UECHIRYU BUTOKUKAI™

Black Belt History and Terminology

STUDY GUIDE

For Black Belt Testing

A Brief History of

Uechiryu Karate-Do

Uechiryu is purportedly based on three animals: The Tiger, Crane and Dragon

The history of Uechiryu (Pronounced Way-Chee -Roo), began in Okinawa on May 5, 1877, with the birth of the founder: Kanbun Uechi. Kanbun was the oldest son of Samurai descendants Kantoku and Tsura Uechi.

In 1897, Kanbun left Okinawa for China to avoid a Japanese Military conscription. He arrived in Fuchow City, Fukien Province and began his martial arts training. For the next ten years, he studied under the guidance of a Chinese Monk we know as Shushiwa. The style of karate that Kanbun learned from Shushiwa (Pangainoon) later became the foundation of Uechi Ryu.

In 1907, Shushiwa encouraged Kanbun to open his own school. He eventually did in Nansoe, a day's journey from Fuchow. Kanbun was credited with being the first Okinawan to operate a school in China. The school ran successfully for three years, then one of his students killed a neighbor in self-defense in a dispute over an irrigation matter. The incident hurt Kanbun to the point that he closed his school and

returned to Okinawa. There he married, settled down as a farmer and vowed never to teach again. On June 26th, 1911, his first son Kanei Uechi was born.

In 1924 Kanbun Uechi, along with many other Okinawans, left his home and went to Japan for stable employment. He arrived in Wakayama and worked as a janitor. It was here that he met a younger Okinawan Ryuyu Tomoyose. It was through this friendship that Kanbun agreed to begin teaching in a limited capacity.

It was here that the co-founder of this style, Kanei Uechi (Son of Kanbun) began his martial arts practice. After ten years, he returned to Okinawa. Like his father who died in 1948, Kanei married an Okinawan (named Shige) and kept his martial arts practice from becoming public knowledge.

Sometime later Ryuko Tomoyose, son of Ryuyu, approached Kanei and following the advice of his father, did everything he could to convince Kanei to begin teaching in Okinawa. Kanei resisted until Ryuko and several fellow farmers built a dojo for Kanei. Later, this was moved to its current location in Futenma and was called “Uechi Ryu Karate Family Headquarters Dojo” (a.k.a. “Soke”). Kanei and Ryuko stayed together for many decades and became the best of friends. A friendship which continued until Kanei Uechi died in 1991.

Ryuko Tomoyose has a long list of amazing accomplishments. In addition to becoming one of the highest ranking living martial artist in Okinawa, he was also given the title of National Living Treasure of Japan. He is also fluent in English. In 1956, with the permission of Kanei Uechi, he began teaching the first non-Okinawans Uechiryu Karate.

There have been several highly known non-Okinawan students. Two examples are, the late Ian Fleming, creator of James Bond, and George Mattson, who would become the first American to be promoted to Shodan (First Degree Black Belt). In 1958, Ryuko Tomoyose gave George Mattson two instructions for returning the United States: write a book and teach Uechiryu.

George Mattson began teaching at the YMCA in Boston and this grew into becoming the famous “Mattson Academy of Karate”. It was at this school that many of the most remarkable Uechi practitioners began their training.

In 1963, George Mattson published his first book “The Way of Karate”. This was the first hardcover publication of martial arts ever to be written in English.

In 1966, Buzz Durkin began his practice under the tutelage of George Mattson. In 1969 Mr. Durkin

received his Shodan. In 1974, he opened his dojo is Salem, NH.

In 1984, Master Uechi visited the Salem dojo and named it “The Butokukan,” which translates to mean “Place Where People Study the Virtues of The Martial Arts.” That same year, Buzz Durkin formed the Uechi Ryu Butokukai (Gathering of People Who Study the Virtues of The Martial Arts). The Uechi Ryu Butokukai is now an association of schools consisting of Buzz Durkin’s Karate School and all schools owned by Mr. Durkin’s students.

In 1988, Buzz Durkin opened his new facility in Atkinson, NH. Mr. Tomoyose, Mr. Nakahodo and Mr. Kanmei Uechi attend the dedication ceremonies. The dojo would later be awarded “Best Martial Arts Facility in North America” for three years in a row by the United States Martial Arts Association.

On August 19, 2017 Buzz Durkin was promoted to the rank of Judan – Tenth Degree Black Belt.

In 2018, Judy Durkin (Mr. Durkin’s wife) was promoted to the rank of Kudan (Ninth Degree Black Belt). Among her many accomplishments, Judy is credited with being the highest ranking woman in all Okinawan Martial Arts.

Currently, Kancho Uechi (Great-Grand son of Kanbun Uechi) is the headmaster of Uechiryu Karate-do.

A Timeline of Uechi Ryu History

1874	Shushiwa was Born
1877	Kanbun Uechi was born
1897	Kanbun left Okinawa for China
1907	Shushiwa encouraged Kanbun to open his own school
1911	Kanei Uechi was born
1924	Kanbun went back to Japan
1948	Kanbun died
1991	Kanei died
1956	George Mattson began training
1958	George Mattson received his Black Belt and returned to America

1963	George Mattson published “The Way of Karate”
1966	Buzz Durkin began training
1969	Buzz Durkin received his Black Belt
1974	Buzz Durkin Opened his first school in Salem, NH
1984	The Uechiryu Butokukai was created
1988	Buzz Durkin opened his new school in Atkinson, NH
2017	Buzz Durkin received the rank of Judan
2018	Judy Durkin received the rank of Kudan

UECHI TERMINOLOGY

The terminology used during the course of Uechi training can be confusing and, often, misused. More is being added and more clearly understood on a daily basis. The following pages have a list of the terms and calligraphy that we should all be aware of and use correctly.

TERM	TRANSLATION
Uechiryu	Uechi's Style or Uechi's Way
Pangainoon	Half-Hard/Half-Soft (Chinese; the foundation of Uechi-Ryu)
Kyu	Junior
Dan	Senior
Karate - Ka	Karate Student
Sensei	One Who Has Gone Before (aka, teacher)
Dojo	Way Place
Gi	Uniform
Do-Gi	Uniform of the Way
Wa-Gi	Shirt
Obi	Belt
Ki	Spirit
Chi	Spirit (Chinese)
Kami Dana	Guard Shelf
Domo Arigato	Thank You
Arigato Gozaima-Shita	Thank You (more formal version)
Do Itashi-Mashite	You're Welcome
Dozo	Please
Hai	Yes
Eii	No

TERM	TRANSLATION
Gambati Masho	Work Hard
Karate	Empty Hand
Karate-Do	Way of Karate
Butokukai	Gathering of people who study the virtues of the martial arts.
Butokukan	Headquarters Dojo of the Butokukai. *Buzz Durkin's Karate School*
Sempai	Senior Student
Makiwara	Striking Post
Kumite	Clashing Hands
Bunkai	Application
Kiai	Shout of Spirit
Kotekitae	Forging of the bone
Shinkokyu	Deep Breathing Exercise
Mae or Shomen	Front (sometimes referred to the front wall of the Dojo)
Mawate	Turn
Migi-e	Right
Hidari-e	Left
Massugu	Straight
Uke	To Accept (Block)
Wa-Uke (Mawashi-Uke)	Circular Block
Nagashi-Uke	Push Block
Tsuki/Zuki-Uke	Thrust Block
Hajiki-Uke	Striking Block
Sanchin-Dachi	Sanchin Stance
Musubi-Dachi	Neutral Stance
Kiba-Dachi	Horse Stance
Hachiji-Dachi	Informal Stance

TERM	TRANSLATION
Zenkutsu-Dachi	Leaning Forwad Stance
Bushiken	Palm-heel
Tsuki	Thrust (Punch)
Mawashi-Tsuki	Roundhouse punch
Seiken-Tsuki	Straight Punch
Uki	Strike
Seiken	Flat Fist Punch
Uraken	Backfist
Nukite	Spear-hand
Hiraken	fore-knuckle-fist
Shoken	One-knuckle fist
Shuto	Knife-hand strike
Empi-Uchi/Hiji-Tsuki	Elbow strike
Haito-Uchi	Ridge-hand strike
Geri	Kick
Shomen-Geri	Front Kick
Mawashi-Geri	Round-House Kick
Yoko-Geri	Side Kick
Sokuto-Geri	Kick using the Blade Edge of foot
Sokusen Geri	Toe Kick
Tobi-Geri	Flying (a.k.a. *Jump*) Kick
Ushiro-Geri	Back Kick
Hiza-Geri	Knee Strike
Gedan-Uke	Lower Area Block
Chudan-Uke	Middle Area Block
Jodan-Uke	Upper Area Block
- Keage	Snap (as in Snap Kick)
- Kekomi	Thrust (as in Thrust Kick)

PRIMARY KATA

Sanchin

This is the first kata taught to Kanbun by Shushiwa, and the first kata in Uechiryu.

In Chinese the name translates to mean *Three Conflicts*.

There are many interpretations for this, but the generally accepted one is *Mind, Body* and *Spirit*.

Seisan

This is the second kata taught to Kanbun by Shushiwa, and the fifth kata in Uechi ryu.

In Chinese the name translates to mean *Thirteen*. This is usually understood to mean

Thirteen modes of attack and defense.

Sanseiru

This is the third kata taught to Kanbun by Shushiwa. It is the eighthf and final kata in Uechiryu.

In Chinese the name translates to mean *Thirty six* or *Tiger coming down from the mountain*.

Suparimpe

According to legend, this is the fourth kata of Shushiwa's system. It was never taught to Kanbun Uechi.

SECONDARY/INTERMEDIATE KATA

Kanshiwa

This is the second Kata in Uechiryu. This was added to the style under the influences of Kanei Uechi in 1956.

The former name to this kata was *Kanshabu*. Both names are a mix of Kanbun and Shushiwa (Shushabu).

Kanshu

This is the third Kata in Uechiryu. This was added to the style under the influences of Kanei Uechi in 1956.

The former name to this kata was *Dani Seisan*, which meant *Second Seisan*. Current name is a mix of Kanbun and Shushiwa.

Seichin

This is the fourth Kata in Uechiryu. This was created by Saburo Uehara, and added to the style in 1963.

In Chinese the name translates to mean *Ten Conflicts*.

Seirui

This is the sixth Kata in Uechiryu. It was added to the style under the influences of Kanei Uechi in 1950.

In Chinese the name translates to mean *Sixteen*.

Kanchin

This is the seventh Kata in Uechiryu. It was added to the style under the influences of Kanei Uechi in 1960.

The name mean the *Tactics (Chin) of Kanbun* .

OTHER EXERCISES

Kumite Three	This was designed by George Mattson in the 1960s to teach to beginning students the concept of distancing.
Kyu Kumite	This was added to the style, under the influences of Kanei Uechi in 1973. The word *Kyu* means *junior*, which would indicate that it was designed for beginning students.
Dan Kumite	This was added to the style, under the influences of Kanei Uechi in 1965. Originally called *Ten-Point Kumite*. The word *Dan* means *Senior*, which would indicate that it was designed for advanced students.
Kumite One	This is understood to be the first Kumite introduced to Uechiryu. It was added under the influences of Kanei Uechi in the 1956.
Kanshiwa Bunkai	Applications of Kanshiwa Kata. This was added under the influences of Kanei Uechi in the 1956, as a more junior version of Seisan Bunkai.
Seisan Bunkai	Applications of Seisan Kata. This was added under the influences of Kanei Uechi in the 1958.
Junbi Undo	Primary Exercises. This was added under the influences of Kanei Uechi in the 1950s.
Hojo Undo	Secondary Exercises. This was added under the influences of Kanei Uechi in the 1950s.