

Bokuto Ni Yoru Kendo Kihon-waza Keiko-Ho

(Bokuto Application for Kendo Fundamental Technique Practice)

Overview

Kendo is from the concept of cutting with the sword. The shiai represents the sword in Kendo. However, some of this concept has become lost because Kendo has become sports oriented.

Kendo kata was established in 1912, to teach and preserve the concept that the shinai and the katana are one in the same. However, the kendo kata is very difficult for beginners and has become infrequently practiced, often only in hurried preparation for examinations. Therefore, the Bokuto Ni Yoru Kendo Kihon-waza Keiko-Ho was developed.

Bokuto Ni Yoru Kendo Kihon-waza Keiko-Ho has been worked from concept to application. On April 5th and 6th, 2003, the first Bokuto Ni Yoru Kendo Kihon-waza Keiko-Ho workshop was conducted in Tokyo, Japan to introduce the new methodology to selected representatives from each region of Japan. On April 12, 2003, the first known demonstration and group teaching of this practice in the United States was carried out in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

The main intent of the creators of the Bokuto Ni Yoru Kendo Kihon-waza Keiko-Ho was to develop a form of bokuto practice that could be incorporated into the regular kendo practice for the following purposes:

1. Help beginners learn the concept that the shinai is the representation of the katana.
2. Develop solid, applied basics and techniques.
3. Develop the students' abilities and understanding for later practice of the Nihon Kendo Kata.
4. Develop reiho (manners).

The All Japan Kendo Federation is focusing the application of this new bokuto practice in the primary and secondary school systems. Currently, the Osaka Prefecture Kendo Federation is applying it in promotional examinations, in addition to the Nihon Kendo Kata and keiko. The All Japan Kendo Federation is also looking into avenues of interjecting the Bokuto Ni Yoru Kendo Kihon-waza Keiko-Ho, to make it a regular part of kendo practice throughout Japan.

Practice

In kendo kata there are five kamae used, some of which have no practical application in modern kendo. Therefore, in the Bokuto Ni Yoru Kendo Kihon-waza Keiko-Ho, only chudan no kamae is taught. All strikes are executed within the center-plane of the body and the techniques are directly translatable into bogu kendo practice as well as the kendo kata. Fundamental techniques are emphasized but the practice leaves the latitude for instructors to elaborate on a particular waza's application, if desired.

There are nine techniques in the Bokuto Ni Yoru Kendo Kihon-waza Keiko-Ho. The accepted practice is for students up to the rank of ikkyu (1st kyu) to learn the first three kihon forms. The next three forms are added for shodan and all nine forms for nidan and above. Like the kendo kata, there are two roles: motodachi who acts as the leader allowing the partner to execute the various waza; and the kakarite who executes the basic techniques. However, unlike the kendo kata the relationship of the two practitioners is equal.

The opening and closing protocols are the same as in the kendo kata. The bokuto is held in the right hand during ritsurei and then transferred to the taito position on the left hip for the approach to the center of the practice area. Bokuto are drawn upon taking the third step, the left foot is drawn forward naturally and the sonkyo posture is assumed. Retiring from the practice is the reverse.

Movements

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| 1. Kihon: Ippon-uchi-no-waza (sho-men, kote, do, tsuki) | 6. Kihon: Suriage-waza (kote-suriage-men) |
| 2. Kihon: Ni-san-dan-no-waza (kote-men) | 7. Kihon: Debana-waza (deban-kote) |
| 3. Kihon: Harai-waza (Harai-men) | 8. Kihon: Kaeshi-waza (men-kaeshi-do) |
| 4. Kihon: Hiki-waza, Tsuba-zerai (Hiki-do) | 9. Kihon: Uchi-otoshi-waza (do-ushi-otoshi-men) |
| 5. Kihon: Nuki-waza (men-nuki-do) | |

Kihon Ichi (kihon #1) - Ippon-uchi no waza: men, kote, do, tsuki

1. Kakarite takes one step forward to execute each strike then takes two steps back after completion of each strike.
2. Motodachi does not move except when kakarite executes tsuki. When kakarite delivers tsuki, motodachi takes one step back.
3. After the tsuki kakarite takes one step back and motodachi does not move. When the kakarite takes the second step back, motodachi blends in taking one step forward. This completes number 1.

Kihon Ni (kihon #2) - Ni/sandan no waza: kote, men

1. Kakarite strikes kote, then men. Motodachi does not move on the kote strike but immediately takes one step backwards after the kote strike and then kakarite delivers the men strike
2. Kakarite takes two steps back and on step three motodachi also blending in with kakarite to end back up centered.

Kihon San (kihon #3) - Harai waza: harai men

1. Kakarite takes one step forward while at the same time striking harai men. Motodachi does not move.
2. Kakarite takes two steps back after completion of the strike.

Kihon Yon (kihon #4) - Hiki waza: tsubazeriai kara no hiki do

1. Kakarite steps forward and executes a strike to the motodachi's shomen. After motodachi blocks the men attack, both kakarite and motodachi take a step forward and assumes tsubazeriai.
2. Kakarite steps back striking hiki do as motodachi raises his bokuto as if to strike men.
3. After kakarite steps back with the execution of hiki do, kakarite takes two steps back to the original position.
4. After kakarite executes hiki do, motodachi takes one step back as kakarite takes their second step, retuning to chudan no kamae.

Kihon Go (kihon #5) - Nuki waza: Men nuki do

1. As motodachi takes a step forward and executes a men strike, kakarite immediately steps forward executing nuki do.
2. Motodachi and kakarite turn and face each other taking one step backwards bringing their bokuto to issoku ito no maai
3. Together, kakarite and motodachi take one step diagonally returning to center after the completion of the waza.

Kihon Roku (kihon #6) – Suriage waza: Kote suriage men

1. Motodachi takes one step forward initiating a kote strike. At the same time kakarite takes one step backwards performing suriage waza and then immediately steps forward striking men.
2. Together, kakarite and motodachi take one step back after the completion of the waza.

Kihon Shichi (kihon #7) – Debana waza: Dehana kote

1. As soon as motodachi and kakarite meet in issoku ito no maai, motodachi moves his right foot slightly forward while raising his kensen in the action of initiating a kote strike. Immediately kakarite takes a step forward while striking kote.
2. Kakarite takes two steps back after completion of the strike.
3. Motodachi moves the right foot back upon the kakarite's second step back.

Kihon hachi (kihon #8) – Kaeshi waza: Men kaeshi migi do

1. As motodachi takes a step forward and executes a men strike, kakarite performs kaeshi waza and then immediately steps forward executing do.
2. Motodachi and kakarite turn and face each other taking one step backwards bringing their bokuto to issoku ito no maai.
3. Together, kakarite and motodachi take one step diagonally returning to center after the completion of the waza.

Kihon Kyu (kihon #9) – Uchiotoshi waza: Do uchiotoshi men

1. As motodachi takes a step forward and executes a do strike, kakarite steps diagonally backwards to their left while performing uchiotoshi waza. Immediately kakarite steps forward striking men.
2. Motodachi and kakarite turn and face each other taking one step backwards bringing their bokuto to issoku ito no maai
3. Together, kakarite and motodachi take one step diagonally returning to center after the completion of the waza.