

The Japanese Fighting Arts

Edited by John Goodbody

There is no end to training. Once you begin to feel that you are masters, you are no longer getting on the way you are to follow.

Hagakure Bushido

Karate

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1. History

The origins of karate are somewhat obscure. The most popular tradition traces them to the arrival in China of the fierce Indian monk Bodhidharma, or Daruma taishi, to give him his Japanese name. He is said to have arrived in Canton in AD 520 and he was also the First patriarch of Zen Buddhism in China.

Bodhidharma imposed the most severe discipline on the monks under him at the monastery of Shaolin. His students and their successors became famous for their physical prowess as well as their mental discipline and Shaolin was to give its name to one of the foremost schools of Chinese boxing. Shaolin boxing was introduced into the Ryukyu Islands, of which Okinawa is the main island, in either the fifteenth or the sixteenth century.

These were tough times in the Ryukyus. A succession of tyrannies, for their own preservation, had made the possession of weapons by any member of the civilian population a state offence. Understandably this boosted the interest in unarmed combat, producing a system called Okinawa-te, a mixture of Chinese and indigenous influences.

There were in fact many different 'schools' of Okinawa-te, each one carefully guarding its secrets from the others. Secrets had also to be kept from the ruling classes and from any individual who might have misused them. Therefore, all training was carried out in the early morning or late at night, or else behind locked doors. No beginner was accepted until his good character had been established.

Thus modern karate is the outcome of centuries of interchange between China, the Ryukyus and Japan. It only recently came to be openly taught to the public first in Okinawa and later in Japan. During 1917 and 1922 the late Gichin Funakoshi, President of the Okinawa Bushokwai, demonstrated his powers in Tokyo. Funakoshi was to become Supreme Instructor of the new Japan Karate Association and by 1935 karate clubs were established at most of the leading universities in Japan.

The contact with intellectual life at university was invigorating for karate. New techniques were developed, old ones improved, and elements which had always been regarded as mysterious and supernatural were regarded in a more rational light. It must be remembered, however, that karate students now more than ever derive moral and spiritual strength from their training.

2. Mental Development

The primary aim of practising meditation in karate is not to turn the fighting art or the sport into a religion. It serves a practical purpose.

Rigid patterns of thought and confused emotions always tend to obstruct the understanding and anticipation of an opponent. They close the mind, and meditation or 'mokuso' is the means by which you are able to clear it before training. Here is how to practice.

You begin by sitting on your heels, Japanese style. Your back is straight, chest out, shoulders down, and your nose must be vertically in line with your navel. Look straight ahead for a few minutes, then half close your eyes and fix them on a point two yards ahead of you on the floor. After a few more minutes completely close your eyes but continue to see the point on the floor in your imagination.

While you are a beginner, in order to forget whatever you may have on your mind, it may be helpful to concentrate on your breathing.

Imagine that you send the breath to the top of your head, down through the spine to the coccyx, the anus and the testicles, then concentrate it in the abdomen for a few moments. Return it through the chest to the mouth, breathe out and repeat.

Either routine should ideally be repeated at least once every day for five or ten minutes, and also before and after training. We have already mentioned its use before training. The purpose of 'mokuso' after training is to quieten the mental and physical excitement which a hard session necessarily entails. At this time it is practised by all the students, sitting in line, facing their instructor.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of 'mokuso'. You may not appreciate it at first but you will soon feel the benefits if you practise it every day. It is the moments of complete blankness, of being empty of all thoughts, that enable you to cultivate the sixth sense that men have to such a large extent forfeited in return for intellectual development. It was precisely this sixth sense that enabled the mediaeval 'samurai' to fight in pitch darkness or anticipate the most cleverly concealed ambush.

Ultimately, karate should consist in the *mental control* of an opponent or opponents. If you're challenged to fight, you will be prepared to avoid any attack and at the same time you will observe your opponent's weakness. You will take for granted a successful outcome for yourself and will concentrate completely. Without thought you will be aware of every slightest change or

movement in the environment. In such a state of mind you are ready to beat your opponent in physical combat, and meditation is essential for the cultivation of such a state of mind.

But if, on the other hand, you can control an opponent by sheer mental force - by the force of your personality - and make a peaceful settlement, this is the course you will choose. This is a discipline common to all the martial arts. It is known as 'kiai-jutsu' and is the real end of meditation in 'budo'.

3. Physical Development

General Health

If mental development is the real end of karate, the beginning is undoubtedly physical development. A sound body is always the basis of a sound mind.

But can *anyone* have a sound body? With a few obvious exceptions, the answer is yes. Karate training is particularly adaptable for persons of either sex or any age. The training, although hard, is never excessive. You need no apparatus, no partner, but only enough space in which to exercise. Later, of course, when you are ready to begin sparring, you will need a partner. By this time your health should be so improved that you will all be but unrecognizable!

In fact, the benefits are too numerous to be dealt with fully here. No wonder so many 'karate-ka' live to a great age!

Side-kicks stimulate the thyroid glands, ensuring a normal emission of hormones. Certain postures, particularly the 'iron horse' posture, strengthen the abdominal and hip muscles and also tone the sexual nerves which stem from the pelvic region. Breath control accompanies every movement improving the flexibility of sensory nerves controlling tenacity and contractile forces. Most important of all, perhaps, is the alternative that karate offers to the nervous prostration brought about by an excess of self-control which is such a hazard of civilization. Karate offers nervous balance and both mental and physical fulfillment.

4. Breath Control and 'Kiai'

Breath-control has been described as being 'zen itself in its physiological aspect'. Even before schools of Zen existed the relation of breath-control to awareness was a major preoccupation of Indian 'yoga' and chinese 'taoism'.

One's rhythm of breathing is, after all, affected by either the physical or mental state that one is in. When exhausted after training, one breathes heavily; when excited, one breathes quickly; when one laughs, the emphasis is on the outbreath; when one cries, or is afraid, the emphasis is on the inbreath. But also it can work the other way: one can affect the mental and physical condition by controlling one's rhythm of breathing.

The use of 'kiai' (or a shout) in Karate is one aspect of a wide application of breath-control. In order to shout one must breathe out. The obvious point is that sharp exhalation tends to contract the muscles, and particularly the abdominal muscles the use of which is essential for any really solid technique. Another point is that by emphasizing the out-breath (by the same token as that by which one emphasizes the out-breath while laughing) one tends to increase one's confidence, and if this is communicated with the 'kiai' to your opponent *his* confidence will tend to be correspondingly undermined. A further point is that one's vision is clearer (look at a page of print and breathe out sharply) and reactions quicker during exhalation. It follows from all these points, not only that one should breathe out at the moment of attack, but also that the moment of attack should come when your opponent has just emptied his lungs and can therefore only breathe in.

Don't imagine that a loud shout is necessarily a strong 'kiai'. It must be full of aggression and come from the stomach. Breathing into the stomach rather than (or as well as) into the chest is in fact a rule common to all the oriental disciplines, spiritual or otherwise, that are concerned with breath-control. Breathing in this way does increase lung capacity, but in addition contributes a sense of well-being perhaps physically connected with the resultant lowering of the centre of gravity. One feels more *stable* - this point is certainly important to karate.

Breathing into your stomach must become a habit and then your 'kiai' will be spontaneous and effective even when not necessarily loud. To begin with, however, you must simply remember to shout loudly from the bottom of your belly when you perform a technique. In due course, you will perhaps master 'kiai' in its real sense, and will then often be able to overcome an opponent without fighting at all! To be able to convey so much confidence and will-power as to do this - *simply by breathing!* - is to exercise the advanced martial art of 'kiai-jutsu'. This might be said to be the perfect finished form to which all the martial arts aspire.

5. Comment on the Different 'Schools' of Karate

There are as many different schools of karate today as there were of judo and kendo in the old days of 'ju-jitsu' and 'ken-jitsu'. Generally speaking, the various schools or subsidiary schools are named after the pioneers or experts who founded them. Not only in karate, but in all the martial arts, each individual has his own idea of what is essential and his style will conform to it. It doesn't of course follow that each individual is qualified to found a 'school'.

To make a rough classification of the different schools, which are too numerous to treat in detail, we may distinguish two main categories. These are the 'shorei' and the 'shorinji'. Schools of the former category chiefly emphasise power through severe muscular exercise while those of the later have as their chief aim lightning fast movement. The katas associated with 'Shorei' karate are therefore 'tekki', 'jutte' and 'hangetsu' while 'bassai', 'kanku' and 'eubi' belong to the 'Shorinji' schools. The 'heian' katas (*see the chapters on kata*) are basic and have movements common to both kinds of karate.

You will be impressed by the magnificent physique and the powerful performance of a specialist in one or other of the 'shorei' schools but you may feel that his lack of mobility is a disadvantage.

On the other hand, quite a small man may impress you with his speed and precision in the execution of 'shorinji' karate, but at the same time you may be doubtful about his want of strength and even *vigour*.

Ideally, the karate apprentice will learn and assimilate into his own personal style the merits of both kinds of karate.

6. Callisthenics

Every training session should begin and end with a callisthenics routine. At the beginning of a session it should immediately follow the preparatory meditation. This tones up the muscles, making them easier to control and co-ordinate, and also loosens the joints. At the end of a session it immediately precedes the closing meditation, and helps to prevent stiffness.

A good idea is to start with the neck, rotating the head first in one direction, then the other; bending the head sideways, then forward and back; finally twisting it from side to side. Work systematically down through the body, rotating the arms to loosen the shoulders; bending sideways, forward and backward; twisting the trunk; rotating the hips; stretching and spreading the legs; rotating the knees and ankles; and, finally, shaking the limbs loosely in order to relax muscles and joints. Deep breathing may be added at the end of a session.

Strength exercises may also be included in the routine, but on the whole may be regarded as 'extra-mural'. Every student should know for himself which particular sets of muscles require most work in his own individual case.

7. Postures, Stances and Body Shifting

Postures

Basically there are three postures widely used in karate. The front-facing posture is mainly used in attack and the shoulders are at ninety degrees to the line of attack. The half-front-facing posture is mainly used in defence and the shoulders are at forty-five degrees to the opponent's line of attack. The side-facing posture, in which the shoulders are in line with or parallel with the line of attack, is used both in attack and defence.

With all three postures the upper half of the body will normally be straight and perpendicular to the ground, otherwise the balance will be endangered and the correct performance of most techniques difficult if not impossible. Naturally, the rare occasion does arise which calls for a non-perpendicular posture.

Stances

As much as the posture, the stance is an integral part of any technique you perform. Therefore, a strong technique from a weak stance is a contradiction in terms. The different stances used are the outcome of two considerations - one for strength, the other for agility. The actual ratio of these factors varies with different stances.

Heisoku-dachi (attention stance). Just stand naturally with the feet together and the weight evenly balanced on both feet. The knees should be not quite straight.

Hachiji-dachi (open leg stance). As for the above but with the feet about a shoulders' width apart. This and the preceding stance are simply natural stances from which you can move with maximum smoothness into stances appropriate to actual karate techniques.

Zenkutsu-dachi (forward stance). This stance is very strong toward the front and is useful both in attacking to the front and in blocking attacks coming from the front.

Step with one foot about two shoulders' widths forward and about thirty degrees diagonally to the side. Keep the back leg straight. Bend the front leg, forcing the knee outward directly over the big toe. Both feet should be flat, the front foot pointing slightly inward. In this stance the front leg takes sixty per cent of the body weight.

Kokutsu-dachi (back stance). A very useful characteristic of this stance is that, after having used it in stepping back and blocking or avoiding an attack, a mere shift of body weight into the forward stance enables you to close with the opponent and counter-attack immediately. Also, as most of the body weight is taken on the back foot, the front foot is free for kicking.

Again, the legs are about two shoulders' widths apart. A line extended to the rear from the front foot should touch the heel of the back foot, and this later should be at a right angle with the line. The rear leg takes seventy per cent of the body weight, and should be deeply bent and forced outwards. The front leg should not be quite straight, otherwise a stamping kick to the knee would easily break it.

Kiba-dachi (straddle/stance). This is a strong stance when attacking or defending to the side.

As in the two previous stances the feet should be two shoulders' widths apart. The feet themselves should be turned a little inwards, the knees forced outwards, so that the legs are rather like bows under tension. This involves a screwing tendency of the feet into the floor which is essential for the stability of the stance. It is equally important that the knees should be bent deeply, thus keeping the centre of gravity low. The weight of the body is carried evenly on both legs, all the muscles of which (along with those of the pelvis) should be tightened.

Sanchin-dachi (diagonal straddle stance). A stance equally strong to the sides and to the front - for attacking or defending.

As in the straddle stance, the knees must be tensed outwards. This is, in fact, just the straight straddle stance with one of the legs twisted forward, the front knee over the big toe and the rear knee a little in front of the big toe. The body weight is again carried evenly on both legs.

Neko-ashi-dachi (cat stance). Here the front leg carries hardly any of the body weight and so it can easily be used for kicking. Another great advantage of this stance is that from it you can easily and quickly move into any other stance - whether to the front, back, or to one side.

The back should be absolutely straight. Keep the rear foot flat and raise the heel of the front foot, the knee pointing a little inwards. The rear knee should be well bent.

Body Shifting

In karate, body shifting may be achieved by stepping, sliding, turning, or by any combination of these basic elements. The following general rules apply to all methods of body shifting:

1. Your head should be always more or less at the same height from the floor. Therefore, when moving from one wide-legged stance to another your feet come together and your knees must be well bent. This helps to maintain a strong balance.
2. You should neither raise your feet very high from the floor nor drag them. You lose both speed and balance in either case.
3. Whether fast or slowly, the weight of your body must always be shifted *smoothly*.
4. Begin and end every movement in a strong, correctly-spaced stance, and maintain correct posture *throughout* the movement.

8. Hand Techniques (Attack)

Although a wide variety of striking surfaces is used in karate, the basic weapon is the fist. For our purposes, however, this must be capable of striking surfaces of high resistance with great power and speed without injury to oneself. It is therefore most important that the fist be correctly formed.

Starting with the hand open, curl the little finger over until the tip of the finger meets the base. Curl the other fingers in turn finishing with the index finger. Now bend the fingers together from the roots, so that the back of the fist and the front (the first phalanges of the fingers) form a right angle. Finally, bend the thumb firmly over the second phalanges of the first and second fingers. The striking area of this basic fist (*seiken*) consists of the knuckles of the first and

second fingers and should be toughened by regular practise with a 'makiwara'. When striking, be sure that the fist is squeezed as tightly as possible and that the wrist is not bent.

Seiken-choku-zuki (straight punch). Starting palm upward from a point just above the waist, the attacking fist is thrust straight outwards, twisting as it nears the target so that the palm is downward at the moment of impact. Simultaneously, the other fist is withdrawn sharply to the corresponding starting position, the reaction of this movement adding to the momentum of the attack. *As with all the hand techniques*, the muscles of arm, back and chest are momentarily tensed at impact, and then relaxed in preparation for the next technique. At no time should the shoulders be hunched.

Gyaku-zuki (reverse punch). This is simply the adaptation of the straight punch used when the attacking fist is on the same side as the rear leg usually in 'zenkutsu-dachi'. It is very commonly used as a counter-attack after having parried with the hand or arm on the side of the forward leg.

When beginning this technique, the hips are at forty-five degrees to the line of attack. Twisting the hips so that at the moment of impact they face the opponent or target squarely (or so that the hip on the attacking side is even a little in advance of the other) contributes enormous power to the technique.

Oi-zuki (lunge push). Here the straight punch is used on the side of the advancing leg when stepping forward, usually into the forward or the diagonal straddle stance. It is very useful when closing in on an opponent.

With this technique, the hips should remain more or less square. The fist should reach the target at the precise moment at which the advancing foot is planted on the ground. In order to keep a strong balance, be very careful not to lean forward - any feeling of pushing forward into the attack must come from the centre of gravity.

Riken-uchi (back-fist strike). Actually, the striking surface here is the back of the two knuckles used in the straight punches. The elbow is pointed at the target, with the fist palm downward. Then, in the *downward strike*, the fist describes an arc in the vertical plane; in the *sideways strike*, in the horizontal plane. In both cases, the little finger side of the fist leads until the very last moment, when the fist is flicked over.

Both the downward and sideways forms are very often used to attack from the straddle stance to the side, often following an 'empi' attack (see below).

Tettsui-uchi (bottom-fist strike). This is also in two forms exactly like the preceding one, except that the fist is not flicked over. The bottom or little finger side of the fist has a wider striking surface and is better for striking soft targets (such as the solar-plexus) rather than the back-fist.

Empi-uchi (elbow strike) can be broken down into four separate techniques: - for striking to the front, to the rear, sideways and upward. Begin the *forward strike* with the fist palm upward just above the waist; finish with the elbow pointing straight ahead and the fist downward against the chest. The angle between the upper- and forearm should be as sharp as possible. The *upward strike* begins similarly but finishes with the fist close to - and palm facing - the ear. At the finish of the *backward strike* the fist is more or less in the starting position for the forward and upward strikes, with the palm upward and the elbow pointing directly to the rear. For the *sideward strike* start with the attacking arm pointing away from the target across the body and the fist or open hand palm upward; finish with the fist palm downward and against the chest.

Elbow attacks are very powerful and often used for close-quarters fighting. Be careful to avoid raising the shoulder on the attacking side as this weakens the 'focus'.

Shuto-uchi (knife-hand strike). When using the 'knife-hand' or little-finger edge of the hand the palm should be *stretched* open at impact, the root of the thumb pulling outward but the thumb itself bent inward (so as not to get caught in any loose clothing and possibly injured).

Begin the *outside strike* with the attacking hand palm upward and close to the ear. The elbow is pointing sideways. At impact, the arm is more or less straight in front of the body and the wrist is twisted so that the palm is facing upward. For the *inside strike* raise the hand to the opposite ear, palm facing the ear. Swing the hand inward in a wide arc and at impact twist the wrist so that the palm faces downward.

9. Hand Techniques (Defence)

As in the attacking techniques, many of the parries used in karate are 'focused'. That is to say, one's entire strength is concentrated at the point and the moment of impact, after which the muscles are immediately relaxed. As a result, pain or even injury may be inflicted *with the parry alone*, and the opponent sufficiently discouraged from attempting any further attack.

When parrying, however, you should always have a counterattack ready to follow up with. Be sure that you maintain a good posture and balance and try always to take advantage of your opponent's momentum and strength to upset his balance and posture.

Age-uke (rising block). Usually used to parry an attack to the face (jodan).

This block begins with the fist palm upward just above the waist. At the finish, the fist is at a point approximately twelve inches in front of and six inches above the opposite ear. At the last moment the fist is flicked over so that the palm faces away from you and the opponent's attacking arm is struck by the outer edge of the forearm near the wrist. Simultaneously, the other hand is withdrawn from a point somewhere in front of the face to the usual ready position. It is important that the elbow of the parrying arm should be lower than the fist at the moment of impact.

Soto-uke (outside forearm block), a parry capable of inflicting considerable damage. It is usually used against attack to the solar plexus (chudan).

With the elbow bent, swing the fist from above the shoulder down in front of the body. Focus strongly, snapping the fist so that the palm faces toward you. At this point, the fist should be about level with the shoulder and the elbow in front of the body (*not to the side*). The same striking surface is used as in the rising block.

Uchi-uke (inside forearm block). This technique is also used to parry attacks to the solar plexus.

At the finish, the arm is in precisely the same position as in the outer block. However, it begins with the fist palm downward at the ready position on the opposite side of the body and the striking surface is the *inside* edge of the forearm.

Gedan-barai (downward sweep). Another strong defensive technique, useful against attacks to the solar plexus, stomach or groin (gedan), and particularly employed against kicks.

The fist is carried to a point near the opposite ear, palm facing the ear, then swung diagonally downward. At the finish, the arm is extended in front of the body and the fist twisted palm downward. Strike the attacking arm or leg with the outside edge of the forearm and to avoid damage to the wrist be sure to clench the fist as tightly as possible.

Note that like the three preceding parries this one is very strong against attacks from the front, and so is usually performed from a forward or diagonal straddle stance. Sometimes, however, these parries (with the exception of the rising block) may be used to the side in the straddle stance.

Shuto-uke (knife-hand block). Once mastered, this is a very fast parry, and one moreover that leaves one in a good position for the counter attack. It is used chiefly against attacks to the solar plexus.

The hand begins from the same position as the fist in the downward sweep, palm facing the ear. Cut downward with the forearm and finish with the palm facing diagonally forward, the hand and elbow in line with the shoulder and the hand more or less level with the shoulder. Simultaneously with this parry, the other hand is pulled from a position straight in front of the body, palm downward, to the middle of the chest, palm upward. This technique is commonly used while retreating and is conveniently executed from the back stance.

As with the attacking techniques in Chapter 8, it is most important with all these hand techniques that the shoulders be pulled *down* and the 'fixation' muscles of the chest and back strongly tensed at the moment of focus.

10. Foot Techniques (Attack)

Without training, it is really more difficult than one might suppose to damage an opponent by kicking him - unless, of course, he's already lying on the ground. However, in karate the feet are so thoroughly trained that their use about doubles the scope and effectiveness of one's fighting repertoire.

With all kicks, take great care that the supporting leg is firmly planted. It must be capable of bearing the weight of the body, plus the momentum and shock of the attack, without loss of balance. The knee should be bent. The foot should be flat on the ground.

It is also of primary importance that the kicking leg should be withdrawn sharply (but smoothly) immediately after impact. The opponent will then have no chance to catch hold of it, and a strong stance can be resumed in preparation for the next manoeuvre.

Mae-geri (front kick). The usual striking surface is the ball of the foot. Pulling the toes back makes the ball of the foot more prominent and also prevents the toes from being damaged. Start the kick by pulling up the knee and then snap the lower leg and foot toward the target. Pull back the foot with the knee still held high and finally lower to resume the original stance or to move into the next stance. While performing this kick avoid the common mistake of raising the shoulders, pushing the head forward and buttocks backward. The hips should be pushed forward behind the attack.

Yoko-geri (side kick). This technique uses the edge of the foot toward the heel as the striking surface. Actually, there are two side kicks. For the *snap kick*, raise the knee and point it diagonally sideways toward the target. Then snap the foot upward toward the target from a position close to the other knee. At impact, the hip is twisted sharply inward and the knee of the 'kicking leg' should point directly forward. For the *thrust kick*, raise the knee straight in front as for the start of the front kick, and then *push* the foot sideways toward the target. Whereas in the snap kick the foot travels in an arc, here it travels in a straight line. With both kicks, avoid bending the body too far in the opposite direction as this weakens the balance and also the strength of the attack.

Both forms of side kick can be performed from any stance, but when attacking to the side the straddle is most commonly used. To give an example, if one is in the straddle stance and the opponent is to one's right, cross the left foot in front of the right, quickly raise the right knee, the right foot passing *behind* the left knee, then kick (with either the snap or the thrust kick), pulling back the foot before moving it to the right again to take up the straddle stance a double-step further in the direction of the opponent.

Ushiro-geri (back kick). Here the striking surface is the heel. There are again two independent forms - the snap and thrust kicks.

The preparatory position for both kicks is more or less as for the front kick, with the knee raised toward the chest and the foot bent upward. The supporting leg must be slightly more bent. Then, for the *back snap kick* sharply swing the thigh to the rear and snapping the knee strike the target with the heel. The target is usually the groin or the stomach. For the *back thrust kick*, push the heel to the target in a straight line, the target in this case being the stomach, solar plexus or face. In both cases, keep your eyes on the target and avoid leaning too far forward. Also, in order to kick with maximum power, be sure to kick straight to the rear and not diagonally.

Mawashi-geri (roundhouse kick). The swing of the hips through something like ninety degrees in co-ordination with the snap of the knee make this a powerful technique.

Bend the knee of the kicking leg and raise it to the side. The knee points diagonally sideward and the foot is near the buttock with the toes and ankle bent well back. Then swing the hips and snap the knee forward, striking the target with the ball of the foot directly in front of the body. Snap the leg back to the preparatory position before resuming the original stance or moving into a new stance.

Once again, it is most important not to bend the body too far away from the kick. It is also important with the roundhouse kick not to let the hips swing around too far, as this jeopardizes the balance and makes focusing the kick difficult.

Fumicomi (stamping kick). Can be used to the front, rear, or sides, and is useful for attacking an opponent's knee, shin or instep. In all cases the knee is first pulled toward the chest and the foot then thrust downward in a straight line to the target. In stamping to the front, or the rear, the heel is the usual striking surface. To the sides, use the side edge of the foot.

11. Foot Techniques (Defence)

Blocking with the feet has the great advantage of leaving the hands free. However, it does leave one momentarily on one leg and so the balance must be very secure. Here are two of the most common defensive uses of the feet.

Mikazuki-geri-uke (crescent kick block). The striking surface here is the sole of the foot. Bend the leg slightly at the knee, raise it, then swing it with a swivel-like movement of the hips to focus on the oncoming attack in front of the body. At the moment of impact the knee should still be bent slightly, and the toes should be pointing straight upward. Finally, withdraw the leg as at the completion of the front kick and resume a strong position in order to counter. (Alternatively, after withdrawing from the block you may use the same foot for a thrust kick without first returning it to the ground.)

Nami-ashi (inside snap block). Although this technique may be executed from any one of a number of stances, including the forward and diagonal straddle stance, it is best practised basically from the straddle stance. From this stance, simply kick the sole of the foot inward and upward in front of the body, using the hip muscles to give the movement its snap. This is a very

fast technique: only the blocking leg is moved and the body weight should not be shifted. It is useful either to parry an attack to the groin or to move a leg out of range of a stamping kick.

12. The 'Katas'

There are something like fifty different katas or formal exercises in karate, but all are based on elements contained within the five basic 'heian' katas and three 'tekki' katas.

In the early days of karate, when sparring with partners was considered dangerous because no one had thought of focusing attacks short of contact, katas afforded the most realistic training possible. It is still an advantage that they enable one to practise alone. Another great advantage is that they force one to use, and co-ordinate, a wide variety of techniques and manoeuvres. If one practised only sparring, there would be a tendency to narrow one's repertoire down to a few favourite 'tricks'.

A kata is a set of predetermined defences and attacks against four or eight imaginary opponents who approach from various directions. Each set follows a fixed course, which may be a straight line or a letter 'T' or 'H' or some more complex figure. However, the starting point should always coincide with the finishing point. If it doesn't, there must have been some mistake in distancing or direction, and it is important to take great pains to determine where the mistake was made and eradicate it on the next repetition.

One's aim in practising a kata is always to attain technical *perfection*. Every detail must be attended to. The stances and postures should be suitable for text-book illustrations. Muscles and breathing must at all times be controlled. Finally, the kata must be felt as a rhythmic and organic unit, not as an arbitrary sequence of independent techniques.

13. Sparring

Basic sparring (kihon kumite) was first introduced into karate in the 1920s by Gichin Funakoshi. It was made possible by the contact of karate with the ethics of Japanese martial arts, which stress mutual trust between opponents. Gradually, basic sparring was developed until free style sparring and finally contest became possible. The modern student, in his own personal development, follows the same path from five- and one-step basic sparring to competition. All forms of sparring begin and end with a standing bow to one's partner.

Kihon-kumite (basic sparring). In this kind of sparring, the attack and the target are both predetermined, the participants facing each other from a fixed distance and taking turns to attack and defend. Commonly, beginners will practise both one-step and five-step basic sparring. To begin either kind, the attacker steps back into zenkutsu-dachi (gedan-barai) while the defender waits in hachiji-dachi. In *five-step sparring*, the attacker announces whether the attacks are to be to the face (jodan) or stomach (chudan) and then takes five steps forward, attacking with each step. His partner takes five steps backward, parrying each attack and countering with a 'kiai' after the fifth and final attack. *One-step sparring* is similar, but only one attack is made which is

immediately parried and countered by the defender, also with a 'kiai'. After the final counter, in both the one-step and five-step forms, the participants are 'frozen' for a few moments with the fists extended.

Jiyu-ippō kumite (free one-step sparring) is the next step towards free-sparring. Both the attack and the defense are again pre-determined, but this time each participant assumes a ready position and moves around, the attacker looking for an opening and making the correct distance preparatory to his attack. The defender must be ready for the attack at every moment. A variation of the free one-step sparring which is even closer to the free-style proper is to predetermine only who should attack and who defend. Again, however, only one attack should be used. In free one-step sparring the participants do not 'freeze' after the counter but immediately resume ready positions.

Note that it is very important to practise all the forms of basic sparring with full spirit. As the attack is predetermined, the defender should be able to cope with it. Therefore, the attacker should try his hardest to 'get through'. The counter-attack, on the other hand, must never make contact, because the first attacker must make no attempt to resist it. He offers himself as a target.

Jiyu-kumite (free-style sparring). This is the most advanced form of sparring. Beginners are not encouraged to practise it, not so much because it is dangerous because beginners haven't really the power or the technique to attack dangerously, but because it can impede the development of power and technique. Faced with an opponent, the beginner will forget all the basic training he has so far learned. At a later stage, however, it is the most realistic application possible of the skill he has acquired.

Of course, at this stage there would be danger of serious injury if a vital point were struck with a focused attack. But the ability to focus even powerful techniques a fraction of an inch short of contact is one of the measures of proficiency in karate. The rules forbid any actual contact being made by an attack, and also any such auxiliary action as stamping the instep strongly enough to cause injury.

In spite of these precautions, free sparring does have elements of genuine competition and is gaining wide popularity as a spectator sport in Japan and elsewhere. Enormous suspense is created by the 'battle of minds' that typically precede a physical attack, and this latter is so swift, and the technique that wins the point so convincing, that the imagination is easily satisfied as to what the outcome might have been were the rules less civilized.

14. Contest Rules

Selected paragraphs embodying the most important points from the Contest Rules laid down by the Japan Karate Association can be found in *Karate, the art of empty hand fighting* by Hidetaka Nishiyama and Richard C. Brown. Publisher, Tuttle and Co.

15. Contest Hints

The two most important aspects of karate for contest are timing and distance. You must react the moment you see an opening and be close enough, given the maximum speed of which you are capable, to get the attack in before the gap is closed or the opponent can move out of distance.

Of course, getting an attack in successfully when your opponent is just waiting and on his guard is very difficult. You may put him off his guard by relaxing - or, rather by appearing to relax - or else by giving a really strong 'kiai'. Or you may feint an attack, say to draw your opponent's attention down to his groin or his legs, and then attack to the face. Alternatively, you may simply wait for your opponent to attack first, taking advantage of any opening this may create in his defences, before or after parrying his attack, or better still you may invite him to attack by deliberately leaving an opening in your own defences. In this last case you should be able to anticipate his attack and therefore the opening or openings likely to be offered you.

Whenever possible, when your opponent attacks you should move *in* on him. This doubles the power of your own counterattack and gives your opponent half the time in which to change his tactics. However, it does require both boldness *and* skill. If your timing is less than perfect you stand a good chance of getting hurt. And, of course, if you are injured from moving in on an attack you will lose the point!

With regard to your opponent's tactics, it is essential to understand his psychology and not be misled by superficial movements. No movement must escape your notice, but you should interpret correctly the intention behind it. This is, of course, more easily said than done, but it helps if you observe your opponent 'peripherally' - that is to say without ever focusing on any one detail. Although your eyes will be directed toward his eyes, you must actually be equally aware all the time of his body as a whole. His eyes, however, are important. They will often reflect his intentions, for which reason your own eyes should be kept half-closed and your expression unstrained.

Remember to be aware of (but again without *concentrating* on) the rhythm of your opponent's breathing, this will reveal his physical and psychological condition and it also can be an indication of when you should attack. When his lungs are empty and he's just starting to take an in-breath his reactions will be slower and his muscles less responsive.

Control your own breathing - keep the in-breath and out-breath equal in emphasis and smooth - and you will not only give your opponent a discouraging impression of imperturbable confidence, but will actually increase your confidence.

Confidence and skill - these are probably of equal importance in karate contest. Most of the foregoing matter has been concerned with methods of acquiring the latter, which is more easily explained. About the former, I can say this much in addition to what has been said about breath-control: confidence must become as much a *habit* as the correct way to stop a kick.

You must get into the habit of thinking only in terms of victory, whatever aspect of your life is under review. You can practise winning in daydreams. It should finally be impossible for you to imagine *not* winning, even when you dream in your sleep at night.

16. Comment on Wood Breaking

It's perhaps appropriate that we should reserve a short chapter near the end of this section for the aspect of karate that so many people think *is* karate!

Although not so important as these people think, 'tameshiwari' is not practised purely as exhibitionism. It provides the more serious student with additional indications of the progress he's making. It helps us appreciate how powerful and effective a given attack is when it is not withdrawn short of impact, as it must be when the target is part of a fellow-student's anatomy.

There are less common forms of 'tameshiwari'. A plank or board may be thrown into the air then broken with a kick or a punch as it falls. This demonstrates the performer's speed and precise timing.

To demonstrate how the balance of the body and focus of strength can be transferred, four planks may be placed in front of, behind, and left and right of the performer. These must be broken in a continuous flow of movement.

There is something else, however, which it is most important for the serious student to prove to *himself*: that through dedicated training a human being can sometimes achieve the seemingly impossible!

17. The Essence of Mastery

It is often very difficult, perhaps impossible, to know which instructor or school of karate is right for you until your training is under way. When choosing fruit, you may want an apple to help if you have indigestion; a banana because it's good for stamina; or perhaps an orange if you have a cold, because it contains vitamin C. Concerning tastes, however, all we can say is that there's no accounting for them - and the same might be said of instructors or schools of karate. What really *is* important is that, having chosen an instructor, you should trust and respect him wholeheartedly and unselfconsciously. Your aim should be his own high level of attainment. The moment you begin to doubt his attainment you will cease to make progress under him and would do better to give up karate or change to another school.

The relationship between instructor and pupil is to a large extent telepathic - particularly during the advanced levels of training.

Sometimes you will be bored by your training, tired of practising techniques 'in the air' 'ad infinitum'. This is inevitable and you must simply accept that you're going to be bored. But at the same time you must hold nothing back. You must punch and kick 'in the air' exactly as

if surrounded by real enemies. And you must polish each technique that you learn until it becomes a natural reflex - only then are you ready to move on to another technique. When you really know a technique you will discover for yourself its connection with other techniques. You will thus gradually come to master a series of techniques. Should you, on the other hand, be in too much of a hurry to move on before fully understanding the techniques that you study, these techniques will seem to lack coherence.

Your original purpose was to master karate. To accomplish this you must persevere to overcome every obstacle. Some students become so absorbed that they dream of little else but karate even during their sleep. Others, however, soon forget their original zeal. It is a pity to forget or lose sight of the essence and depth of karate-do while attending to the details. Those who have the patience or imagination to keep on to the end win the fruits of life itself.

Aikido

Ken Williams

1. The Background of Aikido

Aikido is a scientific form of self-defence created over fifty years ago by Master M. Uyeshiba, who is still practising at the age of eighty-six at the world centre of the fighting art - the Aikikai, Tokyo, Japan. Aikido was a secret known only to a relatively few privileged Japanese up until as recently as 1948. The requirements to gain entrance into the inner chambers of the Aikido gymnasium and to learn Aikido's art and philosophy were many including at least two recommendations from well-known, respected citizens of Japan.

Aikido is a combination of many martial arts including ju-jitsu, Kendo and Karate. Most Budo (military arts) originated from a kind of physical fitness programme, developed into self-defence arts and then on to refined Budo.

A physical fitness programme may be compared to preventive medicine programmes and prophylactics. If we move our body adequately and if the movement agrees with the 'natural laws', we still have a well-conditioned body and will not be affected so easily by disease. When we consider various physical fitness programmes we will soon discover the ideal of Aikido. The flowing flexibility and the importance of a stable balance agree with the 'laws of nature'. The aim of Aikidoists is complete self-control. When we have self-control, we have a posture which is completely alert. By exercising our whole body we approach improved health.

In Aikido, the techniques related to each part of the body are necessarily related to the whole. There are no radical techniques which use strength suddenly or immediately cease using power. Here lies the secret of Aikido in keeping a healthy body. The exercise of the body in this way will lead to better health.

The movement of Aikido is natural and is without the physical strain demanded by other combat arts. Aikido provides tremendous range movement on the study of balance, posture and most important - relaxation. For this reason Aikido can be practised by members of either sex, young or old, while it is also a most effective form of self-defence. Aikido has a particular appeal to most people for the way that it builds a mind which you can adapt to everyday life.

The Art was first introduced in any big way into Great Britain by my teacher Kenshiro Abbe (8th Dan) in 1955. I was one his first pupils. At that time Judo was very popular and so people were not interested in the 'new art'. The Aikido training was also found by beginners to be extremely severe and this put off many beginners.

After many years of study I was graded to 1st Dan. At the time I received my black belt for Aikido, there were only eight pupils practising in this country. These pupils are now the teachers of the art in this country. The art received stimulus by the visit to this country of Mr Tadashi Abbe (7th Dan). In 1963, Mr M. Nakazono (7th Dan) came to England and was asked to supervise Aikido in this country. At the same time I was appointed National Coach. It is therefore only comparatively recently that Aikido has spread in this country and it is now being taught in schools for the Education Authorities.

2. Aikido Gradings

To assess the student's ability in Aikido, he or she has to take an examination before a Dan Grade (Black Belt). In this examination, the students with their partners go through the techniques that have been taught. These techniques have been laid down in the grading syllabus. This applies for all the Kyu grades up to 1st Kyu.

If a pupil is trying for a Black Belt then he can only be graded by a 4th Dan or above. This method has been laid down by the Aikikai, the world centre of Aikido. All Black Belts who have been graded by Aikikai teachers receive a diploma from Japan. It is a great honour to receive one of these as there are only fifteen British students who hold them.

Do not forget that there is a lot of hard work before one reaches this standard. The usual time is three years based on two practices a week. I believe that ninety per cent of people who practise Aikido could arrive at the Black Belt stage if they had the strength of mind and determination to keep up their practice.

It is not so much the practice that is the difficult part but the getting down to the club. For instance, the pupil may return from work on a cold evening, have his dinner and afterwards sit by the fire.

It is one of the hardest things to get oneself out of the chair and to get down to the club for training. This is where the mind must be strong and control the body. This dedication is a part of the training and discipline which must go with Aikido.

Try to adapt Aikido to everyday life and I am sure that you will understand more easily the true principle and feeling of this wonderful art and more easily progress up the grades towards your goal.

3. The Spirit of Aikido

You will find that the more you practise Aikido, the more the self-defence aspect will become of secondary importance. By the physical practice of Aikido we are trying to find the truth by technique. If one's technique is not correct or true, then one's way of life is false and one can never be fully confident of oneself.

I think that material things can only bring happiness up to a point but it is the deeper inner happiness that we are seeking and Aikido is one way of finding this. You will find that through Aikido practice your mind will become more positive in deciding matters.

As you can imagine, when one is practising and someone attacks you, one has little time to decide what technique to use but one moves the way that one's feeling takes you, either positive or negative. This attack is the same as a problem. If it is an easy one, one can go positively into it. On the other hand if it is a difficult one, one moves one way first to get out of the way and then considers it. But if you hesitate you are lost. It is no good saying afterwards that one should have done such and such a thing. Naturally we all make mistakes. This is a good thing, but one must try and learn from them.

This is why to find the 'way' we must always continue to practise our technique and try to put our mistakes right. This is also why Aikido is so interesting as there is no end to it. One never stops learning and there is always something new to learn and improve.

I have been asked by people if I am not afraid of the wrong person learning the art and gaining knowledge which could in some circumstances be dangerous.

But I know that it takes three years to become proficient at Aikido and if the mind is bad and the intentions evil the technique and the Aikido power will not come out. I believe that if one puts sincerity into the art then good will come out. So I feel that no person with evil intentions can ever find this natural movement. If they use Aikido for bad reasons then they will only destroy themselves.

I have known students who have started Aikido in order to use any knowledge they acquire out of Dojo to change their intentions. They become responsible citizens and one has the satisfaction that Aikido has changed their whole character and way of life. They are grateful for what Aikido has done for them.

Aikido is for everyone - not just for the few.

4. Different Ways of Practising

1. To practise with one partner. This is usually the way for beginners and uses the forms as laid down. Once you understand the basic form then try to add more movement to it.

2. The next stage is for three people to practise. This gives two students against one so as to provide a more continuous practice and teaches you to react more quickly to the attack.

Sometimes practise gently - other times practise hard. When I say hard I do not mean with strength but by non-stop practise with your partner making strong attacks on you continually. When attacking, make sure that your attack is true. Otherwise, you give your partner a false impression and this will not help him one bit as it will give him a false sense of the movement. If your partner cannot escape your attack then it is his responsibility. Do not get upset if your partner catches you off-guard. Just put it down to good experience.

Next try three people against you with all three attacking you at once. Do not try to make correct techniques but keep your body moving and turning in a circular motion, trying to keep your mind and body relaxed.

Another method practice is for two partners to hold you and for you to try to escape. This practice will show whether you are using strength or not. In the beginning always let your partner hold you but as you progress you should move just before they touch you. Lead their strength with yours. Do not let your Ki power clash with your partners or you will not feel the real sense of Aikido.

5. Suwari-Waza (Sitting Techniques)

These sitting and kneeling techniques are more difficult for Europeans than for Eastern students. The Aikido manner of kneeling and sitting is the Orient's natural way of sitting. Unless one starts young it is hard to acquire this suppleness. But with persistent practice one should be able to learn these techniques. This is a very good exercise for the student's body especially for the hips.

When I began Aikido my teacher instructed me mostly from the kneeling positions. This lasted for two years. Because of this I got a good idea of the use of the hips in Aikido. Later on, after practising these postures which can be seen in Plates 51 and 52, try the actual knee walking. Start with one knee resting on the mat, keeping your feet underneath your buttocks. The other knee is bent. Keep your hands on top of your knees. Now lower the knee that is bent onto the mat and spin on your knee until you are in the opposite direction, bringing the other knee into the bent position. Continue this move - alternatively changing knees and turning from side to side. Keep your shoulders relaxed, the small of your back straight and your toes bent uppermost. Practise until you are able to move in all directions with a smooth rhythm. Then practise the technique with a partner - sometimes techniques should be practised with one of you kneeling and the other standing. Occasionally practise with both of you kneeling.

Each technique is done to counter a particular attack on form. The form in which your partner attacks you is described in each technique to help the student.

6. Dress of Aikido

The Aikido dress varies according to whether one is a Dan or Kyu grade. All Kyu grades wear trousers, jacket and belt of the Kimono style. These clothes are suitable for the art because of the freedom of movement and the strength of material.

Dan grades wear Hakamas. This dress has been kept from the old days in Japan when the Samurai used to wear them. The dress has the other advantage that it teaches the student to move properly by keeping the feet closer to the mat.

Cleanliness is very important in Aikido as well as the other fighting arts. Not only is it very important to keep your body and clothes clean but also your mind. Aikido's aim is to make harmony and this will not be achieved if one person in the Dojo is clean and another dirty. You will find that no one will want to practise with the dirty club member. This can cause bad feeling in the Dojo. Harmony will thus disappear.

In Aikido toe and finger nails can be very dangerous so these should be kept trimmed. When stepping on to the mat, the student should bow to it. This is to give thanks to the mat because without it one would not be able to practise. Therefore we respect it for being there and it teaches us not to take things for granted.

Slippers should always be worn to the edge of the mat and when they are removed one should step straight onto the mat. This prevents any dirt or grit getting onto the mat. One should never walk on a mat wearing ordinary shoes.

When practising try not to have the same partner all the time as you will find that you get too used to each other. Everyone is different in build, weight and height. Your techniques becomes more adjustable if you change your partners.

One should not have stupid strength contests with each other or fool about. Try to help to understand each other and help one's partner wherever possible.

7. The Basic Principles of Aikido

The basic techniques of Aikido are very important to learn thoroughly. In this book I cannot give you all of them as they are too numerous. But I have tried to give you a good overall guide. It is difficult to learn true Aikido from a book and the best way is to practise in a club under a good teacher. But use this book in conjunction with your training.

This book, I hope, will help you to understand the real meaning of Aikido.

If you can imagine that you are like a spinning top and if someone or something attacks you, they will fly off from you and not be able to enter into your body. In Aikido all movements must be 'circular' - not 'triangular'. Thus if you are spinning like a top and your opponent is on the outside, he is controlled not by strength but by your movement. At the same time your body and mind must be relaxed. We then have a posture which is completely alert.

Always practise with good feeling and spirit. An excessive amount of talking on the mat is a waste of time. Your breathing should be through your nose with your mouth closed. By this method you will learn to control your breathing. This will in time enable you to practise at least three hours a week. At the leading clubs in this country, most pupils practise five hours a week and Dan grades ten hours a week. At the Aikikai, they have a system whereby the pupils live in and devote their lives to Aikido. They train up to six hours a day for seven days a week. After a certain number of years - usually ten - they are sent out as apostles of Aikido to teach the Art to all parts of the world.

8. The Power of Ki and Kokyu

When listening to people talk about Aikido, you will hear about the power of Ki (Spirit) and Kokyu (Breath control). Both are things that cannot easily be explained as they are spiritual feelings. I am still trying to acquire these powers fully. I have found that these powers in Aikido are only possible when one is fully relaxed. So if one loses one's temper one will never find this power. This is why I feel sure that it is important to practise not only the technical side of Aikido but also to discipline the mind and accept the ceremony which is associated with the Art.

9. The Ceremony in Aikido

The ceremony in Aikido is similar to that in the other Martial Arts.

The pupils bow to the teacher before and after practice. They also bow to each other before each separate practice. This creates respect for each other and is helpful to class discipline. Discipline not only stops accidents on the mat but also helps in self-discipline which is essential in Aikido. This helps make the club a strong and happy one.

10. Warming-Up Before Practice

Warming-up is as necessary in Aikido as it is in other physical activities. One loosens up one's joints and muscles. Starting from the feet, one twists one's ankles. Then one softly but firmly taps one's insteps with the palms of the hands. Next in a sitting position and with your legs tucked underneath you tap your thigh, shoulders and chest. From a standing position bend one knee and push the other leg out. Try to get down as far as possible. Keep the outstretched leg straight.

Next stand in a natural posture stretch your arms out and twist from your waist from side to side. Turn your head from side to side in time with your hands. Then move your head up and

down. Finally twist your wrists. This is a little painful at first but with practice becomes easier. Catch the back of your right hand with the palm of your left and twist down to the right, for your left hand reverse the procedure. You are now ready to practise.

11. The Aikido Techniques

Shino-nage (four direction throw). 1st form

This technique is the four direction projection as used in Japanese fencing. It involves turning on the left and right foot and cutting in four directions. Your opponent grasps your right wrist with his right hand. By making a spiral movement with your right hand, you then catch his wrist. At the same time catch the back of his right hand with your left hand, breaking his balance to his front. Do not lean backwards but keep your body slightly forward. Step through with your left leg, keeping your legs slightly bent. Swivel on the ball of your foot and bend your opponent's arm backwards. Throw your opponent down.

Koto-gaeshi (small hand twist). 1st form

This technique is called the small hand twist. As your opponent catches your right wrist with his right hand, grab the top of it with your left hand and at the same time turn ninety degrees to your right. Keep your head looking in the same direction as you are going and your partner will come round in a semi-circle. Now change your direction, going back with your leg. Your right hand should push on the back of his right hand, throwing him. At all times try to keep this a smooth action and use circular not angular movements. Maintain your own balance and in no circumstances use shoulder strength to try to force the throw.

Irimi-nage (enter body projection). 1st form

Irimi-nage is the enter body projection (throw) and is a special technique of Aikido. When your opponent catches your right wrist with his right hand, keep your right arm straight. Step in with your left foot into his rear side, your left hand encircling his neck. You are now the centre of the movement, and, stepping backwards with your right foot so that he is on the outside circle pull him into your right shoulder. Hook your right hand under his chin and throw him down. Most of the control comes from your grip on his neck. Try not to use strength catching him, otherwise he will resist you more easily.

Kaiten-nage (spiral throw). 1st form

This technique is a spiral throw and involves a circular movement. All techniques of Aikido are circular and not angular. This is important to remember. When the opponent attacks you for 1st form, step slightly back with your left leg. Your right hand follows your body, taking his arm over his head as you escape backwards under his arm. Keep your hand in the same position, push forward thus making an arc. At the same time you should catch his right wrist with your left hand. With your right hand press upon his neck and roll him forward.

Simultaneously step into him with your left foot, keeping your posture upright.

Tentchi-nage (heaven and earth throw). 1st form

This is quaintly called the heaven and earth throw. As the opponent catches your right wrist, cut off with your left hand and at the same time step with your left leg to his right back corner, making sure you keep your left hand straight and pointing down to the earth. The right foot is then moved with a zig-zag step to his right rear corner. Bring your right hand arm under his chin and with your fingers of your right hand point directly upwards and throw him down. Keep your posture upright and your balance correct.

Ikkyo (first principle). 1st form

As the opponent catches your right wrist with his right hand, move your left leg and hip to the rear and lead him up bringing his arm back to his hand. At the same time, your left hand catches him just above his elbow and pushing back over his head you direct him to the floor. Then pin him down by kneeling with your left knee on his arm-pit. Place your right knee near his wrist. Keep your arms straight and posture upright.

Nikkyo (second principle). 1st form

The first part of this technique is the same as Ikkyo. Step backwards and lead him to the ground. But when coming back catch his fingers that are grasping your right wrist. Then apply the lock by bearing down on the wrist. Simultaneously, move your body backwards. This technique can be most painful to your partner and should not be applied too quickly in the early stages. Even at advanced levels, care must be taken. Your partner should tap to indicate submission as is done in the other martial arts. The moment he taps you should release the application.

Sankyo (third principle). 1st form

When the opponent grasps your right wrist with his right hand step to your left side. Turn your body move under his right arm, at the same time take his left hand with your right. Now twist his right hand up and to the left, keeping the palm open. Move your hips to the left. Cut his right hand down and grasping his elbow with your right hand direct him to the floor. Apply the lock by keeping the elbow straight and face his body when pinning him on the mat.

Yonkyo (fourth principle). 1st form

The opponent grasps your right wrist. Turn as in Sanyo and catch his right hand with your left. Twist his wrist with your right hand and put the bottom of your left forefinger on his right pulse. Push upwards, making sure that his elbow than his shoulder, then cut his arm down to the ground. At the same time, step forward with the left foot. Pin him down and release on submission.

This concludes the fundamental techniques. Throws are often achieved in Aikido by forcing an opponent to throw himself if he is to avoid having one of his limbs dislocated. This is why it is particularly important for the beginner to practise *carefully*. The beginner will learn to avoid locks by throwing himself but this may take some time to acquire.

12. Aikido Breakfalls

Aikido Ukemi (breakfalls) are similar to those in Judo. At all times they should be soft, and your body should be kept like a ball. But unlike Judo at no time should one hit the mat with your hand in order to soften the shock. In Judo, we argue that if you find it necessary to use Ukemi in the street softening the blow by hitting the ground with your arm, you will only succeed in hurting your arm. In Aikido we learn to roll when thrown so as to recover on one's feet.

Ukemi are important. You must remember that Aikido is not so much a sport as a fighting art. Therefore, I believe that Ukemi are as important as other techniques. If your Ukemi become proficient then you will follow your partner better because the fear of falling will have gone. This will allow your mind to be calm and as the body always follows the mind in Aikido then it will be more relaxed, giving you more speed and natural movement for your technique.

13. Aikido Posture

The posture in Aikido is in an oblique position. The reason for this is that you lessen the area of attack and you are able to move more easily and with speed. Stand with your left foot half a step forward as shown in the photograph. This is left Hamni. Right Hamni is the same except that your right foot is half a step forward.

14. Advanced Aikido Techniques

Defence against a knife

Attack to the stomach

There are many ways in which you can be attacked with a knife but I am giving the most basic technique for you to practise. With the practice of Aikido, the others will come more easily to you.

Your partner lunges at you with the knife. Turn to the rear in a clockwise direction so that your partner is kept moving. Step back with your left foot, at the same time catch the back of his hand with your right hand and then throw him. As soon as he falls, lock his arm by placing your right arm on his elbow. Walk around his head bringing him onto his stomach. Now put your right knee on his neck and push his arm towards his head until he lets go of the knife.

Koky-nage from 11th form

Catching both of your wrists with his hands your partner comes in to you. Slightly bend your elbows so as to break your partner's power. Step in to him to stop him from pushing you back and kneel down. Your left hand should be pushing out and down to the mat. Your right hand goes down to your partner's right foot and you can throw him easily. Make sure that the small of your back is kept straight and your shoulders relaxed.

Shiho-nage (four direction) 6th form attack

Your partner attacks the side of your head. Step back to your right corner with your left foot. Your left hand should guide his right. Your right hand attacks his face. Follow through with your right hand, and catch his wrist with both hands then as in 1st form Shiho-nage step through and throw him.

Nikkyo (second principle) 4th form attack

Your partner catches your wrist with his right hand. Step back to your right corner with your left foot. Your right hand attacks his face. Follow through with the back of your hand brushing down his arm. Your left hand catches your jacket above his hand and with your right hand take hold under his hand. Now turn it over until his little finger is uppermost, making sure that you keep it tight to your body. With your left elbow, bend his elbow and bear pressure on his wrist until he submits by tapping.

Tentchi-nage (heaven and earth throw) 3rd form attack

As soon as your partner's right hand catches your shoulder, turn to your right giving him no chance to punch you with his right hand. Try to keep contact with his arm across your back. Now with this movement, he should be moving on the outside of you. Change your direction by stepping back with your left foot. Your left arm comes over the top of your partner's right, with a cutting action towards the mat. Your right foot makes a zig-zag step towards his rear and your right arm pushes across his left shoulder. Keep your forward leg slightly bent and shoulders relaxed.

Shiho-nage (four direction throw) 4th form

Your partner catches the front of your jacket with his right hand. Step back to your right corner with your left foot. Attack your partner's face with your right hand. Catch his wrist with both hands. Now use your shoulder against the inside of his elbow joint. Step through with your left leg. Turn completely around on the balls of your feet and kneel on your left knee. Your partner's arm should be bent backwards so as to break his balance.

Irimi-nage (enter body throw) 5th form

Your partner's right hand attacks you to the centre of your head. Using your right hand push straight towards him so as to deflect the blow. At the same time step into his rear side with your left foot.

Your right hand should be on top of his right hand. Now cut down his right arm and catch his neck with your left hand. Step right around with your right foot bringing him in a circle outside you. Pull his head into your right shoulder and throw him down by bending his head backwards with your right arm.

Sankyo (third principle) 6th form attack

Your partner attacks the side of your head with his right hand. Guide his right hand with your left. At the same time step back to your right corner with your left leg. Attack his face with your right hand. Follow on down his arm to grasp his wrist. Take his arm back in the direction of his head simultaneously stepping to his front catching the back of his hand with your left hand. Put your fingers in the palm of his hand and place your own thumb against his. Your right hand comes down just above his elbow and leads him to the mat.

Shino-nage (four direction throw) 7th form

Your partner punches to your stomach with his right hand. Turn your body to the right and grasp his fist with your left hand in the same way as Kote-gaeshi. Step back with your left foot, bringing his hand in the same direction. Now catch his right wrist with your right hand. Your thumb should be across the inside of his wrists so that you can push his arm straight. Step into his arm, your left arm pushing against his elbow. Slightly lift his arm up and throw him.

Nikkyo (second principle) 8th form

Your partner catches your collar with his right hand. Step back to his right side in a crouching position, letting his arm go over your head. You will find that his wrist is now under your chin. Hold his right hand with your right hand and bend his elbow with your left hand. Now bear down on his wrist with your chin. Bend your knees slightly as you do this. This completes Nikkyo and he will submit by tapping.

Sankyo (third principle) 16th form attack

Partner holds you with his right hand around your neck. His left hand is grasping your left wrist. Bend your body slightly forward, pushing forward with your left hand.

Step back to your left side, at the same time turning your left hip. Catch the back of his hand with your right hand, thus applying Sankyo. Keep moving your body to your partner's front, your left hand catching him just above his elbow. Move your body backwards, lowering your

partner on to the mat. Kneel down with your left knee by his neck. The other knee is by his side. Ensure that his arm is straight. Change from your right hand holding his wrist to your left. Push your right arm down his arm bearing towards his shoulder until he submits.

Ikkyo (first principle) 7th form attack

Your partner punches to your stomach with his right fist. Step back with your left foot towards your right corner. Your right grasps the top of his wrist. Take it in a downward movement by bending your knees slightly. When you feel your partner resist slightly bring his arm back into him. Your left hand should be just above his elbow pushing towards his head. Step in with your left foot, pushing him into the mat. Make certain that his body and arm are flat on the mat. Push his arm more than ninety degrees towards his head. Put pressure on his arm with your arms so as to immobilise him.

Irimi-nage (enter body throw) 4th form attack

Your partner holds your lapels with his right hand. Step back to your right corner with your left foot. Attack his face with your right hand. Follow through until your arm is under his right hand. Swiftly turn back and with a big circle with your shoulder break his grip. At the same time, step into his right side with your left leg. Catch his neck with your left hand. Take a big step with your right leg so that you are in the opposite direction. Bring your partner in a wide, smooth circle. Keep his head into your right shoulder. Your knees should be a little bent and your shoulders relaxed so as to maintain balance. Now bring your right arm over his face and bend his head back. Throw him to the mat. Do not bend from the waist but use your hip movement to throw him.

Kote-gashi (small hand twist) 6th form attack

Your partner attacks the left side of your head with his right hand. Step back with your left leg to your right rear corner.

Your left hand should be guiding his right hand. At the same time attack his face with your spare hand. Follow through with your right hand on top of his wrist. Push his hand in a circle in front of him whilst you move to your right. Now catch his hand with your left, with your right hand pushing on the back of his hand, step back with your left leg and throw him. Make sure that you keep his arm straight and *project* your power. The breakfall can be either forwards or backwards. But if it is forwards roll on the side that you are thrown. Do *not* try to forward roll on your left arm if you are thrown by your right.

Kokyu-nage 4th form attack

Your partner catches you by the lapels with his right hand. With his left he punches at your face. Side-step to your right by moving your hips and head. Deflect his blow by using your left hand, making sure that your arm is straight and that feeling is coming out of your fingers.

Now turn into his body with your right arm coming under both of his armpits. Do *not* try to lift him over but lead his body down to the mat. Your left hand is still in contact with his left arm and now lead him down to the mat.

Sankyo (third principle) 14th form attack

Your partner holds your elbows from the back. Keep your arms slightly bent and push forward. Step back to his left side, with your body in a crouched position. Bring your right arm over and catch the back of his left hand, making sure that your fingers are well into his palm and your thumb against the knuckle of his thumb. Step round to his front with your left leg. Break his grip from your elbow. Hold his elbow with your left hand and guide him on to the mat so that he is face downwards. Kneel down, putting your right knee in the middle of his back. Your other knee should be bent and the foot flat on the mat. Change the grip from your left to right hand closing his wrist. Now use your left arm to pin his arm against your own body. Turn to the right until you get the submission.

Koshi-waza (hip technique)

The hip techniques are different to those in Judo.

In Aikido, we make what we call 'T' form. This is not so much lifting your partner up as using your hips as a see-saw. Imagine that the thrower is the upright part of the 'T' and your partner is the cross. There are numerous techniques that one can do with Koshi-waza. But usually these are not taught until the grade of 1st Kyu because of the special use of the hips and the breakfalls involved. I have selected two main ones for this book. This is one of them.

Sankyo (third principle) Koshi-waza 13th form attack

Your partner holds both your wrists from behind. Moving your body into a crouched position push your hand forward and twist them. At the same time, catch the back of his left hand with your right in the Sankyo position. Do not worry if he is still holding your right wrist. Now push your hips through to his right side so that you are in a 'T' form. The small of your back is against his thighs below his belt. Look up at your partner. Now to throw him turn your head to your left, your right arm following him at the same time.

Irimi-nage (enter body throw) 8th form attack

Your partner catches the back of your collar with his left hand. Attack his face with your right hand - usually the side as in the Karate shuto techniques. He will defend against this attack with his right arm. As you hit his arm, step into his right side with your left foot deflecting his right arm down. Now catch his neck. Step back with your right foot making a ninety degree turn, bringing him with you. At the end of the movement, bring your arm over his face throwing him backwards. He should escape by a backward roll, so as not to injure himself.

Nikkyo (second principle) 12th form attack

Your partner attacks both shoulder from your front. Step back with your left foot to your own right corner. Counter with an attack to his face. Follow through, bringing the back of your hand down his right arm so as to break his balance. Catch the back of his hand with your right hand and bring it back so that his little finger is uppermost.

Keep his hand close to your shoulder, your left hand bending his elbow. Now step in with your right foot to the front of him and put pressure on his wrist. At the same time move backwards so as to bring him face down on the mat. Kneel down with your right knee by his neck and your left knee next to his armpit. Use your left hand under his elbow to turn it over. Grasp his hand in the crook of your bent left arm. Bear down with your right hand on his shoulder joint and turn your body to the right until he submits.

At all times when going back you must think about going back. When coming forward think forward. It is no good thinking forward when you are going back or vice-versa.

Kokyu-nage, 13th form

Your partner grasps your wrists from behind. Move your body backwards and push your hands forward. Simultaneously, twist your wrists slowly and lower your body by bending at the knees. Escape to your partner's side. Still pushing your power through your fingers, lower your hands to the mat, thereby throwing your partner. This technique calls for complete harmony and understanding between partners. If you use strength, you will make your partner resist or break his grip.

Aiki-jyo jutso (stick technique)

Techniques against a stick are very popular in Aikido. This is one of them.

Your partner thrusts to the stomach with the end of the stick. Move to the outside - as shown in the photo - and catch the stick with your right hand. Bring your partner round in a circle. Then grab the centre of the stick with your left hand, bringing your right hand over your own head. Push the stick in front of your partner's body. Turn your own body by swivelling on the balls of your feet and throw him backwards.

Irimi-nage (enter body throw) 7th form attack

Your partner punches your stomach with his right hand. Use your right hand to deflect the blow. At the same time, step with your left leg into his right side.

Now catch your partner by the shoulders and push him down so as you move past his back, bending your knees as you do so.

Kote-gaeshi (small hand twist) 5th form attack

To counter an attack to the centre of your head, turn your body to the outside, at the same time follow his hand down with your left hand until contact with his hand is made. Your body should be moving towards his back, bringing him in a circular movement. Make certain that you keep your arm straight. Now change direction, stepping back with your left foot. Put the palm of your right hand on the back of his hand. Then push his hand over with your hands thus throwing your partner.

Ikkyo (first principle) 3rd form attack

Your partner catches your left shoulder from one side. Step back to your own right corner, bringing your right hand up to attack his face with either a punch or a blow with the side of the hand. Follow through brushing the back of your hand down his arm. Catch his wrist with your right hand and place your left hand just above his face. Bring your body back and push his arm into the mat to immobilise.

Henka-waza (combination technique)

The idea of combination techniques is to train the individual to change from one technique to another. Thus if your partner escapes from one technique one can quickly switch to another. Also by being able to follow him by the feel of his movement and direction, combination techniques give you control over your partner the whole of the time.

There are many combination techniques but you will find that if you practise properly they will come automatically through your Aikido movement. This will eventually come to you without you thinking about them. I will give you the basic idea from 1st form Shiho-nage into Kote-gaeshi and then into Ikkyo.

Take your partner into 1st form Shiho-nage as I have explained. Now when you are throwing him he will make a backward breakfall, so make certain that you keep hold of his wrist with your right hand. Now take hold of the top of his hand with your left hand. Your right hand catches the back of his hand. At the same time, step back with your left foot, throwing him with Kote-gaeshi. Keep hold of his hand with your left hand, your right hand coming over to grasp his wrist. Switch your left hand grip to just above the elbow. Turn your body to the right, throwing him in Ikkyo.

Counter techniques, 2nd form Nikkyo (second form) into Sankyo (third form)

With counter-techniques you must completely follow your partner. At no time resist his technique, otherwise you will find that you cannot counter him. This is a very good exercise for harmony and relaxation. Make sure that you first try to 'give' yourself to your partner. Do not practise these techniques too fast until you have learnt to completely relax.

First I will describe 2nd form Nikkyo. Your partner grasps your left wrist with his right hand. Step back with your left foot towards your right corner. Your right hand attacks your partner's face. Carry down his arm to grasp his right hand at the back. Now bring it up until his little finger is uppermost and his hand is resting on your left shoulder. Your left hand should be grasping his wrist. Now by bringing your left elbow over push down and out. So as to bend his elbow do not stay in this position but move backwards. Bear down on his wrist. These movements should not be done too sharply, but smoothly.

Let us assume that your partner has obtained Nikkyo on you. Go forward, pushing your elbow into his body and turning it across his chest. Catch his thumb between your thumb and forefinger and move your left hip out. Now you will be able to catch the back of his hand with your own left hand in the Sankyo position. Draw his hand down to the mat. At the same time push your left hand downwards just above the elbow, with your body moving backwards.

When you are practising these counter-throws, try to keep you mind always going forward. If you let your mind go back it will be too late for you and his technique will win. This is the real fight in Aikido - to try to completely give yourself to him. This lets your partner feel that he has secured the technique and won. This lulls him back into a false sense of security and you will be able to counter him. If you cannot control your ego and try to show that you are the stronger by resisting him, you will lose.

Kaiten-nage (spiral throw) 2nd form left side

Your partner's right hand grasps your left wrist. Keep your left arm straight and step with your left foot to the left. Attack your partner's face with your right hand. Follow down with your right hand pushing it under your partner's right arm. Step with your right foot so as to turn your hips, going underneath his arm with your head coming through last. Catch the back of his head with your right hand, your left hand grasping his wrist, and push his arm in the direction towards his head thus throwing him. Try not to break your own balance when you throw. But if you are off-balance, take another step forward to regain it, keeping the front leg slightly bent.

Irimi-nage (enter body throw) 15th form

Your partner catches you from the back by the shoulders. Step forward and bend slightly to one side. On the next step bend slightly the other way. Then make a ninety degree turn into your partner. Take your head and the arm that is furthest away from him between his two arms. Keep moving until you feel that he is coming off-balance. Now change your direction by stepping back with one arm coming in the direction of his head. Do not knock him down but steadily push him. Keep your body moving backwards until he falls to the mat. Your partner escapes with a backward ukemi.

Nikkyo (second principle) 10th form attack

Your partner grasps your right forearm with both hands, his right hand round your wrist. Step back to your right corner with your left foot. Your right hand follows in the same direction. Catch the finger of his right hand with your left and lock them against your arm. Make a big circle, coming back into him with your right arm. Your hand now goes over the top of his wrist and pushes him to his right side so as to bend his elbow. Begin to move backwards at the same time bearing on his wrist. Bring your right hand towards your own stomach and he will crumple on the ground. You can immobilize him as in Nikkyo 12th form.

Irimi-nage (enter body throw) 5th form attack against stick

Here is another defence against a man with a stick. It calls for perfect timing and speed as well as relaxation. You are attacked from the front to the centre of your head. First of all look to see which of his hands is leading. As he brings the stick to your head, move directly towards him. Keep your body in an upright position and step with your leg into his right side. Turn your hips and head as you step so that your chest is nearly touching his back. Your left hand catches his neck and your right hand goes over the top of his right wrist so as to stop him bringing the stick back. Step ninety degrees with your right foot to the rear, bringing your partner in a wide circle. Now take his head close to your right shoulder and with your right arm coming over his head throw him down.

I end this techniques with another of the Koshi-waza (hip techniques).

Ikkyo, 1st form (Koshi-waza)

The first part is the same as 1st form Ikkyo but instead of you pushing your partner's arm towards the mat, you take it over his head, pushing your hips through. Your right side is now touching him and the small of your back is completely against his body and underneath his centre of gravity. Keeping his arm pushed out, swivel your hips and throw your partner over.

15. Exercise for One Person

Often Aikidoists should supplement their Dojo training with practice at home. The exercises I am giving here are for you to practise by yourself for the purpose of building your Ki power, movement and balance. They are also good for relaxing your mind. Stand in left Hamni posture, your hands having the feeling of pushing down and out. Step forward, with your right foot turning at the same time. Repeat with your left so that now you are in the reverse position. Do not stop dead. Repeat the movement. Keep this movement going so that you build up a smooth and fast movement. On no account jump when you are doing this exercise. Keep your centre of gravity down.

In the next exercise take the posture of left Hamni. Now with your arms pushing forward and your fingers open and stretched out, keep the small of your back straight, shoulders relaxed and head upright. As you push forward with your arms slide slightly forward and bring them back to your side. Keep doing this until you can get someone to test you by standing in front of you when you push out. See if they can push you back by holding your wrist. Practise this exercise on both sides.

16. Breathing Exercises

Sit in an upright position with your legs folded underneath you. The small of your back must be straight, the shoulders relaxed and your hands in your lap. Push your hands out to your front bringing them up and out so as to open your chest. At the same time, breathe deeply in through your nose. Your hands come back to catch the left hand in the right. Push your breath down below your navel. Hold this for a few seconds. Now blow your air out of your mouth whilst your hands are pushing forwards. Repeat this exercise four or five times before and after training.

From a standing position bend your knees and try to imagine that your body is a ball. Keep your body in a crouched position. Now roll back. Do not roll right over as in the backward roll. As your head touches the mat regain your balance by rolling forward.

17. Conclusion

There is no such thing in Aikido as a contest. It is against all the principles of the art. Thus, if you practise 'contest' Aikido, you are not practising true Aikido but street fighting. It is therefore better to practise in the streets as it is cheaper and the training is not so hard!

In Aikido, you must remember that your partner is not your enemy but your friend. Look after his welfare as well as your own. Help him to learn Aikido. If you injure him purposely then he will go away and you will not progress by yourself. There is an old Japanese saying: 'It takes two hands to make a noise; one is no good by itself'.

I truly believe that by giving to others you can obtain a great deal of pleasure. Higher grades must be kind to lower grades and help them in their difficult periods. Lower grades must have respect for their seniors and listen to them when they are teaching. In this way, improvement can be assured.

Kendo

Tommy Otani

1. The Introduction

This section on Kendo is more a manual for students than a 'Teach Yourself' attempt. It has been taken for granted that the reader is either a student already or considering starting. True Kendo, in common with older Martial Arts, will lack clarity unless it is practised.

The writer studied Kendo under Master Kenshiro Abbe Sensei during the period 1955 to 1964 and wishes to thank him for all his help. He is well known as one of the leading Martial Arts teachers - he was the youngest-ever All Japan Judo champion, and also studied Kendo, Aikido and Juken Jutsu (the art of bayonet fighting derived from spearmanship).

Until the end of the Second World War, the Butokukai (Martial Arts Society) controlled all gradings and teachings and Kenshiro Abbe Sensei was awarded a 6th Dan in Kendo from them, in 1945.

The specific theory or system of Budo (Martial Arts) created by Kenshiro Abbe Sensei is termed Kyu-shin-do and its application is particularly easy to understand through Kendo. Kyu means a sphere, or circle. Shin means the heart, or nexus point and Do means the way or path. There is little space here to deal adequately with this ancient Japanese philosophy but its three fundamental precepts are:

- a. Bambutsu Ruten - All things existent in the Universe turn in a constant state of flux.
- b. Ritsudo - This motion is rhythmic and smooth.
- c. Chowa - All things act in a perfect accord.

Kyu-shin-do is a Japanese equivalent of the Buddhist Karmic cycle especially as far as its application to life is concerned. This is an old Japanese idea but the writer's teacher was the first to grasp its real significance in relation to Budo. To attain perfection in technique means to attain to perfection as a human being and through our studies to become a better person and a useful and positive factor in society.

Kyu-shin-do also states that the accumulation of effort is a steady motion about the radius and centre of gravity and that all things resign to this basic cyclic pattern. The normal perception and focus of awareness in the human being, flies along the outer periphery of existence, events flash past too rapidly for the mind to grasp. By re-discovering the original centre of things, events turn more slowly in perception and the general scheme is more easily viewed. All this refers directly to the original *Great Principle of Creation*, under which the Universe was first formed. By understanding and harmony with this *Principle of God* a better purpose of life is

brought about. Instead of hopeless repentance or regret for bad things, the human being should strive for good actions.

This does not mean that every student must involve himself in complicated metaphysics but these laws of Material Nature still exist and cannot but become clear during the course of study. *Kendo* in itself is a vigorous and healthy activity, developing a strong physique and sharp mind. There is no reason why it cannot be practised and enjoyed purely and simply as a sport, or interesting game; even just for exercise. *Kendo* also has within itself the capacity to include the deepest significance of life and the highest goal of human conception. The student should concentrate firstly on the purely physical aspect of training, since interest in other aspects will occur naturally as they become problems.

The student involved in the sheer physical problems of training will scarcely be aware of his mind, but once the body is reasonably under control it will be seen that the mind is the real bar to progress, for one reason or another. The human being consists of both a spiritual and physical side. Too much concentration on one aspect will lead to an unbalanced life and the student should attempt to develop both parts equally. The student who is too prone to think, should train harder and with greater regularity whilst the student more sluggish of thought should strive to improve his mind and increase his intelligence by thinking things out, and reading.

Once past the first initial stages *Kendo* is a battle with oneself to catch the mind and force it to obey the will. Over the years the student will pass through periods of elation and depression, keen enthusiasm and lack of interest. The main object is to overcome all difficulties and to press forward with a firm mind and iron will. The student who misses classes because he cannot be bothered to attend, feels tired or thinks that he is getting nowhere has defeated himself from the very beginning. The senior grades and masters are merely those who have had the tenacity of purpose to continue in the face of any difficulty.

It is not thought necessary to describe equipment here, since this will be seen clearly enough once training is begun and the same applies to individual *Dojo* (training hall) regulations. The widespread attitude of behaviour and etiquette in the *Budo* arts derives from *Kendo* since it was foremost of such studies in former times. The only *Budo* are pre-dating *Kendo* is *Kyudo* (archery).

Philosophy and semi-religious attitudes, as a universal concept of swordsmanship, is regarded as dating from the sixteenth century although the broad field of techniques and movements can be traced to the ninth century and the introduction of the modern Japanese sword. The term *Kendo* (Sword-Way) has only been in general usage since 1895 and prior to this many terms were in use at various periods. Whilst *Kendo* derives directly from swordsmanship it must be understood that the wearing of padded armour and of the bamboo *Shinai* or practice sword changes many aspects, both physical and mental. Swords are still sometimes used in *Kata* or pre-set 'Forms' but the real appreciation of the 'heart' of *Kendo* is only gained in direct combat and is thus very difficult to understand in modern times.

Kyu (Student) and *Dan* (Step) grades are awarded in *Kendo* for proficiency and are the exact equivalent of other *Budo* art grades, except that no belt or distinguishing mark is worn. It is easy to assess a student's ability by the way he sits, stands or moves about the *Dojo*. Grading is a relatively modern idea and as a general rule not much attention is paid to this. It is normal fashion to ask the grade of a strange student prior to, or after, practice but a more common question is merely how long he has been training.

As a very broad guide to progress the grade of *Sankyō* (3rd *Kyu*) normally means the student has probably trained two or three evenings per week over about a year. The grade of *Shodan* (1st *Dan*) may take anything from three to five years and progress through the *Dan* ranks becomes progressively more difficult. The average European could expect to pass a number of years equivalent to the next *Dan* rank taken. Mastery is generally accepted as being 6th *Dan* or above and even in Japan may take from fifteen to twenty years unless the student is particularly brilliant. Only three or four *Judan* or 10th *Dan* exist at any one period and these are elderly gentlemen who display not only technical ability but possess very real human qualities as well. It has not been uncommon to find *Kendo* Masters in their nineties who train five hours every day retaining agility and skill.

Grade refers to a certain level of technical proficiency and is not necessarily relevant to ability or the understanding of *Kendo*. Since we have competition without any direct physical contact *Kendo* is predominantly psychological by necessity and since the full personality does not develop until about the age of forty there is no noticeable drop in ability with advancing age. In pre-war years, when a deeper study was made, the Champions were always at least in their fifties and *Kenshiro Abbe* Sensei tells of his own teacher at the Busen College, who, at the age of seventy-five, could not be touched on the body by any young students or even young teachers.

2. The Fundamentals of Kendo

Ability and progress in *Kendo* is said to consist of some eighty per cent posture and only twenty per cent technique. In *Kendo* we are not merely attempting to hit the opponent, but to deliver a correct technique in a specified manner. From this viewpoint *Kendo* has much in common with shooting, since both posture and breathing are of importance. But the situation is more complex in *Kendo*; both attacker and target are very likely to be in motion. Aiming has little to do with *Kendo* and we do not even watch the target as we cut. Aim develops quite naturally if left to itself. One does not make a fully conscious effort when reaching to pick up an object and in the same way the precise target areas may be easily struck immediately by the novice, providing that he is not inhibited by the concept of aiming, or it being particularly difficult.

Shisei (general posture and carriage)

Shisei forms the foundation and platform from which all actions must spring and the techniques will only be as stable as the base provided. The simple way to view the repertoire of techniques is as each being the spoke of a wheel. To one side branch the purely aggressive

techniques and to the other the more passive techniques. The waiting condition should be in the centre, where a free adoption of other techniques can be made with equal facility depending on circumstances. Any intellectual planning or concentration on one aspect will inhibit the technique at the crucial moment. The basic posture should therefore express the neutral and natural condition of the human being and this applies equally; both externally and internally.

The hips and shoulders should be square, the spine and head erect with the chin tucked slightly in. The body should be relaxed but firm, neither rigid and tense, nor loose and drooping. Equally the mind should be calm and watchful, but not committed to any specific attitude. Any heavy extreme is bad and it must be remembered that each negative expression includes a little positive expression within itself and vice-versa.

The natural physique of a human being is shown by an upright spine and head whilst excessive egoism results in hunched shoulders and rigidity without suppleness. The shoulders should therefore fall downwards to their natural position and the body-weight dropped to the *Chushin* (centre of gravity) just below the navel, and the general feeling of balance carried in this area. Balance is of more importance in *Kendo* than in the other *Budo* arts in that the student has no contact with his opponent to aid or assist his own balance. The student must act and move in a completely independent fashion, automatically harmonizing with the opponent's actions but having little control over them.

What we term the *Chushin-sen* (body centre-line) is an imaginary line which we visualize as passing through nose, navel and striking the floor exactly between the feet. Regardless of changing foot positions or widening the stance the *Chushin-sen* must be kept straight to maintain balance. This line is important as related to technique and in most cases the movement of the sword follows this line.

Shisei can be simply regarded as the basic posture of the upper torso and head in relations to floor and hips. In *Kendo* the basic *Shisei* should hold true, regardless of the movements or position of arms and legs at any given moment. Naturally enough, the position of *Shisei* is very similar to meditation posture and known for thousands of years in the East as the ideal and natural positioning of torso and head. One should not be confused by different circumstances in other *Budo* arts which demand variations due to the different techniques. Essentially the *Shisei* is the same.

Kamae (positions of posture)

Kamae actually means 'Posture' but in context is more clearly expressed as 'position' since it refers specifically to the position in which the *Shinai* or bamboo practice sword is held. The height of blade is divided into three levels or *Dan* (steps) and designated as *Jodan* (high step), *Chudan* (middle step), and *Gedan* (low step). '*No-kamae*' means 'posture of', but the short form as above is general.

Seigan-no-kamae (natural posture)

Seigan (natural step) is the more common name for *Chudan*. The right foot is advanced with the knee slightly bent; the left leg is straight with the heel clear of the floor. The *Shinai* is held in front of the body with both hands, in a natural manner that does not interfere with the basic *Shisei*. The sword points directly at the opponent's eyes and crosses his point about three to four inches from the tip. This is at a distance of some seven to seven feet six inches and defined as *Ma-ai* or the theoretical distance from which an attack can be launched with a single step attack.

Seigan (or *Chudan*) is defined as when the blade points forward from the left hand, which is held in line with the *Chushin* (body centre), at an angle above horizontal and below the opponent's eyes. A lower angle more completely covers the front attack line whilst a higher angle to cover the eyes has more psychological effect on the opponent. *Seigan* is the most important posture to study and understand. It is the only position which covers the front attack line and also the only position to give equal facility for offence or defence as required. All variations are virtually a weakening of this basic stance, used to deliberately provoke an attack by the opponent.

Judan-no-kamae (high posture)

Jodan is the only important variation used today and is favoured in contests. *Jodan* has a very strong character since it is very aggressive. '*Jodan*' is universally taken to mean *Migi-jodan-no-kamae* (with right foot advanced) unless otherwise specified. But the more common or comfortable form is the *Hidari Jodan* (left foot advanced) this makes single handed cuts very convenient as explained later. The angle shown is fairly conservative (about forty-five degrees) but this can vary a good deal from almost perpendicular to nearly horizontal. Some schools suggest that the arms be as shown - in a natural position - whilst others allow the elbows to spring out. The body direction can be square or slightly turned to either side. Sometimes the *Shinai* is held in this line whilst at others it may be canted over or held almost cross-wise. Much of this variation is due to the particular techniques specialized in or according to personal taste. At any rate the only classification made is left, or right foot advanced. An exception to this is the radical *Katate Jodan* (single hand) postures in which either hand will release its grip on the hilt and the blade is balanced back on this hand which supports the back edge of the blade.

Any form of *Jodan* completely opens the front attack line and the student must have a good sense of timing and outmatch his opponent if he is to take any advantage.

Gedan-no-kamae (low posture)

Gedan is still used to some extent and in this case the attack line is opened by dropping the point. In some variations the *Sinai* may be turned off to either side and *Gedan* is in itself an invitation to attack the head. The posture is defined as when the point drops below horizontal.

Waki-gamae (side posture)

Waki-gamae has little use in modern *Kendo* apart from *Kata* (forms) in that it was originally designed as a *Sutemi Waza* (sacrifice technique) and such techniques merely result in *Aiuchi* (double hits) in modern *Kendo*.

Hasso-kamae (figure of eight posture)

Hasso-kamae is not illustrated but the *Shinai* is carried almost vertically at either shoulder, so that in combination the two complimentary sides are likened to the Japanese figure eight, or *Hachi*. These are sometimes referred to as *Yo-no-kamae* and *Inno-kamae*, *Yo-in* being the positive/negative principle (*Yinyang* in Chinese). *Hasso* has variations in the *Jodan* and *Chudan* positions, the former high above the head and the latter low at the hip and canted backwards. As a minor point *Waki-gamae* takes what would be the *Gedan* position of *Hasso*, except that the blade is reversed.

Hasso-kamae is also a *Sutemi Waza* and has little use in modern *Kendo* but with *Waki-gamae*, *Gedan*, *Chudan* and *Jodan*, completes the five fundamental postures.

There are literally dozens of other postures - many very ancient. Some better known ones are the *Kasumi-kamae* found in low, middle, and high positions in which the arms are crossed over so as to partly conceal the technique; *Kasumi* means 'mountain mist'. Another variation is the *Kongo-kamae* in which the blade is held vertically in front of the face. There is a particular phase during which such postures appear attractive to the student but he should not become involved in them. It is, however, as well to learn by experience and it will soon be found that such postures are too restrictive under modern conditions.

The essential posture to concentrate on is the *Seigan* (natural posture) and this is absolutely essential as a basis for anything else. To enable the hands to grip as naturally as possible it will be noted that the elbows are slightly sprung outwards. The *Shinai* is exactly in the centre line and the posture should be relaxed and comfortable. An amount of stiffness and awkwardness is inevitable at first but if no effort is made the position cannot be achieved with ease at a later date.

Nigiri (the hand grip)

The method of gripping the hilt is the foundation of the cut and the movement of the *Shinai*. If the hands are incorrectly placed it is impossible to deliver a correct stroke, especially with regard to the left hand. Because of the gloves, this is difficult to see clearly but the position is the same as in the plate.

The left hand is always at the very end of the hilt, regardless of whether the student is left, or right-handed. The hilt lies transversely across the palm of the hand along the line of life, crossing under the base of the index finger and the butt lies in the heel of the hand. The three

smallest fingers curl back over the hilt to point back at an angle of forty-five degrees to its length, and tighten firmly to pull the butt into the inner palm which we call *Tenno-uchi* (inside hand). The fore-finger and thumb just curl about the hilt in a comfortable position.

The *Tuska-gawa* (hilt leather) of modern *Shinai* are constructed with more length and the right hand is placed with an inch or so clearance below the guard. This is to avoid the excessive wear of the glove constantly rubbing against the guard.

The wrists are snapped well inwards so the hands lie along the top of the hilt and the knuckles of each fore-finger should be aligned with the edges. The *Shinai* should form a natural extension of the arms and the hands be in the ideal position for maximum control. The correct grip will only be possible if the wrists are supple and again this is a question of practice.

The *Tenno-uchi* (inner palm) of the left hand is the main cutting source and the placing of the left hand most important. The right hand does almost nothing, merely supporting the *Shinai* and guiding direction. Once the correct grip is understood the left hand is aligned with the *Chushin* (body centre) and thrust about four inches forward.

Students should avoid grasping squarely since this stiffens the arms and shoulders, or allowing the hands to slip around the sides of the hilt. In this case it is impossible to control the cutting and movements of the *Shinai*.

Shintai Dosa (basic footwork)

If it is understood that *Shisei* (fundamental posture) is the foundation of all techniques it will be equally clear that the only way to preserve this position is by footwork. All footwork is designed to preserve *Shisei* and generally speaking to maintain the advanced position of the right foot to facilitate instant attack at any moment. The basic aim is to step forward and strike the opponent in a special way and the only method of closing this distance without loss of *Shisei* or balance is by the correct step.

In the basic waiting position the left heel is lifted clear of the floor and the right knee slightly bent so that the body is inclined forward and some seventy per cent of the total body weight falls on to the ball of the right foot. In *Kendo* we are not concerned with attacks from the side or rear. There is only a single opponent who will always approach from the front. The basic posture is rather weak to the sides and backward movement is also less efficient but the whole body is poised for forward attack when required.

The right foot is advanced about the distance of its own length. There is just sufficient room for the left leg to pass in front of the right if necessary and the toes of both feet point directly forward. If the left toes are allowed to point sideways (a common fault) or if there is too much lateral distance between the feet, the thrusting action of the left foot will tend to throw the body over to the right and balance will be lost. The left foot should be as close to the centre-line as possible, but not so much as to cause loss of balance or awkwardness. Balance is greatly aided

by turning the toes slightly inwards, which has the effect of steadying the body inwards to the centre-line, rather similar to the result of *Shibori*, as will be seen later.

Fumikomi (diagram 1) shows the actual attack step and in all illustrations the starting position is shown as shaded whilst the number refers to the sequence of steps. *Fumikomi* means 'jumping in' and this is the only occasion when the feet leave the floor. By studying diagrams 1 and 2 this may be clearly followed. The left foot thrusts the body forward and the right knee punches upwards, the right foot strikes vigorously into the floor as the cut lands. This is followed almost simultaneously by the left foot, which is drawn up into its original position. As the cut lands the body is virtually travelling forward in the original *Shisei* position. At this moment the direction of body-weight is direct forwards and downwards at an angle of forty-five degrees to assist balance. There is a very brief pause as the cut lands. Then a series of smaller steps are made until the forward momentum is dissipated. This follow-through, or *Tsuzukete*, continues to maintain the right foot in advance whilst the left foot constantly pushes. The result should be that the feet slide smoothly across the floor in a fast 'shuffling' action.

As will be seen later, a full *Fumikomi* (attack step) means that some three feet to three feet six inches must be covered and so the *Tsuzukete* not only aids balance but also gives a smooth finish to the technique. It also has the extra function of avoiding any retaliation by the opponent. For clarity the *Tsuzukete* is shown in a direct line but in actual fact it is necessary to sidestep to avoid crashing into the opponent.

The method of keeping the right foot advanced is termed *Tsugu-ashi* (following feet) and is the method of stepping employed at any time when the opponent is at *Ma Ai* distance or attack range. When stepping backwards the right foot pushes back and is drawn back afterwards. A single *Tsugu-ashi* step is two separate movements of the feet made almost simultaneously, ie, 'one-two', 'one-two' and so on.

Nami Ashi (diagram 2) are normal 'pace' steps in which one foot is advanced from the rear. *Nami-ashi* means 'succeeding feet'. As the left foot advances in *Nami-ashi* any attack action is very difficult and because of this, *Nami-ashi* is avoided altogether except when well out of range. In *Nami-ashi* the feet are still slid smoothly along the floor, without lifting up, so that constant contact is maintained.

Diagram 3 shows a combination of *Nami-ashi* and *Fumikomi* in a method of attack from long distance, often used in competition. To cover the extra distance the left foot comes forward in advance of the right and the right foot is then advanced in normal *Fumikomi* style. In this specific case the advance of the left foot does not inhibit the attack since it is contained within the actual process of attack as the initial phase. With this type of attack it is possible to cover double the distance or more.

Ugoki (side steps) are mainly employed to pass by the opponent after attack and normally comprise the first of the *Tsuzukete* (follow through) steps. Diagram 4a shows the *Mae-migi Ugoki* (forward right) and *Ushiro-hidari-ugoki* (rear left) diagonal and by definition these are *Tsugu-ashi*

(following feet). Diagram 4b shows the *Mae-hidari-ugoki* (forward left) and *Ushiro-migi-ugoki* (rear right) and to prevent the feet crossing over and to avoid tripping, these are technically in *Nami-ashi* (succeeding feet) style. Because of this, movement along this latter diagonal is avoided where possible. The *Ugoki* step has the effect of taking the body out of line whilst maintaining the shoulder and hips square to the direction of movement. If the body is allowed to swing sideways in passing, balance will be very easily lost.

Mawashi (turning steps), mainly used when meeting an attack, shift the body out of the attack line and turn the receiver's own centre-line inwards, to allow for a counter stroke. Since the opponent is attacking, the distance is rapidly decreasing and thus, although vigorous, the *Mawashi* step is very short and balance to the side is not threatened. Diagram 5 shows merely the basic side movements of *Mawashi* and in the case of movement along either diagonals the sequence of steps will be as for *Ugoki*. Where possible it is better that the first foot be placed directly in the new line to avoid spinning on the feet. Only a relatively short step is necessary to clear the attack line and if the feet stamp down properly the balance is better preserved.

Almost any combination of step may be made, according to circumstance and diagram 6 shows one in which a *Mae-hidari Ugoki* (forward left) side-step is changed to a *Migi-mawashi* (right) swinging step by turning on the sole of the foot. The circumstances in which this type of step might occur would be in attacking the right wrist or *Kote* or in performing certain counter techniques to this left hand side.

Generally speaking, footwork should be as smooth and precise as possible, so as to avoid 'Rocking' the body backwards and forwards. No matter what direction the step takes the action is always that of thrusting with the rear foot; if retiring the right foot becomes the 'rear' foot in the context. The *Tsuzukete* (follow-through) will be found difficult but must be concentrated upon. The *Fumikomi* is very vigorous and all other steps smooth, so that the body glides over the floor and the feet are constantly in contact, ready to leap forward as an opportunity occurs.

Another very important aspect of footwork is the distance factor, since only the top portion of the blade is used to strike and thus the distance and range of each attack step must be regulated with the appropriate footwork. As the opponent attacks the length of our own attack step shortens proportionately. This is similar to the 'deflection' factor in shooting against a moving target and whilst this stepping, in relation to where the opponent will be, is difficult, it comes with experience.

It is necessary to make a definite step when cutting, or if the distance does happen to be just correct, then the motion of a step or a stamp is made and co-ordinated precisely with the cut. Cuts to the front are very much easier than cuts made whilst reversing and thus a forward side-step or diagonal will often provide just that little extra space necessary to cut forward rather than backwards. Backward cuts are quite valid if correctly performed but the student should concentrate on forward attacks as much as possible since constant retreating and backward strokes result in a negative style and make it impossible to understand *Kendo*.

3. The Principles of Cutting

The essence of *Kendo* consists in *Kiri-otoshi*, or 'striking downwards' and each technique is virtually the same. If we can master a single technique of delivery this may be applied with equal facility in any direction or angle. For clarity we are forced to separate various actions into sections but the student is advised to regard all techniques as simple variations of the basic fundamental action.

Two directions of cut are included, with the blade moving forward *Oshigiri*, or backward, *Hiki-giri*. The angle of stroke is either straight vertical, or diagonal lateral. For simplification all diagonals are expressed as forty-five degrees. With two directions and two angles it is therefore possible to strike any portion of the opponent's body by adjusting the direction or distance in which our body moves. The diagonal stroke is just the same as the vertical except that the arc of the stroke is canted over to either side.

Fluidity of technique comes with the understanding of the basic principles involved in the movement of the body and the swinging of the *Shinai* (bamboo sword). As mentioned earlier the great principle of Nature operates on circular or cyclic action and this holds true not only with the physical plane but also abstracts and conditions. In macro-cosmic proportion the planets turn and in micro-cosmic proportion the pattern repeats in the wave flow or vibration of matter. This is also reflected in the 'Turning' of the seasons and the transmigratory nature of all existing forms and things. With an axis which revolves the simple circles appear as a spiral and should the spiral also be spiralling the resulting motion is too complex to understand. In actual fact the common factor in all motion is that it shall be relative to itself rather than to the surrounding space. By this means we return to the fundamental circle as a basis both for our actions and viewpoint and our particular school is known as *Kyu-shin-do* or 'heart of the circle'.

The human body is a perfect circular machine, designed to turn on pivots and capable of extremely harmonious and smooth movements if properly directed. To make ugly, stiff actions or to force our limbs into a straight line by our human conceptions of speed and directness is as though we took up a finely made pair of compasses and proceeded to draw straight lines by constantly altering the radius. A circle viewed from the side is a straight line and a straight line can be followed by a gradual unwinding of the joints and the basic attitude of mind is to let the circles play themselves out and not keep our attention on the straight line as such. In *Kendo* even the thrust is regarded and understood as merely a different direction of circle, or cut.

The first principle of the stroke is that a perfect circle is made, as in diagram 7. The two forces of centrifugal force (*Enshin-ryoku*) and centripetal force (*Kyushin-ryoku*) play a great part in our handling and control of the *Shinai*. It will be noted that if the *Shinai* revolves an inch or so from the hilt end the motion/force/speed ratio increases to approximately x24 at the tip. It is therefore a great advantage to turn from one end and strike with the other. The *Shinai* is divided into three sections on the blade the *Dage-kibu* (striking base) above the leather *Musubi*, or thong, the *Chu O* (centre section) and the *Tsuba-moto* (guard base). As a general rule blows are struck with the *Dage-kibu* and the opponent's blade controlled or taken off along the *Tsuba-moto* which

not only moves more slowly but also gives greater control of the point. The only problem is that the effort required to turn the *Shinai* will be inversely proportional as we leave the periphery of motion and the way this is overcome is by the second principle.

Diagram 8a shows an arm turning in an antic-clockwise direction about a fixed point (a), another extension arm being pivoted at point (b) and allowed to swing freely. As the inner arm revolves to position 8b centrifugal force will act outwards from the centre and the extension arm will open with increasing velocity. Diagram 8c shows the way in which this applies to the cutting arm in *Kendo*. In this case the inner section from shoulder to elbow may turn forty-five degrees. The second section, from elbow to wrist may turn through twenty two and a half degrees, whilst the *Shinai* itself may turn only eleven degrees or so. In each extension the actual distance and motion is less but the speed increases.

This accumulation of effort by direct stages is the main reason for relaxation and the arms should be allowed to unwind naturally during a stroke. If the feeling is of 'throwing outwards' centrifugal force provides much of the power of a stroke and the physical action need be very little. A very popular phrase of Kenshiro Abbe Sensei is 'maximum efficacy through the minimum of effort'.

A very common fault of people not understanding this principle or who cannot be bothered to study it during their practice, is to attempt a levering type action with the right hand and pivot the *Shinai* from the left hand. Whilst the ratio of correct stroke is 24 to 1 the latter ratio will only be about 3 to 1 so whilst, the levering section appears easy through ignorance it is in fact making very hard work of the cut. It is better to start correctly from the very beginning and loosen the shoulders well. The outward feeling and spaciousness of technique is also essential in developing the *Kokyū* or 'breath power' essential to *Budo*.

Having understood the first two principles we must now examine the final result in the moment of cutting, called *Ki-ken-tai-ichi*, or the moment when 'spirit-sword-body' become 'one'. At the moment of impact there must be focus of all available forces to one point and this is best developed in three explanatory diagrams.

9a shows the angle of approach as the *Shinai* strikes. In this basic action the only available force is that implied by the radial velocity, which will fall at a tangent to the arc and results in a 'penetration angle' of about ninety degrees. This is not good since it is as though we cut a loaf of bread by pressing straight downwards. The centrifugal force being countered by centripetal force.

9b shows the same condition but in this case the *Shinai* is metaphorically flung forward on impact and in the crucial instant this has the effect of countering the centripetal effect. The result is the introduction of centrifugal force, along the length of *Shinai*. The result will be a new penetration angle bisecting the two forces at an angle of forty-five degrees, and an efficient 'slicing' action is implied.

9c shows the force line of the body moving forward and the final angle is again bisected to arrive at a very efficient slicing angle of penetration. In this way the downward cutting action of the stroke is directed forward and the penetration action is implied rather than factual. The *Kiai* or shout is uttered at his moment and serves to throw the mind and spirit into the *Shinai*.

10 shows merely the final effect in reverse, when a cut is made with a backward step. In this case the arms are straightened but the *Shinai* is drawn back in imagination and the whole direction reverses inside the arc of the stroke.

The stroke is very rapid and normally made during the first few years with a wide and full swing to loosen the joints and to develop a free and easy style. When we cut we either stop the action dead, at head level if exercising alone, or strike to just below the surface of an imaginary target area. The effect of merely chopping downwards makes the action difficult to control, especially if the student attempts to directly oppose the arc of the stroke. By flinging forward at the final moment the *Shinai* is easy to halt and the right arm acts rather as the tall-chain on a lorry since the major downward force has been redirected forward. A well controlled blow lands sharply and cleanly, with a crisp snap, and follows through smoothly and easily.

Shibori

Shibori (wringing) is another most important action on striking. The effect of the hands being in different positions will be to drag the *Shinai* off centre and the *Shibori* action of squeezing the hands into the centre negate their effect by opposition. *Shibori* steadies the blade and gives definition and control to the stroke and it must be timed to co-ordinate exactly with the moment of impact. The actual physical effect of the blow is more via kinetic energy than actual downward force.

Immediately after the blow lands the hands are relaxed and the *Shinai* passes off above the target in a very natural fashion. This is likened to the effect of a ball which will bounce upwards at the same angle at which it approaches the floor, but will still continue in the same direction.

Co-ordination

Diagram 11 shows the coordination of arms and legs during the attack step. 11a is the starting posture, 11b shows the *Shinai* thrusting forward as the right foot begins to rise. 11c shows the *Shinai* lifting and still thrusting forward, whilst the right knee begins to punch upwards. 11d shows the highest point of the stroke, with the arms stretching upwards. 11e shows the mid point of stroke the whole body is in the air and the blade is in roughly the *Jodan* (high posture) position. 11f shows the moment of impact as the *Shinai* is thrown forward. The action of taking off on the first *Tsuzukete* (follow-through) step will be approximately that of 11c.

Note that the blade thrusts forward before it lifts and that the head line is virtually level throughout. The cut is coordinated with the stamp of the right foot and the left is drawn up

almost simultaneously. Numbers 2a and 2e comprise the development of the stroke and from this point the left hand having thrust forward and upwards then pulls downward and throws forward, much as if throwing a knife. The right hand does almost nothing only guiding direction and aiding in the control on impact. The arms and hands should be supple and relaxed until about two or three inches above the target, there is then an instant of tension in the *Shibori* (wringing) and *Ki-ken-tai-ichi* as the action is concentrated. There is then another moment of relaxation in taking off and a slight tension in controlling the following-through blade.

Most movements of the *Shinai*, including the attack stroke will be found to consist of interplay between centrifugal and centripetal force and also of relaxation and tension. If great strength is applied the result will be rigidity and the accumulation of force described in principle two cannot flow freely into the blade. If the tension is timed too early the blow will be dead for the same reason and the same will apply if it is too late. A nice technique results in perfect co-ordination of all factors.

Kiai

Kiai means 'spirit meeting' and is only referred to as 'shouting' by association. True *Kiai* is the force of the spirit power, and can be equally as powerful if silent. In *Kendo* this serves the double function of 'calling the cuts' although a short sharp *Kiai* is often common as in all *Budo* arts.

The *Chushin* (body centre) is often called *Saika-tanden* or *Shita-hara* and is regarded as the centre of motion and the source of *Kiai* and *Kokyu* (breath power). The student should imagine a volume of sound already contained in his stomach, the mouth opens and the sound comes out, not from the throat but deep in the lower belly. As the breath is expelled the stomach drops downwards with the body weight.

This power which develops is from out imagination and not muscular. In olden times swordsmen frequently cut an opponent from head to groin with a single stroke. This factor of training should be employed against inanimate objects to be understood, but never used in practice since armour is no protection.

The whole spiritual aspect of *Kendo* cannot really be discussed and the student will do better to study this directly from his teacher. However, the whole idea is aided by loud, drawn-out shouts and one hundred per cent vigour in performing attacks. The more running about and shouting, the better the training and the more easy it is to see the conception of *Kendo*.

Timing of co-ordination

The initial action is for the novice to raise his *Shinai* before stepping forward since the arms normally lag behind the feet when untrained. The second phase is when the *Shinai* is raised as the step is made, giving less warning to the opponent. As the timing sense grows finer the lifting action can be delayed still further as necessary.

In diagram 11 the action will appear almost the same for diagonal cuts except that the blade will cant over on the downstroke. By raising each time to the direct high centre position, the minimum of warning is given.

4. The Preliminaries

Suburi (foundation action)

An evening's training normally begins with some form of callisthenics to loosen up and what we term *Suburi* or practice swings of the *Shinai*. These preliminary exercises are sometimes performed individually by students and also in group form. *Suburi* is the most important exercise in *Kendo* since it develops the stroke and can also be employed to build up stamina and strength, which is naturally important for drawn-out matches or practice sessions.

San-kyodo-no-suburi (cutting in three stages) is the basic form. The first action is to raise the blade, thrusting forward and upwards as in diagram 11. After the highest point, 11e, the arms are folded back as in plate 106 and the body is stretched upwards so that the fullest possible circle is made and the joints well stretched. To do this the right arm must relax its grip and revolve about the hilt as it is turned by the left hand; this is shown in plate 107 and it will be noted that the left hand has retained its grip so that the cutting edge of the *Shinai* faces to the direct right. The *Shinai* touches the base of the spine and the hands have turned inwards. The cut is performed by simultaneously stepping forward with *Tsugu Ashi* (following feet) and cutting by throwing the *Shinai* upwards and outwards with the left hand. The right hand gradually revolves as the left hand turns the *Shinai* to its original position, but in this case the action is delayed so that the correct hand position is re-assumed at the exact finish of the cut. Plate 108 shows almost the final instant. The left leg is just drawing up to position and the hands are just about to squeeze as the wrists snap inwards. The cut is halted at head or eye level.

Suburi are always made in this very wide and exaggerated action to give maximum exercise and often the novice cuts only in this way throughout his initial training. The cutting at head level may be varied by diagonals but it is not necessary to exercise cuts against other targets in this way since only a matter of height is involved. This is automatically adjusted just as we adjust to varying heights of opponent without effort.

Mae-ato-suburi are the normal form in which cuts are made forwards and backwards in a rhythmic fashion, with the cutting action coordinated with the footwork. A more exhausting form of *Suburi* for stamina training, are *Tonde* (with a leap) *Suburi* in which a jumping or skipping action is made rather than a simple sliding step. *Sonkyo* (crouching) *Suburi* strengthens the legs and may take the form of cutting whilst sinking and rising from this position or may consist in bouncing up and down whilst cutting from this position, or even cutting and walking. The most exhausting of all are *Tobigaki* (jumping) *Suburi* in which the student leaps as high as he can and attempts to touch his buttocks with his heels as he raises the *Shinai* and cut as he lands again.

It is really true that no progress is possible without *Suburi* training and the keen student should set himself a target of 500 or 1.000 cuts per days if conditions allow.

It will be noted that in the final action the right shoulder swings a little forward since the right hand is advanced on the hilt, but the hips remain square. This swinging forward should not be exaggerated and the student will find it occurs naturally if he concentrates rather on keeping the shoulders square but letting the shoulder come forward a little if this feels awkward. The student will almost certainly find his hands blister until a tough hardened palm develops. Callouses along the forefinger show that the technique is incorrect, the areas of callous as shown in diagram 12 give a good guide to correctness of technique. The right hand is hardly affected.

Correct footwork will also cause blistered feet until the soles harden, after which very little trouble is experienced. The only injuries normally resulting in *Kendo* are a few bumps and bruises from blows and sprains or self-inflicted dislocations. At any rate there are few serious accidents although *Kendo* often appears dangerous. The student should ignore any painful blows and never duct or show any sign of discomfort. In actual fact a blow is far more painful if the student cringes. To ignore a blow means that it is rarely felt and normally bruises are only noted when changing after practice.

5. Reishiki (Ceremonial Form)

Reishiki is important for self-discipline and safety during the practice, since it reminds the students that they are there to study seriously. The details of laying out equipment and the precise form *Reishiki* takes will vary from *Dojo* to *Dojo* but that given here is fairly typical. The student when visiting merely follows the particular form of that school. A training session without *Reishiki* will be casual and lacking in form, which prevents the development of united spirit among students and also leads to accidents. The effect of *Reishiki* is that from the moment of entering the *Dojo* all outside thoughts are to be put aside until we leave again and to create a proper atmosphere for serious study. The atmosphere should not be over strict or depressing. Amusing incidents often occur and the students should feel free to laugh or talk providing that this is not interfering with training. In actual fact the student is normally fully occupied during training and so discipline is hardly a problem. Enforced discipline is of little worth. The student must himself want to follow his own discipline and etiquette to build his character.

The correct style of entry to the *Dojo* is shown in plate 109, the breastplate and lower armour have been donned in the dressing room and the head towel, gloves and loose cords placed inside the mask, which is carried grill downwards under the left arm. The *Shinai* is carried in the left hand, parallel to the floor. A *Tachi-rei* (standing bow) is made on entering the *Dojo* and the more senior students line up in order of grade to the instructor's left-hand side.

Plate 110 shows the *Seiza* (seated posture). The spine and head are erect and the body sits well back on the heels. The body-weight is dropped to the stomach and the hands placed on the knees. The *Shinai* is placed to the left side with the guard level with the knee and the mask laid on the gloves, to the front, with the towel draped across the top. The Senior student ensures all

are ready then shouts '*Kyo-tsuke*' (attention) and everybody braces up and pays attention. The second command will be '*Rei*' and the class and teacher perform *Za-rei*' (kneeling bow) as in plate 111. The left hand is placed on the floor followed by the right, the elbows lowered to touch the floor and the forehead to touch the hands.

A high ranking teacher will often be accorded the courtesy of a special salutation and on the command '*Sensei-ni-rei*' (bow to the teacher) the class bows whilst the teacher remains in *Seiza* position. Japanese *Dojo* have a *Kamiza* or shrine and a bow is made in this direction. It is also etiquette to pass in front of the teacher and perform *Zae-rei* by way of thanks after an evening's instruction and also to other students.

After the *Rei* have been completed a short period of meditation is made to calm the mind and settle the thoughts. At the command '*Mokuso*' (meditation), or '*Muso*' (no thoughts) the hands are folded in the lap, right over left (negative over positive) and silence reigns for about two or three minutes. Students concentrate on breathing or the *Chushin* (body centre) and attempt to gain the right frame of mind. This whole procedure is performed in reverse at the end of the evening.

Before any practice, exercise with a partner, or contest, the following form is always followed. The junior approaches to the senior and both make *Tachi-rei* as in plate 112, in this case the *Shinai* is at an angle as though in a scabbard. Next the two participants move to *Ma-ai* (fighting distance) and drop down into the *Sonkyo* (crouch position) and make the motion of drawing a blade with the right hand, over the head and down into the *Chudan* (middle step) position. The left hand is placed in position as in plate 113, and upon standing and assuming correct *Seigan* (natural posture) as in plate 114, they are ready to begin. The same form applies in reverse on finishing.

All bows are performed as naturally as possible, with rather a military flavour, avoiding both casual half bows and heavy elaborate ceremony. The bow is a courtesy or greeting to the opponent and should be treated as such. Its meaning is that all students help one another to progress and wish to understand one another by direct technique and spirit during practice or competition.

6. Kogeki-Waza (Offensive Techniques)

Uchi-dokoro (striking areas)

The target areas in *Kendo* are classified as *Men* (the mask area above the ears), *Kote* (the glove, just above the joint of the wrist), and the *Do* (side portion of the breastplate). All blows must be declared loudly by name as they are struck to the targets. In general terms, the complete top section of the head is counted as *Men*, the gauntlet portion covering the lower forearm as *Kote* and the entire lower section of the breastplate as *Do*. The only thrust in *Kendo* is termed and declared as, *Tsuki*.

Direct attacks are known as *Shodan-waza* whilst composite techniques or two separate attacks used in combination are called *Nidan-waza* (two step techniques). The most complex form employed are *Sandan-waza* (three step techniques) and if no score is made the participants must separate and re-start. The following classifications refer to delivery and are not specified when declaring.

Shomen-uchi (striking the front mask)

This is shown in plate 115 and consists of a vertical, or straight blow to the centre of the mask. Note that the blow is delivered on the reinforced padding above the grill, with the cutting edge of the *Dage-kibu* (striking base).

Plate 116 shows the position during the follow-through, on the first step, as the attacker passes to his own right and carries the *Shinai* forward. In actual fact the attacker is dashing past at this point, rather than standing.

Hidari-yokomen-uchi (striking the left side mask)

This is shown in Plate 117 and after lifting the blade exactly to the centre it is canted over to strike diagonally to the opponent's left temple. Note that the cutting edge has turned inwards to strike the rim of the grill at ninety degrees. The follow-through will appear exactly as for *Shomen* and apart from the canting over, the same form applies.

Migi-yokomen-uchi (striking the right side mask)

This is shown in plate 118 and is exactly the same as *Hidari Yokomen*. It is normal to pass to the attacker's own left after cutting to this side.

Migi-gote-uchi (striking the right wrist)

In its basic form this consists of a vertical blow which strikes over the joint of the right wrist. Note that the arms are extended and the blow is again delivered with the cutting edge of the *Dage-kibu*. As can be seen the *Migi-gote* is the only directly open target, plate 119.

Plate 120 shows the first follow-through step as the attacker passes to his own left. Note that the *Shinai* is carried forward and brushes over the opponent's right shoulder.

Migi-do-uchi (striking the right breastplate)

This is shown in plate 121 and consists of a low diagonal blow to the right side of the breastplate. Note that the technique is delivered a little more deeply than for the *Men* and *Kote* attacks and again the cutting edge is turned inwards. It will be seen that the arms are well extended forward into the line of attack and that the left hand remains inside the *Chushin-sen* (body centre-line).

Plate 122 shows the first follow-through step after cutting the *Do*, as the attacker passes to his own right. So as to pass clearly the blade is snapped back to the attacker's right shoulder when passing. This form of pass can also be used when attacking the *Migi-gote*, if the opponent's *Shinai* happens to be high.

These are the five basic striking attacks in *Kendo* and all are precisely the same in nature, merely directed to various targets. The direction is forward when cutting, neither downward in cutting the *Men*, nor sideways when cutting the *Do*.

Hidari-uchi (striking to the left)

A single blow to the left temple is regarded as sufficient practice to this side, which is the easy side. In normal practice the *Hidari-do* (left *Do*) plate 123, and the *Hidari-gote* (left *Kote*) plate 124, are out of play. These come into play if the opponent adopts an initial variation *Kamae* (posture) and thus conceals or restricts the targets. This does not apply to actual processes of attack.

The above attacks are known as *Men*, *Hidari-men*, *Migi-men*, *Kote*, *Do*, *Hidari-do* and *Hidari-gote* in their shortened form.

Tsuki (the thrust)

The only thrust in *Kendo* is to the throat guard or *Kubi-tare*, the stiff pad at the lower bottom of the grill. The *Tsuki* is very dangerous since the *Shinai* is a rigid weapon and this thrust is forbidden below the rank of 3rd *Kyu*. At all times the *Tsuki* should be performed with caution. A wild jab can easily damage the neck, or slip under the pad and cause permanent damage to the throat. The *Tsuki* should only be employed when it has been properly taught and practised. This is shown in plate 125 and it is not possible to pass so a step backwards follows the thrust.

The deliveries are as follows:

Jodan-uchi - Blows delivered from the high position.

Dai-jodan-uchi - Blows delivered with the widest possible action, touching the back each time when lifting the blade. For exercise and development of technique.

Tenno-uchi - Blows delivered with the hands where instead of lifting to the *Jodan* position as usual, the blade lifts in a limited action and both hands perform a 'levering' action which results in a short sharp blow suitable for free practice or contest. *Tenno-uchi* should not be confused with 'inside palm' and when striking the *Kote* the blade merely passes over the opponent's point and when striking the *Do* it is canted back to the attacker's left should, much as when passing after cutting.

Sashigari - thrusting cut. This is often termed *Oshigari* (thrusting cut). The blade is not lifted above the target level but thrusts straight forward and a sharp crisp blow results in positive footwork with well-timed *Shibori* (wringing action) as well as complete suppleness during the delivery. In normal cases the *Kote* must be attacked by passing over the opponent's point to the other side but with this technique the attacker can drop his own point and pass straight in. This is sometimes termed *Maki-gote* (winding in).

The *Tenno-uchi* and especially *Sashigari* cannot be understood unless correct action has been learned by constant *Jodan-uchi* in the initial stages. The normal idea is for students of 3rd *Kyu* status to begin a study of *Tenno-uchi* and 1st *Kyu* students to begin *Sashigari*. This does not mean that such techniques may not be experimented with but if allowed to form the basis of technique too early, the technique and style cannot develop.

Hiki-waza (reversed techniques)

Although students below the *Dan* grades have little chance of scoring with a backward cut these are practised, especially when the first attack may be blocked. In this case the student, instead of passing, steps quickly backwards and cuts to another undefended point. *Hiki* means 'pulling' although the student should not be misled by this. The action of *Hiki-giri* is exactly the same as a forward stroke, except that the body is moved backwards. The actual pulling action is achieved by the left hand pulling back with the *Shibori* (wringing) and the arms remain outstretched.

With a forward stroke the point passes over the target whilst in a backward stroke the blade is passing the other way. *Sashigiri* cannot be made backwards and neither can the thrust. The important factor of *Hiki-waza* is footwork and timing.

Hiki-waza comes under the definition of *Nidan-waza* (two step techniques) since either an initial attack, or a defensive action will occur prior to a backward cut. The method of delivery looks exactly the same and the difference is only felt. For general classification *Zenshin* means attacking forwards and *Kotai* attacking backwards.

Nuki-waza (drawing techniques)

Nuki means a drawing action, such as pulling a cork from a bottle and can refer to drawing the opponent forward to take an advantage. *Nuki-waza* are also the types of strokes in which the blade is drawn back, very similar to *Hiki-waza* but more deeply on the blade, from *Chu O* to *Dage-kibu* (centre to striking base). Whereas the *Hikigiri* slides backwards the *Nukigiri* drags backwards a little more deeply.

In actual fact *Nukigiri* is rather more an old fashioned sword technique and is modified for practice today. The main technique which will concern the student is the *Nuki-do* in which the breastplate is struck simultaneously with a side-step to the attacker's right. The blade is drawn obliquely across the opponent's body as the left hand crosses underneath the right and draws

downwards towards the right knee.

Nuki-do can be performed when close to the opponent or in the face of an attack and to avoid the downcoming blade, is normally performed directly from the shouldering position. The blade follows the right foot in this case and whilst the step is normally fairly wide the *Shisei* (posture) and head remain upright. *Nuki-do* cannot be easily performed against a static target.

Naname-waza (oblique techniques)

Naname-waza are not illustrated but consist of blows delivered obliquely, by entirely changing the body-line. *Naname* attacks can be performed to any point but are easiest against *Do* or *Kote* targets. *Naname-waza* are employed in contests since the side-step takes the body out of the attack line and the return cut is made without swinging the body inwards.

Katate-waza (single hand techniques)

Single hand techniques are valid if correctly performed but should not be studied until the *Dan* ranks are reached. The main difficulty is achieving the effect of *Shibori* (wringing) by snapping the wrist inwards as the cut is made. Either hand may be used and the body is turned sideways to the appropriate side. The left hand is much easier to perform and gives greater control, besides adding some eighteen inches to the reach.

Katate-waza from *Seigan* (natural posture) consists of circling the blade backwards and sweeping it up over the head and throwing forward. This is normally used merely as a 'trick' or 'surprise' attack and is rather dangerous unless controlled.

The simplest *Katate-dzuki* (single hand thrust) in which the left hand throws the blade forward into the neck; this can also be the means of simultaneously escaping a *Kote* attack. The *Do* and *Kote* are rather unlikely targets in this style.

The main use of *Katate-waza* are from *Jodan* (high posture) and the blade is thrown forward just as the opponent attacks. The main defence against *Jodan* is to raise the *Shinai* point to cover the high attack line, in a rather high *Chudan* (middle posture). The easiest targets are the *Tsuki* or the *Kote*, both *Kote* and *Do* are in play if the opponent adopts *Jodan*. In this case the man in *Jodan* will sometimes use the *Katate* cut to simultaneously avoid a *Kote* attack, drawing the hand back as he cuts.

Bogyo (defence)

Bogyo is not really bothered with in *Kendo* other than as a means to create an opening for a counter-technique but certain methods do exist.

Uke-dome (defence stop) is described later and is more or less the direct parry. There are other methods of deflection or blocking and all avoid direct clashing with the opponent's *Shinai*

and normally attack the downcoming *Tsuba-moto* (guard base) which is moving relatively slowly.

The easiest method of defence is *Hiraku* or 'turning open' in which, for example, as the attacking blade cuts down to the *Kote* the defender slips his own point to the right and the attacking blade slides down the inside. This can be applied in other cases. The attack to *Do* is almost impossible to defend against efficiently and will often be simply blocked with the hilt section, between the hands. It should be remembered that in the cutting position the opponent's guard will always return to the centre-line so that it is important to cover this line.

Renzoku-waza (combination technique)

Combination attacks are one or two attacks used to create an opening at another point. It is impossible to simultaneously cover all points at once and if the defender's mind stops on parrying, or he can be tricked to move in one direction, a clear chance is gained to attack.

The first style of *Renzoku-waza* is to make positive attacks which the opponent will parry and thus expose another point. This idea can be extended by circling around so that the point circles over the opponent's blade, as though to attack the *Kote*, then continues underneath, up to its original position and thence to a *Men* attack. Meanwhile the opponent swings to the right to protect the *Kote*. Later still just the merest gesture can cause a reaction or in the extreme a strongly projected idea of attack in a master's mind can cause the opponent to react. Whilst we must always call the attacks correctly, we can think strongly about another target and if we lift the *Shinai* and think strongly about the *Do* the opponent will often catch this thought and defend whilst we attack the *Men*.

Renzoku practice is extremely good for judging timing and distance as well as developing speed of thought but all *Renzoku-waza* are restricted to *Sandan-waza* or three step techniques, after which the match must be restarted. This is merely to eliminate scrappy play and the factor of luck rather than correct application of technique.

There are many variations, many of which depend upon the individual opponent's reaction against certain attacks. This is a matter of practising the basic forms, which can be easily worked out and adapted to circumstances at the time.

Shikake-waza (initial opening techniques)

When practising, the teacher will open his attack line to allow the student to cut but this will not hold true in practice. The opponent may not respond to *Renzoku-waza* and so another method of removing the point is necessary. The majority of these actions are employed in counter techniques as parries and are important movements of the *Shinai*.

Harai (sweeping)

Harai is performed with a semi-circular sweeping action, which spirals forward to turn the opposing blade aside. On an advancing step the attacker's blade is circled to the right, downwards then upwards to the left, striking the opponent's blade sharply to his own right and opening the inside attack line. The action is made by turning the blade with the left hand, as shown in diagram 13.

Harai-men is shown in plates 126 and 127 and can also allow for *Tsuki*. The outside attack line is opened by circling over, or under, and snapping the opposing blade to the attacker's right. This exposes the *Men*, *Kote* and *Tsuki*, and if taken correctly will also open the *Do* line. A very wide sweep is classified as *Nage-barai*, or long sweep, whilst a sharp sweep caused mainly by *Shibori* (wringing) is termed *Hari-barai*.

Osai (pressing)

A stiff opponent will instinctively swing his point back to the centre, so that in this case the blade is pressed aside by turning the attacker's edge to his right and running down the opposing blade, pressing the point off and controlling until the point is cleared. Rather than pressing directly to the side, we thrust obliquely across the blade and *Osai-men* is shown in plates 128 and 129. *Osai-dzuki* is more awkward and so this technique is normally followed by a *Men* attack.

Uchi-otoshi (striking down)

This is not illustrated, but will appear very like plate 128 and is employed when the opponent adopts a low *Chudan* (middle posture) or *Gedan* (low posture). The angle of approach is as for *Osai* but instead of pressing, the blade is smacked sharply downwards with the side of the attacker's blade. A powerful form of *Uchi-otoshi* is often employed to disarm.

Hajiki (springing)

This is best employed against a very stiff opponent and in pressing slightly to one side the opponent will react by pressing back and by sliding our blade off the point the opponent is caused to swing to the reverse side. This is shown in a very wide action in plates 130, 131 and 132, this opens the outside line and instead of *Hajiki-gote* as shown the attack could as well have been *Hajiki-men*. *Hajiki-dzuki* can be made by slipping the point underneath the opposing blade.

The inside line is opened by pushing from the opposite side but only opens the *Men* attack line. By pressing downwards the opponent can be made to spring upwards to his left side and expose his *Do*. The *Hajiki* principle is very useful at very close range, which we term *Irimi*, or *Tsubazeri-ai*. The pressure should not be too obvious or the opponent will realise what is happening.

Mawashi (wheeling)

This is best performed against a limp opponent and in this case the opposing *Shinai* is wheeled off with a spiral action, as shown in *Mawashi-gote* in plates 133, 134 and 135. Although the opposing blade is more or less 'scooped' aside the factor to concentrate upon is maintaining the point of contact as the blades twist about each other.

These are the more important *Shikake-waza* and as a rule the following stroke is short and sharp rather than wide. The actual *Shikake* action may at first be made with a half step forward, then later included in the initial development of the cut. Another name for *Shikake-waza* is *Saki-waza* or point techniques since they control the point of the blade.

7. Receiving Techniques

Kaeshi-waza means 'returning techniques' although the currently favoured term *Oji-waza*, or 'replying techniques' is less confusing since one of the categories is known as *Kaeshi*. *Oji-waza* are methods of deflecting the attack, or avoiding, in such a way as to allow a counter blow.

Uke-dome (defence stop)

This is the straight 'parry and riposte', plates 136 and 137. The attacking blade is caught and held in the *Hidari-men-uke-dome* (left mask parry) position and the counter attack stroke made before he can react. In this action the blade is canted forward and across the body, whilst being snapped backwards so that strength enters the blade by the linear motion applied along its length. The point of the defending blade remains along the centre-line to aid in delivering the counter-blow and strikes against the opposing blade's *Tsuba-moto*. Instead of a clumsy side movement this snapping backwards keeps the blade perfectly under control. This position is in itself too weak to parry the attack so it must be ensured that the blade is actually snapping backwards as the attack strikes.

As a general rule, the *Hidari-men* defence will allow a *Men* or *Do* attack whilst the reverse *Migi-men* defence will allow all three attacks in reply. The *Kote-uke-dome* is performed lower at the hip and can be followed by *Kote* or *Men* and the same applies to *Do*. They are signified as *Men-uke-dome-men* or the attack, the action, and the reply, whichever may be appropriate.

Harai (sweeping)

This is the same action as in *Shikake-waza* but instead of a full circle only a semi-circle is necessary, to sweep aside the down-coming blade. *Men-barai-men* is shown in plates 138 and 139. The action of *Harai* is to thrust the defence spiral, or cone obliquely into the attack arc, so as to cant it over and tilt the axis off, see diagram 13. Strong *Shibori* (wringing) action is made when sweeping and the hands and palms should relax again prior to the actual cut.

Harai give the greatest variety since they can be performed to both sides and against any attack. The effect of *Harai* is a sharp clash which knocks the attack aside.

Uchi-otoshi (striking down)

This is in effect the reverse of *Harai*, in that in this instance the semi-circle strikes downwards instead of upwards. This is not illustrated since it will appear the same as plates 138 and 139.

As with *Harai* the defending blade clashes against the *Tsuba Moto* (guard base) of the attacking blade but is normally less efficient since it is necessary to lift the blade again to make the reply cut, and time is lost unless the attacker is striking to either the *Kote* or *Do*. In the case of *Do*, which approaches at a very oblique angle the action is very similar to that in the *Uchi Otoshi* of *Shikake-waza*, except that the defending blade points towards the opponent's right shoulder and hip.

Suriage (brushing upwards)

Suriage is an action peculiar to counter techniques and is shown as *Men-suriage-men* in plates 140 and 141. The defending blade thrusts forward and slides up the attacking blade, from *Tsuba-moto* to *Dage-kibu*. Whereas the *Harai* is a clash, the *Suriage* is a soft, sliding action, particularly useful against a thrust, or thrusting cut. After brushing the attack aside the defending blade will be close to the *Jodan* position and a reply stroke is easily made.

Plates 142 and 143 show a variation of *Men-suriage-do* in which the blade is drawn back to the defender's left shoulder to facilitate a reply to the *Do*, in this case *Nuki-do*.

Kaeshi (reversing)

As in plates 144, 145 and 146 the defending blade thrusts forward into the attack, then suddenly reverses so that the opposing blade slides away and from there is swung up into the *Jodan* (high posture) position to strike. Great suppleness is necessary and the twisting off action should be smooth. This can be very easily performed against *Tsuki* and can be performed to either side. It is normally necessary to step further out to the side with *Kaeshi-waza*, so as to allow more room for the reply.

Hazushi-waza (avoiding techniques)

These are not illustrated but consist in allowing the attacker to almost complete his stroke, then suddenly avoid the cut and reply before he can recover. It is not considered good form to 'dodge' about or 'duck' and *Hazushi-waza* are performed in correct posture, normally raising the blade at the same time.

Hazushi-waza can be performed by stepping backwards or to the side and also by releasing the right hand and cutting or thrusting with the left, as described before. If we move too soon the opponent will merely follow and if cutting against a real Master one normally thinks the blow has landed and in this moment the reply suddenly snaps in as a complete surprise. This precise timing is not a matter of judgement but a certain feeling or sense that develops with training, an intuitive feeling for the correct time to move which can only be discussed in the vaguest of terms.

These are the more common counter-techniques and in any case where the blade is to be swept aside or touched, the defending blade should have the cutting edge turned away to follow the spirit of the old sword techniques.

8. Timing Techniques

Senno-waza

Sen means 'before' and these techniques apply to attacks made just before the opponent's stroke is delivered. In *Kendo* it is impossible to cut without exposing the body to attack, since the act of lifting the *Shinai* opens the attack line.

Men-senno-do is to attack the *Do* as the opponent strikes down to the *Men*, this normally takes the form of *Nuki Do* (drawing *Do*) and the side-step avoids the cut as the counter attack is made.

Men-senno-men can be made by attacking directly forward as the left hand passes down below the attacker's face and is taken to the right. *Men Senno Dzuki* is performed by dropping the point and thrusting upwards but this is very dangerous unless both the attacker and attacked have a good idea of what is happening.

Kote-senno-gote or *Kote-senno-do* can also be taken but the timing is more difficult. *Do-senno-gote* is easier since the attacker's *Kote* is entirely open as his *Shinai* swings inwards.

Do-senno-men is shown in plate 147 and as the attacking *Shinai* swings across to the left the *Men* is exposed. The illustration shows clearly the method of carrying the *Shinai* off after cutting and dashing past to the left.

In these techniques it must be remembered that the opponent is himself leaping forward and our own attack is very short, often a mere quarter step. This idea of distance is essential to keep the delivery within the *Dage-kibu* (striking base).

Dehana-waza

De means 'at the outset' and *Hana* 'coming out'. This is similar to *Senno-waza* but in this case the attack is made just as the opponent starts to move. The most common form is a cut to

the *Kote*, just as the blade thrusts forward to begin the attack and this is known by the short form of *Degote*.

Dehana-do is taken just as the opponent raises his arms and clears the *Do* and of course any combination of attack against any movement may be made as appropriate. The reverse of *Dehana* is *Oi* or 'following' in which an attack is launched to follow a retiring opponent. It is common practice to step backwards and forwards rhythmically in practice or contest and attacks made on the advancing step are classified as *Dehana* whilst those on the retiring step are classified as *Oi-waza*.

Sen-senno-waza

This literally means 'before-before' and whilst this may sound strange it forms the best opportunity in *Kendo*. *Sen-senno-waza* means the attack is made just in the instant before a movement is made. This is done just before the opponent's point stirs and whilst his mind is occupied with the decision to attack. In this split second he can neither defend, nor perceive our own attack.

In my own experience with high ranking teachers nothing will happen until the student decides to attack. But as the thought arises it is suddenly too late, since the teacher has just stepped forward and struck. As with most *Kendo* the observer will note nothing other than one side has struck. But to those concerned a very definite and skilful technique has been employed. Whilst the lower *Dan* grade students may catch this timing occasionally it is a permanent factor with skilled teachers and is again a question of sense and intuition. There are said to be such techniques as *Sen-Sen-Senno Waza* but I must confess this is beyond me at present!

The *Oji-waza* or reply techniques are often designated as *Go-no-senno-waza* or techniques 'after-before', since they occur after the crucial time. The above techniques of *Sen-Sen*, *Dehana* and *Senno-waza* are regarded as the most important since they illustrate the real heart and spirit of *Kendo*. 'As your opponent attacks ... you attack' this is often said and no thought of defence should occur if *Kendo* is to be understood fully. In olden times it was necessary to dispose of the enemy and the loss of one's own life was regarded as a fair bargain if no other alternative was possible.

When practising with a highly graded Master the blows are either not seen at all or appear to be merely 'lucky hits' taken just because we were not prepared. It is only when this happens again and again that the student realises that this is in fact the real essence of the technique. In a case where the teacher is seen to step forward very casually and strike, whilst we just do not move, or react far too late, this means the attack time at the turning of the breath has been taken. As the breathing changes and turns, so the consciousness lapses for an instant. This timing can be taken accidentally but in reality the opponent's breathing cycle is sensed and one's own breath keyed in to compliment this so that any attack made to our breathing phase will be timed exactly.

This other sense is vital to proper *Kendo* but cannot be developed properly unless practice is made every day. During a period when this is possible the student will find he can sense the attack before it begins, know the place of attack, or even the nature of the combination to be employed and this is before his opponent has moved. This is termed *Senken* (seeing before) or precognition and the instant of attack can be felt building up, even when watching. The spiritual build up of the time of the attack can be caught even by relative novices providing it is pointed out to them. The flow between the opponents can be strongly felt almost as a physical force. This is necessary to take advantage of the five basic times of attack:

1. A moment of distraction, breath change, a blink or outside disturbance or thought (*Sen-senno-waza*).
2. Immediately prior to the beginning of any action (*Sen-senno-waza*).
3. As the mind is involved in beginning the action (*Dehana Waza* and *Senno-waza*).
4. As the mind is involved in the finish of the action (*Renzoku* and *Oji-waza*).
5. As the mind relaxes just after the completion of the action (*Hiki-waza*).

Each of these points is known as a *Suki* or 'mind stopping' and it is only at these times that it is possible to strike. It is impossible to be so fast as to hit even a novice, providing he has normal reflexes and a basic knowledge of *Kendo*. Speed is of importance but of no use unless timed correctly. The crucial moment which will decide whether or not the attack is a success is not the moment at which the blow lands but the moment at which the blow starts. Since we can hit many times, even in the early days this aspect is often not fully understood and since the above five moments are constantly occurring and re-occurring there are plenty of opportunities. The idea is to take them as definite applications rather than merely by luck.

Returning to the aspect of 'mind stopping' it is obvious that in the vast majority of cases we are struck merely because the blow was not seen in time, and this because our mind was held at another point. The idea of non-stopping of the mind is expressed in the *Zanshin* or 'lingering of the heart' in that awareness should be maintained even after cutting and the mind is not stopped at that point.

Providing the opponent is practising seriously it is possible either to draw him forward to attack, or to make it very difficult merely by our own spiritual condition. If we take a positive mind and press our spirit forward the opponent will reciprocate and a pressing feeling arises which feels like two opposing magnetic poles. If the opponents are both very strong willed, it may even appear that the tips of the *Shinai* or swords are clamped together. If one side suddenly draws his spirit inwards the opponent is forced to attack without his own volition and although he may not be aware of this he will be completely under the control of his opponent. This is a little difficult for the average Westerner to grasp but is easily demonstrated by causing a student with closed eyes to sway forward or backward at will merely by suggestion.

In olden times it was the *Samurai* custom to look into the eyes of other passing swordsmen and test their spirit. If the fighting mind is suddenly taken off and replaced with a vacuum the other's spirit is taken away and a peculiar feeling is felt in the stomach. In this way the *Samurai* could assess his rival and it was not necessary to draw swords to discover who would win unless the loser could not understand this factor. More of this timing or spiritual feeling can develop without dedicated training and it develops quite naturally of itself so the student should concentrate on his exercise but also train this other side from time to time.

9. Practice and Contest

Keiko means 'practice' or 'training' and can take various forms. The normal type of instruction consists of one or two techniques, exercises and various types of *Keiko* for application. *Keiko* is normally preceded by *Kirikaeshi* (cut and return) or exercise to develop the stroke in which one student will take the teacher's action and accept or defend against attacks according to a pre-set pattern. The most common forms are an initial *Shomen-uchi* (striking the front mask) followed by a series of *Yoko-men-uchi* (side mask attacks), delivered in rapid succession to alternate sides whilst moving forward and backwards. The teacher normally parries the side cuts and then allows the student to strike a final *Shomen-uchi* and dash past, to complete the exercise. The style of *Kirikaeshi* may vary from place to place but follows this universal form.

Kakari-geiko (teaching practice)

In *Kakari-geiko* the teacher opens the attack line and indicates various attacks or combinations and yells encouragement as the student dashes in, cuts, dashes past and turns to cut again without pause or rest. This style of practice is very exhausting and the teacher will often take a rough attitude and strike the student if he pauses or even hit his legs or back if he does not dash past. Two or three minutes at a time is normally quite sufficient if the student is expelling his full effort and shouting loudly.

Kakari-geiko is often sub-divided into *Dai Ichi, Ni, or San Kyoshu* (first, second, or third teaching action) according to the complexity of attacks indicated. This training builds up stamina and gives full facility in delivery of blows. Sometimes the student holds his breath for a full minute or so of vigorous action. Nobody enjoys *Kakari-geiko* but it builds up spirit and tenacity.

Ji-geiko (level practice)

In *Ji-geiko* a more level aspect is taken and neither side is committed to initiate the attack although the student has not much chance other than to keep attacking. It is rather difficult to practise freely if too wide a grade space separates the two participants since the timing sense is different. A more normal form is *Hiki-tate-geiko* in which the senior grade will assist the junior, either by deflecting incorrect blows or by allowing some opportunities for the junior to take and adjusting a certain level of technique for the junior to match himself against. If we practise with a novice at our own level it will merely consist in him being beaten about. Therefore adopt a

level just about a grade above his own and he can then work directly to some end and take an occasional point.

Shiai-geiko (contest practice)

This is a form of simulating contest conditions. In normal *Keiko* points are acknowledged in passing but often the loss of a point occurs whilst developing a specific technique. In *Shiai Geiko* a more serious concentration is maintained and this is the time for practice of techniques in competition.

9. Shiai Kite (Contest Rules)

Contest is normally performed under the eye of one or more referees depending on senior grades available. The contest *Ma Ai* (fighting distance) is greater, with a good twelve inches between the points.

There is an *Omote Shinban* (front referee) and one, or two *Ura Shinban* (rear judges) and contestants normally have coloured sashes on their backs and flags are employed to indicate scoring. Two simultaneous decisions are required for the cut to score, according to complex rules. A good understanding of technique is necessary to properly understand scoring but the following will give a rough idea.

1. The technique must originate from at least full *Ma-ai* (distance) unless composite.
2. The *Shisei* (posture) and balance must be maintained throughout the action.
3. The blow must strike accurately and be delivered with the cutting edge of the point section.
4. The blow must be properly controlled and taken off.
5. There must be no contact between the opponents *Shinai*, the cut must be clear.
6. The opponent's *Shinai* must not be in contact with the attacker's body as the cut falls.
7. The cut must be delivered with spirit and declared loudly by name.

A scoring point normally gives an impression of fluidity and hits the opponent's body quite naturally. Awkward or uncontrolled blows are not counted as valid. If two blows land together this is taken as *Aiuchi* (double hit) and no score. If a time lag can be seen the first blow to hit takes the point. After three contacts of the blade the *Shinban* will normally halt the match and restart from the centre.

Properly marked out *Shiai* (contest areas) are not available in Britain but a rectangular area of at least 15 by 20 feet is necessary. After each score both the contestants return to their original position since the point is declared to this side regardless of whether or not the contestants have changed sides during the match. Some referees words are given below.

Ippon Shobu or *Sanbon Shobu* - Match for one point, or match for the best of three. *Hajime* - Begin. *Yame* - Finish. *Men Ari* - A *Men* has been scored (or *Kote Ari*, etc). *Wakarete* - Break. *Moto Ni Kaeru* - Return to your original positions. *Nihon Me* - For the second point. *Ippon Shobu* - One each, for the final point.

A normal contest lasts five minutes but many extensions are allowed and often the championship matches will last half an hour or more before a single cut is made and the point taken. *Hiki-waki* or 'drawn matches' rarely occur and contest is not normally required for grading until 3rd *Kyu*.

This section gives you an introduction to *Kendo* but many advanced aspects have been ignored. The student is advised to begin training and see whether or not he enjoys it. *Kendo* is utterly absorbing and fascinating to those who practise and a new field of technique or different aspect of thought is always beginning. The basic conception of cutting is very simple and the main study is in co-ordination, timing and the mental aspects of training.

There are currently several dozen clubs scattered over the country, three of them being in London. Not all clubs originate in the same school or theory and some remain independent. Information can always be given on all known clubs at the headquarters of the British Kendo Council, 10 Stuart Road, Acton, London W3 (tel 9929454).

Most established clubs have a limited amount of equipment on loan to the novice. Buying equipment is rather a problem since it comes from Japan, but it can be obtained.

Judo

Syd Hoare

1. Judo History

Judo as a martial art came into existence in 1882 being derived from the much older techniques of attack and defence called ju-jitsu. Before the advent of judo or more properly Kodokan Judo there existed some twenty independent ju-jitsu schools. A young Japanese man Jigoro Kano, wanting to be able to handle some bigger bullying companions, decided to join one of the ju-jitsu schools.

He studied the techniques of various schools for several years. Finally in 1882 he established his own which he called the Kodokan and instead of using the word ju-jitsu used judo instead. One of the reasons for choosing a different name for his school was that with the

ordinance of 1871 forbidding Samurai to carry swords the martial arts fell into decline and then disrepute. Some ju-jitsu experts of Kano's time were rogues and bullies and ju-jitsu acquired a low reputation. Kano, not wishing to inherit this, began his school with a new name.

Kodokan judo was not just a rehash of ju-jitsu techniques. Kano selected the good points of each ju-jitsu school and with his own fresh ideas and innovations turned an old martial art into a new system of physical culture and mental training. There was much rivalry between the new Kodokan school and the ju-jitsu men and four years after its foundation the Kodokan had a public match with the top ju-jitsu school. It was an overwhelming victory for judo with the Kodokan winning nearly every match.

The techniques of judo have slowly been streamlined and modified over the years with some new ones being added and old ones on account of their inefficiency or danger being eliminated. With judo becoming an international sport during the last ten years rules governing contests have been formulated to make it safe for competition. Nevertheless, the essence of judo - throws, strangles, joint-locks and hold-downs - makes it an excellent system of self-defence and attack.

2. What is Judo?

Modern Judo techniques consists of four main divisions. They are throws, strangles, armlocks and hold-downs. Any one of these scores a point in competition. One point only is required to win. This is because in the early Samurai days it was thought that one of these techniques would finish off the enemy or at least put him at a serious disadvantage.

A successful throw is obvious. The man is whirled up and over and thrown with impetus on his back. The thrower must show that he has control and could increase the force of the throw.

With the armlocks and strangles the opponent must signal defeat or else he suffers injury.

A hold-down must be maintained for thirty seconds. The inter-play of all these techniques with defensive moves, continuation attacks, counter-throws, styles of fighting and so on makes judo a fascinating sport.

3. The Sport of Judo

From the early days of the Kodokan, Japan has held Judo Championships. However, it is only in recent years in the West since judo gained popularity that national and international matches have been held. World championships have been held regularly in recent years. In 1964 Judo was included in the Olympic Games for the first time. It is now recognized as a fully fledged sport and takes its place in many other games including the Pan-American Games and the Maccabiah Games.

Judo is not just a knack learnt after a few minutes. It takes just as much training to throw a good man as it takes to become a top boxer or high jumper. International judo players include running and weight-training routines plus several hours daily practice in perfecting their actual judo technique. Judo is an exacting combat sport making great demands on the body and is an all-round strength and fitness builder.

4. Judo as Self-Defence

Although ability in a judoman to throw, strangle or put an arm lock on an adversary makes him somebody to fear in a brawl, judo itself is not a complete system of self-defence. The judoman, although practising some form of kicking or striking in kata, is not thereby made completely efficient.

All the combat arts are deficient in one way or another. A boxer is vulnerable to attacks at a low level or in close quarters. The karate man is weak on the ground or perhaps due to the continuous pulling of his opponents' punches and kicks is not able to take punishment in the way a boxer does. A judoman is vulnerable to kicks and punches. It takes a combination of all the combat arts to acquire a complete defence.

The ideal would be a judoman who boxes and does karate for the kicking techniques. However, a practitioner of any one of these combat arts will be fit, will have good reflexes, will be strong and without dithering will be able to attack instantly with his particular techniques. This puts such men at a huge advantage over the average untrained man.

5. Starting Judo

The best way to learn judo is at a reputable club. If you have difficulty in finding a local club the British Judo Association will advise of your nearest one. It is also advisable to check with the BJA about your instructor. There are many charlatans professing to be judo experts who will tell you they are such and such a black belt.

Grades in judo are awarded for ability and progress through various coloured belts and then through Dan grades. They are:

6th Kyu	<i>white</i>	3rd Dan	<i>black</i>
5th Kyu	<i>white</i>	4th Dan	<i>black</i>
4th Kyu	<i>white</i>	5th Dan	<i>black</i>
3rd Kyu	<i>white</i>	6th Dan	<i>red and white</i>
2nd Kyu	<i>white</i>	7th Dan	<i>red and white</i>
1st Kyu	<i>white</i>	8th Dan	<i>red and white</i>
1st Dan	<i>white</i>	9th Dan	<i>red</i>
2nd Dan	<i>white</i>	10th Dan	<i>red</i>

Sixth Dans and above may wear black belts if they wish and generally do so except for formal demonstrations. The top international competition men are usually 4th Dan and they acquire higher grades as they grow older through knowledge and service to the sport. The club you join should have a proper judo mat and will provide a judo kit. If these are not available some surface soft enough to absorb a heavy throw is necessary with some loose strong clothing tough enough to take a lot of pulling. You will then be ready for your first lessons in Judo.

6. Breakfalls, Holding and Moving

Before a beginner can start learning to throw somebody there are three simple things he must learn first. He must learn how to fall, how to hold his partner and how to move around.

Ukemi (breakfalls)

The art of falling is, in most cases, letting the broad expanse of the back take the shock of the fall. With this there are two important points to remember. The first and most important is keeping the head tucked in to avoid it banging the mat. The second is to not use the arms for saving one's position. For example, when a beginner takes up skating and his skates fly out from underneath he will drop down on his backside with both arms stretched out backwards to stop his upper body and head from hitting the ice. This is dangerous because if the fall is hard all the joints in the arm and shoulder could suffer injury. In this case it is better to keep the arms out of the way, with the chin tucked in and let the curve of the back take the impact.

Breakfalling is quite a simple business and shouldn't take much time to master. The following are few exercises to be mastered before taking an actual throw.

1. Lie on the back, head up off the mat with the chin almost touching the chest, arms held across the body. Now starting with either arm beat the mat with the whole arm down to the flat palm and then with the other arm and so on alternately. Try to get a slight roll to the side which you are beating. The idea of beating the mat is to absorb some of the shock that the back takes. In a heavy throw the arm hits the mat as hard as possible. The arm should not be too rigid or too limp but with just enough firmness to hit the mat hard without damaging the elbows. The position for starting and beating the mat can be seen in plate 151. This is quite a simple exercise and can be learnt after a minute or two.

2. The next step is to crouch down, then slowly falling backwards, roll into the mat. The head must be kept near the chest right from the beginning. If the head is slack when thrown it will snap back and hit the mat. The other natural tendency is to use the arms as supports. This must be avoided. The beginner must get used to keeping his head out of harms way and using his arms only for beating.

3. After a few attempts at No. 2 exercise stand now not quite upright but with a bit of a crouch. Fall slowly backwards and to one side and roll into the mat. Do not hold the body stiff as a board or too limp. In this case where the body is falling to the side only one arm is used

for beating. In most throws it is only possible to use one arm. However, this is sufficient. As the beginner gains more confidence he can do this last exercise with more gusto until he is almost throwing himself off his feet backwards.

Exercise 4 is possibly the closes one can get to an actual throw. With a partner stand as in plate 152. The man standing grasps his kneeling partners sleeve and trouser at the knee and pulls up sharply thus lifting his partner up and spinning him quickly on to his back. The man who is being spun over uses his free arm to beat the mat. The force of this exercise is then gradually increased. There are several breakfall exercises. The best one is to take an easy fall and, bearing in mind the important points about the head and arms, get one's partner to gradually increase the force and speed of the throw. As this happens naturally from the first lessons on throws it is wise not to waste much time on the exercises. They should occupy no more than half of your first lesson with perhaps one or two revision periods in the second and third lessons.

Holding your partner

If you are right handed, grip opponent's left lapel at about your own shoulder height with your right hand. If you are tall or your opponent is very small stick to this rule about shoulder height. It can be of great advantage to hold up high around the collar at the back of your partner's neck. The left hand holds the opponents sleeve halfway on the outside. There should be no slack but with the cloth gathered up until it is tight on the opponent's arm. There are several variations on holds. The standard hold is best as it gives maximum control of the opponent. The body should be slightly inclined to the right with the right foot forward. Left handers should follow these instructions substituting left for right, and right for left in all cases.

Moving around

Having completed a few of your basic lessons your instructor should get you on to 'free practice'. This is where you try to put into actual practice all you have learnt against an attacking and defending partner. This is where the beginner is surprised to learn that the throws which seemed so easy to do against an unresisting partner now seem impossible. This is where knowing how to move round the mat comes in useful. The beginner will be shown that for most throws there is a particular position in which his partner's feet and body should be in. Some throws depend upon whether the opponent is upright or crouching over, moving forward or scuttling back. An inexperienced man will in the beginning be in a bad position but it doesn't take long to learn how to keep out of trouble and this is where it is essential to know how to manoeuvre your opponent into a suitable position for throwing. It is not usually possible to make a man move as you want. If, for example, you tried to make a man step forward with his right foot by stepping back with your left foot and pulling him forward with your left hand the chances are that he would realize what you were after and do the exact opposite. This gives a clue, however, for action. If you want a man to step forward push him backwards. In many cases he will react against your push and come forward.

However, if you make your push too hard and obvious, the opponent will realize instantly what is happening and use your own pushing action for his forward throw. The art in moving is not to make your manoeuvring obvious.

If a man is moving backwards then push him just a little faster than his own movement. Then when you get some forward reaction pull harder than he is pushing you. This can be done from front to rear or from side to side or a combination of all four. The actual time during which a man will be doing what you want will be very short so that it is necessary to attack immediately the opportunity presents itself.

As for your own movements, try to make them unpredictable. Change direction as often as possible in any random combination.

If your partner doesn't know what you are going to do next it will upset his attacking plans. It is also essential to be able to change your weight from foot to foot. Therefore don't stand with your feet spread wide or close together.

Stand with the feet shoulder width apart and the body upright. When moving about try to keep roughly to this distance. Do not cross one foot in front of the other when turning round. It is very easy to trip somebody with crossed legs.

The extent to which you will move around will depend upon your height, weight and temperament. In general the big men are slow and the little men fast. However, a big man may meet someone even bigger and the small man someone smaller. In which case it is necessary to change the tempo of attack, etc.

A little man practising with a big man must rely on his speed and stamina and try to outmanoeuvre his larger partner. The bigger man, being slower, must rely on his strength and weight to anchor his wily partner on one spot so that he can pick him off.

Most throws can be done with the two men standing almost stationary providing that there is not much weight or strength difference between them. On the move it takes a lot more accuracy but they are more successful as they combine both the thrower's and defender's impetus and weight.

7. Throwing Techniques

There are forty basic throws. In this section I will describe the ten most efficient ones. Throws can be divided into leg throws, hip-throws, hand-throws and sacrifice throws. Starting with leg throws I will illustrate some from each section in the above order.

The throws which I shall describe will, in some cases, differ slightly from the standard text-books on judo.

This is because my experience has shown that the methods I describe actually work in top competition which is the ultimate test of technique. Body mechanics and theories of 'what should work' are not taken into great consideration.

One reason for this is that surprise, which plays an enormous part in judo, can help a man win from a very inferior position. It may be possible to say that such and such a position is the best mechanically but if this position gives one's opponent a chance for an easy counter or block it will be of little use. We attempt what we can get.

This is a diagram of throwing directions against an opponent standing with his feet about shoulder width apart facing you. These directions will often be mentioned in the description of throws.

Note that most throws are in a direction which is usually against an opponent's weak point. Try not to stray from these directions as you might be trying to throw a man against his strong point.

8. Ashi-Waza (Leg-Throws)

O-uchi-gari (major inner reap)

When a man stands with his feet fairly wide apart his weight and balance will be evenly spread. The idea of this throw is to take one leg away suddenly causing him to fall over. This is not so easy as it sounds. A man sensing that you are going to reap one of his legs away will either close his legs or shift his weight to his other leg. The essence of this throw is to catch him with his legs spread wide and in the actual execution of the throw make sure that his weight is mostly over the leg you are hooking away.

Stand in the natural posture with your partner bracing backwards with his legs spread wide. We will assume for the minute that you have got your opponent into such a position. As you stand now it is not possible to stretch out your right leg to hook the inside of his. Starting with the right foot take a short pace forward followed by a similar short step with the left. This will bring you in closer and within range. Stretch out your right leg and with the back of your heel and lower calf sweep round in a small circle until you hit and reap away the opponent's left leg.

With your right hand which is holding the collar, bear down with all your weight over the leg you are taking away. Your left hand should contribute to this action by pushing your opponent's arm and upper body in the same direction. One important point to remember is the direction of the throw. You are throwing your partner backwards and down. This means that when you are actually doing the throw you should be moving in those directions too (forward and down).

If you are very fast and catch your man completely on the hop with his legs spread wide he will collapse backwards instantly. This is not often possible. It is usually necessary to complete the technique by bearing down on the opponent's left shoulder all the way to the mat. It is not necessary to fall on the opponent. Your hands still holding your partner's jacket pin him to the ground and should be used for preventing your body crushing into his. Note the position of my head and right shoulder. After I have got the man toppling backwards it is necessary to guard against an effective counter for this throw.

To do this I swing my head and shoulders round my right. Compare this position with the starting position for the throw. Getting a man to spread his legs is not so difficult. If you attack strongly several times with a forward throw - a hip throw for example - the man will start to brace back and spread his legs. A sudden swift change of direction using o-uchi-gari will be effective.

Another example is when you try pulling the man forward. If he resists this movement he will usually start pulling back with legs spread wide in the manner of a tug-of-war. Once again a sudden change to o-uchi-gari should succeed.

There are many other opportunities when your opponent is moving round the mat. Every time he steps with his left leg he is spreading his legs. Try with a subtle pull to make him step a little further forwards or to the side. Then attack with o-uchi-gari.

This throw is very useful for breaking up a defensive position. It is possible to attack several times in quick succession with it which should at least make your man stagger. Depending on what reactions you get it is then easy to come crashing ni with some other throw.

One last point. When you hook your opponents leg do not lift it up. If you do this you are supporting him to a certain extent. The idea of the throw is to take away his support. Aim to keep your reaping foot fairly close to the mat.

A similar throw against this wide leg stance is to use the right leg and foot against the opponent's right leg. This means shifting his weight over his right leg. This is called ko-uchi-gari.

Ko-soto-gari (minor outer reap)

This throw is similar to the last except that one's leg reaps or hooks the opponent's leg from the outside. Once again it is essential that your partner has weight on the leg you are taking away. The opportunity for this throw is when one of your opponent's legs is forward. This can happen when he is moving forward or back.

It is even possible to do the throw against a rear leg. Stand with your left foot advanced and your partner with his right foot advanced. With a short step of the left foot followed up by the right, move in closer and to the opponents side extend the left leg and using the flat of your foot or the back of your heel on the back of partner's right heel. The direction of the throw is to

the opponent's right back corner and down.

The hands help by pushing in this direction and for pinning the man on the leg you are taking away. The left hand which holds the sleeve pushes the opponent's arm into his waist and your right hand, holding the collar, pushes the opponent's head and shoulders over and back.

If you are right-handed and hold the opponent's right sleeve it is generally better to attack his right leg. There is nothing to stop you using your right leg against the opponent's left leg. However because your right hand is holding the collar and not controlling the arm it is often possible for your partner to escape from the throw by using his left arm.

As a man walks forward or backwards there is a moment when all his weight is on one foot. This changes from foot to foot with each step. Experiment with your partner to find these moments. Even at a slow walking pace the weight passes fairly quickly from leg to leg. In ko-soto-gari, it is necessary to attack instantly at this moment. Try to combine this throw with the previous one. For example, if you attack with the major inner ear (o-uchi-gari) your partner will sometimes react by putting his left leg back and out of reach of your reaping right leg. However, this means that his right leg will be forward which gives an opportunity for the minor outer reap.

With these two throws there is not a complete opposite of throwing directions. However, the change from an attack to the opponent's left back corner (o-uchi-gari) to his right back corner (ko-soto-gari) is often successful.

When trying a throw first do it stationary and then on the move, bearing in mind that physiques vary considerably. As long as the direction of the throw is right and the man is picked up and actually thrown slight variations from my text do not make much difference.

If it is not possible to finish the throw standing up, be prepared to fall to the mat with the leg reaping strongly. This throw is very useful for a tall man with long legs.

O-soto-gari (major outer reap)

This throw ranks as number two in the big contest throws. The reasons for this is that there is nearly always an opportunity for it. Secondly, it can be done very quickly and thirdly, once in position, it is very difficult for the opponent to escape. Also the man who uses o-soto-gari can apply a lot of power for forcing the throw through even if he is only partially in position. Study the photographs. You will see that the attacker has swept his partner's leg off the ground with his right leg and is throwing him to his right back corner.

The moment for this throw is when your opponent's right leg and side are forward either when he is stationary or moving forward or backwards. Stand with your partner in the natural posture. In order to sweep the opponent's leg successfully step with the left foot out to his right side and close to his right foot.

Instantly the right leg follows through sweeping in an ellipse against the back of the opponent's leg. To complete the throw sweep vigorously back with right leg scooping both of the opponent's legs up and dropping him on his back. As in all these throws where you take away an opponent's legs, you must make sure that his weight is on the leg. Notice in plate 161 that my opponent's left foot is almost off the mat.

In this throw the arms and shoulders push the opponent back and over his right leg. The action of the arms is not isolated. They start working before or at the same time you step out with your left leg.

This throw is my particular favourite. I've studied it for a long time and have come to the conclusion that the action of the arms is most important especially the right arm.

This throw seems deceptively easy. One reason for this is that it is easy to move the feet quickly and get the right leg almost in position. For this reason everybody tries it. However, because of bad arm work in the majority of cases, it rarely comes off.

With his right leg in position, it is often possible for an experienced man to hop forward until his arms come into play and with further hopping and hooking with his right leg force the throw through. However, to move in quickly and throw the man on the spot needs positive armwork. Look carefully at the arms in the plates.

De-ashi-barai (advancing foot sweep)

This throw embodies fully the judo principle of seriyoku-zenyo - the maximum efficient use of mind and body. When it is done properly the thrower exerts very little force at all. Success in this throw depends upon speed and timing. De-ashi-barai is attempted a lot by beginners with the result that the opponent's shins get very bruised. Like o-soto-gari it seems easy but is in fact quite difficult.

Study the action shots of this throw. The opportunity for this throw occurs when your opponents steps forward. As he lifts his foot up and steps forward most of his weight is supported on the other foot but just at the time his front foot is an inch or so off the mat all his weight will be transferred to it and this is the moment for the throw.

This throw can be likened to somebody stepping on a banana skin. Their foot comes down on to the skin and then slides away. Stand with your partner in right posture. With your right leg step backwards and then forwards and so on, get your partner to do the same with his left leg. This should be something like a natural walk except that only one leg moves in order to isolate the throwing movement. Your left leg and the opponent's right leg do not move.

As the opponent's leg steps forward and is about an inch off the mat, using the flat of your right foot, sweep his foot across diagonally in front of your own left foot.

If you have caught his foot at the right moment he will fall over. If you are a bit slow and his foot and weight are solidly on the mat it will seem like uprooting a tree trunk. If you are too soon in sweeping his foot it will just dangle in the air because his weight will still be on his rear foot. To finish off the throw the right arm pulls the man down to the mat. When this throw is done, with speed and correct timing the man may be levelled off almost at hip height.

Using this one sided stepping movement as above, keep on trying to catch the right moment your partner steps forward. After a little bit of experimenting you will find the right occasions to avoid hurting your partner's ankles, take care to use the flat of your foot. The actual sweep with the right leg is not a hook or a push. The moment when the opponent's leg is in the right position is very short. Thus it is necessary to sweep across as fast as possible - using the weight and impetus of your leg rather than force and strength. In the beginning this will cause some bruised ankles but in the long run this is the style to aim for.

This concludes the leg throw section. Three of them are rear throws and one is to the side. There are other leg throws some of which are forward throws and several variations of the ones already mentioned. As can be seen from the above throws there is almost no position the opponent can put his legs in without being vulnerable to attack. The beginner would do well to bear in mind all the opportunities for them and depending upon where your partner's weight is or how he is moving or reacting attempt to put them all in practice.

One of the best ways for practising these or any other throw is to throw somebody with them as many times as the person can take, the faster and harder the better. Concentrate on speed rather than brute force.

9. Koshi-Waza (Hip Throws)

Opportunities for the leg throws mentioned in the previous section occur mostly when the opponent is standing fairly upright or bracing back against a forward throw. Should your opponent be bending forward at the waist with his arms fairly straight, it will be difficult to do the leg throws described in the previous chapters. However, against this posture forward hip throws are usually employed and three of the most important will be described in this section.

O-goshi (major hip)

This shows the basic action of the hip throws. Stand in the right natural posture. Step with your right foot to a spot just in front of your opponent's feet. Pivoting on the ball of your right foot swing your left leg and foot round to about the position where your right foot was first. You should now have made a complete turn and be facing the same way as your partner with your feet about shoulder width apart. As you take the first step with the right foot, let go of your partner's jacket, and as you swing your body and left leg round put your arm round the opponent's waist and pull him forward onto your right hip. Do not move close in to your partner with the foot movements. Turn more or less on the spot where you are and aim to pull the opponent forward and on to your hips.

You should by now have your main pinned tightly on your hip with your legs slightly bent. To throw the man straighten your legs so that your partner comes off the floor and by swinging slightly round to your left side unload him off your hips.

Your left hand helps to pin the man on your hips by pulling strongly forward in conjunction with the pivoting movement of the feet and body. This technique is rather difficult to do as a straight throw. The reason is that when you let go with your right hand the opponent usually knows what you have in mind and defends strongly against it.

However, in a mix-up when one man has attacked and failed with, say a hip throw, it is possible to do. In this case when he is still close to you slide your arm round his waist and when he moves out from his own attack follow up immediately with this hip throw. Another occasion when it is possible to attack with o-goshi is when for some reason or other you are only holding with your left hand. This happens very often. Instead of resuming the normal grip on the lapel with your right hand jump in quickly, pulling strongly with your left arm, and whip your right arm round your partner's waist in one movement.

Two variations on this throw can be employed. The first is to throw your right arm round your opponent's neck and head instead of his waist. This can be used with great effect by a tall man on his shorter opponent. The other is to hold your partner's belt at the side and heave him up and onto your hips. This can be a very powerful throw. It does not depend on too much speed and can be used by a slower short stocky man. These two variations have slightly different names in Japanese but I consider them as more or less similar to o-goshi.

Harai-goshi (sweeping hip)

Stand in the right natural posture. Step across with your right foot as in the previous throw, then round with the left foot so as to pivot as before. This time the right leg sweeps into the opponent's right leg, so it is not necessary to push your hips completely in front of the opponent's.

As your left leg swings round pull the partner forward and with your right leg sweep the opponent up so that he almost somersaults and lands on his back. Study the plates. The arms in this throw pull the man forward strongly and onto the sweeping leg. It is not necessary, as in the previous throw, to hoist the man up with your hips. Care should be taken to see that your right leg actually sweeps the opponents legs and doesn't just dangle in the air. In the sweep, keep the leg fairly firm and use the weight and impetus of the leg to hit the opponent and sweep him off his feet rather than putting the leg in position and slowly hoisting.

This is quite an effective throw especially for tall long-legged men. The position of the right arm can sometimes be uncomfortable. If you are shorter than your opponent try to push your right elbow somewhere under the opponent's armpit, and if you are taller let your elbow point up to the ceiling. Having pulled the man forward on to your sweeping leg take care to keep your man pinned tight to your body. Imagine your opponent is like a door hinged not at the side

but at the top. If you want to sweep his legs up, ie, the bottom of the door, you must have the top of the door hinged to something firm. Try for chest contact. Although it may not always be possible to keep actual chest contact try to get as near as possible. If you have pinned and hinged your man firmly on his upper body it will be easy to sweep his legs away.

Once again remember the direction of this throw. You should be pitching forward with your partner to his right front corner.

Uchi-mata (inner thigh)

This throw is the number one contest throw. Possibly the reason for this is that in contest people defend and fight in a crouched position with their legs spread wide. This is not an ideal position from which to attack. But it is a natural tendency to retreat into it when competing against a good man. A man who adopts such a position is a sitting duck for uchi-mata.

Stand in the right natural posture with the man who is taking the throw bending forward with his leg spread wide. Pivoting on your right foot swing your left foot round and close in behind your right. As soon as your body and left leg have pivoted into position, with your right leg sweep back and upwards into the top of the opponent's thigh. This should lift him into the air. Now pulling strongly with your left hand across your body turn your man in the air and drop him on his back.

The important point with this throw is to turn completely round so that you are facing the same way as your partner. If you only manage to turn three-quarters round the chances are that you will not be able to sweep your man up into the air. As your leg sweeps up into the opponent's crotch your arms should be pulling him strongly forward with your head dipping down towards the mat. For a smaller man it is necessary to put his left leg through or between the opponent's leg when he first starts to pivot so as to get right underneath.

If necessary in the sweep be prepared to stretch your leg up almost vertically with your forehead brushing the mat. It is this extreme range of the throw that makes it very difficult to stop when once the thrower has got into position. The whole movement of the throw should be as fast as possible especially the initial leg movements. One of the counters for this throw is to get out of the way of the sweeping leg by jumping slightly to the right side and closing your own legs together. If the thrower is attempting the throw properly by putting his heart and soul into it he should go sailing past and turn a complete somersault by his own efforts.

This gives an indication of the amount of effort to put into this or any other throw. In this throw the thrower should make sure that he does the throw so fast that he doesn't give his partner time to get out of the way or close his legs. There is a tendency when practising this technique to take undue regard for the opponent's comfort. Providing you sweep into the opponent's crotch with the broad expanse of upper back part of your right thigh it should cause him nothing more than a slight uneasiness.

As can be seen, the preceding three throws are for use against somebody leaning forward. To get the best effect in practice try to combine them with one of the rear throws of the leg throw section. If you attack strongly with a leg throw to the rear the opponent should react by bending forward. As soon as you get this reaction come strongly in for one of these forward throws and if you fail in this because your partner suddenly braces back instantly try a rear throw again. An example of this is inner leg sweep (o-uchi-gari) followed by the inner thigh (uchi-mata) followed by inner leg sweep again.

10. Te-Waza (Arm Throws)

Two throws are described in this section. They appear at first sight to be almost similar to some of the hip throws. However, the point to bear in mind is that the arms and shoulders do most of the work. If for example you find that it is necessary to use your hips to get the man over it is a good indication that you are not doing the throw correctly.

Tai-otoshi (body drop)

This is a very popular throw and forms part of the repertoire of most judomen. One reason for its popularity is that it is almost impossible to counter. It is also possible to do it when the opponent is standing still, moving forward, sideways or backwards. It is most used as a forward throw which I will describe here. Stand in the right natural posture with your right foot about midway between your partner's two feet. Swing your left foot round and out about half in front of your partner's left foot. As you swing your left leg pull very strongly with your arms to the opponent's right front corner. This should make him stagger forward with his left leg flying up into the air. Having put your left foot on the ground take one more short step with the right foot so as to make a trip for your partner's right leg. The position of your right leg is important. Your ankle should fit snugly into your partner's ankle. Your weight should be now spread evenly between your two legs. If you find that your right leg is dangling in the air - something like Harai-goshi - you are doing it wrong.

If necessary when you make the step with your right foot lean into it so that most of your weight is on the right foot. Remember this is a hand throw. The arms which started by pulling forward never let up. The thrower's right leg is nothing more than a trip wire. The arms and shoulders start and finish the throw by whirling the man to the mat. If the throw is done slowly it will be difficult to get the arm action. All the actions of the arms, leg and body should blur into each other in one thunder-clap of a throw. To get the arm action right, start by moving your body into position without moving the right leg across. Practise turning the man into the mat just with your arms alone. Once you find this can be done successfully start moving your right leg across. If you find that you are having to use your right leg to sweep or hook to get your man over go back to practising with the arms alone. My teacher in Japan once described the leg action in tai-otoshi as an afterthought. The man should be almost thrown before you use the trip.

Seoi-nage (shoulder throw)

This throw is traditionally the favourite of the little man. However, in these days of weight divisions men of any size can use it. The advantage of this throw for a smaller man is that once he is in position even though outweighed by two or three stone it is still possible to carry it through against resistance. Many throws fail if the initial impetus is halted but not the shoulder throw. There are two ways to do it, both of which are equally effective. I'll describe the double arm should throw (morote-seoi-nage).

The literal translation of the Japanese name for this throw is not shoulder throw. Seoi comes from a verb meaning to carry on the back and this can help us in picturing how the technique should be done. Imagine a man wanting to unload a heavy sack of coal from the low back of a truck. He grasps the top corners of the sack turns round and sinking down hoists the sack on to his back. This is the action of seoi-nage.

Stand in the right natural posture with the normal grips. Move the right foot across and slightly in front of the left foot. Pivoting on this swing the left foot round so that you have made an about turn. At the same time as you start the foot movements pull strongly with the left hand so that your partner starts to fall forward on to your back and still holding tight with your right hand swing your elbow across and under your opponent's arm pit. You should now have wedged your partner tight to your upper back. To finish off the throw, bend at the waist and unload your partner on to the mat. If your partner is slightly shorter than yourself, it will be necessary to bend the knees more so as to swing your right arm comfortably under his armpit. When you do this throw, imagine the analogy of the sack of coal. Of course, your opponent is not just a dead weight so it is necessary to do it at top speed.

Your opponent will try to stop you by pulling his right arm free when you swing under so make sure that you have a strong grip with your left hand. It is not necessary to pivot close into the opponent's legs. Aim to move slightly forward in the pivot and by pulling strongly with the arm cause your man to fall or step forward into the throw. Remember this is a hand throw and most of the power is employed in the arms and shoulders. This is one of the most strenuous throws and it also requires a lot of speed. The older Judo students would do well to specialise in one of the other throws which do not require so much energy - for example, o-uchi-gari.

11. Sutemi-Waza (Sacrifice Techniques)

There are several sacrifice throws but, in this section, I am only describing the most popular. In sutemi-waza one throws one's opponent by sacrificing one's own balance. This is achieved by using the weight and impetus of one's falling body to throw the other man. From the self-defence point of view, these techniques are not so useful if one is opposed by more than one opponent as one is left on the floor at the mercy of the other attackers.

Tomoe-nage (stomach throw)

This is the old favourite of the cinema and television screen although it is not usually done very well. It is also a great favourite of the judomen who specialize in groundwork. In the judo rules it is not possible to drag a man to the ground without making some attempt at a throw first.

For the groundwork man this is ideal. He can come with whistling in for this throw and if he connects well and good: if not he can then try to get his man in one of the many groundwork techniques. Stand as with the opponent bent right forward. Step in deep with the left foot as far as possible level or beyond his two feet. As the left leg goes in lift up your right foot and plant it in his stomach. But it is not always possible to do this. What in practice actually occurs is that one is dropping to the ground as one puts the right foot in the stomach. As your back touches the floor straighten the right leg and by pulling strongly with the hands to your own body turn the man over in the air and drop him on his back to a point past your own head.

What usually happens in the movies is that the hero does this throw and as the villain goes sailing over he lets go with his hands so that the villain comfortably rolls on his back onto his feet. The idea of any throw is to drop the man with impetus on his back. With the stomach throw, hang on tight with the hands so that your partner lands on his back and stays there.

If you miss with this throw a grip is necessary to control the opponent for further groundwork moves. To get maximum effect with this sacrifice throw, literally throw yourself down under the opponent. Providing you have got your foot in his stomach he won't collapse on top of you but will go sailing over the top. Exercise some caution when first attempting this as it is easy to injure your partner or yourself if done wrongly.

12. Throws - Conclusion

The stomach throw concludes the description of ten basic and important throws. There are many others, but the ones I have described are perhaps the best known. Most of the throws I have described are capable of many variations for different types of movements and opponents. One throw can cover most situations although not all. Try to get in as much throwing practice as possible with all these ten throws on a non-resisting partner. The faster and harder you throw the better. Gradually you will find that one or two throws suit your physique. These are the ones to specialize in. When moving around in free practice (randori), try to create opportunities by your own movement. Study the pictures of the throws carefully. They will show much more than can be gleaned from the text.

Sometimes the thrower in these will differ in his position slightly from that of the text. This is because he has adapted his throw in its actual execution to the defender's resistance. However much it is necessary to adapt a throw keep its direction much the same. In the next part I will cover the defence and counter attacks for the previous ten throws.

13. Counter-Throws and Defence

Although the best form of defence is attack it is necessary to know how to defend properly and to be able to counter-throw. It is possible for the older and slower individual to base his judo on defence and counter-throws. This, from the spectator's point of view, is boring judo and in the long run it usually gets beaten. The reason is that when a man realises that his opponent is purely defensive, it gives him a chance to really 'open up' and not worry about his own defence too much.

Defence and counter to O-uchi-gari

As in all these leg sweep throws, the thrower will try to get your weight over the leg he is sweeping. Don't let him. Keep on the move with your feet about shoulder width apart. You will be able to see with which foot he will attack by watching his grip. If he is a right hander he will attack your left leg with his right. Against a really good right o-uchi-gari, hold the tip of the opponent's sleeve with the cloth gathered in until the jacket is tight on the wrist. Then push the arm off strongly every time he attacks. He will be able to stagger you but will find it very difficult to complete the throw.

In the counter-throw, let your partner attack and, as he moves his leg forward to hook in, step back with your left foot and sweep his left leg diagonally across in front of your left foot. This counter is similar to the de-ashi-barai (foot sweep throw). As you sweep across with your right leg, pull him down to the ground with your right arm. Note that this counter is against a left side o-uchi-gari. Reverse legs and grips for right o-uchi-gari.

Defence and counter to Ko-soto-gari

The simplest way to avoid an attack with this throw is to keep your leg back and out of trouble. However, this will leave you open for another throw so I think, in this case, the best defence is to try the counter-throw. The counter for ko-soto-gari is uchi-mata. When your opponent moves to your side and attempts to hook your right leg make a half turn to your left and balancing on your left leg lift your partner up and over with right uchi-mata.

Defence and counter to O-soto-gari

If you look at the plates showing this throw, you will see that both the thrower and his partner are in the same position. The only difference is that, if the thrower is doing the throw properly and breaking his partner's balance, the partner will be bent over backwards. To block this throw step back with your right foot and lean forward with the upper body so that the thrower will not be able to break your balance to the rear or reach your right leg. For the counter let the attacker come nearly in for the throw, taking care that he doesn't break your balance to the rear, step round and back with your left leg. As you do this keep him pinned tight to your body with your arms and do exactly the same throw (o-soto-gari) back on him.

Defence and counter to De-ashi-barai

Care in moving around is necessary to stop De-ashi-barai. Do not keep your feet too close together or make large steps forward. Do not skip about the mat on your toes. Instead move about with fairly small steps, always being ready to transfer your weight from the forward foot to the rear foot and vice-versa. There is one very spectacular counter for this throw which is extremely difficult to do. This involves taking your foot out of the way of the attacker's incoming sweeping leg, inserting it behind it and doing exactly the same sweep back on him using the impetus of his own attack. An easier counter is to keep your weight off your front (right) leg. Let your partner sweep your right leg a little and then, using this, move in for o-soto-gari.

Defence and counter to O-goshi

The thrower in this and other throws depends upon breaking your balance to the right front corner. It is his left hand pulling on your right sleeve which achieves this. To successfully stop these forward hip throws snatch your right arm and shoulder back with a considerable jerk causing him to lose his grip. To counter this throw and its variations sweep away his supporting left leg once the attacker is in position with an action something like ko-soto-gari. This is not a very 'clean' counter, but if it is done with a lot of gusto it should be possible to scoop the attacker's legs right off the ground. As the attacker will be hanging on with his right arm round your waist or neck it will be necessary to drop to the mat as you sweep the legs. If your stand up as you sweep, the attacker will simply hang on to you. Take care when dropping to the mat, not to injure yourself or your partner. There are several counters to o-goshi but I think the beginner will find this the easiest to learn.

Defence and counter to Harai-goshi

Defence is the same as for the first hip throw. To counter, let the attacker get in position for the throw with his right leg across your thighs but do not let him break your balance forward - keep upright! As soon as you have stopped the impetus of his throw, step with your left leg deep in between his two legs. Balancing on this lift up your right thigh under the opponent's right thigh so that he is lifted completely off the ground. Pivoting on the ball of your left foot swing round to your left and unload the attacker off your thigh on to the mat. This can often be a very heavy counter.

Defence and counter to Uchi-mata

Once again defend by snatching your right arm and shoulder back making him loose his grip. Also do not stand with your legs too far apart or with your body bent forward. If the attacker has managed to get his right leg between yours do not let him lift your left leg up, instead try to reach forward and sweep away his supporting left leg. Another counter is to get completely out of the way of the throw. As the thrower begins to turn for the throw bring your left leg in and behind your right leg as quickly as possible. If the attacker is putting a lot of power into the attack he should go sailing past and throw himself. However, to make sure, as his

leg goes whistling past, turn his upper body with your arms and stretch your left leg across to block his left leg. This is the same action for tai-otoshi.

Counter and defence to Seoi-nage

Defence for this throw is the same as for the hip throws. Snatch your right arm and shoulder back. In the counter throw where the attacker is already in position for the throw let go with your left hand and encircle the opponents waist. As you stop the movement give slightly in at the waist. Then thrust the hips out strongly lifting the attacker up in the air. To make sure that your opponent doesn't come down on his feet again, continue the push forward with your hips until his legs are out almost straight. Then, pivot round to your left and drop him to the mat. It will sometimes be necessary to drop a little to the mat to finish off the throw. Take care not to use too much force in practising.

Defence and counter to Tai-otoshi

The thrower will try very strongly to break your balance to your right front corner. Do not let him do this and be prepared to snatch your right arm free from his sleeve grip. Stand upright with your right shoulder well back. There is a counter for tai-otoshi but it is extremely difficult to do against even an average tai-otoshi exponent. Be content to break the attacker's left hand grip and push him down face forward into the mat with your left knee. Once he has fallen forward, move in quickly for a groundwork technique.

Defence and counter to Tomoe-nage

There is no satisfactory counter-throw for a stomach throw. To defend against it, firstly do not let the attacker put his foot in your stomach. As he sinks to the mat, sweep aside his rising foot with your left hand so that his foot shoots out past the side of your body. If he has managed to place his foot in position do not let him pull you forward, sink immediately to the mat keeping your head and shoulder braced back. If the attacker should manage to get you actually in the air, try to make a cartwheel and twist so as to land on your feet or on one side.

14. Renraku-Waza (Combination Throwing Techniques)

Attack strongly with o-uchi-gari. As this is a rear throw your partner will bend forward taking his weight off the foot you are trying to hook away. This leg will probably rise in the air. Should this happen abruptly, change direction of your attack by hopping in close to the opponent with your left leg and turning round as you do so. Having turned round, your right leg sweeps up into the opponent's thigh as in uchi-mata and throws him forward.

It is essential to time your change from the first throw to the second as your opponent reacts to your first attack. This means that the first throw must be attempted with the full intention of throwing your man. If you do not convince your partner that the throw is dangerous he will not bother to avoid it. This goes for any combination attack. Should you miss with the

second attack because your partner pulls back strongly against it, try the o-uchi-gari again. Providing your balance is good it is possible to alternate from one throw to the other until you get your man over.

O-soto-gari - Ko-soto-gari

Having attacked with o-soto-gari, your opponent will either brace strongly forward in which case you must retreat or he will attempt to counter with the same throw by turning slightly. As your opponent will often try for the counter ko-soto-gari makes an excellent counter to a counter. Attack with o-soto-gari and as your man starts to swing round place your right foot on the ground swing round with your left leg and sweep the opponent's left leg. With this counter do not change direction. As your first throw fails, keep moving in the same direction - that is to say to the opponent's right back corner - and as you sweep his supporting left leg try to drop his body in the same direction.

De-ashi-barai - O-soto-gari

If your timing is wrong with the ankle sweep, either your partner's leg will dangle in the air or it will be rooted on the mat. In either case do not wait or try to force the throw, move your sweeping right leg across for o-soto-gari and throw the man down. If you should stumble your opponent with de-ashi-barai so that he ends up on one knee, still carry through with o-soto-gari but lift the man up so as to get some impetus in the throw.

Harai-goshi - O-uchi-gari

Having attacked unsuccessfully with harai-goshi you will often find that your partner, in expectation of another attack, will be braced back with his legs spread wide. Make as if to try harai-goshi, turning slightly and pulling forward, then, as you feel your partner stiffening and pulling back, suddenly change the direction by pushing to the opponent's left back corner and hooking his leg away in o-uchi-gari. This counter can also be used for o-goshi and its variations.

Ko-uchi-gari - Seoi-nage - Ko-uchi-gari

Ko-uchi-gari was mentioned briefly with o-uchi-gari earlier. The reaction to ko-uchi-gari is to take the leg out of the way and back. As your opponent takes his right leg back place your hooking right leg on the mat close to the opponent and swing through for the shoulder throw. If this fails it may be because your man is bracing back against the forward pulling action of the shoulder throw in which case try for the ko-uchi-gari again. Ko-uchi-gari is a rear throw and the seoi-nage is a forward throw. The idea of this sequence is to use the opponent's reaction of defence so as to move from one throw to the other.

Tai-otoshi - Tai-otoshi

This is not exactly a combination attack in that one does not move from this to a different throw. However, I am including it to give some idea of what can be done with just one throw. Having made an unsuccessful attack with tai-otoshi, you will often find the opponent stepping over your right leg. As he steps over, swivel round a bit to your left moving your foot in closer to your right foot then shoot out your right leg again in order to trip your partner. This in effect is exactly the same throw but from an adjusted position. If your opponent should again slip his right leg over your right leg, adjust the position and attack again and so on until you get him. With all these adjustments of leg position, keep the turning action of the arms constant. It is essential to keep your opponent bent forward. With the continued attacks your partner should be moving in a circle around you. A further example of continued attacks with one throw is when the opponent does not step over your right leg but just braces back. In this case one changes the attack by coming in at a different level. Having made the attack with tai-otoshi and met resistance suddenly, drop as low as possible. The sudden switch in the level of attack will often catch the opponent napping. In free practice experiment with your favourite throws and see if you can get some success with a sudden change in level.

Tomoe-nage - O-soto-gari

Having made a few strong attempts at the stomach throw you will often find that if you lift your right foot up as if you were going to make another attempt your opponent will brace strongly back. When this happens, slide your right foot over the opponent's right thigh step in close with your left leg and throw the man back with o-soto-gari. The roles can be reversed, ie, attack with o-soto-gari until you get your man braced strongly forward then suddenly throw yourself underneath him for the stomach throw.

This concludes the renraku-waza section. There are many more examples of combination attacks and a judoman can easily work out variation of his own.

The beginner should experiment to see what other throws he can use with his favourite techniques. They should as much as possible flow into each other. If the beginner finds out that he has to make a violent readjustment of position with lots of foot movements in between, then it is a good indication that it is not a natural combination technique. The techniques should blend into each other with a minimum of movement in between.

15. Hints on Free Practice

Practise all the techniques illustrated so far, as often as possible, on an unresisting partner standing still and then on the move. In randori (free practice) do not let an opportunity for a counter go by. Some people feel that counter-throws are not quite sporting! However, don't let this bother you!

Disregarding opportunities for a counter can become a habit which could easily lose you a contest. Also an attacker will have to sharpen up his throws if he knows a counter awaits them. This makes for all-round, lively judo. As soon as possible, practise your techniques on the move against a resisting and attacking partner.

This free practice is the best way to sharpen up all your techniques. Practise with as many people as possible as many times a week as possible. Try not to waste any time in practice. Do not move around doing nothing, wasting for an opportunity. Make opportunities with constructive movement. If you are not defending or countering you should be attacking or making an opening for an attack. Keep the arms loose. When an opponent attacks, brace suddenly for your defence and relax quickly as soon as the attack fails.

There is a tendency for beginners to move around with arms like iron bars in order to stop their partners moving in for an attack. This means they stop their inexperienced partners to certain extent but against a good man they have no effect. What is worse is that the man with the stiff arms will be unable to attack. His stiff arms will stop his own attacks. For best results move around with a loose upper body. Then, when necessary, snap into action to gain maximum impetus. Stiff arms will be a problem for the beginner so I'll describe a few methods of getting past them.

If you are a right-hander only, one of your opponents arms will pose a problem. For example, in harai-goshi as you pivot round to the left the opponent's left arm will be pushing you away. His right arm does not get in the way because you are turning into it. The easiest way to get past the left arm is to bring your right elbow and arm sharply down, breaking your partner's grip on your right sleeve. It will be necessary to let go to do this, but having broken the opponent's grip do not give him a chance to recover his grip, but instantly snatch a hold on his lapel and come in for the throw. There is nothing more unsettling for a 'strong-arm' man than to have his safe grip broken. Keep on breaking his grip attacking instantly as you do so. The opponent's right hand grip on your lapel can be broken by snatching the whole left side and arm back, pulling your left lapel as you do so. One final example is when you are holding underneath your opponent's two arms. To break through this grip suddenly lift up both elbows forcing the opponent's arms up and as you do so pull him forward sliding your shoulders under his arms. As you get under the man's arms turn in for your throw.

16. Ne-Waza (Groundwork)

During practice or contests, there will be many occasions when one or both judomen will fall to the mat. This may be through an unsuccessful technique by the opponent or simply overbalancing yourself when trying to throw. In either case it is essential to continue the attack on the ground.

There are three ways of scoring on the ground. These are: to hold the man down for thirty seconds, to strangle him till he submits and to apply a lock on his elbow. It is possible to do arm locks and strangles when standing up but these are specialist techniques. Most locks and strangles

are done on the ground. A word of caution before describing these techniques. Some of them can be very painful.

When the man in a lock or strangle wishes to submit he must signal by tapping sharply two or more times on the opponent or on the mat, either with his hand or foot.

Should he be tied so much that he can't move then he must shout his submission. Needless to say the man applying any lock or hold must do so with care, be aware of any signal of submission and release his lock or strangle instantly. There is a tendency for judomen to neglect groundwork. On the other hand, there are one or two rare individuals who specialise in groundwork. It is noticeable that all the judo champions are very skilful at groundwork. The all-round judomen should be at home either standing up or down on the mat.

Therefore any opportunity for doing groundwork should be taken so that it becomes a habit. Should your opponent stumble, never be content to let him stand up again. As he stumbles, dive in immediately for a strangle or a lock.

Shortly after I won my black belt 1st Dan, I injured my ankle rather badly and was unable to do any standing judo for six weeks. I used this time to do nothing but groundwork. When my ankle had got better I found that I had gained a considerable edge on the ground over my fellow 1st Dans. This helped me to win many contents and got me a reputation as a 'groundwork man'. Since that time I have paid a lot of attention to groundwork technique and have won many contests on the ground. One interesting effect of having such a reputation is that it restricts your opponents' throws considerably. He won't attack with anything that can be easily countered or blocked for fear of being taken down. This means that you can open up with your own attacks. As in the throwing section, there is a huge range of techniques on the ground and here are some of them.

Osaekomi-waza (hold-downs)

It is not necessary, as in wrestling, to pin the opponent's two shoulders to the mat. The position of the man being held varies from hold to hold but in general he should be flat on his back and unable to get up. The man applying the hold must show that he is in control. In this section I will show holds as a continuation of a throwing technique.

Kesa-gatame (scarfhold)

Move in for tai-otoshi. Do it slowly so that your man just stumbles to the mat in front of you, lying slightly at an angle.

From this position let go with your right hand, drop to the side of your opponent, putting your right arm round his neck. Pull his head up into your body and readjust your left hand grip so that you hold your opponent's right arm under your armpit. Spread your legs wide and keep your own head down. Do not relax your grip on his neck or his right arm. If your partner starts

to move round in an attempt to get up, move with him so as to keep the same relative positions.

Should your opponents try to roll you over his body, shoot out your right arm to stop the attempt. Instantly resume your hold on his neck when his escape fails. Rest heavily on your partner's ribs with the part of your body under the armpit where the large back muscle called the latissimus dorsi sticks out. Keep this chest and back contact at all times.

Kami-shiho-gatame (upper four quarters)

Throw your partner slowly with a shoulder throw so that he lands in front of you on the mat. From here drop to both knees resting your head, on your partner's chest, at the same time letting go with both hands and inserting them *under* both shoulders of the opponent and down until you catch his belt at both sides. Having caught his belt, pull it up sharply to his chest and clamp in tight with your elbows with the side of your head pressing down tight on the opponent's chest. This is the basic position. Depending on individual preference, you can either kneel with the opponent's head caught tightly between your legs as above or stretch out both legs resting slightly on one side of the opponent's body. As in the first hold, lock in tightly with both arms and keep the same relative positions if your partner moves.

Important points, keep your arms locked in tightly *under* both the opponent's shoulders and keep the side of your head pressed tightly down on his chest - not his stomach.

Yoko-shiho-gatame (side four holding)

Get your partner to step forward with his right foot and throw him with the ankle sweep using your left foot. Your opponent should land horizontally in front of you. From this position drop instantly down, with your chest bearing down on his. Release your left hand grip and insert it round his neck catching his collar. Pull in strongly with the left arm so that your left shoulder comes against the side of his head. Your right arm can hold in a variety of positions. In this case over the opponent's legs catching his trousers. As in the previous hold, the legs can either be up close in a kneeling position or stretched out straight. Use whichever is effective or comfortable. Study the plates for the positions of the head, arms and legs. There are several variations of this hold but this is the basic one.

Kansetsu-waza (armlocks)

There are two basic ways of applying the armlock. The first against a straight arm, is to straighten it a bit more against the joint and the second against a bent arm is to bend it against the natural range of the arm. In effect, this means that the arm can be locked no matter what position it is in and in fact there are innumerable ways of applying arm locks. I shall describe just two, illustrating the basic methods. The beginner should remember these two basic ways and try to put them into practice at every opportunity.

Ju-ji-gatame (straight arm lock)

This lock has been used with great success in competition. It can be done in various positions but I will describe the most usual position. Quite often in groundwork your opponent will end up in the defensive posture as shown with you kneeling close behind him. To apply the lock, first of all place your left thigh on your opponent's head, at the same time making your right hand into a ball, push it under the opponent's right arm and then catch your own left arm. Now swing your left leg over his head and tuck your heel into his neck on the left side.

Your right leg bends with the right foot tucked in under the opponent's body. At the same time as you swing your left leg over the opponent's head, start to fall back with the opponent's arm trapped in between your legs. Keeping his arm trapped between your legs start to put on the pressure by raising your hips off the ground. Carefully transfer your grip to his wrist and in combination with the raising of the hips pull his arm against the action of the joint until he submits. To get the right pull against the joint always pull in the direction of the little finger (the opponent's). Make sure that you trap the opponent's arm *tightly* between your two legs. Note the exact position of my legs in the plates.

Ude-garami (entangled arm lock)

It often happens that when you try for the scarf-hold your partner will not let you encircle his neck. In this case a variation of the scarf hold is taken by holding under the opponent's left arm. This is a very powerful hold which gives many opportunities for locks and strangles. A good opportunity for the entangled armlock occurs when the opponent's arms flap about in his attempts to escape. If he should reach up for your collar let go with your left arm and catch the opponent's wrist. Push his arm down to the mat and bend it until you can thread your right arm through and catch your own left wrist.

From this position keep the opponent's arm bent and continue to twist the joint by pushing his hand down toward the mat and lifting his elbow. Keep twisting until he submits. This lock can be applied very quickly. Practise it many times until you can get the arm positions right without having to think which arm goes where.

Shime-waza (strangles)

This method of scoring can be done in two ways. Either by cutting off the opponent's wind or the blood to his head. Both take only a few seconds to make a man unconscious. I will describe three methods as actually done in practice.

Okuri-eri-jime (sliding collar lock)

Quite often your opponent will be on all fours in a defensive position. This gives an excellent opportunity for this strangle. Approach your opponent from the side thrusting your left hand under his chin catching his right collar deep on the other side. As you do this swing your

right leg over the opponent's body and roll over to his right side clamping his body tight between your two legs. As you start to roll over, thrust your right arm under the opponent's right armpit to catch his left lapel. You should now be as in plate 198. To apply the strangle, pull up sharply with your left hand against the opponent's throat. At the same time lock the opponent's body tightly with your legs and pull down with your right hand in the opposite direction to your left hand. Providing you have inserted your left hand deeply in the opponent's collar, the resulting leverage against his throat will cause him to submit. It is essential to get the left hand position as quickly as possible.

Kata-ha-jime (single wing lock)

This lock is applied against the same defensive position as the straight arm lock. In this strangle, insert your left hand under and round the opponent's head to catch his right side collar as deep as possible. As you do this thrust your right arm under the opponent's right arm and down past the back of his head. As you do this, lift his right arm up to apply pressure, pull up strongly with your left hand and shove your right arm deeper past the opponent's head. The thickening of your right forearm will gradually force the opponent's head into the lock. Keep the opponent close to your body and don't give him a chance to unravel his arm right.

Ju-ji-jime (cross strangle)

An excellent opportunity for applying this strangle is when you are sitting astride your opponent. As quickly as possible thrust both hands down into the opponent's collar as deep as possible with the thumbs on the inside of his collar. As soon as you have got this deep grip, throw yourself to the side, clamp your man tightly between your legs and pull his head into your body. As you pull him in the crossgrip of your arms you should press into the side of his neck and make him submit. One point to remember is that the opponent even though he is underneath is in exactly the same position to apply the same strangle back to on you. Therefore try to beat him to it.

This ends the section on groundwork. I haven't included many techniques however the ones I have included are the essential ones. The beginner should practise all of them as often as possible until he can do them without dithering.

17. Conclusion

The amount of progress you will make depends upon *the amount of effort* you put into your judo. Obviously going to the judo club once a week will not get you along as fast as you would if you went three times a week. It is possible for a young man to get his black belt within a year providing he starts under the right instructor and trains really hard. However hard you do decide to train, I'm sure that you will enjoy judo. I have been doing judo for thirteen full years and I still manage to learn something new about this intricate sport every time I go on the mat. I wish you luck in your efforts.