

# SHORIN-RYU KARATE

*Karate ni sente nashi* (There is no first attack in karate) is the guiding principle of Okinawan karate. *Matsubayashi Shorin-Ryu* Karate stresses that combat is “a defensive art from the beginning to the end.” The components of this art are not merely techniques of self-defense, but are means to develop the individual mentally and physically.

Matsubayashi Shorin-Ryu Karate was developed on the island of Okinawa, about half way between mainland China and Japan. It was developed from the teachings of masters Kyan, Motobu, and Arakiki by Shoshin Nagamine Sensei. Grand master Nagamine's Shorin-Ryu blends the arts of Shuri-te and Tomari-te, native martial arts heavily influenced by the southern Chinese Kung-Fu.

The names Matsubayashi and Shorin are both pronunciations of the same Japanese characters for the Chinese word *shaolin*, or pine forest. These all refer to the Fukien Shaolin Temple which influenced the kung-fu of the southern Chinese martial artists, who either taught/demonstrated to Okinawans in China or traveled to Okinawa. The name Matsubayashi is also Grandmaster Nagamine's tribute to Kosaku Matsumora and Sokon Matsumura, early pioneers of the Shorin-Ryu system of karate. The word karate originally meant Chinese hand (To-de), but was changed to mean empty hand because of Japanese influence and to underscore the weaponless, peaceful nature of the Okinawan people.

Karate was popularized in Japan and found its way to the rest of the world from there. It was after WWII, during the U.S. occupation of Japan that Karate became widely known. Many service men, especially U.S. Marines, studied the techniques from the Japanese and Okinawans and brought what they learned back to America.

Shorin-Ryu has elements of free fighting, pressure point attacks, and grappling. Shorin-Ryu emphasizes the practice of *kata*, (a series of pre-arranged empty hand forms) to develop the attributes necessary for effective self-defense. Matsubayashi Shorin-Ryu has ten basic kata and eight advanced (fighting) katas.

Mastery of karate requires the following:

1. **Courtesy** and respect of others and of the traditions of the art.
2. **Practice** often with focus and to the best of one's ability.
3. **Cleanliness** externally and internally. Strive for perfection.
4. **Sequential** movement. Move in the order of eyes, feet, hands.

DOJO KUN (training hall rules) as outlined by Master Nagamine

- First, purify your mind.
- Cultivate the power of perseverance by strengthening your body and overcoming the difficulties that arise during training.
- The dojo is the place where courage is fostered and superior human nature is bred through the ecstasy of sweating in hard work. It is the sacred place where human spirit is polished. Work hard, do not waste time with idle talk.
- Seniors and black belts are aware of these facts. Therefore, beginners are expected to keep the above in mind and observe the following:

Bow when entering or leaving the training area (dojo)  
Address all black belts as “Sensei” in any formal training  
Thank all seniors for their instruction  
Cheerfully assist any juniors with difficulties they may face

## JAPANESE TERMS

**Karate** – Empty hand, originally Chinese hand, refers to the weaponless forms of combat developed in Okinawa.

**Matsubayashi & Shorin-Ryu** – Pine forest style, refers to the Matsumura and Chinese influence on Okinawan karate.

**Do** – “Way” or path, meaning lifestyle the practitioner. Usually, a philosophical outlook on life and combat.

**Jutsu** – “art” or technique, refers strictly to attributes and technical form.

**Dojo** – School or training area.

**Karateka** – A practitioner of karate.

**Dan** – The holder of a black belt.

**Kyu** – A student rank (9<sup>th</sup> to 1<sup>st</sup>).

**Kata** – Form, refers to pre-arranged movements of attack and defense.

**Kime** – Focus, sometimes refers to the point where kata begin and end.

**Gedan** – Lower body level.

**Chudan** – Chest level.

**Jodan** – Head level.

**Waza** – Technique.

**Dachi** – Stance.

**Shizentai** – Natural stance.

**Jigotai** – Wide leg stance.

**Zenkutsu** – Long stance.

**Neko ashi** – Cat stance.

**Shihan** – A master’s grade, usually 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> dan.

**Sensei** – Any senior.

**Gi** – The uniform of a karateka.

**Onegai-shimasu** – Please, teach me.

**Domo arigato** – Thank you.

**Kyotsuke** – Attention.

**Yoi** – Ready.

**Rei** – To bow.

**Ritsurei** – Standing bow. Informal salute.

**Seiza** – To sit.

**Zarei** – Kneeling bow. Formal salute.

**Hai** – Yes.

**Iye** – No.

**Uke** – Block.

**Zuki** – Punch.

**Geri** – Kick.

**Hajime** – To begin.

**Yame** – To stop.

**Kumite** – Sparring.

**Ki** – Internal energy.

**Kiai** – Spirit convergence, a yell accompanying a strike.

**Makiwara** - A post for developing power and focus in strikes.

**Zazen** – Sitting meditation.

## **NUMBERS**

**Ichi** - one

**Ni** – two

**San** – three

**Shih** – four

**Go** – five

**Rocku** – six

**Sichi** – seven

**Hachi** – eight

**Ku** – nine

**Ju** – ten

## SHORIN-RYU PRINCIPLES

- *Karate ni sente nashi* (There is no first attack in karate), karate is for self-protection and keeping the peace.
- Sequential Movement-Movement begins with the eyes followed by feet, then hands. Although these are three separate actions they come together as one fluid movement.
- Movement is direct, in a straight line from one point to another.
- Counter attack off the angle of an aggressor to maximize both offense and defense. Never directly opposed superior force.
- 8 S of Shorin Ryu

These are the eight points on our emblem and the eight directions of movement in Matsubayashi-Ryu kata.

Shorin Ryu

Science

Solemn

System

Splendid

Speed

Spirit

Strength

## OTHER PRINCIPLES

- In general, strike in the theory of the Yin and Yang. Hit hard targets with softer attacks and hit soft targets with harder attacks.
- Yield to force and follow retreats. Any attack creates a target.
- Attack off angle in the opposing direction of a joint (e.g. the side of the knee).
- Striking is elementary physics at work. Learn the theories of collisions, force, pressure, impulse,

momentum, and kinetic energy and how they apply.