

THE MAKIWARA

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE AOKA

2009 Training Weekend By Steve Young

On July 10 -12, 2009, Master Steve Young hosted the first annual Isshinryu Training Weekend in Fort Madison, Iowa. Approximately 70 people participated in the activities. Workshops started on Friday evening and went until Sunday morning. Some great classes were provided by:

Master Nick Adler
Master Peter Carbone
Master Marilyn Fierro
Master Terry Creamer
Master John Holwager
Master Denny Shaffer
Master Ken Pierce
Master Cliff Morse
Master Lars Anderson

To view some of the pictures from the event go to <http://www.symac1.com/photogallery/index.html>.

I would like to thank all who participated and especially those who provided some of the training. It was truly a honor to have everyone in attendance.

My special thanks go to Master Keith Smith and Master Dan Harrison who provided a great deal of help with logistics and to Sensei Kay Young for the great food at the parties.

I plan to make this an annual event given the positive feedback I have received. I look forward to seeing everyone (and some new faces) next year!

2009 Canadian Isshinryu Summer Camp By Tim Leonard, Harri Makivirta and Bob Markovich

With the AOKA tournament being canceled this year due to economic conditions, the Canadians decided to hold their first ever Summer Karate Camp from July 10 to 12th. Sensei Harri Makivirta hosted the event in his own backyard (a dojo and an acre of land in Cookstown, ON). Karateka pitched tents, brought tent trailers, slept in the dojo and some stayed at the local Days Inn. The event brought together three dojos from Windsor, Cookstown and Ottawa Ontario for weekend of training and fun. Shihan Robert Markovich from Windsor had often talked of getting a summer camp going and are we ever glad Shihan finally got it going.

The camp was a great success with about 20 participants in total. Friday night training began at about 5:30 p.m. and ended at 9 p.m. We covered Bo-Bo kumite and Bo-Sai kumite with the adults and some of the older children. At the same time Sensei Leonard worked with the remaining children on Tokomine Bo. Saturday morning began with a 5 K (or 3

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Increase Power with Fast Twitch Training

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Please send questions, comments or contributions to the Newsletter Committee to have answered in the next edition:

newsletter@aoka.org

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2009 Canadian Isshinryu Summer Camp

By Tim Leonard, Harri Makivirta and Bob Markovich

mile) run led by Sensei Leonard then breakfast followed by group basics. Basics were followed by two hours Arnis training (short stick fighting). We broke up the group in two sections and Windsor black belt Dave Kaselika worked with the advanced group and Shihan Markovich worked with new people. We also worked on finger and joint locks which everyone seemed to enjoy despite the pain. After lunch, Sensei Makivirta put everyone through a vigorous bag workout and then through various full contact fighting techniques. After several buckets of sweat, we practiced hand kata go over the waza (techniques) of Seisan, Seiuchin, Naihanchi, Wansu and Sanchin.

Training ended at 6 p.m. and it was time for food and relaxation. Some chose to barbeque while others went out to a local Japanese restaurant. Around 9:00 pm everyone went over to Daniella's house, one of Sensei Harri's students to watch UFC 100. Our thanks to Daniella and her family for putting on a nice spread for everyone.

Sunday training began at 9:00 a.m. due to the late night. We picked up from where we left off on Friday going through the application of bo, sai and tonfa. We reviewed everything that had been taught over the weekend and demonstrated to each other hand kata as well as weapons so that we could insure uniformity among the three dojos.

Sensei Makivirta led a class on a different way of doing basic exercises called "Ten Point" which is ideal for dojos without a lot of space and very good for teaching students to move in 10 different directions while doing the basics.

The Windsor contingent left for home around 12:30 p.m. while the Ottawa karateka remained for another couple of hours to work on kumite once again with Sensei Markivirta. There were three students (Reily, Nicholas and Phil) from Sensei Markivirta's dojo who were tested on their kata on Saturday and then needed to complete the kumite component. All three did a great job. Well done!!

Chris Barnett from Sensei Leonard's dojo tested for his orange belt in Arnis and was successful.

Everyone agreed that the camp was a success and that they had learned a lot in a very condensed time frame. Everyone also indicated that this should become an annual event which would, not only help with learning but present everyone with an opportunity to see old friends. Until next year!!



2009 Isshinryu Kyu Fest Invitational Tournament

By Tim Boykin

The first annual 2009 Isshinryu Kyu Fest Invitational Tournament was conducted on Saturday the 11th of July, 2009 at Weddington Middle School in Weddington NC, and was lauded as a great success by participants and spectators. The event was hosted by Grand Master Mitch Kobylanski and his affiliated Carolina dojos. A number of "Master Level" instructors supported the event, including Grand Master William Salinardi, and Masters Pete Williams, Tim Cunningham, David Riddle, Butch McLaughlin, Tim Grismer, and Tim Boykin.

Prior to the tournament, Grand Master Kobylanski announced that Master Tim Grismer and Tim Boykin had successfully completed testing on Friday PM, and had been promoted to Shichi Dan and Hachi Dan respectfully.

The tournament began promptly at noon, following a brief Black Belt Meeting and scorekeeper training and was completed at 2:45 PM. A total of 44 divisions were supported, with four places (trophies) per division, including a basics, hand kata, weapons kata and kumite. The event ran like clockwork, in support of 125 karateka from a variety of locations, including Enfield CT, Norfolk VA, Wilmington NC, Lexington NC and Charleston SC. Zero injuries were reported as a direct result of strict adherence to safety.

This event was unusual, in that it not only focused on the KYU rank competition, but also allowed junior level black belts to receive unique insight into the preparation, set-up, and execution of a tournament. In all, 25 Black Belts were also afforded the opportunity to act as Head Referees (supervised) and actively evaluate and grade hand and weapons kata.

A non-host cookout followed at Grand Master Kobylanski's home, which continued the spirit of comradery developed during the course of the day. Many thanks to all who participated, and supported this highly successful event!



Footwork

By Master Tim Grismer

Improving your footwork will improve your skills as a martial artist. Your work on blocking, striking and kicking can be made more effective by developing good footwork and movement skills.

Before you start your footwork drills you should understand the physiology and psychology of an attack. The human eyes are located in the front of the head with both facing forward. This is because humans are carnivores and hunters. The location of the eyes allows the attacker acquire and lock onto the target. The attacker locks his/her eyes on the target, the eyes triangulate, giving the attacker depth perception. Another way to view the attack is to think of a sniper having a target in his cross hairs. At this point the typical attack is launched.

Now onto foot work. Keep in mind that unbalance is the same as weight; therefore if you are the attacker you want to maintain balance throughout the attack. So if you have to cover distance during the attack you must be careful not to lean into or lunge as you approach the target. If you do your unbalance will cause tension which will limit your ability to change directions and deliver an effective technique in addition to revealing to your opponent your intent. To maintain proper balance and body frame the first thing to move should be a foot. By initiating movement with the feet you will keep your center under your upper torso. Think of a circus performer spinning a plate on a long pole. The performer can keep the plate on the top of the pole as long as he keeps the bottom of the pole under the plate. If the plate gets out in front of the bottom of the pole he must move the bottom of the pole back to a position under the plate in order to regain the balance.

A good place to work on this principle is in practicing kata. Most of the attacks and defensive moves in kata begin with foot movement. So, when practicing kata be sure that you keep proper body alignment. A simple drill is to stand feet shoulder width apart, knees over your toes, back and neck straight. Move around the floor taking short steps. Be aware not to lean or shift your upper body in the direction in which you are stepping. If you want to add some difficulty to the drill have a training partner walk toward you from three or so steps away. Practice evading your partner by moving/stepping out of their path. Again, don't lean your upper body or otherwise shift your weight. Your body will go where the feet go.

Another effective drill is to go through your katas at a super slow speed. When doing this you should be relaxed at all times and be able to stop at any point in your movements and hold your position comfortably. This drill will reveal to you when you are not over your foot/feet and are therefore not balanced.

When you attack and have to cover some distance to close a gap you want to work on sliding your back foot forward or crossover steps. You can drill these foot movements by moving back and across the floor, again focusing on keeping proper body position. Do these drills moving forward and backward so as to work on offensive and defensive footwork.

Now if you are being attacked you will use your footwork to gain an advantage on your opponent. Here's how; back to the sniper and the cross hairs, if the target moves out of the cross hairs the sniper must re-acquire the target. If your timing is good and you move out of the cross hairs just as the sniper pulls the trigger the round will go past you and the sniper will have to chamber another round and try to get you back in his sight. So, when an opponent attacks step off line. The step will move your upper body to the side of the attack, (new students learn this in the 5th kick). By using your footwork to move your body off line of the attack you will avoid getting hit, your opponent will have to re-acquire a target, and you will be in an advantages position to counter.

One last comment about foot work, the feet are typically out of your opponent's field of vision. Move your feet effectively prior to moving other body parts and you will be well on your way to your attack or counter before your opponent perceives what you are doing.



Hikite

By Mark Ciprich, Waga Michi Dojo

In 1756 “Tode” Sakugawa met/trained with the Chinese military attaché Kung Shang K’ung. We know this person in Isshin Ryu as Kusanku. He is known to have taught kumiuchi-jitsu. This means fighting or grappling techniques. The big principle that he bestowed upon the island was Hikite.

Hikite means pulling or withdrawing hand. Our style (and all Okinawan styles) incorporates it in our kata. It is a concept that is ubiquitous within our kata and yet is often completely overlooked by many karateka. I’d like to point out a few examples within kata and hopefully open up some bunkai ideas for the reader.

In the very first series of moves (after the salutation) ,in Seisan, we do a left hand “middle block” followed by a right hand reverse punch. Sometimes this is preceded by an open handed parry with the right hand. The Japanese terminology for the middle block is “Chudan Uke” which roughly translates as “to receive in the mid level of the body”.

The basic application all white belts learn is blocking a punch (often a right hook) and immediately returning the favor with their own right hand punch. Good Stuff!!! In a real situation this may well be what happens but if you miss with the punch your back to square one because you have no control over the attacker.

Instead, lets assume the attack is parried with the open right hand first and then caught with the left hand. The left hand then withdraws and pulls the attacker into your punch. The main points are that you maximize the strikes power by increasing the closing speed AND you keep control of the attacker in the process. The question then arises, “But the hand doesn’t do a grabbing motion? ”. As a general rule, and it’s a doosey, if the hand is closed it MAY be holding something.

If the attack is a left hand punch, the grab sets up an arm bar where the punch is no longer a punch but the punching motion is the same. The trick is to turn the attacker wrist and roll the arm over while performing hikite and get their elbow pointing up.

How many times has a Sensei corrected you because you didn’t bring your hand back to chamber. In the arm bar application above, it is imperative that you lock the end of the attacker’s arm to your side while doing the arm bar. This connects him to you and gives you control over the attacker. Try it both ways, the difference will be apparent.

The next example is from Wansu or Sunsu. We chamber the hands, one on top of the other, on the right hip and do a sidekick to the left. Then reverse the process to the other side.

One application often heard is that you are performing an elbow to someone standing to one side of you while kicking someone on the other side. I need to fight in that universe. I’d always get first prize.

Instead, someone standing in front of you launches an attack, let’s use an attempted double lapel grab (for safety). You step back and angle your body so that the attacker is now to your side. Capture either arm between your two hands WHILE you take the step back and pull them to you hip. This pulls him off balance and puts his weight on the foot nearest to you. It’s like you open a door he’s trying to push from the other side. He falls forward easily. With all the weight on one leg the opportunity to strike is present, Avail yourself of it quickly and the fight is over. This requires you to learn how to grab/catch punches out of the air. It’s easily done if you practice. Practice enough and it just happens without thought, (mushin). The trick is to aim not at the end of the arm but at the forearm and slide down.

As a rule, if you are chambering one or both hands on a hip, it is holding something!!! It doesn’t have to but it always can. The act of withdrawing the hand to chamber performs numerous different functions. Unbalancing the attacker, connecting them to you for control, doubling the speed of your strike at the moment of contact (four times the power) and taking

UPCOMING EVENTS**(source: <http://www.bohans-family.com/Events/UpcomingEvents.htm>)**

Date	Location	Event
1-Aug-2009	Knoxville, TN	Isshinryu Hall Of Fame



Tim Boykin - 8th Dan
Robert Crosby - 7th Dan
Timothy Grismer - 7th Dan
Dan Harrison - 7th Dan
John Holwager - 7th Dan
Ken Pierce - 7th Dan
Clifford Morse - 6th Dan
Eric Cohen - 2nd Dan

Hikite

By Mark Ciprich, Waga Michi Dojo

away the attacker's follow up are some of the more important ones.

Now, start running through some moves you have no explanation for and see if you can't open up some new avenues for yourself .



Increase the power of strikes with fast twitch fiber training

By Leslie Snow—Certified Personal Fitness Trainer—Marshville, NC

A strike begins as intent in the mind. The body then brings that fist out from the hip as fast and as powerfully as possible, from a completely relaxed state, so fast that your opponent cannot react defensively to it. How does our mind/body do this? How do we do this better?

You may know that the muscle contraction and release, that is, the firing or stimulation, causes the intended movement. More specifically, our muscles are made of slow twitch (ST) fibers and FT fibers. ST fibers are used with long term, low-to-moderate intensity activities, such as maintaining your posture or long distance running. Fast twitch (FT) fibers are used with extremely high-intensity, maximum-strength, explosive events, as in lifting very heavy weight or in high-speed movements, or whenever a large amount of total force is needed.

In karate, greater muscle power, where $\text{power} = (\text{force} \times \text{distance}) / \text{time}$, is especially important for improved performance. Sensei Don Gyr, Yo Don, of Monroe, NC, a former personal trainer, says, "In karate we need to be able to go from an inactive state to an explosive state instantly. A martial artist should be able to react, 'as quickly as the spark that ignites between two rocks struck together.' The only way to achieve that kind of instant speed is to develop our FT muscle fibers as best we can."

A person's ratio of FT fibers to ST fibers is genetically determined, but like musical ability, improves with appropriate training.

Resistance training can develop your FT fibers to increase your speed and power. Sensei Gyr explains, "When we lift a weight it's FT fibers that fire first so they have to be stimulated early on in the set to be developed. If we lift with a weight that is too light the FT fibers fire, but aren't stressed enough to adapt, or become more powerful. A set with five to a maximum of eight reps should do the trick. Training to near failure, with failure being when good form is lost, is important in order to fully involve the FT fibers. Again, though, this point has to come early in the set. If failure occurs at more than eight reps the ST fibers become exhausted, causing the muscle to fail due to lactic acid buildup; the FT fibers will have long since fired at a submaximal state."

Plyometric training is a type of resistance training that develops FT fibers in your lower body. Also known as jump, rebound, or reactive training, it eccentrically (lengthens the muscle against resistance) loads the muscle and forces it to explosively contract on the rebound. Imagine the ballet dancer's high leap or the basketball player's jump shot. The technique: stand on a 12"-high box; jump off the box and spring straight up as high as possible; repeat until failure.

Sensei Gyr's favorite FT exercises are clapping pushups for training your upper body, and jump squats for training your lower. Medicine ball passes, abdominal curl-ups with a medicine ball pass, and tuck jumps are also effective. As with other resistance training techniques, give your body at least 48-hours recovery between training sessions.

The correct use of well-trained FT fibers is the physiological expression of "soft-hard-soft" in Isshin Ryu technique. Sensei Gyr notes, "To understand hard and soft we have to understand that a muscle firing to deliver a technique with speed must be free of added tension. This is what 'soft' means when we are talking about a strike or block. At the instant of impact, however, the muscle must tense to take or deliver the blow. This is what 'hard' means. To move like a viper but impact like a hammer is the goal." Specific training of the FT fibers can help you realize this goal.

Thanks to Sensei Don Gyr for his contribution.

