



OKINAWA BUDO NEWS

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Okinawa 2007</i>	1
<i>Dojo News</i>	1
<i>2007 Isshinkai Enbukai</i>	2
<i>Kobudo Historical Site</i>	2
<i>Bokator of Cambodia</i>	3
<i>Obon & Eisa</i>	4
<i>Okinawa's Superman</i>	4

Special points of interest:

- Don Bohan & Rick Niemira Memorial Tournament June 27 & 28 2008 Fredericksburg, Virginia <http://www.bohans-family.com/>
- From Okinawa Tokumura Kencho Sensei U.S & Canada Seminars June/July 2008

OKINAWA TRIP 2007

OBK Chief Instructors Jeff Perkins & Carol Womack traveled to Okinawa during the months of August & September to partake in cultural festivities, sight seeing and training. The weather was hot & humid as is typical for Okinawa during the Summer months. Carol & Jeff attended a local Eisa Festival and an Eisa party at Tokumura Kencho Sensei's new house and dojo. This trip was mainly a training trip for Jeff & Carol who logged many hours on the dojo floor with Kobudo teachers Tokumura Kencho Sensei of Tokushin Kobudo & Iha Kotaro Sensei of Ryu Kon Kai.



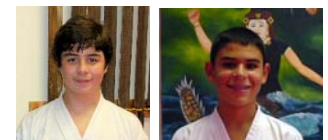
DOJO NEWS - PROMOTIONS

During their recent trip to Okinawa, OBK Chief Instructors Jeff Perkins & Carol Womack tested for their 5th Degree Black Belt in RyuKyu Kobudo RyuKonKai. It was (5) days of testing in the heat and humidity of Summer time Okinawa. The testing was

conducted under the guidance of Iha Kotaro Sensei, 9th Dan, who awarded Jeff & Carol their GoDan certificates in RyuKyu Kobudo.

Ni and Jimmy Michels was promoted to Senpai Sho (Junior Black Belts) in Okinawa Isshinryu Karatedo. Great job guys!

During the month of October OBK Advanced Kids Alex Agne was promoted to Senpai



2007 ISSHINKAI ENBUKAI - OCEANSIDE, CA.

The annual Isshinkai Enbukai was hosted in Oceanside, California by Chief Instructor A.J. Advincula. This years event commemorated the 100th birthday of Isshinryu's founder, Shimabuku Tatsuo Sensei and the 33rd anniversary of his death according to the Lunar or "Samurai" calendar. Karate-ka from all over the U.S. & Canada participated in three days of training, camaraderie, demonstrations, Isshinryu history & traditions and.....oh yes....much kanpai !

Special guests this year were Isshinryu 1st generation Robert Safreed, John Bartusevics and long time Advincula student from Okinawa & State side, Robert Embese. All are Marines who have served our country.



ISSHINRYU KARATE HISTORY

There's a small group of Isshinryu Karate practitioners who are diligently working to uncover and keep the TRUE history of Okinawa Isshinryu Karatedo. Recently, a couple "pearls" of Isshinryu have been brought to the surface. Sensei John Bartusevics and Sensei Jake Eckenrode have been in contact again with the Isshinryu community sharing

their stories and photos of Master Shimabuku Tatsuo and the Agena, Okinawa Honbu Dojo. I've had the pleasure of talking to Sensei Eckenrode by phone and meeting Sensei Bartusevics at the 2007 Isshinkai Enbukai. I've also had the pleasure of being the catalyst for a phone conversation between Sensei Eckenrode and his

"tomodachi" (good friend) and teacher Tokumura Kensho Sensei in Okinawa. They had not conversed with each other since the Agena Dojo over 40 years ago.

You can find their recent interviews and photos on the *Bohan Family Web Site*.

www.bohans-family.com



RYUKYU KOBUDO HISTORICAL SITE

Shikina Garden's Banya and Soeishi Oyakata

For serious researchers of Ryukyu Kobudo, the ancient book "Ryukyu Kobudo Taikan" is a must. In this book, there is an explication of the Kata "Soeishi no Kon". Also pronounced "Shishi no Kon" in Okinawan dialect, this Kata was passed down by the Soeishi family, who were the Ryukyuan king's martial art instructors. It

is said that the Kata was originally passed on by Chinese imperial envoys, and that only the king and the first son of the Soeishi family were taught it. During their visit to the Ryukyu, these envoys, also named Sapposhi, were welcomed and entertained at the beautiful Shikina Garden, today a UNESCO World Heritage Site. In the garden, visitors can discover the Banya or guard house where Soeishi Oyakata* stayed when the king was in the

garden. While rebuilt in 1977 and less impressive than the main building facing the lake, it is certainly one of the few kobudo historical sites standing today.

* Oyakata is a higher rank title in ancient Ryukyu.

<http://www.okinawa-karate.jp>



The Greatest Value of Karate Training

During our recent visit to Okinawa, Iha Kotaro Sensei gave Carol and myself a handout titled, "The Origins and Spirit of Okinawan Karatedo". Here is an important section that caught my eye:

"The greatest value of karate lies in right action. It drives us to take right actions whenever and wherever such actions need to be taken. Karate does not teach us to avoid or escape the inevitable evils of the world, but rather to gather fresh strength to face and beat them. Therefore, we will fight when fighting is absolutely necessary.

Otherwise, we never fight. Those who follow the way of karate must consider courtesy of prime importance. Without courtesy, the essence of karatedo is lost. Those without courtesy are not qualified to be karateka, even if they excel others in their technique. This is the very reason why karate practice begins and ends with the traditional bow. The bow represents one's recognition of the meaning of courtesy. Courtesy must be practiced constantly, not only during training periods, but at all times in one's daily life. Courtesy is

universal. It transcends all distinctions such as language, nationality, race, sex, age, and religion. Our mutual relationships can be peacefully maintained and developed so long as courtesy is exercised towards others."

(Shigeru Takamiyagi, Robert Dus & Lisken L.P. Dus)



Rei



Bokator: Cambodian Blood Sport

Images of Bokator, the martial art of ancient Cambodia, can be seen depicted in bas-relief on the walls of Angkor Wat, the famous temple located in northwest Cambodia, in the capital of the once mighty Khmer empire. A hand-to-hand combat system used by the ancient Angkorean

army, Bokator played a crucial role in Angkorean domination of much of the Southeast Asian mainland from around 800 A.D. until the early 15th century. Thailand, then Siam, defeated Angkor in 1431, beginning a long struggle with Vietnam over control of the Khmer kingdom,

before France intervened in 19th century and proclaimed a protectorate over the region. Though the tradition of Bokator was nearly lost during the bloody Khmer Rouge era it was revived in recent years with the return of relative peace to the region.



Bokator: Cambodian Blood Sport (continued)

In 2001, one of the sport's grand masters, Sam Kim Saen, returned to Cambodia some 20 years after fleeing the Khmer Rouge. He and other Bokator teachers worked to revive the ancient art, holding the first Bokator conference in Phnom Penh in 2004. The sport soon spread to other provinces of Cambodia, and the first national championships

were held at Olympic Stadium in Phnom Penh in the fall of 2006.

Bokator fighters, known as yuthkhun, train in a wide variety of styles, each based on the fighting motions of a particular animal. Monkey, lion, elephant, crocodile, crab, horse, bird and dragon are only a few of the hundreds of different fighting styles. Instead of

belts, Bokator uses colored kramas, or scarves to indicate the fighter's level. In Bokator, any part of the body can be used as a weapon, including fingers, hips, jaws and shoulders. Techniques in Bokator include strikes, throws, trapping, locking, grappling and ground-fighting, as well as sword and stick maneuvers.

www.history.com



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Okinawa Obon & Eisa

The Okinawa custom of *Obon* takes place from July 13 -15 on the old lunar calendar. Okinawans invite their ancestral spirits to visit the family's Buddhist altar during this holiday period. Family members clean up their clan's tomb on July 7th of the lunar calendar to let the ancestral spirits resting inside the tomb know that *Obon* is approaching. During *Obon* people pray, eat, sing and dance with the spirits before sending them back to the other world.

On the first day of the festivities, which is called *Unkeh*, family members and relatives gather at the main family home and family altar. They place fruit, water, saki, tea, and a pair of sugar cane stalks on the altar. In the evening, they also light candles at the house's entrance and the family altar to invite back ancestral spirits.

The last day of *Obon* is called *Uukui*. During *Uukui*, relatives gather and hold a luxurious dinner before sending off the spirits to the other world. They place on the altar a variety of food and some paper money called *uchikabi* (paper imprinted with a coin pattern) for the spirits to use in the other world.

Family members wait until about midnight before removing the offerings from the altar and placing them at the entrance to their home. Then, they light incense and burn *uchikabi* at the home's gate to see off the ancestral spirits. Traditionally, Okinawans believed that the spirits will return to the other world carrying *uchikabi* money and using the sugar cane stalks as walking sticks.

An event that takes place during *Obon* is *Eisa* dancing, which is performed after the spirits are sent back to the other world. *Eisa* is *Bon Odori* (dance) of Okinawa and is performed by groups of young people in cities and villages. Young men and women play drums and *sanshin*, a banjo-like Okinawan instrument as they dance down the streets to wish good health and prosperity.

(Okinawa: An Introduction, by Christopher Ames & Hisashi Ashimine)

Okinawa's Superman

On November 3, 1951 Ie-jima Island produced a modern day karate legend name Kiyohide Shinjo. He began karate training, not by his own choice, when he was ten years old. His Father, Seiyu, was a hard man concerning karate. He maintained the uncompromising, sometimes inhuman, standard of training established by Uechiryu's founder, Kanbun Uechi.

Intoxicated servicemen often found their way into the dojo, challenging the Okinawans to fight, in those days. Seiyu Shinjo often ordered his son to fight the belligerent Americans. For many years the skinny young Okinawan was beaten by the challengers. As Kiyohide's size, strength, and karate ability increased, so did his dislike for American servicemen. In time Kiyohide won every fight with great pleasure.

In 1968, The Uechi Ryu Karate Shubukai held the first annual Uechi ryu tournament. It included kata (forms) and kumite (sparring) competition for black belts. Seiyu

Shinjo was the organizer and tournament director. His son Kiyohide, placed third in kata in the inaugural tournament.

At the third annual tournament in 1970, Kiyohide Shinjo won the championship in both kata and kumite. He continued to do so for a record nine years. He became a legend in Okinawa in the process and is often called "Okinawa's Superman"

In 1978, the eighth year of his championship reign, the first All Okinawa Championship Tournament was held. The champion of this historic sparring event, open to black belts of all karate styles, was Kiyohide Shinjo. He retired from competition after the 1980 Uechi ryu tournament, due to the ill health of his father.

The Uechi ryu tournament ran uninterrupted for twenty years until the break up of the Uechi Ryu Association in 1988. The Kadena dojo won the championship in fifteen of the twenty tournaments.

The Shinjo Dojo of Kadena, Okinawa is often called upon by the Government to perform demonstrations in Okinawa and around the world. Seiko Toyama and Kiyohide Shinjo were given the honor of performing karate for the President of the United States and other world leaders at the G-Eight Summit in Okinawa in June 2000.

The Shinjo family is one of vigorous strength who live by the code of Gosatu Bokuto...

"Live life easy and peacefully, but when it is time to fight become ferocious."

<http://www.1shoken.com/Kiyohide.htm>

