

FIGHTING SPIRIT

闘魂



日本空手道玄和会米国本部

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CONTENTS

EDITORIAL.....1

FEATURES:

BOWING: A MARTIAL ARTS TRADITION....by Master H. Tajima.....2

SIMPLE PERFECTION.....by Jim Rodríguez.....3

AN OBJECTIVE MEASUREMENT OF POWER...by Barry L. Hauser.....4

JAPANESE PHYSICAL TRAINING, PART 4..by Fredrick J. Lovret.....8

SUSHI STROKE.....Hipopocrates Magazine.....9

DEPARTMENTS:

BOOK MART.....2

DOJO DIRECTORY.....10

HEAVENLY HAIKU.....9

MY FAVORITE MON.....10

QUOTE - UNQUOTE.....9

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EDITORIAL

Since the last Newsletter I have had the good fortune to be able to visit two Genwakai Dojo in other areas. In April I visited Jay Robison at the Saginaw Dojo. I was there for a practice and enjoyed myself very much. Not only did we have a vigorous practice but I also had the opportunity to learn a very little bit of Hakko Ryu Jujutsu. Rigorous training is the norm and was plainly evident. After practice Sensei Robison and I spent time working on Kata and Iaido. We compared notes on Genwakai history, viewed videos and generally had a very fruitful visit together. Sensei Robison demonstrated his broad interest in a variety of Martial Arts. He is not only ranked in Hakko Ryu but researches and practices Wing Chun Kung Fu.

Sensei Robison has a desire to master Genwakai and he wants to do it in his own dojo. His goal is to purchase property to convert or build his dojo on. A very worthwhile goal. The current dojo and students are very impressive. Etiquette and formalities were practiced with every attention to detail. With all things considered, this is a very good dojo. Well deserving of its new name, To Ren Kan - (Fighting) Spirit Training Place.

I also visited the Toronto Dojo. As you recall Shihan Masuko died unexpectedly last April. Since then his Black Belt students have continued the dojo according to the teachings set forth by Shihan Masuko. Unfortunately, Sensei Stanley Janusas was on vacation but I had the opportunity to meet the assistant instructors. Jeff McMillan and Mike Clarkson conducted the practice I attended. Mike spent a year in Japan in 1978. Jeff studied and was promoted to Sho Dan by Master Masuko.

The dojo is located in an elementary school in Toronto. As in the Saginaw dojo, traditions and etiquette are closely observed. As Mike related, since Shihan Masuko died the leaders of the dojo are closely guarding against going on any tangent. Evidently other Japanese Karate dojo have asked them to join in a brotherly and kind spirited gesture. However, Sensei Janusas, Jeff and Mike, commendably, have retained the spirit and prerogative of the Genwakai style. They are going the Genwakai Way and are remaining independent.

Our practice was rigorous. We practiced basics, then kata, ending with calisthenics. After class Jeff, Mike and I worked on unsoku. We later had an entertaining evening together at Jeff's house. We shared knowledge and experiences from our karate lives. I heard all about Master Masuko and shared some of my experiences with Master Tajima. Jeff and Mike explained how they now consider Master Tajima as their leader so we are happy to include them in the Dojo Directory of the Newsletter.

SIMPLE PERFECTION

by

Jim Rodriguez

At Headquarters dojo Master Tajima has always provided us with mini-lectures both during and after practice. All of these are very interesting, informative and thought provoking. One of his most recent ones has really stuck with me.

His lecture revolved around the concept of simplicity. He began by saying, "In a life or death situation you must be perfect. One mistake can cause you to lose your life." He continued explaining how we must always strive for perfection in our techniques. That if we are ever faced with a life or death situation our technique must be perfect because there will be no second chance. This is the meaning of the old Martial Arts saying, "One chance, one life."

So many things in our culture conditions us to expect second chances. Sports is a big cultural activity. Baseball allows for 3 strikes before you're out. Football allows 4 downs before you relinquish the ball. Tennis has a "double" fault (2 errors) before you lose a point.

Sensei then discussed striving for perfection through repetition of our techniques, emphasizing an attitude that he calls, "A willingness to progress." What this means is concentrating on each technique with an open and critical mind. It means not just a willingness but a striving to discover the ultimate level of achievement for each technique; in essence, a perfect technique.

Sensei went on to explain why Genwakai is the more basic, fundamental style that it is. He explained that Genwakai uses simple, down-to-earth fighting techniques where perfection can be achieved. Fancy techniques take much longer and much more effort to perfect. They also allow more room for error because they are more complex. So, in a life or death situation the more simple the technique the greater the probability of success. Conversely, the more complex the technique, the greater the chance for error.

"One chance, one life."

Think about it!

AN OBJECTIVE MEASUREMENT OF POWER

by

Barry L. Hauser

Last Fall I was browsing through my latest issue of Black Belt magazine (Black Belt, October, 1987) when I came across a very interesting article. The article caught my eye with the heading, "Which Style Has The Strongest Kicks and Punches? - New Equipment Makes It Possible To Measure Force." At first the skeptical side of myself thought, "Yea, Right! Has technology really produced a device that can reliably measure power? I'd better read this!"

As I read on I became more impressed. The products are called Impax Force Gear and is produced by Impulse Sports Training Systems. According to the author, Chris Thomas, the Impax Force Gear can Actually measure the force of punches and kicks. Built into these kicking and punching pads is a thin elastic substance called Piezo Film which converts impact into electricity. The greater the impact, the greater the voltage. Attached to the pad is a small electronic box which measures the voltage and converts the signal into a digital readout which represents the total force of the technique.

"There are several benefits for utilizing this kind of device," according to Mr. Thomas. "One benefit is that through use and practice, the most effective methods of punching and striking will become evident. There will finally be a way of actually comparing different techniques to verify, or disprove, claims of technical superiority. Of course, this is also a frightening prospect, since some cherished beliefs may crumble under the scrutiny of objective analysis."

Probably the greatest benefit is the value of the Impax pads to the individual student. Because the Impax pad gives immediate feedback, the student is able to develop skills at a faster pace. Without the objective and immediate feedback, the karateka can only guess that their skills are improving.

As Mr. Thomas puts it, "It is possible to work out on a makiwara or heavy bag and perform hundreds of repetitions with little benefit. But when the bag talks back, reporting the actual force of technique, people find themselves driven to do their best with each punch or kick."

A study was done by Mr. Thomas involving four Isshin Ryu black belts: two Sho Dan, one San Dan, and one Roku Dan. Because of the sample size, observations could only be tentative. What they did observe however, was that the Isshin Ryu verticle punch was equal to the classical "corkscrew" style karate punch and that

both punches were significantly stronger than a straight punch delivered from the shoulder instead of the hip. The weakest but fastest punch was the backfist (uraken) and the highest scoring kick was the side kick (yoko geri), delivered with a step. It also showed the Roku Dan punches and kicks were more consistent than the others.

After reading the article I was impressed but still skeptical. I thought perhaps I was falling prey to a shrewd sales pitch, but never the less my curiosity took over. My wife and fellow karateka bought me an Impax pad for Christmas that was designed to attach to a heavy bag. I worked out on it in my basement for awhile and discovered how accurate it seemed to be.

Still slightly skeptical, I asked our Sensei, Jim Rodriguez, if we could try this thing out at the dojo. He agreed and with the cooperation of twelve karateka from our dojo, I designed my own study. Again, as with the Thomas study, observations could only be tentative because the sample size was too small to be representative of a large population.

My study involved one San Dan, one Ni Dan, four Sho Dan, (2 female, 2 male), one ikkyu, two yonkyu, one gokyu and two hachikyu. Overall, there were eight males and four females ranging in age from 10 to 43, with a weight range from 80 lbs to 250 lbs, all right handed except one.

Techniques used in this study were tsuki, gyaku tsuki, uraken, mae geri, yoko geri, mawashi geri and ushiro yoko geri. Each karateka performed five techniques on the right side and five techniques on the left side. The highest and lowest scores were dropped and the remaining scores were averaged. The results were fairly predictable but interesting as far as comparisons go.

With the help of our computer expert, Ben Dutcher, several observations were made. The strongest technique, on the average, left and right, was mawashi geri followed by yoko geri. Yoko geri on the left was the strongest single technique.

In general, it appears that the right hand punches were stronger than the left hand punches. Conversely, the left leg kicks were stronger than the right leg kicks with the exception of ushiro yoko geri.

Obviously, the kicks were stronger than the punches with uraken being the weakest technique.

In the category of sex differences, males kick and punch harder than females. This was predictable as far as punching goes because males naturally have greater upper body strength than females. However, I am not sure if the difference in kicking is

a result of sex or body weight. Many anthropological studies claim that if you have males and females of equal size and weight, males have greater upper body strength but both sexes have relatively equal lower body strength. (Remember men, we were the hunters and food gatherers. We needed those biceps). I think it would be interesting to use a scientifically appropriate sample size to compare male kicks to female kicks given that both sexes were of equal size and weight.

The scores of our 250 lb male purple belt gives some credence to the importance of size as opposed to sex. Although his skill was average for a purple belt (8 kyu), his body weight helped him to receive high scores on all techniques, especially upper body techniques.

Shortly after the conclusion of this study I received a device from Impax Products that not only measures force but also measures reaction time as well. An audio signal occurs randomly every 2 to 8 seconds and a digital readout of the reaction time appears on the box attached to the Impax pad. Thus, we should be able to receive objective feedback that can tell us not only how strong or weak our techniques are, but also which ones are the fastest and slowest. I hope to do another study in the future to determine the speed of our techniques.

In the meantime, my skepticism has diminished and I would recommend the Impax Products to any dojo or individual interested in an objective measurement of power.

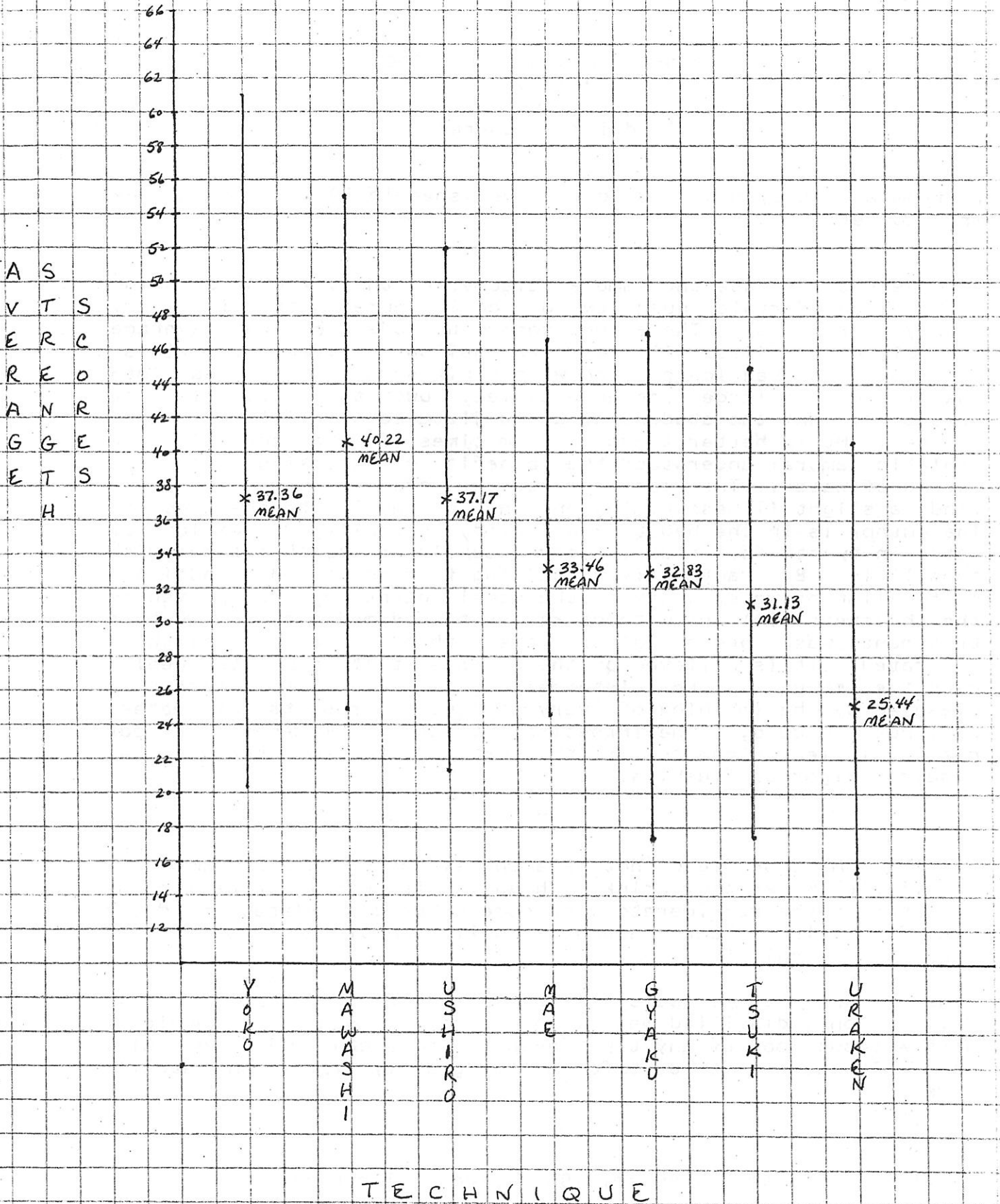
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Other Observations and Data:

1. The more straight the trajectory of the technique the higher the score. Straighter techniques received higher scores.
2. The more accurate the technique the higher the score. The closer to the center of the pad the higher the score.
3. Large variations in scores indicate a lack of control and less skill in general.
4. From the graph on the following page:
 - A. Mae geri has the smallest variation in scores singling it out as the most skilled technique.
 - B. Mae geri is the same in strength on the high side as gyaku tsuki and tsuki.

AN OBJECTIVE MEASUREMENT OF POWER

BARRY L. HAUSER



JAPANESE PHYSICAL TRAINING
PART 4
by
Fredrick J. Lovret

...from a book by H.J. Hancock, published in 1904. Comments by
Mr. Lovret

At a very early date the samurai discovered the value of drinking a very considerable quantity of cool, pure water in every twenty-four hours. The amount consumed today by the average disciple of jiu-jitsu will reach the gallon mark...Summer drinks, composed of shaved ice covered with fruit syrups, have crept into the life of the larger Japanese cities, but their use is not extensive, and the student of a jiu-jitsu school will have none of them. He is better taught...From times of great antiquity the athletic samurai understood the benefit of drinking only the purest of water...The Japanese student of jiu-jitsu, when he finds a slight illness coming on, he does not go to the doctor. The author is in the habit of drinking, normally, a gallon of water in twenty-four hours. Very recently he was threatened with tonsillitis. By practically abstaining from food, and by adding a half-gallon of water a day to the usual quantity, he prevented the threatened illness without regard to any medicines. And this treatment was begun after the throat became slightly ulcerated...it is believed by the Japanese that complete health cannot exist unless the internal system is most effectively cleansed by the imbibing of very frequent draughts of water, cool-not ice cold. The intestinal tract is likened, by our clever little neighbors of the Orient, to the sewer, that requires vigorous flushing.

* * *

COMMENT: Most people do not have the slightest idea how much (or how little) water they drink each day. Try setting a gallon jug of water in the refrigerator, or some other cool place, and drink ONLY from this. Your consumption will probably be closer to a quart than a gallon.

I have found that periodic, short (two or three day) fasts, drinking only distilled water, are also very good. A couple of days without food of any type (even fruit juice) will not kill you. It seems, at least for me, to greatly improve my reaction time.

Reprinted from the December, 1980 issue of The Bujin.

SUSHI STROKE

BRONX,N.Y.- First there was Chinese restaurant syndrome. But that was before sushi became chichi. Now it seems there's Japanese restaurant syndrome, too.

According to neurosurgeon Daniel Spitzer of Montefiore Hospital, a naive diner made a small mistake in his first encounter with sushi's morsels of rice and raw fish. For his first bite, he reached past the seafood-and instead picked up the delicately green pile of wasabi, a horseradish that brings tears to the eyes even when used sparingly. The sushi novice popped the entire mound into his mouth.

"His heart rate dropped, and his blood pressure plummeted," says Spitzer. "He blacked out, and ended up on the ground." It took 24 hours, but the reckless eater thoroughly recovered-although he refuses to try sushi again.

But others might not be so lucky. If arteries in an unsuspecting diner are already narrowed by fatty deposits, they could close when blood pressure drops, causing a stroke or heart attack. Wasabi is fine as a condiment, Spitzer says-just don't make it a main dish.

Hippocrates Magazine, May/June 1988.

HEAVENLY HAIKU

Don't touch my plumtree!
Said my friend and saying so...
Broke the branch for me

TAIGI

QUOTE - UNQUOTE

To ask may be a moment's shame, but not to ask and remain ignorant is a lifelong shame.

THIS IS KENDO (page 22)
J. Sasamori & G. Warner

