

FIGHTING SPIRIT

闘魂



日本空手道玄和会米国本部

NIPPON KARATEDO GENWAKAI U.S. HEADQUARTERS

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EDITORIAL

This issue I have a lot of odds-and-ends to report. Most concern people so let's start with Fredrick J. Lovret.

For those of you who do not know, Sensei Lovret was the editor of the Bujin magazine which is no longer in circulation. I'm not sure, but I believe he published the Bujin for five years. Sensei Lovret, a Kenjutsu and Aikijutsu practitioner is a traditionalist who wrote many very enlightening articles about Japanese martial arts, culture and swords. He is also the author of "Kenjutsu Shoden" and "The Way and the Power: Secrets of Japanese Strategy." (For those interested in purchasing a copy of The Way and the Power, it is available from Paladin Press, P.O. Box 1307, Boulder CO 80306.)

Sensei Lovret has granted me permission to reprint any articles from the Bujin that he wrote. This is a real boon for our Newsletter. Look for one in each publication.

I owe an apology to Sensei Jay Robison for spelling his last name incorrectly for the past year. It has been a very busy year too for Sensei Robison since he formed a partnership with another martial artist and established Martial Arts Training Consultants, Inc. Sensei Robison teaches Genwakai, one of five styles of martial arts taught at the new dojo. I hope Sensei Robison will be able to take some time from his busy schedule to write the Newsletter to fill us all in on his new dojo.

I have received letters from Mr. Yamabe and Sensei Mark Edamura. Both are fine and teaching their own students. Mr. Yamabe is back in Japan working with several new students. Sensei Edamura is in Hawaii busily looking for a dojo to house his classes. He has several students who practice Monday, Wednesday and Friday. He says there are 100 dojo for the 750,000 population. Okinawan karate is big and Korean karate is small.

Recently there was a rumor started in Dayton by someone who will remain unnamed. The rumor is that Sensei Robert Clary may again don his dogi. I'm keeping my fingers crossed.

I recently wrote to Sensei Tadaya Iwaya in Japan and requested information about video tapes of Genwakai kata. At this time he says there are none but they may be made in the future. I will keep you posted.

EDITORIAL

by

Fredrick J. Lovret

I had a rather interesting occurrence at my dojo last month that I would like to share with you.

My dojo has an 18' wide door as the entrance. This door opens onto a small garden, which is surrounded by a 6' high fence. Each student has a key to the gate and can come in for practice whenever the main door is open.

Visitors are only allowed on one night per week and must make an appointment with the head instructor to get permission to watch a class. They are instructed to be at the gate exactly 15 minutes prior to the time the class starts and one of the students will admit them.

Last month a visitor showed up about 20 minutes before class and, after standing around for a couple of minutes, decided that he had better do something to attract our attention. Accordingly, he grabbed hold of the top of the fence, chinned himself, and looking over the top, called out, "Hey! Would someone let me in." Then the message of what his eyes were seeing got to his brain. He very slowly and very, very quietly, let himself back down. When a student opened the gate he proceeded to apologize...profusely. He had come here expecting to see some form of gymnasium and been completely unprepared for his first true dojo.

An impressive dojo is more than just a big room. Actually, size has very little to do with it. The amount of money that has been invested in the furnishings also is not too important.

What IS important is the way in which it is furnished and the atmosphere.

I know of one school that features life-sized posters of Bruce Lee all over the walls and loud music. Students and instructors also frequently train in street clothes. More than once I have seen the head instructor eating his lunch in the practice area. Gis and belts are frequently just tossed into a corner and rarely washed. This is not a dojo and it never can become one. That is not to say that a school of this type can not train someone how to fight. But, that is ALL that they can do.

If you acknowledge the fact that the martial arts are more than purely physical you must also acknowledge the fact that the

spiritual aspects must be, in some manner, taught. Spiritual instruction must be done in a spiritual manner. A person can practice a front kick just as easily in a sweatsuit as in a karate gi. The same thing can not be said for the inner factors of the art.

You can line a class up and say "Do koshi nage!" and physically guide new students through the proper motions. If you want them to do zanshin, however, you have a problem. There is no way to guide a mind with hands or words.

THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE DOJO IS A TOOL FOR MOVING SPIRITS.

All of my students wear clean, white uniforms. They do not carry on idle conversations in the dojo. When sitting down they sit in seiza and don't slouch. They don't come into the dojo dirty or unshaven. They bow to seniors. Juniors stay away from the kamiza.

There are no dojo rules that say that these things should or should not be done. That is simply the way it is. It is unthinkable to do it any other way. After awhile, this sort of seeps into the walls. When a visitor enters, he gets very, very quiet and starts looking around for someone or something to bow toward.

However, impressing visitors is not the purpose of a dojo. Teaching students is. If you drop a new student into a proper dojo, he will be changed! The dojo does the teaching for you! You do not have to try and teach a new student what The Way is, you just dump him into the dojo and he starts living it.

I'm feeling pretty good about this dojo. When the students fight to be the one who admits visitors so that they can watch their faces when they walk into the dojo, you know that you are doing something right.

Reprinted from the August, 1980 issue of THE BUJIN.

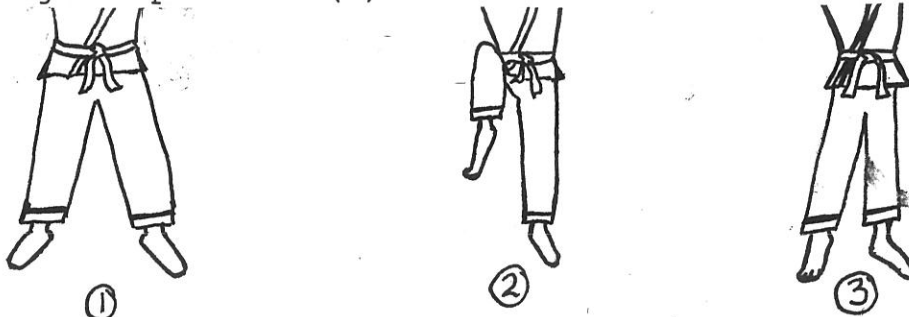


TRAINING TIPS
by
Jim Rodriguez

An exercise taught by Mr. Yamabe during his recent visit is used to develop focus and concentration of strength. It is geared to focusing strength in the ball of the foot. It is best practiced while a white belt is learning mae geri.

To begin teaching a white belt mae geri we have historically had them sit on the floor with their feet straight out in front of them. Their feet are pointed forward with the toes pulled back in the same position as if doing mae geri from a standing position. The student, on the count, is instructed to pull the knee back to their chest. On the second count they push forward concentrating the strength in the ball of their foot. The instructor kicks the balls of the student's feet with the side of his or her foot to get the student to harden the foot and concentrate strength. Next, speed is added to this sitting exercise.

The new exercise goes one step further and has the student standing up for the exercise. The student stands in hachijidachi, (1) feet shoulder width apart, knees slightly bent, hands about one hand spread out in front of the body in morote gedan barai position). On the count, the student pulls one knee up above the belt (2) and thrusts down concentrating all the strength in the ball of the foot (3). The leg is then returned to the position with the knee above the belt (2) before returning to the original position (1).



If done correctly, the foot will pull down when fully extended from the power of the kick. Each foot is done alternatively on each count.

This exercise is strictly a supplement to doing the actual kick. Best results are gained at white belt level or when you feel your kick is not as focused as it should be.

DOGI
By
Jim Rodriguez

So many times I have seen students come to class carrying gym bags with their dogi inside. So many times these same students appear on the dojo floor wearing a dogi that looks like they slept in it for two weeks. On a couple of occasions it was so bad I told the student not to come to class again in a dogi as wrinkled as the one he was wearing.

On the other hand, some of my students come to class wearing an ironed dogi. The pants have creases and no wrinkle is in sight. I must say I am impressed by this but it is more than is necessary.

What any Sensei expects is a student in a neat, clean, presentable dogi. Sweat stains that indelibly mark a dogi are not to be considered taboo. Actually, if your dogi lasts long enough for permanent sweat stains you should wear it with pride.

Another aggravating sight on a student is a belt whose one end curls up. Obviously this is due to rolling the belt up into a tight circle. Clever, but not very smart! "So who cares?", you ask. You will be testing in a short while and you will be getting a new belt anyway, right? Maybe! Assuming you pass the test what happens to your old belt? Do you stick it in the closet or hang it on your bedroom wall like a trophy? What I always did and what most of my students do is pass their belts down. When they pass a test and jump to the next color belt they give their old belt to a lower ranking student who also passed their test. The idea being that the next person wearing your belt will be as successful as you were. Some of you and your technical ability has rubbed off on the belt which the next wearer will inherit. So for their sake, you should take as good care of your belt as possible.

The first thing most of us notice when we get a new belt is that it is folded in half three times. This is the best way to store a belt. Why do you think the manufacturers ship them this way? The dogi takes a little more ingenuity.

If your gym bag isn't large enough or you don't have a gym bag, you won't be able to fold your dogi. The alternative is to roll your dogi.

1) Lay your dogi top on its back with the arms straight out to the sides. Make the sides of the body straight by crossing over the flaps until the side seams are straight. Press the arms and body flat.

2) Now take the arms and lay them flat across the chest area in a straight line. They will be pointing in opposite directions.

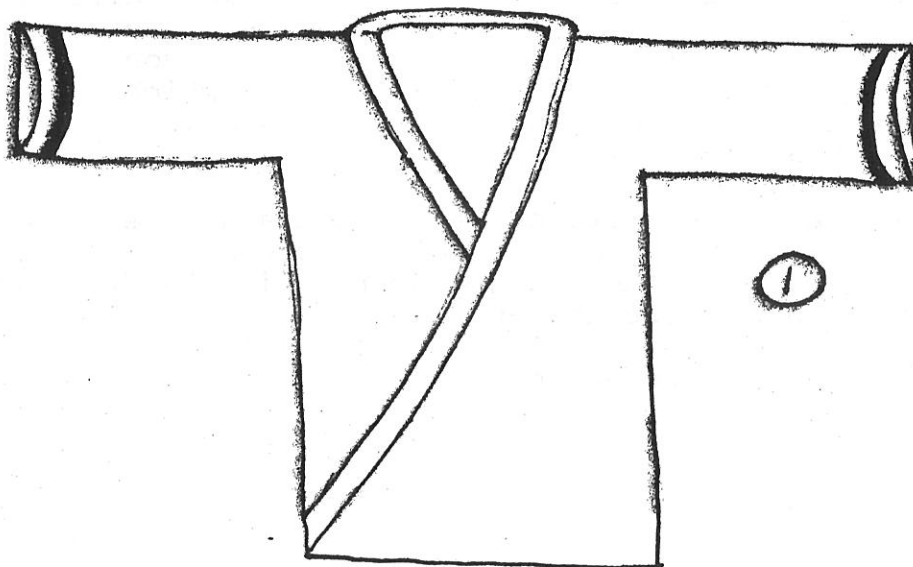
3) Fold the whole top in half by putting the side seams against each other with the front of the dogi on the inside of the fold. Press flat.

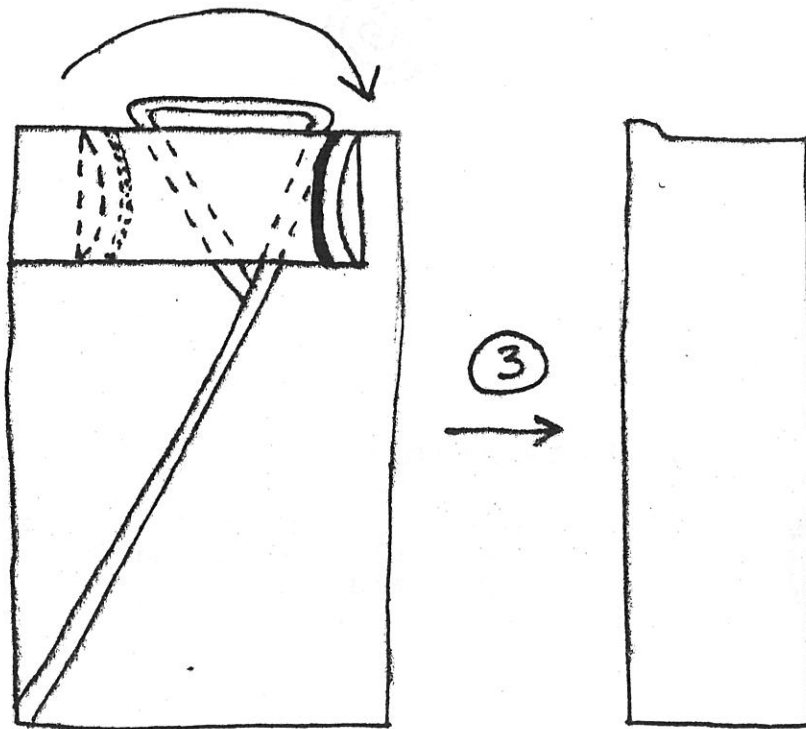
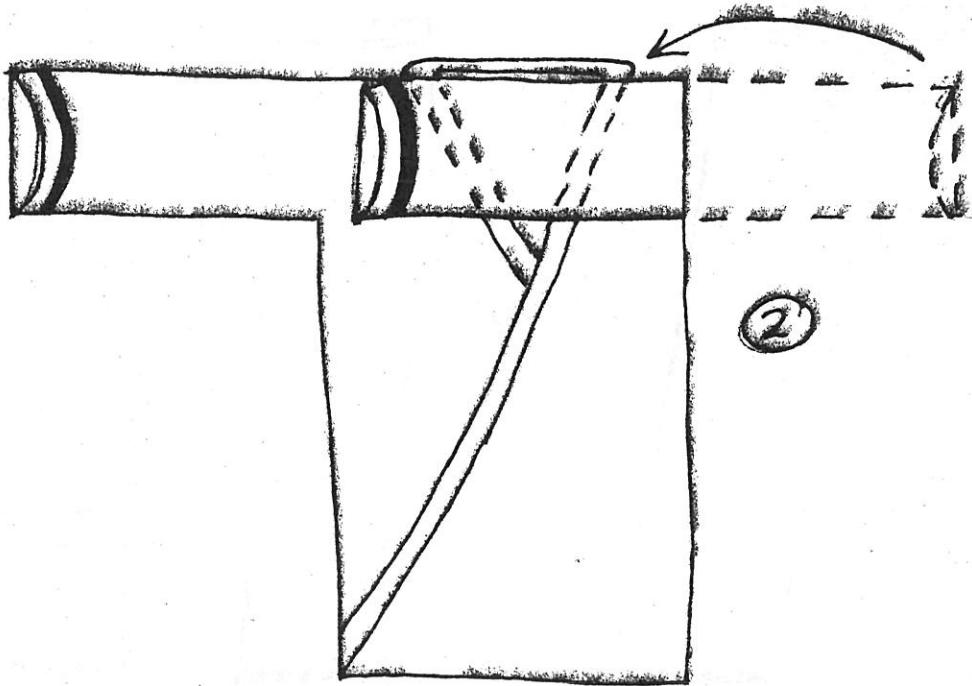
4) Fold your dogi pants in half lengthwise. Now fold the pants in half, waist to ankles.

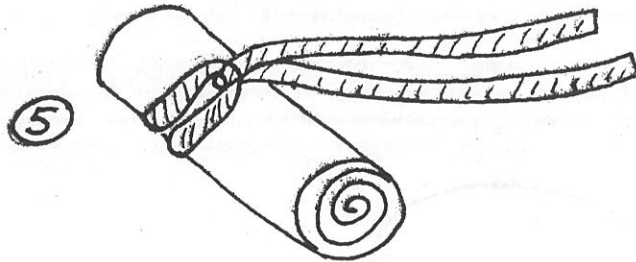
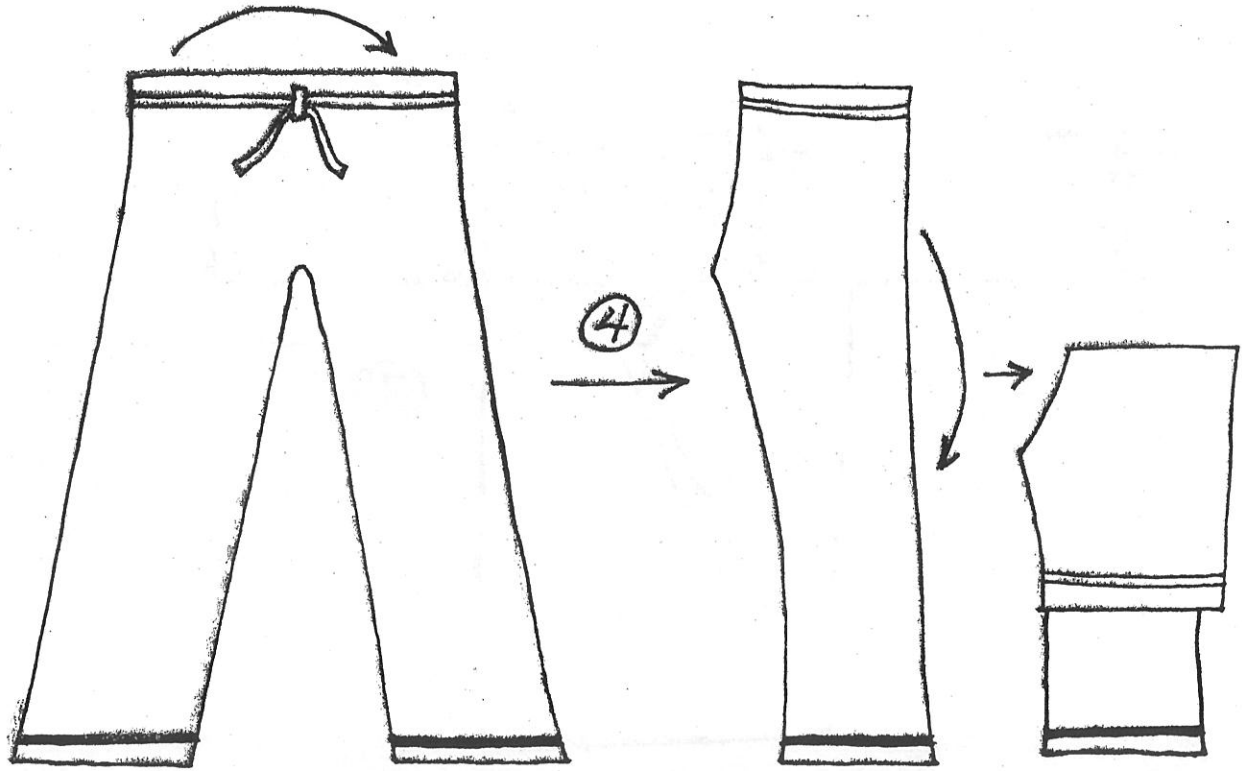
Lay the pants on the folded dogi lengthwise. Now, after putting in a hand towel, sweat band, or whatever, start at the top of the dogi and begin rolling like you would a sleeping bag.

There you have it! A relatively wrinkle free way of transporting your dogi. One word of caution is to not leave it like this when it is wet. The moisture will cause the threads to weaken quickly.

If you don't use a gym bag, simply fold your belt in half and wrap it around your rolled dogi once, (5). Now pass the ends through the loop in the belt and you have a handy package to throw over your shoulder.







"MY FAVORITE MON"



ARIMA - A Daimyo family descended from the Murakami-Genji, through the Akamatsu.

"HEAVENLY HAIKU"

Autumn -
even the birds
and clouds look old.

Basho

"QUOTE - UNQUOTE"

Victory goes to the one who has no thought of himself.

Shinkage School of Swordsmanship

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