



# **INTERNATIONAL KOJOSHO KARATE FEDERATION**



**Volume XXVIII N1**

**IKKF Newsletter**

**Spring 2011**

## **SHAOLIN**

Oral Tradition tells us that about A.D. 520 an Indian Buddhist monk arrived in China. He eventually settled at the Shaolin Temple at Sung Shan in Honan province. This monk was Ta Mo or Bohddharma as he is more popularly known. Ta Mo held that the practice of sitting in solitude for the purpose of meditating was the core of a superior kind of religious Buddhism, and in support of his belief he allegedly sat in meditation for nine years while facing a wall in the courtyard of the temple.

Ta Mo became disturbed over the fact that monks at Honan Temple frequently fell asleep during meditation. He designed special exercises by which monks could increase their stamina and so stay their weariness. In the I-Chin Ching, a work that is traditionally attributed to Ta Mo, we find described and illustrated eighteen such basic exercises for the purpose of improving one's general health. These exercises are believed by some people to be the basis of shaolin, a category of hand-to-hand arts, so named after the temple. However, there is no proof of his authorship of the I-Chin-Ching, nor are the eighteen basic exercises in that book directly related to Chinese combative arts, being more concerned with calisthenics performed from static stances and postures, and designed to strengthen the body and mind. It is now known that combative arts of a shaolin-like nature existed long before Ta Mo came to China, that at least some of these arts were initially practiced in places other than the Shaolin Temples.

The Honan Shaolin Temple attracted men from all walks of life, and became a source of and training ground for persons who engaged in the practice of fighting arts. A second Shaolin temple, supposedly constructed over a thousand years ago at Chuan Chow in Fukien province in South China, is also recorded in Chinese legends. This temple too, eventually became a center for combative activity, and consequently is said to have played an important role in the political histories of various dynasties. Both temples, the one at Sung Shan in the north and that at Chuan Chow in the south were, during years of warring, frequently razed on the grounds of alleged sedition against the government. Each time, only a few of the occupants of these temples managed to escape the wrath of the imperial troops sent to destroy them. The more fortunate of these fugitives avoided detection by going their separate ways to other areas of China and elsewhere, where they continued their study and practice of fighting arts.

The fame of the Fukien Shaolin Temple became particularly widespread as exponents of combative arts converged there to further their skills. The Ch'ing government was grateful to this temple when in 1672, 108 Shaolin Temple monks volunteered for military service against the marauding bands of barbarians who were massing on China's western borders. These monks displayed skill and heroism in expelling the invaders. But a short time later, when it was discovered that the Fukien Shaolin Temple monks were actually rebels who dreamed of launching their own uprising, the Ch'ing government ordered the destruction of the Fukien Shaolin Temple and the massacre of its occupants. Only five monks, later honored as the Five Early Founding Fathers, escaped. Each of these five monks is believed to have established his own particular kind of shaolin, and these five kinds of shaolin are traditionally held to be the prototypes of shaolin as we know it today.

According to orthodox beliefs, shaolin groups fall into two major divisions: those that support Northern Shaolin, and those that make Southern Shaolin the center of their activity. Northern Shaolin is believed to have originated at the Honan Shaolin Temple, while Southern Shaolin is believed to have come from the Fukien Shaolin Temple. In their basic technique patterns both northern and southern 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 physical prowess and the use of strength; Kung, in which clever tactics of a soft or pliable nature offset strength; and Yue, in which both hard and soft actions combine to produce technique. From the Yue branch of Northern Shaolin there developed systems that depend on the actions of other animals such as the monkey. Southern Shaolin consists of five main branches: Ta-hung and four families of Ch'uan.

On the basis of these traditional beliefs, some exponents of shaolin say that there are vast differences between Northern and Southern Shaolin. Exponents of the northern type are said to make more use of long-punching actions and to exhibit a higher order of agility, mobility, suppleness and fluidity than do the exponents of Southern Shaolin. But modern exponents of hand-to-hand arts find it difficult to support such traditional beliefs. It is, of course, possible that the stated differences did once exist between the original forms of shaolin, but such differences have been erased by the effects of time.

*from "SHAOLIN" by Khim & Dragger*

# 國際古松空手道連盟

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## THE KOJOSHO PROMISE

In one student's mind, the Kojosho promise of decades ago unfolds in three acts: In its first act, Kojosho promises the excitement and anticipation of attending class, to step onto the mat and enter an old culture—a respite from the mundane aspects of daily life; the promise of an exotic discovery, of effort realized, a small mystery revealed in motion; the promise of new people to work with and new information gained, experiencing the dedication and diversity of the senior students, their devotion to Kojosho still mysterious; learning to practice without fear; learning to conform to a foreign culture, lining up properly, practicing traditional manners and performing on demand with concentration; an opportunity to admit and exhibit, unequivocally, your imperfection in body, spirit, and mind, and to be accepted for sincere effort.

In the second act, Kojosho promises a role for everyone, integrating into the System as a living component of the harmony of each class; an understanding that the true enterprise at hand is self-introspection, realizing that introspection leads to the perception of reality; learning that the other students, whomever they may be on any given day in any given place, are essential to your own success—to pursue perfection among comrades, and to complete a perfect whole with your imperfect contribution; learning that deference to rank is a testament to personal knowledge and dedication; learning that knowledge of the form is empty without compassion for others; the gentle surprise as resonance with the next animal is revealed - layer upon layer, element by element—an animal revealed as an archetype for a human trait, someone you know recognized as an essential character; the pleasing logical progression of the form's sequence, and the subtle feedback to previous forms, circulating and recurring themes, rolling forward and breaking back; the essential dichotomy of a warrior—“The classical warrior can kiss the cheek of a child and cut the neck of a villain in a single heartbeat”.

And finally in its third act, the Kojosho promise is revealed in full—a lifetime of learning; a family bound in common pursuit across time; an endless pursuit of rarified knowledge, of self-realization, of self-actualization, and foremost, of affection for the Form and its creators, its students past, present and future; the desire for perpetuation; the teaching of the young; the closure made; the perspective obtained. “Even as it changes it remains the same”.

Steven Goldsmith

## 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*,

### This is the 28th 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***Book review*

The annual winter Kojosho Black & Brown Belt Testing was held on Saturday, January 8, 2011 at the Kojosho Moon School Dojo in Albuquerque. 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:

**YONDAN**

**Fourth Degree Black Belt**  
**John Braly**

**SANDAN**

**Third Degree Black Belt**  
**Steven Archuleta**

**SHODAN**

**First Degree Black Belt**  
**Taylor Caulder**

**First Kyu Brown Belt**  
**William Monts de Oca**  
**Dan Castillo**

**Second Kyu Brown Belt**  
**Paul Myzia**  
**Arnica Palm**  
**Rody Wiley**

**Congratulations from the Kojosho Board of Regents**

**Watch your thoughts, for they become your words**

**Choose your words, for they become your actions**

**Understand your actions, for they become your habits**

**Study your habits, for they become your character**

**Develop your character, for it becomes your destiny**

**The Dalai Lama**

**The Making of a Martial Artist**

by Sang Kyu Shim

**Author's Foreword**

The purpose of this book is to focus on the true nature of the martial arts: what they are, their source, how they developed, their underlying philosophy, and their future prospects.

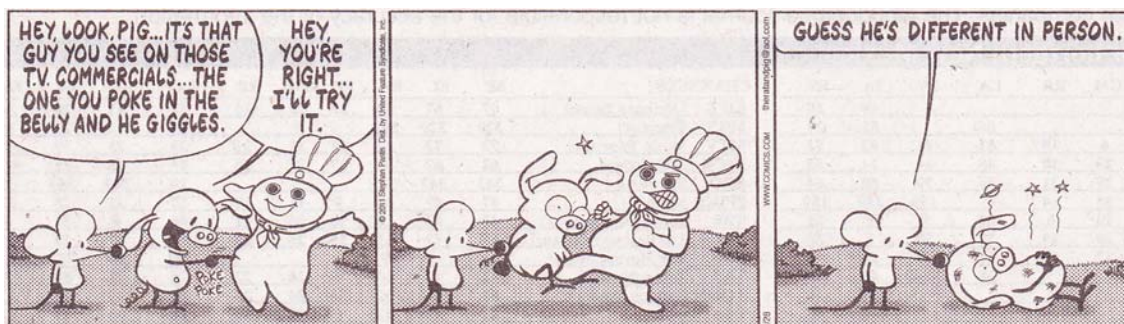
Much more than sport, display, or means to money, they are concerned with more than physical fitness, fighting skills, and conditioning. While the martial arts do, indeed, involve physique, they are more concerned with the why, how, where, and when of physical involvement. They predicate a philosophic foundation through which they ultimately become a way of life. They decompartmentalize living so that the same principle energizes every moment. While following their pattern, one sets oneself free.

The place of the individual can be seen from two basic viewpoints. On the one hand, he is a unique being, freely making choices and willing his own destiny; on the other, he is a mere atom, completely dominated by the gigantic flow of universal forces. Which view a person adopts will profoundly influence all the rest of his life. The differences between success and failure lies in one's self-concept.

The martial arts project the more positive self-image, allowing the practitioner to assume responsibility for what he is, and to claim the just rewards of creative action. In their fullness, the martial arts defend the independent spirit as much as the well-being of the body. The master of the martial arts is, essentially, not a "sayer," but a "doer."

The process of re-assessment is built into the very nature and goals of the martial arts. An understanding of and appreciation for their history and tradition are essential to their proper practice and mission. It is my sincere hope that this book will open to many the road to creative change, the road to encounter and discovery, the road to fulfillment and happiness. The journey begins with a single step; the way itself is endless. Much of its achievement is in the process, for, as someone once said, perfection closes the door.

To all my readers I wish the challenge, reward, joy, and pleasure of setting out and reaching the goal on the way of the martial arts.



## INTERNATIONAL MARTIAL ARTS CHAMPIONSHIPS

February 9-15, 2012 San Jose, Costa Rica

- ◆ 7 days & 6 nights at the 5-Star all-inclusive Doubletree Resort. There's fun for everyone!
- ◆ See the exciting competition at the Championships, which are held for one of the 7 days in Costa Rica!
- ◆ Tours arranged at a discounted price! See the famous crocodiles and other Costa Rican wildlife—or glide through the tree tops!
- ◆ Relaxation & great food are on the menu too not to mention sunshine & beautiful Pacific Beaches
- ◆ This trip is open to Kojosho students and other martial artists, relatives & friends.

**Make your reservations now. Contact Mr. Shane Absher (505 228-5592) or Mr. Steve Sanchez (505 280-4872)**

### ELEMENTAL TRIGRAMS

The Kojosho Elements are postures based on the 8 kua, or trigrams, of the Yi Jing (I Ching). There are many attributes associated with each Element, gathered from various sources (most notably the Yi Jing and the Kojosho book). They include shapes, colors, numbers, sounds, times, directions, weather conditions, even types of food. The most important attribute for Kojosho is the Element's "Virtue". This is an abstract concept associated with the Elements in the same way as the concept of Discipline is associated with the Crane. The following are a distillation of those Element Virtues:

#### Heaven=Strength

Strength, both mental and physical, is a necessity for the martial artist. Strength means both firmness and resilience, like the bamboo. No matter how good your technique, if you haven't the strength to complete the task then nothing will come of it. The same is true of the mind. If you set yourself a goal but lack the mental strength to achieve it, all is wasted.

#### Earth=Receptivity

The martial artist must be receptive in all his senses. He must be able to listen both to instruction and to the opinions of others. He should be able to 'see with his ears' all that happens around him.

#### Fire=Clarity (lightness)

The mind should be clear, bright and not fixed in shape or place. A mind that is set on a single thing cannot cope with thoughts or actions outside of that thing.

#### Water=Work

All good things require work and application to detail. Diligence is necessary in accomplishing goals.

#### Wind=Insight

At some point in his training the martial artist will experience a solid wall or an endless plain separating him from his goal. Then one day there is a 'quick flash' of certainty about a thing or movement and suddenly the wall will disappear or the plain will become a garden plot, easy to cross. This is the flash of insight.

#### Lightning=Motivation

Motivation is the arousing of the spirit from a sluggish unmoving state. It comes first from outside, from a friend or instructor. Then it must come from within. It can be a slow, massive push, like an old locomotive pulling out of the station. It can also be like a fist, an application of a quick, irresistible force.

#### Mountain=Patience

Action is often seen as being a positive event. Yet, a 'tiger' who meets a bigger 'tiger' may be in serious trouble! It is not always the best thing to act. Sometimes the best thing to do is wait, then re-act to whatever happens.

#### Lake=Pleasure

Much of the Martial Arts is a repetitive, waiting experience. But the result is excellence, and the reward is pleasure—pleasure in the way you move, in how your mind and body work together as one. Ultimately it becomes a true pleasure in Life itself.

#### Void=Harmony

There is a story about three men tasting vinegar from a large bowl. The faces of the first two are screwed up as if they had just sucked the most bitter of lemons. They are pushing away from the bowl in disgust. The third's mouth is caught in a smile and he welcomes the bowl and its contents. He realizes it tastes exactly as it should and so is in harmony with the way of things.

As an informative exercise we can look at each Element's virtue and match it to that of the corresponding Animal. It is important to examine the ideas brought forward as a result of matching the Element and Animal Virtue for each form:

#### Animal/Element Virtues

Tiger Explores the Earth—Courage/Receptivity  
Snake Avoids Fire—Knowledge/Clarity  
Dragon Inherits the Wind—Wisdom/Insight  
Leopard Plays with Wave—Honor/Work  
Bear Finds the Tao—Loyalty/Harmony

Crane Stands in Lake—Discipline/Pleasure  
Hawk Seizes Lightning—Courtesy/Motivation  
Deer Enters Heaven—Humanity/Strength  
Monkey Embraces Mountain—Trust/Patience

Geoffrey Comber

## 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	David Barnhart
Cuba H.S. Kojosho	Schedule Varies			Victor Velarde
Roswell H.S. Kojosho 500 W Hobbs	M T W T H 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 T H F	7:00—8:00 AM		Greg Spradling

## KOJOSHO SYSTEM CALENDAR

2011		2012	
May 28 - 30	Spring Camp	January 7	Black / Brown Belt Testing
June 3	Colored Belt Testing (Albuq)	February 9-15	IMAC Costa Rica
July 9	Black / Brown Belt Testing	February 18	Instructor's Seminar
August 19	Colored Belt Testing (Albuq)	March 9	Colored Belt Testing (Albuq)
October 22-23	Fall Camp	April 7	Tournament (Albuq)
November 5	Tournament (Albuq)	May 26 - 28	Spring Camp
November 12	Instructor's Seminar	June 1	Colored Belt Testing (Albuq)
November 25	Colored Belt Testing (Albuq)	July 7	Black / Brown Belt Testing

## MACHIDA & PACQUIAO

Lyoto Machida and Manny Pacquiao have been in the news lately because both of them won decisive victories in the first part of May. For those of you who don't follow such things, Machida is a light heavyweight (200 lb) mixed martial arts (MMA) fighter, and Pacquiao is the World Boxing Organization welterweight (145 lb) title holder.

MMA and boxing martial artists often display fighting styles that can seem far removed from what we study, but Machida and Pacquiao are notable exceptions. While Machida doesn't move like a traditional hardline karate stylist, he grew up under the strict training regime imposed by his Shotokan Sensei father. And Pacquiao, when asked to explain the way he fights, simply says, "Like Bruce Lee". Watching these two fighters do their thing can be a martial arts lesson in itself.

Sportswriters have a hard time trying to describe these fighters' styles – the word "unconventional" comes up a lot. But what is unconventional to conventional MMA and boxing practitioners doesn't seem so unconventional to senior Kojosho students. A typical description of Machida's approach uses words like "elusive", "complex", "confounding", "frustrating", and "interesting". To quote a recent article – "Machida employs a karate-like style based on avoiding damage while waiting for openings to land pinpoint strikes. He spends most of a fight circling away from opponents, which allows him to land strikes and escape before they can find their range. Once Machida finds an opening, he attacks with conviction. He has knocked out fighters with combinations and single punches, dropped them with kicks, dumped them to the mat with sudden trips and submitted them."

Pacquiao, who is often described as the best boxer, pound for pound, in the world, elicits paragraphs like this: "The boxing genius of Manny Pacquiao includes feet that belong in 'Riverdance,' calves the size of grapefruits and deceptive power generated from his core. His movement is unorthodox, scattered and perpetual, as if designed by a jazz musician. He creates angles unlike any other fighter, past or present, appearing, disappearing, shifting, striking - on balance, off balance, even off one foot."

While each of these gifted fighters has his own unique style, there are broad similarities. Both are extremely fast for their size. "If Pacquiao's trainer, Freddie Roach, could place one

boxing skill above all others, it would be speed - 'speed is the greatest asset in the world'". Neither fighter engages straight-on like most boxers, MMA fighters and karateka. And both fighters are in perpetual angular motion.

This composite description of Pacquiao's style could also apply to Machida: "When he moves, his footwork is so exact, so perfect, it's what creates the angles and wins all his fights. The continual movement makes Pacquiao difficult to time. This disrupts the rhythm of his opponents, forces them to take risks. It's not a continuing flow of beauty. It can be herky-jerky. It can be harsh, deliberate, unorthodox. But it's effective. Pacquiao moves sideways, makes angles and uses elusive tactics, blocking tactics and sidestepping tactics. Part of his genius remains a mystery and always will. Bruce Lee was like that."

Hmmm, Kojosho students. The Nine Animals would like to have a word with you.

G Vaughn

## KUDOS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

\* Mr. Steven Archuleta, who was promoted to Sandan in January, has the honor of holding the record for the longest period between Dan rank promotions. He was last promoted more than 30 years ago. Congratulate him when you see him—he's the Black Belt with the grey hair.

\* 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 2011 are now due.

Dues can be sent to:

**Mr. Michael Pierson**

**PO Box 51416,**

**Albuquerque, NM 87181**





## BIGGER? OR BETTER?

“The bigger they are, the harder they fall” is a saying often attributed to judoka. Physics aside, size does matter, so all “competitive” martial arts pay close attention to weight classes or divisions. There are 7 weight divisions in Judo, and also 7 divisions in MMA competition. In boxing there are, amazingly enough, 18 distinct weight classes!

Why this emphasis on weight? Because size matters. In a contest between two opponents of more or less equal skill, the bigger one will almost always win no matter if it's in judo, MMA, or boxing. Size & weight carry such a competitive advantage that size can often (but not always) trump skill. This has been so obvious for so long that martial arts competitions organized by weight classes are just a given.

What accounts for this effect? We have to acknowledge that modern martial arts contests are “civilized” in the sense that there are rules, and therefore some very effective techniques are banned because they are just too dangerous. While the banned techniques (groin shots, eye & throat strikes etc) can be used by fighters of any size, they tend to be critically important for the smaller of the contestants. In the limit, if handguns were allowed in boxing matches there would obviously be no need for weight classes. Likewise for katana. Weapons are the great equalizers. Sheer power is a formidable weapon, as are dangerous techniques. But using sheer power isn't against the rules.

So what is the trade-off between technical skill and brute force? Technical skill is extremely important – without it the biggest & strongest would always prevail. Cultivating sophisticated martial skills can only improve your odds. We can classify all sorts of highly specialized abilities & techniques as “martial skills” including speed, timing, balance, and even “spirit”. But don't fall into the trap of believing that your favorite skill set is a match for any sized opponent under any circumstances.

Generally Kojosho Instructors pair students up by size so that you usually work the two-person forms with someone of similar physical stature. And in self defense practice, students are also usually paired by size. But advanced students will learn a lot by occasionally working out with someone much bigger & much stronger. This is obvious to our female students (DUH!), but for the typical macho grande – not so much.

It takes lots of practice to learn to execute sophisticated fighting techniques successfully. That learning process is made easier if your partner is roughly your size and if your partner cooperates just enough for you to experience some incremental successes. As you become more skilled at applying a technique, your partner's cooperation and even their size become less important.

Techniques can be classified into all sorts of categories – punching, kicking, sweeping, evading, throwing etc. Three unusual categories that I find particularly important in my own study are:

- 1) techniques that only work on opponents who are smaller or weaker than you. This category may seem silly, but when you're first learning a new skill this may be the only way you'll be successful. Your partner will cooperate by acting smaller and/or weaker even when they're not, in order to help you learn to apply the technique. But techniques that you can successfully perform only on smaller or weaker opponents are clearly the least valuable. And if you always work with partners who are smaller than you or who always “make you look good”, then you may not fully appreciate this fact.
- 2) techniques that work on opponents who are your size. This is our “normal” training approach, and it's a big step up in training effectiveness. If you are evenly matched in size & strength, then the deciding factor will be your skill in applying the technique.
- 3) techniques that work on opponents of any size. As your skill in applying a technique improves, you should be able to extend its application to opponents who are bigger & stronger than you. This is clearly the most valuable possible result of studying a particular technique, and it's also a way to identify the very best techniques and technical interpretations.

You may think that all traditional martial arts techniques must fit into category 3, but that just isn't true. In some cases, the problem isn't the technique itself, it's the student's limited understanding of the full potential or application of the technique. Keep in mind that many martial arts instructors are big & powerful, so they naturally favor techniques that they can execute in a way that takes full advantage of their own individual strengths. And many martial systems emphasize power above all else. The fact is that not all techniques are created equal, so it's not unusual for an instructor's favorite technique or technical interpretation to be of limited practical value to a much smaller and/or less powerful student.

If one super-duper technique would always win the day regardless of the opponent, then there would be no need to study the Nine Animals. If you habitually reprogram the Kojosho Forms to showcase only your favorite technical approach, then at best you're only studying one of the Nine Animals. And if you insist on emphasizing only brute force, then you aren't really studying the Nine Animals at all.

The Nine Animals of the Kojosho System display a wide range of technical approaches to combat. The Tiger and the Crane are certainly not paired up by size or strength or weight class. The Snake and the Hawk have entirely different technical repertoires. The Dragon and the Deer approach combat from different martial universes. If you insist on working the Kojosho Forms as if all the pairings are “fair & balanced” and as if all the animals use the same tool box then you'll never discover the true richness of the Kojosho System.

G Vaughn

# INTERNATIONAL KOJOSHO KARATE FEDERATION

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