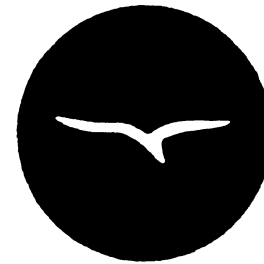




INTERNATIONAL KOJOSHO KARATE FEDERATION



Volume XXXIII N1

IKKF Newsletter

Spring 2016

SNAKE AVOIDS FIRE / HAWK SEIZES LIGHTNING

Preparing for the First World Taekwondo Championships—an interview with Fred Absher



“Given the aggressive full-contact nature of the Korean tournament, I knew I was going to have to do some power building. And because of the rigid rule structure and the boundaries and what techniques would score and not score, I was going to have to re-evaluate what would work best. The most obvious and easiest to adapt sequences were the advancing and retreating punching and advancing and retreating kicking portions of the Snake and the Hawk.

I had to consider what techniques could be connected and reconnected in different ways as you reached the ring's boundary. If you reach a boundary you can drive them out, but if you're avoiding the boundary it doesn't matter where you are in your technical execution, you've got to go left or right. The Snake fit perfectly for that kind of situation where you could pick up almost any kind of combination in half a step or two. So I spent a lot of time trying to imagine the changes and combinations you could do and a considerable amount of time using weight training using those sets.

When you have a six month time to train, the combinations aren't that many really. There are not many modifications when you're dealing with a handful of kicking and hand techniques that you can score with, so you try to change them up in direction, which is a big challenge, and change them up in terms of alternating one to the next; a different combination of techniques than you would do in normal form.

In the beginning I did more personal training, and then later on, when it was getting closer to the competition, within 60 days, I had some help working with a competitor, student or other black belt. Initially it was getting in the mindset. I tried to visualize in my mind the numerous things that could happen, the different combinations and not be welded into the two-man idea of *'this is what the hawk does when this happens'*. Instead I tried to visualize what many different things could happen, without getting away from the Snake and Hawk concepts.

There wasn't a lot of defensive fighting, either. A few competitors, perhaps, but most did very little defensive fighting. It was mostly bouncing back out of the way and coming back in very aggressively. I brought defensive

continued on pg 3

國際古城松空手道連盟

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KATA-SENSEI: THE FORM AS THE TEACHER

A student once asked the Sensei whether a particular kata was hard or easy. "Both," replied the Sensei.

"What do you mean?" asked the student.

"Easy," said the Sensei, "because once you master it, you realize the 'answer' was there all along. Hard because it takes longest to see what is closest to you."

The search does not begin until one knows that one does not know. If one regards one's understanding as complete, there is no room for further growth. As Suzuki Roshi put it, "In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities; in the expert's there are few."

"In all the writings of the great masters, it's very clear that there is no end to understanding. It goes on and on, becoming clearer and clearer and clearer." *these 3 excerpts are from One Bird One Stone by Sean Murphy*

Exemplified in kata, repetition is the core training method. Kata are filled with physical *koan* or conundrums [*puzzles*] - situations that evoke technical crises. They are devices through which the student's mind is shocked into action. Physical *koan* are to be met head on and conquered through adherence to prescribed form.

The "answers" to the physical *koan* are to be found within the student—the master serves only as a guide who enables the student to work out the necessary solutions. [*this suggests that the student must become aware of both the koan or "puzzles" that the kata presents AND the technical solutions to those puzzles that the kata prescribes. ed*]

The method of kata is always [*engaged*] repetition [*as opposed to "rote" repetition*]. The mechanical aspect of this repetition leads to technical mastery—but it teaches only how to achieve technical skills. Those who would follow only the physical aspects of kata miss the principle behind the art they perform. They are too busy with technique to see beyond it.

excerpts from Classical Budo by Draeger

The [Kojosho] student is taught to look beyond the obvious theories of combat condensed in the 108 Movements of the Form. Every student is encouraged to discover the deeper meanings and variations of motion which are hidden in the Form and only revealed through diligent and thoughtful study. The superior student knows how to learn, but the inferior student can only repeat what was taught.

this excerpt is from the book below:

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 33rd 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 winter Kojosho Black & Brown Belt Testing was held on Saturday, January 2, 2016 at the Kojosho Moon School in Albuquerque, 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:

SHODAN
First Degree Black Belt
Logan Robinett

Congratulations from the Kojosho Board of Regents

KOJOSHO ANIMAL ATTITUDES

Snake: The snake is **not** a tiger in scales. The snake must move quickly and with commitment but should never move out of his coiling's range.

Hawk: The hawk is "defensively aggressive". If the hawk stands her ground she will surely die. She must defend and retreat until her opponent makes a mistake. Then she can dive in for the kill.

from The Mystical Warrior by F. Absher

[so, Kojosho students, what is your Snake's "coiling range"? And how does your Hawk show "defensive aggressiveness"?]

continued from pg 1

fighting in with Snake and Hawk, but not with a lot of pre-planning as much as training in a defensive nature the way to block an attack made at full power. The way you kick and move backwards is pretty much the same. It's just awfully hard to step off the line defensively, pull off a kick and have it explode. You end up with a lot of the kicks jammed and you don't have any strength and balance. So you become an easier target. If a mistake was made or a block worked, that changed the situation really fast. This is something which we are trained to do. It's just that training to do it and having to do it with full power are different.

I have to emphasize that I think you get the best results doing what you do, but when you're limited by sport, by what will score, you have to modify, you have to make changes. I think, given the fact that I was almost thirty years old, more at the end of my competitive career than at the beginning, I had a feel for how the Snake and Hawk really played well in the free fighting sense. So it wasn't a huge struggle for me to use those, adapting them to boundaries and the limited technique you could use. And then the power training I did made the techniques more effective in that tournament. So it wasn't like I had to change things to do the power training. I wasn't going to have to modify so much the theory as being able to modify the sequences required. So I worked on that aspect of it, relying on what Snake had. I did put the theory to the test by padding up good and blocking full contact attacks as I retreated. This is very different from the patty caking we can do when we work with someone we know.

What I'd say to everybody in general is, with our two-man forms there's a real tendency to patty cake it up and tap here and move there. There's no need to beat everybody up, but there is a need to make sure you consciously make an effort to make it a block, not just a touch, but a valid technique.

What I learned most from Korea was to just do what you do best, and add to it this new power information that I had been training on, but don't try to get so wrapped up in taking to that tournament their rules and their technique and expect to have really good results. Go and be yourself, do your techniques, fight like you fight. The investment in both offensive & defensive power training for that particular scenario was a good investment, but I would not recommend it for most people".

ANNOUNCEMENTS

*** The 44th Annual Kojosho Karate Spring Camp was held over the Memorial Day weekend!!**

*** Digital Kojosho**— a complete set of **Kojosho Newsletters** from VIN1(1984) to V31N1(2015) with index, plus Crest Awards and miscellaneous Camp and Banquet fliers are now available on a single DVD. Thank Mr. Comber for making this a reality. A copy of this DVD will be offered at the 2016 Spring Camp—one can be yours at the special Spring Camp price of only \$6.00.

* 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 2016 are now due.

Dues can be sent to:

Mr. John Braly
4 Vista Montana Place
Placitas, NM 87043

KOJOSHO PORTLAND

Beginning Kojosho Class

There were enthusiastic students in the Fall 2015 & Spring 2016 Kojosho classes at Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Oregon. Jim Proctor, Professor & Director of the Environmental Studies Program is the Instructor, along with California transplant John Knight. Congrats to Mr. Proctor & Mr. Knight—and welcome to the new Kojosho students.

Here are some thoughtful observations about Kojosho Portland from John Knight:

“What started as an excuse for Jim Proctor and me to work out more became a small group of students learning the basics of Kojosho at Lewis and Clark College in Portland. Over this past year, we have learned new lessons about teaching Kojosho, especially about priorities when having both limited time and commitment from students focused on earning credit in a Pass - No Pass PE class. What would be the most important thing to teach a student if you only had a year? a month? an hour? Can the essence of Kojosho, martial art, self defense, be refined into a single lesson? The basics of stance, technique, attitude? Perhaps the postures; even one posture. We are fortunate to have a lifetime to study the scope of Kojosho. But there is also great depth in a single tiger posture.

Of the students we've seen this year, most expressed interest in the self-defense aspects of Kojosho training. How to demonstrate the artistic value, the mental and physical balance, and even the spiritual benefits of a basic technique such as stepping off-line to the beginning student?

We hope our excitement for Kojosho has been contagious, that students will see beyond an earned credit to the depth contained in the form.”

KOJOSHO OTERO

Beginning Kojosho Class

Here's a photo of most (but not all) of the students in the first Kojosho class at Otero Jr. College in Colorado. The venerable instructor is Kojosho Board of Regents member Ron Striegel.



NEW MEXICO KOJOSHO CLASS SCHEDULES

ALBUQ Heights Moon NE—1 Blk N of Indian School 505-228-5592	MWF	5:00 - 6:00	Juniors	Fred Absher & Staff
	MWF	6:00 - 7:00	Mixed Adults	
	T TH	5:00 - 6:00	Juniors	
	T TH	6:00 - 8:00	Mixed Adults	
Cedar Crest	W	6:45 - 7:45	Juniors	Shane Absher
	W	7:45 - 8:45	Adults	
	Sat	11:00 - 12:00	Juniors	
	Sat	12:00 - 1:00	Adults	
Apple Valley Ranch 505-281-5294	M	5:00 - 6:00	Mixed	Fred Absher Hamilton Link
	Sat	10:00 - 11:00	Mixed	
Las Cruces	MW	7:00 - 8:00	Mixed	Jack Diehl Howard Cothern
	MW	8:00 - 9:00	Advanced	
Cuba H.S. Kojosho	Schedule Varies			Victor Velarde
Roswell H.S. Kojosho 500 W Hobbs	M T W TH F	7:15 - 8:00 AM		Mike Kakuska
	M W	6:00 - 7:00 PM		
Clayton Kojosho 14 South 2nd 505-374-2168	T TH	5:30 - 6:30	Juniors	Tim Hodo
	T TH	6:30 - 7:30	Begin	
	T TH	7:30 - 8:30	Advanced	
	Sat	7:30 - 8:30 AM	Open	

KOJOSHO SYSTEM CALENDAR

2016		2017	
January 2	Black & Brown Best Testing	January 7	Black & Brown Best Testing
February	Costa Rica Tournament	February	Tournament
February 20	Instructor's Seminar	February 18	Instructor's Seminar
May 28—30	Spring Camp at Apple Valley	May 27—29	Spring Camp at Apple Valley
July 9	Black /Brown Belt Testing	July 8	Black /Brown Belt Testing
September 10	Instructor's Seminar	September 9	Instructor's Seminar
October 22- 23	Fall Camp @ Elephant Butte	October 21-22	Fall Camp @ Elephant Butte
November 5	IKKF Fall Tournament Abq	November 4	IKKF Fall Tournament Abq

KARATE'S DECODER RING—KAISAI NO GENRI

Many recent Martial Arts researchers, including Goju master Seikichi Toguchi, a student of Miyagi Chojun and founder of ShoreiKan, and Patrick McCarthy, well known Karateka and Martial Arts historian, believe that the origin of kata are two-person self defense sets. This progression will sound very familiar to any Kojosho student, but their thoughts are that the two-person self defense sets became so numerous that it was difficult to remember them all. To make them easier to learn and retain, the theory goes, these sets were joined into two-person kata for easier remembrance. Since one doesn't always have a partner to work with or a large amount of room to work out in, it is supposed that the attacking side of the forms were removed and the sets' movements ordered to accommodate a smaller area. While the two-person forms were being made into solo forms, and to fully understand what is happening in each form, they were designed in such a way that the information that was removed could be recovered using a 'decoder ring' of sorts.

This is, in a nutshell, the theory of *Kaisai no Genri*. At least one modern practitioner has commented that the rules of *Kaisai* are 'just common sense' but knowing what the early masters thought were the guidelines for understanding the *Bunkai*, or analysis and application, of kata makes that common sense just a bit more sensible.

The first three, main, rules of the decoder ring are:

- Don't be deceived by the *embusen* (shape or design) of the kata. The *embusen* is designed to allow the kata to be performed within a small space. The shape of the *embusen* has no bearing on the meaning of the techniques in the kata.
- Techniques executed while advancing are offensive. Those executed while retreating are defensive.
- There is only one opponent and he is in front of you. Turning to face a new direction while performing the kata does not mean you are turning to face a new opponent.

The remaining rules are:

- Every movement in kata is significant and is to be used in application. There are no "salutation", religious or empty movements in kata. All movements in the kata have meaning.
- A closed pulling hand returning to chamber usually has some part of the opponent in it. When pulling a hand to the chamber position, particularly if it is closed, it should be considered to have some part of the opponent in its grip, e.g. an arm, wrist or even head.
- Utilize the shortest distance to your opponent. The kata will typically attack the opponent with the closest part of your body.
- If you control an opponent's head you control the opponent. Kata techniques often target *Kyusho* (vital or weak points of the body); many of the most important of these are in the head, e.g. eyes or throat.
- There are no blocks. Uke are not blocks, they are "defenses", however in kata they may not even represent defenses, but simply be the movements of the limbs required to execute a more complex technique like a throw.
- Angles in kata are very important. The angle to which you turn represents the angle which you must take relative to the opponent for the technique to work. It does not represent turning to face a new opponent.
- Touching your own body in kata indicates that you are touching part of your opponent. In the absence of a partner to practice with, where the kata touches your own body, you would be touching or holding part of the opponent's body.
- Don't attack hard parts of your opponent with hard parts of your body. The kata typically strikes hard parts of the opponent with soft parts of your body and soft parts with hard parts of your body.
- There are no pauses in the application. The rhythm of the performance of kata has no bearing on the performance of the techniques extracted from it.

These rules have opened up a whole new aspect of the traditional hard-line forms and made them much more interesting to me. But how does this apply to Kojosho?

We still have both sides of the sets, so there is no need to 'work out' what an imaginary opponent is doing. We have all the moves and motions laid out without a need for any deciphering. Or do we? The motions we are taught as colored belts are set out in a way that promote safety and 'pure motion'. We can become complacent in the choreography and not take the time to explore other aspects of the forms; the reasons for why each movement happens, understanding attacks that are not fully expressed in the forms or examining the more combative aspects of each movement in the forms.

Do we still need a decoder ring? I don't think we need a set of rules like *Kaisai no Genri*. What we have instead is the solo form and a martial mind. It is our job as students, especially senior students, to take the time to examine the motion and movements in the forms and to explore their applications. We can take the time to differentiate each form according to the animal's motion to learn how each generates power, how they approach combat and what new weapons, defenses and combat theories each one adds to our repertoire. This is part of what makes the Kojosho such a rich system.

Note: The bulleted section above is taken, almost completely un-edited, from http://katapedia.org/wiki/Kaisai_no_genri.

Geoffrey Comber

ADVANCING PUNCHING—RETREATING PUNCHING

Each of the movements which make up Advancing Punching and Retreating Punching may be extrapolated from the Nine Maneuvers [Snake] and successfully used in free-threat situations exactly as demonstrated in the Form. However, the motion of the Form is not limited by the student's interpretation. For example, the first hand movements in Advancing Punching [*faint with left jab, strike with right reverse punch*] can be interpreted as a block with the rear [*right*] hand and a simultaneous strike with the front [*left*] hand.

Many more insights remain for any Kojosho student to seek and discover on their own. When the dedicated student is able to find a personal revelation in the Form, or a new interpretation of a movement which has been denied others, that is when the student begins to understand the true genius of the Kojosho Form. The Form welcomes direct communication and becomes a bridge between the Kojosho student of the past and the Kojosho student of the future.

In the study of motion, physical repetition is the key to proficiency but a questing mind must be the first prerequisite to understanding.

from "Kojosho: Theory and Application of a Karate System"

LEARNING A NEW PHYSICAL SKILL

Learning to juggle, swim, ride a bike or snowboard could change and strengthen the brain in ways that practicing other familiar pursuits such as puzzles or marathon training will not, according to an accumulating body of research.

When most of us consider learning and intelligence, we think of activities such as adding numbers, remembering names, writing poetry, or learning a new language. Such complex thinking is classified a "higher-order" cognition. There is strong evidence that learning a second language as an adult, for instance, results in increased white matter in the parts of the brain known to be involved in language processing.

Regular exercise likewise changes the brain. The impacts of learning on one of the most primal portions of the brain have been surprisingly underappreciated. Most of us pay little attention to our motor cortex, which controls how well we can move.

We have a tendency to admire motor skills, but most of us make little effort to hone our motor skills in adulthood, and very few of us try to expand them by, for instance, learning a new sport. Studies have shown that learning a new physical skill in adulthood, such as juggling, leads to increases in the volume of gray matter in parts of the brain related to movement control. It was also found that learning a new skill had changed the inner workings of adult animals' motor cortexes; but practicing a well-mastered one had not.

Motor skills are as cognitively challenging in their way as traditional brainteasers. So adding a new sport or physical skill to your repertory should have salutary effects on your brain, and also provide all the physical benefits of exercise.

excerpts from "New Sports Stretch the Brain" by Gretchen Reynolds in the NYT

If we apply this relatively new information to our study of the martial arts, we can appreciate the value of being exposed to unfamiliar kata from other systems. But an advanced Kojosho student doesn't have to learn a new kata from another system to have the opportunity to learn new physical skills that stimulate brain development – the student only needs to appreciate the value of seeking a deeper understanding and corresponding proficiency in executing Kojosho kata that are already very familiar. Discovering the deeper levels of familiar kata can be more challenging (and therefore more beneficial to our brains) than always repeating that same old kata that same old way.

Senior Kojosho students studying the Third-Person Forms are familiar with the experience of having their brains "re-wired" by "challenging discoveries" made during focused Third-Person workouts. What was assumed to be already "mastered" turns out to require different timing, different distance and different intersection – ie there are new physical skills to be mastered and new brain cells to be built.

Gary Vaughn



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