

SRKHIA Newsletter 2/03

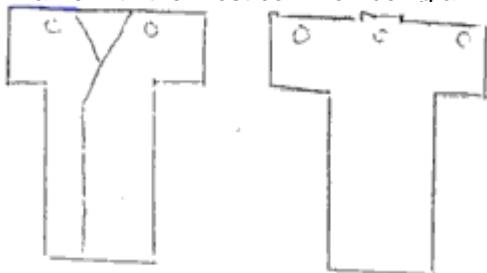
Dear karateka,

Your Newsletter is arriving once more this year. This time may be earlier than normal, but certain personal obligations in the coming days obliged me to do so, in order to avoid unnecessary delays. I have received several positive comments, concerning the "new face" of the Newsletter and I am glad about that. Thank you for your comments and I promise you to do my best to serve the Shotokan Ryu Kase Ha Instructors Academy. I am also waiting your contributions to the Newsletter; I consider as necessary to make this Newsletter a forum for all. Do not hesitate, send your contributions.

Budo Themes

In the last edition I told you that in this letter I will talk about SRKH emblem or *mon* as it is the Japanese term. I will start first by explaining what a *mon* is. Japanese *mon* first appeared in Japan during the Heian - Fujiwara Period (785 - 1185), by the nobility as a mean of identification on the battlefield. It quickly evolved into a heraldic device, worn by the Imperial Court. The *mon* was used like the European crest or coat of arms, to identify retainers and belongings.

Mon are generally simple and they incorporate a motif with symbolic connotations. Examples are the bamboo denoting constancy and fidelity; pine, stability of character and unflinching purpose; the crane, a thousand years of long life; the cherry blossom, bravery and glory; the plum blossom, fortitude; and the radish, fertility. Many *mon* are similar but with subtle differences; by changing the position or posture of the motif, by drawing the motif with different emphasis, by including or excluding parts of the motif. The *mon* were often varied by the addition of a ring or a square as a frame with the most common being a ring.



The *mon* was displayed on kimono using the "three places, five places rule". For informal wear the *mon* was placed on each side of the front of the kimono and in the center of the back. Formal kimono added *mon* to the back of each sleeve. During the later part of the Heian Period large sleeves became very popular and often had huge *mon* painted on the front of the sleeve; this style of sleeve is known as *montsuki*.

Sometimes families or clans had many different *mon* that were associated with the family. But it became the practice to choose one *mon* that was the official symbol of the family or clan. That *mon* was known as the *jomon* or front *mon* and was usually the oldest or most significant of the *mon* used by the particular group. Any other *mon* used by the family was called the *kaemon* or back *mon*.

The *mon* of **Shotokan Ryu Kase Ha** has been selected by *T. Kase sensei* and is shown below. I am absolutely sure that everybody knows it. What it is not possibly well known is that it has the form of a *hanko*, (personal seal used by Japanese together with their signature). It composed by the kanji character **Gi**, meaning **the right decision, rectitude** (see Newsletter 1/03), but drawn in a special way, appropriate for *hanko*. The calligraphy of this kanji is also shown, so recognition is easy. The kanji **Gi** comprises part of the word **Giri**, meaning *obligation, loyalty, duty*, part of the name of the founder of Shotokan, *Funakoshi Gichin*, *the man of right decision*, and probably is found in the nickname of *Funakoshi Yoshitaka*, **Giko**. The last I am not absolutely sure, since I have not see the *Giko* written in Japanese and as you may know many Japanese word have same or similar sounds but different writing, the later being the one giving the correct meaning. Last but not least, I have heard, but not confirm it yet, that Kase sensei has chosen this *mon*, because it was the *hanko* of Funakoshi Yoshitaka; I transmit this information but I am not in a position today to confirm it.



Any way this the mon of SRKH and its meaning. What is important to be clearly understood is that, everyone bearing this *Mon* on his *keikogi*, our keikogi, fully honor the meaning as well the family which it indicates.

Reports

LECOURT Pascal, well known to all, has directed a course in Luxemburg on 18 and 19 January 2003. Heene Dirk, who attended this seminar, provides the following report:

SRKHA COURSES /PASCAL LECOURT LUX 18-19 JAN 2003.

Since a couple of years P. Lecourt is teaching in Luxembourg for the club from the European Commission (Peter Taylor). This year there was an attendance from qualified instructors from several countries, which gave the course, and Pascal himself, an extra push.

There was a delegation from Belgium, Germany, England, Ireland, Scotland and France and not to forget, the very international crew from Luxembourg. Pascal tried to express himself in a better English and even, his demonstrations did not need any comment.

Session 1

I trained with Laurence (Bel).

Henka waza with open hand techniques. After attacking, we had to block the counter and continue with an open hand combination (shuto, haito, nukite).

There was special attention for the specific kamae's.

First in the kihon and later, gradually, in the kumite, we were introduced in the complexity from open hand skills. Later on we even combined with side stepping and kicking.

Session 2

I trained with Peter (Lux), Christian and Jérôme (both from France). By the way, Jérôme did an effort to support the English (Irish) translation from Pascal.

Subject: Bassai dai oyo.

There was a development of the bassai dai in a linear kumite version. This fitted well in in the typical atmosphere from a weekend course. A step by step continuous kumite situation with a fluid feeling of constant changing strategy. It was not a cut bunkai explanation but a real feeling of combat. The original interpretation and the introduction of some new blocks gave a wider view on the kata.

Session 3

I trained with Peter (Lux).

Enbu kumite: An attack-defence combination where both harmony and clear understanding from both partners are involved. A selection out of the grading syllabus from shodan until sandan was worked out in a kihon and kumite set.

The body dynamics in the kihon and the body shifting in the kumite made this session to the most demanding physical part of the course.

Session 4

Again I trained with Peter.

Subject: Tekki oyo.

In the early 80's sensei Kase created the Heian oyo and the Tekki oyo kata combination. The Heian oyo is regularly repeated and has even been introduced into the grading syllabus. The Tekki oyo is nearly forgotten and remained in the shadows. Well Pascal brought it back in the spotlights.

The Tekki practice, together with the applications, made this session certainly to the most demanding brainwork part.

Conclusion

For the black belts and the instructors among the participants it was certainly a technical uplift. Original visions on kata-applications and kumite workout gave a different view on training and teaching strategy.

Thanks very much Pascal and we are looking forward to the next January-course in 2004.

Dirk Heene Jan 21, 2003.

Thank you Dirk for this contribution. I am looking forward to similar contributions from other members.

Recommended Courses:

On the last moment (literally on the print) I received the latest version of courses by T. Kase sensei in 2003, which I attach for your information. Specific information on these courses as well as in courses with different instructors, you may find in www.kamikazeweb.com/events Please be reminded that information relevant to courses, by SRKHIA instructors, will be provided every month, in the same way, provided you have informed me accordingly. Please take under consideration that due to certain technical difficulties that I have encountered, I am not able to distribute posters etc to large numbers of recipients by e-mail. However I will forward them to Frank Schubert for insertion in his Calendar of events in the above mentioned site.

Membership status:

I would like to remind everybody that I have already asked for renewal of 2003 memberships. Please remember that the membership fee has been increased to 60 Euro or 36 British pounds. Many of those who participated in the Hasselt Gashuku have already paid, some others have already done but not all. For those who have not yet, I remind that payments may be done, either by bank transfer to our account: Natwest Bank Ltd, Cheltenham Branch, 31 Promenade, Cheltenham, GL50 1LH, UK, Sort Code 60-05-16, Account number 16412087, Beneficiary Shotokan Ryu Kase Ha Instructors Academy (attention, in this case you transfer only British pounds), or by a bank cheque or international money order, made payable to Shotokan Ryu Kase Ha Instructors Academy and posted to our Treasurer, Alan Armstrong, 19 Jubilee Drive, Bredon, Tewkesbury, GL20 7QJ, England, preferably by registered mail (attention, cheques could be either 36 British pounds or 60 euros, whichever is more convenient to members). You must not forget to mention the name(s) and the year. I will appreciate if your payments are due by 10 February 2003, since it will help us to avoid unnecessary correspondence and it will facilitate planning. In the next Newsletter I will provide the updated membership list.

That's all for this month. The next Newsletter will arrive at the first weekend in March 2003. Till then stay strong and train hard.

Oss
Spiros G. D rossoulakis