

ENSHIN KARATE



WHAT IS

SABAKI?

Find the Secrets

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Enshin Karate reflects Kancho Joko Ninomiya's own experience in Judo and Karate. As Such Enshin uses grabbing techniques in addition to the familiar punches and kicks we associate with karate. But the single principle that clearly separates Enshin from other styles is a strategy called Sabaki. Sabaki is circular movement out of a line of attack into a "blind spot" position from which one can counterattack while using the opponent's momentum against them.

The traditional way of defending against an oncoming attack was to stand solid and block and hope that you could punch or kick your opponent before you got hit again. This was straight line fighting, where it seems the most important thing was to hit first, and the result was more important than the process. This strategy is fine if you are quick and powerful. But still, it is not a very logical way to deal with a confrontation because you would always take punishment, your body would always be directly in front of your opponent. How can anyone fight intelligently without first considering their position. Position is critical, yet many fighters give no thought to the vital principle.

Kancho Joko Ninomiya developed Enshin's unique fighting strategy drawing upon his years of tournament competition and real life confrontations. Enshin's Circular strategy known as The Sabaki Method makes use of the opponents power against them to gain an advantage by braking the opponents balance and creating a strong "blind spot" position. Kancho Joko Ninomiya's Sabaki Method not only embodies the true spirit, and power of karate it employ's a method of strategy, which is rarely seen in other forms of martial arts, and is the essence of his Enshin Karate.

Sabaki is the transitional movement that occurs when a defender blocks and moves out of the line of the attack into a position from which he can freely and most effectively control his opponent. This position is always to the side and back of the opponent. The opponent can't reach across his body to strike you, and the opponent can't see you with both eyes to tell where your attack is coming from. You are in the best tactical position from which to counter.

The fighting combinations derived from the Enshin's Sabaki Method are not only quick and powerful, they are almost limitless.

ENSHIN KARATE

SABAKI'S PENDULUM MOTION

Enshin's Sabaki method uses a pendulum-type body action to provide defence and offence in one continuous rhythmic motion. The Advantages of using pendulum-type motion are:

- 1/ takes you to the blind spot
- 2/ gives you control of your opponent
- 3/ creates momentum for your counterattack.

The power of a pendulum derives from a weight swinging back and forth from a fixed point. The centrifugal momentum around that point creates rhythm and power. A Pendulum requires a fixed support to which the moving object is connected. The pendulum action of Kancho Ninomiya's Sabaki method is no different. This means the Enshin practitioner moves outside the attacker's lead shoulder, they establish a vertical axis with their grabbing hand and pivot foot. As the Enshin practitioner steps to the outside of the attacker, they grab the sleeve and let there front foot pivot as there momentum swings out there back foot in a natural circular motion. Think of the way a child on a swing kicks their legs to gain thrust and hight.

In Enshin's Sabaki Method, the parry and circular movement to the outside of an attack releases power in the front arm while the rear arm and leg store energy for the counter attack. The Enshin practitioner swings out on the parry, and then swings in on the counterattack. Great power and control can be gained



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from this simple, yet very effective principle.



POSITIONING

The most critical aspect when applying Sabaki method of fighting is position. As a defender your distance and position in relation to your opponent will determine your counterattack. Positioning means not only moving out of the way of an attack, but also being aware of distance and using timing appropriate for each distance – short, middle and long. Distance is not a function of where you start in relation to your opponent when you square off to fight: it is determined by where you find yourself at the end or the opponent's attack when you are ready to counter. You should always decide the distance best suited for your counterattack and then move accordingly.



Positioning is useful not only for aversion but to lead the opponent's momentum into to the right position for you to gain the advantage.



Against any attack you must insontaneously choose the best possible position to put yourself in an advantageous position to launch an effective counterattack. The most efficient way to achieve this is moving into what is known to Enshin practitioners as the 'Blind Spot'. The term blind spot refers to the area to the back and side of the opponent, where is visibility is limited and his offensive weapons are few.



When you are in your opponent's blind spot, you are protected for the opponents follow up attacks, as well as being in a good position to keep your opponent off balance as you counter attack. If you fail to take the blind spot position you gain no advantage and the confrontation remains equal. To achieve the blind spot Kancho Joko Ninomiya's Sabaki method is patterned on moving to one of four basic strategic positions. Positions one and two are applied when your opponent's stance is balanced. Position three and four are applied when the opponent drives forward with full momentum.

GRABBING TECHNIQUES

To maintain the blind spot position and keep the opponent off balance the use of grabbing techniques is employed. These consist of moving to the outside and pulling the lead arm forward in a direction that continues the opponent's momentum in a circular orbit around the defender where a powerful counterattack can be delivered. Enshin karate use's two types of grabbing techniques Hiki kuzushi (one-handed grab), and Hiki Mawashi (two-handed grab). Deciding on what grabbing technique to use depends on the distance between you and your opponent.

At long range Hiki Kuzushi would be used and is very effective to set up a counterattack using roundhouse kicks or sweeping techniques. At close distance you can gain further control by immediately following Hiki Kazushi with a hooking action to the back of the opponents neck, using the knife edge of your opposite hand, this is known as Hiki Mawashi. Hiki Mawashi is a very effective method of neutralizing the opponents follow up attack's and positions the defender to launch effective knee strikes or throwing techniques.

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SABAKI TAKEDOWNS

To add a more affective and complete dimension to the Sabaki stragity Kancho Joko Ninomiya has incorporated many takedown techniques to add to the arsenal of kicks and punches we normally associate with karate. Kancho Joko Ninomiya's many years of experience in Judo has enabled him to incorporate very efficient throwing techniques to make his Enshin Karate a more complete system. Some of the throwing Techniques used in Enshin Karate are:

Forward rolling through (Makikomi Nage) – Makikomi Nage is applied when the attacker's weight and momentum are moving forward, and is redirected by the defender in a spiraling action to the ground.

Front throw (Omote Nage) – Omote Nage is most effective in combination with sweeps or throws, as a finishing technique to bring your opponent to the floor. After applying a combination that drives your opponents upper body forward, such as an inside thigh kick or knee kick, omoto nage adds to his momentum and easily brings the opponent down.

Back throw (Ura Nage) – Ura Nage is a very versatile throw, it is applied when the opponent's momentum is moving backwards.

Foot Sweep (Ashi Barai) – Ashi barai is better suited to the one handed grab (Hiki Kuzushi). It is especially effective when your opponent is trying to pull away from your grasp, or as follow-ups to high roundhouse kicks when your opponent is not well grounded.

Inside Thigh kick (Uchi Momo Geri) – The inside thigh kick provides the Enshin practitioner an immediate counterattack or set up technique from a frontal position that draw's the opponent forward and off balance. Enshin karate's method of executing an inside thigh kick is quite different to the conventional application where basically a low roundhouse kick is directed into the inside of the opponents thigh.

The Enshin practitioner uses Hiki Mawashi (two handed grabbing) in conjunction with an inside thigh kick to enable a pulling action to the opponents head in a forward direction as they drive a shin kick to the inside of the opponents thigh.

(You can also target the lead ankle with the top of your foot, driving it backward and to the outside). By forcing the opponents upper and lower body in opposite direction at the same time you can easily up-end your opponent.

Back-Of-Knee Joint-Kick (Teisoku Kansetsu Geri) – Teisoku Kansetsu Geri is executed when a full backside position is created. From there you can take your opponent down quite easily with a joint kick to the back of the knee. When standing directly behind your opponent, grab both of the opponent's shoulders. Use a pulling action on your opponent's upper body as you kick out their supporting leg.

Lifting-Spinning –Throw (Tsurikomi Nage) – Tsurikomi Nage is especially effective when countering your opponents Sabaki.



Jikuashi Gake – Jikuashi Gake is very effective when applied to front kicks or back kick attacks. As the opponent attacks, use a lower parry and grab the leg of the opponent's pants with the same hand. As you lift the opponents kicking leg hook the front of the opponents supporting knee and take them to the ground.

HISTORY OF ENSHIN KARATE IN AUSTRALIA

Enshin karate was first brought to Australia in early 2001 by Sensei Dino Kardas. Having many years experience in the Ashihara Karate system, Sensei Dino Kardas Had a deep passion for the Sabaki method. His desire to continue learning and to be the best that he could be lead him to the Enshin karate honbu which is situated in Denver USA. Staying in the Uchideshi (live-in student) dormitory he experienced some of the hardest training he had ever participated in.

At the End of his stay at the Enshin Honbu Kancho Joko Ninomiya offered Sensei Dino Kardas to become the first Enshin Branch Chief in Australia.

Felling very honored he accepted and so the journey for Enshin Karate in Australia began. In mid 2002 Kancho Joko Ninomiya and Sensei Koji Masuda visited Sensei Dino's dojo in Melbourne and held a seminar on the Sabaki Method. It was a very successful event with over 90 people attending of various karate organisations.

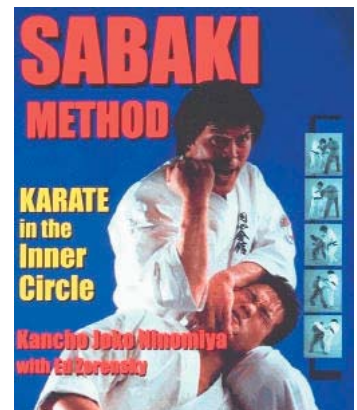
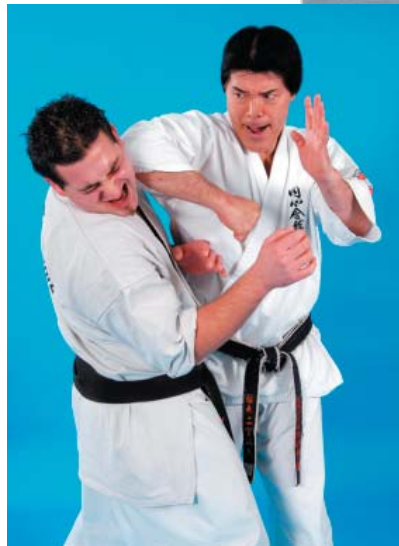
In July 2002 Sensei Dino Kardas and his brother Senpai Lucas Kardas attended the Enshin summer camp held in Ehime Japan. Upon Kancho's request Sensei Dino was re-graded and received his Nidan. Senpai Lucas was also successful and achieved his Shodan.

It has now been over two years and Sensei Dino's dojo has grown, having over 100 very dedicated students.

Enshin Karate has now started to expand with a new Enshin dojo in Sydney headed by Sensei Andrew Kubiak, and two other Dojo's that are opening in the Melbourne metro area soon, there are also plans for an Australian Sabaki Challenge.



photo above
Sensei Dino Kardas and his brother Senpai Lucas Kardas
photo left



Kancho Joko & Sensei Dino



My Journey in karate, The Sabaki Way, Kancho Joko Ninomiya with Ed Zorensky, Frog LTD 1998.

Sabaki Method, Karate in the Inner Circle, Kancho Joko Ninomiya with Ed Zorensky, Frog LTD. 2000.

