



# The Canadian Isshinryu Way Everything Karate & Kobudo

Isshinryu.ca

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## A Contest for Everyone!

Isshinryu.ca has been expanded and now you can help to improve it!

A recently added feature to the website is a photo gallery. Currently there are lots of recent pictures from the Thunder Bay area and from the 2006 AOKA World Championships from Windsor, ON (Including a video of Shihan Albert Mady's breaking show for anyone that wasn't there, or wants to see it again).

It would be great if you have any Isshinryu Karate photos, either older ones or newer ones that you could help the gallery grow.

Even if you just have older pictures that are printed, let me know and I can help make arrangements to get them scanned and on the website. Photos are a great way to share experiences in Isshinryu so please get involved.

Speaking of getting involved, The

Canadian Isshinryu Newsletter is holding its first ever contest! Everyone reading this knows that not only is Isshinryu the most effective martial art, but that training in the martial arts is beneficial both physically and mentally. So, the job is to share this information with others! Isshinryu Sensei frequently teach multiple times a week for little (or more often, no) money. They do it because they enjoy helping others to grow.

So, to help your instructors and your dojo, invite your friends, invite your family, invite anyone you know to try out karate. For every new student (or truant) student you bring to the dojo, your Sensei will send me a note letting me know you did and in the next newsletter the winner will be announced.

So what do you win?

You will be recognized in the

newsletter for your great contribution to helping others learn the benefits of Isshinryu Karate as well as a special reward that will be worked out with your Sensei should you win.

Remember, Isshinryu is a very effective and unique style of karate that has a lot offer. Some keys points when you invite your friends.

- 1) Very effective, no flashy techniques only ones that work
- 2) Natural movements and stances, no need to be a contortionist to be good at karate
- 3) Weapons as part of the basic style, no other style of karate has weapon kata as part of the base art.
- 4) It's fun! Isshinryu instructors are nice practical people that want everyone to enjoy themselves.

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## Eighth Edition of new Canadian Isshinryu Newsletter!

- Valuable training information
- Important historical articles
- Promotion & Tournament Results
- Important details on upcoming events.
- A Karate crossword

## Upcoming Events

### Seminars:

**Oceanside Enbukai Isshinryu Seminar with AJ Advincula Sensei & Tokumura Kensho Oct 13-15th.** Oceanside, California

### Isshinryu Tournaments:

**June 29th and 30th—IWKA 2007 World Championship. Princeton, New Jersey.**

**July 6th and 7th—AOKA World Championships Chicago, Illinois**

**July 27th and 28th—Isshinryu Hall of Fame Tournament Gatlinburg, Tennessee.**

### Open Tournaments:

**September 29th—Don Nagle AOKA, Inc World Championships. Bayonne, New Jersey.**

## Wansu—Part 2

### By Mike Fenton

## Isshinryu Karate Kata

### Background Part 8

Understanding the history of the Isshinryu kata can provide the Isshinryu Karateka with a greater knowledge of the kata and the techniques it employs. The origins of a kata can guide us toward understanding both the application of the technique as a student and a deeper respect for the evolution of the art as an instructor.

The information within this article is a result of research done as part of a book in progress. It is to represent a comprehensive resource of data concerning the art for all Karateka. While every effort has been taken to ensure accuracy of the information, any corrections or additional details are welcome from one and all.

#### Wansu Kata

汪楫

#### The Technique

Wansu kata is a kata with deceptively effective techniques. The majority of the techniques are executed while transitioning into the move to maximum power in the strike. At the same time, with only a few rare exceptions, the movements in the kata are never straight forward. The stepping positions the Karateka into an ideal position to strike with the maximum effect.

The complexity of the kata is immediately noticeable when compared with the previous kata. Wansu introduces the karate student to a variety of techniques and stances within a single kata. The kata has virtually every stance that appears in Isshinryu as well as many unique techniques.

The Bunkai for the techniques in Wansu are very diverse and can be applied to a variety of situations and do not specifically apply to a single circumstance.

#### The Origins

Wansu is a very old kata with a clearly defined origin. As well the recent history of the kata and its inclusion into Isshinryu is also known. Unfortunately, this does not give us a complete picture due to the age of the kata a gap exists in the definitive history of the kata.

The kata itself originates from the techniques of a Southern Chinese master who taught on Okinawa. The question becomes, who was the instructor and when did they teach?

1. Wang Ji in 1683
2. Wang Sifu circa 1800
3. Wu Xian Hui (Gokenki) (1886-1940)
4. Tang Daiji (To Daiki) (1888-1937)

The first Wang Ji is by far the most commonly accepted origin of the techniques. However, looking at the details of Wang Ji leads to some concerns about his ability to have been the originator of the kata.

1. Wang Ji was a high ranking military attaché in Okinawa on business; it is unlikely he would have had the time or inclination to teach the local Okinawans.
2. Wang Ji's stay on Okinawa was only 6 months. While it is possible to teach a kata within 6 months the political climatic on Okinawa meant he only had limited access to the Okinawans and teaching a combat art would have to be hidden from the public eye.
3. If we assume that Wang Ji was in fact an accomplished martial artist based upon the region he originated from he would have studied Quan Fa a northern Chinese boxing style. However, the technique is clearly from a southern Chinese style.

None of these factors can definitely prove that the kata did not originate with Wang Ji it just makes it less likely.

*(Continued on page 3)*

*“The kata itself originates from the techniques of a Southern Chinese master who taught on Okinawa”*



## Wansu—Part 2 Cont'd

### By Mike Fenton

The second case is the most likely. Wansu could easily be a mistaken translation of Wang Sifu. Additionally, Wang, being a very common name, could easily have been many Chinese martial artists who visited Okinawa over a number of years. Additionally, it may have in fact not even been a martial artist who visited Okinawan but a master in China who trained Okinawans.

These last two points relate to the possibility of a Wang Sifu teaching in China. Two individuals were known to train in China and teach in Okinawa for extended periods of time and both taught the Wansu kata.

Wu Xian Hui (Go Kenki) was a whooping crane boxer from the Fujian Province. Tang Daiji (To Daiki) was a Tiger Boxing specialist. Both of these individuals taught in Okinawa during the time of Bushi Matsumura Sokon. One of these individuals is the most probably path, and out of these two, it is most likely Wu Xian Hui as he had the greater impact during his teaching on Okinawa.

Wansu was part of Matsumura Sokon's teachings. As referenced above he may have learned the kata himself from one of the three possible instructors during his time. Alternatively, if the kata was

brought over by Wang Ji, it would have been taught by Takahara Peichin to Sakugawa Tode. Sakugawa being the most notable instructor of Matsumura Sokon would clearly have passed the kata on.

At this point, the path of Wansu again becomes clear. Matsumura Sokon taught the kata to Kyan Chotoku who would master the kata and teach it to Shimabuku Tatsuo.

If you have corrections or comments regarding this article or any future article, please feel free to contact me directly.

Mike Fenton

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This article represents part of an unfinished work by Trevor Warren and Mike Fenton. Nothing would have been possible without the many resources available both on the internet and via books currently available on Okinawan Karate. Additionally, special thanks must go out to Joe Swift, his research and willingness to share was an invaluable asset.

## Seisan Kata Bunkai—Part I

### By Shane Hale

This article assumes the reader is very familiar with Seisan Kata. The movements are initially described using a basic understanding of the kata simply so the reader can know what portion of the kata is being described. For this reason, a move may be described initially as a punch and then later as a grab or throw.

Throughout Seisan kata, the same series of movements is repeated two and sometimes three times. While the movements always appear the same to the observer they can have vastly different applications in bunkai. For the purpose of this document, individual movements are grouped together into logical sections and multiple bunkai are not necessarily provided for series' of movements that are repeated more than once. Rather, if many possible bunkai are known for a given series of movements, these are all outlined under the single heading.

Within each series, possible bunkai are provided under three headings.

#### Level 1

Level 1 is the most basic understanding of the movement and is normally taught to a student when initially learning the kata. At this level, things are often exactly as they appear. A punch is simply a punch and a block is a block. When exposing someone to this level of understanding of the kata, the goal is for them to begin to visualize an actual opponent.

#### Level 2

Level 2 bunkai covers a broad range of possible movement applications. Key concepts introduced in Level 2 bunkai are the concept of body mechanics, combining movements into a coherent flow, controlling your opponent, etc. Level 3 bunkai is the most advanced.

*(Continued on page 4)*

## Seisan Kata Bunkai—Part 2 Cont'd

### By Shane Hale

(Continued from page 3)

#### Level 3

In Level 3 bunkai students now concentrate on striking pressure points, taking their opponent to the ground, and controlling them. In Level 3 bunkai the objective is no longer to meet force with an equal or greater force, but rather to use your opponents force against them with minimal exertion by the defender. While Level 3 bunkai can be very impressive it takes a great deal of skill to reliably apply a Level 3 bunkai in a real world situation. As in all things, students are advised to focus on truly mastering Level 1 before attempting to use the more advanced techniques in a real life altercation.

For the purpose of continuity, the reader may choose to read all of the Level 1 bunkai at once, followed by the Level 2 and then the Level 3.

#### SERIES 3

##### Basic Movements

- Step forward with the right foot
- Left hand open-hand down block
- Right hand chicken-head block
- Right hand grab & pull
- Repeat this series three times on alternating sides

#### Bunkai

##### Level 1

Having eliminated the opponent from Series 1 and 2 with a series of punches and a strike to the inside of the thigh, you are now faced with a new series of opponents lined up in front of you. The first attacker throws a right foot kick at your mid-section which you block with an open-handed downward block using your left hand. The same opponent now throws a mid-section punch using their right hand. You execute a soft chicken head block to redirect their energy past you and bring their arm across their body. At this point, your opponent is off-balance and you can now grab them and pull them past you. This series repeats two more times with two more opponents.

##### Level 2

This series of movements can be interpreted in a variety of different ways. The downward block could be a clearing motion used against either a midsection kick or punch. The chicken-head block can then be followed by a quick strike to the outside of the bicep

prior to grabbing the opponent and pulling them forward.

#### Level 3

The chicken-head block can be thrown to either the neck or temple. If the Tori uses the downward arm to grab the Uke's arm then the Tori's upward arm can do an arm lock at the elbow or slide up along the Uke's arm to strike the jaw, neck or temple.

#### SERIES 4

##### Basic Movements

- Stepping to the left Chudan Uke
- Seiken Gyak Tsuki
- Seiken Oy Tsuki
- Mae Geri
- Seiken Gyak Tsuki
- (Repeat 3 times at 9 o'clock, 3 o'clock and 6 o'clock positions)

#### Bunkai

##### Level 1

Level 1 bunkai is essentially as it appears in this series. In the first iteration, you are being attacked from the left side with a mid-body strike, you step into the attack with a Chudan Uke, followed by two rapid mid-section punches, a Mae Geri kick and another punch. Two additional opponents attack you in much the same way from the other directions and you dispatch them using the same series of techniques.

##### Level 2

Level 2 bunkai deals with body mechanics. After blocking your opponent's punch, you deliver 2 punches in rapid succession. If these punches find their mark and inflict a reasonable amount of damage, your opponent will begin to fold forward from the impact. At this point they are more exposed and vulnerable to a strong Mae Geri delivered to the Uke's midsection. This will serve to further injure your opponent and destroy their balance. At this point the opponent is bent forward significantly and most likely their hands are tucked in to protect their stomach thus exposing their face to a powerful Seiken Gyak Tsuki delivered to the bridge of the nose.

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*“A punch is simply a punch and a block is a block. When exposing someone to this level of understanding of the kata, the goal is for them to begin to visualize an actual opponent.”*

## Seisan Kata Bunkai—Part 2 Cont'd

### By Shane Hale

(Continued from page 4)

#### Level 3

One very nice level 3 bunkai for this series of movements modifies the Mae Geri slightly. Rather than simply kick with your right foot and then step back into Seisan Dachi, the Tori instead steps forward and places their right leg behind the opponent's legs. The last punch instead becomes a throw in which you throw the Uke over your hip

.. To be continued in the next issue of the newsletter with the next two series of movements.

## Why Kata?

### By Tim Leonard

*An exploration into the benefits of pursuing the study of kata*

(Kanji for Kata "shape which cuts the ground")

The martial arts have gone through a dramatic change in recent years. In the martial arts magazines of 20 years ago, the most common debate was the comparing of styles to see if "our own" was truly the best. As a martial arts culture, our styles often became the #1 style when Hollywood agreed with us. When Bruce Lee made his movies, Gung fu became popular; when Chuck Norris hit the screens, karate became the most sought after martial art; and when Steven Seagal threw people around like rag dolls, Aikido was it. Now we live in an age where mixed martial arts (MMA), full-contact tournaments, the Fight Channel, the Real TV Ultimate Fighter series, and pay-per-view MMA are big hits and money-makers. Guess what? Ju-Jitsu, wrestling and full-contact karate have never been more popular.

The MMA fights depict fighters from any style of martial arts, street fighter, or any type of fighting background. These fighters are there to win by knocking out their opponents or forcing them into submission. The fights can be very entertaining, pitting warrior against warrior to determine the "Ultimate Champion". As fans and want-to-be-fighters, we learn

about how these fighters train, what they use for supplements and we imitate their techniques.

As a student of the martial arts, you have to ask yourself the question "If most fights only last 10 seconds and end up on the ground, is it not more worthwhile to study MMA than to be stuck in the katas of our style?" Bruce Lee was one of the first to break away from the teaching of forms in which he called on martial artists to be more "real" and to seek the "truth" (*Liberate Yourself from Classical Karate*, originally published in Black Belt Magazine). Does kata have a place in the modern world in which pre-arranged fighting movements no longer have to be disguised as a dance-like pattern? Unequivocally, yes it does.

In this paper, the benefits and a further understanding of the esoteric nature of kata will be explored. The purpose of kata will be explained using the model of Sanchin, the three battles or conflicts. Some of the benefits of kata are straightforward and easily understood while others may be more implicit in nature.

Contrary to Bruce Lee's thinking, kata is what unites us, not what divides us. Kata offers a common language in which we all learn and communicate with each other. The differences (and our similarities and shared underlying principles) between the multitude of martial art styles lies within the katas. The katas themselves contain those aspects of our styles that define us, focus our training, and unite dojos across the world. Katas are our language. The katas are also the place of mystery and intrigue in which karateka search for new meaning and bunkai (practical application of the movement).

I am as big a fan of these MMA events as any other martial artist and no doubt the onslaught of these full contact matches has affected my personal training and what I teach in the dojo. As an instructor, I constantly look

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*"If most fights only last 10 seconds and end up on the ground, is it not more worthwhile to study MMA than to be stuck in the katas of our style?"*

## Why Kata? Cont'd

### By Tim Leonard

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for new motivations to inspire my students and myself. To be honest, prior to the MMA events of 1994, I rarely practiced hard-hitting or grappling. But this has been adjunct to my foundation, a fine-tuning of what was known, not the pursuing of the latest fad.

#### *What Is Karate?*

*"True karate is this: that in daily life one's mind and body be trained and developed in a spirit of humility, and that in critical times, one be devoted utterly to the cause of justice."*

*—Gichin Funakoshi*

*“Traditionally, kata is also a way to ensure that the body of knowledge is passed down through the generations. By ensuring that kata are performed in the same manner, and with the same moves, the knowledge is preserved and not dissipated”*

Shotokan founder Gichin Funakoshi has said that "mind and technique become one in true karate." We strive to make our physical techniques pure expressions of our mind's intention, and to improve our mind's focus by understanding the essence of the physical techniques. By polishing our karate practice we are polishing our own spirit and our own mentality. For example, eliminating weak and indecisive movements in our karate helps to eliminate weakness and indecision in our minds and vice versa.

Traditionally, kata is also a way to ensure that the body of knowledge is passed down through the generations. By ensuring that kata are performed in the same manner, and with the same moves, the knowledge is preserved and not dissipated. A respect for history and ancestry is developed and cultivated. It is very important that the kata are not changed, otherwise each kata will become distant from the original, and lessons within the original kata are lost. This does not mean that new understandings of the technique are not allowed or developed. New bunkai applications are often the most sought after source of knowledge. Most kata are quite old and are handed down from the original schools of martial arts. In respect to our senseis and the senseis of our sensei, the waza (technique) must be maintained.

Often trying to maintain standards of the katas is also often what separates dojos as well. Through the well intentioned efforts to keep the katas as Shimabuku did them, egos have gotten involved to the point of creating life-long feuds between senseis. I am always amazed when I meet an Isshin Ryu karateka, our katas are quite similar; perhaps only 5% difference. It becomes a point of dialogue, sharing and history to explore this 5% difference. Within Isshin Ryu, we have our eight empty hand katas passed onto us through Tatsuo Shimabuku. These

eight katas have been the source of thousands and thousands of training hours in which karateka have met, shared and transmitted the teachings of Shimabuku.

By keeping an open mind and seeing all sides, further appreciation of the movements occurs. Any Isshin Ryu karateka who has studied a bit of Goju Ryu and Shorin Ryu develops a deeper understanding of Shimabuku's radical thinking of "natural stances and punches." On the other hand, I never truly understood the power of hip movement until I studied Goju Ryu. Kata does provide a life-time of study and is why even though I am a sensei, I remain a student first.

#### Kata is Karate

I love doing kata. For me, it is an active meditation in which I get totally zoned into the kata and at the end of which, the kata has passed with little memory of what has just occurred. Allowing muscle memory to totally take over, shutting down the brain, and letting the kata go, is a rewarding process. But how do we get to this place? As instructors, we have all done our katas thousands of times. If I were to stop practicing karate today, I am certain I would still know Seisan Kata when I am 80 years old. It is a part of me. As a teacher, it is important to pass on the passion for kata to the students. Kata is our foundation; it is the thing that links all Isshin Ryu karateka.

Without kata, there is no "do" in karate-do, no art in "martial art." It would simply be another fighting system without the art form. It is the emphasis on the art or the way that helps define us as a good martial artist. By watching others perform their kata, we know immediately the quality of what we are watching. Proper breathing, rhythm, power, focus, speed, control are all beautiful things to witness during a kata demonstration.

In Isshin Ryu and many other karate styles, we are students of one of the oldest katas called *Sanchin*. Sanchin translates to the three classic battles or conflicts:

Man Vs Man  
Man Vs Nature  
Man Vs Himself

It is within these three battles, the karate-ka trains him/herself to be a warrior and where our work in the dojo resides.

...to be continued with a full explanation of these three battles in the next newsletter.

## Fighting Perspectives

### A Look at Two Common Types of Kumite

By Jesse Hill

There are many types of fighting in modern martial arts, ranging from sparring to grappling to self-defense and many combinations in-between. Two broad styles that will be discussed in this article are point fighting and full-contact fighting. These two very different styles of sparring have different aspects that contribute to a karateka's martial arts abilities. Both kinds of kumite (fighting) have their place in the dojo as they can teach different skills.

Point fighting is the type of sparring seen at most karate tournaments. It is essentially a game of tag where speed is the key to victory. In point fighting there is an official set of rules which can vary from place to place, style to style. The traditional Isshinryu scoring system gives one point for a punch and one point for a kick landing on one of the permissible target areas, including the groin. In many other styles, and in some Isshinryu tournaments I have attended, the groin is not a legal target area, and kicks are worth two points. Generally speaking it is not the strength or skill of the strike that counts but the fact that it makes contact with the other person within the prescribed target zone. Good judges will endeavour to get participants to use proper technique and not call sloppy, lucky shots. Another difficulty in scoring point fighting is the inability of any one referee to see every angle at once. Thus there are times when a point may not be called because not enough judges actually saw it. It is not appropriate to call a point you did not actually witness because the sound of a hand or foot hitting the arm or hitting the stomach are not very different, therefore you cannot be positive if a scoring hit has been made.

Point fighting relies on speed, which is a valuable skill in fighting, the faster fighter tends to have an advantage in a point fighting match. Accuracy and aiming can also be improved by point fighting. By limiting the target areas you are forcing the opponents to think and strategise and make sure their attacks land in specific areas rather than all over the place. One of the drawbacks to point fighting is the constant stopping of the fight. This not only gives the fighters a chance to rest that they would not get on the street; it also gets them used to trying to get just that one clean hit. I know that it would take an amazing shot to take me out in a single blow, so why should I assume I can disable anyone else as easily. The competitive nature of point fighting can cause friction if not addressed properly; certain people become very incensed when a call is made against them, or if a referee perceives a situation differently than the participant. It is important to stress the technical aspects of kumite while still reinforcing the notion that everyone is there to learn and have fun. Point fighting can be a fun way for younger karateka to get into sparring, and a good drill for more experienced fighters to sharpen up their kumite.

Full-contact fighting is the "rougher" form of kumite training that teaches us to take shots and give out better ones. In the official rules to full-contact fighting, as used in some competitions, points are scored based on stunning the opponent, knocking the opponent down, or knocking the opponent out. If no points are scored within the time limit, the match is decided by judges. Full-contact competitions are less common than point fighting tournaments, but

provide a different experience for karateka. To me, full-contact sparring is less about competition and more about training hard. However, the preparation for a full-contact tournament can provide initiative to train harder and result in the overall improvement of a student's karate.

The goal of full-contact fighting is not to hurt your opponent, contrary to what some non-martial artists believe. The goal is to improve your sparring skills and thus increase your ability to defend yourself in a real-life situation. Full contact fighting incorporates conditioning, both mental and physical. Physically you are training your body to take a blow; you learn fairly quickly to tighten your abdominal muscles when a punch slips past your guard. When full-contact fighting it is important to stay relaxed, tightening only when making contact with your opponent, either striking or blocking. Otherwise you will tire yourself out and slow yourself down by expending extra energy needlessly. Mentally, full-contact kumite teaches you to keep pressing your attack and not stop after just one or two shots. In a real self-defense situation one or two punches or kicks are not likely to stop your opponent. So if you stop once you have thrown your first combination, odds are you will be in some trouble. Also, full-contact fighting allows you to see how vulnerable you can be while throwing certain techniques and conversely to see the multitude of targets open to you when your opponent is on the offensive. For example, a lot of fighters have a tendency to drop their hands when throwing an upper level kick; this can lead to a face full of knuckles. In the event that your opponent lashes out with a high round kick, an observant fighter will take advantage of the opening and kick to the inside of the thigh, which can knock the other person off their feet. In full-contact fighting precautions are taken in the dojo to try to avoid injury. Depending on the skill level of the participants the pace can be fast and hard, or lighter and slower. Also take-downs can be dependent on how soft the floor or matting is. Generally if someone gets taken down the fight stops or there might be a five second rule or something similar allowing kumite to continue briefly on the ground. Attacks to the joints are generally forbidden because, again, the goal is to learn not to maim. These precautions are necessary because they allow for continued training and safety; however the result is an environment not indicative of the real world. This aspect of martial arts training in no way diminishes the training, it is simply a fact that one must remember lest they become overconfident.

There is a tendency for some martial artists to refer to full contact fighting as "real" fighting, and although I feel it is closer to what a real self-defense situation would be like, I realise that it is still an exercise in the dojo. A safe, comfortable setting and thus not completely accurate in terms of what one may face in the street. There truly can be no alternative to experience when it comes to defending yourself. Our goal, as martial artists, is to become as prepared as possible. So train hard, be aware, and stay safe.

*"Full contact fighting incorporates conditioning, both mental and physical. Physically you are training your body to take a blow; you learn fairly quickly to tighten your abdominal muscles when a punch slips past your guard"*

## Improve your karate— Upper Body Basics Part I

Basics are both the fundamentals of Isshinryu as well as an important aspect of Isshinryu independent of other techniques. Because of this, regardless of rank, I recommend working on the basics to improve not just the techniques used elsewhere but the basics themselves. This will be the first multi-part Improve your karate article with the first three focusing on the upper body basics and the fourth focusing on the lower body.

with the wrist straight. Begin your practice by deciding what the block should look like. Once you are satisfied that you know what will make contact with the strike and what angle, find a partner and try the block repeatedly from every angle and height making sure that you are actually blocking with the part of the arm you intend. I guarantee, no matter your rank, you'll miss a few. Practice helps to reduce the misses.

*“All of these apply to all levels of student and instructor, regardless of your rank do not overlook any aspect of the basic, or take for granted your understanding of it”*

In order to provide an outline for improving the basics, the aspects of the basics will be broken into 4 categories; the block, the strike, the stepping and the timing. All of these apply to all levels of student and instructor, regardless of your rank do not overlook any aspect of the basic, or take for granted your understanding of it. The more time you invest in them, the greater the payoff.

### The Block

The block in the major of basics is the first movement. There are two keys to a block functioning as expected,

1) The block must use the correct part of the body. Each block has a specific part of the body it is meant to block with. For all closed blocks, the first is tight, wrist straight, and the muscle is used to block, equally distributing the force across the two bones of the forearm. Open hand blocks should be done with middle of the hand and never with the fingers

2) The block must take an optimal path to the attack.

In order to block a strike coming toward your body, your arm must begin the block on one side of the attack and move it beyond your body. This sounds simple, but it takes significant work to develop this, the basics are consistently done by trapping to the opposite hip. This is great for static basics, but unrealistic. Improve your understanding of the technique by minimizing the movement to be the most effective. Again, find yourself an attacker and work on the block, focus on moving your arm just far enough that you can involve your hips in the lock and stop at the very edge of your body. By working every angle, you will also learn to shift your hips in preparation for the block allowing a quicker block that is more powerful as your entire body supports it.

## Improve your Kobudo—Bojutsu no Kihon

Just like the Improve your Karate Series, the Improve your Kobudo will be a multipart series dedicated to improve the basic usage of the weapons. Whether you directly train with Kobudo Basics or develop the techniques through other means, these fundamentals will help.

### Bo Support

Every strike and every block must be properly supported. Go through each basic very slowly ensuring that your hand and elbow are consistently behind each block and strike. Begin by working on your

strikes and, hopefully you have a kobudo makiwara you can strike, try each strike adjusting your hand until you find the optimal position. Once you've got all your strikes solid, with a partner do the same for the blocks.

When positioning yourself to block, it is very important that your body is tight and that your hand is supported by your elbow and your elbow is supported by your body. A single weak link could mean an ineffective block which means, you don't block a proper strike.



## Improve your Kobudo—Bojutsu no Kihon Cont'd

### Bo Path

The Bo is a versatile weapon that can be used along many paths, but to generate the optimal power in a strike, it must travel in a straight line. The longer it spends going in a straight line, the greater the velocity which means greater power in the strike. Analyze each movement you are making in the basics making sure that whenever possible, your bo is traveling directly to the strike in relation to your body and that your arms are not curving or pushing the strike. All power strikes with the Bo follow a pulling motion, focus on the pull and the Bo will travel straight.

### Stance

Just like in every aspect of Isshinryu the stance is crucial. At all times it must be balanced and positioned to strike with either end of the Bo. Be careful to avoid shifting your stance too square or too

sideways as it greatly impedes the Bo.

### Preparedness and Timing

When fighting with a weapon, every moment can equate to life and death. This should be kept in mind when practicing the basics. Recovering from a strike should happen immediately and be crisp. As you move from one technique to the next, focus on a pattern of generating power for the strike, recover. If I am fighting another weapon, I definitely don't want to be out of position when they attack, and any missed attack of my own, will surely be countered by a skilled opponent.

*“When fighting with a weapon, every moment can equate to life and death”*

## Training Tips

It is recommended that for a healthy lifestyle every children should get at least one hour of physical activity every day. And of course, adults should set an example and do at least as much.

Physical activity can be any activity that increases the heart rate and gets a person moving. This includes games, sports as well as working out. The first step in making the most of your life and health is keeping it. So I'm sure you already are getting the appropriate amount of physical activity in your life. If not, take care of that! There are lots of fun things to do with life that are better than watching TV or sitting in front of a computer. This article is about using your physical activity to improve your karate.

No matter what activity you are doing, it can be made to relate directly to your karate training. Look for aspects of your activities that apply to your karate training, it shouldn't be too hard with the variety of movements and areas karate employs. While doing the activity, try to think not only about how those movements help your karate, but how your karate helps those movements. If you play soccer, it could be your kicking power, if you are a goalie, it could be how incredibly fast and accurate your blocks are. The skills of karate can be applied

to any sport or activity.

Once you have seen the relation in the activities you are doing you can also move one step beyond by adding more karate to them. One thing that is easy to add and very beneficial is conditioning. Conditioning is effective because it is a repetitive action, by association a small aspect of conditioning with an action that is part of another activity it will trigger you to condition more often. A great example of this is, the location where I run we have to turn around at a set of doors every 200 meters or so. Every time I turn around during my run I do a fairly light punch using my knuckles on the door. The door is made of steel, so it isn't going to break but my knuckles get a little bit of condition every single lap. As a result, my knuckles are stronger than they would be otherwise.

Karate is perhaps the most physically challenging activity that exists, you must train your body to become a very well rounded athlete to excel and it is important to keep in mind during all activity the benefits it can give your karate. This will help you to improve those areas even farther.

*“Physical activity can be any activity that increases the heart rate and gets a person moving. This includes games, sports as well as working out”*

## News

### Isshinryu News

**August 7th, 2006—Shimabuku Uto (Wife of Shimabuku Tatsuo) Passed away.**

*Continue training and practicing at home to improve your standings and to help ready yourself for promotion.*

### Coloured Belt Promotions

**Cookstown, ON—October 1st**

**Yellow Stripe**

Jamie Ferguson

**Yellow Belt**

Daniel Smith

**Orange Belt**

Ashley Aman, Branden Ringhofer, Kyle Ringhofer, Brandan Carman, Aaron Schrank and Adam Mollica

### Black Belt Level Promotions

Each newsletter, we will attempt to recognize all Black Belt level promotions that have occurred since the previous newsletter.

Again like everything else in this newsletter, there is no guarantee of absolute completeness. If you know of someone I missed, please let me know and I will include it for the next newsletter.

#### **Completed Promotions**

Don't stop training now! There's always more to learn and improve upon.

Till Kuendiger—Shodan—Ottawa, ON

#### **Upcoming Promotions**

None Announced

### Special Awards

**Isshinryu Hall of Fame Award Winners**

**Kaitlan Brown** - Chikara Dojo—Windsor, ON—  
Young Female Karate-ka of the Year.

**Kaitlan Brown** - Chikara Dojo—Windsor, ON—  
Junior Female Competitor of the Year.

## Contributors



### Editor & Author—Chitora Dojo

Mike Fenton—Thunder Bay, Ontario  
Mike lives with his wife Kyla and has been training in Isshinryu karate for 20 years, and has been an instructor for the past 15 years. He is currently head instructor of Chitora Dojo in Thunder Bay, Ontario.



### Author—Chitora Dojo

Trevor Warren—Thunder Bay, Ontario  
Trevor lives in Thunder Bay with his wife Maria. He has dedicated a great deal of his time to teaching and his own training with the realization that hard work is the key to success.



### Author—Toshikai Dojo

Tim Leonard—Ottawa, Ontario  
Tim lives in Ottawa with his wife Debbie (also a black belt). He currently dedicates a great deal of time to his Dojo and is the first to teach Isshinryu in the Ottawa area.



### Author—Toshikai Dojo

Shane Hale—Ottawa, Ontario  
Shane is the first Black Belt student (recently promoted to Nidan) of Tim Leonard in Ottawa Ontario. He is also the president of the Ottawa Flying Club and the recipient of the 2004 Chief Flying Instructor's award.



### Author—Chitora Dojo

Jesse Hill—Thunder Bay, Ontario  
Jesse is a Chemistry Concurrent Ed student at Lakehead University and has been training for almost 12 years. Jesse is both a dedicated student and a skilled instructor understanding the importance of helping others grow.

### Author

Requested—Anywhere in Canada  
Someone willing to contribute their time to helping other Isshinryu karateka with their training or understanding.

## Karate Terms in this Newsletter

**Barai**—Sweep

**Bojutsu No Kihon**—Basic exercises of Bo combat

**Bunkai**—Application of Move

**Chikara**—Strength

**Chitora**—Essence of the Tiger

**Dachi**—Stance

**Dojo**—School

**Funakoshi Gichin**—Founder of Shotokan

**Geri**—Kick

**Godan**—Fifth Degree Black Belt

**Gojuryu**—Hard / Soft Way

**Isshinryu**—One Heart Way

**Kanji**—Japanese Writing

**Karate**—Empty Hands

**Karateka**—A person who trains in karate

**Kata**—Prearranged training techniques

**Kobudo**—Ancient Martial Way

**MMA**—Mixed Martial Arts, a generic term to describe fighting competitions between various styles of fighting.

**Nidan**—Second degree black belt

**Okinawa**—Japanese Island where all karate began

**Peichin**—“Senior” Honorary title in the Ryukyu Kingdom.

**Sandan**—3rd Level (Black Belt)

Sensei Level. This rank denotes instructor level as such the title Sensei becomes the appropriate title for the individual at this rank.

**Shodan**—1st Level (Black Belt)

**Shuri**—Capital City on Okinawa

**Toshikai**—Fighting Spirit

**Uchi**—Strike

**Yondan**—Fourth Degree Black Belt

*It is important to familiarize yourself with commonly learned Japanese words. Try to memorize all the words each time and you will soon have a large “karate” vocabulary.*

Visit Isshinryu.ca for an archive of our newsletters and much more information about Isshinryu.

### Story Submission

Stories are welcome from anyone and everyone. They can be about anything related to the Martial Arts, a technique you think is just great; A better way to do a technique; History of a Karate Master; a tournament trick that works well; ANYTHING!

All stories are appreciated as e-mail. You can send it to your instructor to proof read and send in, or directly to me. (Mike (at) Isshinryu.ca) or (newsletter (at) Isshinryu.ca)

You can even include pictures if it helps your article!

### Dojo Directory:

Any student is welcome at anytime to visit any dojo. Before class, always introduce yourself to the Sensei of the dojo and tell them who your current Sensei is.

For a full dojo list visit Isshinryu.ca We are getting too many to list here.

Affiliate Cities!

#### Brandon, MB

Contact: Richard Wharf

#### Calgary, AB

Contact: Charles Boyd

#### Cookstown, ON

Contact: Harri T. Makivirta

#### Kenora, ON

Contact: Steve Davis

#### Ottawa, ON

Contact: Tim Leonard

#### Thunder Bay, ON

Contact: Mike Fenton & Trevor Warren

#### Windsor, ON

Contact: Albert Mady

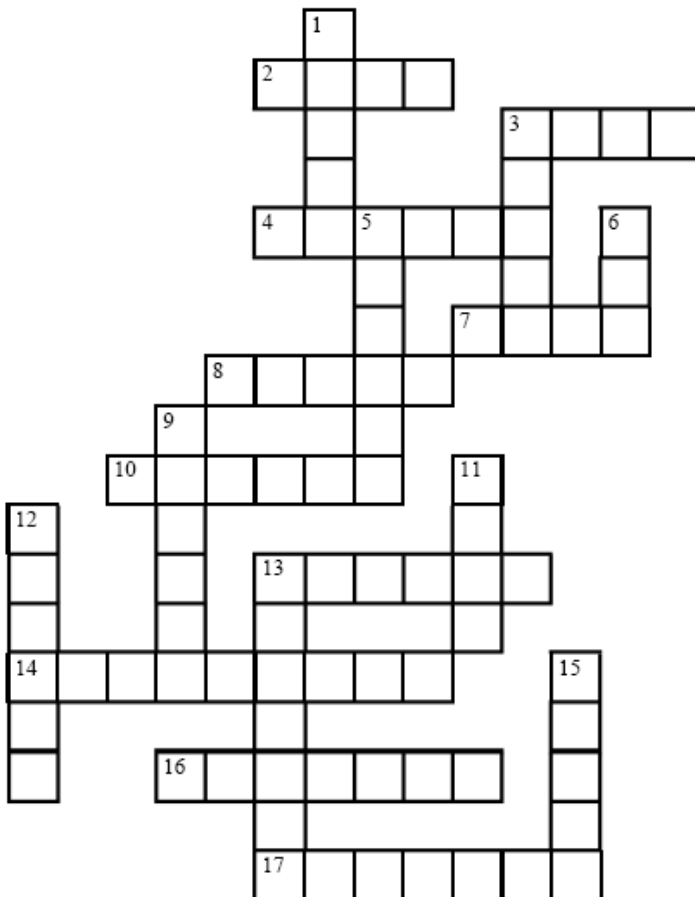
Canadian Isshinryu Abroad

#### Berlin, Germany

Contact: Ryan Boesche

#### Tsukuba Ibaraki, Japan

Contact: Brent Horton



### DOWN

- 1 American Isshinryu Pioneer
- 3 Parallel Stance
- 5 Instructor of Shimabuku
- 6 Must see all sides
- 9 Instructor
- 11 Gentle Way
- 12 With Heel
- 13 First Son
- 15 Not Tonfa But...

### ACROSS

- 2 Highest Ranked Canadian in Isshinryu
- 3 Part of Basic #15
- 4 Senior Student
- 7 Wrist
- 8 The Highest Rank
- 10 Protective Goddess
- 13 Ancient Martial Way
- 14 Creator of Isshinryu Patch
- 16 Master of Kobudo
- 17 Home of Karate

Stuck? Either ask your Sensei for help, E-mail for help, or wait until the next newsletter and I'll put the solution on the website.