



The Canadian Isshinryu Way Everything Karate & Kobudo

Business Name

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Train Hard to Learn

I was recently reading Saijutsu by Katsumi Murakami and despite being in his eighties, he spoke of the benefit and need for hard training, especially when practicing Kata.

“If we try very hard in the training of the sai or karate, we will forget ourselves. It also means to learn ourselves”

He speaks very passionately about practicing kata, with power and focus as the method by which the culture of Karate will be carried on by future generations.

Kata has been practiced for hundreds of years on Okinawa and each Kata is unique, While they may share common techniques, each is intended to represent a set of fighting techniques. These techniques may not work for everyone, but they worked for someone.

As we practice them, we should try to think like the master who created them, and likely used them in life or death situations. He had to put his utmost focus and power into each movement as there was no margin for error.

By practicing in this same manner our-

elves, we will better understand how we move and breath during exertion. This will help to preserve the memory and history of Karate by training in the same spirit as those Okinawan masters who trained not just for the love of Karate and the Martial arts, but as a means to preserve their own life and family.

Next time you do your Kata, try to visualize yourself as a Karate master applying the techniques for real!

Essential Isshinryu has been Released!

For more information on the first Canadian Isshinryu book, visit www.essentialisshinryu.com!

ATTENTION NEEDED!

Do you know of someone great in Canadian Isshinryu? If so, please e-mail Sensei@isshinryu.ca with the contact details to be pro- filed in future newsletters.

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Upcoming Events

Seminars

Sensei Richard Ruberto—Isshinryu & Kobudo Seminars—Ottawa, ON—Sept 17th & 18th.

Tournaments

AIKC Kyokushin Championships—October 9th & 10th, Rochester, NY

Other

We cry in the dojo so we can laugh on the battlefield!



Matsumura Kosaku

Understanding the history of Isshinryu and karate can provide the Isshinryu Karateka with a greater knowledge of the masters of Karate and their contributions to creating Isshinryu. Understanding the people involved leads the student and instructor alike to a deeper respect for the evolution of the art.

Matsumura Kosaku (1829-1898)

Who he was

The leading martial artist from the city of Tomari in his time and a well known instructor across all of Okinawa.

Key Instructors

Uku Giko—A royal instructor (Matsumura's family was noble) who primarily taught him Naihanchi.

Teruya Kishin - Second instructor who taught him Passai and Wansu.

Yara of Chatan—A master of Jojutsu.

Key Students

Itosu Anko—Very highly regarded instructor on Okinawa, largely responsible for the incorporation of Karate into the school system and creator the Pinan and Naihanchi kata sets.

Motobu Choki— Instructor of Tatsuo Shimabuku and highly regarded instructor and fighter.

Kyan Chotoku—Instructor of Tatsuo Shimabuku and highly regarded instructor on Okinawa.

The Individual

Rather than outline the training and many details of his life, which exceeds the space allocated for this article, I will instead share a specific incident from his life.

As Matsumora became an adult, his position in the community increased. During Matsumora's time the Satsuma officials were quite unpleasant to the Okinawans. They frequently used their power to control the Okinawans and even resorted to acts of violence against women and children. Many of the young men of Tomari who found this unacceptable would gather at the school to discuss solutions. By

this time Matsumora was recognized as a martial arts leader among the men of Tomari and decided to develop a method for disarming a swordsman using only a wet towel.

One day Matsumora was traveling down Haariya Street and heard screams coming from a group of upset people. When he arrived at the scene he witnessed a Satsuma official brandishing his sword and threatening the locals with vulgar and cruel statements. Matsumora pushed his way through the crowd and stood before the swordsman. The crowd on hand was amazed. Even with a sword standing up to the Satsuma was incredible, Matsumora was unarmed.

Matsumora was prepared for the swordsman. He quickly removed the damp towel he now carried at all times from the inside of his jacket. Quickly the swordsman lunged at him intending to deal him a mortal blow, but Matsumora remained calm and avoided the attack. Before the swordsman could retract his blade Matsumora had already flung his towel and manage to wrap it around the sword. He quickly yanked on the towel disarming the samurai. Unfortunately the technique was not without its danger and Matsumora's little finger was severed. Focused on his task, Matsumora quickly seized the sword and flung it into the river before running off. The swordsman, so embarrassed to have lost his sword to an Okinawan, quickly left as well.

Knowing he would be easy to locate with his freshly missing finger, Matsumora decided to relocate from Tomari and hide out in Nago Asoubaru district. He remained there for about ten years, returning to Tomari at age thirty.

Upon Matsumora's return to Tomari he found that the situation had changed for the better. He was able to sustain a comfortable living by trading goods between those in Tomari and those he met in Nago. Shortly after returning to Tomari, Kosaku studied with Yara of Chatan village in Jigenryu jojutsu. This Yara was most likely a descendant to the original Chatan Yara and, under his training, Matsumora became an incredible master of the Jo, even missing a finger.

I sincerely hope that you enjoyed reading this series of articles on the history of Isshinryu. For more information about this master and karate in general, please refer to Essential Isshinryu.

Up next in the Isshinryu history will be additional biographies of Okinawan Karate masters. If you have corrections or comments regarding this article or any future article, please feel free to contact me directly.



Heaven and Earth, the Moon and the Sun:

The *Bubishi* and the Origins of the Spiritual Codes of Isshinryu Karate

By Pat Couperous

Code 1. "A person's heart is the same as Heaven and Earth" / "The human mind is one with heaven and earth"

Code 2. "The blood circulating is similar to the Moon and Sun" / "Our blood circulation parallels the solar and lunar cycles of each day"

It is well established that the eight codes of Isshinryu were adopted from the almost identical precepts listed in the *Bubishi*, the ancient manual of martial training which surfaced in Okinawa in the 19th century and profoundly influenced the development of the modern Ryukyu martial traditions. In both the *Bubishi* and Isshinryu versions there are significant differences in tone and goal between the first two codes and the following six. The last six are easily related to physical movement, force and sensory perception---hearing and seeing, balance and striking. Thus, they are readily interpreted in a literal manner. Though all of the codes can be interpreted in social and spiritual ways, as well as in the more literal physical ways, the first two codes are clearly more spiritual or emotional in intent. They emphasize balance and harmony or unity with the natural order. As such, the concepts behind these codes as well as their ultimate meanings can be hard to grasp.

One can gather more understanding of the meanings of the codes by looking at the origins of the codes and their connection to the *Bubishi*. This ancient guide imparts both the physical and spiritual elements of ancient White Crane and Monk fist boxing or *quanfa*. It was compiled in China during the Qing dynasty (14th - 19th century). It is not known exactly when or by whom. Essentially it is a compilation of writings on personal physical development, philosophy, and health. It served as a training and moral guide to many of the great martial arts masters and innovators in Okinawa. The subject matter of the articles of the *Bubishi* reveal the philosophical traditions that are the underpinnings for the codes. I have presented both the Isshinryu and *Bubishi* versions of the codes above.

Codes one and two have been well interpreted by many students and masters over the many years, though with some variation. In most cases interpretations focus on the interplay between the physical and the spiritual world. The *heart* in Code 1 is generally taken to mean the emotional and spiritual centre of our being. The code therefore

emphasizes a union of the individual with the spiritual or universal pattern. One is united with the universal cycle and cannot go against natural law; and must draw on the natural energy of the universe. Others have interpreted the code to mean an individual must maintain a calm spiritual and emotional centre in order to meet challenges. Code 2 is again concerned with harmony with the natural world but, this code is more focused on the cyclical patterns of life, both biological and spiritual. These are slippery concepts that are difficult to grasp.

From reading the articles of the *Bubishi*, it is apparent that the codes are a reflection of how the dominant cultures of the lands surrounding the China seas saw their world over the years centuries over which the various articles were gathered and amended. To the ancient peoples of the oriental world the physical patterns and the biological mechanics of the every day world could not be separated from the spiritual. For those who compiled the *Bubishi*, the mental, physical, and spiritual aspects of life were fed by a universal natural well-spring of energy which was manifested in understandable cycles. The philosophical underpinnings to the *Bubishi* and to the codes persisted for many centuries and are reflected in the martial arts traditions today. Thus the first two codes of Isshinryu reflect this coordinating life view though each code emphasizes a different aspect.

The first code joins the individual with the universal. At the heart of this code is the idea of *transcendence*, that an individual can move beyond the physicality of existence. This is a central Buddhist concept allowing for the awakening or enlightenment of the individual beyond the physical plane to the spiritual plane. These ideas are present in the first article of the *Bubishi* which presents the history and the development of philosophical underpinnings of *quanfa* training. The article explains how Master Fang saw from the beginning that a student must not put too much prominence to training the body. The spiritual development was just as important and would reflect itself in the physical abilities and confidence of the practitioner. She saw that "true power and wisdom come from within and are reflected without. Introspection and philosophical assimilation must balance strict, hard physical conditioning. This is the way to transcend ego related distractions."

To be Continued in the next newsletter.



2nd Annual Isshinryu Karate Camp by Tim Leonard

The second annual Isshinryu Karate Camp took place on the August 20-22nd weekend in Cookstown, ON (40 minutes North of Toronto). What a jam-packed martial arts weekend, complete with testing, a little karaoke, a birthday celebration, and an Argentinian pig roast. Hosted by Sensei Harri Makivirta, karateka had the choice of pitching a tent, sleeping in the dojo or staying at the Holiday Inn.

Here is how the weekend unfolded. Friday night, led by Sensei Tim Leonard and Sensei Shane Hale, we studied Choto Kyan no Sai and Bo-Bo in the backyard. Spurred by hunger, we went to the local pub for something to eat but little did we realize that Sensei Harri would be applying pressure point techniques and getting us all to do karaoke!! Saturday morning, we were up and doing our 5K run by 8 a.m. After breakfast, we covered the first three katas of Isshinryu: Seisan, Seiuchin and Naihanchi. Shihan Markovich then covered some stick fighting through Arnis drills. Our heads were filling up fast. There were two karateka testing on the weekend, Laura Harvey and Jack Lafleur. Both demonstrated their hand kata and showed some bunkai from the kata throughout the afternoon. The day was completed by Sensei Harri teaching some of his favourite 'bouncer' self-defence techniques and full-contact sparring

drills. By 6 p.m., we had completed 8 hours of martial arts training and we were now ready to enjoy ourselves.

Sensei Harri had arranged for everyone to experience and enjoy an Argentinian pig roast hosted by karateka Charlie Brown. The event took place on a horse farm in which the pig (and beef tenderloin and chickens) were barbecued on a open pit. We also celebrated Shihan Markovich's 70th birthday. Many thanks goes out to everyone who planned and prepared the food for this event. It was simply fantastic.

On Sunday morning, Shihan Markovich taught two new weapons kata: Tsun Kwa (short tonfa kata) and Matsumura no gama (kama kata). It was exciting to learn two more Okinawan weapons kata. The last thing for the weekend was to finish off the testing by completing Sanchin kata and kumite. Congratulations to Laura Harvey for succeeding in testing for Sankyu (brown belt) and to Jack Lafleur for his Nidan (second degree black belt). Both did a great job!

We packed up our tents, said our good-byes and promised to see each other at next year's summer camp. Hope to see you there as well!!





Isshinryu Family News

By Mike Fenton

On August 15th, 8:07 AM Kaelyn Aressana Fenton was born! Mike Fenton, his wife Kyla and daughter Julia welcomed the newest edition to the Isshinryu Family!

Kaelyn sprinted out a week early weighting 9 lbs 5 oz and since her arrival has focused on packing on the pounds. She works out daily, currently focus-

ing on her neck muscles & rolling ability. At this rate she'll be doing jumping jacks in the dojo by the end of the year.

Big sister Julia has been very helpful as well, playing with Kaelyn, but also keeping up her conditioning, Kaelyn may have the toughest eyes in the Dojo!



Kaelyn Aressana Fenton



Julia & Kaelyn

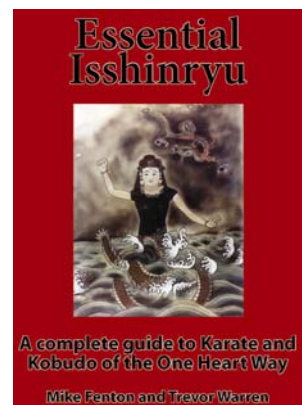
Essential Isshinryu Available

Essential Isshinryu is the recently released book by Trevor Warren and Mike Fenton. The book is a complete guide to the one heart way including both history and techniques of Isshinryu.

Essential Isshinryu is now available for purchase via Amazon.com, Amazon.ca and many online retailers. For more information please contact the authors via this website or by [clicking here](#).

For more information including a complete table of contents for the book please visit Isshinryu.ca or EssentialIsshinryu.com.

Bulk rates and signed copies are available directly from the authors for those interested.





Black Belts in Training

By Tim Boykin

In order to develop well rounded black belts in your charge, it may become necessary to embrace unconventional methods of training. One of my favorite methods of achieving this training is to have junior black belts take part in the planning, management and execution of an actual tournament. This approach to training has many advantages and changes the focus from competition to leadership and teamwork. do not run themselves.

For more information about our second annual "Kyu Feast", which is being hosted in Charlotte NC on Saturday the 9th of October 2010, please contact me via email: tim_boykin@yahoo.com

Junior Black Belts who become involved in the actual logistics of the event gain invaluable insight. There's nothing like setting up rings, moving furniture, identifying support equipment, and sorting trophies to appreciate how much work goes into a successful event. The process also develops teamwork and comradery.

Junior yudansha also gain invaluable experience early in their career. Skill sets include learning to validate scores, proper tournament etiquette, and enhancement of kata.

Developing skills as a referee is far more difficult. Being familiar with rules and standards is important, but nothing takes the place of actually executing the duties of a side judge or head referee. Safety is paramount and knowing how to call a point, control a ring, handle infractions and render good decisions which avoid injury are skills that should be learned as early as possible. Junior black belts may have to wait years for an opportunity to judge in a tournament environment to gain experience. It's assumed that proficiency automatically comes with rank. I've discovered that nothing could be farther from the truth.

However, the most importantly, junior personnel learn teamwork and cooperation. Safe and efficient tournaments





The Challenges!

Karate

Time to get back to basics!

After a long fun summer working on new techniques and exploring new ways of training, now is a great time to get back to focusing on the basics. There is much to be said for being great at a few things rather than poor at many. So, let's take the time to get great at the basics and refocus on being great at the "easy" stuff.

To improve your Karate, I'd like everyone to pick their favorite block punch combination from the basics, it can be an open or closed block and any strike to follow up. In fact, it doesn't even have to be in the basics, you could even make up a combination you like (although, the ones in the basics are pretty nice).

Now, focus just on that one basic combination. Try to generate as much power and speed as possible in that movement (notice I said movement and not moves?) to make it powerful and effective. The movement shouldn't be thought of as two separate moves, but as a whole. Your body should make one powerful movement in order to accomplish both the block and strike.

As you develop your powerful response every once in awhile pause and think about the smaller points, how's my stance, how's the form on my block & strike, am I breathing properly? But never lose focus on the bigger picture, making your entire body move with the technique.

Remember, it doesn't have to be pretty to be effective, and being pretty doesn't make it more effective, so focus on the movement and putting it together, not on the aesthetics of the positions. This isn't a one day training suggestion, it's an every day training challenge that should last for months if you truly want to be an expert at the fundamental block counter. Don't worry, you aren't alone, I'm doing this challenge myself until the next newsletter is published, but I've got a head start on you, I'm already doing it!

Kobudo

If you haven't read the karate challenge yet, do that now!

The Kobudo challenge is the same as the karate challenge (yet again), and it's also my own personal challenge, so I think it's good!

I'm working with the sai, but chose any weapon you like and pick a block and counter, and make it perfect, focus on power and response. With weapon training, if you block, pause, counter, likely, if you are fighting anyone with even a little training, you just did block, got hurt badly, and that's about it. As fast as you may be with a weapon, someone attacking you is just as fast and if you aren't prepared to respond immediately, it's already too late.

Focus on combining the movements in order to make the response to the attack timely.

Training

I'm sure everyone has been training hard through the summer, and even if you haven't, you can start now. Make use of the remaining nice weather and try to diversify your training as much as possible. Run hills, do interval training, get together in parks and do jumping & running drills.

Just train outside and enjoy it while you can. It won't be long before all you can do it run on a treadmill, or back and forth in a small room so you may as well get it in while you can.

Kata can be a great workout as well, all you need is enough open room outside to do a Kata (and given this is Canada, I'm pretty sure you can find the space) and do your kata hard and fast, and then do it again, and again and again. Put your utmost effort in and after 3-4 Kata you will definitely be breathing hard.



Competition Results

Not really a competition result, but definitely an achievement worth mentioning. At the 2010 Isshinryu Hall of Fame, Shihan Robert Markovich was awarded their Lifetime Achievement Award.

Congratulations Shihan Markovich!

Coloured Belt Promotions

Chitora Dojo—Thunder Bay, ON

June 24th—Greg Iwanoniw—Green Belt

July 15th—Alexander Serenko—Ikkkyu

July 15th—Al MacTavish—Hachikyu Kobudo

Toshikai Dojo—Ottawa, ON

Laura Harvey—Sankyu

News

Nakazato Joen Passes Away

Designated an Intangible Cultural Asset, Okinawa Karate master and former mayor of Chinen Village passed away at 4:16 am on September 7, 2010 at age 88 and is survived by wife Chiyoko.

He was a student of Shuri-te Karate under the late master Kyan Chotoku at the time when Shimabuku Tatsuo was Kyan's sempai and later founded the Shorinji-ryu system of Karatedo in 1954.

In 1960 he became Vice-President and head of the All Japan Karatedo Federation, Okinawa Division, in 1965 he was appointed Vice-Chairman of the Okinawa Karatedo League, and in 1983 he served as the President of the Okinawa Karatedo Federation.

In 2000 he was designated an Intangible Cultural Asset, and in 2007 a Cultural Merit holder. He authored one book on Karatedo, "Karatedo no Jidaiteki Soan". He was the former mayor of Chinen, elected in 1982 and served two eight-year terms.

Yudansha (Black Belt) 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 them in the next newsletter.

Completed Promotions

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

Jack LaFleur—Ottawa, ON—August 22nd—Nidan



Contributors



Editor & Author—Chitora Dojo

Mike Fenton—Thunder Bay, Ontario
Mike lives with his wife Kyla and has been training in Isshinryu karate for over 25 years, and has been an instructor for over 20 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 Ottawa

Patrick Couperus—Ottawa, Ontario
Pat has been studying Isshinryu for 9 years and is a Shodan at the Toshikai Dojo in Ottawa and runs the cardio classes.

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—Any Dojo

Authors are always wanted! Consider taking the time to submit something to the newsletter.

Karate Terms in this Newsletter

Bunkai—Taking to Pieces, commonly interpreted as the application of technique.

Bushi—Warrior

Chatan—A region on Okinawa

Chinkuchi—Bone, Sinew and Energy

Dojo—School

Furi—Swing

Go—Hard

Jo—Short Staff

Ju—Soft or Gentle

Jutsu—Technique

Ka—Person / Practitioner

Kama—Sickle(s)

Kata—Prearranged training techniques

Kihon—Exercises

Kime—Focus

Kobudo—Ancient Martial Way, the term used to describe all the weapons in Isshinryu and Karate.

Kyu—Student rank level, counting down towards 0, being the first rank of Black Belt.

Makiwara—Striking Board

Mushin—No Mind

Naha—Port city on Okinawa

Okinawa—Japanese Island where all karate began

Ryukyu Islands—The island chain south of Japan where Okinawa is the largest Island.

Shuri—Capital City on Okinawa

Tonfa/Tuifa—Baton with Handle

Uchi—Strike

Yara—An original student of Kusanku and pioneer of Karate techniques on Okinawa.

Yudansha—Black Belt

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



Business Name

Primary

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!

Abbotsford, BC

Contact: Mike O'Leary

Brandon, MB

Contact: Richard Wharf

Contact: Buzz Cox

Calgary, AB

Contact: Charles Boyd

Cookstown, ON

Contact: Harri T. Makivirta

Dryden, ON

Contact: Rick McGogy

Hope, BC

Contact: Norm Losier

Kenora, ON

Contact: Steve Davis

Contact: David White

Ottawa, ON

Contact: Tim Leonard

Saskatchewan

Contact: Brian Smout

Sioux Lookout

Contact: Jim Sapay

Thunder Bay, ON

Contact: Mike Fenton

Contact: Trevor Warren

Vancouver, BC

Contact: Rachel McGovern

Windsor, ON

Contact: Albert Mady

Winnipeg, MB

Contact: Brent Horton

Canadian Isshinryu Abroad

Berlin, Germany

Contact: Ryan Boesche

Stow, Ohio

Contact: Albert Pecoraro

Never, Ever fall asleep first in a group of Karateka.

You'll regret it in the morning.

