



Early training partners of Master Ueshiro during their visit to the U.S. in 1975 at C.W. Post College for the first All Okinawan Karate Tournament. L to r: Santos Kina Sensei; Ansei Ueshiro Sensei; Kensai Taba Sensei. DePasquale Sensei (Jujitsu) in back.



Sekichi Iha Sensei, highest rank in USA of Kobayashi Shorin-Ryu under Master Katsuya Miyahira. While on Okinawana Master Ueshiro & Iha Sensei trained together during the early days of the organization of the two styles.



L to r: Oshiro San, Kishaba Sensei, Ueshiro Hanshi



Workout in Central Park, 1962. Master Ueshiro with Ken Lee.



L: Kishaba Sensei performing Yakusoku-kumite.

宇江城先生の三十年間唯一すじ徒手空手の精神を  
 そと守り松林流のしんおつを教へて来た人こそ空手以  
 外に何も無いといつて良方です。此度彼の刊行されよ本  
 を記念しん此如に宇江城先生の將來を祝ひたいと  
 有ります

一九九二年七月二日  
 於肥前市蓮有道柔術  
 糸師 弘

序

慶長十四年九州の薩摩藩に琉球が攻略され武器一切を  
 収上げられ一から徒手空拳にふる一孝女殺の空手に発達した  
 空手道の一つ沖繩松林流を糸師にて教へて行く宇江城  
 先生が未米を来てから四十三年か過ぎが長。彼が  
 最新に教へられたのか。約三市十四丁目五番街と六番街  
 のイニパール道場を私も其の頃から其漢身道柔術を  
 同道場を教へて居りて彼もまた米の陸軍、教念、  
 好まふ等が日本武藝のデモンストレーターをやつたし  
 のです。



December, 1970. Left: Master Ueshiro. Center: Sensei John Hara. Right: Choich Yara.

After the Ryukyu Islands were attacked by the Satsuma clan from Kyushu in Keicho 14 (1609), and all weapons were banned, the ultimate weapon of empty fist was developed.

It has been thirty short years already since Sensei Ueshiro first came to the United States bringing with him Okinawan Shorin-Ryu, one of the karate styles.

It was at the Imperial Dojo of Fifth and Sixth Street, 14 Fukuiku, where he first taught. About the same time I was also teaching self

defense at the same dojo. Together we often demonstrated Japanese martial arts at U.S. Army bases, churches, police stations and other places.

For thirty years Sensei Ueshiro has faithfully obeyed the karate spirit and has taught the core of Shorin-Ryu. He's simply the person who's full of nothing but karate.

Here in remembrance of Sensei Ueshiro's book, wishing him the very best in the future.

July 2, 1992  
 Hara Shihan

## ABOUT THE MARTIAL ARTS

**KARATE:** It sounds mysterious. Instinctively you react to the word. Is it with fear? Or perhaps interest? Or just curiosity? Would you expect to find a woman or a child of 5 years old studying karate?

Karate, or kara (empty) té (hands), is probably as old as man. Just think – how did man protect himself before he discovered weapons? Why, with “empty hands.” So you see it is a very natural defense, one that is always with you. The physical aspects of karate are as important as the mental discipline it imparts.

This has been emphasized many times, as you may see this art form taught to men, women, children, physically disabled, elderly, mentally retarded, and physically uncoordinated persons. Yes, anyone can find benefits from karate, in their own way and their own time. It gives the young strength, discipline, and maturity, and the old, flexibility and a physical well being that is so important for a long and useful life.

There are many types of systems of karate, basically originating in the far eastern countries of China, Okinawa, Japan and Korea. There are probably thousands of systems, many of which are taught in the United States. If you would like to study karate, you probably want to know which system is best. The answer to that is not possible. It is your judgment, and you must find a system that fulfills your needs. Karate is just one of the many Martial Arts available. In helping you make a decision, a short, basic description of some of the Martial Arts are listed. So, take your time, you may find yourself involved in a new and exciting way of life.

**KUNG FU:** Chinese legend has it that the first organized system of the Oriental Martial Arts began over 3,000 years ago when Tao Mo brought Buddhism to China. Along with beneficial exercise, it produced, in time, a rugged form of personal combat for the Shaolin monks in order to protect themselves against the many bandits of the day.

Wushu meaning (war arts) was

renamed Ku Shu (national arts) in 1928. Throughout the western world, Kung Fu (special abilities) is accepted.

There are basically five families in Kung Fu, stemming from the five Shaolin Temples in the Northern and Southern provinces of China. These families dominate the many styles practiced and become recognizable through the first four postures of salutation, which are symbolic in tradition.

Kung Fu uses flowing circular moves similar to the related art of T'ai Chi, although performed with greater speed.

Northern styles are best explained by their softness while the southern styles lean towards aggressiveness. **T'AI CHI CHUAN:** T'ai Chi Chuan is a graceful exercise that relaxes the body, increases muscle control and massages the internal organs for better health and greater energy.

It contains over one hundred postures which take some twenty minutes or longer to perform in their entirety and are ritually done with balance and control as a means of relaxing the body and releasing the flow of Chi. Rigidity and strength are emptied from the upper torso and sink to the very soles of the feet, one of which is always firmly rooted to the ground. Breathing is natural through the nose.

T'ai Chi encompasses three levels: the exercise, pushing hands, and free fighting. It is considered an internal system of learning and stresses the yin-yang principle of positive and negative forces.

**KARATE:** Karate originated in the islands of Okinawa, becoming refined in the seventh century by the Okinawan king, Neopashi, who noted the discipline attained through Shorin Ji Kempo. Thus, combining its teachings with the Okinawan “te,” it became the beginning of Karate.

Okinawan history, throughout the centuries of invasions, has greatly influenced the distinct flavor we know today. Japan, at that time, forbade the manufacture of weapons; even the making of ceremonial swords had ceased. So, weapons

were originally fashioned from farm tools and became adaptable in the open hand postures.

In 1902 Karate was adopted into the school systems as part of the curriculum. It spread through Japan and Korea, who formed their own systems. Karate reached the United States after World War II, and has become one of the most popular of the martial arts.

Karate uses sharp blocks, kicks and punches, that are designed to strike and retreat in a single motion. Speed, balance, power and coordination are the principle effort of the practitioner. The kiai, or loud shout is used to empty the diaphragm and to summon extra power for attack (this energy is called Chi).

**KENDO:** Kendo training concentrates on developing seven efficient blows and one thrust. Efficient blows are given to three areas of the head, the right wrist, left wrist if it is at shoulder height or higher, two positions of the trunk and a direct thrust to the throat. No other targets are included. When delivering a blow or thrust, the practitioner calls out the area of contact, showing the opponent has been struck mentally as well as physically.

Modern kendo is largely practiced as a sport which includes spiritual training. The practitioner is taught the fundamentals of postures for engaging, gripping the wooden sword, and synchronization of foot and arm movements; these basic skills take time to develop. Eventually the attack practice is employed with partners. Kendo places great emphasis on eye contact and the kiai.

**KYUDO:** Modern Kyudo is an effective form of physical and mental training, finding spiritual perfection of self and, ideally, mastering the unit of mind, body, and bow. Shooting skill and quiet dignity are characteristics of the archer. Not only should one be able to repeatedly penetrate a target, but in kyudo self-discipline and spiritual values are equally important.

**AIKIDO:** Aikido is not primarily a system of self-defense. Its philosophy is a calm and a confident reaction to any form of stress or

confrontation and a free flow of personal expression that offers no conflict with nature or the universe.

Its techniques include throwing and grappling, the latter largely confined to joint locking techniques and countering attacks with graceful yielding movements that keep in balance with the universe.

Like Tai Chi and Kung Fu, Aikido uses circular movements which are combined with twists and shifts to avoid the impact of the attacker.

**JUJITSU:** The Jujitsu practitioner first learns the art of falling down with a sharp smack of the arm against the mat, breaking the fall and rolling up again in a defensive stance. Next, the student learns forms of escaping and grappling, and throwing forms; choking, breaking and nerve techniques are added as the practitioner progresses.

Jujitsu stresses unarmed techniques but may also deal in small weapons, which can become adaptable to larger weapons.

**JUDO:** Judo has its historical roots in Jujitsu. It incorporates "Katame-Waza" (mat techniques) and "Atemi-Waza" (throwing techniques) founded on scientific principles which integrate combat training with mental and physical education. All harmful and dangerous techniques were eliminated.

The main principle is to force your opponent to make his body rigid and lose his balance, and then, when he is helpless, you may attack or simply gain the advantage.

## **THE DOJO**

The dojo is traditionally known among the oriental people as a school or institution where students are instructed in any of the martial arts such as karate, judo, etc. The dojo is treated with particular respect and veneration by all karate students. They always bow whether entering or leaving it. While class is in session, conversation of any type is strictly forbidden. Total concentration of energy and thought is

focused upon the exercises being performed. Even while in repose the karate student maintains solemn and quiet deportment out of respect for the others who are using the exercise deck and for the serious purposes to which the exercise deck is devoted.

The dojo is the meeting house of all the karate students who use it, and so high is the esteem in which it is held that its care and maintenance is not entrusted to outsiders or janitors. The dojo is washed, cleaned, and kept spotless through the personal attention of each and every karate student who uses it.

The karate dojo is no ordinary place of exercise. The high respect given the dojo by the karate student can only be explained by its close association with the devotion which the teacher and the serious student share toward karate. It is the place where the student strives to arrive at the high point of readiness and willingness to submit his body and his mind to the learning of the ancient discipline of karate.

## **THE HISTORY OF KARATE**

The origin and development of karate are intimately tied to the history of the Okinawan people, who brought it to its present form and preserved its tradition for centuries. A major root of the discipline, however, can be traced to ancient China, where in about the year 562 B.C. Daruma Tashi developed an exercise form for the use of buddhist monks. The exercise form was first taught by Tashi at the Shorin Temple and eventually became known as "Shorin Ji Kempo" meaning "Way of the Fist." The exercise discipline concentrated upon the art of learning to control and master the body, mind and soul.

In the 7th century, Chinese feudal warlords invaded and occupied the Ryukyu Islands, known then as Uruma (Okinawa). They brought with them the techniques of Shorin-Ji Kempo. The Okinawan people had already developed a system of self defense called "Te" or "Hand." The Okinawan king, Neopashi, was impressed by the discipline attained through Shorin Ji Kempo and com-

bined its teachings with Okinawan Te. The combination of the Chinese and Okinawan systems was the beginning of karate.

During the 17th century Okinawa was overrun and occupied by the Japanese. The Okinawan Samurais were disarmed and forbidden to own, use or carry any weapons. Faced with the necessity of defending themselves and their people from their oppressors, and having only their bare hands with which to fight, the Samurai warriors turned to the ancient forms of karate. In those desperate years they developed and refined the techniques of karate until their bodies and hands were as deadly and effective in their defense as had been the swords that were taken from them. Karate was taught in secret and was only known to the king and his most loyal subjects. Where and how it was taught was a mystery to most Okinawans for to be introduced to the discipline of karate was to be marked as one of the most poised and trusted human beings and was an honor as high as any that could be bestowed.

In the more settled times that followed, karate, although remaining secret and known only through word-of-mouth on the Island of Okinawa, became a course of exercise valued for its health and character building. In the 17th century Master Matsumura collected and studied the various forms of karate that had grown up, systematized them, and designed an overall method for the training of karate men. His way, "Shorin Ryu," the way of Master Matsumura, is the style of karate taught in our dojo.

## **KATA**

To grasp the meaning of kata, the true essence of karate, one must be involved in one of the martial arts. The layman cannot hope to grasp the state of mind of an individual performing a kata. To him, the kata is only a series of movements that look like a form of dance. However, these beautiful and graceful move-

ments are in reality far more than just a series of blocks, punches, kicks and stances. One of the major aims of the karate practitioner is to be able to perform all of the kata accurately. As the performance of kata improves, one becomes aware of more than the physical being. The ancient saying, "There is body, there is mind" implies that we must first master our own body before we may turn to any vogueish philosophy.

The student repeats the kata many times in each class, placing emphasis on posture, balance, speed and coordination. Great emphasis is laid on increasing the student's vigor, heart, mind, and soul. The teaching is usually conducted in a group, but the individual's performance of the kata is continually revised by the instructor. Gradually the student's character, attitude, and intentions are unmistakably revealed to his instructor. Only then can the instructor help the student to acquire the mental power to overcome his own weakness and recognize the vanity and false ego which lies within him. This can be accomplished only by constant practice of the seemingly simple moves of kata.

Karate-do teaches that we should strive to be calm in the face of adversity, and to do whatever it takes to accomplish a task. These complementary attitudes give us the ability to accept the worst and prepare to deal with it. It is only a small step from applying these principles in a fight to applying them to all aspects of life: For most of us, the latter is the more important application, as our fistfights may be few, but our lives are filled with obstacles we must overcome. Only by remaining serene and focused, can we surmount our misfortunes, as well as the troubles of our loved ones. Indeed, by remaining tranquil while those around us become overwrought, we become the foundation on which others may rely. ▀

## **Karate Black Belt Katas**

(Okinawan Karate-do/Shorin-Ryu Karate U.S.A.)

**SPECIAL EXERCISE:** Oyo-Tan Ren

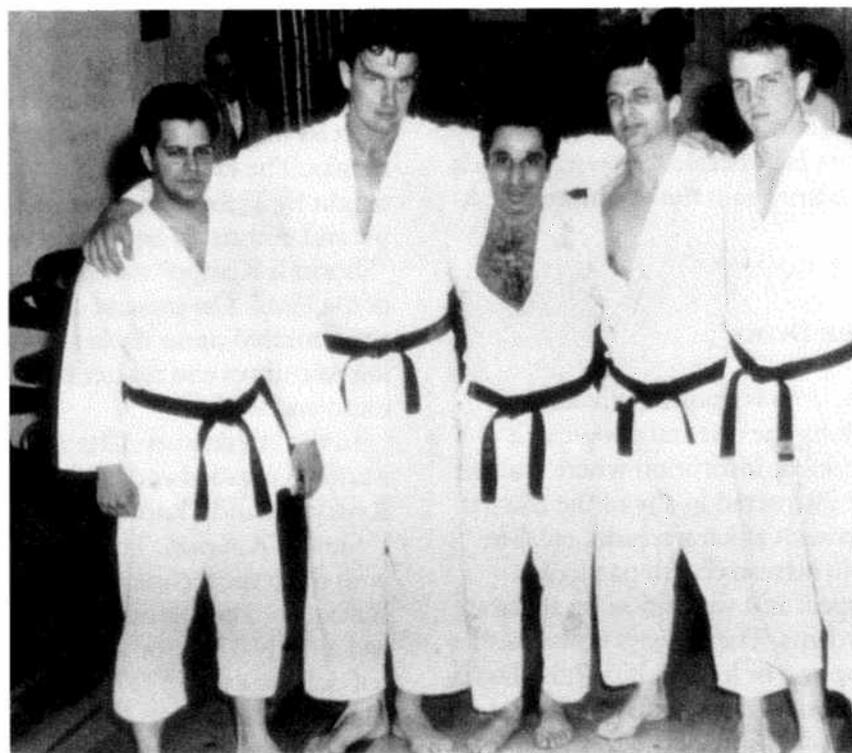
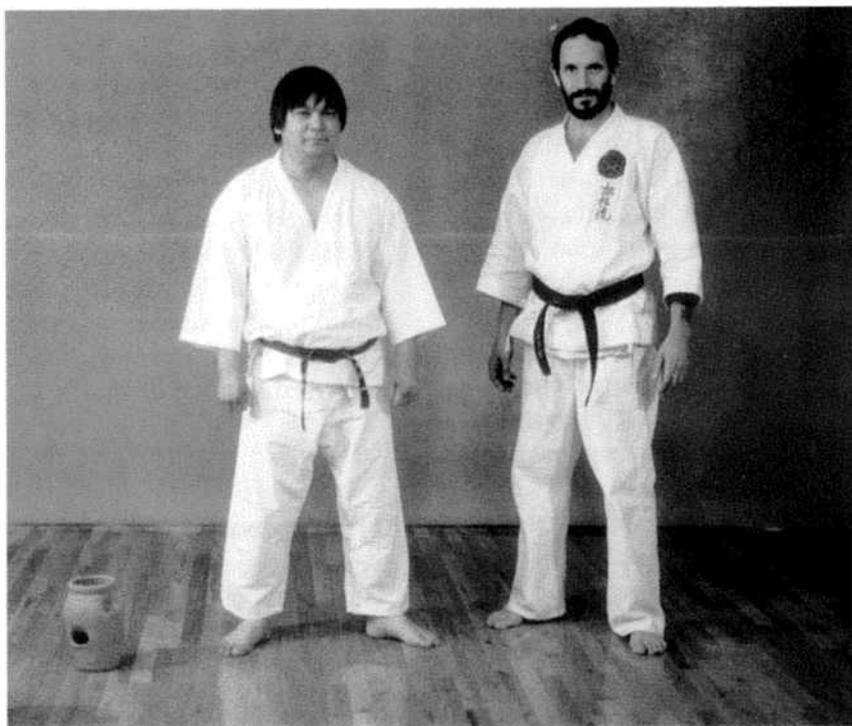
**FUKYUGATA:** Sho-Dan, Ni-Dan, San-Dan

**PINAN:** Sho-Dan, Ni-Dan, San-Dan, Yon-Dan, Go-Dan

**NAIHANCHI:** Sho-Dan, Ni-Dan, San-Dan

**SPECIAL KATAS:** Wankan, Ro-Hai, Pa-Sai, Chinto, Go-Ju-Shi-Ho, Ku-San-Ku

**KOBU-JITSU:** Bo-Jitsu, Sai, Nunchaku, Kama, Tuifa





New York City Dojo, 1982.



Marketplace, Okinawa.



Nagamine Dojo, Okinawa.

**AN INTERVIEW WITH GRAND MASTER ANSEI UESHIRO**

*an excerpt from a forthcoming book by Jeff Moriber entitled "The Graphic Martial Artist"*

JM: "Looking back over the period of time since you first brought Shorin-Ryu Karate to the United States in 1962, how has karate translated into our Western culture? Can it be as meaningful for someone outside the Okinawan culture as inside? What were your expectations in 1962 and have they been met?"

**MASTER UESHIRO:** "First, in the West, karate was seen mostly as a form of self-defense, but one with a special mystique because of its Eastern philosophy. Now it has become a sport, like boxing or wrestling, but it still has that mystique. It's not just the mystique; many people now realize that it's a system that helps you order your whole life. In that way, it can be as meaningful to someone outside the Okinawan culture as inside, yes, but the meaning is different because the cultures are different.

As for my expectations in 1962, as far as my students understand the deeper meaning of karate, as a way to focus and shape their lives, they have been met. But in addition, I'd like to see the view of karate as a destructive force, or solely as a money-making proposition, eliminated. Karate is an art that can benefit society and help improve people's lives.

I lifted my head and as I was about to ask an additional question he raised his hand and, establishing his ground rules, gently said: "Just because you are writing a book doesn't mean that you should give away all the meaning and secrets of karate. Neither the book nor the answers have to be long to be complete."

JM: "What are your feelings about training with contact? You are renowned for your aggressive, full-commitment style."

His ever-present smile was now

replaced by a serious expression: "When you have to protect your life, you must use all your strength and skill. To use force and contact when you train would be very dangerous and foolish. It would cause injuries that would prevent your continuing to train. Training should prepare you to fight. 'To fight is a very serious thing,' my Master said, 'Sometimes it is alright if you are hit once, if that will end the fight. Fighting should not be entered into lightly.'" The Master referring to his Master, spoke volumes to me. His smile returned.

JM: "Is the concept of Karate-do as meaningful today as it was in the past?"

**MASTER UESHIRO:** "Certainly. Karate teaches you how to focus your being on certain goals, whether it be to perfect a kata, or to master the nun-chuk. And this focusing carries over into the rest of your life. Karate is more than just a physical skill; it is a balancing of mind and body. It's a spiritual system as well as a sport, and one that is as valid today as it was two hundred years ago."

As to karate's validity in today's times, Master Ueshiro added further clarification when I reintroduced the question: "In any culture, in any country, at any time in history, a person must always be able to defend himself."

JM: "You were born into the karate tradition. Was there ever a time when you questioned whether or not you would go on? What has karate meant in your life?"

**MASTER UESHIRO:** "No, there was not any time when I questioned whether or not I would go on. Karate has been my life; it has given me the philosophy for living my life."

JM: "How does one continue to practice karate as he advances in age?"

**MASTER UESHIRO:** "Karate is a way of life. It is not a thing that you just learn when you're 18. There is spiritual growth as well. Obviously, physical strength will decay, but the aesthetic value you get from the art will continue to strengthen over the years."

JM: "We all face difficulties. What aspect of karate was most difficult for you and how have you tried to overcome it?"

**MASTER UESHIRO:** "There are always other difficulties in life, and karate for me is a form of meditation almost that relieves the tensions of everyday life. If there was a difficult aspect of learning karate, I didn't realize it was there. I once had an accident that made me lose the use of my hands; recovering from this accident, mentally and physically, was the main struggle of my life. It was karate that made it possible for me to recover."

JM: "What did it mean to you when you received the Sho-dan rank? What did it mean to you when you received the Kyoshi title?" (To be awarded the title of Kyoshi one must first be a Go-dan, fifth degree black belt. After a minimum of two years at that rank and being at least 35 years old, the title Renshi may be awarded. After ten years as a Renshi and being at least 45 years old, the title Kyoshi can be awarded.)

**MASTER UESHIRO:** "The better I got, the more I felt a responsibility for the art, to help those who are learning it."

The underlying doubt and skepticism that I had brought to this meeting had dissolved. Here before me was a man of disarming charm and personality who had, beneath his ebullience, a rock-solid strength in his beliefs and dedication to karate and its traditions. I was happy that circumstances allowed me to have this opportunity to talk with him.

I thanked him and he thanked me. In parting we shook hands, which he followed by bowing deeply. I returned the bow, having had lots of practice in the dojo. He then returned my bow with a second deep bow. I knew I had entered new territory. I regained my balance but not my composure and returned his bow. How I wished I knew more about the etiquette of bowing. I felt awkward as I made this second bow not sure when to rise or how low I should be, hoping that despite my feeble effort I was showing the

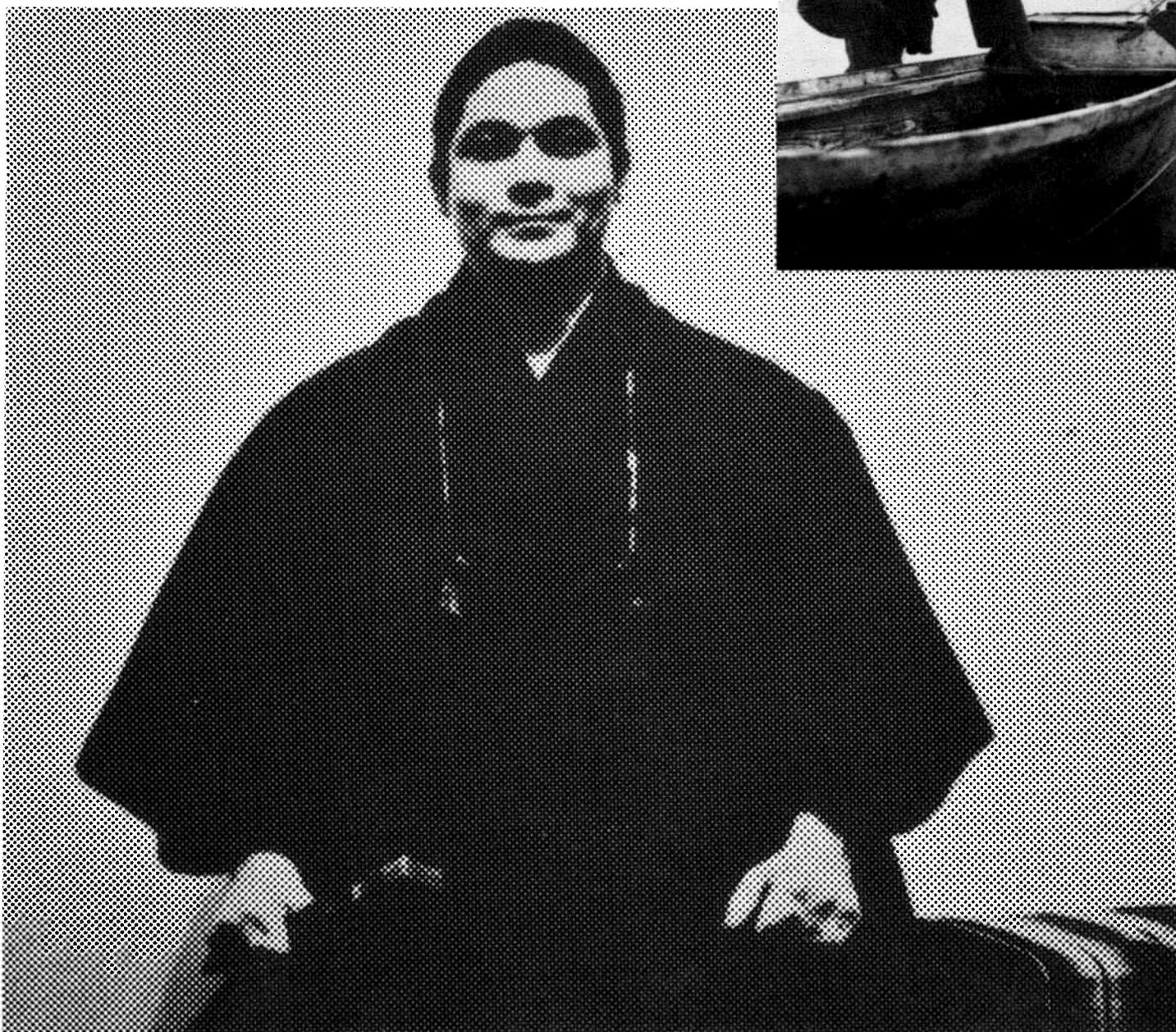
proper respect, which I genuinely felt toward this man.

He would have the last bow.

My mind reviewed our meeting as if it was in fast-forward. Over and over, the one highlight that kept pushing itself to the front was Master Ueshiro's response to my last question. Indeed, after this meeting, there was no doubt in my mind that that answer should be the last word.

*JM: "To those who read this book but are not now studying karate, what is the one thought you have for them? For those who are now studying, what would you tell them?"*

**MASTER UESHIRO:** "To those who are not now studying, I have nothing to say. I would tell those who are now studying not to stop. Karate is a lifelong pursuit." ■



## MOVING ZEN THE TRADITIONS OF KARATE AND ZEN

In the sixth century A.D. an Indian monk named Bodhidharma (Daruma in Japanese) left his home and made the arduous trip over the Himalayas to China. His mission was to spread the teachings of Zen Buddhism to the people there.

When he arrived at the monastery at Shaolin he found that the monks welcomed the insights he had to offer. They were eager to take on the rigors of zen practice. But the long hours of zazen were simply too much for the sedentary monks. For all their good intentions they were unable to make any progress.

Bodhidharma was a skilled martial artist. He knew that there was no better way to put the ego aside, and place the consciousness in the moment, than to engage in vigorous martial training. The monks had added motivation. They were in dire need of protection against the vicious thieves who were active in the vicinity of Shaolin.

The monks became Bodhidharma's students. Before too long they began to show a robust strength many had not known since they were boys, and others had never known.

Soon they were able to endure the hardships of zazen practice, as well as the intense physical and spiritual demands of martial training itself.

This became their "Do," their path. This training is practiced to this day at the Shaolin monastery. There a visitor can still see the deep grooves worn into the stone floor of the courtyard by nearly a hundred generations of monks and devotees practicing their footwork... over and over and over.

As the centuries passed monks traveled from Shaolin to all parts of China, to Japan, and from time to time to the great fishing port halfway between the two empires – the island of Okinawa.

The Okinawans have always been a fiercely proud but peaceful people. They farmed and fished and kept to themselves. But during the period of civil war in Japan, the island was repeatedly overrun by rapacious armies from mainland Japan.

Any weapons the Okinawans may have had were confiscated during these periods. The Japanese soldiers, like most any occupying force, had little respect for the indigenous people, their homes, or their peaceful way of life.

In order to protect themselves and their families from the invaders, the Okinawans used the only weapons they had at their disposal: their bodies.



They combined the knowledge of their own martial heritage with the methods they learned from the Chinese. And they practiced. They practiced in secret. Often at night on deserted beaches, to escape detection by the hostile occupying forces.

Even at times of the harshest civil conditions the fundamental precept of karate was upheld: "Karate ni sente nashi." Karate is only for self-defense.

There are many stories that report the defeat of sword-wielding samurai at the hands of empty handed Okinawan masters. Of many brawl averted by the fierce, calm countenance of karatemmen.

It was because of their immediate almost desperate need for a practical, effective martial art that the Okinawan art, karate, evolved to such a spectacular degree.

In most dojo in Okinawa today beginner students spend only a few hours a week in classes. Black belt classes, however, go long into the night. And at dawn training begins again, with long, silent zazen practice.

Today we carry on a tradition of martial arts practice that stretches back 1500 years, and beyond.

A tradition of people becoming stronger, healthier, wiser. Helping to create not only stronger individuals, but stronger families, communities – a healthier, more peaceful world to live in.

Karate training is not easy. It requires dedication and relentless effort.

It isn't a sport or a game. It is an art. A journey toward self-perfection. It is a means to fulfill the deepest human striving and yearning.

Although the results of karate practice are evident shortly after taking up the practice, training lasts a lifetime. Dedicated practitioners continue to progress in Okinawan karate into their 70's, 80's and 90's.

The rewards of karate practice are enormous, and at the karate dojo they are available to every person who wants them – regardless of age size or gender.

Master Egami said: "The only secret is to practice seriously and with perseverance, in order to attain the state of mushin. This opens the doors of the hara (center) to consciousness."

Or, in the words of the ancient karate precept: "He who conquers himself is the greatest warrior." ■

## MAE-GERI

I felt like the most privileged San-kyu in Shorin Ryu when Scaglione Sensei asked me if I'd "mind photographing Master Ueshiro performing Fukyugata San." The pictures would be used to illustrate the kata in the soon-to-be-published Cummins-Scaglione *Question and Answer* book. And they had to do justice to the kata's composer.

The technical challenge in photographing Hanshi's kata was to find a camera that was fast enough. At the time, the best professional camera on the market was a Nikon F4 motor drive to 250 exposures per roll, and the motor drive, a staple of sports photographers, could fire eight frames per second. Each frame would "freeze" movement at  $\frac{1}{2000}$ th of a second. All this would allow us to capture the kata "naturally," without the loss of mushin or kiai had we "posed" each move separately.

The biggest concern was with mae-geri, the front snap kick performed towards the camera with audible kiai. Our chances of catching the kick either chambered or fully extended at the rate of eight frames per second were dismal at best.

Hanshi arrived the morning of the shoot, cheerful and relaxed. Sensing a bit of nervousness from the photographer, he immediately put me at ease by asking about the camera equipment.

Emerging a few minutes later in a plain gi, Hanshi modestly joked about how a "younger" person should be demonstrating the kata. He then performed his "warmup" consisting of one deep knee bend and we commenced with the first of two shoots.

Even through the camera lens Hanshi's movements were more fluid and natural than any I had seen. "So *this* is what Fukyugata San should look like," I remember thinking with awe. With only Scaglione Sensei and two other students observing, Hanshi flew through the

kata. The blocks and counters to the right, left and back were every bit as powerful as those straight into the camera. The kick was completely invisible; indeed, the only method of detection would be to *feel* this technique – not a desirable prospect.

The kata ended quickly, long before I could have assimilated every move. But I remember noticing Hanshi seemed even more ready, more relaxed and even stronger than when he'd started. The frame counter showed 193 exposures – only 24 seconds had passed from bow to bow.



Master Ueshiro performing flying side

Master Ueshiro walked off the deck breathing easily as I changed film backs for the next take. Hanshi said, "OK, Michael, are you ready?" When Hanshi asks, "Are you ready?" you know you are. Coming from Hanshi, the question is completely rhetorical. The motor drive cranked into eight frames per second and Ueshiro Sensei performed the kata again. As with the first take, I was amazed by the speed and agility of his powerful movements. At the end I got the same impression of being led full circle back to the kata's beginning, as if no time had elapsed. The second take ended

as quickly and naturally as it had started.

When the film came back from the lab (all 100 feet of it) the results were, for still photography, satisfactory. Ueshiro Sensei had "locked in" each move for two frames, or a quarter of a second. The first moves in the combination techniques managed to get caught within an eighth of a second (one frame).

But at the point where the kick should have been frozen in silver emulsion there was only the move before . . . and the move after. Hanshi's foot must have traveled out

and back – a distance of about 10 feet – well within an eighth of a second. The equivalent of zero to 60. Much to Grand Master Ueshiro's disappointment, modern technology was no match for his front snap kick. The only way to capture the kick photographically was to pose the move. ■

*"Less and less do you need to force things, until finally you arrive at non-action. When nothing is done, nothing is left undone."*

LAO-TZU

The western culture looks upon certain dates – anniversaries, birth-dates, whatever as a time of celebration and self-congratulation. The eastern attitude may not be the same. The first day, the first year, the first decade run together. Each is a highlight unto itself. A kata performed for the thirtieth time is as pleasurable and fascinating as the one that is done for the first time, for the time before or the time after, for the three-thousandth time. Much can be shared between the eastern and western outlook. There is a certain structure, security, serenity provided by the continuity of years that keeps one humble and humbly in awe of this one immense contribution to the lives of so many made by this one Grandmaster Ansei Ueshiro. ▪

The only way even remotely to repay our debt to Master Ueshiro and all those who shared in our development is to continue on, expand the “family,” spread Shorin-Ryu. Arigato Master Ueshiro for allowing all this to be possible. ▪

As a result of the teachings of the Shinden, and all the Sensei of Shorin-Ryu we can become better human beings; we prepare for battle so that we are able to “Keep Peace.” ▪

“To refine” something means to “purify,” to distill it to its essence. That, to me, is what karate and karate-do are all about. Continual practice of technique until there are no extraneous or unnecessary movements. Release of one’s personal concerns during training, so that the focus is purely on karate. Breath moving properly with blocks, kicks, and punches, until mind, body, and spirit are in agreement, in harmony. Reaching your own core, or essence, where there is total power, complete calm, and all possibilities. ▪

Thirty years ago, Master Ansei Ueshiro arrived in the United States. With him came Fukyugata San and the “move forward” philosophy of Shorin-Ryu which this kata represents. Physically, the moves are constantly moving forward with speed and combinations of attacks and blocks, invading an opponent’s space. But the move forward philosophy does not end with this kata and its emphasis on moving forward in a fighting situation. This philosophy can be recognized in other ways while training in Shorin-Ryu. From an individual’s point of view, techniques and kata that seemed so foreign and difficult as a white belt can later be practiced and demonstrated as one advances through the ranks. This could be perceived as “moving forward.” “Moving forward” mentally and spiritually is another recognizable aspect, how a person deals with certain situations, if it was with anger or hostility in the past, might, while studying Shorin-Ryu realize that staying calm and staying within one’s hara would be a better and healthier course of action. The expansion of new dojo which have their genesis in New York City are all examples of this philosophy of moving forward and spreading the knowledge of Shorin-Ryu. The list of examples, I am sure, is endless. The “move forward” philosophy will continue with dedicated deshi and this will be most evident when, thirty years from now, a brand new deshi will read this paragraph. ▪

Even the beginning student of karate can see the dramatic difference between slow-motion kata and kata that is performed at full speed and full power. To most students the kata that is performed at full speed and full power is the greater measure of their ability. But for some the real challenge is the kata that is done in slow motion. To these students the ability to turn off all tension so that the body moves gracefully and effortlessly, while maintaining full speed and power of the “spirit” within, is the real test. ▪

Karate is a lifetime marathon. We have heard this countless times and its meaning is a varied as the number of deshi. It means that karate training never ceases, on or off the deck. It is the continual striving for the next plateau; once reached there is no rest, the struggle continues. There are no successes or failures, just the continued pursuit of karate-do through desire, hard training, self-discipline and focused effort. It is truly a way of life where the real opponent isn’t on the deck or on the street but rather is in each and every one of us. On this 30th anniversary of Shorin-Ryu in the USA, many thanks to Master Ansei Ueshiro for all that he has given. ▪

Regulation of the breath also influences awareness of hara and ki. A secret transmission of a jujitsu school in Japan, circa 1710, as quoted by author (and 8th Dan Judo Practitioner) Trevor Leggett in *Zen and the Ways*, teaches, “Keep in a formal posture, exhale and inhale, thinking that the breath is passing just below the navel. This is in fact the natural course of feeling the breath, but because people move badly their inner organs are compressed, and the vital current is felt only as in the chest... The defect is bad breathing. So we must train to make the breathing correct.”

Shorin-Ryu Karate is a complete practice, in that it incorporates all the various points mentioned above including physical training and conditioning, development of ki, and awareness of hara and breath. ▪

At a point in one’s “karate life,” opening a dojo is the natural evolution of training, a step that will further spread the art and fortify our system while fortifying us; a duty as well as a manifestation of self-growth. We thank all those who have done so before us for the example and inspiration. ▪

## KATA POWER

Training has an uplifting effect. Kata training can raise your spirits, it can link body and spirit. You can experience a oneness, a flash of enlightenment. Kata has physiological effects too! Kata practice can produce temporary relief from the symptoms of a cold or make a tired body feel refreshed and invigorated. How does this happen?

We often refer to CHI in our training. The concept of Ki, or Chi, goes back to China and is one of the cornerstones of the oriental view about the order of nature. Put simply, Chi is a universal force or energy that is in all things. Chi-Kung is a Chinese term that refers to the study of Chi and its relationship with the human body. The Chinese have been studying this energy for thousands of years and have found applications for it in many areas: philosophy, religion, meditation, health, healing, longevity, and the martial arts.

Tai Chi Chuan offers an interesting example. It is practiced by many people in China and around the world. Tai Chi involves perfecting a long intricate form and repeating it at half speed and power. It looks like a slow motion kata. It requires coordination of body movement with breathing and it circulates and balances the body's Chi flow. This balanced, circulating Chi nourishes the body's organs and spirit which promotes health, healing, and longevity. Tai Chi is a martial art but its martial applications are not so widely known nor practiced. Most present day practitioners of the art are seekers of health and longevity.

Our kata training offers an interesting parallel to Tai-Chi. We work in patterned techniques, coordinating breathing and movement. We focus our Chi as in Tai-Chi; we are circulating and balancing our Chi, nourishing our bodies and spirits. Even though the intent of kata training is martial, its effects on health and spirituality are unmistakably

constructive. This paradox, destructive/constructive, is an example of the oriental idea of yin/yang. Outsiders often assume that karate is a violent art because we train to develop explosive power and focus it into devastating killing techniques. But karate is also a peaceful art, an art of inner peace that, if developed through the loving labor of kata perfection, promotes, health, longevity and – ultimately – enlightenment. ■



## SHADOW WARRIOR

Simple moves stir foundation, patience is the key, strive for perfection.

As I stand in the Dojo,  
gentle hands turn to power,  
striking the spirit of Shorin.  
Slicing, jabbing, cutting air,  
moving through openings, looking  
to drive through the heart of  
matter.

Vision the great fight of life where it  
all began.

Imagine a dojo on a beach or in a  
forest of pine trees.

The smell of pine needles in the air,  
giving strength to one's mind  
or letting the breath flow free like  
the salty sea.

Doing kata against the waves, the  
ocean pounding with loose sand  
giving way to every move, finding  
ground to endure to the end. ■

## HIT WAVES BACK DESPITE THE OCEAN

What a great view!! It was the natural power of the ocean, with strong powerful waves rolling up and drawing us in. At first, this great nature scared a group of white belt karate people. When beginning their kata, they heard the angry sound of the sea shooting its power. Everything else was minuscule in comparison. In front of the angry ocean their kata became better. Every movement they made felt like real karate. The angry sound became lower and lower in their minds. They heard their breath; then they breathed together with every movement. They were peaceful but powerful. They calmed down nature's angry power. What a great view!! It was a group of people with dirty white gi's hitting back the waves. ■

## A TOAST TO MASTER UESHIRO

30 years in this country.  
30 years (more!) in karate.  
Think of the things you have done  
for 30 years...  
Your family, your friends, your life,  
Commitment.  
Think of the commitments you've  
made, you've kept,  
For 30 years.  
On this, the 30th anniversary of  
Master Ueshiro's arrival in this  
country,  
I am grateful to him for his  
commitment,  
To all of us, To karate,  
To life!  
Arigato.

Like steps on a ladder,  
each Kata is a higher rung  
leading to perfection.

The first day one steps into the dojo  
is the first step in a journey of  
finding one's true self.

## FREEDOM THROUGH KARATE

It has now been 30 years since Master Ansei Ueshiro came to this country. When he came he had this great task in front of him; to bring Shorin-Ryu Karate with him, and us who practice this ancient art form can hardly express our appreciation of this contribution to America with adequate spirit.

When I came to America I had few ideas about what it would be like. The ones that I had were probably common for most people who arrive to America from somewhere else. Freedom is to be found here in this huge country, great nature sites and impressive monuments. Never would I have thought of finding karate.

I had an invisible conflict between karate and my ideas about the freedom I had hoped to find here. Shorin-Ryu Karate can not be separated from a rather strict discipline; we can not laugh or smile during class, there is a certain way of doing everything, and most things are very controlled; from our facial expressions to the execution of technique. To me all these things were the opposite of freedom, so why would I choose this thing apparently contrary to my goals?

I'm learning that freedom *can* be found through this, in the commitment and persistency inherent in karate.

Freedom is also to be found in the moment, exactly what karate is about – being able to train 100%, whether it be sitting seiza, doing kata at half speed, showing courtesy, or sweeping the dojo floor. This pertains to everything else we do in life, therefore karate will be an aid to other goals we have in life, not a limitation.

Freedom is to learn because one can have an open free mind, in fact *has* to have, to get the full benefit, also exactly what karate is. "Zen mind, beginner's mind."

Freedom does not necessary mean leaving N.Y. to get rid of the subway congestion. It can, with time, be found on the deck in the dojo, as the body and mind become less of an obstacle to itself. The moves and technique will become freer and hopefully will end in the perfection where the moves just flow.

America and especially N.Y. stands for me not just for freedom, but diversity of cultures, ideas, races and ways of life.

Also here karate-do makes perfect sense. There is no *one* particular type of person that is better fit for karate than others, but all types and ages: small ones, old ones, skinny ones and not so skinny ones, and we all get a different color when we train. Like America is big enough for extremes, karate is big enough for extremes too. The taller person can train and get full benefit with the shortest.

Freedom. We will find it where there are no limits. We will always find limits in our bodies, but with karate we can learn to stretch this limit, or even pass the one we thought we had.

Sometimes it seems as if our mind has no limits. In certain situations I know there is at least one. I came to think of one situation we probably all have been in or will be in at some point; training with injuries. It was

discussed at the recent Doshokai. We should not let that stop us from training, even if we can't go on the deck. Perhaps let the body train light and give the mind a harder class. Perhaps the mind will be able to take home something that is much more important for that day, than the 50 deep knee bends that was missed. If unable to train we can observe a class and learn.

Freedom is knowing that there is always something more; you will never bump your head against the ceiling because there is no ceiling. Bearing in mind that karate is 90% mental this is especially true. Observe the "perfect kata" and know that beauty we see, is only a small part of the whole.

American expansion on the North American continent stopped many decades ago, and we do not experience any economic growth either, but isn't karate-do a way where American can still grow?

I feel very lucky that I'm part of this and again I'd like to thank Master Ueshiro for introducing this ancient tradition to America, for sharing this valuable knowledge with people here. I'd also like to thank Sensei Scaglione, Sensei Baker and everybody else who help this tradition grow, in the spirit of the old Okinawan masters. ■



## **AWARENESS (MAI) – A PARABLE**

In the time of the Shogunate in ancient Japan, an aging samurai and teacher, whose sword had never been defeated, and his best and most accomplished disciple, who had just returned from battle and had become known throughout the kingdom as the best swordsman of his day, were spending a quiet day together walking through the woods outside of Edo (now Tokyo).

The venerable master swordsman was still a formidable fighter, but age had begun to diminish his senses – his eyesight was no longer as acute and his hearing had begun to weaken. Yet, his body was still that of a soldier, and his mind was as keen as ever, as was his skill with the sword. Indeed, only because of his advancing years had he lately begun to think that perhaps his friend and finest student might now be the better of the two, a thought he mentioned to his young comrade. Since they would never fight, the younger man replied, it was a matter of no consequence and no further discussion was required. The master accepted this with a wan smile, knowing he had pleased his student, but that the young man still showed him the proper humility and respect.

It was a warm, late summer day, with almost no breeze at all and the forest was virtually silent, but for the twittering of a few birds and the infrequent scurrying of an occasional small animal. They walked unhurriedly, taking in the forest odors, sights, and sounds, and discussing their lives and learning. Everything the young swordsman knew about fighting and surviving he had learned from his master, and he reveled in the fact that his sensei not only treated him with deep affection, but also with the mutual respect borne of countless hours of training side by side, and defeating all those who had come before them.

They walked in this manner for some time, discussing the experiences they had shared, the correct manner of approaching a battle, the time to prepare for conflict, and the time to avoid engagement. As the late afternoon began to turn to dusk they talked, too, of the manner in which one learns to use the sword, the right way to draw, the time to cut and the time to slash, the difference between the two and how this knowledge enables one to reach victory. And they talked most consistently about the correct state of mind, of awareness, necessary immediately to recognize what effort was required and the best way to execute it, whether it was armies at war or a struggle between two individual combatants.

This talk of awareness led them to discuss at length the application of the correct attitudes and the Way of the sword, dwelling often on the nine elements of the Way, as described by Miyamoto Musashi: 1. Do not think dishonestly. 2. The Way is in training. 3. Become acquainted with every art. 4. Know the Ways of all professions. 5. Distinguish between gain and loss in worldly matters. 6. Develop intuitive judgment and understanding for everything. 7. Perceive those things which cannot be seen. 8. Pay attention even to trifles. 9. Do nothing which is of no use.

As the day became dusk, they moved more and more often into silence, each understanding that the meditations of the other were as important as the discussion between them. Finally, one long silence took them into twilight. The night air began to grow cooler and the forest noises grew softer, as even the birds began to prepare for the coming night; the sylvan hush grew still deeper.

At this moment, the young master heard a soft noise, too soft to be called a noise, a mere stirring, in the branches overhead. With the training which was so much a part of him, he recognized that this almost intimate reverberation was the sound of an acorn losing its grip on the great oak under which they were passing, and he knew that it was

plummeting to earth immediately behind him and to his right, on the opposite side of his teacher. In that same instant, he also knew that his venerable friend and instructor had not heard the sound because of the loss of hearing his age had wrought. In the twinkling that these realizations came into his mind, he knew, too, that with his deftness he could draw his sword, step, turn and slash the acorn before it hit the ground, even before the brilliant swordsman at his side knew why he was moving at all. With his thoughts moving at breakneck speed, his body reacted; his draw was so fast that it was almost invisible and his katana moved so quickly that the acorn did not reveal that he had successfully cut it in half, until it hit the ground and the halves separated.

By now, of course, the older man had observed what was occurring and knew that his student had accomplished a remarkable feat of skill and agility. The young master slowly turned to his sensei, bowed, and said, "Is there anyone else in the Shogunate who could have done that? You yourself hadn't even heard the acorn when I had already begun to strike." And he bowed again, even more deeply than the first time "Thank you for teaching me," he added, believing this appropriate show of humility compensated for the excess of pride he was feeling and showing.

There was a long moment during which the master did not respond, and the solitude of the forest closed in around them. As the younger man watched with puzzled eyes, his teacher's demeanor gradually softened in the moonlight, and then saddened. After what seemed an eternity, but had been only a minute, the master replied mournfully, "But my son, it was only an acorn."

With this, the aged samurai walked into the darkness, alone. ■



## KARA – THE EMPTINESS

In learning karate–do, I have learned that my mind must play the major role in my training. Because, as I was taught, karate is 90% mental and 10% physical. That is why as we enter the dojo, we have to learn to empty our minds to prepare ourselves before training so that we can concentrate and focus on karate and also be ready to learn what our sensei has to offer. As deshi we will be able to learn and receive better with an empty mind.

To concentrate, I have to leave the world outside the dojo behind me and enter into a “new” world. Every training session is a new beginning that fills our minds with BUBISHI (martial art spirit). Being clear in our thoughts, attitude and understanding helps us to better know ourselves, our sensei, fellow deshi, sempai and the way of the warrior.

Kara doesn't just mean weaponless. I feel that when we face adversity, our minds must be empty, clear of all thoughts so that we can defend ourselves without resorting to violence and not let our emotions control us. The hardest training we face is the training of our mind, and this includes our attitudes and emotions. Together we can make it easier by helping each other through this narrow road. ■



I never met Sensei's Sensei  
And yet I learned his kata;  
I know the Master  
In this way;  
Shorin-Ryu way.  
Without his journey so many  
Would never know themselves.  
Domo Arigato Gozaimasu,  
Master Ueshiro!

## SUN TZU: THE ART OF WAR AND ITS APPLICATION TO THE STUDY OF SHORIN-RYU KARATE-DO

Sun Tzu lives in the shadows of history. Not unlike other figures in Chinese history such as Lao Tzu and Confucius a mystery surrounds him. When did he exist? Was he the author? Did he exist? These questions still are under scholarly debate. They are also irrelevant, for what is important is his work.

Written over 2,000 years ago, *The Art of War* is still considered one of the most comprehensive works on the subject. The noted British military historian, Sir Basil Liddell Hart, has referred to Sun Tzu's essays as "the concentrated essence of wisdom on the conduct of war."

The work is brief yet focused on the fundamentals of tactics and strategy. The concepts are ever-green. Leaders such as Mao Zedung\*, General Douglas MacArthur, Ho Chi Minh, and the "Nintendo Warrior" General Norman Schwarzkopf have studied and applied its principles. The precepts are equally applicable to the most micro conflagration in the realm of combat, the one-on-one, person-to-person encounter.

Before we examine the application of some of Sun Tzu's precepts, it is important to understand the general cultural linkage between China and Okinawa. I believe this connection is responsible for the transfer of certain key elements of martial thought to Okinawa which have manifested themselves in the underpinnings of karate-do.

Rooted and developed in Okinawa, Shorin-Ryu Karate-do was heavily influenced by Chinese martial arts and thought. Sensei Robert Scaglione in his work, *Shorin-Ryu Okinawan Karate Question and Answer Book* indicates, "Okinawa, the main island in the Ryukyu chain, is located midway between Japan and China. For centuries it served as a convenient stop

over for ships traveling between those two nations. Okinawa's strategic location made it a place where these cultures could cross-pollinate; a uniquely fertile ground where the best of both worlds could grow." With respect to its influence on karate-do this cross pollination is evidenced through the Okinawan karate master Sakugawa who lived in Shuri over two hundred years ago and learned the art of To-te in China.



The Chinese masters of self-defense performed their art in secret in Okinawa during its occupation by the Japanese Satsuma clan in the 17th century. During this period their kata was integrated with the Okinawan art of te. Kusanku, a Chinese expert in self-defense, gave one of the more famous demonstrations of this integration of techniques in 1761 in what was to become the Kusanku kata.

*The Art of War* predated the development of open handed martial arts by over a thousand years. However, the application of its principles were widespread and certainly, as we shall see later, had an influence on the philosophical, tactical and strategic aspects of the martial arts. The cultural exchange between China and Okinawa discussed by Sensei Scaglione and the influences of Chinese martial arts practitioners on the Okinawan arts support this conclusion.

The opening verse of Sun Tzu's classic is the foundation of his philosophy.

*War is a grave concern of the state; it must be thoroughly studied.*

He believed that the moral character and intellectual ability of man were decisive in conflict and would be pivotal in achieving success. Thorough study and moral character form the basis for success according to Sun Tzu.

They are also the underpinnings of karate-do. Sensei Scaglione in his book indicates,

*The truth inherent in Karate has been made manifest by countless hours of practice, innumerable repetitions of kata and techniques, throughout decades and entire lifetimes.*

It is a lifetime marathon as we have heard so often and if ever any practitioner has cause to use the art, only

the skills honed through thorough study will provide the edge in his or her conflict.

Karate ni sente nashi – There is no first strike in karate – is the moral anchor of Shorin-Ryu Karate-do. Sensei Scaglione tells us,

*Karate embodies physical, emotional and spiritual values which may be applied to all phases of one's everyday life... Once presented, all challenges will be swiftly dealt with through one's spirit, strength and character. This is the objective and reward of dedication to Karate. This is Master Ueshiro's philosophy. This is our philosophy. This is our Shorin-Ryu system.*

What follows is a brief discussion of some of the tenets of Sun Tzu and their relationship and application to Shorin-Ryu training.

*For to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill.*

There is no first strike in karate – the foundation of our system. Physical combat is to be used only as a last resort. The truly experienced practitioner will first avoid situations that may be confrontational. Secondly, the practitioner will try to diffuse those situations that are unavoidable through negotiation, guile or other means. We have learned our art well if we can achieve victory in these situations without fighting. Only after avoidance has failed should we resort to the use of our art. There are few instances where resorting to combat is justifiable as the Karate creed implies

## KARATE AND PHYSICS

*Mystics understand the roots of the Tao but not its branches; scientists understand the branches but not its roots. Science does not need mysticism and mysticism does not need science, but man needs both.* – F. Capra, “The Tao of Physics”

I don't know if any of the Shinden were trained physicists but the basic moves of karate show that they had a very good intuitive feel for physics. Some of the basic laws of motion are applied in the kata Fukyugata Ichi. Consider what happens in the transition from the first to second movements in the kata. In the second movement the deshi, from Zenkutsu-dachi, steps up to a natural walking stance and punches. Punching is simply applying a force with the fist, so Newton's Second Law of Motion applies:  $f = ma$  where  $f$  = force (something that produces a change in the motion of a body, i.e., your opponent);  $m$  = mass (for our purpose, your

weight); and  $a$  = acceleration, or a change in velocity (of your fist).

The force (power) of the punch results from the acceleration of the mass of your entire body, although you're only striking with the two knuckles on your right fist. Acceleration of the fist results from moving the entire body forward, pulling your non-punching arm back, and twisting (or torquing) the hips. This twisting of the hips is particularly important, because it involves a rotational or angular force (angular momentum) which is much stronger than the 'linear' force described in the Second Law of Motion. An even more dramatic example of angular momentum is the transition from the second to the third movement in the kata, where you 'spin around' 180° back into Zenkutsu-dachi and execute a Gedan-uke. You can feel how much more force is generated by this spin than a 'straight ahead' technique.

While it is not important to be able to reduce karate to a bunch of equations – something inexplicably important would be lost anyway if you tried – at the same time it is very interesting that it all has a basis in physical science, too. ■

## TAMASHIWARI

Believing... my bones are stronger than this wood block before me

Concentrating... eyes focused on the target

Understanding... that “failure” will open up this opportunity to me again

Remembering... drop my weight... speed plus mass equals power

Feeling my heart race I await my turn

Breathing... it's quicker than usual

Anticipating... the impact of hand slicing through wood

Envisioning... the heel crashing through brick

I've never felt more ready to face a challenge

I stare down at the wood  
it's a reflection  
of me

Arigato ■



## KARATE DISCIPLINE

The role of physical and mental discipline in the study of karate cannot be overstated.

Physical discipline is the ability of your body to obey the instructions sent to it from your brain. Almost everyone has minimal motor capabilities which were developed in early childhood. In karate we strive to further develop these capabilities by constant repetition and refinement of technique. By doing this, the body acquires the physical discipline to perform the desired movement upon receiving the appropriate signal from the brain. It



may take years, or even decades, to achieve this level of discipline, depending on one's natural abilities and the intensity of the training. Once achieved, this level of discipline can only be maintained through constant reinforcement. If one stops training, the capabilities quickly deteriorate. The longer the lapse in training, the longer it takes to regain the capabilities once training is resumed.

As important as physical discipline is to karate, the true art of karate cannot be mastered without the corresponding development of mental discipline. I would define mental discipline as the ability of your mind to control and coordinate the signals sent out by the brain. I would also define it as the will power to overcome the obstacles that are placed before us, and the determination to achieve the goals that we seek.

Certainly it requires a minimum level of mental discipline to return to the dojo after the initial two or three classes. Some of the new students drop out of karate after realizing the amount of work and dedication it takes to remain in class. Those that continue face other challenges that require an additional degree of discipline. The challenges may include financial hardship, conflicting activities, injuries, physical limitations, illness, or just plain laziness. How many times have we hesitated to go to class because we did not feel like it or because it was too hot or too cold. But, having gone, we were rewarded with that good feeling of having tried our best and of having not given in to weakness.

But what requires the most mental discipline is performing a kata many times, each time making many mistakes, and not giving up. We push ourselves to our physical and mental limits concentrating on each technique, hoping to get it right, just once.

We can see from this, that to have any hope of mastering karate requires substantial amounts of both physical and mental discipline, and, furthermore, that studying karate will increase the degree of both. ■

## KATA AMONG THE KANGAROOS

The Outback of Australia. Isolated. Lonely. The kind of place where nature is uncompromising. Temperatures can soar to 140° in the day, and plunge to freezing at night. Poisonous snakes are plentiful, as well as the pesky bush flies. Yet it is also a place that is filled with so

much natural beauty, it is simply breathtaking. It is where an individual can really take stock in himself, to see if he has "the right stuff."

At first it would seem an environment as harsh as this would have little in common with Shorin-Ryu Karate, but a closer look will find the Outback and Shorin-Ryu are very complementary.

Shorin-Ryu, being a "hard" style, can be very devastating and powerful, yet the movements are fluid and graceful, almost ballet-like. There is an intrinsic beauty in the kata that can cloud the storm of energy in which it lies. The waza are technical precise, and not without meaning.

The Outback is similar; displaying the majestic MacDonnell Ranges, The Great Sandy Desert, and the spectacular Ayers Rock. The people live in harmony with nature here, yet they realize the very elements that contain this grandeur are the same elements that can bring about their demise.

Shorin-Ryu teaches respect from the moment a deshi enters the dojo; that respect is carried with him for the rest of his life. It is that respect which the deshi uses as his vehicle to progress through the ranks; to learn the art in the correct form and with the proper perspective.

Respect for the elements, likewise, is paramount to Shorin-Ryu training here. Training is best done just prior to dusk; by then the ground is starting to cool, the flies have left until morning, and the snakes have returned to their homes among the rocks. But then, the kangaroos begin to emerge from their habitats, to observe this curious figure, all alone, yet fighting an imaginary enemy.

Shorin-Ryu training is difficult at best, due to the isolation and not being a member of a local dojo. That is when the deshi reaches deep down and realizes that the lessons taught to him by his Sensei are not lost or forgotten, but merely a bit more challenging to grasp. For me, one day I would again like to experience the electrifying sensation that only training in a dojo can provide. Until then, I can only continue training and know the collective Shorin-Ryu "spirit" will be with me whilst I practice my kata among the kangaroos. ■

... should I be forced to defend myself, my honor or my principles; should it be a matter of right or wrong, life or death...

Sun Tzu's insight into preparation is particularly relevant to our approach to training.

*It is a doctrine of war not to assume the enemy will not come, but rather to rely on one's readiness to meet him; not to presume that he will not attack, but rather to make one's self invincible.*

Training should be a constant endeavor; we should always be prepared for any situation that may require the use of our skills. Training should not be done for the sole purpose of testing or other unique events. Readiness means consistent training week by week, month by month and year by year to meet any challenge any time.

Sun Tzu's view on the duration of war is simple and proved true throughout history.

*For there has never been a protracted war from which a country has benefited.*

While Sun Tzu discusses warfare his point is equally applicable to a person-to-person encounter. One strike, one technique is all that it should take to defeat an opponent. That is the goal. Once two opponents start to "face-off" and "posture" the fight will be long and more difficult to win.

Timing, momentum and the concentration of force were recognized by Sun Tzu as critical elements in achieving success.

*When the strike of a hawk breaks the body of its prey it is because of timing. Thus the momentum of one skilled in war is overwhelming, and his attack precisely regulated.*

Kiai literally means "spirit convergence" or "energy concentration." By using Kiai the maximum life force is focused in a killing technique against an opponent. One of the goals of our practice and study of karate is to be able to concentrate this energy, or the desired amount of energy, at the right time onto the selected target. Too little energy would be ineffective; too much may bring about an undesirable result;

and applied at the wrong time would render any focused technique useless.

In tactically dealing with an opponent Sun Tzu offers the following advice.

*Appear at places to which he must hasten; move swiftly where he does not expect you.*

In a fighting situation an opponent must be kept off balance. Most opponents, in this country, would not expect a kick and would very likely be unable to deal with such a strike. Closing distance quickly can catch an opponent by surprise. Attacking instead of blocking when an opponent attacks is another technique aimed at doing the unexpected.

Sun Tzu emphasizes making quick assessments of the enemy and devising tactics and strategy to meet the need.

*Now an army may be likened to water, for just as flowing water avoids the heights and hastens to the lowlands, so an army avoids strength and strikes weakness.*

*It is sufficient to estimate the enemy situation correctly and to concentrate your strength to capture his. There is not more to it than this. He who lacks foresight and underestimates his enemy will surely be captured by him.*

On a person-to-person level these precepts are linked and quite basic. The opponent must be "sized up" quickly. Is he taller or shorter than you? Does he appear stronger or weaker? Is he armed? Is he heavier? Are glasses worn? These assessments must be made quickly and a plan of attack developed accordingly.

A stronger opponent would more readily be defeated through attacks to the groin and knees. To take the advantage of reach away from a

taller opponent requires bringing the fight in close — closing distance quickly using elbow smashes and palm heel strikes to key target areas. These are just some examples.

Deshi should train kumite and bunkai often and with opponents of varying sizes, weights and skills. The study of when to apply specific techniques is as important as the study of the techniques themselves.

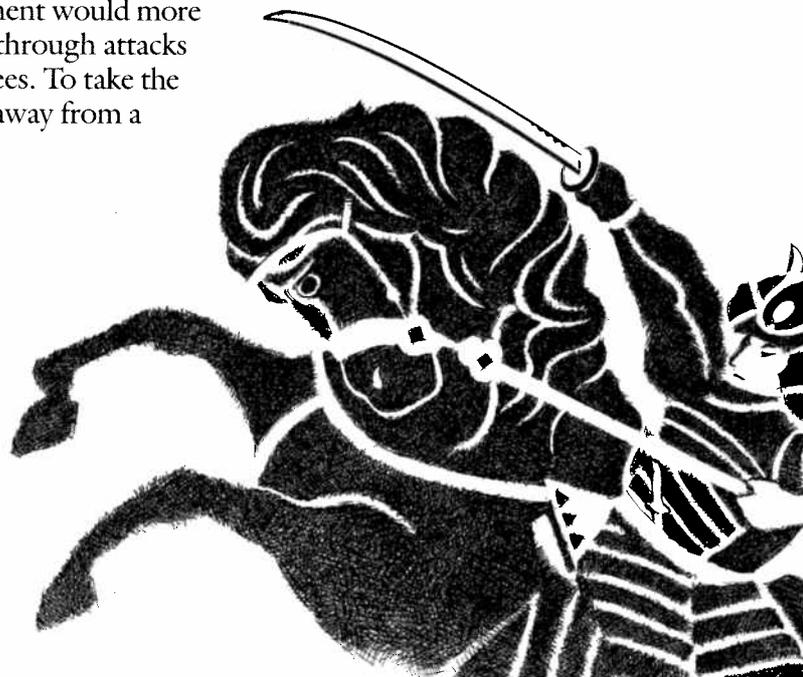
*Both advantage and danger are inherent in maneuver.*

Said another way — every action has a reaction. Every technique has a block and a counter. A strong foundation will help withstand almost any block. Quick blocks will deflect counter-attacks. However, the deshi must be aware of the weaknesses and strengths of the techniques used; for example, kicks may place the user off balance for a split second and punches to the face may leave the groin exposed. Knowing the weakness/exposure in techniques is as important as knowing the strengths of techniques.

\* \* \*

The foregoing are just a few of the many relevant passages of Sun Tzu's work. *The Art of War* is short and concise and on the surface simple, yet every reader brings new thoughts and interpretations. Its principles are timeless and their application broad. Any serious student of karate-do would benefit greatly from the study of Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*. ■

\*It is interesting to note that the younger members of Chiang Kai-shek's officer corp considered the work out of date.





### SOME DAYS....

On some days at the dojo, pictures of our past and present masters are only pictures and photographs behind glass. But on other days I might look up and wonder how they began karate and what did they learn. Perhaps after a series of kicks or punches, a glance at one of the masters may catch hold and transmit some subtle message. Once I looked up and felt "Responsibility," not as hearing a word but more of a feeling of continuation. Accept the self discipline of karate, learn respect, win the battle of mental vs. physical. During a kata, on another day, I caught the old master's look again. Build strength, build stamina, curb your distracting ego, do not give up these responsibilities to yourself. . . . all this transmitted in the wink of an eye from that picture on the wall. And on some days when bowing out, as my fingertips touch the dojo floor, through the silence, our masters give *their* nodding bow of approval. ■

### THE GARDEN

Two men each have a small plot of land. One clears the land, fertilizes, plants and tends his garden. He produces beautiful flowers and useful plants. The other man clears the land, then loses interest in gardening and moves on looking for something better. His land produces some beautiful wild flowers but is soon overgrown with weeds and thorns. So it is in the study of Karate-Do. ■

### COURAGE

I have long known that courage — true courage — never comes from a fighting skill such as karate, or expertise with a weapon like a knife or firearm. True courage can only come from within one's self. A courageous man knows his limitations, but isn't afraid to push himself past existing barriers to establish new ones. The truly courageous man is the one who is unafraid of being himself — for better or for worse. He's not complacent, and is rightfully unashamed of himself. Since my newly resumed journey upon the martial path, I have met several such men; one stands out in my thoughts and receives much admiration. He is not a sensei and yet to me he is. He is not a black belt, a brown belt, or even a green belt. He is, like myself, a white belt. The lesson he has re-taught me is probably one of the most important lessons I've ever learned. I seldom see him, but the valuable example he has given me is with me each time I step into the dojo. This fellow student has very pointedly reminded me that we only fail when we fail to try. In a world so over-filled with complacency and the "I can't" attitude, Gary has stood tall — a man in a world of so many mice. I think of his courage in the face of great adversity (suffered in a devastating auto accident) and am humbled. During training, when I feel weak, when I'm sure that I can't continue, I think of Gary. And I overcome. ■



Perhaps the most valuable lesson to learn is that in karate, as in life, one gets out of it exactly what is put into it. ■



**THANKS FOR THE OPPORTUNITY:  
THE PURSUIT OF THE UNATTAINABLE**

Spirit, intensity, focus, keen awareness of self and surroundings, balance, inner calmness, courtesy and respect for others... All are critical elements of Karate-do. In our dojo we pursue the perfection of each in pools of perspiration. We are not frustrated in the knowledge that perfection is unattainable. We accept that the value lies in its pursuit. We are not hung up by ego. We are relentless in search of our own weaknesses and imperfections, so that we may correct them and forge them into our strengths. We do not expect instant gratification. We take pleasure in knowing that our learning will stretch over years and years. We are thankful to those who have the patience to teach us and to those from whom we learn when we teach. With each step in this lifetime marathon we experience personal growth and enhanced perspective...

Pause for a moment and reflect: There has been no mention here of punches and kicks, or boards and

bricks. Yes, these are important physical elements in our training. However, the essence of what we do is far better represented by the other, more important qualities described above and the attitudes with which we pursue them. We carry these with us to all other dimensions of our lives – our families, our jobs, our communities, and our friends.

Shorin-Ryu provides us the opportunity for a disciplined pursuit of the perfection of these qualities. It is an opportunity which is deeply appreciated. We are indebted to Scaglione Sensei, the founder of our dojo, and to Baker Sensei, who has carried on as Shihan since our founder's departure to carry Shorin-Ryu to Florida. Importantly, Hanshi Ueshiro, we recognize that none of this opportunity would have existed without the courage, spirit, and dedication you exemplified when you left your homeland as a pioneer to bring Shorin-Ryu to the United States. On this Thirtieth Anniversary of that event, all of your deshi thank you very much. DOMO ARIGATO!! ▪

**FOUNDATION**

It was a typical winter morning in February: cloudy, blustery, damp and cold. Added to this was an incessant chill rain. As always, I was looking out my kitchen window as I was eating an orange.

The weather the previous evening had been particularly ugly. The winds had torn some of the exterior wiring from the mooring of the recently-installed cable TV system.

To my immediate right was a tree no more than five or six feet from my window. My eye caught a squirrel's nest perched precariously on the bared limbs. The nest swayed with the wind-blown branches... but, amazingly, the nest HELD!

I couldn't help but be struck by the parallel of a feature of our training, i.e., rooting – the necessity of a good foundation before executing a technique. Fantastic! ▪

**REFLECTIONS ON SAKUGAWA BO KATA:  
THE FAVORITE OF HANSHI**

After practicing Grand Master Ansei Ueshiro's favorite bo kata for about four years I made a curious discovery. The left foot remains firmly planted in the same location for the last third of the kata. As imaginary opponents attack from six different directions, all are dealt with without leaving the "spot."

I could attach little meaning to the kata's strategy until last August, when Sensei Judy Scaglione published an article in the Merritt Island Dojo Newsletter. Sensei Judy described a conversation she had with Hanshi on the subject of loyalty and the importance of "one dojo, one sensei." In other words, they were discussing the value of "staying in one place." Rooted to the spot. It suddenly became clear that Hanshi's bo kata is not about flashy movements or jumping all over the deck ("Yo-yo idea"). The kata is an expression of Sensei's firm belief that you commit to the place where you practice your martial art.



Master Ansei Ueshiro performing bo kata.

## CONDUCTING A CLASS

In a way it's like being a movie director. The director sees the film as a whole, the whole picture, as a teacher may see a whole kata or technique. But he has to communicate what he wants to his actor/student, step by step, scene by scene, so he can stay true to his vision – the big picture. In the case of a teacher, it would be to stay true to the tradition of Shorin-Ryu Karate. It is very important to pass on accurate information.

Teaching is a big responsibility. You have to be very wise. You have to know when to stop talking and just do it. To teach is to learn. Because as you teach someone else, your words come back to you with a lot of clarity. Whether it's correcting a move, or explaining a new kata, you get a fresh look at your own training. ■

In many karate classes there is an "electricity" generated during kata practice. When the group is soaking wet with sweat the dojo is filled with a "special" life. It is as though we have all just won the "big game," and everyone is MVP. ■

It is a good feeling knowing that you can walk down the street and fear no man. But at the same time, there is the responsibility that goes along with the gift. Strive to be humble, not egotistical. Be long on patience and understanding, short on harshness and quick-temperedness. ■

## KARATE

We are soldiers in an elite organization. Each of us must strive to move forward.

The more we train, the more we gain. We have to be fully committed in order to get the most out of our training.

Our training schedule should be

adhered to very strictly.

There are many excuses why we should miss a training session, but we should not use any of them. Coming to class should become just like putting your shoes on in the morning.

We just do it.

The more we sweat in peace, the less we bleed in war. ■

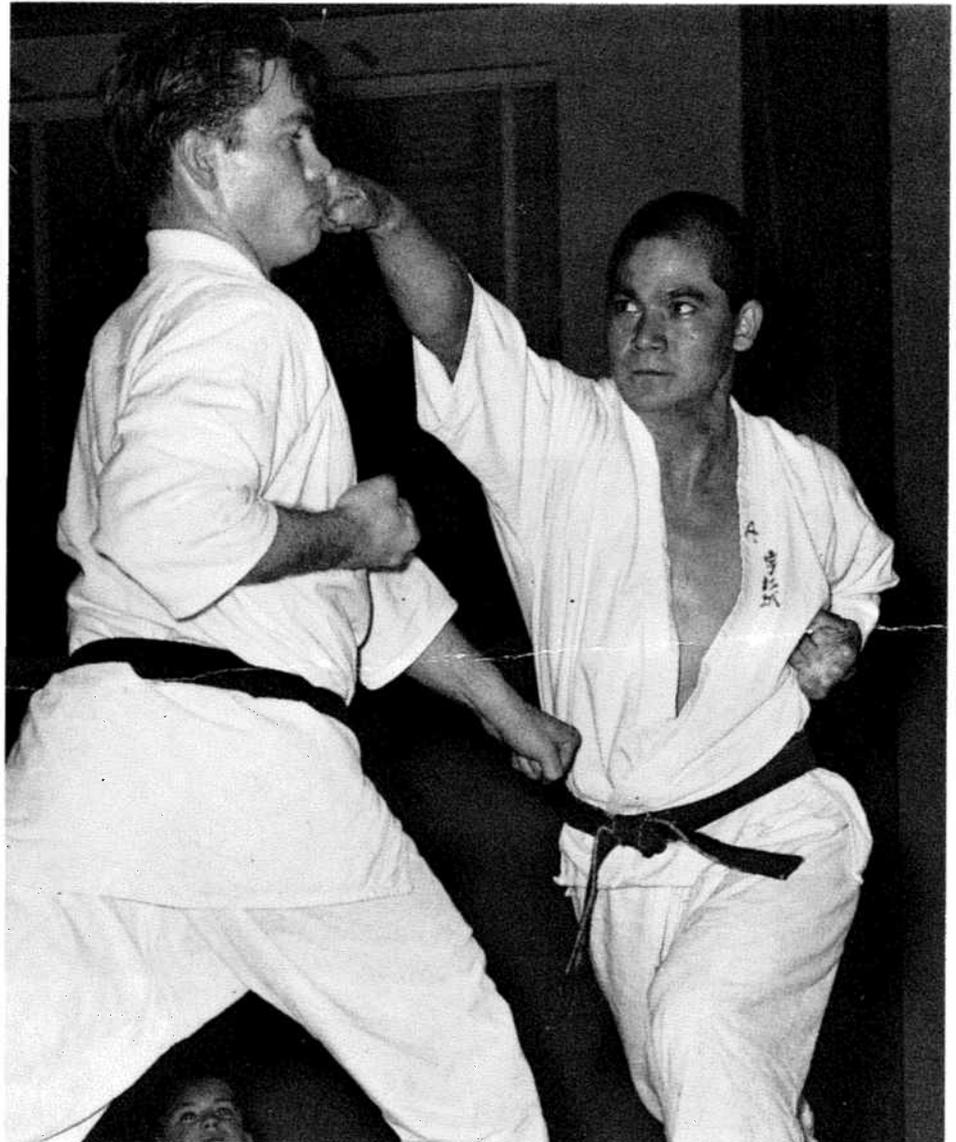
## STRENGTH, "KI" AND "HARA"

The cultivation of ki is certainly of paramount importance in karate practice. The Japanese word "ki" is a transliteration of the word "chi" in Chinese, which in turn was derived from the Sanskrit word "prana." Specifically speaking, prana is described as the vital life energy which animates our body and mind. This energy can be blocked through tension and stress, or cultivated through meditation and martial arts practice, and can be noticed as a sort of flow which animates our every action. Certain forms of Oriental

Medicine, most notably acupuncture and acupressure, utilize knowledge of the meridians through which this energy flows to promote healing from various illnesses.

Ki is psycho-physical, meaning that physical training, such as the various movements we undertake in Shorin-Ryu Karate practice, and the clarity of mind which develops from it, both contribute to the cultivation of smooth and strong energy flow. Keeping the body as relaxed as possible is integral to fostering the flow of ki, and thus building real strength.

The hara is a point about two fingers width below the navel, and is described as the center of gravity of body and mind. In the West, we usually imagine our being as emanating from our head or brain, resulting in a kind of top-heaviness, but the Eastern martial arts and yogic traditions unanimously teach the hara is the central point we need to be aware of.



Master Ansei Ueshiro performing yaku-soku kumite.



## SIX SELF DEFENSE TECHNIQUES

### WHEN TAKING PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION:

*Waiting for a bus:* You've been waiting patiently on line, in the rain, for the next bus or perhaps you've decided to hail a cab when suddenly someone pushes in front of you on line or darts past you to grab the door handle of the cab before you can get to it.

*Self defense technique #1:* Say "Please go ahead. You must be in a hurry."

### IN YOUR CAR:

*Driving a car:* You're driving at the speed limit in the center lane when someone not only passes you on the right hand side at about 95 mph but also cuts in front of you and practically takes off your front right headlight.

*Self defense technique #2:* Tune in your car radio to a country music station.

### IN THE STREET:

*Walking:* You're walking down a city street on your way to work. Ahead of you are three youths who don't seem to fit into the normal flow of people walking. At the pace you're walking you will come alongside of them on the next street.

*Self defense technique #3:* Slow down and cross to the other side of the street.

*Walking:* You're walking along when someone, who you don't know, walks up alongside of you and starts to talk to you.

*Self defense technique #4:* Walk faster.

### IN A STORE:

*In a department store:* The store is crowded and noisy. There's a half price sale on all merchandise for one day only. The salesperson waiting on you is becoming impatient "What's it gonna be?" he says.

You haven't decided.

"I can't wait all day. Can't you see I'm busy. What's the matter? You stupid or something?"

*Self defense technique #5:* Just say, "I'm so sorry to take up your time. I need a little more time to choose. Please help someone else while I decide. Thank you."

### SOMEWHERE FAMILIAR:

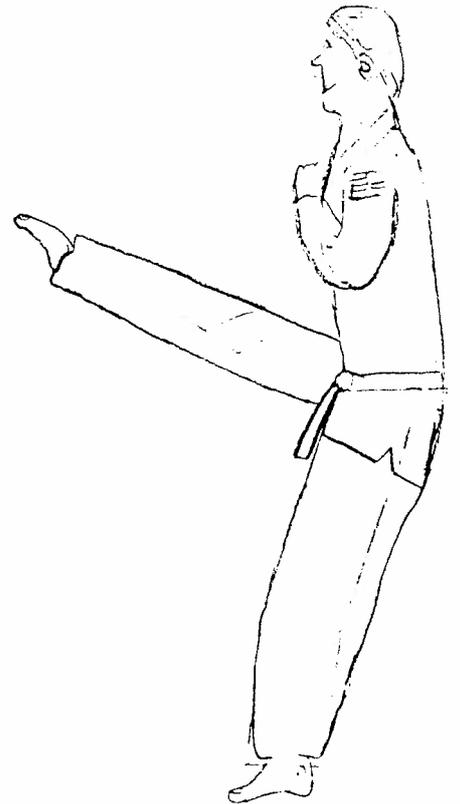
*You can't believe it:* This only happens to someone else. Not you. But there you are. Your back is now against the wall. You've tried to walk away but were blocked. You've tried to reason but to no avail. You've tried to give them your money, you swore you would never take off, but that doesn't seem to be enough. You've looked for help but no one is around. You keep looking for an escape route, but there is none.

*Self defense technique #6:* From you Hara. With all your spirit. With full speed and power. Holding nothing back: EXPLODE! ■

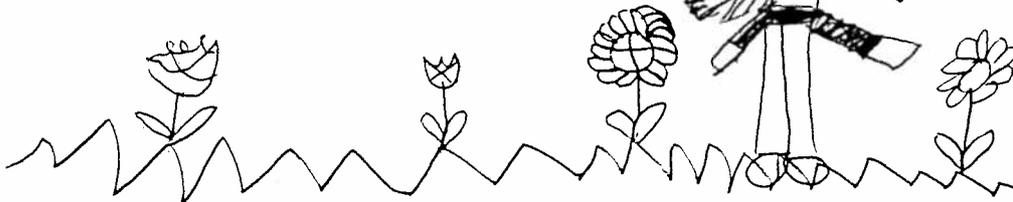
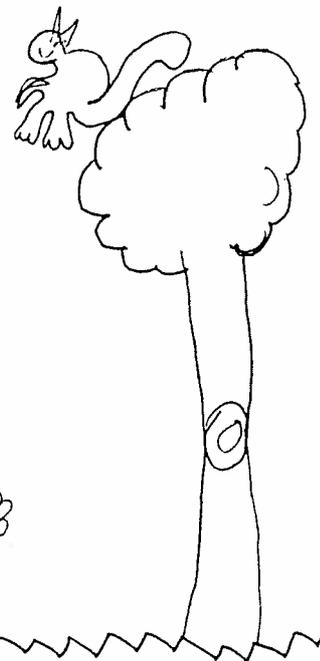


Submitted by  
Shorin-Ryu Karate

Kids



Karate is fun.  
You really should try it.  
It gets you in a good mood.  
Even though you don't want to go,  
when you get there you don't  
want to leave.  
That's what Karate is to me.



## LEARNING TO LEARN

Some critical elements in the 'style of learning.'

*Will:* When a student steps onto the deck, the Sempai is ready to teach, therefore the student should be ready to learn. Exercise in Will. When the gift of new material is offered, one shouldn't miss the chance to collect 'Sugar.' Old habits keep us alive but do not bring us to greatness, whereas new habits might do both. The quality of learning depends on many things. We can all learn by doing it, by seeing it, by hearing it and by feeling it.

*Courage:* Temporary failure is the centerpiece of learning. We rekindle our courage by remembering that failure is fleeting, natural and, if you let it, helpful. We must allow ourselves the luxury of our errors. We must learn to cue ourselves at the moment of error, to remind ourselves right then that our mistake is a benefit, something to learn from. The will to change and the courage to fail along the way make us calm and confident.



Joyce Santamaria, 1st woman promoted to blackbelt in the USA by Master Ueshiro.

*Awareness:* We are aware when we are free to catch, screen and absorb all the signals from our senses. We direct our senses to select and receive the signals from the environment that are pertinent to the art of karate. We intensify our awareness through conscious listening, seeing, feeling, and imagining – eyes, ears, touch and mind's eye. Our eyes must constantly move over our opponent. They look for nothing in particular, yet they always feel the target. The eyes do not flinch or break to the side. Awareness carries the athlete to understanding.

*Imagination:* Imagination is the awareness of what is about to hap-

pen. Imagination lets you see and feel the meaning of the technique unfold before it actually does. Listen, watch and feel for it, but don't chase after it. It is elusive.

*Concentration:* The other tool of learning is concentration. Concentration is focusing the awareness in order to act. We select, execute, and live with it. Concentration also includes focusing on what is happening right now, within and around you. Let go of all those things in your mind that aren't happening at the moment, such as business deals, relationships, worries, anxieties, problems, and solutions. Push them fearlessly aside for the time you are training on the deck.

*Practice:* Practice is sacred. It implies repetition, effort and commitment. Good practice is an immersion. This is the essence of kata. Practice is the opposite of drudgery.

Will, courage, awareness, imagination, concentration, practice. Taken together, these six principles form a unified technique for you to use to improve your learning skills. ■

*"Life is not a problem to be solved, but a reality to be experienced"*

– Kirkegaard

It's easy to view karate as a series of obstacles:

- Developing a proper zenkutsu-dachi
- Learning Pinan Shodan
- Or my personal favorite: pushups on fingertips

In fact, the sequence of training – most notably the kata – is designed increasingly to challenge the student's skills as he/she progresses. This makes a lot of sense. Unfortunately, we as students all too often put our minds in the mode of "this is new and difficult to do" rather than simply accepting the experience of learning something more challenging! This "karate is a problem" mindset inevitably results (speaking, unfortunately, from personal experience) in a great deal of unnecessary frustration and is, I believe, the main reason for the high attrition rate of new deshi. Experience and benefit from the challenges at your present skill level; you'll never have the benefit of them again. ■



Judith T. Scaglione, Yon Dan, 2nd woman promoted to blackbelt in the USA by Master Ueshiro.

We are women of Shorin-Ryu under Master Ansei Ueshiro.

We train hard and have much spirit.

We train diligently alongside the men.

Yet we are not men – We are women!

With grace and power.

With respect and humility.

With a strong eagerness to learn. Steely eyes

show great determination, will, and vitality.

Our bowing heads signify honor and reverence to the Shinden.

We are proud of the style we practice and in awe of its capacities.

We are an important part of the art.

**SHUKIN-KYU KARATE  
RULES AND REGULATIONS  
GRAND MASTER ANSEI UESHIRO**

1. A meeting of all black belts will be held once a year on the first Sunday in December.
2. All black belt testing will be sanctioned by Master Ueshiro.
3. There will be a 3-year training minimum before a deshi can take the Sho-Dan test. All Sho-Dan black belts must wait 2 years before being able to test for Ni-Dan. This requirement holds for all subsequent black belt ranks (San-Dan, etc.). All black belt tests are given at the discretion of the Dojo Shihan.
4. Only San-Dan rank may open and run the dojo.
5. A dojo license, obtainable only from Master Ueshiro, will be issued upon payment of a license fee to the Sensei of the applicant. This fee will be paid by the applicant.
6. A Shihan (dojo owner) must own and run only one dojo.
7. In an emergency or special situation, under San-Dan rank may open and run a dojo if the following conditions are met: (a) must be sponsored by the *applicant's* sensei; (b) then subjected to approval of board of Shihans (dojo owners) and Master Ueshiro.
8. A dojo may not be opened within 10 miles of another dojo except if located in a major city. ■

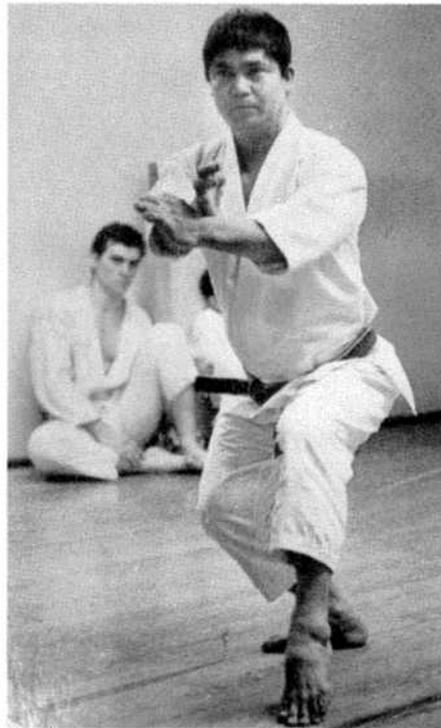
Karate has taught me: *I have no limits.*

I no longer look at a challenge and say, "I'm not sure if I can."  
I now say, "I will."  
And I dig in. And I learn. Often slowly. Patiently. Humbly.  
And I push, And I stick with it.  
I'm an athlete now. . .  
In all aspects of my life.  
I'll get there. Step by step.  
Whatever it takes.  
Thank you, Master Ueshiro.  
Thank you, all my Sensei. ■

It is not given to me to know how many steps are necessary in order to reach my goal. Failure I may still encounter at the thousandth step. Never will I know how close my goal lies unless I fail to take that next step. ■



Early photo of Master Ueshiro.



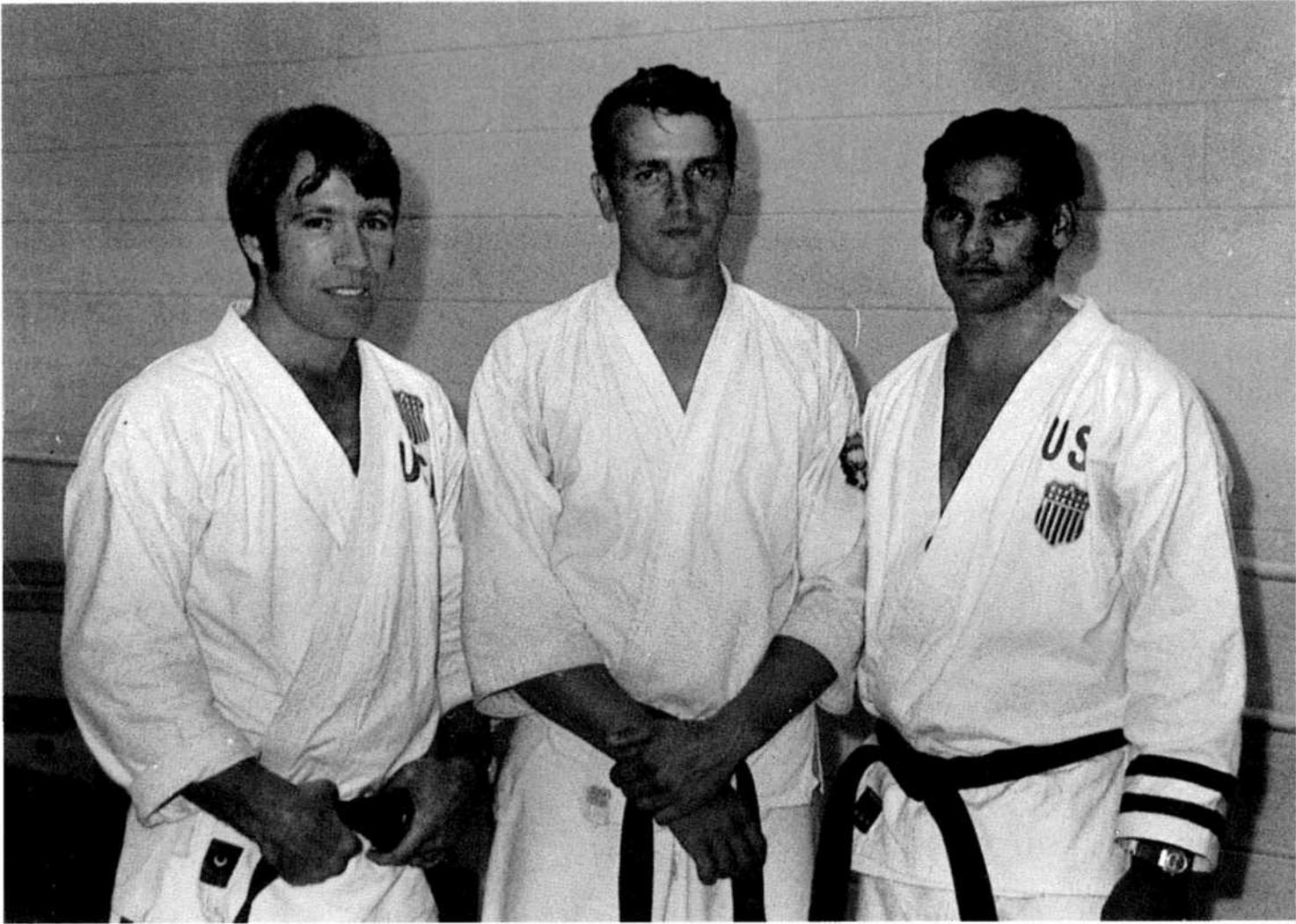
Master Ueshiro performing Chinto.



David Swenson-Tonfa and Master Ueshiro-Bo, 1960, Okinawa.

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L to R: Chuck Norris, Robert Yarnall (2nd American Black Belt under Hanshi Ueshiro) and Mike .

*United States Karate Association  
Top Three Competitors in the USA, 1963*