

Training in Okinawa 2019 (May 13th to May 17th):

There are no Shotokan instructors on the island as Shotokan was developed on mainland Japan. Shotokan was developed by Sensei Funakoshi in Japan. (born in Okinawa)

Shotokan was developed for teaching a large group of people so it was simplified (compared to Okinawan styles) to make it easier to instruct a large group (like University students or Military soldiers).

Kiba dachi and kokutsu dachi are not practiced in the Okinawan styles. Their stances are higher and more mobile aside from shiko dachi. I think Shotokan developed deeper stances more for physical fitness/training purposes.

As the most widely practiced style, Shotokan is considered a traditional and influential form of karate do. The term Shotokan was Funakoshi's pen name and came from Shoto which means pines-waves (you can still see some of these pine trees on the island today) and kan which means house. So Shoto-kan.

[Gichin Funakoshi](#) had trained in both of the popular styles of Okinawan karate of the time: [Shōrei-ryū](#) and [Shōrin-ryū](#). After years of study in both styles, Funakoshi created a simpler system that combined the ideals of the two.^[5] He never named this system, however, always referring to it simply as "karate." Funakoshi's karate reflects the changes made in the art by [Ankō Itosu](#), including the [Heian/Pinan kata](#) series. Funakoshi changed the names of some of the *kata* in an effort to make the Okinawan kata names easier to pronounce in the Japanese [Honsū](#) dialect.



Day 1:

Time: 10am-12noon

Location: Budokan (gym/rec center)

Instructors/rank/style: Zenpo Shimabukuro, 10th Dan, Shorin-ryu (and his son)



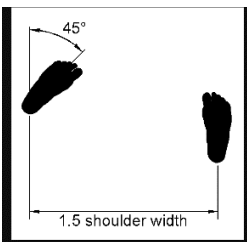
15.Okinawa Budokan

Focus: Sanchin Kata (close fist), seisan dachi stance. This kata is purely a training kata to understand proper breathing and body/floor connection.

Practiced Kihon

- 1) basic stances: neko ashi dachi (cat), zenkuzi dachi, seisan dachi
- 2) basic punches and blocks: uchi ude uki (middle), age uki (high), and gedan barai (low)
- 3) Basic front kick: mae geri close execution with snap back (not above the belt)

Seisan dachi:



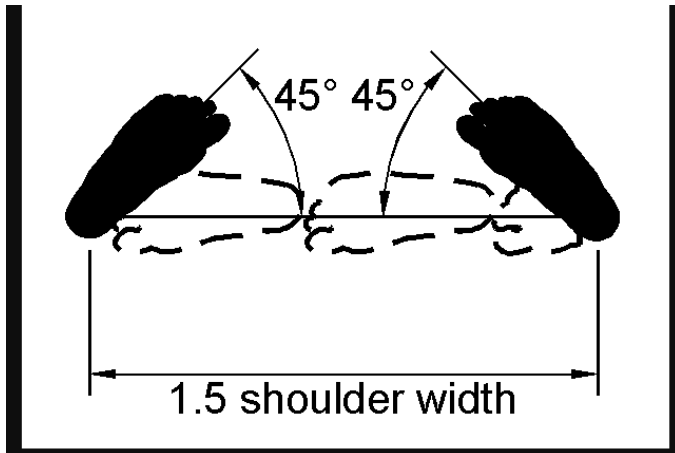
Time: 2pm-4pm

Location: Budokan (gym/rec center)

Instructors/rank/style: Kiyoyo Tsuneo, 9th Dan, Goju-ryu; Gima, 9th Dan, Goju-ryu (couple of characters, good instructors)

Focus:

- 1) Kata: Fukyugata Ni and Sanchin Kata, seisan dachi and Shiko dachi stance.
- 2) Kihon: Elbows in on blocks, hip rotation opposite (not same direction as technique), breathing, hook on all uki technique's
- 3) Kata: In line kata (take kata and make it one line with application)



Day 2:

Time: 10am-12noon

Location: Karate Kaikan (below: new big \$60 million facility for karate only)

Instructors/rank/style: Yoshio Kuba?, 10th Dan, Goju-ryu (and female instructor who did interpretation and demonstration)

Karate Kaikan (outside and inside main floor)



Focus: Kihon. Uki out and hook. Punches keep pull back in front, don't pull back all the way to hip.

Partner exercise from kata to demonstrate application (grab wrist, escape)

Kata: Sanchin kata (close fist)

Time: 2pm-4pm

Location: Karate Kaikan

Instructors/rank/style: Minoru Higa, 10th Dan, and Son Koyu Higa, Shorin-ryu

Focus:

- 1) Kihon (stationary): Uki, zuki, geri. Directed straight line to arties, not center line of body. Uki comes across body. Repeated zuki's (long and short), uchi ude uki (middle), age uki (high), and gedan barai (low), and mae geri multiple times. (10x count for each student and both instructors: ~170x per round and ~10x rounds) Reason given is that at some point you are exhaust to point of becoming more efficient in execution of techniques. No wasted muscle contractions.
- 2) Kihon (mobile): This was practiced by stepping and then executing techniques. Reason given is for training purpose only to focus on solid stance and then proper techniques. In real practice or application the action is fluid.

- 3) Partner stance connection exercise: While partner 1 is in short front stance partner 2 pushes partner 1's shoulders back, pull's partner 1's arm forward, and pushes partner 1's arm to sides while partner 1 executes double zuki each time.



Day 3:

Time: 7pm-9pm (termite training. ☺)

Location: Sensei's Local dojo (100 yards from apartments where we stayed in Naha)

Instructors/rank/style: Kiyoyo Tsuneo, 9th Dan, Goju-ryu; Gima, 9th Dan, Goju-ryu

Focus:

- 1) Kata: Fukyugata Ni and application of first 3 moves with partner. Inline defense: Jodan (seisan age uki), chudan (seisan uchi uki), gedan (shiko dachi gedan bari).
- 2) Kihon: Elbows in on blocks, hip rotation opposite (not same direction as technique), breathing, hook on all uki technique's
- 3) Kata: In line kata (take kata and make it one line with application)
- 4) Makiwara training (short punch). 3 levels of makiwara strength.



Day 4:

Time: 10am-12noon

Location: Karate Kaikan

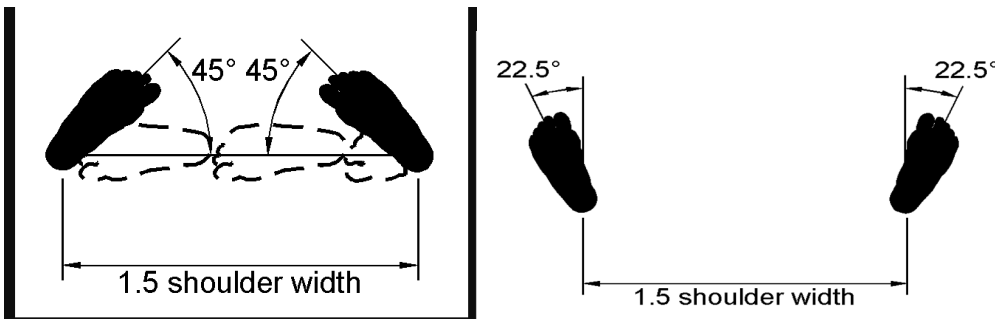
Instructors/rank/style: main instructor Minoru Nakazato (some English) 10th Dan, assistant instructor (no English), 7th or 8th Dan, Shorin-ryu

Very similar to Shotokan. (Pinan/Heian, Naihanchi/Tekki)

Focus: warm up in circle with everyone counting and then kata

- 1) Kata: Pinan kata's and Naihanchi kata's sho, ni, san
- 2) Kumite: 2-3 step partner exercise.

Naihanchi dachi and shiko dachi



Time: 12noon-1pm

Location: Karate Kaikan

Instructors/rank/style: Yusuke Onaga, 7th Dan, Shito-ryu Kobudo (no English)

This style is a mix of Goyo-ryu and Shito-ryu with weapons

This training was a 1:1 (not planned or part of the group training) as I seen him training next door with weapons and a black gi (weapons use black gi I am told) he invited me in to train. He spent one hour with me training 2 kata's. One was with bow and one was with si's. And then ask me to show him our Heian Nidan kata (which is similar to their Pinan shodan). Then invited me to training in evening at his dojo. (with some help from an interpreter he found to help)

Time: 2pm-4pm

Location: Karate Kaikan

Instructors/rank/style: Takenobu Uehara or Tsuyoshi Uechi??? 9th or 10th Dan plus 2 Italian Black belts (Father and son) and Okinawin interpreter. Uechi-ryu (13 kata's)

Focus: Sanchin Kata (open hand version). This kata is seen as defensive. Their idea is if you master this kata with proper breathing and body/floor connection you can withstand anything. They had all the males take off their tops practice this kata. As demo one of the Italian BB's did the kata while the other BB strike and kick different parts of the body to demonstrate proper connection and seisan stance. (avoid knee joints for example).

Time: 6:30pm-9pm

Location: Private dojo other side of town

Instructors/rank/style: Yusuke Onaga, 7th Dan, Shito-ryu Kobudo (no English)

This style is a mix of Goyo-ryu and Shito-ryu with weapons

This training was in his dojo before and during regular class (kids and adults).

- 1) Kihon: focus was hips during kicking (mae geri), punching, and block (no 45 deg)
- 2) Kata's (empty hand): pinan and couple others.
- 3) Kata's (weapon): practiced si and stick kata with 2 of his adult BB's while he instructed.



Day 5:

Time: 10pm-12pm

Location: Outdoor Shrine on pavement near Budokan (gym/rec center)

Instructors/rank/style: Takenobu Uehara or Tsuyoshi Uechi??? 9th or 10th and ??? Dan plus Karate interpreter Uechi-ryu (13 kata's)

Focus: Sanchin Kata (open hand version). This kata is seen as defensive. Their idea is if you master this kata with proper breathing and body/floor connection you can withstand anything. They had all the males take off their tops practice this kata. As demo one of the instructors did the kata while senior instructor struck and kicked different parts of the body to demonstrate proper connection and seisan stance. (but avoid knee joints).

Then they would go around and test your stance and connection by random strikes. Then if you wanted the full treatment they had you come to center and they would beat on you. (my legs hurt for awhile after that):

Shrine below. We trained in front 3 steps up.



Time: 2pm-4pm

Location: Budokan (gym/rec center, note the floor here had mats)

Instructors/rank/style: Sensei Masakazu Kuramoto – IOGKF (International Okinawan Goju-ryu Karate-do Federation) 7th Dan Goju-ryu. Stern instructor but very sharp and good instructor.

Focus:

- 1) Kata: Fukyugata Ni seisan dachi and Shiko dachi stance. Practiced this kata many times. He would give feedback after each time and then repeat. Sometimes taking one technique and going over it until we did it correctly.
- 2) Kihon: practices basic blocks, punches, and kick (mae geri).



Time: 7pm-9pm

Location: Local instructors private dojo (10min walk from apartment)

Instructors/rank/style: Minoru Higa, 10th Dan, and Son Koyu Higa, Shorin-ryu

Focus:

- 1) Kihon (stationary): Uki, zuki, geri. Directed straight line to arties, not center line of body. Uki comes across body. Repeated zuki's (long and short), uchi ude uki (middle), age uki (high), and gedan barai (low), and mae geri multiple times. (10x count for each student and both instructors: ~170x per round and ~10x rounds) Reason given is that at some point you are exhaust to point of becoming more efficient in execution of techniques. No wasted muscle contractions.
- 2) Kihon (mobile): This was practiced by stepping and then executing techniques. Reason given is for training purpose only to focus on solid stance and then proper techniques. In real practice or application the action is fluid.
- 3) Kata (group) We practiced kata together (Fukyuata ichi kata and Naihanchi shodan)
- 4) Kata (individual/group): I ask if they had some high level kata similar to Gojushiho sho in Shotokan. They demonstrated their version and then ask me to do same. And then they ask me to do another kata. I picked bassai dai. They then did other kata sochin, Chinto, and then nahanchi shodan, nidan, and sandan (as group). The level of their kata was very sharp. They were preparing for a demonstration at the Karate Kiakan on Sunday with other dojo's. (it would have been great to have attended to watch but no time due to flight out on Sunday)

With Koyu Higa. (he father had left already)



At war memorial near coastline:



Site seeing near coastline:

