



INTERNATIONAL KOJOSHO KARATE FEDERATION



Volume XXIV N2

IKKF Newsletter

Fall 2012

THE KOJOSHO FORMS

108 MOVEMENTS

One Hundred and Eight Movements (small sets defined by Matsu) are derived from the Eighteen Postures, and each movement presents a method of attack or discusses its related theory of defense. There are eighteen movements in the Tiger-Crane, eighteen movements in the Snake-Hawk, and 72 movements in the Dragon-Deer. However, be warned—it is not very productive spending a lot of time trying to identify each of the 108 Movements because small steps needed to be added or subtracted when the Movements were joined to create the Kojosho forms.

One Hundred and Eight Movements cannot possibly answer the limitless questions that can be raised in combat. But they discuss the three principles of proper intersection (which are rhythm, timing and distance) in great detail. And the Kojosho System believes that those theories of intersection provide all the tools that are required for victory—although success or failure ultimately lies with the individual.

In order to study each theory of intersection, one student plays the role of the attacker. The other student plays the role of the defender. Together, they explore motion and develop and refine the physical, mental and spiritual skills utilized in combat. The Kojosho System believes that it is necessary to understand both the attack and the defense. And unless you know how to penetrate defense, you will never attack with conviction.

Being the first to attack often carries the victory. But historically and philosophically, Karate has always been an art of self-defense. In order to defend with certainty, the defense must be able to contain the attack. The defender may choose to yield initially, but in order to win, the attack must be nullified and the attacker must be controlled or attacked in turn. It takes training to prevail.

How to attack and how to defend, and more importantly, when to attack and when to defend generate a dynamic interplay and create the sparks that fly during the clash of the Two-Person Kojosho Forms.

THE SNAKE AND HAWK

The Snake (Hebi) and Hawk (Taka), which are also called the Nine Maneuvers (Kyu Senjutsu) and Hidden Element (Kakure Yoso), make up the second Two-Person Form (Jayo). While the Little Tiger and Little Crane discuss the single technique, the Snake and Hawk forms teach combination effectiveness—how to attack and defend while using multiple techniques. The Snake Form teaches the attributes and emotional qualities of the Snake, which uses deadly strikes, circular as well as linear motions, and continuation of technique to win. The Snake knows how to coil to store up energy and when to release that pent-up energy in a strike. Conversely, the Hawk Form demonstrates the characteristics of the Hawk, which flies elusively and attacks suddenly, absorbing blows and counterattacking. The Hawk knows how to overcome the instability of flight and offset the initial size disadvantage with the superiority of speed. Together, the Snake and the Hawk are an expression of the effectiveness of multiple attacks and the necessity to defend with light, speedy movements, redirecting instead of opposing the attacks. These forms equip the student to deal with the more sophisticated opponent.

from Kojosho—The Philosophy of a Kempo Karate System by Fred Absher & (Henry) Soon Fook-Leong (2001)

KATA PUZZLES

Karate systems deliberately set puzzles within the katas to test the students. Years of studying forms **WITH THOUGHTFUL ANALYSIS** reveal levels of meaning which are easily bypassed in superficial walk-throughs. **Students who look but do not see beneath the surface** are forever mystified by the passionate love the dedicated student has for karate. For maximum benefit, work each kata slowly, methodically, carefully in silence and in solitude. After years of effort, katas finally reveal themselves.

From The Mystical Warrior by Fredric Absher

國際古松空手道連盟

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DEFENSE

No matter what world you walk in—office, school, temple, prison, or the streets—there is an underworld populated with demons. These are people who are avaricious, aggressive, sadistic, and cynical. They not only take advantage of others without compunction, they delight in it. They find pleasure in seeing others suffer.

The why of it cannot be answered. There is only the fact, with no metaphysical meaning or other ramifications. It is not karma, it is not fate. If these people decide to attack you, it is circumstance. You must fight or be mowed down.

Compassion and humility may be among the most treasured of human virtues, but they are not useful in conflict. A beautiful bold statue of your most adored god is a treasure, but you can not use it as a weapon. Virtue is to be valued in the proper context; only a sword will do in battle.

Whether an attack is physical—assault, rape, murder—or whether it is mental—business intrigues, emotional abuse—you must be prepared. It is best to prepare for conflict by learning as much self-defense as possible. You will not become a bully or a monster, but instead, you will learn that you can respond to any situation. If you are never attacked, that will be wonderful. Training will still help you work out your fears, inhibitions, and anxieties.

In the case of conflict, no one, not even a veteran, is ever sure that they will come out alive from a confrontation. But they resolve to go in there and give themselves a fighting chance. This in itself is a triumph over evil.

from 365 TAO by Deng Ming-Dao

KOJOSHO - The Philosophy of a Kempo Karate System by Soon Fook-Leong

The first Kojosho edition of this Kojosho System book was published in 1982. It has been reprinted several times since then. The latest revised edition is now available which reflects newly discovered historical information as well as documents the “heritage” katas *Hakutsuru*, *Hako*, and *Hakuryu*. To order send a check or money order for \$20.00 US to:

IKKF PO Box 688 Tijeras, NM USA 87059

This is the 29th consecutive year of publication of the IKKF Newsletter.

If you would like to have your article, book or movie review, or personal experience regarding the IKKF, the Kojosho Shinkokai, or any other traditional Martial Art considered for publication please send a copy of your manuscript to the Newsletter Editor at the address below.

You may contact any IKKF affiliated school or individual in any country through the IKKF World Headquarters. Enclose your correspondence to the school or individual you wish to contact in an envelope addressed to:
(name of School or Individual); C/O IKKF Headquarters; PO BOX 688; TIJERAS, NM USA 87059

THE INTERNATIONAL KOJOSHO KARATE FEDERATION
in on the World Wide WEB at
<http://www.kojosho.com>

BLACK & BROWN BELT PROMOTIONS

The annual summer Kojosho Black & Brown Belt Testing was held on Saturday, July 7, 2012 at the Kojosho Headquarters Dojo at Apple Valley Ranch, New Mexico. Mr. Absher conducted the event, assisted by the Kojosho Board of Regents. The day-long test covered basics, hard-line forms, Kojosho Forms, self defense, and sparring. Mr. Absher announced these promotions at the traditional awards banquet that evening:

SANDAN

Third Degree Black Belt
Naomi Sinclair

NIDAN

Second Degree Black Belt
Mateo Arguello

First Kyu Brown Belt
Travis Sullivan

Second Kyu Brown Belt
Grant Roberts
Rush Robinett IV
Seth Packer

Congratulations from the Kojosho Board of Regents

*Hawk doesn't think during the hunt.
It does not care for theory or ethics.
All that it does is natural.*

Though one must first learn skill and ethics thoroughly, one must come to embody them so completely that they become subconscious. Reacting to a situation by asking what is right and wrong is already too slow. One must intuitively do what is correct. There should be no foreshadowing of an act, nor doubt about oneself.

365 Tao by Deng Ming-Dao

KUDOS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- * The theme for this year's Kojosho study is:
IN SEARCH OF THE ANIMALS
- * This will be the 37TH annual Kojosho Fall Camp!
The theme for this year's Kojosho Fall Camp is:
SNAKE & HAWK
- * **Mr. Absher has appointed the following senior Black Belts to the Kojosho Board of Regents in acknowledgement of their many years of loyalty and commitment to the Kojosho System.**

Mr. Steve Archuleta
Mr. Tim Hodo
Mr. John Braly

Please congratulate each of them when you see them.

- * Annual Black Belt dues are a part of the responsibility of being a Black Belt in all traditional systems. All Kojosho System Black Belts share this tradition. Kojosho Black Belt dues are quite modest compared to the amounts required in most other organizations. In recent years the income from these annual dues has been used to fund improvements at the IKKF World Headquarters, and to help support System tournaments and special classes.

All Black Belts please note that annual Black Belt dues for 2012 are now due.

Dues can be sent to:
Mr. Michael Pierson
PO Box 51416,
Albuquerque, NM 87181

**To the student who has a powerful reverse punch,
every opponent looks like a maki-wara.**



SHAOLIN—An Introduction to Lohan Fighting Techniques

by Khim and Draeger (1979)

Most of what is traditionally said about the Shaolin Temples is unconfirmed and unverifiable; it is the basis of endless variations on colorful but highly improbable happenings such as form the bulk of plots of Chinese folklore and the dramatized versions of heroics that take place on the modern Chinese popular stage. But because there may be some factual basis for even the most exaggerated of these stories, modern exponents and scholars of Chinese hand-to-hand arts continue their efforts to discover the truth about the Shaolin Temples and their effect on Chinese society.

It is common for non-Chinese peoples to refer to any and all Chinese hand-to-hand arts as Chinese boxing. This convenient expression has never been accepted by the Chinese people. To equate Chinese hand-to-hand arts with boxing methods is to leave untold a substantial portion of the intrinsic nature of the arts. The facts that sparring tactics never exist alone in any Chinese hand-to-hand art but are coupled with those of a grappling nature, and that sparring and grappling tactics are always used in conjunction with a wide range of weapons, make it necessary to use a more appropriate term when speaking of Chinese hand-to-hand arts. *Wu shu* (martial arts) is used by most modern Chinese people to categorize all the arts of a hand-to-hand nature. Perhaps the use of the expression *kuo shu* (national art) which is used by the mainland Chinese, is one good way to categorize all Chinese hand-to-hand arts; *wu shu*, under this definition, is but a subdivision of those arts, and relates to systems that are devoted to combat.

According to orthodox beliefs, Shaolin consists of two major divisions: Northern and Southern. In their basic technique patterns, both brands of shaolin make use of five animal forms: dragon, snake, crane, tiger, and leopard. Northern Shaolin is traditionally subdivided into three main branches: *Hung*, which stresses the use of strength; *Kung*, which uses “soft” techniques to offset strength; and *Yue*, in which both hard and soft techniques are combined. From the *Yue* branch there developed systems that depend on the actions of other animals. One of those systems is the *Lohan*.

Applying the Lohan Pattern (Form)

Though the trainee may master the mechanics and spirit of the solo *Lohan* pattern, unless he can apply its actions as techniques in defense of his person, he cannot be said to be a fully trained shaolin exponent.

The *Lohan* pattern as it is performed with a training partner is designed to provide the trainee with responses to realistic situations such as might be imposed upon him by an assailant. In the performance of the **partner-practice method** certain technical aspects of shaolin are highlighted and can easily be understood. In particular, when the **Lohan partner-practice pattern** is properly performed, the essentially dual nature of shaolin is revealed to be a blend of soft and hard actions. True shaolin technique is characterized by the use of a soft or pliable kind of defensive action, followed by a hard or resistive kind of action. That the transition from soft to hard must be instantaneous also becomes apparent. It is not enough to simply block an assailant's attack, or to block it and, in time, to counterattack. What is necessary, and what is further the essence of all true shaolin art, is for the exponent to meld his blocking and counterattack action so that they operate in a flash, without any noticeable time lag between them. The trainee must avoid a distinct and time-consuming cocking action of either his arm or leg as he prepares to punch, strike or kick.

A high degree of sensitivity to movement made at close quarters is a key feature of shaolin. This means that the trainee must develop a sense of feeling so that through contact with his foe he is able to read the next movement his assailant will make. Knowing his assailant's movement, the shaolin exponent is able to unbalance him by attacking ahead of the very instant at which the assailant's technique is being focused. Thus, rather than opposing the assailant's forces once they have been focused, the exponent of shaolin seeks to disrupt them before they reach that critical focus.

All of the considerations mentioned in connection with the use of the solo *Lohan* pattern apply equally well to the practice of the partner method of using the *Lohan* pattern, but, in addition, each training partner must have ample regard for the other's safety. Improperly executed technique, wrong acts at the wrong moments, badly focused punches, strikes, or kicks, and misused blocking or parrying actions can cause one or both training partners to be seriously injured. Always practice with safety in mind.

Alert trainees may notice what appear to be certain discrepancies between the performance of the solo *Lohan* pattern and the partner-practice method. Some portions of these two patterns do not fully agree with each other, but such differences are intended ones, and the trainee should not let them hinder his training.

Shaolin is considerably softer in nature than any of the Korean, Okinawan, and Japanese karate-like arts. This is largely so because of the circular pattern of the shaolin exponent's body movements; the shaolin exponent first seeks to evade or blend with the forces of his adversary before retaliating in a hard and devastating fashion. Korean, Okinawan, and Japanese arts tend to be relatively more linear in matters of body displacement with the result being the tendency to meet resistance with resistance, that is, using a hard approach when dealing with an adversary. Shaolin, moreover, has a wider scope of techniques than any Korean, Okinawan, or Japanese combative art has. Each system of shaolin subsumes both sparring (boxing-like) and grappling (wrestling-like) categories of technique, with a substantial number of techniques making up each of these two categories. Korean, Okinawan, and Japanese karate-like arts, in particular, tend to minimize techniques of throwing and grappling on the ground, or to disregard them altogether; but such techniques are regular studies in shaolin.

NEW MEXICO KOJOSHO CLASS SCHEDULES

ALBUQ Heights Moon NE—1 Blk N of Indian School 505-228-5592	MWF MWF	5:00 - 6:00 6:00 - 7:00	Juniors Mixed Adults	Fred Absher & Staff
	T TH T TH	5:00 - 6:00 6:00 - 8:00	Juniors Mixed Adults	Shane Absher
Cedar Crest	W W Sat Sat	6:45 - 7:45 7:45 - 8:45 11:00 - 12:00 12:00 - 1:00	Juniors Adults Juniors Adults	Shane Absher
Apple Valley Ranch 505-281-5294	T TH T TH	5:00 - 6:00 6:00 - 7:00	Juniors Adults	Fred Absher
Deer Mountain Training Club 3821 Hawkins NE 505 710-2500	T TH	6:00 - 8:00	Mixed	Peter Renna & Jack Renna
Las Cruces NMSU	MW MW	7:00 - 8:00 8:00 - 9:00	Mixed Advanced	Jack Diehl Howard Cothorn David Barnhart
Cuba H.S. Kojosho	Schedule Varies			Victor Velarde
Roswell H.S. Kojosho 500 W Hobbs	M T W TH F M W	7:15 - 8:00 AM 6:00 - 7:00 PM		Mike Kakuska
Clayton Kojosho 14 South 2nd 505-374-2168	T TH T TH T TH Sat	5:30 - 6:30 6:30 - 7:30 7:30 - 8:30 7:30 - 8:30 AM	Juniors Begin Advanced Open	Tim Hodo
Alamogordo Kojosho Powerhouse Gym	T TH T TH	6:45 - 7:30 7:30 - 8:30	Juniors Adults	Rick Guidry
Durango Kojosho Durango High School	M T W TH F	7:00—8:00 AM		Greg Spradling

KOJOSHO SYSTEM CALENDAR

2012		2013	
October 20-21	Fall Camp at Elephant Butte	January 5	Black / Brown Belt Testing
November 3	Tournament (Abq)	February	KICKS Conference
November 10	Instructor's Seminar	February 23	Instructor's Seminar
November 23	Colored Belt Testing (Abq)	March 8	Colored Belt Testing (Abq)
		April 6	Tournament (Abq)
		May 25—27	Spring Camp at Apple Valley
		June 7	Colored Belt Testing (Abq)
		July 6	Black / Brown Belt Testing

IN SEARCH OF THE ANIMALS

How should a Kojosho student go about “searching” for the Animals? The obvious answer is to come to class regularly, attend workshops and camps, and practice exactly what your instructor teaches you—in other words: “show up; line up; and shut up. And there can be no doubt that following that advice is critically important. Without building a solid foundation based on your instructor’s carefully designed lessons, you cannot hope to advance in this art. But are there additional “secret” ways to maximize your progress on the path of transforming yourself into the best martial artist that you can be? Yes, of course.

No martial arts system, no matter how “ancient” and “venerated” can possibly encompass all of the possible martial strategies, skills and techniques. And no kata or system of katas, no matter how sophisticated, can possibly encode all martial knowledge. And no instructor, no matter how masterful, can possibly teach all techniques. And no student, no matter how gifted, can possibly absorb all of that information. A true master knows, of course, that it is the years of “searching”, not just the individual techniques that he will pass on, that form the true basis of a student’s learning. In this case “years” means exactly that. Beginning and intermediate students have all they can handle just trying to become adept at doing what they’re being taught.

The advanced student, having invested a decade or more in acquiring and demonstrating proficiency in the foundational aspects of the Kojosho System, can and should take great pride in that accomplishment. For some students, that is more than sufficient—and there is certainly no requirement that they push on any further. And what exactly do I mean by “further”? Isn’t a Dan rank an indication that this student knows almost everything? Sorry to break the news—in the Kojosho System, a 1st Dan rank qualifies one as a serious student, ready to begin the process of studying Kojosho in depth.

So, once again, how should a senior student go about “Searching for the Animals”? Here are a few proven methods:

Show Up; Line Up; and Shut Up There is no substitute for learning from someone who has “mastered” various facets of the System. Once you assume that you already know everything, i.e. that you are no longer a “student”, then your learning days are over.

Keep an Open Mind You already know that form. You already know that technique. You already work the one and only valid interpretation—the one YOUR instructor taught YOU. You already understand the animal attributes and strategies, and you demonstrate them each time you perform the Kojosho Katas (even though your katas seem to all look the same). If that’s what you think—then your mind is already closed off to learning what the Animals are trying to teach you.

Read the System Books, videos, 30 years of the Kojosho Newsletter, the Kojosho web-site, handouts and flyers—these documents have been created by Mr. Absher himself, and by his senior students under his direction. HINT HINT ! For example, here are quotes that could *possibly* be relevant to the theme for this year’s Fall Camp—In Search of the Animals: Snake & Hawk

Notes on Attitudes in the Animal Movements (from *The Mystical Warrior* by F. Absher)

Snake: The Snake is not a Tiger with scales. The Snake must move quickly and with commitment, but should never move outside of its coiling (and recoiling) range. The Snake knows how to attack while retreating and defend while advancing.

Hawk: The hawk is “defensively aggressive”. If the Hawk stands its ground, it will surely lose. The Hawk must retreat and defend until its opponent makes a mistake. Then the Hawk can dive in for the “kill”.

Pure Motion—The Eighteen Postures (from *Kojosho* by Fred Absher & Soon Fook Leong)

Snake: The Snake is thin and wiry, deceptive and cautious. The Snake would prefer to evade rather than fight, but when the Snake fights, it fights to win. The Snake hugs the ground for stability, seeking the hidden places for security. Learn to coil and uncoil like the Snake, disguising your movements and accurately penetrating your enemy’s vital areas.

Hawk: When the Hawk defends, it circles outside its opponents range, probing for weaknesses, and receptive to aggressive movements. When the Hawk attacks, it strikes viciously, then quickly retreats before its enemy can retaliate. The Hawk loves the high places. Plummeting out of the sky, it falls like a feathered thunderbolt.

Break Your Habits Structured and programmed patterns of motion are of great value to the young student. But habitual motion and programmed responses are a two-edged sword. The advanced student strives to respond optimally to each unique situation. That can only happen if you are aware of your habitual patterns and capable of effortlessly modifying them as needed. Easily said but very difficult to accomplish in practice. Hardest of all is to be able to perform in either mode —each at the appropriate time.

Gain Insights from Other Systems Mr. Absher has always taught us katas from other Systems. Lately we’ve been working a Tai Chi form! The White Animal & Combined Element forms are not Taekwondo, and they’re not Kojosho. So why would we work those? What is he thinking? (You-Tube is a rich and confusing source of videos showing other animal interpretations.)

Force Yourself to Work Outside of Your Comfort Zone Kojosho students should be very familiar with this “secret” method. We learn a one person kata, only to see it morph into a two person kata, and then into weapons kata, and then into three person kata. And each time our bodies and our hard-held assumptions and especially our stubborn minds & EGOs are stretched.

Return Again and Again to the Fundamentals Yes, the hard-line basics are an important part of the foundation of the Kojosho System. But there is no doubt whatsoever that the Heart of the Kojosho System is encoded in the Kojosho Animal and Element Forms. All of the other Kojosho katas have their roots in those two forms. And those two forms cannot be mistaken for Taekwondo, or Shotokan, or mixed martial arts. If you cannot recognize the Animals and the Elements in virtually everything you do in the Kojosho two & three-person forms, then your advanced study of Kojosho has not yet begun.

Gary Vaughn

STUDYING SWALLOWS TO LEARN ABOUT HAWKS

Several people are doing *Enpi* (flight of the swallow) at testing or tournaments. I have also been working on this form for a little while now, but more recently I began dissecting it in search of applications that might be relevant to Hawk. I thought that I might share a couple of casual observations.

I should say, for those who are not doing *Enpi* (or even Hawk), the take-away lesson is that you should devote some time and care to the study of your hard-line forms: hidden within them are often tie-ins to our Kojosho Animal forms, and in the process of discussing and evaluating potential tie-ins you'll learn about the defining personalities and strategies embodied by each animal. For those specifically practicing *Enpi*, I'd say it is worth reexamining this hard-line form and seeing if you can find the spots I cover here. I think there are a lot of interesting discussions about Hawk to be found.

The most salient feature of *Enpi* is the repeated grab/kick/dive/withdraw which defines the form. It's so easy to draw an analogy between this and the Hawk's animal posture that it's almost silly to mention it, except that it becomes the point of departure for further study. What are the similarities and differences? What part of *Enpi* "feels" most like the Hawk's motion; can one introduce the techniques used in that section of *Enpi* into the Hawk's motion without losing the essence of it, or can one soften up the hard-line form and express Hawk's personality without going too far afield? How far (meaning, how many moves) can one extend the section in either direction before the flavor of the Hawk is lost? Beyond the motion, what pieces of the Hawk form feel similar, and what constitutes a significant relationship vs. empty coincidence?

Personally, I find that if I soften up my motion a bit I can make the canonical section of *Enpi* Hawk-like in its entirety: deflecting an attack, entering high, and floating in to drop the weight and immediately withdraw. In the Hawk motion we don't express the kick, and we're fading instead of entering with the kick; so, does that matter? I think Hawk's side of retreating kicking is an indication that the addition of a kick is a difference in application rather than essential motion. In *Enpi*, I've seen people withdraw by stepping back as I do or by stepping away -- does it matter to a Hawk? Moving into standing counters, and through most of the defensive sets, Hawk steps back; but in advancing kicking Hawk steps away from the side kick. Again, this appears to be peripheral to Hawk's essence. What seems essential is the notion of defense preceding offense, delivering a combination, and being prepared to rebound from an attack to return to a defensible position. The manner in which this otherwise very general concept is applied is very similar between *Enpi* and Hawk -- but very, very different between Hawk and the other animals.

As another example, before the last jump in *Enpi* is an odd move that I interpret to be a throw. One grabs with both hands, and circles them forwards as the right foot pulls sharply back. It's something you almost wouldn't give a second look in relation to Hawk, but I think it's worth at least considering as a Hawk-friendly throw. At the first pass in two-person, as the Snake takes the last step back and Hawk moves past, there is a narrow window of opportunity for either one to be thrown. As Hawk I would generally avoid grappling, but at this point in the form I have the momentum and am looking to make the most of an extended combination through whatever opening it has generated. It might not be the best idea to borrow moves from another form, but to me Hawk seems opportunistic enough to entertain the discussion. In the course of exploration, one can learn to judge the threat Snake poses, and start to see when Hawk should or should not attempt to end the fight there.

My favorite tie-in to date, however, was the most unexpected one. In *Enpi* there is the sequence: down-block-reverse punch, step through *shuto*, change-up (switching feet) with a *shuto*, shift to reverse punch, and step through *shuto*. It's great hard-line fodder, if a bit unconventional -- in a hard line form shifting from back stance to front stance is unusual, but switching feet in place is unique to this form as far as I know. The thing is, for some reason it all felt naggingly familiar. When I finally placed it in the right context, the application to Hawk was startling. Right foot forward *shuto*, switch feet *shuto*, reverse punch (or kick) is a very interesting substitution at the change of control from advancing to retreating punching and advancing to retreating kicking. You don't really need to know *Enpi* for this one, so I'll leave it as an exercise for the reader.

The take-away lesson from this is not that the *bunkai* I'm suggesting are the right or only applications -- for *Enpi* or the Hawk. I think the important message is that you should study your forms deeply and explore what they might mean in practical terms to you and in relation to the animal postures. Applications from one form might be useful in another, and it's through the process of studying and experimenting that we begin to see relationships and recognize or dismiss individual applications and variations as being more suited to one or another animal's motion -- learning more about each animal in the process.

Hamilton Link



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