



Mid-America Launches New Website

By Jeff Weber

If you haven't been surfing the internet lately, you may have missed our website's new look. Each month, the site will spotlight our next Regional event on the Home Page. If it's a training or a camp, we'll let you know all about it. We still have the instructor's page with biographies of Sensei Golden & Sensei Vaughan, as well as a History page informing visitors about Master Funakoshi. The Regional Info page has contact information for our local clubs. This page will also be home to our most current Regional Newsletter and a place for visitors to submit questions. We also have a link to our Nationals Photographs on this page. Additionally, we have a Calendar Page, where you can keep up to date with what's going on this year as well as map links to all of our trainings. Finally, there's a Team Gear Page, so everyone can download the form to stay outfitted in the latest Mid-America attire. Check out the new site and let me know what you think! www.MidAmericaISKF.com

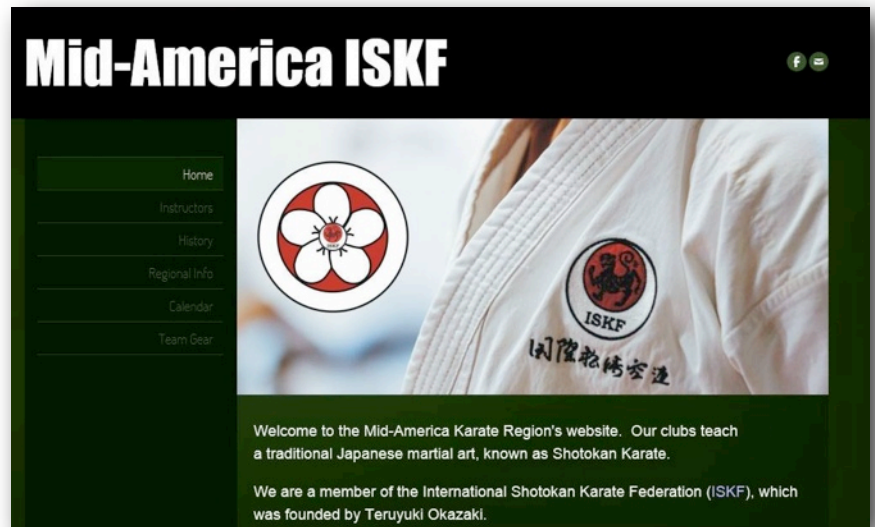


Photo Courtesy of Jeff Weber

Gedan Barai: Not just a useful block

By Dan Hunt, JSKA

Back in 2001, as part of my *Godan* exam, I explored the idea of the different ways of using the blocking motions. Even before that test, the exploration of *bunkai* in kata had been a significant interest to me. I've had the opportunity to teach several seminars and also attend seminars where the specific *bunkai* for a kata are taught. Covering a few variations for each series of techniques by changing the initial attacker's move or just the defense.

I found this fascinating but one thing that I thought was missing was a more general way to interpret our basic blocks seen over and over again in our Shotokan kata.

These concepts can be very important to help us interpret and apply the techniques in the kata. This is not a specific review of kata *bunkai* techniques but more of a general way to look at the down block (*Gedan Barai*). *Continued on Page 2*

In This Issue...

New Mid-America Website - Pg. 1

Gedan Barai Application - Pg. 1

Karate Etiquette - Pg. 3

March Regional Training - Pg. 4

Mae-Geri Application - Page 6

Special Exhibition - Page 8

Gedan Barai: Not just a useful block

Continued from Page 1

I believe it can be used as a strike, throw, joint lock and neck crank. Remember too, the use of the draw hand (*Hikite*) is very important to add to the effectiveness of the motion.

Gedan Barai: Attacks that look like blocks.

We'll cover 4 of my favorite ways to use the *Gedan Barai* motion against an attack or imminent attack. *Gedan Barai* moves from High to Low sweeping in front of the body and forward. We see this move in nearly every kata we do. All your basics apply, like having good connection, posture, speed and power. All could apply to the moves in *Heian Shodan*.

Summary

I think you can see that these concepts should help you with reading a kata and give you some different ways to

look at a *Gedan Barai*. Note that these would be followed up by a punch, kick or are the initiation of a throw.

Many times when I train or teach, I change the thought of the technique from a block to an attack. It takes on a little different feeling and sometimes adds a focus point to the initial movements where some attacking is going on too.

As for the kata *bunkai*, many find it a challenge to remember exactly what move 21 in kata XYZ is meant to show along with the 5 variations you've seen from other instructors, seminars and YouTube videos. The more you study different ways to use the same technique, the more those principles can guide you to the ideas of how to interpret other techniques.



#1: Grab lead hand of imminent attack, pull down and unbalance as you move to side.



#2: Attacker grabs your lapel, secure with your *Hikite*, move to side, bring arm over, elbow to face, luxation to tricep tendon.



#3: After suppressing haymaker punch, slide arm behind head, hit with head with bicep, grab chin and throw as you turn.



#4: Suppress haymaker, send to your right side, grab, press your LH into chin and pull as you step away, drop him on your knee. (*Heian 1* move 3-6)

Photos courtesy of Dan Hunt

Basic Karate Etiquette

By Carol Glenn

At the close of March Regional Training, as Sensei Vaughan turned to address the students, he mentioned he wanted to put some emphasis on "Etiquette" this year. To help with that endeavor, provided below is information on "Basic Karate Etiquette". With respect to Shotokan Karate, Etiquette is tradition and respect rolled into our behavior and attitude. Karate etiquette not only is a reflection of your training, but that of your instructor and dojo as well. Please read, learn and share the information presented below. It is the responsibility of EVERY Shotokan Karate practitioner to learn, apply, and pass on, these important behaviors.

Uniform (*dogi* or *gi*)

- White *gi*, ISKF logo and calligraphy permitted on uniform, left front
- Top long enough to cover buttocks
- Sleeves cut to mid-forearm length, between elbows and wrists
- Pant legs cut to mid-calf length, between knees and ankles
- Sleeves and pant legs should not be rolled outward, may be rolled inward
- Women suggested to wear white sports bra or may wear a plain, white t-shirt
- The uniform should be cleaned regularly
- Each end of the belt when tied should be 12-18 inches in length
- Bare feet

Personal

- NO Jewelry – no earrings, no rings, no necklaces, no bracelets – wrist or ankle
- If rings or bracelets cannot be removed, they may be taped
- No metal hair "ties"
- Fingernails and toenails should be trimmed short and without sharp edges
- Students should bathe regularly



Image courtesy of velominati.com

Dojo

- Bow at the side of the room/ring before entering the dojo/ring, and the same upon leaving
- No shoes on the dojo floor
- ALWAYS arrive before Sensei
- When *Sensei* arrives, attention should be called and everyone should bow
- Line up (quickly) with senior students (usually to the right facing *Shomen*, juniors to the left), the line should be centered to where *Sensei* is seated; if needed the second line should start behind the senior students, all the way to the right
- If late and class has begun, sit in *seiza* near the rear of the dojo and meditate. When finished, bow to the front, stand up and wait to be recognized by the instructor, then join the class
- Do not leave the floor or dojo unless you have an emergency or permission from Sensei
- Run when asked to change position
- No fighting in or out of the dojo
- No food or drink in the dojo
- Silence all cell phones and electronic devices (parents too!)

Continued on Page 4

Basic Karate Etiquette

Continued from Page 3

Training

- Pay attention to the instructor, assume the instructor is talking to you!
- When listening to Sensei, no hands on hips and no arms crossed in front of the chest
- Do not talk during class unless asking a question (raise your hand and wait for the instructor to call on you) or answering a question from the instructor. Please note that the instructor may ask students to hold their questions until after class.
- If told to sit, sit in *seiza*; if told to relax, bow first then change to cross-leg sitting position
- Never sit with legs straight with the bottom of feet facing *Shomen*
- With partners, bow first before beginning the training, and again when finished
- Always give your best effort to give your partner the best training you can

- Do not carry on conversations before, during or after completion of partner training, if necessary a few words for clarification
- Do not walk between partners
- During training if you need to adjust your gi or belt, turn to the rear, away from *Shomen*

Miscellaneous

- Senior students should take responsibility for teaching junior students proper etiquette
- Junior students should address senior students as “*Senpai*”
- Everyone should address the sensei as “*Sensei*”

So, beginning with your next club training, and at the next Regional event, it is expected that you will be able to demonstrate proper “Basic Karate Etiquette.”

Mid-America Hosts First 2014 Regional Training

By Adam Clouser

The sound of swishing gis and thumping feet returned to Delaware Ohio on March 22, where Mid-America held its first regional training of 2014. Led by Sensei Vaughan, the class focused on a return to basics in preparation of a new year of karate training. After a light warm up we jumped right in to basic motion and control of our hips. When practicing techniques, Sensei reminded us to never lead our techniques with our arms; karate motion starts with the hips. By twitching our hips and driving off our back leg, before our hands move, we attain maximum power and finish the motion in correct position. When practicing basic technique, it is important to maintain a firm support foot/knee and drive off of our back leg. These basics, along with others, provide the root of our karate and must be mastered before we can move on to more advanced movement.

After practice in basic motion and technique, the class was divided in to two groups; the *Kyu* ranks led by Sensei Obershlake and the Dan ranks led by

Sensei Vaughan. The Dan ranks continued their lesson on basic movement by working on *oi-zuki* from *jiyu-kamae*. Sensei Vaughan explained the need for smooth stepping, moving the weight over the support knee in a linear fashion and then driving in to the punch with spirit and *kime*. This was practiced with partners and Sensei encouraged us to “Make them fear you when you step.” He told us that the power of our entire body behind the technique, along with the speed of a smooth step, will yield a movement that is difficult to stop and should give your opponent a feeling of fear when aimed at them. Never make *oi-zuki*, or any technique, with a relaxed feeling; move with intent.

Sensei Vaughan provided us with two drills to practice with partners:

Continued on Page 5

Mid-America Hosts First 2014 Regional Training

Continued from Page 4

Partner Drill #1

A: Steps in *oi-zuki chudan*.

B: Rotate to opponents outside to approximately a 45 degree angle blocking with *soto-ude-uke*. Then shift in to front stance and *gyaku-zuki*.

A: Steps in *oi-zuki chudan*. Then provides target near their head with *bikite* hand.

B: Rotate to opponents outside blocking with *soto-ude-uke*. Then use blocking hand to grasp opponents wrist and continue rotating the same direction. Perform *empi-uchi* landing in *kiba-dachi*, twist the opposite way striking *empi-uchi* a second time. The second elbow strike hits the target provided by opponent.

These drills are provided in two pairs with A and B representing the partners. The first pairing is the basic version, with the second being the more advanced. After making the block, press/lean in to the opponents arm to break the opponent's posture. Stay low and rotate tight against the opponent.

Partner Drill #2

A: Step in *oi-zuki jodan*.

B: Shift to opponents outside blocking open hand. Perform *yoko geri kekomi*. Grasp opponents wrist and pull them in to the kick while simultaneously breaking their posture.

A: Step in *oi-zuki jodan*.

B: Shift to outside, blocking open hand. Then pull opponent in while kicking *yoko geri kekomi*. After the kick, shift in and land front leg behind opponent while moving front hand across opponents body (switch hands so back hand now controls opponents punching arm). From this position rotating your body (just a twitch) will roll the opponent over your hip and to the ground. Finish opponent with your choice of technique.

These drills are provided in two pairs with A and B representing the partners. The first pairing is the basic version, with the second being the more advanced. As in the previous drill, using your own

body to break your opponent's balance/posture, when performing the block, will put them at your mercy. Make sure to be close to opponent when performing the takedown. Use your body against theirs.

Sensei walked the Dan ranks through the kata *Hangetsu* to finish training. He provided pointers on the kata and stances involved. Two of these included:

Inward tension isn't in the knees. The tension is created by tensing inward and upward with the core and pelvic muscles.

Control your breathing. Breathe inward on blocking techniques, collect your tension, and breathe out on striking techniques.

Big thanks are due to both Sensei Vaughan and Sensei Obershlake for the excellent instruction over the weekend. The training was well needed after the winter's break and everyone attending had a wonderful time and got a great workout. As always, Sensei can only provide us with the lessons, it is up to us to bring them back to our respective dojos and practice them. We look forward to seeing everyone in a couple weeks, on April 12-13, as we welcome Sensei Cathy Cline to our region for our annual Spring Camp, held on the campus of The Ohio State University.



Sensei Martin Vaughan led our first Regional Training of 2014.

Photo courtesy of midamericaiskf.com

Proper Application of *Mae-Geri*

Last quarter, I provided my method for developing the proper technique for *mae-geri*, or front kick. As a follow-up, I am sharing my thoughts on the additional steps in the learning process – proper application.

Technique is the foundation of application, and the two must be developed simultaneously. You cannot successfully apply *mae-geri* without proper technique, and you cannot consider your technique correct unless you can successfully apply it.

The critical elements of application, in addition to proper technique, are timing, distance, and target. I will cover each of these facets of kicking application and provide a training guide for improvement.

Proper timing is highly variable based on a number of factors, but ultimately, success is achieved when you land the kick with sufficient power to disable your opponent. There are five basic types of timing: 1) Counter-attacking your opponent after successfully blocking or evading their completed technique, or *go-no-sen*. 2) Counter-attacking your opponent while simultaneously blocking or evading their technique, *sen-no-sen*. 3) Attacking your opponent at the instant they start to launch their attack, *sen-sen-no-sen*. 4) Catching your opponent off-guard by launching a *mae-geri* offensively when you observe their lack of readiness. 5) And finally, launching a *mae-geri* as part of an attacking combination (*awase waza*). Utilizing any of these types of timing can effectively disable your opponent if done properly and all are dependent on your situation.

The proper distance is determined by your ability to land a *mae-geri* without breaking form. There are three considerations: your own distance, your opponent's distance, and the combined distance as you and your opponent move together. As you move in a combative situation, you must constantly evaluate your opponent. When the intercept of proper timing and proper distance is achieved, launch the technique to your chosen target. Often times, especially when using *mae-geri* as a counter-



Photo courtesy of Martin Schrager

attack, you must adjust your support leg to create sufficient distance for a powerful kick

In its simplest form, target is defined as the location at which you intend to land your kick. When fighting an inexperienced opponent, the target often presents itself. Their hips may be more squared to you than to the side. This provides a larger and more directly aligned area for which to aim. Additionally, their hand position is critical. An experienced opponent will typically have a strong guarded position, creating smaller openings, where those with less experience may have their hands more open, too low, or generally misplaced, allowing for an opening in which to insert your foot. However, even with an experienced opponent, you can work to create these openings by adjusting your position.

Proper position is a function of distance, timing, and target. You must be in the right place at the right time and typically, you must create this by influencing your opponents movement, taking advantage of their lack of awareness of your intent.

Continued on Page 7

Continued from Page 6 Proper Application of *Mae-Geri*

Position is always subjective based on your opponent's movement and your capabilities and must be developed in order to understand and feel when it is right. Typically, you want to create the appropriate angle where the *mae-geri* has the largest target and the least likelihood of being blocked. This may involve switching to your off side or driving your opponent off-balance to open up the best angle.

All of these factors are critical and must be developed through rigorous training in order to be successful in executing *mae-geri*.

Training guide

Go-no-sen – Both students stand in *zen-kutsu-dachi* (front stance) with the left side forward. One side steps in making *mae-geri* while the other student makes *yor-ashi* (shifting step) to the approximate 5 o'clock position, simultaneously making *gedan-barai* (downward block). Immediately after blocking (preferably before the opponent's foot hits the floor) adjust your support leg for proper distance and launch a counter-attack *mae-geri* to the belt level. Repeat 20 times, gradually increasing in speed, then switch to the other person. Repeat with the right side forward.

Sen-no-sen – Using the same position as above, one side steps forward making *oi-zuki* (lunge punge) to the face. The defensive side holds position and launches a *mae-geri* to the belt level while

simultaneously blocking the punch with the either hand (alternate blocking hands to be prepared for varying situations). Repeat 20 times gradually increasing speed then switch to the other person. Repeat with the right side forward.

Sen-sen-no-sen – Using the same position as above, one side steps in with *oi-zuki*, the other side drives forward with *mae-geri* at the instant they start their forward movement, catching them prior to the completion of their technique. Regardless of how good your timing is, it is always a good idea to keep your hands in a position so as to block any technique that may break through your counter-attack. Repeat 20 times then switch people. Repeat with the right side forward.

Offensive and waza – practice moving in *jiyu-kamae* with your opponent and experiment launching *mae-geri* on its own or as part of a *waza* when you observe the right situation. There is no right answer – you have to find what works for you.

Position – Create position on your opponent using the fundamentals discussed above regarding openings. Have your opponent remain in a stationary position. Quickly switch from left-side forward to the right side forward and simultaneously move your center several inches to the left. Immediately launch the kick so as not to give your opponent time to adjust their position.



1. Fight same side forward as opponent



2. Switch to opposite side and move several inches to the inside of your opponent's center



3. Immediately launch kick with better inside position.

Special Exhibition at Detroit Institute of Arts **"Samurai: Beyond the Sword"**

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Tel: 313-833-7899
E-mail: pmarcil@dia.org



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Sensei Golden



Chief Instructor, ISKF Mid-America Region

Sensei Greer Golden graduated from the Instructor Trainee Program in 1969 and was sent to Ohio University in Athens to begin sharing his knowledge with Mid-America karate students.

Sensei Vaughan



Assistant Instructor, ISKF Mid-America Region

Sensei Martin Vaughan has been training under Sensei Golden and Master Okazaki for over 40 years and has been our region's Assistant Instructor since 1999. He is also the Chief Instructor of Indiana ISKF.

Executive Director, Mid-America Region

Sensei James Nelson is the Chief Instructor of the Swartz Creek Karate Club and has served as the Executive Director of the Mid-America Region since 2003.

Calendar

May 17, 2014

Adult regional tournament and Regional Board of Director's meeting - Willis Intermediate School, Delaware, Ohio

June 6 - 13, 2014

ISKF Master Camp and Goodwill Tournament - Camp Green Lane, PA

July 25, 2014

Regional training - Brown County Dojo, Hamersville, OH

July 26, 2014

Mid-America Golf Outing - Friendly Meadows Golf Course, Hamersville, OH

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