karate.





At that time it also triggered me to see what fear and stress related to danger and excitement did to me. This led me to competition in both kata and kumite and becoming a bouncer at some dance events for a period of time. This experience had its positive and negative moments, but taught me something about myself. It taught me that from a self-defence point of view, everything is very relative. Confronting fear on different levels has been and still is helpful for me to understand my own drives and motivations of acting better. Karate competition was a game, a sport and in my eyes had little to do with martial arts. Being a bouncer was dangerous, and also did not add any value to my martial art, except both gave me first hand experience and were a part of my journey. So my first few years were very experimental in a range of different mental and physical challenges. But it was a valuable time, fully in live and strongly focused upon my art.

***Were you a 'natural' at karate – did the movements come easily to you?***

I was gifted with a little talent, not much, but still. Together with my determination and experience at a young age with intensive training, it helped me to adopt movements, handling general karate training, center my focus and develop patience. I was very eager to learn and I always tried to engage every technique or movement as something new, although I might already have done it a thousand times. I was especially keen on taking every opportunity to see how masters or skilled people demonstrate their abilities. I am typically visually orientated, have a strong visual memory of body movements. Once I have seen it, it resides in my mind. By analyzing body mechanics, adopting movements myself by copying, repeating and giving instant bio feedback to transform it into my own 'body feeling', the process of 'perfecting the technique/movement' starts. At the beginning and throughout this never ending process, the questions rise in me how does it suit me, why does or doesn't it suit me, can I adjust, should I adjust, what do I feel both mentally and physically when I interact these movements with others doing kumite forms, learn from the outcome and implement it. This interactive process, combined with the theoretical information and my required knowledge and experience, I use to fine-tune techniques/movements until I reach a certain free feeling and therefore, had made it my own. The most interesting part is the moment when you are physically trained enough to shift your focus more and more upon the mental part. First you learn what tools (your body) you have and how you can use it, then transform that into a natural way of create something with your mind, giving it spirit. A process that is never so black and white and already active from the start but differentiates during your development.

***What do you think are the most important characteristics of Meibukan Goju Ryu?***

Nowadays I teach and train eclectically, I am independent of any organization and not involved into politics, commercialization, cultural bloodlines or other enhancements nor distractions. I teach and train in what I believe in and dare to question myself and let others question me. As a teacher I have only very few answers for my students, but a lot of questions and challenges both physically and spiritually. I am just a guide with the intention to let us grow as human beings and use martial arts as an instrument. I don't present any style or teacher (anymore). Having said that, I have learned a lot of investigating



# Through the Eyes of a Master



the history of martial arts and have encountered firsthand the style of Goju-ryu karate and the teachings of the Meibukan in particular. Some answers I give are straight forward, others point towards subjectivity.

As far as I can compare the teachings of several masters and Grandmasters of different Goju-ryu karate schools like Jundokan, Shoreikan, Seibukan and organizations like the IOGKF and the Japanese Goju-kai, I would say that the Meibukan school founded by Meitoku Yagi has some body movements that are more Chinese like than most other Goju-ryu schools. But compared to another Okinawan style of karate called Shorin-ryu, with its swift and dynamic tai sabaki (body shifting), this distinction is not worth mentioning. All Okinawan karate styles have fragmented ways of moving with a lot of focus upon power and linear directions as seen in their kata and often also certain kumite forms, which you could translate in the famous words 'One blow, one kill', typical for karate. This is in contrast to Chinese Kung fu, which is softer and has more fluid, more circular in movements, but for Chinese standards general Kung fu is still an external, and hard martial art. All is relative.

Most Goju-ryu schools have the same basic curriculum as formalized by its founder Chojun Miyagi being specific kata together with other forms of kumite, hojo undo etc. The Meibukan school has on top of this also unique Meibukan kata, with more Chinese like postures and movements developed by Meitoku Yagi and included into the Meibukan curriculum. They are typical for the Meibukan school and you will not see those anywhere else. (For those who are interested, in a book I wrote titled 'Karate Goju Ryu Meibukan', characteristics of Goju-ryu and the Meibukan school are explained in detail. In there you will find a treasury of information about the style and Okinawan karate history and masters.) Also ude tanren (body conditioning of the arms) was introduced in the Meibukan curriculum after a visit of Meitoku Yagi to Taiwan in the 1960's. Nowadays ude tanren is introduced in many Goju-ryu schools together with drills from other arts like Uechi-ryu, another Okinawan karate style which is known for its hard body conditioning.

You can compare things like Okinawan karate with Japanese karate in all its elements, the different karate styles with each other and Okinawan karate prior to World War 2, the 1950's till its present day and look at many other comparisons. However, for me it is more interesting to look at the principles behind the curriculum and the methods that are used to achieve certain goals. What lies behind it?

Within the Meibukan organization, there are many different branches, schools and teachers. Some are very sport orientated and others are more spiritual. This is the case with most karate-schools, be it this style or another, be it in the West or in Okinawa and Japan itself.

Every teacher influences the methods, techniques or other elements resulting in different teachings and schools. I think it is good to ask oneself what a style, a ryu is, which position does it take in this or another culture. How does tradition fit in, what goal has

it? How is it interlinked between something so changeable like humans, like our society, our environment? In my eyes it all depends on who is teaching with what intention, in what way and why. Without these questions, foremost interactive questions towards our own practices, karate is dead. It should be alive, organic and although foundations are important, ultimately, you should transcend above all. I have seen unique footages and films of the Meibukan and other styles throughout the '50 until the beginning of this century from the private collection of Master Mirakian, which he often himself filmed. You see that things grow, change, being adjusted in curriculum, but also the way body dynamics changed over the years. For those who are interested in the history of Okinawan Goju-ryu, I would recommend reading the articles of Mathieu Ravignat, a Canadian federal politician, Goju-ryu karate teacher and practitioner, who I have met in the USA and Canada and who has visited my dojo in the Netherlands. He wrote for the Meibukan Magazine about Goju-ryu history. You can still find the old editions of the Meibukan Magazine (which in name is not related to the Meibukan of founder Meitoku Yagi) on my personal webpage [www.krijgskunst.org](http://www.krijgskunst.org).

***Karate is nowadays often referred to as a sport... would you agree with this definition or is a martial art?***

If you talk about sport (karate) or the art of karate, you talk about two different things. For me, one of the most interesting questions is what the meaning of art and sport is. Even great institutions differ on what is one and what is the other. So in the framework of this interview, my words fall short already, but I will try to explain how I see it.

Self-defense is the vehicle of a martial art, but secondary. We use self-defense in martial arts, being techniques, movements, exercises, confrontations, body awareness etc., in a matter that has a higher purpose. A purpose to develop ourselves as a human being. This is a process that is internal orientated.

Within a martial system, self-defense is primary. Clinically seen, without ritualization and mainly focused upon survival. Survival can mean attacking before attacked; it also can mean defending when being attacked. Using all there is, without limitation, just one goal: to survive.

Sport has to do with competition, about winning (over the other) as a primary goal within the framework of fixed rules. Like a martial system, the enemy, the opponent is outside. It is someone that should be concurred, overcome. This is a process that is orientated outside ourselves. I don't rule out that within sports there is a place, there is room for self-reflection, but our culture, our superficial needs, commercial and political interests have a strong influence on sport. So for me, the purpose of martial art is focus internally, to grow as a person, to overcome myself.

The purpose of sport is more in line with that of the martial system: external focus to overcome the other.

***Do you think Kobudo training is beneficial for a Karate practitioner?***

From a point of self-defense, I certainly think that it is beneficial for a karate practitioner. Personally I did not practice jumping kicks much myself, nor do I spend much time teaching jumping kicks to my students. It is useful to learn the technique, to know by experience what an opponent can do with that technique and how to deal with such an attack

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**“Self-defense is the vehicle of a martial art, but secondary.”**

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# Through the Eyes of a Master

when implemented upon you. This also goes for using weapons. So, from that point of view it is good to know how it works, to practice how to deal with armed opponents and get familiar with all kinds of weapons or objects that can be used as weapons. Although the battle between an armed and unarmed person is an unbalanced one.

From the point of body dynamics, I also see beneficial ways to teach the body to move and get familiar with something outside the body (the weapon as a tool) and become one with it.

Do you need Kobudo for the development of karate used as an art form? No, don't think so. You don't need all the kata, the entire curriculum of a style or system to practice martial arts and therefore you also don't need another martial art like Kobudo. A simple technique as a punch or a body shift could be enough to practice your martial art. But on a self-defense level, it can make you more universal, more developed, enhancing your abilities and possibilities.

Don't forget, karate is the Way of the Empty Hand, although originally the word "karate" was a way of expressing "martial art from China." On the surface, it deals with the physical component of emptiness, without weapons, with our bare hands. More interesting is that it also refers to empty our mind, our spirit to look at things as they are.

***When teaching the art of karate – what is the most important element for you; self-defense or sport?***

When teaching the art of karate or any martial art, you commit yourself to the other, your student. As a guide, you try to form formulate the questions the student has, but of which he is not (sufficiently) aware. Being a guide you also give direction to your student's journey of self-cultivation. This is only possible when the student opens up himself to you.

I use self-defense to reflect upon the students own conflicts. This is the core of my teachings. Practicing self-defense can be very useful and is confrontational both physical and mentally. In my opinion self-defense, clinically seen, can also be very useful to confront the enemies inside. Is it the martial art which directs it into something meaningful. Sport has no additional value for me in this context.

***Kihon, Kata and Kumite, what's the proper ratio in training?***

It's all depends on what your goals are, what is needed to reach those goals and what time you have at your disposal to train and under what circumstances. So, to my opinion, there is no fixed ratio that can be applied for everyone.

With this in mind, one should first investigate the curriculum's content. Not such much what it contains, but what it means. For example what kata means. Where did it come from and why? For what purpose was it created? How was it perceived throughout its history? What purpose does it have now? What purpose has my teacher given it and what do I want with it. The same is applicable to kihon and kumite.

I personally believe that what is the closest to us humans, from a physical point of view, should be the departure of self-defense. A martial system should in my opinion support the primal instincts reactions and reflexes. Beyond these we try to gain control over body and mind to support our chances of survival in self-defense. Training and practicing supports our body and mind reaching that goal. Within this context of self-defense you can create a martial system with room for individual competences. This is something that can be trained. Within the context of an art, we add, adjust, exclude to form the conditions for a higher goal than only self-defense. This is something that requires practicing.

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**“Don't forget, karate is the Way of the Empty Hand, although originally the word “karate” was a way of expressing “martial art from China.””**

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### ***How important is competition in the evolution of a karate practitioner?***

Having been a competitor myself in both kumite and kata for a few years in the late eighties and early nineties, looking back I personally see no importance for a karate practitioner in the light of martial arts practice to engage into competition. Don't get me wrong, everyone has to choose his or her own path, and a path in life is never straight forward. One of the reasons I have chosen to use the symbol of a labyrinth to present my martial arts school.

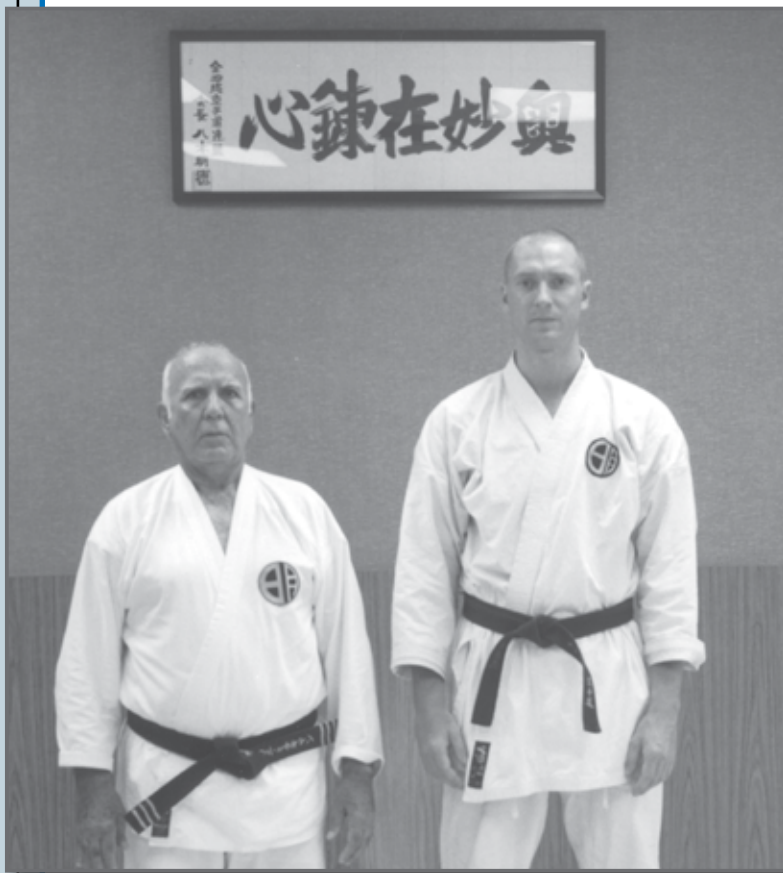
Maybe one sees competition being beneficial and for someone else it has no meaning. It all depends on your own goals. I think competition can teach you something, but it has also contradictions towards the goal of karate as a martial art and can work against you. Again, you should ask yourself with what purpose you want to do something. Investigate what competition in all its aspects and ask yourself why you should participate in it.

### ***What really means "Ikken Hissatsu" and how it applies when used in sport Karate?***

Ikken Hissatsu means to annihilate or solve resistance with one single technique of blow. As I mentioned before referring to the power of karate translated into 'one blow, one kill', technically the focus or kime (total movement of the muscles chains bringing it to a maximum energy outcome) in delivering a devastating technique to finish of the opponent, is typical for karate. Karate is known for its powerful techniques, especially its straight punches. The strong input from the legs and the hips attached to a strong conditioned body, a body that is used to resistance training like makiwara practice, can deliver such a powerful punch. Don't get me wrong, in self-defense, finishing of an opponent with one technique is not an easy thing to do and tactically and more realistically there are numerous technical combinations possible and trained for the purpose to annihilate a physical threat. With most of the regular sport karate, powerful techniques are not always permitted or hardly can be performed. Often the body and fists have too much body protection and one needs to focus upon speed and retracting power to score points and therefore will not take the risk of losing points doing otherwise. This is somewhat different with full contact karate, but again, you may fully punch at chudan levels, often not on the face. But this is still superficially. Ikken Hissatsu goes beyond that. It is also a question of finishing of an attacker who wants to kill you. If this is the case, you want to defend yourself and want to stop a physical threat immediately, annihilate the threat at any cost since your life is in danger and nothing else has more priority than preserving your life. So no half decisions, only one decision right now, right here and so effective as possible with every technique possible at any location on the opponents body. No rules like in sports. Here you find its deeper meaning. Originating from your basic instincts, it is the will that has chosen to act, without hesitation, without holding back giving orders to the body to focus all its energy into one single action. There is a mindset to take one's life in order to preserve your own. This intention has no place in sports. There is concentration, there is focus and determination in sports, but not with such a mindset. It's life or dead.



# Through the Eyes of a Master



From a technical point of view, this is also the case in martial systems like for example the Israeli all-round self-defense system of Krav Maga.

So in my opinion in sport karate related to kumite it has no place. Demonstrating Ikken Hissatsu in kata could be. Then it should be demonstrating Ikken Hissatsu in its pure form, with the proper mindset and body movements / outcome. No distractions, no additional goals. Unfortunately, in demonstrating kata in sport events, there are so many other goals and therefore adjustments made that there is nothing left of the concept.

Practicing kata, or even no ritualized kata but just shadow fighting on an imaginary opponent, you yourself form your own process by visualizing. You could bring yourself to such a mindset, the question is if the body can deal with punching in the air without damaging your body. But again, it is possible to initiate the thought through the correct mindset starting to perform the technique, but withholding it at the last moment, to come back often before overstretching yourself since there is now real body contact and therefore no body resistance where the released energy can go into. I have seen many kata champions performing for points, not for a demonstration of their mindset being in Ikken Hissatsu. Controlling balance, exact embusen (patterns), decently and fully aligned

artificial postures are focused and trained upon by many. Demonstrating Ikken Hissatsu with visualization of fighting applications (bunkai), creates too much risks of not winning the contest. There are exceptions, but I personally hardly saw them in sports competition on any level at all.

### *How do you see the art of Karate evolve in the future?*

I am not sure how karate will involve. For my own practice and teaching I have an idea of the direction I would like to take for the near future. I think it is important to express and illustrate the spirit of martial arts since it is meaningful for life itself and I believe it can be of value for others as well.

I have seen all kinds of martial sports and shows pass by. It is ok that these forms of 'karate' exist, but they unfortunately overshadow the true spirit of the martial arts. At the moment I have noticed that karate is back on the agenda to be nominated as a sport for the Olympics. If karate becomes an Olympic sport, I really hope that out of respect for karate deeper meaning, they change the name karate for this purpose in something else that defines it as sport karate, being nothing else than an offshoot of an Okinawan martial art used fragmented for sport purposes.

### *What advice would you do to those who want to focus on becoming a Karate teacher?*

First of all you should be aware of the task before you. It is a great responsibility to teach something like karate to others. Karate is not meant to entertain someone. Karate

techniques can be very brutal, when not guided properly by respect for others and values related to society and us as social human beings. Karate practise can be physical harmful when not carefully approached. Know why, in which way and to whom you teach. So, be aware of your intention and be clear and honest in what you can offer people. Be also clear in what you expect from each other, teacher to student and student to teacher. Karate is a long term proces, not a take away product.

***What advice would you give to an instructor who is struggling with his or her own development?***

Development can come from the interaction with many things. Karate in its deeper meaning is not contained to techniques, form, etiquette and rituals alone. It is intertwined with life. I found myself often too much focused on what was told, what was demonstrated, what was framed by so called authorities, be it a teacher, organization, culture, or subculture like a certain martial environment I was in instead of seeing what really matters. My advice would be to actively search contact with those people who are looking for answers, not those who think they possess or know the truth. If an organization (or a person) promotes itself by saying that this is the only way, this is the true way, the most traditional one, be aware... Try to form a strong basis, but also try to look behind your own horizon, behind your organization and style. Don't withhold yourself, empty your cup more often. Dare to ask yourself fundamental questions and, above all, try to listen to your inner voice and act accordingly. In this context Sensei Mirakian often said that you should not wear someone else's suit. The chances are it might not fit. To me, this is very true.

On different levels, I felt the need to find out myself what was suitable for me and what was not. I couldn't find one system, style, way or teacher that had it all. Not only for the self-defense part but also for my personal growth and self-education. And I don't believe that it is possible to find all the answers in one location / with one style or teacher. I believe everything is already there, all the answers are available within oneself, but you have to find your own way, push the right buttons, dare to leave something behind, embrace something unknown, listen to your inner voice and find your way by yourself. What do you have to lose? You can only gain if you want to develop from within. Struggle is something natural. I struggle every day. I can only see a direction, no final answer.

***What karate can offer to the individual in these troubled times we are living in?***

To my opinion the art of karate or any other martial or non-martial art, can give a person direction. For me, martial art has everything to do with mindfulness, everything else is secondary. Especially in this troubled times, we need to find a place for ourselves but also for sharing with others, were we can meet not only physically and socially, but connect also on a spiritual level. We should be more aware of the masks we wear and feel confident to take them off, reaching out to each other in love on a journey that leads us to who we are, to our true self. With all our strengths and weaknesses searching for connection with ourselves and others.

I am aware of the connection between our body and mind that we as human beings have and believe martial practice can confront us, putting a mirror in front of us, openly exposing ourselves and help us develop as a human being.

***Tell us about your relationship with the late Sensei Anthony Mirakian.***

I have never met a more charismatic person than Sensei Anthony Mirakian. He was one of a kind. Before I first set foot in his dojo, he asked me more than once what my intentions with karate were, what my history was. By letter, by telephone and again upon arrival when he first welcomed me in his house and dojo in 1995. He was keen on all the details. This continued for quit a long time. Like a sort of never ending trial period.

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**“Development can come from the interaction with many things. Karate in its deeper meaning is not contained to techniques, form, etiquette and rituals alone.”**

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# Through the Eyes of a Master



I heard from his students, of which a dozen or more trained under him at that time for more than 20-25 years, that Sensei Mirakian taught 4 times a week in his dojo for 2,5 hours a day. Three times a week for the adults in the evening and on Saturday a class for children followed by a class for adults.

In the periods I visited his dojo in Watertown, Boston MA, USA, he would open up his dojo earlier, and often stayed until midnight, sometimes even gave an extra opportunity so I could workout. In the first few years I would spend more than 5 hours a day training in his dojo under him or with his students. I was therefore very honored and fortunate. Not only because he gave me the opportunity to practice and receive instruction so much, but also in giving personal attention to me when we sat down after training or welcomed me in his house, discussing karate for long periods of time, watching old movies. The same warm hospitality I received from his students.

Sensei was, like he would call it, the 'Rock of Gibraltar'. He was always present in the dojo, since the day he started his dojo in Watertown back in the sixties. He sometimes joked about this and mentioned that his wife Hellen, with whom he had a good relationship, called herself a karate widow since he was away from home so many hours a day, teaching karate besides his job and when he retired sometimes even more. He was someone who you could build on, who not compromised his way teaching karate and did not commercialize it. Sensei often spoke with me about karate history, his own experiences with the masters he had met and trained under, but also about the political circus of the many martial arts organizations, be it Okinawan or otherwise. He disapproved what was happening in the world with karate. He felt that karate should not be

about politics and sport, but had to focus on self-realization. He also often spoke about the fact that there were distortions in karate history by consciously manipulated egoistic motivations. Sensei Mirakian never expressed his thoughts in public out of respect for others, especially to honor his master Meitoku Yagi, but even within the Meibukan organization from the moment Meitoku Yagi stepped back from his active role within the Meibukan, he had his thoughts and doubts about the succession and direction of the organization and continuation of the late Grandmaster Meitoku Yagi's heritage.

Never the less, he continued acting in accordance with what he believed in and tried to stay out of the politics as much as possible. "People call me a dinosaur", he told me once. "But I rather be a dinosaur that is about to become extinct, than selling my principles for money or power. I would rather die". His voice, his eyes were fierce on those moments, like the mindset when he demonstrated techniques in de dojo. For some things there was no in-between for him.

Sensei was very strict during the workouts. Workouts that were as rigorous as the ones he received in Okinawa in the 1950's. He did not gave much compliments or was coddling during his classes. The only time when he said something about my personal



physical abilities, was after the first two weeks I was in his dojo, where I trained every day for more than 10 hours nearly until exhaustion. “You well trained” were his words. For me the message was, ‘you are serious, let’s move on’. Years later, when I taught some lessons to his students in de dojo, he said; “You are a good instructor”. That was all, during all these years. And it was good. I wasn’t looking for compliments, I was there to learn, to practice.

When we as his students were not moving around, stood still, you could hear a pin drop. His eyes saw right through you when you were working out. He saw the flinches when your concentration would lack for a moment and pull you back on track with his exceptional penetrating voice. After the training session ended, he would transform and become milder and was very approachable. He was laughing, getting food and drinks for all those who were present and telling stories. And stories he had, with his photographic memory and colorful way of telling things!

Sensei Mirakian had strong personal relationships with his students. He helped them in finding a job or gave them advise in personal issues and brought students and family together also outside the dojo. Many of his students started doing karate since childhood under the watchful eye of Sensei Mirakian and therefore had become like a father figure to them.

When I came to Sensei Mirakian, I was already formed in my way of karate in Goju-ryu, but was fortunately to have meet this exceptional master, receive his instructions, advise and insight, but above all, his kindness in taking care of others. There is so much to tell about the legend Master Mirakian, that I want to refer to the interview with him that was originally published in the famous Fighting Arts magazine. If you read that intensive and long interview, with its unique pictures, you will grasp something of old school Okinawan karate and the unique position of this Western karate-pioneer at The Golden Age of Okinawan karate.

Although I am very grateful for what Sensei Mirakian has done for me, and the great honor he has given me, I had to follow my own path. This was not an instant decision, but a longer progress. I had to listen to my inner voice and wear the suit that suits me best, my own suit. I am dedicated to the higher goals of martial arts which I shared with Sensei Mirakian, but still, I needed the freedom to form my own structure without framing it into somebody else’s style, form, organization or otherwise.

Sensei Mirakian will be in my memory as a great teacher, a gifted master, a unique karate pioneer and above all, a human being who cares about others and offered his guidance with the intention of making the world a better place.

***Finally, what advice would you like to give to all Karate practitioners?***

Ask yourself the question every single day if it feels good what you do for yourself and for others and I don’t mean fulfilling materialistic or short term satisfactory goals. What does really matter? How can you be part of society developing yourself and helping others in doing so? As human beings, social as we are, we share goals with each other and when we accept who we are, we will accomplish a lot, inside and outside the dojo. 🖐️



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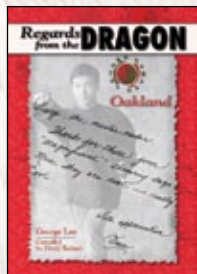
The Finest Martial Arts Books in Print

## REGARDS FROM THE DRAGON - Oakland

**FULL COLOR!**

By George Lee  
Compiled by David  
Tadman

Throughout their friendship, Bruce Lee wrote George Lee letters on a regular basis. Those letters touched on everything from Martial Arts philosophy and the development of Jeet Kune Do to George's creation of workout equipment for Bruce's private and personal training.



These letters express friendship and appreciation for a man Bruce Lee called 'my friend.' Periodically, George would take the letters out of a box, read them, and then reflect on the moments he and Bruce shared as close friends.

We've heard of Bruce Lee the man and legend. Until now, however, we did not know Bruce Lee, the friend. The letters and photographs in this book document the close friendship that George Lee and Bruce Lee had. This book is for everyone who wants to know more about Bruce Lee behind the scenes and the friendship only a few knew about.

#317 - Size: 7 x 10 - US \$29.95  
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## JEET KUNE DO CONVERSATIONS

By Jose M. Fraguas

What exactly is Jeet Kune Do? Is it simply a fighter's personal expression in combat? Is it a style? Is it a process? Is it a product? Can it be taught? Can it be learned? While the founder felt there should be no such thing as a "fixed" system or method of fighting, he did believe there is definitely a progressive approach to training.



#413 - US \$29.95 - 7 x 10 - 320 pages  
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## REGARDS FROM THE DRAGON - Seattle

**FULL COLOR!**

By Taky Kimura  
Compiled by  
David Tadman

It was in Seattle, Washington, where Bruce Lee met a man by the name of Taky Kimura. Taky would not only become one of Bruce's top instructors in the Jun Fan method of Martial Arts, but he would also become Bruce's closest friend and confidant.



In this special book, you get a rare insight into the close friendship Bruce and Taky shared through their letters. These letters touched on everything from Martial Arts technique and philosophy, to Bruce's accomplishments within the world of television and film industry.

Above all, the letters in this book express the care and appreciation for a man Bruce Lee called his "best friend."

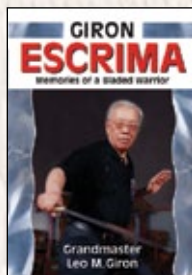
Throughout the years, Taky would take these letters out, read them and reflect on the special moments he shared with the "Little Dragon," letters that until now, have never been shown to the public.

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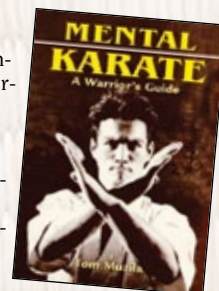


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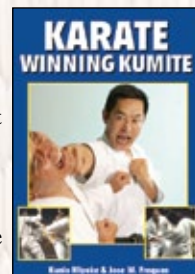


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By Kunio Miyake & Jose M. Fraguas

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## The Best Martial Arts Masters in Action

### MARTIAL ARTS LEGENDS: ESCRIMA – LEO M. GIRON

Included in this historic DVD is private home footage and photos of one of the greatest Filipino Martial Artists of our time, Grand Master Emeritus Leo M. Giron, along with interviews with two of his closest friends, Guro Dan Inosanto and Grand Master Tony Somera. A World War II combat commando handpicked by General Douglas MacArthur for special assignment in the Philippines, Grand Master Emeritus Giron was the founder of one of the most effective, combat-proven fighting systems, Giron Arnis Escrima and Bahala Na Martial Arts. It's a collector's item for all Martial Arts fans, regardless of style.



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### GIRON ESCRIMA By Grandmaster Tony Somera

#### Estilo De fondo

Estilo De Fondo: *estilo* is style, *fondo* is anchor. In Filipino terminology, Estilo De Fondo means to hold your ground or anchor yourself in a solid position. This may be called a blocked or closed style, like when a door is closed, one must either use force to break in or look for other openings.



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#### Cadena de Mano

The term *Cadena de Mano* literally means “chain of the hands.” This is a close-quarter fighting style consisting of a progression from parry to grab, twist, and lock.



**VOL. 2 #402**  
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#### Estilo Macabebe

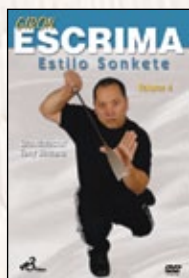
*Macabebe* is the name of a town in the province of Pampanga. These men from Macabebe introduced an art of self-defense using two long sticks; this style is characterized by the interweaving motions of the sticks and is also known as *sinawali*, the weaving style.



**VOL. 3 – #403 – US \$24.95**  
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#### Estilo Sonkete

Estilo de sonkete is a thrusting and poking style using such rigid weapons as a bolo, panabas, or baston (stick). In this style, the escrimador thrusts his weapon into an opening in the opponent's guard.



**VOL. 4 – # 408 – US \$24.95**  
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#### Estilo de Abanico

In the art of Giron Arnis Escrima, *estilo de abanico* refers to a bolo knife defense that—with the flick of the wrist—wards off strikes or thrusts coming from the front. This is one of the fastest motions used to deflect an attack, allowing the defender time to reposition himself in a more favorable location or posture.



**VOL. 5 – # 407 – US \$24.95**  
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#### Larga Mano

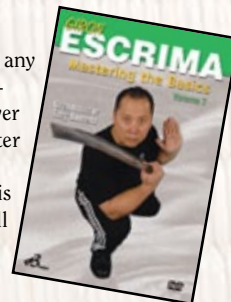
The term *larga mano* literally means “long hand” and implies the ability to extend one's reach. Reaching your opponent without jeopardizing safety is foremost because one can disable his enemy with less chance of getting hurt or killed. To employ this style, a practitioner must know how to systematically use a longer weapon.



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### Mastering the Basics

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The purpose of this training DVD is to illustrate blade and stick disarms against an armed opponent. In the Giron system, we are taught to direct hit the target with the blade, but in some encounters it may be necessary to apply disarming techniques or pass the attacker to engage oncoming attackers.



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### De Fondo Series #2

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**CLASSIC JUDO Vol. 1-2-3 • # 232 - \$69.95 - ISBN: 978-1-60661-001-5**

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**Vol. 2 - Classic Basic Judo By The Masters (68 minutes)** brings back to life names like Kobayashi, Yoda, Ichijima, Samura, Tokuyama, Otaki, etc. Names that would have been forgotten but that Hal Sharp has recovered them in this DVD capturing the history of Judo.

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**CLASSIC JUDO Vol. 4-5-6 • # 233 - \$69.95 - ISBN: 978-1-60661-002-2**

**Vol. 4, Classic Judo Competition Techniques (63 minutes)**, shows masters Osawa, Matsushita, Asahi, Hattori, Shibayama, Miura, Ikeda, Yoshiaki and Mizutani explaining their favorite techniques. They show the timing, the control, the combinations, and the applications of each technique plus the ground work and counter-throws for which the masters became famous.

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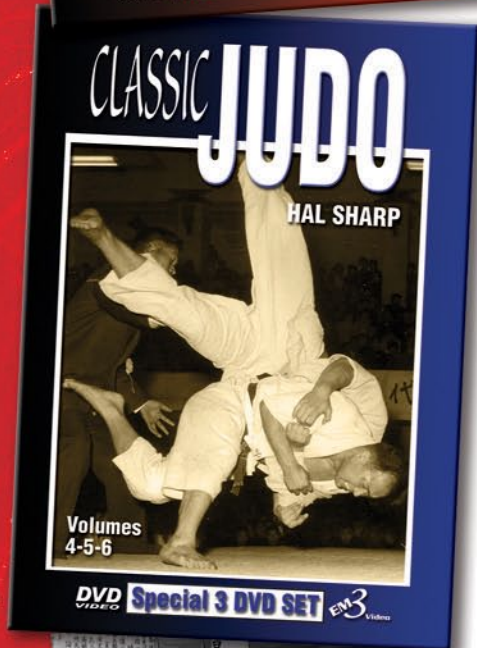
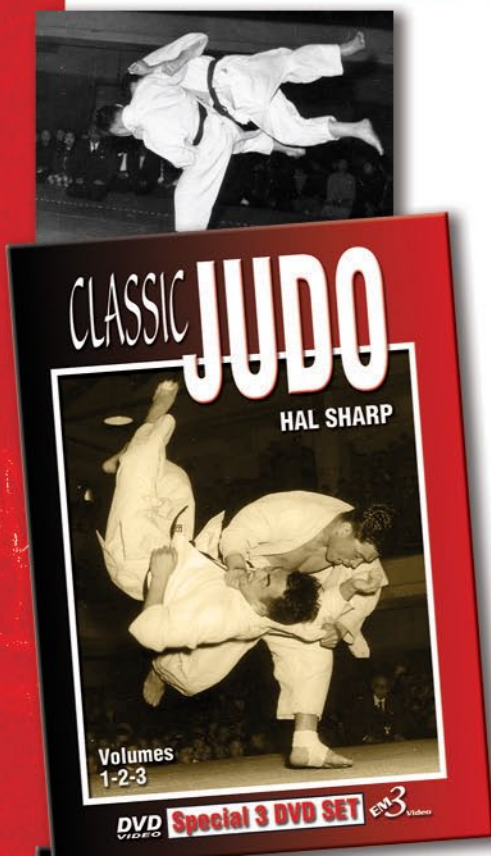
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1. Nagaoka, 2. Kawakami, 3. Takagaki, 4. Ito, 5. Kudo, 6. Asami, 7. Shinojima.

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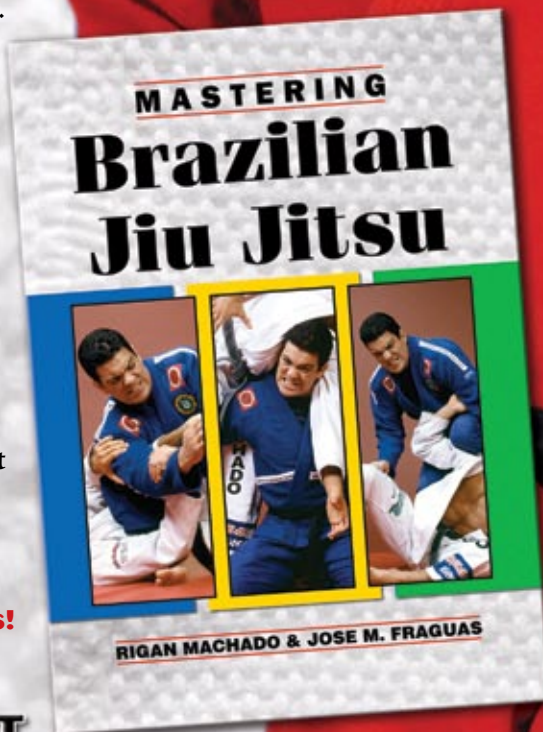
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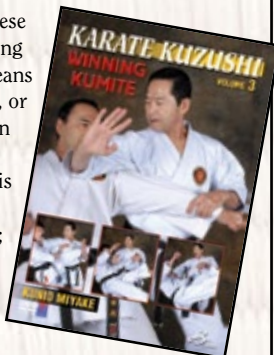
By Kunio Miyake

Kuzushi is a Japanese term for unbalancing an opponent. It means to level, pull down, or demolish. The main idea behind this combat principles is not just to unbalance the opponent; it also involves the process of getting an opponent into a position where his/her stability, and hence ability to regain compromised balance, is destroyed. Unbalancing the opponent will make him/her weak and in this disadvantaged position ... which is when we should strike.

The principle of "kuzushi" is very important in Kumite. Its proper application depends on maai (distance) and perfect timing. It is used in Kata "bunkai" as well as a follow-up to the basic technique application. The practice of "kuzushi" must be learned under the constant direction of a qualified Karate teacher in order for the student to assimilate the concept to the point that it becomes an integral part of his/her sparring arsenal.

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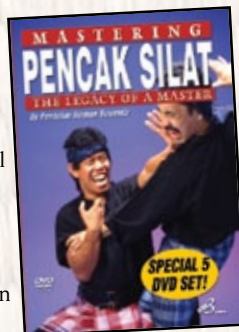
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By Grandmaster "Ising" Atillo

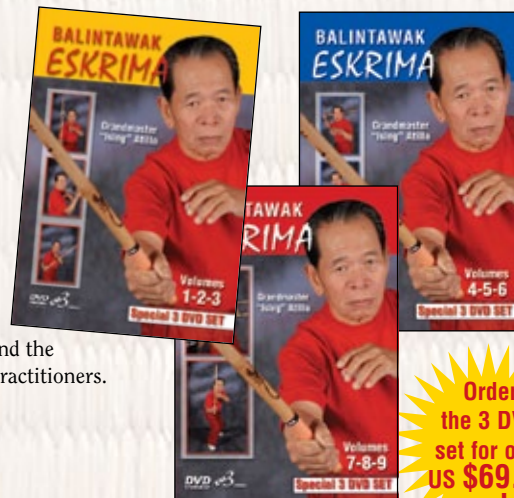
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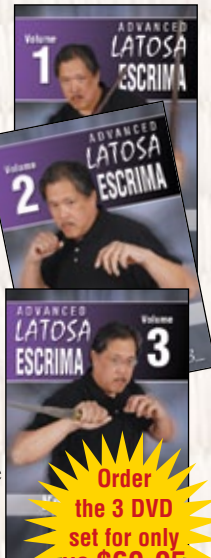
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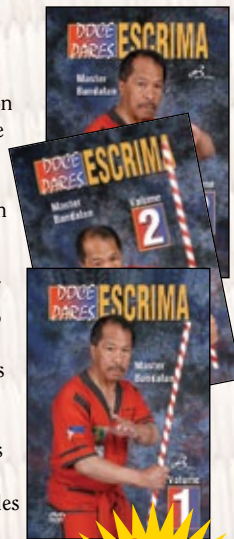
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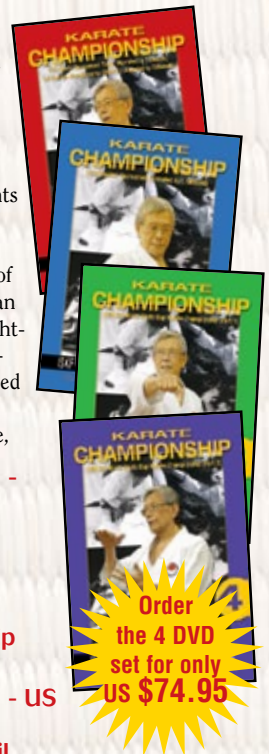
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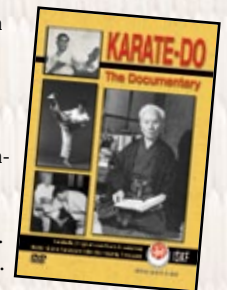


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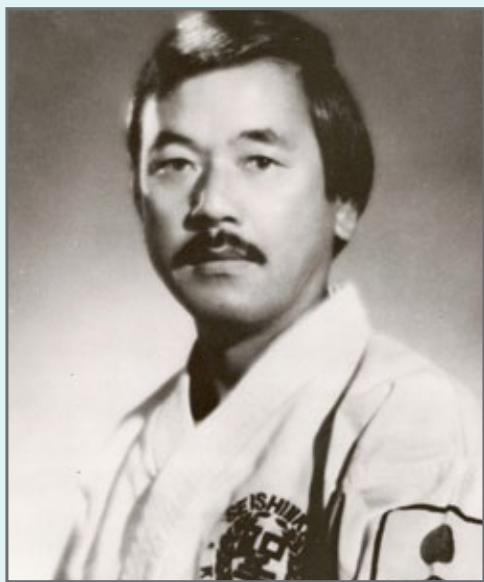


# Keepers of the Faith

By Hanshi James Herndon, Ph.D., Ed.D.

**A**nyone who has been around for a while has heard the expression “keep the faith.” Not always referring to religion, the phrase is intended to encourage one to stick to beliefs and principles, to remain true to one’s cause. And so, there are those who do. They are the keepers of the faith.

In the pursuit of martial arts prowess, there are also keepers who attempt to maintain a particular legacy believed to have been left to them by teachers, by sensei – those who have gone before. This article will present and discuss four key people who have distinguished themselves by holding firm to their views and interpretations of the teachings of Kosho (“Shogo”) Kuniba, Soke of Motobu-ha Shito-ryu Karate-do and his derived Budo.



Kosho “Shogo” Kuniba  
(1935-1992)

## The Teacher

“Shogo” Kuniba is well-known in the martial arts world. Much has been written about him (1) and some controversy surrounds his legacy. The purpose here is not to resolve all disagreements regarding his teachings, or even to debate who learned what when. Rather, the intent is to give deserved credit to four main adherents of his teachings as they went about carrying on the tradition they believe he inspired them to do. Others will be mentioned in passing.

Succinctly stated, Kosho Kuniba was the adopted son of **Kosei Koku-ba** (Okinawan pronunciation for Kuniba) (1901-1959), who was a furniture salesman in Osaka, Japan and founder of Seishin Kan Dojo. Seishin Kan served as a martial arts community center in the 1940s and 1950s, wherein prominent teachers such as **Choki Motobu** (1870-1944) and **Kenwa Mabuni** (1889-1952) were able, as visiting instructors, to spread their arts. It was from and through this lineage that the younger Kuniba developed Motobu-ha Shito-ryu in 1956. Exposure to other teachers and other forms of Budo, such as **Ryusei Tomoyori** (1909 -1976) – **Kenyu-ryu Karate-do**, **Gozo Shioda** (1915-1994) – **Aikido**, **Kenko Nakaima** (1911-1989) – **Ryuei-ryu**, **Shoshin Nagamine** (1907-1997) – **Kobayashi Shorin-ryu Karate-do**, **Shinken Taira** (1897-1970) – **Kobudo**, **Ishii Gogetsu** (dates unknown) - **Iaido**, and **Asakichi Ito** (dates unknown) – Judo, enabled Kuniba to develop in his youth into a well-rounded martial artists.

In 1957 Kuniba wrote and published *Karate-do Bin Ran* (2), a book about the basics of his style. Included are biographies of his father and other notable teachers. In 1980, a copy was obtained by this writer from **Shuho Yamanaka**; but, today it is not available.



By the late 1960s, Kuniba was heading Seishin Kai and spreading his martial inheritance throughout Japan and around the world. He traveled frequently to the U.S. and eventually made America his permanent home in 1983. Until his death in 1992, he taught at his Hombu Dojo in Portsmouth, VA. Future generations were molded, as the teachings of Kosho “Shogo” Kuniba passed hands, literally. But, let’s go back in time a bit when young American servicemen were being introduced to Japanese martial arts. I will highlight four “Keepers” from among perhaps dozens, basing my comments on firsthand knowledge and available historical information about them.

## The Keepers

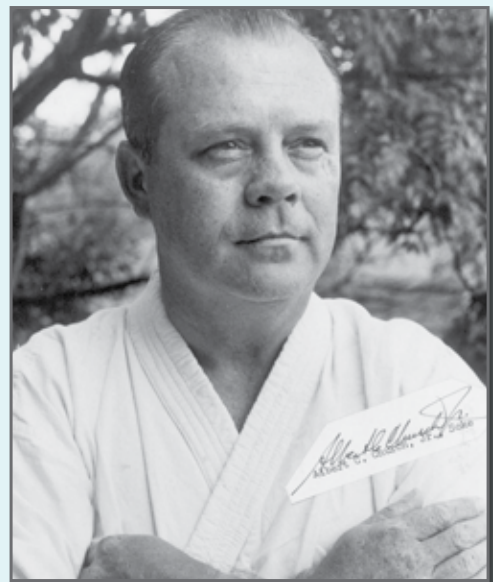
Without a doubt, anyone who ever seriously trained with Kuniba-sensei was left with an indelible impression of him. There were many who claimed him as their teacher, even after one clinic or seminar, never to train with him again. And, there were the takers who simply used him and his name for their own self-aggrandizement. They know who they are; history will expose them. Yet, there were some (a few) who really linked their martial arts development to Kuniba’s teaching and inspiration by not only training with him, but also adopting his style and passing it on.

I have chosen the four that I believe history will show made the biggest impact on Kuniba’s legacy, at least in the U.S. Opinions may vary, as they always do when martial artists are discussed. In fairness, I will mention a few others briefly, paying respect where respect is due. The four that I have chosen to highlight, two deceased and two still living, represent figures whose prominence is well-known. Articles could be written about each one of them. Perhaps, someday a book will be written that fully examines and explores their martial arts journeys.

### Albert C. Church - (1930-1980)

Perhaps one of the first American servicemen who had contact with Kuniba in Japan was Albert C. Church, Jr. As a young Marine in 1950, Church was sent to Korea for a two-year tour of duty. Though his martial arts training had begun much earlier in Alabama, exposure to the Korean martial arts would have a lasting effect on Church’s development. Reportedly summoned to Japan by his Korean teacher (who was there for medical treatment), Church moved to the Kanagawa ( ) area (greater Tokyo) of Japan in 1967 (taking a job as a civilian Management Analyst, GS-343, with the Army at Camp Zama). While there, he met and trained with Shogo Kuniba, who had an affiliated club on that military base. The intensity and duration of actual training with Kuniba is not known; however, the records indicate that Church was recognized as Godan/Shihan by Seishin Kai. While in Japan, and with the assistance of Sato Nino, Church prepared a book titled *Karate as the Bushido Way*, which is based on the Kuniba style (3). According to one of Church’s students, “This is the first book written in English covering the basic techniques of the Motobu Ha Shito-Ryu Karate Do System” (4).

Church returned to the U.S. in late 1969 and began formulating his own style synthesized from Chinese/Korean arts and Japanese Budo. Outside his own circle of followers, there is much controversy and misinformation about the historical accuracy of events and circumstances surrounding the development of what has variously been called Kanda-ha Shito-ryu, Kamishin-ryu/Kamishin Kai, and the so-called Nippon Kobudo Rengo-kai (which is not actually a Japanese organization). Much of the controversy centers on a “scroll” allegedly prepared by Kuniba-soke authorizing Church to be the head of his own style. This document is a prime example of Kuniba being used to create something that existed in someone else’s



**Albert C. Church  
(1930-1980)**

## Keepers of the Faith

mind. As we've all come to realize, Kuniba-soke's "no trouble" attitude allowed him to be easily used to sign letters, Menjo, "scrolls", etc. without fully appreciating the ultimate impact of such documents. He felt actions speak louder than words. Church was skilled in imagining his mission and in convincing others that his version of history was real. Upon review of this "scroll" in 1980, Kuniba-soke shrugged his shoulders and said, "this, I don't know." That's all he ever said on the matter. Today, there is no connection between Church's style and/or organization and any Kuniba organization.

Without the detractions of the controversy, what can be said is that Church connected with another returning U.S. serviceman, discussed next, to help organize and operate a U.S. branch of Seishin Kai. Regardless of where Church eventually took his martial arts interests, he was a major factor in introducing Kuniba and Motobu-ha into mainstream U.S. martial arts. For that, he is to be recognized and appreciated. He resigned from Seishin Kai as early as 1970. He died at the age of 50 in 1980, and is buried in James Island, SC.



**Richard P. Baillargeon**  
(1930-1989)

### **Richard P. Baillargeon - (1930-1989)**

No doubt, Richard Baillargeon is best remembered for his efforts to bring Seishin Kai and Motobu-ha Shito-ryu Karate-do to the U.S. As a returning Air Force Technical Sergeant, Baillargeon was stationed at Moody Air Force Base, Valdosta, GA. Prior to that, he had spent about 8 years (c. 1954-1962) in Japan, mainly at Johnson Air Base, near Sayama, Saitama, Japan (5). While at Johnson AB, Baillargeon trained mostly with Kyoshin Kayo, a member of Seishin Kai. It was through Kayo that Baillargeon met Shogo Kuniba. At that time, Teruo Hayashi was Kaicho (President) of Seishin Kai. When Baillargeon left Japan, with a Japanese wife, he was appointed to serve as the U.S. Representative for Seishin Kai Karate Union (SKKU) and established a USA Hombu in Valdosta.

SKKU-USA functioned well for 10 years (1964-1974) under Baillargeon's leadership. He managed to grow a sizeable organization. He produced a Head Instructor's Guide, which he regularly updated; he held annual tournaments; conducted camps, clinics, and seminars; and he published a periodic Bulletin. A little known fact is that he wrote and published a book (circa 1965) titled *Karate Katas Simplified*, a book that is next to impossible to find today.

Despite what is generally known about Baillargeon, or "Mr. B." as he was affectionately called, there still can be found erroneous information. Here is an excerpt from a web page that contains some errors. First, Kayo's given name is Kyoshin, not Kishin. Second, he (Kayo) was not the father of Shogo Kuniba; he was a student of Shogo Kuniba. Third, Baillargeon was promoted to 6th Dan in 1971 by Kayo, not Kuniba (6).

The issue of Baillargeon calling himself Soke generally goes uncontested. But, it is something that needs clarification. When he left Seishin Kai in 1974 and formed his own organization, the National Karate & Jiu-jitsu Union (NKJU), he took the title Soke, instead of the more appropriate title Kaicho. Soke is restricted to the founder or headmaster of a style (Ryu/Ha), and almost always without exception is not a title one confers upon one's self. Kaicho is appropriate for the head of an organization. Baillargeon was

Master Richard P. Baillargeon

8th Dan National Karate and Jiu Jitsu Union (1930-1989)

Soke Richard Baillargeon founded the National Karate and Jiu Jitsu Union in 1974, after having resigned from the Seishin Kai Karate Union.

Soke Baillargeon began his martial arts in Urmagawa, Japan in 1956. His first instructor was Sensei Kishan Kayo, who was, then, 4th Dan in Motobu-Ha Shito-Ryu and affiliated with the Seishin Kai Karate Union. His son, Shogo Kuniba, became Soke of Motobu-Ha Karate Do, Seishin Kai Karate Union. Master Baillargeon studied with Soke Shogo Kuniba until 1964. By then, Master Baillargeon had earned the grade of Sandan. Soke Baillargeon returned to the United States in 1964 and became the United States representative for Seishin Kai. He served in that capacity for ten years. By 1974, he had been promoted to 6th Dan by Soke Kuniba.

In the summer of 1974, he resigned from his position in Seishin Kai. Shortly thereafter, he formed his own association: The National Karate and Jiu Jitsu Union. In July of 1986, Master Baillargeon was awarded on 8th Dan in Motobu-Ha Shito-Ryu Karate by Soke Shogo Kuniba. Master Baillargeon is one of two men outside Pakistan that holds master ranks in Indo Pakistani weapons. He also holds a 6th Dan in Goshin Budo Jiu Jitsu.

<http://www.nationalmartialarts.com/BaillargeonPage.html>

not, and doubtless will not be, the only American to misconstrue the Japanese Budo titles; but, having spent so much time in Japan, should have known better.

Mr. B. built SKKU-USA into a solid organization during his 10 year tenure as USA Honbucho. Even so, there were flaws in his business model that did not sit well with Shogo Kuniba. Most notably was the fact that SKKU-USA had become an eclectic organization, with members still training in and claiming allegiance to other styles (e.g., Goju-ryu, Shotokan – the most at 70%, Shorin-ryu, etc.). SKKU-USA had an open-door policy, which may have been a good recruitment strategy; but, when Kuniba-soke saw the state of affairs for the first time in 1971, he did not recognize his Motobu-ha Shito-ryu. Kuniba was dismayed and not pleased. He wanted SKKU-USA to be pure Motobu-ha Shito-ryu. That was the primary reason he and Mr. B. didn't see eye to eye. A second issue had to do with promotion fees that, according to Kuniba-soke, were substantially less over the years than the numbers of students and dojo should suggest. Thirdly, as he (Kuniba) traveled from dojo to dojo (state to state), he was angered by the fact that each Sensei had to pay a share of his airfare. He felt that the USA Hombu should solely fund his travels. In sum, these three reasons culminated in a parting of the ways between Baillargeon and Kuniba in 1974.

Despite these issues, there is no doubt that Mr. B. made an important and lasting contribution to the growth of the Kuniba arts in the U.S. He died in 1989; he was cremated and his ashes were spread at sea off the coast of New Jersey (7).

## **Hugh Kelley - (1940- )**

The record of Hugh Kelley's early training is difficult to determine. His web site mentions him having been in Japan in the mid-1960s; but, under what circumstances and whether in the military, it is hard to discern. He states that he taught karate in his backyard in Mobile, AL and was a 4 Dan (Yondan) student of Shogo Kuniba (8). He then when on to teach at, and eventually take over, the Mobile Karate Club, which was largely a Shotokan group.

Hugh Kelley founded the United Martial Arts Association International (UMAAI) in 1970\*, the same year he was promoted to Godan by Kuniba-soke. Kelley's UMAAI web site attests to his ability to market himself, while at the same time paying tribute to

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*\*History seems to have a way of revising itself. A recent check of the UMAAI website now states that the organization was formed in 1963.*

## Keepers of the Faith



**Hugh Kelley**  
(1940- )

the memory of Shogo Kuniba. The name Kelley has given to his style is Kokubashin (the spirit of Kokuba/Kuniba). How the style compares to Motobu-ha Shito-ryu or Kuniba-ha Karate-do is not discernible from the web material. Over the years since 1971, Kelley was rarely seen at east coast Seishin Kai events, preferring to remain active on the west coast.

Kelley was, however, an active officer in the early years of SKKU-USA. It is generally understood that he was largely responsible for getting Shogo Kuniba to the U.S. to attend the Dixie National Karate Association tournament in Mobile, AL on March 13, 1971. That date was a turning point in history for many American followers of Shogo Kuniba.

Having excellent administrative and organizational skills, Kelley continued to assist Seishin Kai in America as it evolved from SKKU-USA to SKMA, Inc. He served for a brief period as President of Seishin Kai International during the latter years of Kuniba-socket's life. He compiled a student handbook from earlier works by USA Honbusho. He also contributed his writing and editing skills to numerous other publications, to include the Osu newsletter.

There are some controversies surrounding Hugh Kelley in relation to Shogo Kuniba and the spread of his arts. Kelley maintains the belief that only he was taught secret techniques by Shogo Kuniba. What those techniques are eludes others who more recently trained with Kuniba-socket.

Perhaps the secret techniques were only shown in Japan during the 1950s or 1960s? We can only hope that someday these will be revealed in a book, which Kelley has indicated he intends to write.



**William H. Price**  
(1943- )

### **William H. Price - (1943- )**

William H. "Bill" Price joined the U.S. Marines in the early 1960s and was stationed in Okinawa. It was there that he began his karate training in Goju-ryu. He was promoted to Sandan in Goju-ryu, a rank that was later recognized by Kuniba-socket. Returning to his home in southwest Virginia, Price operated a dojo in Lebanon, VA for years. It was there that Shogo Kuniba would visit and train with Price and his students. One of those students was a young blond named Judy Fuller Molinary; she would in time become Mrs. Judy Kuniba.

Despite claims and counter-claims to the contrary, Price emerged as the American heir to Shogo Kuniba's martial arts heritage, if not in total, at least in title. Having met Shogo Kuniba in 1971 in Mobile, Price immediately began following Kuniba's way. Throughout the 70s, 80s, and 90s, Price was steadfast in his commitment to Shogo Kuniba, never putting his ego above others. A humble man, and a dedicated professional law enforcement officer (Virginia State Trooper, Sheriff of Russell County,

VA, and Chief of Police, Bristol, VA), Price absorbed as much as he could from Kuniba's teachings, especially Goshin Do.

Price served for many years as the chief instructor of defensive tactics for the Virginia State Police. His interest and proficiency in defensive tactics contributed to Kuniba-socket's development of Goshin Do. Kuniba had long noted that the American physique

required changes to his self-defense system which initially had been based on smaller Japanese size opponents. Price added an element of realism to the Goshin Do, since street encounters in law enforcement almost never involve cooperative and willing opponents. Based upon the written wishes of Kuniba-soke, Price humbly accepted the role of Nidai Soke of Kuniba-ryu Goshin Do and Nidai Soke of Kuniba-ha Shito-ryu.

Attempting to cooperate with the Japan members of Seishin Kai following the death of Kuniba-soke, Price found that working with them was not only difficult, but also ethically prohibited (due to his law enforcement career and the known Yakuza connections of the new Kaicho).

Chikubu Kai was formed in 1995, with the assistance of Goichi Kobayashi in Japan. A U.S. alternative to Seishin Kai, which was in turmoil in Japan, Chikubu Kai gained many loyal followers of Price, as well as some former students of SKKU-USA and the NKJU. Monthly clinics throughout the southeast (VA, SC, TX) have kept training strong. After 20 years, Chikubu Kai remains vibrant and loyalty to Price-soke has never been stronger.

### Chronology Table

Table 1 below shows a comparison of the martial arts chronologies of Church, Baillargeon, Kelley, and Price. All details have not been included; but, the reader can get a visual sense of their overlapping lifespans.

The above table does not include organizations created since the death of Shogo Kuniba. Three of those have been or will be mentioned elsewhere in this article (viz. Chikubu Kai, Kuniba Kai, Shogo Kai).

Table 1. Comparative Chronology				
Year	Church (1930-1980)	Baillargeon (1930-1989)	Kelley (1940-	Price (1943-
1950	USMC Korea			
1951	“			
1952	“		Began training	
1953				
1954		USAF Japan		
1955		“		
1956		(Shodan from Kayo)		
1958		“		
1959		“		
1960		“	Japan?	
1961		“		
1962		“	(4 Dan from Kuniba)	USMC Okinawa
1963		“		
1964		SKKU-USA		
1965		(4 Dan from Kayo)	Mobile Karate Club	

Table 1 (continued on next page)

# Keepers of the Faith

Table 1 (continued from previous page)

1966		"		
1967	Camp Zama, Japan	4/28/67 (5 Dan from Hayashi)		
1968	Book (3)			
1969	NKR/KKI	"		
1970		"	UMAAI (5 Dan from SKKU)	(3 Dan Goju-ryu)
1971		" (6 Dan from Kayo & Kuniba)	DNKA Tournament Mobile, AL (6 Dan from Kuniba)	Met Kuniba Mobile, AL Joined SKKU
1972		"		
1973		"	(7 Dan from Kuniba)	
1974		NKJU		(4 Dan from Kuniba)
1975		"		
1976		"		
1977		"		
1978		"		(5 Dan from Kuniba)
1979		"		
1980	Church Died; Kuniba visited SC	"(7 Dan from Kuniba)		(6 Dan from Kuniba)
1981		"		
1982		"		
1983		"		
1984		"		
1985		(8 Dan from Kuniba)	(8 Dan from Kuniba)	(7 Dan from Kuniba)
1986		"		
1987		"		
1988		"		
1989		"Mr. B." Died		
1990				
1991				
1992				(8 Dan from Kuniba) Nidai Soke

1993				
1994				
1995				Chikubu Kai

### Contributions vs. Controversies

The four men discussed above display their own personal strengths and weaknesses, plusses and minuses in the way that they took and passed on Kuniba’s teachings, and they have made contributions at times clouded by controversy. Table 2 below is a summary.

Name	Main Contribution	Main Controversy
Albert Church	Karate as the Bushido Way NKR/ KKI	Scroll and new style
Richard Baillargeon	SKKU-USA Karate Katas Sim- plified NKJU	Use of Soke title re: NKJU
Hugh Kelley	DNKA Tournament '71 UMAAI	Secret techniques
William Price	Nidai Soke Chikubu Kai	Declaration of Shogo Kuniba

### Honorable Mention

There are other notable martial artists who trained with Shogo Kuniba that are worthy of respect. Their web sites make reference to their training, and at least one clearly carries on a Kuniba tradition. Excerpts from their web sites speak for themselves (grammar and spelling errors were not corrected).

#### Darrell Craig

In the interim between the departure of Richard Baillargeon from Seishin Kai in 1974 and the selection of William Price as USA Honbucho in 1978, Darrel Craig stepped in to assist Kuniba-soke. Since then, little has been heard from him in reference to Kuniba, other than brief mention in his Iaido book (9).

There was an article titled “Siyogo Kuniba: Japan’s Youngest Karate Master “ in Official Karate that featured a photograph of Darrell Craig with Shogo Kuniba at Houston Budokan. The caption states that “Mr. Kuniba awarded Mr. Craig the title of Shihan or exceptional teacher during his recent visit to the United States.” (10, p. 15). The web site excerpt below makes reference to that in 1973. The articles stated that during a recent trip to the United States, “Kuniba visited with two of the top American leaders of Shito-ryu karate: Darrel Craig of Houston, Texas and Richard Baillargeon of Valdosta, Georgia.” (10, p.16).

Darrell Craig, promoted to Godan in 1973 by Kuniba-soke, is a dedicated martial artist. His Houston Budokan continues to spread the martial arts of Japan in a commendable fashion. To be sure, Kuniba-soke had an influence on Darrel Craig, and Darrel Craig aided Shogo Kuniba in his early visits to the U.S.

## *Keepers of the Faith*

In 1956 while assigned to the Third Marine Division in Yokosuka, Japan, Mr. Craig received his initiation into the martial arts. He began his career of study with the art of karate under Master Gogen Yamaguchi of the Goju School. It was during this initial period of study that he developed an intense personal interest in the philosophical, cultural and historical foundations of a discipline that can be most closely described by the term 'art'. However, its substance has no true equivalent in western culture, His interest in this foundation has contributed most significantly to his continuation of study and advancement.

Transferred to Okinawa in 1958, Mr. Craig was afforded the opportunity to study under Sensei Z. Shimabuku. In Okinawa Mr. Craig furthered his study of Karate and began a study of Okinawan weapons, a style of weaponry historically unique to that island.

Upon discharge from the U.S. Marine Corp, Mr. Craig enrolled at Arlington State University. Taking a B.S., degree in business, he then moved to Houston, where, for the last two decades, he has channeled his interests into several of the disciplines which comprise the martial arts.

As self-defense instructor for the Houston Police Department, Mr. Craig has received commendations from the Houston S.W.A.T Division for distinguished meritorious service..

He is the author of *Iai-Jutsu : The Art of Japanese Swordsmanship* and *Iai-jitsu : Center of the Circle* both out of print but still available in some shops and collections. Mr. Craig's books currently in print are *IAI The Art of Drawing the Sword* also *Japan's Ultimate Martial Art: Ju Jutsu Before 1882*, and *Heart of Kendo* and the just published *SHIHAN-Te The Bunkai of Karate Kata*.

Mr. Craig received the highest recognition in his career in 1973, when he was awarded the title of Renshi Shihan or 'Master Teacher'. Shihan is the historical title of the army of the feudal warlords and has been retained as a term of great respect in modern Japan. The title has been bestowed on very few Westerners.

In 2001 during a trip to Japan Renshi Shihan Craig received a Shogo Title promotion to "Kyoshi" An advanced teaching title and rank used in the traditional martial arts and ways. A Kyoshi Shihan is considered equal to a Sixth to Eighth Dan. <http://www.houstonbudo.com/SHIHAN.HTM>

### **Rudy Crosswell**

Rudy Crosswell, a USAF veteran, met and trained with Shogo Kuniba while stationed in Japan during the late 1960s. He came to the 1971 Mobile DNKA tournament and assisted Kuniba-soke with a demonstration. For a few years following that event, Crosswell remained active in SKKU-USA; but, his connections to Teruo Hayashi and other notable martial arts masters may have led him to leave Seishin Kai.

In 1968, destiny favored Shihan Crosswell with a rare wartime assignment to the US Air Force base in Fuchu, Japan. While living just outside Tokyo, he met and became a student of the legendary Soke Shogo Kuniba (Kokuba) and Soke Teruo Hayashi. Though not accustomed to having foreign students, these two master instructors generously provided their eager American protégé with detailed and extensive knowledge of Motobu-ha Shito-ryu karate and Okinawan weapons (kobudo). Driven to assimilate as much martial arts knowledge and skill as possible before leaving the country, Shihan Crosswell spent hours training nearly every day, chauffeuring his Japanese sensei around town, sleeping on dojo floors, and commuting tirelessly between Tokyo and Osaka to soak up every piece of information from them that he could—both in and out of the dojo. The year 1968 also marked Shihan Crosswell's first introduction to Japanese sword, and he began his training in the art of laido while stationed there as well.



During his years overseas, Shihan Crosswell not only studied day and night from these renowned martial arts masters, but also found the time and energy to run the Seishin-kai Motobu-ha organization's only American branch dojo. In 1969, he and his all-American GI team shocked the nation by taking third place in kumite at the All-Japan Seishin-kai National Championships—shattering the stereotype that only Japanese nationals were truly capable of mastering the art of traditional karate. It was to be one of many outstanding accomplishments that would make Shihan Crosswell instrumental in elevating the status of foreign-born traditional martial artists, both in Japan and around the world.

<http://www.azbudokan.com/src.htm#japan>

For more than 40 years, Crosswell has owned and operated the Arizona Budo Kan in Phoenix, AZ. But even to this day, he speaks highly of Shogo Kuniba and passes on lessons learned while training with him in Japan.

### **Butch Velez**

Butch Velez is a U.S. Army veteran, who served in Vietnam. He joined Seishin Kai in the late 1960s, drawn heavily toward Jiu Jitsu and what was known then as Goshin Jitsu (self-defense). I remember clearly that Velez was the next host to a Shogo Kuniba visit in September 1974, receiving Kuniba-soke after he left my home in Chesapeake, VA. Velez has continued to preserve and pass on the teachings of Shogo Kuniba, especially Goshin Budo and Kobudo, as taught to him throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

Shogo Kuniba, Soke, from Osaka, Japan was with no doubt the greatest Motobu ha Shi toh ryu Master of modern times. His knowledge of Goshin Budo (Goshi as he used to call it), laido/jutsu, and Kobudo had bounds that exceeded the most legitimate martial artists. He was a Masters teacher. He had a lot of training ideas that were never fulfilled, mostly by financial short falls and no one interested in a new way to teach waza. This was especially true with him in the 70's.

In the early 70's, even with his struggling language, he could relate with people he did not know, and use the martial arts to gain their friendship, even if they were not martial artists themselves.

Contrary to popular belief, he had a mission that started earlier than the 70's, that would launch him to be identified with a new type of martial art that would blend with his heritage Shi toh ryu. That would be his Goshindo. It's too bad he did not live longer to revise more than the 5 kata. In the late 70's he said Japan would never buy the longer version of Goshin Budo and the Kobudo kata structure. Most of the people that trained with him in the middle 80's had no clue that there was an earlier set of Goshin Budo kata, nor did they know about a Kobudo kata structure.

At one time it was thought that Kuniba, Soke changed a Japanese ryu called Hakko ryu to his Goshin Budo. Most people got the idea from a time when Seishin Kai and Hakko ryu operated out of the same headquarters. In the 60's the organization was known as HMAF (Hakko ryu Martial Arts Federation). The Federation's patch had both the Hakko ryu and Sei Shin Kai emblems.

Another reason was Kuniba, Soke taught a parallel to the Hakko ryu waza early in the 70's. Also the Aikido waza was used. His friend Shioda, Gioza (He referred to him as Shiodasan) was a big help to his arrangement of waza and especially the Te waza. He did not change Hakko ryu to Goshin Budo. The fact was, if you knew the basics of Hakko ryu or Aikido, at least through yon dan level, you had a guide for learning Goshi waza. This made the upper levels easier to learn and you always had a reference point for upper level learning. This made the bunkai levels of Shi toh ryu kata more practical and easier to understand. You learn kata 5 ways. They are, Giden, Chuden, Joden, Okuden, and Menkyo/Keiden. Luckily, in the 70's, there was a large number of Black belt students that managed to keep and preserve most of the format, either by VHS, or collective notes, and still actively practice.

Another waza training link in the goshi waza was the split hand. I coined the term, because I couldn't get use to saying Hante waza (sometimes tehan). Soke told me that this was the beginning of the upper level waza and only certain high

## *Keepers of the Faith*

level individuals had them. I can only guess it came from Shioda Sensei. I compared it to the Hakko ryu (of which I have the waza format through Kaiden), and nowhere are these hand techniques found. I also checked with Roy Jerry Hobbs, Judan-Hanshi of the Sekai Dentokan Bugei Renmei, who trained in Japan and earned the rank of Shihan in Hakko Ryu and Kaiden in KoKoDo (Yasuhiro Irie's Hakko Ryu derivative). He confirmed that they are not there. He also does some of the split hand waza.

To preserve that earlier format, Shogo Kuniba, Soke designed an organizational patch that says American Goshin Budo and Kobudo. The original idea of the gi patch came from setting the weapons on the floor and taking a picture of them standing in a chair. A copy of his sketching is still well guarded. He did the basics in his own handwriting, the order, and where they were applied. There was a set of waza and kata for each level through nana dan for the Goshin Budo and Kobudo. The laido/jutsu through Rokku dan, and designed a menjo in his own handwriting. Even my name was written in his own handwriting on the menjo. He also made a video specifying who would be the Kaicho of the Seishin Kai Goshin Budo and Kobudo, which later became American Goshin Budo & Kobudo Kai.

Shogo Kuniba, Soke demonstrated the Motobu ha Shi toh ryu kata structure on video in '78 to have another reference to his teachings, and is taught under the organization American Goshin Budo & Kobudo. AGK did not copy the international kata structure after the change in Japan in '83/'84. The Motobu ha karate structure is taught under the heading of AGK. Soke made the amendment to the menjo, but nowhere does it say Motobu ha, nor Kuniba ha. That was done in '82 via mail from Japan.

In the near future, excerpts and clips of Kuniba, Soke's teaching will be available to the general public. At present, only AGK people have access to his Goshin Budo & Kobudo kata. Some training requires an oath.

No one really knows why Shogo Kuniba, Soke wanted a separate organization from Seishin Kai. Some say he knew what was coming in the future and wanted to give something to a certain group of people that truly loved his art. No one will ever be sure, but his teaching will always be preserved for other dedicated students.

It is always interesting to hear what Kuniba, Soke left other ranking martial artists and their lineage with him. So far I have only found one other person that has a similar position and the paperwork that goes with it, Hugh Kelley (Shuseki Shihan). Also, the Sunday before he died, he told me who would guide the Seishin Kai Martial Arts, and why. As I understand it, that gentleman has his own ryu-ha now.

Whatever anyone wants to believe about the legacy of Shogo Kuniba, Soke and what he did years ago is history. The difference is, we have the documentation, both for AGK and Seishin Kai Goshin Budo & Kobudo. Most importantly, AGK has the best training format for the Goshin Budo, Kobudo, and laido/jutsu. Since 1974, I have had some constant help keeping his teachings in order and preserved.

<http://www.butchvelezagk.com/historyofagk.html>

As the excerpt above indicates, Velez tends to align with Hugh Kelley, and there has been a rift between them and Bill Price over who has the legitimate rights to Kuniba's legacy (see below). My hope would be that they would come together someday.

### **Organizations Spawned by Contact with Shogo Kuniba**

It is said that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. Perhaps, that is true. Contact with Seishin Kai over the years has generated its share of spin-off organizations that, for whatever reasons, found it better to go it alone than to remain connected to the parent Kai. It could be organizational politics that triggered the break away; but, emulation of style still had its hold on founders and practitioners. Table 3. shows some of the better known organizations whose founders once were attached directly or indirectly to Seishin Kai. As of this writing, all of the organizations listed are still active.

**Table 3. Seishin Kai Inspired Organizations**

Name	Year	Founder	Style
Kamishin Kai	1969	Albert Church	Kanda-ha
IKF	1970	Chuzo Kotaka	Kotaka-ha
Hayashi-ha Shito-ryu Kai	1970	Teruo Hayashi	Hayashi-ha
UMAI	1970	Hugh Kelley	Kokubashin
Shinki-ryu MA Assoc.	1972	Terry Stanton	Shinki-ryu
NKJU	1974	R. P. Baillargeon	Eclectic Shito-ryu
Shin Sei Kai	1974	Richard Dixon	Shito-ryu
AGK	1978	Butch Velez	Goshin Budo
TKA	1980	Ricky Adams	Sansei Shito-ryu
IKKU	1986	Joseph Ruiz	Eclectic Shito-ryu
Kyoshin Kan	1982	Lenny Jordan	Tsuru-ha
Kensei Kai	1987	James Herndon	Tsuru-ha
NKJUI	1989	Tola Lewis, Jr.	Seito Shito-ryu
NKKF	1992	Bill Woodard	Shito-ryu

The above table does not include organizations created since the death of Shogo Kuniba. Three of those have been or will be mentioned elsewhere in this article (viz. Chikubu Kai, Kuniba Kai, Shogo Kai).

### **Other Others**

Too numerous to completely list, there are many others who strive to carry on the teachings of Shogo Kuniba in whole or in part as they learned directly from him or via their respective Shihan. Naming only a few: Terry Stanton; Wayne Taylor; Richard Dixon; Ron Baker; Terry Kirk; Tony Cooper; Jose Hernandez; Fred Thomason; Lenny Jordan; Yovany Agüero; Jimmy Revell; Kevin Watson; Richard “Bulldog” Kelley; Tom Bentley; Joseph Ruiz; Ricky Adams; Tola Lewis, Jr.; Steven Johnson; Bill Woodard; Danny and Nina Higgins; Allen Hartman; Henry McCoy; Tim Click; and Chris Wirt. Some are with Chikubu Kai; some are with Kuniba Kai. Some are independent now. A piece of Kuniba lives in all of them.

There is also a group of followers aligned with the remnant of Seishin Kai, ISKU, under Robert Burgermeister. But, their loyalty remains with the late Kunio Tatsuno. Shogo Kuniba is nevertheless a part of their heritage.

### **Not to Mention**

There are others who could be mentioned; those who had tangential contact with Shogo Kuniba and claim to this day to be carrying on his teachings. It is amazing how a few hours in a seminar or clinic could justify someone calling Kuniba their Sensei. Nevertheless, it continues to be seen in print and heard in conversations. If your name is not mentioned in this article, and you think it should be, apologies are extended. This is not to deny that you trained with Kuniba; it’s just that what you did with that training cannot be considered “carrying on his legacy.”

In discussing those who claim to follow Kuniba’s way, I am reminded of the parable of the blind men describing the elephant. It ends with these words: “And so these men of Indostan disputed loud and long, each in his own opinion exceeding stiff and strong, though each was partly in the right, and all were in the wrong! (11).

# Keepers of the Faith

## **The End is the Beginning**

The last few years of Shogo Kuniba's life (especially 1990-1992) saw a sad crescendo to an illustrious life. Students at his Hombu Dojo in Portsmouth, VA clung to his teachings, even as they watched his spirit fade. Reluctant to accept that his life would soon end, yet mindful of the need to learn as much as possible from him, senior students trained hard and absorbed all they could. They knew it was just a matter of time. Though there were several senior students, a few of them stand out because of their concerted efforts on behalf of Shogo Kuniba.

## **Mike Doyle**

Mike Doyle began his karate training as a student at my ODU karate club around 1973. He was one of a select few who went on to become a direct disciple of Shogo Kuniba. Together with his brother-in-law, Mark Boyette, Mike was instrumental in the Goshin Do kata creative process with Shogo Kuniba in the late 80s – early 90s.

## **Mark Boyette**

With some previous training, Mark joined The Dojo of Chesapeake in the early 1980s. A hard worker and a seeker of effective technique, Mark's path led him to Shogo Kuniba, to Wing Chun, and back. He was an inspiration to many students; and, he carries much of Kuniba's legacy in his teachings today.

## **Darren Myers**

Darren Myers met Shogo Kuniba in 1980 at a tournament in Chesapeake, VA. At that time, Darren was a member of Baillargeon's NKJU and had been a student of Donald Bitner. Upon meeting Kuniba-soke, Darren's worldview changed. Little by little through class, clinic, camp, and seminar, Darren turned his development fully towards Motobu-ha Shito-ryu and other Kuniba martial arts. While operating his own Virginia Martial Arts Center, it fell to Darren to continue running the Seishin Kai Hombu Dojo in Portsmouth as Kuniba-soke became too ill to teach and eventually passed away. He embraced fully Seishin Kai, preferring to hold onto hopes that it would survive Kuniba-Soke's death. He went to Japan several times; trained with Kunio Tatsuno and tested under Teruo Hayashi; and, kept the faith as best he could.

## **Lewis Estes**

Lewis Estes met Shogo Kuniba in 1982 while a student at The Dojo in Chesapeake, VA (which became Kensei Kan Dojo in 1983) when Kuniba-soke visited what was then his USA Hombu Dojo. Influenced by Mike Doyle, Mark Boyette, and Kevin Thompson, his dojo seniors, when Soke opened his own dojo in Portsmouth Lewis joined as a Gokyu. He trained with Soke faithfully for the next 9 years.

Lewis has been very active running his Seishin Kai of Virginia Beach dojo, all the while traveling throughout the country with his videographer job (filming sporting events for ESPN, the Golf Channel, and others). Every chance he gets, he visits other dojo and spreads the teachings of Kuniba, especially Goshin Do. Lewis is a peacemaker and seeks harmony among all Kuniba followers. Today, he is active in Kuniba Kai.

## **Japan Watches the West**

Not only did the Americans discussed above take up the mantle of Kuniba, his two sons in Japan did likewise. As Shogo Kuniba lay dying, a declaration of succession was

prepared in March of 1992. In that document, Kozo Kuniba was named as the next Soke of Motobu-ha Shito-ryu (and William H. "Bill" Price was named the next Soke of Kuniba-ha Shito-ryu and Kuniba-ryu Goshin Do). This was not received without controversy and resistance by Kai members in Japan and the U.S. The events surrounding the takeover of Seishin Kai by Kunio Tatsuno are details for a separate article (one written in 1996, but never published). Suffice it to say that seven years would pass before Kuniba Kai was formed in Japan on November 1, 1999. According to family tradition, Kosuke Kuniba (the older brother) was recognized as Soke, and Kozo Kuniba was recognized as Kaicho when the Japan Karate Federation (JKF) sanctioned Kuniba Kai. Today, however, Kozo prefers to be recognized not only as Kaicho, but also as International Soke. This is not without controversy.

Kuniba Kai is the only Japanese karate organization recognized by the JKF to claim the rights to Motobu-ha Shito-ryu. In a letter (c. 2000) to the Kuniba family from Mrs. Tatsuno (widow of Kunio Tatsuno), all claims to the style were relinquished.

Since its formation, Kuniba Kai has sought to unite the various Kuniba factions around the world. Largely because the Kuniba brothers are junior to Church, Baillargeon, Kelley, and Price, this aspiration has not achieved much fruition. Perhaps, Kuniba Kai will gain new, younger followers who see the next iteration of Kuniba martial arts embodied in Shogo's son. The older generation of Shihan will pass on their teachings, and their followers will do their best to remain faithful.

### **PS: Shogo Kai**

I, myself, in my own way, have also been a keeper of the faith. Having met Shogo Kuniba in 1971, and serving as USA Honbucho for Seishin Kai (1980-82), I operated a Hombu Dojo/Hombu Bunkan from 1979-1990. I also produced a series of Kihon and Kata guide booklets and a handbook for Seishin Kai USA, as well as wrote and published *A Primer of Kuniba-ha Karate-do* that included many of the more than 200 still photographs taken of Shogo Kuniba in 1984, demonstrating basics and techniques of Kuniba's style (12). Probably more than anyone, I discussed with Shogo Kuniba the historical, philosophical, and psychological aspects of his Budo; that also is presented in my book, updated in 2009. Following the death of Shogo Kuniba, I occasionally helped with Seishin Kai Martial Arts (SKMA) events, and eventually, Chikubu Kai events. I began assisting Kuniba Kai in 2007, serving as Information Director (Johokyoku-cho) from 2007-2009, then Kaicho Daiko from 2009-2011. I was acting Kaicho in 2010. Finding it difficult to align with only one stream of the Kuniba legacy, I formed Shogo Kai on January 1, 2011 as a vehicle to capture, preserve, and promulgate all that can be found about the teachings of Shogo Kuniba. That's the best way I know how to keep the faith.

### **End Notes:**

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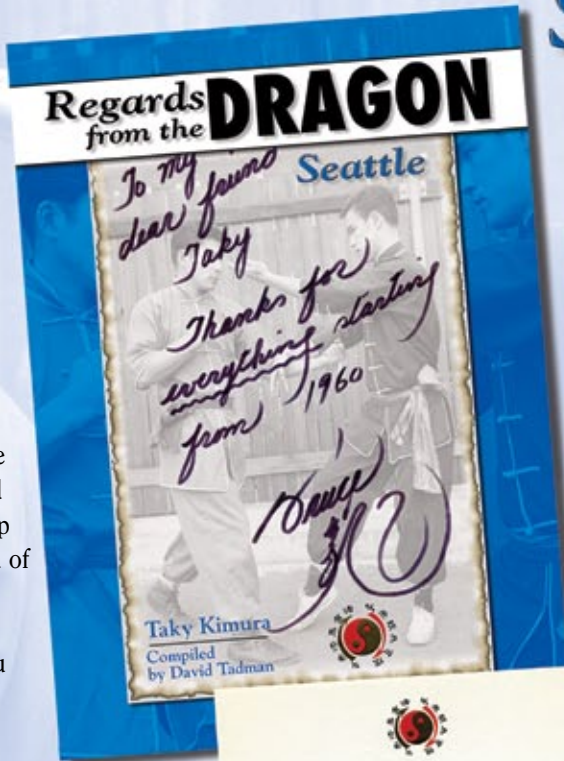
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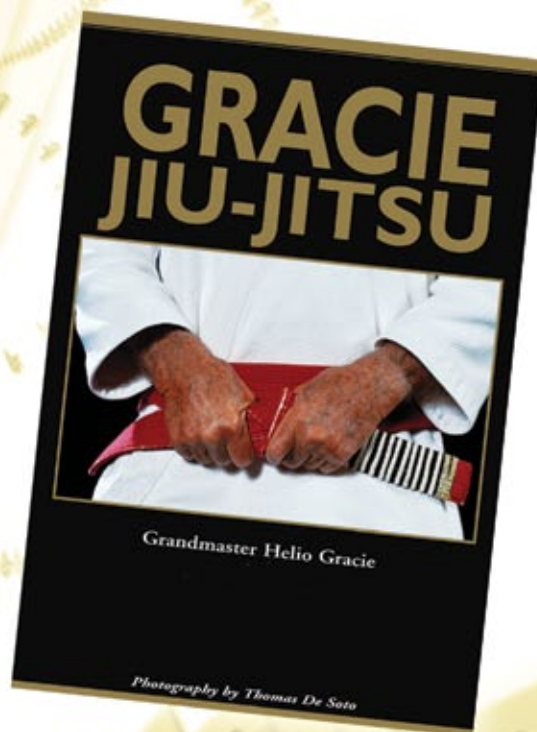
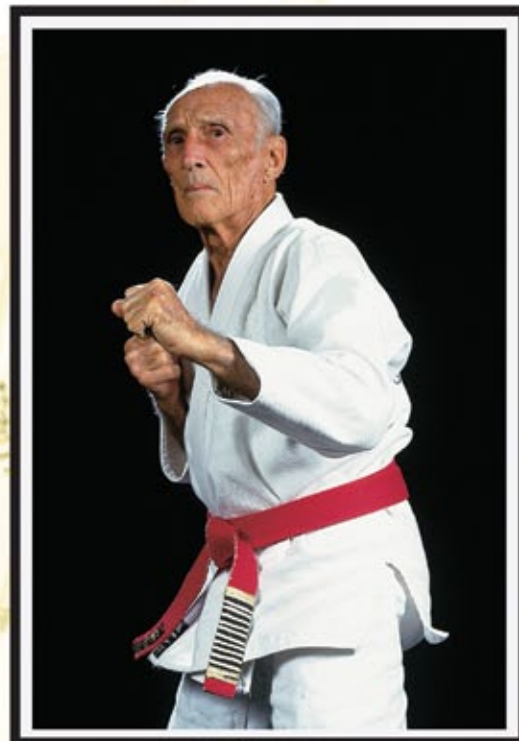
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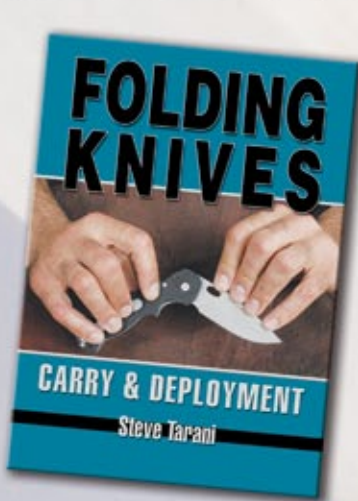
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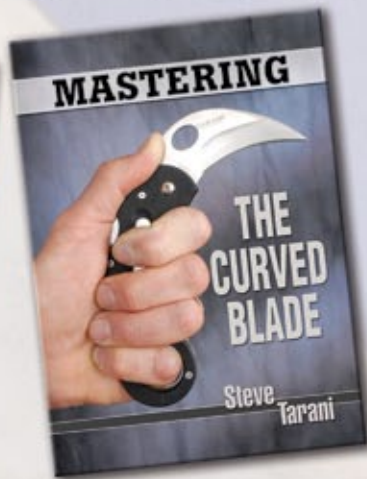


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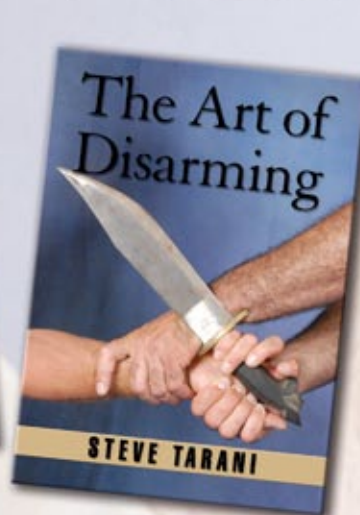


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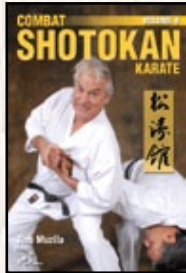
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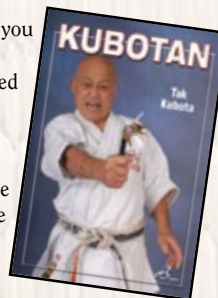


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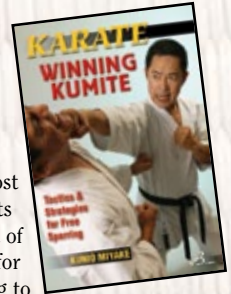


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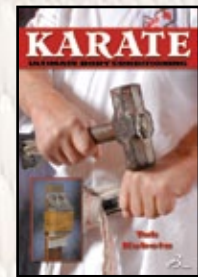
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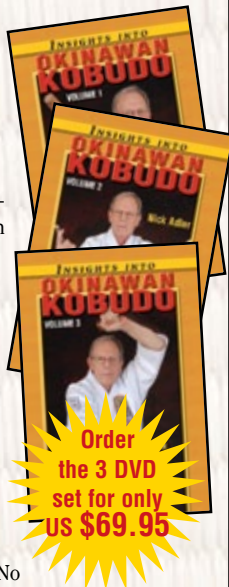
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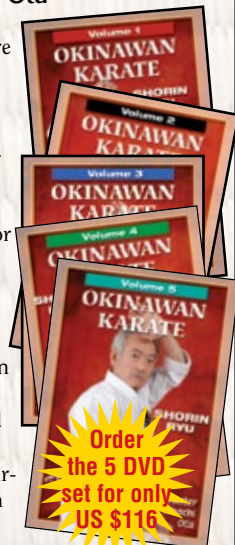


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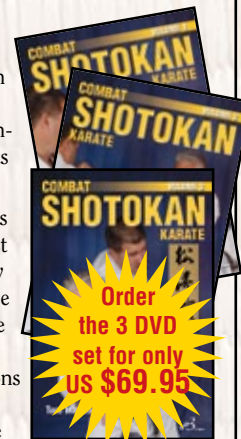
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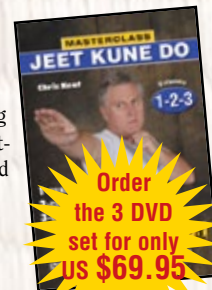
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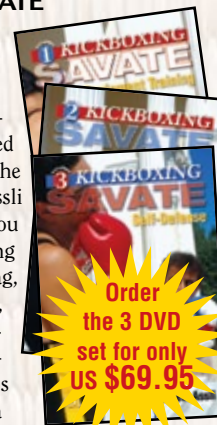
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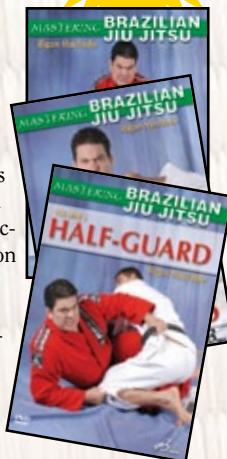
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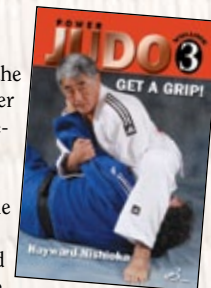
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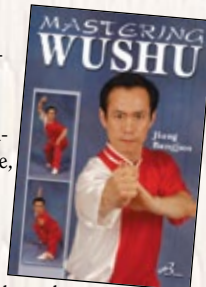
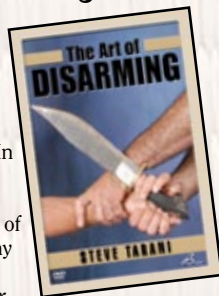
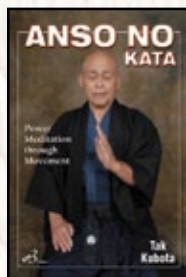
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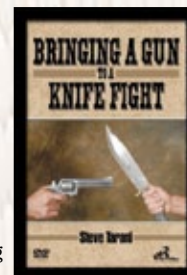
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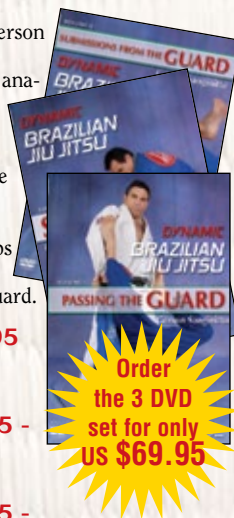
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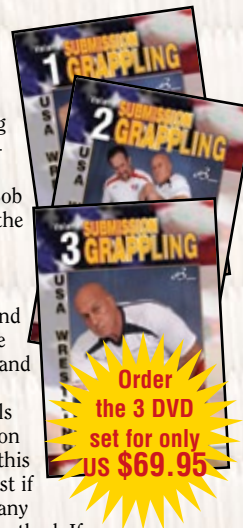
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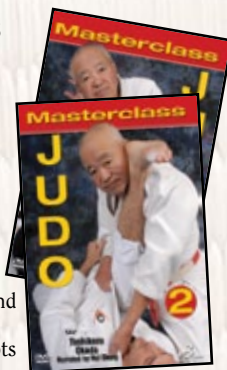
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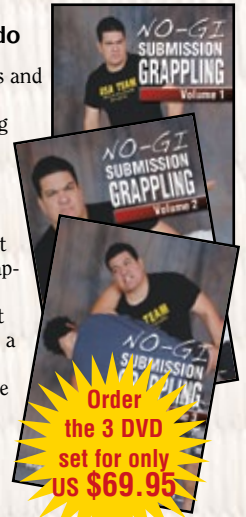
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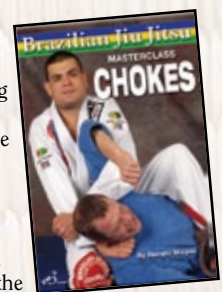
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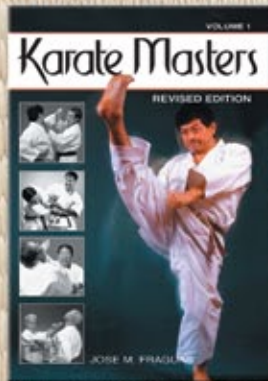
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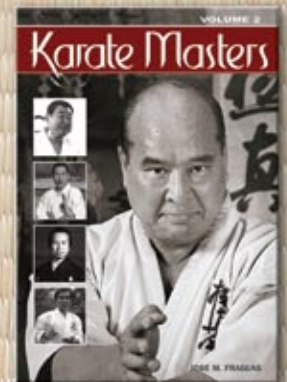
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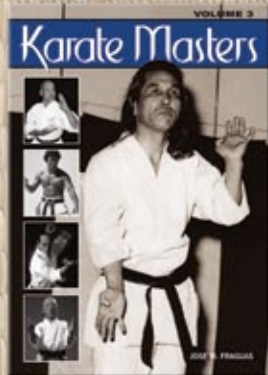


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2013 ESCRIMA SEMINAR



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2013 Queen Mary Seminar

**LEGACY-2 SEMINAR**

Hosted by  
**Grandmaster Darren Tibon**  
**SERRADA ESCRIMA**

Queen Mary, CA August 10th 2013, a historical event of Escrima Grandmasters and Masters gathered at one event to pay respect to the founders of Escrima Grandmasters and share their teachings for a seminar series of Unifying Filipino Martial Arts.

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This historic seminar event has been edited to a 3 hour 37 min (Collector's Edition Set) of compressed instructional content that is a one of a kind experience.



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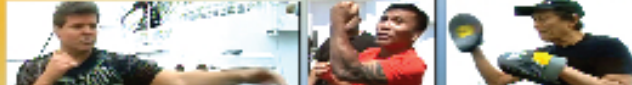


THE LEGACY-2 ESCRIMA SEMINAR

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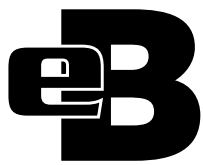
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By **Jim C. Blount**

Contained in this book is not the way, but simply a way to detect, defeat and disrupt a terrorist attack against yourself and your family. There is no magic bullet that will protect you in any and all circumstances. There are no guarantees that following this book to the letter will prevent your becoming the target of a terrorist group. There is no doubt, however, that by following these time-honored and tested principles you will be safer and better prepared than most citizens.

The tactics and techniques in this book have been practiced by U.S. Government employees who live, work and serve in dangerous environments. We have a phrase that we use – “written in blood”, and these techniques have truly been “written in blood”. Simply stated, we learn through the failures and experiences of others. In the world of counter terrorism it is often through the shed blood and sacrifice of innocent lives that we learn our most valuable lessons.

There is no doubt that the world has changed in the last few years and we must be prepared for the worst, even as we hope for the best. The information contained in this book should be considered an essential guide in your quest for personal safety.

Today's terrorist makes no distinction between soldier and businessman, man or woman, child or adult, student or missionary. To the terrorist we are all targets of opportunity – we are fair game. When they are faced, however, with an adversary who is well trained and versed in the terrorists' own tactics, and most importantly is willing to fight, most of these “bullies” will retreat and seek out an easier target. The techniques provided in this book are the “tools” that will help you to:

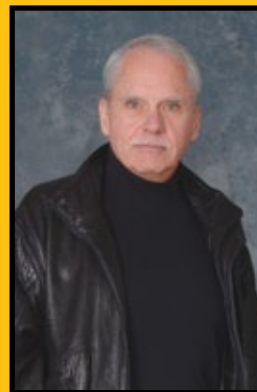
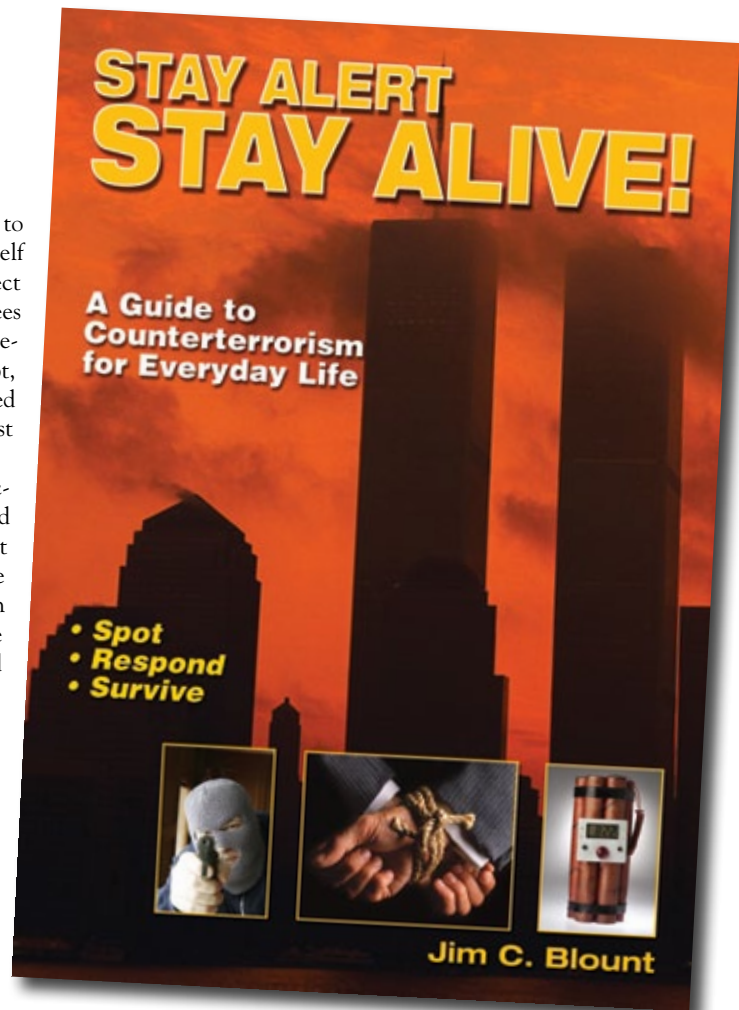
- Spot a terrorist incident before it occurs
- Respond quickly to a terrorist incident
- Survive an attack

As a society, we must become better prepared to detect and defeat terrorism, wherever and whenever it rears its ugly head. This book will help you to stay alert and stay alive through the diligent practice and incorporation of those techniques in your daily life.

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### About the Author

**Jim Blount** is a retired 28-year veteran of the Central Intelligence Agency. His tenure in the CIA included assignments in the Office of Counterterrorism and the Office of Security. Additionally, he served as a senior instructor of firearms, defensive tactics and law enforcement special operations. Prior to joining the CIA in 1982, he was a local police officer and had served in the US Navy.

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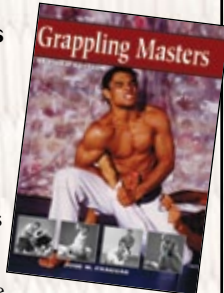
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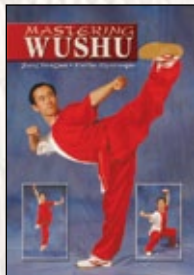


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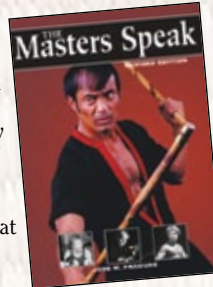
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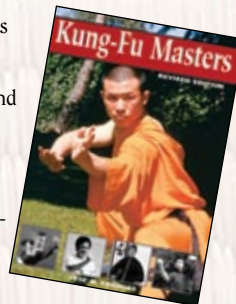
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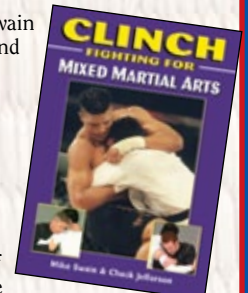


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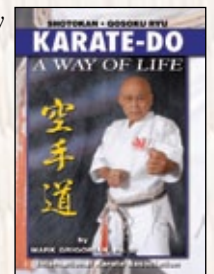


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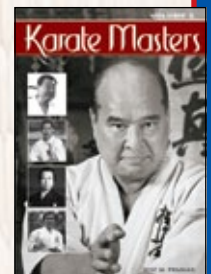


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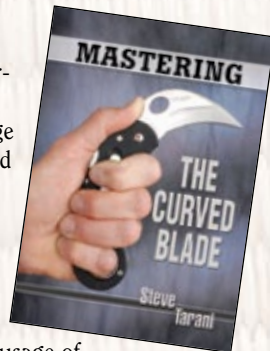
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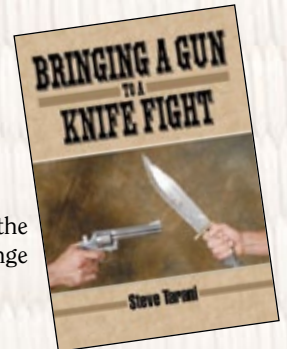


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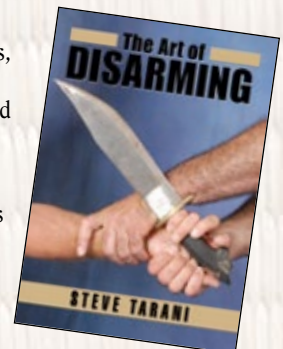
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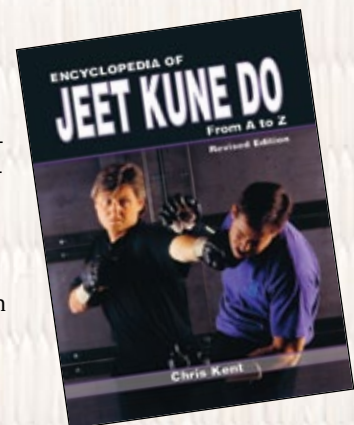
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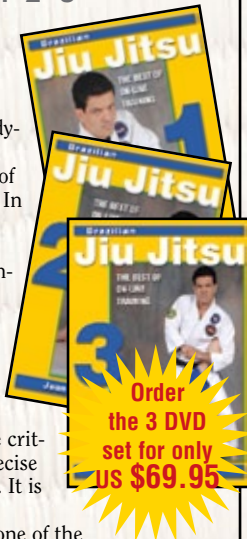
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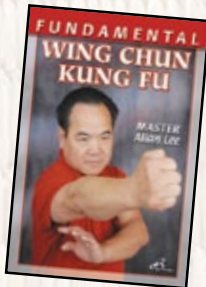
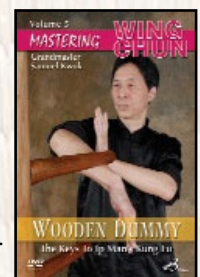
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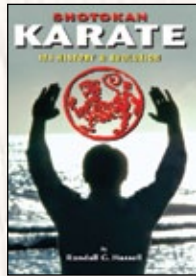
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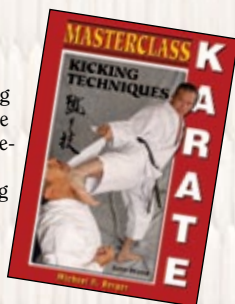


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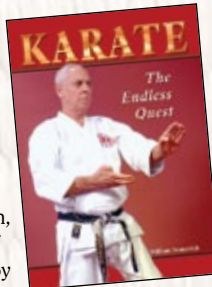


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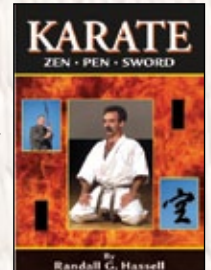
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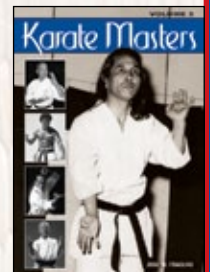
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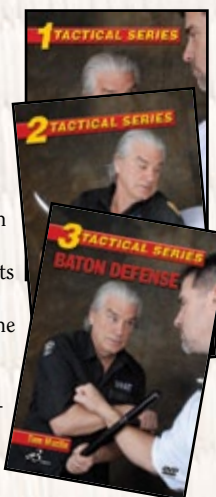
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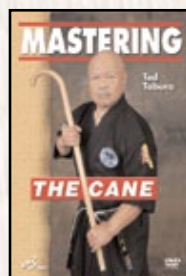


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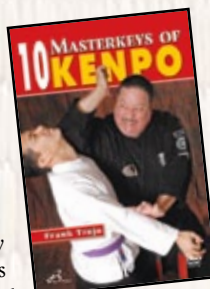


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By Master T. Okazaki

**MASTERCLASS SHOTOKAN** is a complete presentation of the techniques, philosophies, and training methods of the art of Karate-do. Instructed and presented by Master Teruyuki Okazaki, a direct disciple of the founder of Karate, the Grandmaster Gichin Funakoshi, this series is a complete step-by-step guide to the Shotokan style.



Covering and analyzing in detail all the aspects of *Tsuki Waza*, *Uchi Waza*, *Keri Waza*, *Uke Waza*, *Tachi Waza*, plus Funakoshi's 15 original *Kata* and different *Kumite* categories – including sparring against multiple opponents, this 6 DVD Special Set is a classic collection of inspiring Karate-do knowledge, technique and philosophy.

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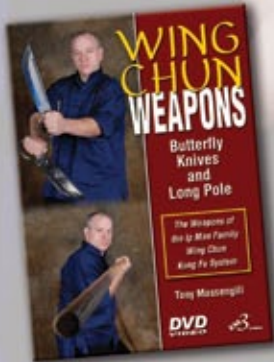
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Tony Massengill brings Wing Chun to life!

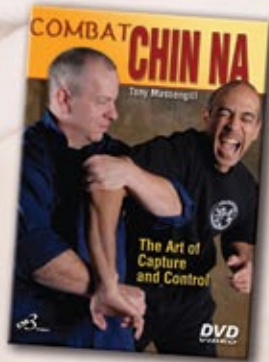


## WING CHUN WEAPONS Butterfly Knives & Long Pole

Ip Man Wing Chun Kung Fu is quickly becoming one of the world's most popular systems! While much has been written and filmed about this method, little has been released on the Weapons training. Traditionally the weapons of the Wing Chun system are only introduced after mastery of the empty hand forms and Wooden Dummy training. It is said that Ip Man taught the knife form to only seven students. So this training has not been readily available, even up to our current generation!

The Long Pole teaches principles of long range weapons use and single weapon use. The Wing Chun Double Knives teach principles of close-range weapons and double weapon use. Also covered in this DVD is how the weapon training relates to empty hand use! In this DVD, 3rd Generation Ip Man Family Wing Chun Lineage Master Instructor Tony Massengill presents the weapons training and forms which have been passed to him in the direct lineage of the Ip Family. Material covered includes the traditional pole and knife forms, along with fighting applications and training methods.

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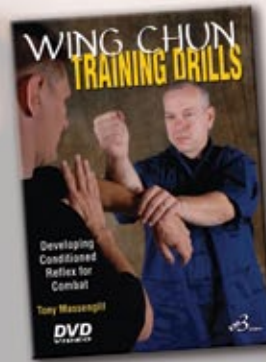


## COMBAT CHIN NA The Art of Capture and Control

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Master Massengill's background spanning 25 years working as a Police Officer, Firefighter and Paramedic in addition to over 43 years of Martial Arts study give him a very unique, practical and frightfully realistic approach to teaching. This is practical experience from the street, not theory based only from Dojo training and sport martial arts.

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## WING CHUN TRAINING DRILLS Developing Conditioned Reflex for Combat

Two of the things which sets Wing Chun apart from many other systems is the principles upon which it is built and the way it is trained. In this DVD, 3rd Generation Ip Man Family Wing Chun Lineage Master Instructor Tony Massengill presents the keys to effective training for developing Conditioned Reflex in fighting techniques. These are drills and principles will not only improve the Wing Chun practitioner, but enhance the skill level of any martial artist no matter what system they practice.

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- And Much, Much More!

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## WING CHUN Close Range Combat

This is practical martial arts at its best! In this DVD, Master Instructor Tony Massengill presents the keys to effective Close Range Combat. Covered are such skills as, Creating Bridge Contact for control of the opponent. The famous "Inch-Punch" from Wing Chun and the differences in the way Bruce Lee demonstrated the technique compared to the way it is actually used in fighting. The "Returning Punch", a devastating strike which is nearly impossible to defend. An analysis of the anatomical differences of the vertical and horizontal punch, and which is more structurally sound. The shifting knee strike and close range kicking to destroy the opponent's base. All this and much... much more!

Sifu Tony Massengill brings his unique blend of over 43 years in the Martial Arts combined with 25 years working as a Police Officer, Firefighter and Paramedic, to his teaching style. This is practical experience from the street, not theory based only from Dojo training and sport martial arts.

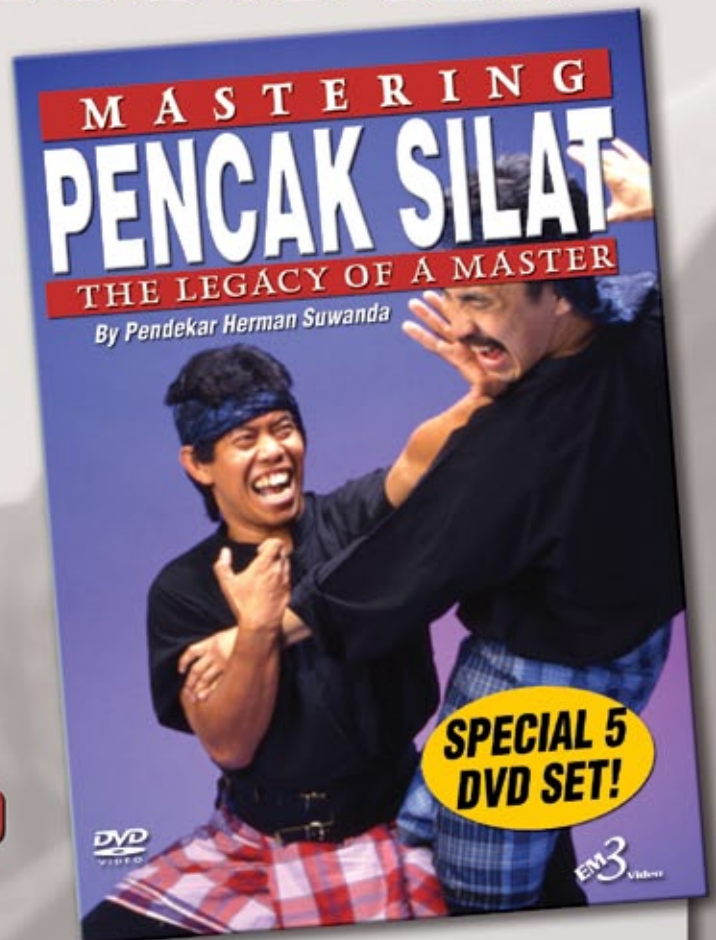
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**Volume 4** - Running Time: 1 Hour 14 minutes.

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# KARATE SHITO RYU KATA

Volumes **1-5**  
By **Kunio Miyake**

Shito Ryu is one of the four major karate styles in the world and this is a complete presentation of the katas of the style. Created and developed by Grandmaster Kenwa Mabuni, Shito Ryu mixes the traditions and experiences of the ancient schools of Naha, Shuri and Tomari with a practical approach to self-defense.

Demonstrated by Sensei Kunio Miyake, this 5 DVD set explores the Kata and the "bunkai" principles of the style, including hundreds of applications for all the forms of the system. This is definitely a master-class piece of valuable information. This series has a great deal to offer to all Karate-do students, from beginner to black belt level, as well as being a unique and enjoyable way to learn the from the basic kata *Pin An (Heian)* to the more advanced forms of the Shito Ryu style. It is a true gem by one of the best Shito Ryu masters of our time. It includes many detailed techniques and comprehensive information that will vastly improve the practitioner's ability to perform and understand the traditional kata of the Shito Ryu style.

Some of the Kata featured in the 5 DVD set of this series are: *Pinan Shodan, Pinan Nidan, Pinan Sandan Pinan Yondan, Pinan Godan, Matsumura No Bassai, Seipai, Seiru (Juroku), Matsumura No Rohai, Bassai Dai, Bassai Sho, Matsukade, Seienchin, Kururunfa, Wanshu, Jitte, Niseshi, Seisan, Tomari No Bassai, etc.*

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