

# KODENKAN YUDANSHAKAI

## ATARASHI DENTO

NEW TRADITIONS

March 2020

Paul Haber, Shihan, editor

A newsletter serving  
Kodenkan Yudanshakai in  
Henry Seishiro Okazaki

Welcome to the newsletter  
associate of Kodenkan



Members and Associates of  
the traditions of Professor  
and Dai Shihan Joseph Holck

dedicated to you, the member or  
Yudanshakai.

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### WHAT'S NEW

On Saturday, on January 2, 2020, a **Black Belt Clinic** was held at MATS dojo and Boxer's Rebellion. Shihan Herzog not only gave us an outstanding 2-hour workout, but "taught the teachers" some of the finer points of instruction in ukemi waza, or falling techniques. Even those of us who have been teaching Martial Arts for many years learned some valuable nuggets.

Next on the agenda was Shihan Lovitt, who brought us all up to date on KDK history- and gave us a much-needed rest after the previous class.

Last on the bill was Shihan Heacock with Advanced Yawara- releases, escapes and counters from his extensive study of Danzan-ryu. The sound of bodies hitting the mats was a thing to

behold. I think it is safe to say that all attendees had a great time, learned at least a little something and worked up a great sweat.

**Later that day**, Black Belt Promotion Ceremony and Banquet were held at St Frances Cabrini Church hall. Four new Shodans (Nolan Fox, Jason Rendon, Bill Senner and Sarina Tuskey ) were awarded their Black Belts and two (Ryan David and Brian Parker) were upgraded to Nidan. Approximately 40 members and guests were present to see the recipients receive their certificates.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL!

The **Promotion Banquet** was also exceptionally well attended, with 72 members and guests enjoying delicious food, great fellowship, and- of course- Hukilau, led by Shihan Parker.



**Kyu testing** was conducted on Sunday, February 9; it was an unusually small affair, with only 5 candidates vying for promotion.

**IN CASE YOU MISSED IT LAST TIME:**

**KDK 2020 calendar and promotion ceremony flyer** out now. If you did not receive them in email, check with Shihan Parker.

**Quarterly testing** will be held at MATS dojo. We encourage you to have your students test at this function. REMEMBER- Brown belts MUST test at the Quarterly testing. This allows instructors to get to know the student before he/ she becomes a Yudansha candidate. It also helps the student become used to the various Sensei and their techniques of grading.

**Updated Yudansha Promotion Standards V1.3-** including:

Martial Arts

Promotion/ Upgrade Eligibility

Notifications/ Recommendations

Testing

Promotions/ Upgrades

External Promotions/ Upgrades

For full details, check out the KDK website.

**Membership requirements and Benefits Standard V1.1:**

Requirements

Benefits

Revocation

For full details, check out the KDK website.

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## MEET THE SENSEI



Elisha Caywood, Sensei

Elisha first walked into the Kodokan of Tucson in October of 2006 because she had signed up for cardio kickboxing. O'Sensei Ken and Sensei Chris Carter gave impromptu jujitsu lessons after class, and she became addicted. Elisha began training in Matsuno Ryu Goshinjitsu in 2008.

After earning her patch, she started teaching a Lil' Dragons class. She says this only emphasized how little she still knew, so she trained harder and longer each class.

Elisha received her Shodan in MRG in 2011; she was a student in the Pima County Sheriff's Department's Corrections Academy at the time. After graduating from Corrections, she began studying the Sheriff's Department's Law Enforcement Academy.

During that time, Elisha began training in Matsuno Kajukenbo Kai under O'Sensei Jackie Britt, and received her Shodan rank in MKK and Nidan in MRG in 2014.

She served as a Deputy from 2011 to 2016; she became a Defensive Tactics Instructor and helped train new corrections and deputy recruits.

Elisha retired in 2016 after her daughter Annie was born so that she could stay home with her. She continued to teach in the dojo and received Sandan in MRG in 2019.

When she's not at the dojo, Elisha is either out running with the dogs, running after Annie, gardening, reading, or hunting.

She's also still training because she says, "If there's anything that teaching martial arts has taught me, it's how little I still know."

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

**KYU TESTING** will be conducted on May 17 at MATS dojo. Sensei are encouraged to get your necessary paperwork turned in early- we expect a large group on this day.

**ANNUAL MARTIAL ARTS CAMP** will take place at the OTT YMCA on May 23-24 this year. We encourage you to save the date, whether you are a youth or an instructor. We need volunteers to help with the teaching , serving and all the usual happenings. **SAVE THE DATE!**

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## KANJI KORNER

By David Heacock, Shihan



Get your *hori hori* garden knife and let's delve into some more common terms.

### PART TWO

#### STANCES

Stances (*tachi*, *-dachi*) are fundamental, in both senses of the word, to all learning in self-defense and warrior arts. That is why they are emphasized early and endlessly. As your training progresses,

your understanding of and “feel” for them must mature, deepening as your center of action moves from head to mid-body.

Whether you are fighting with no other weapon than your body (which contains dozens of them!), a stick, blade, or firearm—without the proper mechanical balance of body positioning AND ground-contact with the surface beneath your soles, your blocks, strikes and even transition movements will be ineffective and may lead to defeat. Power in a strike or block is not just a matter of muscle, speed, and/or proper mechanics (kinesics). It also relies on the ability to “ground” oneself and use what I call “the resistance of the planet” to both counter and aid the laws of physics in one’s favor. I know this sounds a bit mystical, yet it can be achieved by proper form, “gripping” the earth with the feet (as in *sanchin* stances), and sending your *ki/chi* (energy, life force) into the ground to produce immovability, even if for the duration of a single punch.

Look deeply into your stances and transition movements; at how your body makes and uses contact with one or both feet, and you will begin to see how this principle works in conjunction with the forms you have been taught, to produce the best effect in all three phases: steadiness, advancing, and retreating.

A stance is a trade-off between stability and move-ability. The lower and wider a stance is, the more stable and resistive to impacts. Lying down is stable, but also makes it difficult to move quickly. The upright stances allow one to move easily, but at the expense of stability and balance. Using this idea, go back to your training to see and appreciate how it works in individual defensive, throwing, and pinning (hold-down) techniques, and through all phases of the katas.

The stances you are taught have been perfected over centuries of use, in all forms of physical combat, so learn them deeply and use them in full knowledge.

Here are our most familiar Japanese/Okinawan stance names. Illustrations of the stances are given below.

**Tachi (-dachi) (tachi 立ち; -dachi -だち)** (verb: *tachiagaru* 立ち上がる stand up; get up)  
a stance  
*-dachi* is the pronunciation when used in a compound (e.g. *shizendachi*)

**Kamae, (-gamae) (kamae 構え; -gamae -がえ)** posture (e.g. in martial arts); pose; stance

**Heisoku (閉足 closed, shut + feet) closed feet; “attention stance”**

**Musubi (結び ending, conclusion; also: join, connecting) “ending stance” or “informal attention stance”** As in the illustration, the heels are joined.

**Shizen (自然 self + -like; nature, spontaneity) natural.** As a “natural stance” the feet may be in line or one may be positioned a natural step’s distance forward.

**Hachi** (八字 eight + character (i.e., a *kanji*)) figure-8. So named because the feet are positioned like the character number 8.

**Shikō** (四股 (four + (*mata*) thigh) (⇒ verb: *matagu* 跨ぐ straddle, span, stretch over) straddle  
Name taken from the *sumō* wrestler's ceremonial leg raising and stomping to warm up in the ring.

**Naihanchi** (Naihan[*kyaku*]chi) 内・反・脚 (inside, within + (*soru* 反る) curve, arch, bend + leg) bowleg, bowlegged  
置 (verb: *oku* 置く put, place, keep something in a certain state) placement, put, set

Also see: *okikaeru* 置き・換える placement, set + replace, exchange, interchange) to replace, move, change the position of.

Similar to *kibabdachi*, but the legs are closer.

**Kiba** (騎馬 riding on horses + horse) horse riding, horse; the “horse stance”

As a stance, this is similar to *naihanchidachi*, but the legs are wider, as in *shikodachi*.

**Zenkutsu** (前屈 in front, before + bend) anteflexion; the “forward stance”

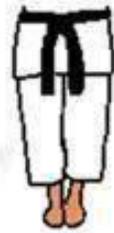
**Kōkutsu** (後屈 back, behind, rear + bend) retroflexion; the “back stance” or “rear stance”

**Neko-ashi** (猫足 cat + foot, leg) cat foot; the “cat stance”

**Kōsa** (*kousa*) (交差) cross; intersection; the “cross stance”

**Sanchin** (三戦 three + war, battle; possibly from: *sanjū* 三重 three + -fold) “three battles/conflicts/wars”; usually interpreted as the battle to unify the mind, body, and spirit.  
From *Wikipedia.com*

## THE STANCES ILLUSTRATED



Heisoku



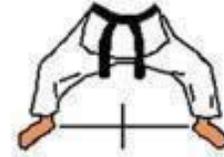
Musubi



Shizen



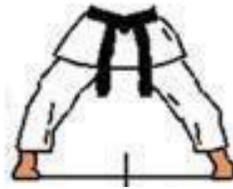
Hachiji



Shikō



Naihanchi



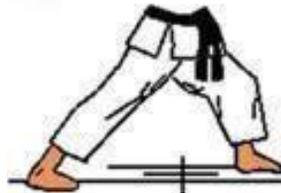
Kiba



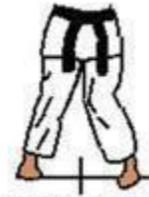
Nekoashi



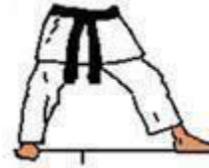
Kōsa



Zenkutsu



Sanchin



Kōkutsu

In **Part Three** I will discuss Blocks and Strikes.

Image source:

*Hori hori* knife. [www.edibleeastbay.com](http://www.edibleeastbay.com).

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## EDITOR'S EDGE

As we continue our study of the origins and development of the martial arts- specifically Karate, at this juncture- you may recall we have traced the lineage and some of the notable masters in the Shuri-te/ Shorin-ryu lineage. Later, we'll discuss the Naha-te and Tomari-te contributions to today's Karate. Following that, we will delve into the long, shadowy and mysterious origins of Jujutsu. For now, however, remember we are picking up our study with notable masters just prior to and after World War II.

One of the students of Matsumura Sokon who lived and taught through the 1920's and 30's was **Yabu Kentsu**,(1866-1937). Although few know much about him today, he was- according to

Clarke, in his book *Okinawan Karate A History of Styles and Masters Volume 1*, one of the most famous *karateka* on Okinawa in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Yabu was descended from the middle aristocracy, or *peichin* rank, in a family who could trace their history back to 1689. His paternal grandfather, Kenyo, was the archery instructor for a noble named Lord Ikegusuku and his father, Kenden, was a court calligrapher. With such a family, Yabu received a good education, both in classics and in the martial arts. He was accepted as a student to Matsumura, who at that time was probably in his 80's, and his student, Itosu. Both were noted as hard instructors, who demanded perfection in both kata and self-defense skills.

Due to the political turmoil at that period, when Okinawa became a prefecture of the Japanese government and nobility was abolished, Yabu joined the military. During the Meiji era, Japan was transitioning from the feudal aristocracy to a more modern, Western style of army and military service was mandatory. When Yabu showed up for his military physical, the doctors were amazed by his level of fitness, due to his Karate training. That, combined with the fact that he was a volunteer, allowed Yabu to attend a school for Non-Commissioned Officers. There, he earned a nickname that stayed with him all his life - Sergeant Yabu.

Sergeant Yabu served in the Sino - Japanese War and after its conclusion, he returned to Okinawa where he became a teacher. He was also instrumental in assisting Itosu introduce Karate into the school system, where Yabu served as *Shihandai*, or Assistant to the Master, doing much of the actual instruction in *Shorin-ryu* as it was taught during that period. He was also among the first people to demonstrate *Karate* in Hawaii. Yabu is credited for introducing the militarized method of teaching, with groups moving en masse performing techniques and kata by the numbers. Prior to this, teaching was done in a much more relaxed, informal manner, which required a much smaller teacher- student relationship.

Some of the *Karate* teachers who trained with Yabu, and were probably influenced by him, were Kyoda Jyuhatsu, the founder of To'on Ryu; Najamnura Shigeru, who later founded *Okinawan Kempo*; and Myagi Chojun, the founder of Goju-ryu. Even though his own training was primarily with Shuri-te instructors, Yabu tended more toward Naha-te techniques and kata. Other famous students were Richard Kim, Tanken Toyama and Gima Makoto. Yabu Kentsu died of cancer in Shuri, Okinawa on August 27. 1937.

Another famous *karateka* in this period was **Kyan Chotoku**, a small, frail man with poor eyesight. Despite his size, he was known as one of the finest fighters and performers of *kata* on Okinawa. He was also noted for his colorful personal life. A member of family whose fortunes plummeted because of the annexation by Japan, he eventually lived on a small farm, tilling it by hand.

From a martial arts family, Kyan trained outside even during the cold winters, in order to toughen his body and spirit. He studied under Matsumura, Itosu, and Matsumora Kosaku. From them, he learned a wide range of *kata*, including Chinto, Passai (Bassai), Seisan (Hangetsu), Wanshu, Gojushiho, Anaku and Kusanku. Because of his small size, Kyan concentrated on his conditioning and speed to defeat his opponents. He also utilized the "three-quarter" punch, rather than the full twist used by most *karateka*. This type of punch is mostly used today by practitioners of Isshin-ryu. Kyan had a large influence on the styles of *Karate* that would become *Shorin-ryu* and its related styles. Some of his notable students were Tatsuo Shimabuku (founder of *Isshin-ryu*), Shoshine Nagamine (founder of *Matsubayashi-ryu*), and Zenryo Shimabukuro (founder of *Shorin-ryu Seibukan*). Kyan died in September 1945 from fatigue and malnutrition caused by World War II.

Another practitioner, physically the opposite of Kyan, was **Motobu Choki**, who was described as a “giant of seven feet four inches, with hands and feet that looked like monstrous hams.” He was born on April 5, 1870, in Akahira Village in Shuri, Okinawa. Because he was born of a courtesan or concubine, rather than his father’s wife, and was not the eldest son in his family, Motobu was not allowed to learn the secret family style taught by his father, although it is said that he learned by watching his brother through a knot hole. This is just one of the many legends of this great fighter.

Some said Motobu was a brawler, a thug, while others claim he was a very quiet person. It is said by some that he was self-trained, but we know he studied under Itosu, Matsumora Tokumine and Yabu Kentsu, although he didn’t stay with any of them for an extended period.

Motobu's philosophy of *karate* was simple - it must be realistic. He was an expert on practical applications of *kata* and insisted on careful study of body dynamics. He highly valued *Naihanchi* ( Tekki), but also practiced Passai, Wansu and Gojushiho. He is also said to have learned *Channan*, an old *kata* believed to have been the source of Itosu’s Pinans.

At the age of 50, Motobu accepted a challenge to fight a Western boxer, whom he knocked out in the second round with a knuckle punch to the temple. There are many stories of his fighting in the “red light” district, accompanied by Yabu Kentsu, Kiyam Chotoku and other masters. Although legend would say he never lost, it is documented that he lost a “demonstration” - actually a fight - with Miyagi Chojun, later the founder of Goju-ryu, as well as a contest with his older brother, Motobu hoyu, who was the successor to the families style, later called *Motobu Udundi* (Motobu Family Place di).

Motobu refused, or was unable, to speak Japanese, and so had a rather hard time in Japan, but he opened his own dojo in Osaka and taught hand-to-hand combat with the Mikage police department, as well as *karate* at the Mikage Normal School. He died on April 15, 1944, and his son, Motobu Chosei, carries on in his father’s place.

Next time, we’ll talk about the various branches of Shorin-ryu, the descendent of Shuri-te, and some of the masters we just mentioned above. Until then, here are some words from Gichin Funakoshi, founder of Shotokan Karate:

“In the past, it was expected that about three years were required to learn a single kata, and usually even an expert of considerable skill would know only three, or at most five, kata.”

Think about that, while you train.