

THE IRON VETERANS 1966-1986

Twenty Years Of The K.U.G.B.



Sensei Enoeda in 1971 at KUGB Nationals



Steve Cattle's famous nose injury - 1976



Winning Liverpool team in 1977 (r. to l.) Poynton, Bolton, O'Neill, J. Brennan, Sherry, Farley, Brown.

May 10th, 1986 was a landmark in European Karate as the Karate Union of Great Britain celebrated twenty years of Shotokan Karate with their annual tournament at Crystal Palace. You could be forgiven if you had the impression that you had seen it all before, indeed that you had been watching a replay of 1966 every year since then. Why? Because with a few regrettable exceptions in the form of retirement, splits and bereavement, the youthful karate-ka of 1966 are still there; no longer youthful, no longer competing, but still in the saddle, still maintaining what is probably the highest technical standard of Karate in Europe, and still organising their events with precision and polish.

This is not fulsome praise from a partisan publication. There is something unique about the K.U.G.B. which perhaps derives from the fact that the whole organisation is justifiably proud of itself, from the six year old who delighted the crowd this year with his kata show, to Sensei Keinosuke Enoeda, the Chief Instructor. This pride itself is as traditional as the Shotokan style itself which has remained unwaveringly faithful to its standard of performance, its kata, its etiquette and its connection with the J.K.A. in Tokyo, Japan.

This connection was recognised again this year with the attendance of a representative from the Japanese embassy (the ambassador himself was in Japan with Prince Charles and Princess Diana), and a special guest from J.K.A.H.Q. Mr. Tabata, 7th Dan.

WHO ARE THEY?

The iron veterans of our title are Sensei Enoeda, 8th Dan, Sensei Andy Sherry, 6th Dan, Sensei Terry O'Neill, 5th Dan, Sensei Bob Poynton, 5th Dan, Sensei Steve Cattle, 5th Dan, Sensei Higgins, 4th Dan, Sensei Naylor, 4th Dan, Sensei Langham, 4th Dan and Sensei Rhodes, 4th Dan. Not all of them were there from the

beginning, but all are part of the K.U.G.B. tradition. Names like Terry Heaton, Cliff Hepburn, John Anderson, Glen Haslam, The Adamou twins, Mick Grey, Charles Mack, Ray and Pauline Fuller, Mick Dewey, Ian Maclaren, Dave Hazard, Ron Wade, John Goodbody, Stan Knighton, Sandy Hopkins, Nick Tarrier, Frank Brennan, Jimmy Brennan, Ronnie Watt, and many others too numerous to mention have all played their part or are still playing their part in the life of the K.U.G.B. Though the Scots are a separate body they are still part of the British Shotokan scene.

Regrets

One cannot speak of the K.U.G.B. and leave out Sensei Hirokasu Kanazawa, who preceded Sensei Enoeda on the Karate stage, both in Japan and Europe. His sterling efforts in the early years, his disagreements and his founding of the separate Shotokan Karate International organisation are another story. But he, and to a much lesser extent the Japanese instructors Senseis Asano, Kato and Nagai deserve at the very least a mention. Even the iron veterans still regard Sensei Kanazawa as one of the best Karate men in the world.

As I shook hands with Sensei Enoeda at the immaculate V.I.P. reception my mind went back to the days when I first saw him, visiting London from Liverpool when his bellowing commands gave him for me the nickname of the Shotokan Bull. In those days, Andy Sherry and the beardless Terry O'Neill walked about in their black belts somewhat self consciously, and another Shotokan man with the surname Smith had been involved somehow with the temporary disappearance of Sensei's new car! In Liverpool, anything is possible ... Then I thought about the first time I saw Sensei Kase. His hair was black then and his rapid gyakuzuki came out like a piston rod.



KUGB visit Scottish Region in 1977.



J.K.A. Instructors at the 1975 K.U.G.B. Championships (l to r): Matsui, Tomita, Sherry, Mori, Yahara, Kawazoe, Abe, Ochi, Enoeda, Kon.

TERRY O'NEILL

I remembered 1971, when the Liverpool team were already the top team in the U.K. Terry O'Neill faced Wills and beat him with his, even then, famous Ushiro-mawashi-geri. In the final Terry lost to Andy Sherry but even so was one of the top three or four in the K.U.G.B. Kata was not a weak point for Terry either and that year he came third, a whisker behind Bob Poynton, with Jitte.

Terry shone again in the A.E.K.F., attacking to good effect against Brennan with his mawashi-geri techniques. He was a member of the international squad which defeated France in 1973, and in the same year won the K.U.G.B. individual kumite with a win over Glen Haslam. He had defeated Ron Wade in the semi-finals using the same technique that got Haslam - ushiro-awashigeri. In a style whose winning technique has been predominantly gyaku-zuki, Terry is perhaps unique with his masterly use of mawashi- and ushiro-mawashigeri. Team-mate of that time, Andy Sherry, has always been a gyaku-zuki man, but then Terry is much taller and his longer leg reach gives him a considerable range advantage when it comes to kicking.

In 1975, a year in which the K.U.G.B. nationals were somewhat marred by a spate of injuries in the eliminations, Terry again triumphed in the finals against Mick Dewey. Again it was punch against kick, and in spite of a half point scored by Dewey with reverse punch, Terry persisted with his roundhouse techniques and with an ushiro version scored an ippon to win. In the Liverpool versus Leeds team final, Terry again won, defeating Robinson by a fumikomi geri.

WINNING AGAIN

In 1977 the annual nationals came round like clockwork. Like clockwork, Liverpool karate team with Poynton, Bolton, O'Neill, J. Brennan, Sherry, Farley

and Brown were team champions. But it was not clockwork for Terry who faced the game and able Steve Cattle, who, in 1976 had been unable to compete in the Kumite because of a broken nose, prominently bandaged. John Anderson, reporting the event, gave a large part of his coverage to this bout. It showed what was said above about size. Cattle had to try to get past Terry's legs to score with his hands. Cattle suffered a hard blow to the head from Terry's long barrelled mawashigeri and went down. Sensei Eneoda examined Cattle and he was pronounced fit and Terry got an on the spot telling off. But it was his opponent, whose terrier like attacks are legendary, who scored first with a jodan zuki, diving in under one of Terry's kicks. Not put off, Terry scored with a maegeri, then he tried a most unorthodox technique which came off. He did a forward roll, ending with a downward kick at the stomach and a tetsui. (Terry has never been one to keep his technical head in the sand). He scored and was champ again.

This was to be Terry's year - he won the kata too with Sochin, pipping kumite rival Cattle who came second with Gojushiho. In fairness to Steve Cattle we should say that Terry beat him in the kumite on a decision, but he still beat him, 3-1.

As this is a K.U.G.B. article we will not dwell on Terry's other achievements and excursions into martial arts and simply say that he is one of the pillars of the martial arts society.

ANDY SHERRY

Is the highest graded English Shotokan stylist, holding a 6th Dan J.K.A. grade. He is master of the reverse punch and has used it quietly and effectively over the twenty years being celebrated. Opponents attacked and opponents lost as their attacks were countered by the ultra-cool man from Liverpool. Through the storms of dissension which have riven the Karate world, the dark haired right hand man of Sensei Enoeda has



come through to his present position - Karate's Cardinal Richlieu.

In 1970 he won the men's kata event with Jion and he defeated Terry O'Neill in the kumite final. It was also the year in which a K.U.G.B. official remarked, after Liverpool's team win, "the new students are not making the same grade." This subsequently proved to be not true for all time with the later emergence of Frank Brennan, the K.U.G.B.'s remarkable champion. After a short absence, Andy was now 4th Dan, he re-joined the Liverpool team in 1973, but this was Leeds' turn to win, and Cattle defeated O'Neill.

In due course, Andy Sherry's role in the K.U.G.B. seems to have become more of an administrator and instructor and less of a competitor, but why not? Someone has to look after the ship!

Likewise, the other veterans have fallen prey to time, and their roles have had to change. But even so their steely presence helps to keep the K.U.G.B. at its present level.

JAPANESE INSTRUCTIONS

Since those early Liverpool days, Sensei Enoeda has kept the pressure up, both on himself and on his top instructors. Travelling widely and not sparing his efforts, he has been assisted by resident and visiting Japanese sensei. These have numbered Sensei Kase, Sensei Shirai, Sensei Kawazoe, Sensei Ohta, Sensei Tomita, and others. Regular annual seminars in Lancaster have provided opportunities for students to keep up with and improve on their karate, as well as the courses at Crystal Palace. Sensei Enoeda is as powerful as ever and his demonstrations at the national championships always brought the house down. He is also very keen on golf, but the stories about that will keep for another time.

THIS YEAR

The K.U.G.B. this year presented Sensei Enoeda with a sword of the type worn by an English Air Vice

Marshal, which he held triumphantly aloft. He was also given a mysterious wrapped box by Mr. Tabata in recognition of his work, from the J.K.A. The nationals began this year at 10.00 a.m. at the Crystal Palace and went on until late into the evening with breaks for meals. When the lights went up for the finals at about seven o'clock the stadium was packed.

In the quarter finals Frank Brennan faced Peters and after a failed attack with a spinning back kick he scored with two gyaku-zukis to win. These contests were a reminder of how much the approach to scoring has changed though the techniques themselves have not. In the old days students were much more flat-footed in their body movements, more traditional. Since that time a way of 'bouncing' up and down on both feet has developed. This modern development was heralded as long ago as 1968 at Crystal Palace, by former boxer Bryan Fitkin who bounced his way to victories and also the disapproval of many purists. However, as far as scoring in sport competition is concerned the Kyokushinkai veteran was right and they have all been proved wrong. Nowadays even the ultra-traditional K.U.G.B. do it.

Next time you watch Brennan, notice how his feet move through almost ninety degrees at the ankle as he 'bounces'.

Notable in the children's kata finals were Parnell with Gojushiho-sho for the boys, and Bell of Ipswich for the girls, winning for the second year running. When Bell is able to relax more she will be even better.

SWEEPING TO VICTORY

A visiting Italian team treated everyone to a friendly contest against the K.U.G.B.'s finest but the Brits showed just that extra skill which makes them one of the world's leaders. Notable here were many sweeping techniques which again at one time were almost never seen. It is ironic that when, in 1967, judo and karate man Charles Mack pointed out the effectiveness of sweeping techniques in Karate he was hardly listened to. It was the emphasis placed on them by such men as Dominique Valera and then Ticky Donovan that eventually made them a respectable part of the karate man's armoury.

FRANK BRENNAN

No look at the K.U.G.B. would be complete, however brief it was, if Frank Brennan were not mentioned. He is cast in the same mould as O'Neill, Sherry and Poynton, Haslam, Cattle and Rhodes. Time and again his powerful techniques and excellent kata have brought him to the top of the K.U.G.B. pyramid of competitors and produce the question: what is it about Liverpool and Lancashire?

What is it?

Sandy Hopkins winning with Nijushiho kata in 1976

