

ZEN NIPPON KENDO RENMEI

IAI



ZEN NIPPON KENDO RENMEI **IAI**
English Version Manual

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All Japan Kendo Federation

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FOREWORD

Kendo and Iaido are closely related. People who do Kendo often refer to the handling of the sword, the spirit as well as Batto (drawing the sword) or Noto (replacing the sword) of Iaido. Kendo practitioners are sometimes asked, "Do you practice Iaido too?" If your answer is negative, then people might look at you in surprise and you may feel a little embarrassed. Generally Kendo and Iaido are considered as a unit and they may take it for granted that those who practice Kendo also practice Iaido.

By performing Iaido with "real" swords, it is expected to soften the criticism that these days Kendo practitioners only twirl bamboo swords.

There are many Iaido schools and many forms or Kata, so it is very difficult to master all of them. So from these we chose the basic techniques from each school and put them together so that people could easily learn Iaido and popularize it.

It is my great pleasure to offer you this book after long discussion and consideration and to be able to show the demonstration of Iaido in 1968 in Kyoto according to this book. I hope that people who do Kendo can at least master what is written in this book.

The masters who established ZEN KENREN IAIDO GATA think it is sufficient enough for beginners. Iaido has deep and recondite phases. I recommend you to pursue a deeper appreciation of this in the future.

May 1969

All Japan Kendo Federation

Administrative Director

Kazuo Otani

Revision of ZEN NIPPON KENDO RENMEI IAI book

The first Zen Nippon Kendo Renmei Iaido instruction manual was compiled in 1969.

In 1976 part of it was revised and in 1980 three new forms were added.

Since then Iaido has been performed all over the world. Translation to foreign languages was considered, but we found some misprinting and inappropriate words. We also think some sentences are difficult to understand or imagine. These factors hindered the translation for using it as a guide.

The Zen Nippon Kendo Renmei Iaido Committee supplemented this book after much further study and discussion. This revised edition has been written in an easier to understand style. It also gives the unified opinion of the Zen Nippon Kendo Renmei concerning refereeing or grading.

I hope that this book will be helpful to the training and further growth and popularization of Iaido for practitioners everywhere.

September 1988

All Japan Kendo Federation

Executive Managing Director

Yoshimitsu Takeyasu

Explanation for adding forms 11 & 12 to the ZNKR Iai book

Iaido has become more and more popular since this book was compiled in 1969.

At the turn of the century we decided to add two new forms to make it better and to let more people enjoy Iaido.

In order to improve Iaido you should not only master the handling of the sword and breathing, but also the unification of heart, spirit and power.

I hope that Iaido will be enjoyed by people who practice Kendo, and it proves more rewarding and fruitful to practice both together.

My wish for this book is that it helps all Kendo and Iaido practitioners everywhere.

November 2001

All Japan Kendo Federation

President

Yoshimitsu Takeyasu

MANNER

(General Etiquette & Opening Formalities)

When performing demonstrations (Enbu) before the altar in the Dojo, it is important to follow the manner as described below. The same manner should be observed when you perform before the image of deceased ones, national flags or guests of honor.

Approach the area in which you will participate, the Shutsujo, with the sword in the Keito Shisei (sword carrying) posture and bow to the altar (Shinza E No Rei). Taking up a diagonal direction to the altar (Enbu No Hoko), sit down in Seiza, place the sword in front of you and bow to it (Hajime No Torei). Take up the sword again, insert it into your belt (Taito) and perform the exhibition. When you have finished, sit down once again, take out the sword and place it in front of you and bow to it (Owari No Torei). Then pick up the sword, stand up and bow to the altar, Shinza E No Rei, and then leave the area (Taijo).

1. KEITO SHISEI (How to hold the sword)

Put your left thumb on the sword guard (Tsuba) whilst gripping the mouth of the sheath (Koiguchi) together with the cord (Sageo) in the other four fingers. The left arm should be slightly bent at the elbow. Hold the sword edge up, placing the pommel (Tsukagashira) towards the centerline of your abdomen. Point the tip of the scabbard (Kojiri) to a 45° angle and place the base of the left thumb on the hip-bone. The right hand should be placed along the side of the body in a straight vertical line.

2. SHUTSUJO (Entering the area)

Proceed to the area commencing on your right foot carrying your sword in Taito Shisei. Before proceeding, make sure the retaining peg (Mekugi) is firmly in place, your attire is correct and your Obi is suitably adjusted.

3. SHINZA E NO REI (Bow to the altar)

In Taito Shisei, stand upright facing the altar. Bring the left hand across the front of the body to the right side, around the level of the hip, changing the sword into your right hand. Grip the cord holder (Kurigata) and the Sageo, with your right hand. Place the blade edge down with the Tsukagashira at the rear. Release your left hand from the sword and return it naturally to your left side. Put the sword along your right side. Bend and incline your upper body forwards about 30° and bow respectfully. After bowing, bring your right hand back across the front of your body at navel height, change hands and hold the sword guard with your left thumb and return to Keito Shisei

4. ENBU NO HOKO (Direction to face when performing)

Rotating your body in the direction of your right foot, locate yourself diagonally to the right of the altar holding your sword in Keito Shisei. You should be in a position such that the Shinza is to your left diagonal. This direction will become the front (Shomen) for the Enbu.

5. HAJIME NO TOREI (Bow to the sword before the performance)

From Keito Shisei, sit down (a), place the sword to the right (b), from Seiza (c) bow to the sword (d).

a. CHAKUZA (Sitting down)

From Keito Shisei, without withdrawing either foot, slightly open and bend both knees and while tucking the hem of the Hakama with the palm of the right hand, place the left knee, followed by the right on the floor. Leave about 10 cm of space between both knees. Extend the tips of your toes and put them side by side. Sit down comfortably. Put your right hand on the right thigh with the fingers lightly extended. Hold the sword in your left hand on the left thigh.

b. KATANA NO OKIKATA (How to place the sword)

With your left hand push the sword forwards to your center. As your right hand takes the sword, put your right thumb on the sword guard. Hold the Saya with the other four fingers close to the Koiguchi. Making sure the edge of the blade faces the front, extend your right arm, ensuring you keep the Sageo and Saya together. Hold near to the end of the Saya with your left hand from above. Bend your upper body forward and lay the sword in front of you. Be careful not to let the end of the Saya point towards the altar. Return your upper body to its original position and put your right hand followed by the left back on your thighs. Sit calmly in Seiza.

c. SEIZA NO SHISEI (Sitting posture)

Straighten your back and concentrate your whole strength in the abdomen. Relax your shoulders and naturally push out your chest. Straighten the back of your neck and head. Put both hands on your thighs. Look 4-5 meters in front of you. Half open your eyes and do Enzan No Metsuke (looking at distant mountains). Be aware of all around you.

d. ZAREI (Bow)

Bend your upper body forward whilst in the sitting position. Place your left hand then the right on the floor before the sword and make a small triangle with thumbs and forefingers touching. Continue to bow until your elbows naturally touch the floor. Your feeling should be one of deep respect. When you have done this, gently raise yourself up and return your right hand then left back to your thighs.

6. TAITO (Wearing the sword)

After the Hajime No Torei, you will be spiritually united with the sword. Incline your upper body forwards and take the sword (with Sageo) in both hands. With the right palm up take hold of the Saya near the Koiguchi. Put the right thumb on the sword guard and at the same time place your left hand about 10cm from the end of the Saya and hold it lightly. As you raise yourself up bring the tip of the Saya to the center of your abdomen and insert the sword into the Obi. Arrange the sword so that its guard is in front of your navel. Secure the Sageo by tying it to the Hakama and put both hands on your thighs.

7. OWARI NO TOREI (Bow to the sword after the performance)

After completion of the Enbu, sit in Seiza and remove the sword (a), place the sword with the handle (Tsuka) to the left onto the floor and bow (b). Place the sword on your thigh (c) and stand up (d).

a. DATTO (Removing the Sword)

While sitting in Seiza with the sword in the Obi, pull and release the Sageo knot with your right hand only. Place the left hand on the Saya near the Koiguchi ensuring your left thumb is on the sword guard. Slightly push the sword forward to the right front, a little off center. Put the right forefinger on the sword guard and place the remaining fingers near the Koiguchi. Place your left hand on the left side of your hip on the Obi and by extending the right elbow, pull out the sword. Make sure that the edge of the blade is facing you.

b. KATANA NO OKIKATA TO ZAREI (How to place the sword and bow)

Keeping the left hand on the left hip, with your right hand let the sword stand upright on the floor at the right front to your right knee and softly lay it down to lie in front of you so that it appears to be horizontal. Ensure the Sageo is tidy and that the blade edge is facing you. Put both hands on your thighs (right then left) and take Seiza No Shisei. Perform Zarei (see 5d) and return to Seiza.

c. KATANA NO TORIKATA (How to take up the sword)

Leave your left hand on the left thigh, stretch out your right hand and put the forefinger on the Tsuba whilst placing the other four fingers around the Saya close to the Koiguchi. Keeping the edge of the blade towards yourself, gently move the sword to stand lightly at your center. Move the left hand to the center of the Saya and squeeze it gently moving downwards to the tip. With both hands place the sword on your left thigh.

Release your right hand from the sheath, put the left thumb on the sword guard and grip the mouth of the Saya with the remaining fingers. Hold the sword with your left hand and place the right hand back on your right thigh.

d. TACHI AGARI KATA (How to stand up)

Raise your waist up bringing your toes underneath. Place your right foot in line with your left knee and stand up without bending forwards. When you stand up bring your left foot in line with the right to assume Keito Shisei.

8. TAIJO (Leaving the area)

Stand in Keito Shisei and face the altar. Pass the sword from the left hand to the right across the front of your body and do Shinza E No Rei. Return the sword to the left hand back into Keito Shisei. Take two or three steps back starting with the left foot and make a 180 degree right turn and leave the area.

PERFORMANCE (Execution of forms)

The following and subsequent paragraphs to each form summarize and introduce the feeling or general meaning of each Kata.

SEIZA NO BU (Kneeling Set)

1. IPPONME - MAE (FRONT)

Detecting the harmful intention of the person in front of you, forestall it by using the sword tip to cut his/her temple in a horizontal action and then bring the sword downwards from above the head in a vertical action.

a. Sit in Seiza and face the front. Gently take hold of the sword with both hands, releasing it slightly from the mouth of the Saya. Raise up on your hips while drawing the sword ensuring the blade remains pointing upwards. When extending the sword, keep the left hand on the mouth of the sword sheath pulling your left hand backwards ensuring that the left little finger is in contact with the belt. Make sure that the edge of the blade is facing up. Applying strength to the tips of your toes, turn the sword into a horizontal position just before the blade comes out of the sheath. Extend your hips, put your right foot forward and aim a cut at your opponent's right temple.

b. Bring your left knee to your right heel in a straight line. At the same time bring the mouth of the sheath back to the navel position and swiftly move the sword above the head with a feeling of thrusting behind the left ear⁽¹⁾. Put your left hand on the hilt and as you move the right foot forward, cut down the centerline⁽²⁾.

(1) In the Furikaburi position with the sword above the head, ensure the Kissaki is not below horizontal.

(2) Upon finishing the cut, the left fist should be in front of the navel and the Kissaki should be just below horizontal.

c. Release your left hand from the hilt and place it against the left hip over the Obi where the Saya is thrust through it. Rotate the edge of the sword so that it faces to the right by rotating the right fist above the Tsuka. Begin lifting the sword upwards to the right until your shoulder height. Bend your arm at the elbow so that the hand and sword come close to your right temple. While standing up, shed the blood off by swinging the sword downwards in a 45° angle (on the Kesa line⁽¹⁾ i.e. the line of a monk's stole; the diagonal line across the chest which one flap of the jacket makes). After shedding the blood off, make ready to do Iai Goshi⁽²⁾.

(1) Chiburi performed on the Kesa line should have a similar feeling to shaking water off an umbrella. At the end of the Chiburi, the right hand should be the same height as the left and positioned to the right front diagonal. The Kissaki should be approximately 45° pointing down and slightly to the inside of the right hand. Ensure the edge is pointed in the same direction as when you performed the Chiburi.

(2) Iai Goshi is a demonstration of Zanshin (awareness) with the knees slightly bent and a feeling of the hips being lowered.

d. While executing Iai Goshi make sure both knees are slightly bent. Bring the rear foot up in line with your right and then move your right foot back. Take hold of the Koiguchi with your left hand and perform Noto. Bring your rear knee down to touch the floor at the same time as Noto is completed. While sheathing the sword your left middle finger should hold the Koiguchi and your left thumb and forefinger should support the back ridge of the sword close to the Tsuba. Extend your right elbow to the right diagonal front and let the tip of the sword point towards your left waist. Put the tip point of the sword into the Koiguchi by sliding and moving both hands in opposite directions. Ensure your left hand controls the sheath. When you finish sheathing the sword, place your left thumb on the sword guard. The sword guard should be located in front of your navel. Keep the sword in a natural horizontal position.

e. As you stand up bring your rear foot forwards in line with your front foot. Release your right hand from the Tsuka and assume Taito Shisei. Return to your original starting position taking three steps back beginning with the left foot.

2. NIHONME - USHIRO (REAR)

Detecting the harmful intention of the person sitting behind you, forestall it by using the sword tip to cut his/her temple in a horizontal action and then bring the sword downwards from above the head in a vertical action.

a. Face the front. Then turn 180° clockwise by crossing the left foot over the right to face the opposite direction and sit down in Seiza. Gently take hold of the sword with both hands and release it in the same manner as previously described in No.1 Mae. As you pull out the sword raise your body and make an anti-clockwise turn to the left using your right knee as an axis. Face the opponent. Place the left foot in the correct position and aim a cut at his/her temple. The following movements are the same as found in Mae, but done with the left foot forwards. After Kirioroshi, Chiburi and Noto, take Taito Shisei. Return to your original starting position taking three steps back beginning with your left foot.

3. SANBONME - UKENAGASHI (RECEIVE, PARRY & CUT)

When the person at your left suddenly stands up and intends to cut you downwards, you parry his/her sword with the ridge on the side of your sword and cut him/her from above the head in a downwards diagonal action.

a. Sit in the Seiza position facing the right. While turning your head to your left to look at the enemy, grasp the sword quickly with both hands. Without a pause, raise your hips and apply strength to the tips of your right toes. Extend your waist and move your left foot forward so that it touches the inside of your right knee with the toes slightly pointed outwards. Draw the sword close to your chest whilst standing up and complete the draw above and in front of the head. As you do this, bring your right foot near to the inside of the left and parry the opponent's sword. When parrying, the blade must be angled to the upper rear and the Kissaki angled down so that the sword protects the upper body.

NB. The angle of your body when doing the parry should ideally be facing slightly to the right. After the sword has been parried by bringing your own sword up above your head, you will find yourself naturally facing the opponent square on.

b. After parrying turn the tip of the sword to the upper right and face the opponent. Place your left hand on the hilt, then without stopping the sword, step back with and bring the sword diagonally downwards from the opponent's left shoulder. Stop your left hand in front of your navel and ensure the Kissaki is a little lower than horizontal.

c. Bring the Monouchi of the sword to rest on the lower part of the right thigh by rotating and extending the left-hand in a clockwise fashion and making sure the blade remains facing forwards. Keep the palm of the right hand upwards and keep a soft grip on the hilt.

d. Release your right hand from the hilt and place it back this time gripping the Tsuka from above.

e. Release the left hand from the hilt and take hold of the Koiguchi. With your right hand bring the tip of the sword from below and bring the Mune (back of the sword) into contact with your left hand at a horizontal position and do Noto. At the same time you sheath the sword lower the left knee onto the floor.

f. As you stand up, bring your rear foot forward in line with your front one. Release your right hand from the hilt, take Taito Shisei and return to your original position by taking a half step starting with the left foot.

IAI HIZA NO BU (Raised Knee Set)

4. YONHONME - TSUKA ATE (STRIKING WITH THE HILT)

Two people, one in front and the other at the back intend to attack you. Thrust the pommel of your sword into the front opponent's solar plexus, then draw and stab the rear opponent. While turning back to the front bring the sword downward from above the head in a vertical action to defeat the first opponent.

a. Sit in the Iai Hiza⁽¹⁾ position and face the front. Swiftly place both hands on the sword and raise your hips. Put strength in your left toes and place them at the rear of the left knee and raise yourself up. Whilst moving forwards with the right foot, strike the opponent's solar plexus with the Tsuka Gashira (pommel), making a thrusting action with the sword still in the Saya.

(1) After taking Taito Shisei, tuck the hem of the Hakama clear of the ankles and bend both knees. Lower the left knee to the floor and bring the right foot up to the side of it and flatten the left foot. Ensure the right knee is pointing to your diagonal right and sit naturally placing the buttocks on the left heel. Close the hands to form loosely clenched fists and place them on the middle of your thighs. Assume the same manner as that found in Seiza No Shisei.

b. While drawing back the sheath with your left hand, turn and look towards the opponent at your rear. The left foot moves 90° by turning anti-clockwise, pivoting on the left knee. Turn left and at the same time draw the sword and bring the Mune near the Monouchi to the chest. The edge of the blade should be facing away from you. Extend the right arm and thrust to the solar plexus of the opponent at your rear. Ensure the tip of the sword is horizontal and in line with the centerline of your opponent. Simultaneously bring your left hand back to your center keeping it in contact with your body until the Koiguchi stops in front of your navel.

c. Face the front opponent by turning the left leg back onto its original line using the left knee as an axis. At the same time bring the sword above the head. Place your left hand on the hilt and cut the opponent downwards in the same manner as described in No.1 - Mae.

d. Without changing your posture, release the left hand from the hilt and place it on the left hip over the belt. At the same time execute a horizontal action to the right with your right hand Migi Ni Hiraite No Chiburi (Yoko Chiburi). When shedding the blood from the sword your right fist should be at the same height as your left hand. Keep the tip of the sword inclined slightly inwards and a little lower than the horizontal level.

e. Take your left hand from the belt to the Koiguchi and perform Noto while bringing your front foot back in a straight line to finish near the other. While doing this, settle the hips into a Sonkyo position. Maintain an upright position facing the front with the left knee on the floor.

f. Bring your waist and right foot forward and stand up. As you do so, bring the rear foot in line with the front foot. Release your right hand from the hilt, take Taito Shisei and return to your original position starting with your left foot.

TACHI IAI NO BU (Standing Forms Set)

5. GOHONME - KESAGIRI (DIAGONAL CUT)

While you are walking along, an opponent comes towards you and tries to cut you by bringing his/her sword from above the head. Immediately cut him/her diagonally, first up through his/her right waist and then down from the left shoulder.

a. Step forward beginning on your right foot. As you bring your left foot forward, quickly place your hands on the Tsuka. Turn both the Saya and the sword anti-clockwise until the edge of the sword is underneath. As soon as the right foot is placed, cut the opponent from the right waist up through to his left shoulder with your right hand. When you have finished cutting, the right hand should be above your right shoulder with the sword upright in a natural position.

b. Leave your feet as they are and return the Saya to its original position with the left hand. Release this hand from the Koiguchi, take hold of the Tsuka and cut the opponent diagonally downwards through the point between the base of the neck and shoulder. The cutting up and down motion should be done in one continuous movement. When you finish, the left hand should be in front of your navel and the tip of the sword slightly lower than horizontal and pointing towards the left as in No.3 - Ukenagashi.

c. Take your right foot back assuming Hasso No Kamae and demonstrate Zanshin.

d. While stepping back with your left foot, release the left hand from the hilt and hold the mouth of the sheath. Do Kesa Ni Furi Oroshite No Chiburi by bringing the sword diagonally down, to finish at 45° to the right front.

e. Do Noto without any further movement of the feet.

f. Bring your rear foot forwards in line with the front foot. Release your right hand from the hilt and assume Taito Shisei. Return to the original starting position by taking three steps beginning with your left foot.

6. ROPPONME - MOROTEZUKI (TWO-HAND THRUST)

While walking along, three people - two in front and one at the rear intend to attack you. Forestall the front attack by drawing the sword and making a cut to the right temple of the first opponents face, followed by a two-handed thrust to the solar plexus. Turning next to the rear opponent, bring the sword from above your head and cut down vertically. Lastly turn once again to the front and cut the last opponent in the same manner.

a. Move forwards starting on your right foot. As soon as you place your left foot, take hold of the sword with both hands. While moving your right foot forwards, turn your upper body slightly to the left and cut the opponent's face from the right temple to the chin.

b. Bring your rear foot up to the heel of your front foot at the same time as you bring the sword into Chudan No Kamae (middle posture) holding the Tsuka with both hands. Without hesitating, step forwards on your right foot and thrust at the opponent's solar plexus with both hands.

c. Making a 180° turn to your left using your right foot as an axis, draw the sword out. Move your left foot slightly to the left and in a parrying action raise the sword above the head. As soon as you have turned towards this opponent, step forwards with the right foot and cut down in a vertical action Kirioroshi. When you have finished cutting, both hands should be in front of your navel and the sword should be held horizontally.

d. Turning back to the front once more, cut the last opponent in a downward vertical action in the same manner by moving forwards on the right foot.

e. Maintain the same posture and perform Migi Ni Hiraite No Chiburi (Yoko Chiburi) while returning the left hand to the left side of the belt.

f. Move your left hand from the belt and take the Koiguchi of the sheath and perform Noto.

g. Bring your rear foot up in line with your front foot, release your right hand from the hilt and take Taito Shisei. Go back to the original position beginning with your left foot.

7. NANAHONME - SANPOGIRI (THREE DIRECTION CUT)

Opponents in front, to your left and right intend to attack you while you are walking along. Draw your sword and cut the first opponent from above the head at your right immediately. Cut the next opponent to your left by turning to face him and lastly turn back to the front and cut the last opponent vertically downwards.

a. Take 5 steps forward beginning with your right foot. Take hold of the sword with both hands as your left foot advances forward on the left foot. Pressing the opponent in front, draw your sword and turn to face (side on) the opponent at your right by using the left foot as an axis and placing the right foot slightly forward and to the right.

Make a cut from the top of their head down to their chin.

b. Turn 180° to your left to face the second opponent without changing the stance and using the right foot as an axis. As you do so, bring the sword up over the head in a parrying action taking the hilt in the left hand. Without hesitation cut downwards in a straight line to his/her center.

c. Turn to face the last opponent using your left foot as an axis. Make a parrying action as the sword is brought up above the head. Then moving forwards on the right foot, cut as described in the previous paragraph.

d. As you take the right foot back, assume Morote Hidari Jodan No Kamae (sword held at a 45° angle above the head in both hands with the left foot forward) and show Zanshin.

e. As you move your left foot back, release the left hand from the Tsuka and place it on the left hip over the belt. Do Kesa Ni Furi Oroshite No Chiburi (large action of shedding the blood from the sword commencing from the Jodan position with the sword cutting in a line similar to No.5 - Kesa Giri) by bringing it downwards diagonally.

f. Slide the left hand forward from the belt to the Koiguchi and do Noto.

g. Bring your rear foot up in line with your front one, release your right hand from the hilt and assume Taito Shisei. Return to the original starting position by taking five steps beginning with the left foot.

8. HAPPONME - GANMEN ATE (HIT TO THE FACE)

While walking along, people in front and the back intend to attack you. First do Tsuka ate to the face of the opponent in front of you, then, thrust the tip of the sword into the solar plexus of the one at your rear. Turn back around and cut the first opponent vertically downwards from above your head.

a. Take 3 steps forward beginning on your right foot. Take hold of the sword with both hands as the left foot moves forward and hit the opponent hard between the eyes using the Tsuka Gashira as the right foot advances. This action uses both the sword and the sheath held together with the left and right hand.

b. Immediately turn around 180° anti-clockwise draw the sword from the Saya, place your left foot to your left and turn to the opponent at your back. Place your right fist on your waist and keep the sword horizontal with the blade facing to the outside.

Without pausing, step forward on the right foot and stretch your right elbow without swaying your upper body and thrust the tip of the blade into the solar plexus of the opponent's. When making this thrust, your right hand should be lower than the tip of the sword.

c. Next you must turn back to the first opponent by making a 180° left turn using your right foot as an axis. Slide your left foot to the left and bring the sword above the head by a parrying action. Take hold the hilt with your left hand and face the opponent in front of you. Immediately step forward with your right foot and cut him/her down vertically.

d. Without moving your feet, release your left hand from the hilt and place it on the hip over the belt. Do Migi Ni Hiraite No Chiburi (Yoko Chiburi).

e. Slide your left hand from the left hip to the Koiguchi, take hold and do Noto.

f. After the sword has been sheathed, bring your rear foot up in line with your front foot, release your right hand from the hilt and assume Taito Shisei. Return to the starting position beginning with your left foot.

9. KYUHONME - SOETE ZUKI (JOINED HAND THRUST)

You are walking along when a person suddenly appears from the left with the intention to attack you. Stall it by taking the initiative by drawing out your sword and cutting diagonally through his/her right shoulder. Then thrust the sword into his/her abdomen as you step forward.

a. Take 3 steps forward beginning with the right foot. As you make a step with your left foot, turn to look to the opponent at your left, placing both hands on the sword. Continue stepping with the right half a step and using it as a pivot, turn your body to face your opponent. Step back with your left foot and open the upper body a little to the left diagonal and make a cut through the opponent's right shoulder to the side of the abdomen cutting along the Kesa line. When you finish cutting, your right hand should be at the height of your navel and the tip of the sword should be a little higher than the right hand.

b. Point the right toes to the right and take a half step back and assume Soetozuki No Kamae⁽¹⁾. Immediately bring your left foot forward and thrust the sword into the opponent's abdomen. At this point the right hand should be in front of the navel and the sword horizontal.

(1) Hold the middle of the ridge of the sword firmly with your left thumb and forefinger. Place your right hand near your right waist holding the hilt and keep the tip of the sword in a horizontal position. Your upper body should naturally be inclined to the right.

c. Without moving your left hand, pull the sword out of the body (rotating it over the back of the fingers of the left hand) and lowering the tip of the sword with the edge facing down and to the front. Bring your right hand in front of your right chest, Kamae⁽¹⁾ and show Zanshin.

(1) When you make this Kamae, hold the sword blade with your left thumb and forefinger. Turn your palm down and lightly straighten your right elbow to ensure that the angle between forearm and sword is approximately 90°.

d. Release your left hand from the blade and take hold of the Koiguchi. While stepping back on your left foot, do Migi Ni Hiraite No Chiburi. The angle of this Chiburi is about 30 degrees.

e. Do Noto as described previously.

f. Bring your rear foot up in line with your front foot and release your right hand from the hilt. Assume Taito Shisei and go back to the original starting position by first turning to face the front and then by taking three steps beginning with your left foot.

10. JU PPONME - SHIHOGIRI (FOUR DIRECTION CUTTING)

You encounter four enemies who intend to attack you. Forestall the first by using Tsuka ate to his right hand at the right diagonal front. Then thrust into the solar plexus of the next opponent at your left diagonal rear. Continue by cutting the others at your diagonal front and back until all are defeated.

a. Take 2 steps forward beginning with your right foot. As soon as the left foot steps forward, turn to the opponent at your right diagonal front and hold the sword with both hands. Push out the sword without drawing and strike the opponent's right hand with the flat part of the Tsuka as you move your right foot forward.

b. Immediately do Sayabiki with your left hand and turn to the opponent at your left diagonal rear. When the tip of the sword comes out from the Koiguchi make a left turn and take Hitoemi⁽¹⁾ position. Place the back of the sword behind the Monouchi on the left side of your chest. Without pausing move your left foot forward and pull the left hand inwards to the navel. Stretch your right elbow and thrust the sword into the solar plexus of the opponent's body. When you put the ridge of the sword on your chest and when you thrust your sword into the opponent, your upper body should take the same posture as No.4 - Tsuka Ate.

(1) When you assume the Hitoemi position, your upper body should open further to the side than Hanmi No Kamae (side facing posture).

c. Turn again towards the first opponent at your right diagonal front. Bring the sword above the head as you draw it out of the rear opponent. Take hold of the Tsuka with the left hand and turn right by using your right foot as an axis to face the opponent. Step forward with the left foot and cut him vertically in a downwards action. (NB. This Furi Kaburi action is done smoothly and in one action).

d. Turning next to the opponent at your right diagonal side (90°). With parrying an attempted sword cut, use your left foot as an axis to turn and with your right foot stepping forward, make a vertical downwards cut to the horizontal.

e. Make a 180° left turn using the right foot as an axis. Move your left foot to the left and face the opponent looking side on (Waki Gamae). Again with the feeling of parrying any attack bring your sword above your head and as the right foot steps forward, cut vertically in a downwards action the opponent at the left diagonal front.

f. Bring your right foot back and assume Morote Hidari Jodan No Kamae position (left foot forwards, sword above the head at about 45°) and show Zanshin.

g. Bring your left foot back, release your left hand from the hilt and place it on the belt. Do Kesa Ni Furi Oroshite No Chiburi.

h. Release your left hand from the left belt and take hold of the Koiguchi. Do Noto.

i. Bring your rear foot up in line with your front foot. Release your right hand from the Tsuka and assume Taito Shisei. Go back to the original starting beginning with your left foot.

11. JU IPPONME - SOUGIRI (COMPLETE CUTS)

While walking along you encounter a person in front of you who intends to attack you. Forestall him/her by cutting to the left face diagonally, then through the right shoulder to the solar plexus and then the left torso. Cut his/her abdomen across the waist horizontally and finally finish with a vertical downwards cut.

a. Take 3 steps forward beginning with your right foot. As your left foot steps forward take hold of the sword with both hands. As your right foot moves forward draw the sword naturally forwards slightly to your right front. Bring the right foot back close to your left foot and parry the opponent's cut by bringing your sword above your head and holding the Tsuka with your right hand. (This is the same Kamae as No.3 - Ukenagashi). Immediately place your left hand on the sword, step forward on the right foot and cut his/her left side of the head down to the chin.

b. Maintaining the same angle from the first cut, take the sword above the head. Step forward on the right foot again and cut the opponent through his/her right shoulder down to the solar plexus.

c. Maintain the same angle as before and take the sword above the head. Step forward with the right foot and cut the opponent from the left upper chest down to the center of the navel. When you have finished cutting, keep your sword horizontal.

d. Keep the same angle as you raise the sword up over the head, bring it down and over to your left waist so that the blade edge is facing forwards. Hold it horizontally and without hesitation make a horizontal cut from right to left (180°) whilst stepping forward on your right foot. Ensure this horizontal cut is made exactly horizontally and do not raise the hands.

NB. When taking this posture, ensure the sword is held low enough at the left side whereby its angle is pointing naturally to the left rear. The characteristic of this cut is to move forwards and not just slash to the right.

e. Again without stopping, bring the sword above head and as your right foot steps forward, make a downward vertical cut to the horizontal.

f. Without changing your posture, move your left hand to the left belt and do Migi Ni Hiraite No Chiburi (Yoko Chiburi) with your right hand.

g. Slide your left hand forwards from the belt to the Koiguchi and do Noto.

h. Bring your rear foot up in line with your front foot, release your right hand from the hilt and assume Taito Shisei. Return to the original starting position by taking steps back commencing on your left foot.

12. JU NIHONME - NUKIUCHI (SUDDEN DRAW)

When standing face to face with a person, he/she suddenly tries to cut you. You let him/her cut the air by stepping back while you draw the sword. Make a vertical downward cut to defeat him/her.

a. While standing upright take hold of the sword with both hands. Step back with your left foot. While bringing the right foot back near to the left, but not in line with it, draw the sword with your right hand and bring it above your head. NB. The correct way to draw the sword is by moving the right hand straight up the center line of your body, without taking it forwards. Without pausing, take hold of the Tsuka with your left hand, step forwards on the right foot and make a vertical downward cut to the horizontal level.

b. Step back by moving the right foot to the rear of the left one. Place the left hand on the belt and do Migi Ni Hiraite No Chiburi (Yoko Chiburi) at the same time.

c. Slide your left hand forwards and take the Koiguchi and do Noto.

d. Bring your rear foot up in line with your front foot, release your right hand from the hilt and assume Taito Shisei. Start to move your right foot forward and then return to your original starting position (Moto No Ichi).

This is the end of the series of the 12 forms that make up the ZEN NIPPON KENDO RENMEI IAI.

SUPPLEMENT

(Additional Explanations)

1. How to step and turn when you arrive at and leave the Shinden area.

When you perform in the Shinden (shrine, sacred place, Dojo), you enter the area from Shimo No Ashi⁽¹⁾, and leave there from Kami No Ashi⁽²⁾. When you change your direction you turn to Kami No Ashi.

(1) Shimo No Ashi - the foot further from the Shinza (shrine) or Shomen (top seat). If you are on the middle line (Seichusen) it is your left foot.

(2) Kami No Ashi - the foot nearer to the Shinza or Shomen. If you are on the middle line (Aichusen) it is your right foot.

2. SHINZA E NO REI in SHINDEN (Bowing to the Shinza)

Proceed to the Shinza in Taito Shisei and do Chakuza as explained in Manner 3. With your left hand push the sword on your left thigh to the right front and bring your right hand to the inside of your left hand. Place your right forefinger on the sword guard and hold the Koiguchi together with the cord with the other four fingers. Transfer the sword to your right hand. While placing your left hand on the left thigh, move the tip of the Saya (Kojiri) from left rear to right rear with your right hand. Ensure the blade faces inside and put the sword guard in line with your knees. Place the sword quietly on the floor in parallel with your right leg. Leave a space between your thigh and the sword. Release the right hand from the sword and bring it back on to the right thigh. According to the style described in Manner, do Zarei. After you have finished, return the sword to the original position by doing everything in the reverse order.

3. SOUGO NO ZAREI (Bow to each other)

This is similar to Shinza E No Rei, but meant as a sign of respect to the teachers and seniors. You start your bow first and raise your upper body up after them.

4. YAGAI DE NO TOREI (Bow to the sword whilst standing)

From the Keito Shisei, move your left hand to the center of your body, and bring your right hand to the inner side of your left hand. Put your right thumb on the sword guard and hold it near the mouth of the Koiguchi together with the cord in the other four fingers. Ensure the blade faces away from you and extend both arms naturally to your front level with your eyes. As you hold the sword up in front of you, incline the upper body forwards and bow respectfully. Hajime No Torei finishes with Taito by bringing the tip of the sheath to the center of your abdomen and Owari No Torei finishes with Keito Shisei by bringing the sword to the rear of the left waist.

5. SAGETO SHISEI (Standing holding the sword posture)

Hold the Koiguchi and the cord lightly with your left hand. Ensure the blade is facing up. Hold the sword naturally along your bodyline with the Kojiri pointing down to the rear. You use this Kamae when are standing in a relaxed posture (Yasume).

6. Points of ENBU Performance

It is important to perform the Enbu in full spirit, with correct handling of the sword and posture. Make efforts to show harmonization of spirit, sword and body. Devote yourself to perform earnestly as if you are in a real sword battle.

7. KOKYU - Breathing

Every time you begin a new Kata you should start the action after the third breath. It is preferable to finish one performance in one breath. If this is difficult, endeavor not to show your breathing to the opponent.

8. How to hold the Tsuka

Hold the Tsuka near the sword guard with your right hand. Hold the other end with your left hand. Be careful not to hold the very end and to ensure that the left little finger does not touch the Makidome (final knot of the Tsuka wrapping near the end of the handle).

Apply a firmer grip to the lower finger muscles than the upper ones and hold the hilt firmly with your little finger and the third finger. The other fingers should be kept quite loose. Try to imagine that you are holding an egg. The whole palm should be in contact with the hilt of the sword.

9. SAGEO (Cord)

It is a rule to tie a cord to the sword. It is up to the individual schools how to tie or how to handle the cord. In some cases you may not require a cord.

POINTS FOR GRADING AND REFEREEING

For the sake of simplicity, the following questions have been scripted in such a way that the answer to each should be in accordance for the form to be correct.

REIHO

Ensure performers are executing the correct manners.

1. MAE

- a. Does the performer do enough Sayabiki when he cuts the opponent's face.
- b. Is the sword taken into Furikaburi with a feeling of thrusting to behind the left ear.
- c. Is the tip of the sword above the horizontal position when in Furikaburi.
- d. Is the sword brought down without hesitation during Kirioroshi.
- e. Is the tip of the sword slightly below horizontal at the end of Kirioroshi.
- f. Is the shape and form of Chiburi correct.
- g. Is Noto performed correctly.

2. USHIRO

- a. When the turn is made, is the left foot moved sufficiently to the left.
- b. Is the horizontal cut made to the opponent's temple.

3. UKENAGASHI

- a. When the parry is made, does it protect the upper body well.
- b. Is the left foot brought back behind the right foot. And is the cut made along the Kesa line.
- c. After the cut has been made, is the left hand in front of the navel and the sword tip a little below horizontal.

4. TSUKA-ATE

- a. Is the Tsuka Gashira surely pointed at the opponent's solar plexus.
- b. When the rear opponent is thrust, is this done with the right elbow extended fully and the left hand bringing the Koiguchi to the navel.
- c. When the cut is made, is it on the vertical centerline and from the correct position above the head.

5. KESAGIRI

- a. When the initial upper cut is made, is the right hand above the right shoulder when the sword is rotated.
- b. When Chiburi is performed, is it at the correct angle while the person steps back with the left hand taking hold of the Koiguchi.

6. MOROTEZUKI

- a. Is the initial cut correctly made from the opponent's temple down to their chin when doing Nuki Uchi.
- b. Does the performer bring their left foot up behind their right. Is Chudan No Kamae correctly made and the sword thrust into the right area of the body. Is the thrust made with certainty.
- c. Does the performer bring their sword above their head in a parrying action after pulling it out from the first opponent.

7. SANPOGIRI

- a. Is the initial cut to the first opponent made through the head down to the chin.
- b. Is the cut to the opponent on the left performed without hesitation.
- c. Is the sword brought up to Furikaburi with a parrying action.
- d. Does the last cut finish at the horizontal.

8. GANMEN-ATE

- a. Is the initial strike with the Tsuka Gashira made between the eyes.
- b. When turning to face the opposite direction, is the right hand placed on the hip.
- c. When facing the rear opponent, is the body faced completely to the rear with the rear heel slightly raised.
- d. Is the thrust performed without too much bend in the knees.

9. SOETE ZUKI

- a. When the initial diagonal cut is made from the opponent's right shoulder down through to the waist, is the right hand at the height of the navel and the sword tip slightly above the horizontal level.
- b. Is the sword held properly between the left thumb and forefinger and the right hand on the hip.
- c. Does the right hand finish in front of the navel after making the thrust.
- d. When showing Zanshin, is the right elbow naturally straight and the right hand no higher than the chest level .

10. SHIHOGIRI

- a. Is the strike to the first opponent's hand done strongly and firmly with the flat of the Tsuka.
- b. In making Sayabiki, is the Mune near the Monouchi of the sword on the chest and the right hand not touching the body.
- c. When the thrust is made, is the left hand brought to the center of the navel and both arms aiding the technique with the correct tension.
- d. Is the final cut made by going through Waki Gamae without hesitation or pause.

11. SOUGIRI

- a. When the sword is drawn, is it in a correct position to parry.
- b. When moving forwards, does the performer do Okuri Ashi footwork.
- c. When making the horizontal cut, is it performed horizontally with the correct angle of the blade.

12. NUKIUCHI

- a. When the sword is drawn, is the left foot drawn back adequately.
- b. When the right hand is taken upwards, is it in the center line of their body.

17th September 1988

JUIPPONME and **JUNIHONME** (Added)

2nd December 2000

GLOSSARY OF GENERAL TERMS

Ashi Sabaki - Footwork or movement of the feet.

Ayumi Ashi - Ordinary walking footwork, where both feet move naturally.

Bokken - See Bokuto.

Budo - Term given to generally mean all types of Japanese fighting arts.

Bokuto - A wooden shaped sword usually made from Japanese oak.

Chakuza - Sitting down from a standing posture. See Seiza & Tate Hiza.

Chudan No Kamae - One of the 5 basic postures where the sword is held in the middle position.

Dojo - A hall or training place where students train in their respective disciplines.

Enbu - The act of demonstrating budo normally to an audience.

Enzan No Metsuke - *lit.* Gazing at distant mountains. A term meaning to look at the whole not something specific.

Furi Oroshite - To swing the sword down from above the head.

Gedan No Kamae - One of the 5 basic postures where the sword is lowered to the knee.

Ha - The cutting edge of the sword.

Hakama - Skirt-like pleated trousers worn for practicing Japanese martial arts.

Hanmi - A stance where the body is sideways on to the opponent.

Hasso No Kamae - One of the 5 basic postures of holding the sword near the shoulder.

Hasuji - The cutting line of the sword blade.

Iaido - A form of sword fighting where drawing the blade quickly and in a single motion to defeat the enemy. Founded by Shigenobu Hayashizaki in the latter half of the 16th century. Many schools were formed in the Edo period (1600 - 1868). In 1956 the Iaido division was set up in the All Japan Kendo Federation, and in 1969 the All Japan Kendo Federation Iai Kata were established.

Jodan No Kamae - One of the 5 basic postures where the sword is held above the head.

Kamae - General word or term given to mean posture.

Kata - Word given to mean form or set movement of techniques.

Katana - Single edged weapon usually given to mean a Japanese sword.

Katsuninken / Katsujinken - Zen buddhist term given to mean "The Positive Way" of using the sword.

Keito Shisei - Term used in Iaido to refer to the position whereby the sheathed sword is held on the left hip as compared with Kendo which generally only uses Taito Shisei to describe the same position holding a Shinai.

Ki Gamae - A state where the body is alert and ready to act in a moment.

Kigurai - A state of commanding presence derived from confidence after much practice.

Koiguchi - The mouth or opening of the sword sheath or Saya. Given because of the similarity between that of the open mouth of a Japanese Koi carp.

Kurai - A word given to mean the degree to which character is combined with skill.

Metsuke - Correct positioning or looking with the eyes.

Mizouchi - See Suigetsu.

Morote - The act of using both hands to grip or hold the sword.

Morote Zuki - The act of thrusting the sword with both hands.

- Mune** - The back edge of the Japanese sword. Also called Mine.
- Nion To** - A general name given to mean a sword manufactured in a Japanese way.
- Noto** - The act of placing the sword in the sheath. One of the basic movements of Iai.
- Obi** - A long narrow sash worn around the waist to support the sword.
- Okuri Ashi** - One of the basic kinds of footwork where the right foot is kept forward.
- Rei** - Behavior and conduct showing respect and courtesy to others.
- Rei Ho** - Courtesy or politeness. Etiquette required throughout all Budo.
- Ryu Ha** - Literal meaning School. Usually meant to mean by a founder or originator.
- Sage To** - The standing posture holding a sword or Bokuto naturally at arms length.
- Seiza** - A way of sitting with the knees in line and the shins and the tops of the feet on the floor. The big toes of both feet should be adjacent or one on top of the other, and the buttocks resting on the heels which are next to each other. The back is straight, and the hands are placed on the upper part of the thighs with the fingers together. In Japan this is considered the correct way of sitting.
- Shinken** - An actual or real sword.
- Shinogi** - On the blade of the sword, the raised ridge on the flat of the blade which runs from the sword guard to the tip point (Kissaki).
- Shinza** - The shrine or revered place in a dojo or training hall.
- Shomen** - A word meaning the front. For example; Shomen E No Rei.
- Suigetsu** - The depressed area below the sternum that is referred to as the pit of the stomach, solar plexus or Mizuochoi.
- Tachi** - A type of sword that is curved and generally longer than 60cm.

Taito - The act of placing the sword in the Obi (sash or belt) or of placing the hand on the left hip when using a Bokuto.

Tenouchi - The overall use of the hands when cutting, holding, tightening or loosening the grip on the handle.

Teito - See Sageto.

Tsuba - Sword guard; usually ornate, but essentially a piece of metal that is inserted between the hilt and the blade of the sword to protect the hands.

Tsuba Moto - The area of a sword near or next to the sword guard.

Tsuka - The hilt of a sword; the area which is usually gripped with the hands.

Tsuka Gashira - The very end "bottom" of the sword handle.

Tsuku - To thrust at the throat, chest or solar plexus.

Ukenagasu - To parry the striking opponents sword, deflecting it to the side with the Shinogi of one's own sword. The move is found in the Kata Sanbonme - Ukenagashi.

Waki Gamae - One of the 5 basic postures where the sword is placed to the side of the body, partially obscuring it from the front opponent's view.

Waza - A motor skill which is gained through long, hard training of cutting movements, and the learning of set techniques or Kata.

Zanshin - The body posture and state of mind in which, even after cutting, one is alert and ready to respond instantly to any counterattack by the opponent. Generally speaking, after cutting, one should always be aware of the distance between oneself and the opponent.

Zarei - A bow made from the formal kneeling position.

GLOSSARY OF COMPETITION TERMS

Fukushin - A sub referee who assists the main referee. There are three in an iaido competition normally, but having the same equal authority in making or calling for decisions.

Fusen Gachi - A win without actually fighting because the opponent did not appear or withdrew from the match.

Gogi - The act of temporarily suspending a match for consultation. The referees hold a conference to decide if one or more of the players has made a critical error or if there is some doubt or uncertainty concerning the demonstration or application of technique.

Hajime - The word used to mean start or begin.

Hantei - The announcement by the main referee in calling for a match decision.

Senshu - Word given to mean a competitor or entrant in a competition or event.

Shiai - A match between individuals or teams that accords with defined regulations.

Shiai Jikan - The time limit of a match. The standard time limit is six minutes, but may vary according to different tournaments.

Shiai Jo - A match court or area where matches are held.

Shinpan - The act of judging the outcome of a match.

Shinpan Cho - The chief judge who oversees all matches and the conduct of referees and players in the competition.

Shinpan In - A referee.

Shinpan Ki - Red and white flags used by the referees during matches.

Shinpan Shunin - The court judge or referee. Usually appointed when there are two or more courts and assists the Shinpan Cho.

Shobu Ari - *lit.* A victory. Announcement made to signal a decision and for the referees to lower their flags.

Shushin - The chief or main referee. Usually announces results of matches.

Taikai - Literal meaning “competition”.

Taikai Kaicho - The chairman of the competition or tournament.

Yame - The Japanese word meaning “stop” or “halt”.

Yasume - The Japanese word meaning “relax” or “stand easy”.

GLOSSARY OF SWORD PART NAMES

Blade Part Names

Boshi - The tempered tip point of the blade.

Ha - The actual cutting edge of the blade.

Hamon - The temper-line along the edge of the blade.

Kissaki - The tip point of the blade.

Mei - The signature of the maker, usually found on the Tang.

Mekugi Ana - The hole in the Tang where the pin is inserted.

Mune - The back of the sword.

Nakago - Tang handle part of the blade.

Shinogi - The side blade ridge.

Shinogi Ji - The flat side of the blade.

Yokote - The part of the blade tip point where the Kissaki ends and the Ha begins.

Fittings and Scabbard Part Names

Fuchi - The collar fitting around the head of the handle.

Habaki - Collar slipped on to the blade before placing Seppa and Tsuba.

Kashira - The butt end of the handle.

Koiguchi - The mouth of the scabbard.

Kojiri - The tip end of the scabbard

Kurigata - The side knob of the scabbard where the Sageo is tied.

Mekugi - Wooden (or other strong material) peg for securing the handle to the blade.

Menuki - Ornamental fittings found under the handle binding.

Sageo - Usually silk or cotton used for securing the scabbard to the Hakama.

Same - Rayskin used as a coating on the wooden handle under the binding.

Saya - Scabbard or sheath for holding the sword.

Seppa - Metal spacers placed either side of the Tsuba.

Tsuba - Sword guard.

Tsuka - Handle of the sword.

Afterword

Editor Note March 2004

This manual is an interpretation of the Japanese version, which currently exists only in Japan. The writer wishes to make available points that are in the Japanese version for the benefit of English speaking people. He also wishes to give readers a taste of how the Japanese perceive basic Iaido through what is presently taught in Japan.

The writer tried to simplify both the format and the content for ease of reading. At the beginning of each form there is a brief outline explanation. Readers may wish to refer to the glossary to familiarize themselves with any unknown terms.

The writer has been informed on numerous occasions, that the main stress or emphasis of Iaido lies in placing more naturalness in performing the Kata. Meaning, given peoples physiological differences, Kata should be done in a way that best reflects the natural movements of their own bodies. The writer through his own experiences, personally believes that this realization is one of the most important developments in Iaido.

Translated by Chris Mansfield

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