



Isshinryu Karate & Kobudo

Isshinryu.ca

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Shihan Mady To Visit Northwest Ontario

Shihan Mady, head **Isshinryu** Instructor to almost all of Canada and hachidan will be making two stops in Northwest Ontario this winter.

April 8th and 9th Shihan Mady will be in Kenora, Ontario. Once again doing gradings and seminars.

In Kenora, **Shihan Mady** is being hosted by Steve Davis at the Lake of the Woods Karate Dojo.

For more information about the Kenora Seminar please see your instructor.

Tentatively, on May 13th and 14th **Shihan Mady** visits Thunder Bay, Ontario. Friday May 13th will be marked with a number of black belts testing. This years testing will be hosted by the **Kokoro Dojo** at West Thunder community center and will begin around supper time and run late into the night.

May 14th will be filled with seminars. **Shihan Mady**

seminars are always tremendous learning experiences. There are seminars for all age and skill levels. The seminar this year will be hosted by the **Chibushi Dojo** at the Canada Games Complex. Make plans to attend, the seminars are not to be missed.

Some of Shihan Mady's accomplishments include:

- 4th Degree Black Belt Kyokushin*
- 5 Time North American Breaking Champion*
- 1986 Practitioner of the Year.*
- 1990 HOF Instructor of the Year*
- 1993 HOF Dojo of the Year.*
- 1997 & 2001 AOKA Spirt of Isshinryu Award*
- 2000 Master Don Nagle Memorial Master Instructor of the Year*
- 2003 AOKA Dojo of the Year*



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First Edition of new Canadian Isshinryu Newsletter!

- Will be available every two months.
- Valuable training information
- Important historical articles
- Promotion & Tournament Results

Upcoming Events

Fundraisers:

Annual Thunder Bay Isshinryu Karate Kickathon -

As is the standard this incredibly fun event will be held at the complex this year. March 19th. See your instructor for forms.

Seminars:

Shihan Mady—March 5th, Thunder Bay.

Shihan Mady—April 9th, Kenora.

Isshinryu Tournaments:

AOKA World Championships
July 16th, Chicago, IL

Open Tournaments:

March 6th, Oliver Rd. Rec.
March 19th, Winnipeg, MB
April 2nd, Kenora, ON

April 9th, Terrace Bay, ON

April 23rd, Selkirk, MB

Seisan - Part I

By Mike Fenton

Isshinryu Karate Kata Background

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.

Seisan Kata

十三

The Name

Seisan can be translated directly as the number thirteen as marked by the most commonly used **Kanji** above. Other possible Kanji for Seisan translate as Thirteen Fists, Thirteen Hands and Thirteen Steps. These names denote the application or deeper understanding of the techniques. The most readily used interpretation of the thirteen in the kata name are:

1. Thirteen Attackers
2. Thirteen Breathes – Can also refer to attackers
3. Thirteen Steps / Positions in the kata

These of course when understood properly from a self defense point of view all become identical in nature. With each Attack/Breathe/Position the kata teaches everything that is required to stop an attacker.

Thirteen Steps

十三歩

Thirteen Hands

十三手

Thirteen Fists

十三拳

The Myth's

Seisan has two basic myths associated with its history and technique. The first myth is common to many Isshinryu schools in that Seisan was a black belt kata prior to it's inclusion in Isshinryu. While it was not the first kata taught in many styles, it consistently appears early in the styles that do teach it. The confusion most likely arises from the **Okinawan** traditional katas of the Pinan (Heian in **Shotokan**) and their labeling of **Shodan** through **Godan**. These kata's replace what we would consider are basics and are strictly techniques corresponding to the level of the Isshinryu basics. The Shodan must be thought of as 1st level, and not associated with the corresponding rank.

Additionally, the history of these Kata's on Okinawa is relatively short as their practice began largely when Karate moved into the school system as they were ideal to begin with when Karate was instituted as a physical education program. However, due to their presence in school, the majority of Karateka on Okinawa would learn these kata first.

The second myth is that of a mysterious master Seisan or Seishan. The origin of this myth is unknown however, there does not appear to be any historical evidence to suggest that a person by the name of Seisan ever existed.

I sincerely hope that you enjoyed reading this. The next article will continue the background of Seisan with the bulk of the article primarily on the kata's origins focusing specifically on the path the kata took on it's way to **Shimabuku Tatsuo** and it's incorporation into Isshinryu Kata. If you have corrections or comments regarding this article or any future article, please feel free to contact me directly.

Mike Fenton

mike@issheinryu.ca

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.

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.



Improve your Karate - Mae Geri (Front Snap)

The **Mae Geri** (Front Snap Kick) is the first kick in Isshinryu and one of the most effective. Follow these steps and you'll develop a powerful kick.

Proper Technique:

The key to **Mae Geri** is the chambering of the leg. To do the kick properly, you must bring your knee up to the final position before you start moving your foot forward.

Step 1: Raise your knee up and pull the lower half of your leg in tight. Curl your foot and toes up.

You are now in the correct position to kick. Swing the lower part of your leg out and have your foot travel straight up (towards the groin from underneath). The key here is speed. It is a snap kick and must be whipped out quickly.

Step 2: Swing leg out and snap up. Quickly bring it back to chambered position.

Once the kick is back in the

chambered position, you can now put it back on the ground. It is very important to always return to the chambered position. It will help your balance and stance.

Step 3: Step down.

This kick is aimed to the groin. When practicing it, remember this. If you are kicking above the groin level, it will not have power. Knowing where to kick is one of the most important aspects of karate.

Training Guide:

Knowing the technique is great, but in order to have a fast and effective kick, it must be practiced, and practiced a lot. Do this workout once a week for two months and your kicks will be lightning fast.

Everything should be practiced on both sides of the body. Always train your weaker side first to make it stronger.

20 Partial kicks:

Hold your leg in the chambered position and do a strong fast kick. Do not put your leg down between kicks. This will develop your balance and your technique.

20 Slow kicks:

Do the full kicking motion very slowly. Pay careful attention to curling your foot/toes back and squeezing your **quadriceps** muscle.

20 FAST kicks:

Now finish with the best kick you can do. Put it all together and drive the kick up.

Advanced Students:

20 Moving FAST kicks:

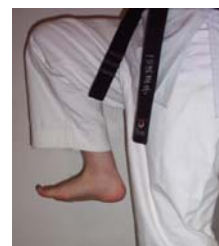
Being able to kick at any time is a great skill to have. Move around in your fighting stance and throw the kick a random times.

Very Advanced Students:

20 FAST sliding kicks:

While moving, shift your feet forward to guarantee your distance and throw the kick.

Mae Geri



“Knowing the technique is great, but in order to have a fast and effective kick, it must be practiced, and practiced a lot.”

Improve your Kobudo - Kote Uchi (Sai)

The **Kote Uchi** with the sai is one of the most effective strikes. It can be done against an attacker wielding a Bo, Sword, Tonfa, Eku(Oar) and almost any other weapon you can think of. The attack should be focused to the wrist never the weapon.

Kote Uchi is a fast quick strike, done with little or no wind up. It is important to remember this

when developing your technique. You don't want to sacrifice your speed for your power.

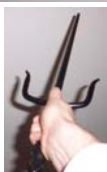
Step 1: Starting Position—Punch.

When working on the technique always start from a punch position. This will help you make sure you are not drawing back too far.

Step 2: Roll your wrist towards your body beginning reversing the sai in your hand.

This subtle shift is important. Do not move your arm. Let your wrist do the work. Your wrist should be relaxed and loose. If you tighten your wrist you will have a slow strike.

Kote Uchi



“A key to both Karate and Kobudo practice is to mentally picture your attacker. If you can’t see in your head what the technique is for, you can’t do it correctly.”

Continuation from Page 3

Step 3: Strike out with the sai as you finish reversing it. Aim to a thirty degree angle outside your arm.

The wrist should be loose until the moment of the strike. Focus on creating a “whipping” motion with the sai. As with all sai strikes. Please be sure that your thumb is firmly behind the sai and that it is well below the prongs.

Step 4: Recover the sai right back to your arm.

Fully recover the sai all the way to your arm. It is very important and will help you develop the “whipping” action which makes this technique so effective.

Training Guide:

Knowing the technique is great, but in order to make it work for

you, it must be practiced, and practiced a lot. Do this workout once a week for two months and your sai will feel like it’s attached.

Everything should be practiced on both sides of the body. Always train your weaker side first to make it stronger.

20 Stationary Strikes:

Position yourself in a proper stance and strike with the front hand. Start in punch position.

20 Step Strikes:

Step forward and strike. Work on the timing of your strike. Ideally, it will strike a split second after you plant your stance.

20 Punch - Strikes:

Step forward, punch then immediately do a Kote Uchi. When doing this, image the punch missing and the strike being a defensive measure against a bo.

20 Side Stepping Strikes:

The most common use of this strike is while avoiding an attack. Practice this by stepping to the side with your back foot (rotating your body) and executing the Kote Uchi.

A key to both **Karate** and **Kobudo** practice is to mentally picture your attacker. If you can’t see in your head what the technique is for, you can’t do it correctly.

Training Tips

“One way to make it easier to workout is to make it fun. It’s always going to be hard, but it can be fun too.”

A great quote is that every great accomplishment in life is 10% Inspiration and 90% perspiration. That should be every **Karateka’s** motto.

Training, and training hard is a prerequisite for all great martial artists. No one has ever become a great fighting sitting on a couch watching TV.

No matter how busy, you are, or think you are, you must make time to train. It’s all up to you how good you can be.

One way to make it easier to workout is to make it fun. It’s always going to be hard, but it can be fun too. This is a fun little workout anyone can do at home.

Step 1: Find some stairs and pick a number between 2 and 6.

The higher the number the harder it is...

Step 2: Look at the stair of the number you picked (from the bottom). Now run up to that stair touching every stair and back down touching every stair.

Go as quickly as you can without falling down the stairs. Think of driving your knees up as you go. Do this for as long as you can. When you can go no farther, stop.

Step 3: Now that you are tired and need a break. Put your feet on the stair you chose and your hands at the bottom. Do as many push-ups and you can. Aim to do as many as times you went up and down the stairs.

Make sure that every pushup is a good one. If you can only do

three really good ones, it’s better than 50 bad ones.

Step 4: Count down from your number repeating steps 2 and 3 each time.

Keep working as hard as you can at each stair. When you can’t keep a good pace, it’s time to stop. It’s fine to stop, just remember how far you got and try to go further and fast next time.

Remember: It’s not how long you train, it’s how hard. If you are doing this workout for more than 10 minutes, you need to go faster and harder. By 5 minutes you should feel your legs burning and be gasping for breathe. That’s good! Continue to work hard and your karate will develop quickly.



Recent Promotions

Chitora Dojo

Dec. 16th new Yellow Stripes.
Jan 20th. **Gordon Findlay & Justin Johnson** successfully tested for Rokukyu (Purple) in **Kobudo**.

Satori Dojo

None Submitted

Chibushi

None Submitted

Kokoro

None Submitted

Toshikai

None Submitted

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

Isshinryu Point totals

Competing in Open tournaments in Thunder Bay earns competitors points. This are the totals for Isshinryu students

6 and under:

Liam Stewart—13

7 and 8:

Ashley Watt—17

9 and 10:

Austan Whitehurst—21

Travis Spivak—11

Kieran Stewart—8

Justin Gushulak—4

Paige Kok—4

Mitchell Lambert—4

Teja Plesa—2

11 and 12:

Jordan Tennier—27

Jodi Polhill—27

Mitchell Watt—16

Amanda Findlay—13

David Naimian—12

Kevin Gagnon—9

Adam Kok—7

13 and 14:

Hayley Tennier—35

15-17:

Nicole Landgraff—18

Sara Naimian—12

Jeff Long—8

Adults:

James Stewart—26

Justin Johnson—14

John Naimian—10

Greg Kok—8

Gord Findlay—6

Hugh Yardley—5

Black Belts:

Mike Fenton—30

Trevor Warren—21

Cody Ward—18

Jesse Hill—13

Simeon Ostap—9

Dale Radford—8

Attention:

If you aren't listed here and have points, it's because I missed you. Send me your name and club and I will add you to the list next time.

Karate Terms in this Newsletter

Chitora—Essence of the Tiger

Chibushi—Warrior Spirit

Dojo—School

Geri—Kick

Godan—5th Level (Black Belt)

Hachidan—8th Degree Black Belt

Isshinryu—One Heart Way

Kanji—The Japanese Alphabet containing thousands of letters.

Karate—Empty Hands

Karateka—A person who trains in karate

Kata—Prearranged training techniques

Kobudo—Ancient Martial Way

Kokoro—mind, heart, spirit

Kote—Wrist

Mae—Front

Okinawa—Japanese Island where all karate began

Quadriceps—Muscle on the front your leg right above your knee

Shihan—Great Instructor

Shimabuku Tatsuo—

Okinawan Master who created Isshinryu. Extra Note: Japanese names are written Family Name, Given Name. We use this format when mentioning Okinawan Master out of respect for their traditions.

Shodan—1st Level (Black Belt)

Shotokan—A Japanese Style of Karate created by **Funakoshi Gichin** (An Okinawan Master)

Uchi—Strike

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.

Photography by : Kyla Bass

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)

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.

Chitora Dojo—North McIntyre Rec. Center

Mike Fenton & Trevor Warren
Tuesdays 6:30-8:30 & Thursdays 6:30-9:00

Chibushi Dojo—Canada Games Complex

Dean Johnson & Maegan Lavallee
Saturdays 10:30-1:00

Kokoro Dojo—West Thunder Comm. Center

Joe Rigato & Dale Radford
Mondays & Thursdays 6:00-9:00

Satori Dojo—Current River Comm. Center

Dinah Jung
Mondays 6:00-8:30 Wednesdays 7:00-9:00

Toshikai Dojo—West Thunder Comm. Center

Susan Baldassi
Mondays 4:00-6:30

Quick Tips

This section is reserved for quick little tips aimed at each belt rank. Adding the skill to your training can only improve your skills as a **Karateka**.

Black Belts:

Kumae—Kumae's are an often overlooked technique. It is very important to take your time and make sure fingertips are pointed up, palms turned downward. Treat it as any other technique.

Brown Belts(Ikkyu & Nikyu):

Sunsu 4 fastest moves—Sunsu is the proud possessor of the 4 fastest moves in Isshinryu. The four open hand strikes should be done with the speed and precision the technique deserves. Pacing is 1-2-3/4. 3 and 4 should be done at almost the same time.

Purple Belts(Sankyū):

Kusanku—When kneeling, focus

on almost touching your knee to the ground. With practice you should be able to have your Gi touch the ground gently without dropping your weight down on your knee.

Green Belts(Yonkyū):

Neko ashi dachi—Cat Stance is a very effective defensive stance. It is crucial that when doing the stance the back leg has a deep bend in it. Sit back in the stance and think of being coiled, ready to attack.

Orange Belts(Gokyu):

Shiko dachi—The horse stance is a training stance. When practicing make sure that your lower leg (between your foot and knee) is straight up and down. If it's not, you need to go deeper.

Yellow Belts(Rokukyu):

Kiais—All Kiai's begin from the belly. Focus on breathing out

like you just got hit everytime you do a Kiai.

Beginners & Yellow Stripe:

Knuckle Pushups—Focus on your top two knuckles. Make sure you are only on those two and are not rocking. The more stable you are the easier.

Kobudo

Wrist Curl—When using the bo, the final state of any technique should be with the wrist tightly curled towards the body. Leaving the wrist dangling down could be a dangerous mistake.

Little Dragons:

Patience is important. Take your time and your skills improve quickly.

Samurai's:

Stance is where all power comes from. A poor stance means a poor punch.