

HISTORY OF KARATE

About 530 to 545 A.D. a Buddhist Monk, Taishi Daruma (later known as Bodhidharma) crossed the Himalayan Mountains from India to China. He came for two reasons; to found a Buddhist Monastery and to unite the various Buddhist and Taoist schools of thought which had preceded him. The undertaking of such a journey even today is an enormous and extremely dangerous task requiring months of planning. Daruma found that the Monarchs of the Liang Dynasty were not perceptive to Buddhist tenets. Returning to the wilderness, he and a small group of disciples constructed the Shaolin Monastery, which was to be the birthplace of Zen Buddhism. Finding his Chinese followers weak from long hours of traditional meditation and physical neglect, Daruma established a system of physical and mental discipline known as I-Chin or San-Chin meaning "three conflicts". The concept of San-Chin is founded on the realization that man's most powerful body forces lie virtually untapped.

The term conflict applies to the independent, undisciplined function of the body's three most powerful elements; breathing, mental and physical concentration. In application, the San-Chin practitioner seeks complete coordination of these forces, greatly improving the mind-body relationship.

About 500 years ago the famous King Haishi Sho succeeded in uniting the Ruykyu Islands into one kingdom. To ensure rule by law, all weapons were seized from the people and it was made a crime against the state to possess weapons. About 200 years later Okinawa became a part of the Satsuma Clan of Kyushu, and a second ban on weapons was declared. During these centuries that Okinawa was occupied by Japanese War Lords the Art of empty-handed fighting, now known as Karate, (Kara-empty, te-hand) underwent its most advanced developments to date. Through their many years of secret the Okinawans became so proficient that they could attack and kill armed soldiers with their "bare hands". Their weapons (hands, feet, fists, etc.) were as effective as any other weapon of that day, and in the 16th Century they attacked and over-threw the Japanese occupational force. Karate was to be taught secretly for centuries and was not officially introduced in Japan until 1917.

The most important step in the development of modern day Karate came with the introduction of Tode Fighting Art to the Ryukyu Islands (Okinawa.)

Scattered like stepping stones from the Southern Island of Kyushu to Taiwan in the East China Sea, Okinawans lived a frugal existence. They incorporated flowing movements of Chinese boxing arts into the art of Okinawa-Te (Okinawan Hand) Islanders gave birth to a new ART KARATE (empty hand), the most fierce fighting Art known to man. From this evolution 3 main styles evolved; they being, Shuri Te, Naha Te, and Tomari Te. Taking their names from principal cities on the main island of Okinawa. Naha and Tomari often were referred to as one.

Of the three systems, the person responsible for the development of Naha Te was Kanryo Higahionna. The developer of Shuri Te and probably the greatest Karate-Ka in Okinawa was Sekon Matsumura, the great Bushi warrior in the Mid Meiji Period (1867 - 1912) and the person who developed Tomari-Te was Kosaku Matsumura.

To breakdown each style system on a basic level so that the reader can understand the history and growth of present day Karate, we can briefly follow each one down to present day Karate leaders in the world.

Shuri Te

Sekon Matsumura was a student of Karate (Tode) Sakugwa. His most notable students were Sekon Matsumura, Yasutsune Ituse, Kentsu Yabu, Chotoku Kyan, Chosin Chibana (Founder of Shorin-Ryu Karate), of all of the aforementioned, these people studied primarily under Sekon Matsumura and Yasutsune Ituse.

Some of the present day style systems coming from these peoples efforts are: 1. Matsubayashi Shorin-Ryu - headed by Shoshin Nagamine, who instructors were, Kyan, Motobu and Ankichi Arakaki. 2. Okinawa Shorin-Ryu - headed by Katsuya Miyahira whose sensei was Choshin Chibana and Motobu. 3. Shorin-Ryu Shorin Kan - headed by Shugoro Nakazato whose sensei was Choshin Chibana. 4. Kuboda Kan - headed by Shinken Taira whose sensei was Kentsu Yabu. 5. Shudo Kan - headed by Toshio Hannue and Koei Kan headed by Eizo Onishi, Hannue and Onishi's sensei was Kanken Toyama, whose teachers were mainly Kentsu Yabu and Choki Motobu.

Also, you have a combination of teachers, Tatsuo Shimabuku, founder of Isshin-Ryu, who had numerous teachers. Three of them being Kyan, Motobu, Miyagi Taira and also some Naha Te instructors.

The founder of Shoto Kan and sometimes called the father of Japanese Karate was Gichin Funakoshi, who is from Okinawa and a student under Ituse and Azato.

Another student of Sekon Matsumura and Yasutsune Ituse was Kenwa Mabuni, who founded the Shito-Ryu Karate which is very popular in Japan today.

The system of Karate enjoying vast popularity in the south island of Kushu, Japan is Chito Ryu Karate founded by an Okinawan named Ysuyoshi Chitose. Chitose was a student of Kyan and other Naha Masters.

Our primary interest in the Master Choki Motobu is that he is part of our schools sensei lineage.

Naha Te

Kanryo Higashionna was the present day founder of Naha Te; he is an Okinawan that studied in China and also developed Okinawan fighting techniques around the city of Naha, Okinawa. His most notable students being Seiko Higa, Chojun Miyagi, Juhasta Kyoda, Neichu So, and also Kenwa Mabuni.

Miyagi was the present day founder of Goju Ryu. Some of his notable students were Sekichi Toguchi, Meitoku Yagi, and Eiichi Miyazto, all of the above are Okinawans.

Gogen Yamaguchi formed the Japanese Goju Ryu, it is very popular world wide today. He was a student of Miyagi.

Tomari-Te

Karate Master Kosaku Matsumora was also an indirect student of Karate Sakugawa. Being born and living in the Tomari area. Tomari and Shuri are in close proximity to each other. Kosaku Matsumora being the direct student of Chyan Makabe (Birdman) who were students of Karate Sakugawa (Tode.)

Kosaku Matsumora's main student was Kosho Karate-Kempo Shorei Ryu Master Choki Motobu. Motobu studied primarily under Kosaku Matsumora.

Many Okinawan students in this system later went to Japan to spread Karate and are Masters themselves today claim Motobu as their teacher; Yasuhiro Konishi, Katsuya Miyihara, Kanken Toyama, ect.

Master Robert A. Trias is the Director of the United States Karate Association, his first Karate Sensei was T'ung Gee Hsing, who was a student and studied with Master Choki Motobu. Mr. Trias, who was in Tulagi British Soloman Island in World War 11, was Master Hsing's student.

Mr. Phillip W. Koepfel is a student of Master Robert A. Trias. Our Shorei Ryu sensei lineage is traced back to Okinawa. It is important to know the history of our teachers since our school teaches strict Shorei Karate.

In this brief History of Okinawan Karate, we have by-passed many Okinawan Masters, but we have tried to highlight the three specific areas in the development of Okinawan Karate in our particular style system.

In America today there are many Karate schools. There are also many styles and systems. Although the basis of Karate began thousands of years ago, there has been a gradual changing in the execution of its techniques. Each Master of the past has added his own special ideas to produce today a form of unarmed self-defense equalled by no other means..... but it is not over; it is just beginning. Changes are being made even now by the Karate Masters of today. Karate is on the move. Its history is being written day by day as it continues to strive for self-betterment in the Art and character of its followers.

UNITED STATES KARATE ASSOCIATION SEAL

The significance of the red, white, and blue. First, they are the colors of our flag. Secondly Taishi Daruma's philosophy is represented by the seven red stripes for the seven failures in his life. The word Karate in red for the eighth when he rose victorious. The five white stars on the blue field signify the five original fist strengths.

- 1. Dragon - Body strength
- 2. Tiger - Bone strength
- 3. Leopard - Inner and outer strength
- 4. Crane - Hidden or spiritual strength
- 5. Snake - Breath strength or power of the Saika Tanden

The blue field is for greatness or vastness symbolizing the U.S.K.A.'s purpose of spreading Karate. Red is for the courage of Daruma. The remaining color, white, is for purity of body, mind, and soul, which is developed through devotion to true Karate science and ethics.

Modern Karate may be considered to be Shorei and Goju Styles.

- K - Knowledge
- A - Attitude
- R - Respect, Rightness
- A - Ability
- T - Technique, Training
- E - Effort

The four(4) elements of Karate are:

- 1. Speed
- 2. Power
- 3. Technique
- 4. Breathing

SCHOOL EMBLEM

MASTER KOEPPEL emblem is called "Buddha's Double-bladed Axe". It is the personal insignia of Master Phillip Koepfel, 7th Dan.

This 4½" special emblem has only been awarded to nine persons. Its requirements are the same as its meaning:

The color white stands for purity
The color black stands for strength
The eight sides represent the "Eight-fold Path":

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Right Understanding | 5. Right Occupation |
| 2. Right Thoughts | 6. Right Effort |
| 3. Right Speech | 7. Right Mindfulness |
| 4. Right Conduct | 8. Right Meditation |

These eight precepts encircle the Axe itself, which has four sides, representing the Four Noble Truths":

1. There are sufferings in Life
2. Sufferings are caused by ignorance
3. Suffering ceases when one overcomes ignorances
When a person reaches this condition, he is said to be enlightened.
4. The way, or path, to overcome the causes of ignorance is the Eight-fold Path.

The Axe is double-bladed, representing the direction of these tenets toward oneself (Hinayan) and for the benefit of others (Mahyan.)

The nine persons to whom this award has been presented are:

- | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1. R. A. Trias | 4. C. E. Wilson | 7. R. C. Moore |
| 2. W. H. Foster (Rev.) | 5. A. D. Zvirblis | 8. Glenn Keeney |
| 3. J. W. McLain | 6. R. J. Holman | 9. Mel Wise |

There is a small, 1½" duplicate of this emblem which may be awarded to special dedicated students of these men.

KARATE

KATA - KUMITE - WAZA

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SCHOOL CREED

I shall conduct myself in a manner which will reflect credit upon myself and the School.

I shall be loyal to this School and to the science it teaches.

I shall be honest and exercise integrity with the purpose of developing cooperation and trust with students, instructors and the dojo Master.

I shall use Karate and Judo knowledge only in defense of my life, my family and my country.

INTRODUCTION OF KARATE IN AMERICA

The following information is not meant to criticize anyone but to give the facts on the introduction of karate and a better understanding of its history and growth in America. The information is from direct quotes from the pages of Master Trias' Shuri-ryu manuals titled, "Okinawan Karate-Methods of Shuri-ryu."

Master Trias' study of karate dates back 35 years (1942). Since then he has travelled the entire world and has introduced either karate-do, sport karate or the use of martial art weapons in this country and many foreign countries. He was the first Caucasian to study the Chinese system of Hsing-yi (Tode) during the war years from a Chinese priest from Canton China.

Karate was first introduced in the United States by Master Trias in 1945 where he opened the first karate school (1946) in the nation. In 1948 he formed now the largest karate organization in the world, the United States Karate Association. In 1955 he conducted the first karate tournament in this country. In 1955 he formed the first rules for karate competition (these same rules with slight variations are still being used for karate competition throughout the world). In 1958 he wrote the first textbook in this country. In 1959 the first training film in this country. In 1963 the first world tournament in this country. In 1968 the first professional tournament in this country. From then on he has been responsible for many other firsts. It should be made perfectly clear that an American (Master Trias, 1945) brought karate to this country way before any Japanese or any other Orientals or Caucasians. There are many books, articles and individuals, etc. who claim first for introducing karate and/or kempo into this country. However, you will note that Master Trias' first style of martial arts was called Shuri Karate Kempo or Shorei Karate Kempo. Shuri-rye karate (Shorei in Japanese), also called Shuri-de or Shuri-te, system originated from the Shorin-ji ryu Chinese system. Shuri-ryu is considered the "ancient karate" of Okinawa. Many schools have modified this art and are now teaching under different names i.e. Seito Shonen, Shorei, Shindho Jinen, Shorin Motobu-ha or Motobu-ryu, etc. Okinawan Master Sekon Matsumura divided the mass Okinawan styles that were being taught in Okinawa (1870) in two categories called Shuri-de and Naha-de. All Okinawan styles were later combined and called Okinawan-te.

Master of Shorei Karate Kempo, Choki Motobu, student of Matsumura and later of Yasutsune (Ankoh) ITOsu is considered Father of Shuri-rye Karate. Motobu met Chinese Master of Hsing-yi Tode, Tung Gee Hsing who at the time was living in Kume Mura in Okinawa. Many Okinawan masters at that time were very eager for further

knowledge of the Chinese arts and were journeying into China (during 1900-1930) desperately in attempts to secure further information on the ancient Chinese arts. For many Okinawans and Japanese it was a blessing when a Chinese martial artist visited, lived or worked in their countries that could be persuaded into revealing any information on the much sought after Chinese techniques, so as to incorporate them into their own styles. Motobu combined rudiments of Okinawan Shuri-rye with Hsing's Chinese system of Hsing-yi. These combined systems were then called Shuri Karate Kempo or Shorei Karate Kempo. (Okinawan Kobayashi-Shorin and Uechi-ryu styles also come from this line of teaching). Motobu died in Okinawa in 1944. Hsing is believed to have died in Taiwan in 1955. Motobu's nephew, James Mitose, living in Hawaii at the time (1946) taught Shorei Karate Kempo under the system banner of Kosho-ryu. Master Motobu's Chief Instructor, Yasuhiro Konichi (10th dan, has now changed his style name to Shindho Jinen-ryu) and today at the age of 84 is still teaching karate and living in Japan. Master Trias' (9th dan) first teacher was Master T'ung Gee Hsing. Directly after Master Trias' discharge from military services in World War II he became the first to introduce karate and the Okinawan Shuri (Shorei) system to the United States. In 1948 Master Trias incorporated some of the Goju-ryu katas into the Shuri-ryu style and this became the beginning of Shorei-Goju-ryu, currently being taught by many in the United States today. Master Trias and Master Konichi are the two oldest and active links remaining in the Shuri-ryu system. Master Trias alone is the largest contributing factor in the recent spread (1945-1976) of the Shuri-ryu system in this country and throughout the world. Master Trias began a mass standardization of the Shuri-ryu system and along with Shotodan are the only two known systems who have documented its philosophy, katas and techniques with full symbolic physical applications and their interpretation. Master Trias is Grand Master of all Shuri-ryu karate. Without him the Shuri-ryu system would have died.

The system's philosophy includes insight, understanding, experience, awareness, perseverance, determination, patience, discipline, humility, fellowship, awareness and health through intrinsic energy and breath, the use of energy without tenseness, strength without hardness, pliability without stiffness and physical fitness within the structure and studies of physics, anatomy, psychology and physiology.

In the final analysis, it is obvious that the Chinese arts had a great influence on all Okinawan karate. There are other fam-

ily tree versions of the Hsing-yi and Shuri-ryu Karate Kempo systems but the above is the direct linkage that is behind Master Trias' teachings. The thousands of students from all corners of the world trained by him and imbued with his psychology, traditions and ethics are the largest factors in the spread of world karate. Master Trias barring and disputing what any other Occidentals or Orientals may state, introduced karate to this country (1945) and because of his knowledge, skills and accomplishments to the art has earned for himself recognition as the definite Father of American Karate.