



CHINTO



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Original drawing by Sensei Jean-Noël Blanchette, 6th dan, renshi in Chito-Ryu

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A FEW WORDS FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Someone new has joined the Chinto team: **Ms. Nancy Steadman**. Nancy, who is a student at the [downtown YMCA](#) dojo, will be responsible for interviews. In this issue she shares with us her discussion with **Sensei Higashi**, 8th dan, Canadian technical director of [Chito-Ryu](#). I would also like to take this opportunity to thank **Isabelle Minier** for her excellent work in the interviews of past issues of Chinto. Isabelle continues to edit and revise published articles.

Undoubtedly you know **Sensei Thierry Debeur** from his position as President of the [Traditional Chito-Ryu Association of Québec](#). **Mr. Bertrand Julien**, a student of Sensei Debeur, gives us a report on the 25-years-in-karate surprise party for Sensei Debeur. Bertrand helps to shed some light on this well-known karateka along with a little story from Sensei Higashi.

Dr. **Btissama Essadiqi** gives us some excellent insights on exercise and cardiovascular illness. Dr. Essadiqi, a student of the [Karaté Cama](#) dojo, has been a medical doctor since 2002. She specializes in cardiology, where she is in her fourth year of residency.

You will find an article from **Sensei Louis-France Lemieux** on the search for the effectiveness of tsuki. He elaborates, among other things, the distinction between kime and itsuki in the final phase of tsuki. Come and discover what itsuki is all about.

You will also find a report on the last seminar given by Sensei Higashi in Montreal and Masson-Angers. Mr. **Mathieu Valotaire**, a student at the [Chito-Ryu Drummondville](#) dojo, elaborates the concepts of ichi-gan, ni-soku, san-tan and shi-riki, whose importance to the martial arts was frequently mentioned by Sensei Higashi during the seminar.

Also in this issue is a brief report on the preparatory training session by the candidates for the recent black belts exams, the results of those exams, and some competition results from the [Chito-Ryu Drummondville](#) dojo. Finally there is a little humorous article that made me smile.

Noël Blais

Instructor [Chito-Ryu Longueuil - SportsPourTous](#)

Translation: Paul MacKenzie

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INTERVIEW WITH SENSEI HIGASHI



Some history

Sensei Higashi was born in Chimus, BC, in 1940, the third youngest of eleven children. In 1946, after the war, his family moved to Japan. They returned to Toronto ten years later.

In 1961, at the age of 21, Kyoshi Higashi began studying karate with Masami Tsuruoka, 6th Dan. He was an exceptionally gifted pupil, receiving his Shodan in Chito-Ryu in the very short space of a year. Thus began a rapid ascent through the ranks of karate sportsmanship. Sensei Higashi earned his Ni-dan from Dr. Tsuyoshi Chitose in 1965. The following year he began intensive training with O-Sensei Chitose in Japan. After seven months, he received his 4th Dan black belt and was given a special instructor's certificate, a rare honour at that time. His 5th and 6th Dans were achieved in 1968 and 1972; further study and training were rewarded in 1979 with a 7th Dan and an elite Master Instructor's License. He was appointed the head of the Association for Chito-Ryu Karate in Canada the same year. Presently, Sensei Higashi is 8th Dan in Chito-Ryu karate.

He also holds a 4th Dan black belt in the weapon art of Kobujutsu and is instrumental in the preservation and promotion of Ryukyu Classical Martial Arts. Sensei Higashi continues to follow in the footsteps of his first teacher, Sensei Tsuruoka, by fostering the growth of Chito-Ryu around the world; dojos as far away as Australia, Scotland, Singapore, Hong Kong, Norway and Iceland can all trace their roots to Canada.

- 1- Sensei Higashi, you started karate in 1961 under the instruction of Sensei Tsuroka. Why were you attracted to karate?

When we lived in Japan after the war, my brother was a judo man; I tried it but it wasn't for me. I started karate in Toronto when we returned to Canada. It was a better fit.

- 2- **Did you ever dream that 45 years later you would still be practicing karate?**

No, never! It just happened. I was really focused on school. After my studies I worked in an architect's office and concentrated on my profession. Karate was just a hobby. But when you love something it always calls you. You try to quit but you can't quit. It's in the blood. And of course, the philosophy of karate is very special. It goes well with architecture. Architecture is an art form, and so is karate.

- 3- How did you finally decide to devote your professional life entirely to martial arts? Was it a difficult decision?

About 15 to 20 years ago the economy deflated and many of the institutional projects I worked on—hospitals, universities, factories—disappeared. So it was a very good time to make the transition from architecture to teaching karate full time.

- 4- **How did you combine family life, work and karate?**

Well, frankly, I was never home. I went to karate after work and on the weekends. There is no way I could have done it without my wife's support. We have four children together. Some years I was so busy she had to go on holidays on her own, all four kids in tow. We'd say good-bye at the airport and go off in different directions. She was the one who made it all possible. I feel I'm the luckiest man in the whole world.

- 5- **How has your training evolved in the last 45 years?**

Each time you practice you go up. I'm kind of embarrassed to see videos of myself teaching years ago. The good news is that you're always improving your technique and your teaching skills; you're always getting better.

- 6- O-Sensei Chitose, founder of Chito-Ryu and Sensei Inoue, founder of RyuKyu Kobujutsu Hozonshin Ko Kai, taught you. How would you describe your training sessions with them?

When I first went in the winter of 1967, we practiced outside in bare feet in the frost. The sunshine would melt the frost and the ground beneath our feet would become slippery and soft. There were no nice wood floors. You couldn't practice on rainy days. The facilities were very modest. This was not O-Sensei's choice. When he switched from medicine to karate he became a poor person. He sacrificed a lot. I was very lucky to work with him.

Sensei Inoue had family money, so facilities were different. He also had the means to document and record all the 42 different katas. By the time I met him he'd already finished two volumes. I appeared in the very thin third volume.

- 7- The death of these instructors must have been very difficult for you. How did you overcome this?

It was incredibly difficult. O-Sensei's son was very young; luckily there was a senior person to take over his father's position. The hardest thing was that he didn't document very much in recorded form. He was an old fashioned teacher, and we did what he did. One day a university professor's son asked me what Chito-Ryu was. I wrote a newsletter and I thought "this isn't enough." Then I wrote out a short history and that didn't seem to be enough. So we started to make a technical manual. The manual didn't provide emotional comfort – you can't learn from a manual – but it did provide uniformity, a kind of order.

8- Did Soke Sensei use the manual?

Oh yes. I knew the Japanese mentality and thought, "I'm going to start something here, and then they'll come up with a better one." (Laughs) And they did! But it started a dialogue between the two worlds.

9- What kind of advice would you give to teachers to prepare them for the death of their primary instructors?

Simply follow your teacher's philosophy. When a person is born, his or her destiny is already given to them – death. You have a choice of what to do in between. My mother always said 'look up at the sky, spit and watch it come back' The English equivalent is 'what goes around comes around'. The most difficult thing in life is making people happy; it's very easy to make people angry. Happy – that's more complicated.

10- In 1979, you were designated the representative of Chito-Ryu for Canada by O-Sensei Chitose, and you formed the Canadian Association of Chito-Ryu. What role does the Association play in the promotion of Chito-Ryu?

It's extremely supportive in terms of finances and travel. And it allows us to communicate and exchange ideas from province to province.

11- As a person of authority you've clearly had experience in solving crisis situations. What advice would you give a student who needs to deal with a karate related conflict?

Solving conflicts has to do with common sense. This is very easily said, but to me a person with a lot of common sense is a genius. Most conflicts involve ego, money or jealousy. You must have a little bit of each of these things to get ahead, but you cannot have too much. The ability to solve conflicts also has to do with asking questions. You have to ask yourself 'what did I do to make this person angry?'

12- What are your future projects?

Just to keep going!

Thank you, Sensei Higashi!

25 YEARS OF KARATE FOR SENSEI THIERRY DEBEUR

On January 16th 1981, *Sensei Thierry Debeur*, currently chief instructor of the [Chito-Ryu Montréal](#) dojo and president of [Chito-Ryu Québec](#), started his karate classes in the vast world of Chito-Ryu at the dojo at the YMCA Notre-Dame-de-Grâce. 25 years later, on Friday April 28th 2006, several well-known members of the Chito-Ryu family attempted to surprise Sensei Debeur at a party for all of his years of service to this art, which, according to his wife, *Mme Huguette Béraud*, has become like a mistress to him. This event and its exquisite buffet required several organizers. We thank, among others, *Sensei Jocelyn Debeur*, chief instructor at the Fudoshin dojo, as well as *Sensei Nadine Lalande* and *Sensei Paul MacKenzie*. We should also not forget *Mr. Charles-Henri Debeur*, the photographer for the evening.

Sensei Debeur received several gifts and thank-you's. Among them, there was a commemorative plaque for his 25 years in Chito-Ryu and many years of teaching, from Mr. Richard St-Yves, director-general of the [YMCA Centre-ville de Montréal](#), himself a black belt in karate. *Sensei Jean-Noël Blanchette* thanked Sensei Debeur and presented him with a painting that he had painted himself. *Sensei Germain Bisson* also thanked Sensei Debeur, describing him as: "A passionate karateka who started practicing Chito-Ryu at the point where the majority stops." *Sensei Louise Provencher* also offered a commemorative plaque to Sensei Debeur, remembering their many very precious times together; she referred to Sensei Debeur as "a sempai and a friend." Even students who had left Montreal kept their memories of the dojo with Sensei Debeur. This is the case of *Mr. Rick Mehta*, a former student now living in Nova Scotia, who sent a gift to Sensei Debeur from that province.

Sensei Higashi also attended the event and said a few words. Sensei Higashi was pleased to tell a tale about Sensei Debeur's 2nd dan black belt exam. Sensei Debeur's instructor, *Sensei Earl Robertson*, had the idea the night before to eat out at the Ritz Carlton. At this time, Sensei Debeur was already well-known as a restaurant critic and the staff heard that he was in their restaurant. What followed, according to Sensei Paul MacKenzie, was a night of exceptional service from the restaurant staff. On the next day, Sensei Debeur did not pass his exam, because, as Sensei Higashi mockingly tells it, "he tried to buy, despite himself, a passing grade by this unique culinary experience..." Of course, this situation was rectified at the next exam because the group ate in the YMCA cafeteria and Sensei Debeur finally got his 2nd dan. Today, Sensei Higashi has another memory of Sensei Debeur and remembers him more for his French lessons when they are together on the road, and for his remarkable dedication as president of the administrative committee of Chito-Ryu for the province of Quebec. Moreover, Sensei Higashi thanked Sensei Debeur and presented him with a jacket with the colours of Chito-Ryu.

Sensei Denis Boilard also addressed the group. Sensei Boilard met Sensei Thierry Debeur during a seminar organized by Sensei Jean-Noël Blanchette in Scotstown. It was during an exercise where each had to find a training partner of the same size that the two big fellows became friends through punches and kicks. Their common points: budo, physical desensitization training and training in koho-kaiten for an hour. After a particularly physical training at the downtown YMCA dojo given by Sensei Debeur, Sensei Boilard did the same at his own dojo in Sherbrooke during a special day-long training session with his students and with Sensei Debeur. This training finished in the evening, barefoot in a foot of snow! Sensei Boilard qualifies Sensei Debeur as an authentic person whose training sessions have certainly inspired him.

We should also mention the presence of *Sensei Harvey Brown*, chief instructor of the [Ottawa Chito-Kai](#) dojo, *Sensei Noël Blais*, chief instructor of the [Chito-Ryu Longueuil](#) dojo, *Sensei Yves Vigneault*, chief instructor of the Chito-Ryu de Québec dojo, *Sensei Rébecca Khoury*, president of the board of directors of [Karaté Québec](#), and several students of Sensei Debeur as well as students from other dojos.

Sensei Debeur finished the night by thanking everyone for their presence and their charming attention. Sensei Debeur added that “we do the best we can, but sometimes, in our vision and our enthusiasm to reach our goals, it happens that we make mistakes. However, we all have the right to make mistakes and learn from them [...] we cannot have confidence in someone who has never made a mistake [...] besides, the dojo is also a place of mistakes as these are integral to learning.”

Bertrand Julien
[Chito-Ryu Montréal](#) dojo

Translation: Paul MacKenzie and Marc Bolduc

Sensei Debeur with his wife, Mme Huguette Béraud, receiving a gift from Sensei Higashi.



Sensei Higashi was satisfied with his choice of jacket.



Attendees of Sensei Debeur's 25th anniversary in karate.



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KARATE VS PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH

Exercise and Cardiovascular Disease

Importance of cardiovascular disease

Cardiovascular disease is a major cause of mortality in our society. Its prevalence is increasing particularly because of the overall aging of the population. Nowadays patients have their first heart attack at a younger age due to the lack of control of risk factors such as obesity, sedentary life style, smoking, diabetes, hypertension, and dyslipidemia (diseases related to cholesterol). All of these risk factors are modifiable and can, if controlled, significantly reduce the number of cardiovascular events.

Atherosclerosis

Heart disease involves the accumulation of cholesterol on the lining of the arteries of the heart that leads to the formation of inflammatory plaques which run the risk of rupturing off. This phenomenon is called atherosclerosis. If a plaque breaks off, a clot is formed that completely or partially blocks the blood vessel. At that moment, the part of the cardiac muscle that is fed by this vessel deteriorates and dies. This is known as a myocardial infarction. Sometimes, the plaque progresses without rupturing off and gradually shrinks the vessel's passage. The patient then has angina pains during effort because the blood supplied to the heart muscle is insufficient for the demand.

The benefits of exercise

Physical exercise is excellent for the population at large and particularly for patients with cardiovascular risk. In cardiac re-adaptation, studies have shown a relative decrease of 26 % of global mortality when the patient follows an adapted program.

The benefits due to exercise are well established in the medical literature. Regular exercise leads to weight loss, a better control of arterial blood pressure, and a significant improvement of the lipid balance, with a reduction of LDL (low density lipoproteins, or bad cholesterol) and an increase of HDL (high density lipoproteins, or good cholesterol). Regular exercise stabilizes the function of cells on the lining of blood vessel, and reduces the progression of atherosclerosis plaques. Furthermore, exercise reduces the clot forming aggregation of platelets, and reduces diabetes causing glucose intolerance.

How to train?

Any patient with heart disease must undergo a medical evaluation and an evaluation of his risk level before starting on a physical activity.

The first type of beneficial exercise is aerobic training where an increase of the heart rate is sought. It is recommended to target between 70 % and 85 % of the maximum heart rate which is estimated by the formula: $220 - \text{age}$. For example, the maximum heart rate for a person aged 60 is 160 beats per minute. Patients that are de-conditioned, with a low tolerance to effort, can notice an improvement of their physical condition with only 55 % to 64 % on the maximum heart rate. On the other hand, patients already active must train at a higher intensity level to see an improvement of their physical condition level.

The duration of the exercise depends on the intensity achieved. For an exercise between 75 % and 85 % of the maximum heart rate, 20-30 minutes of sustained exercise is recommended; this excludes the warm-up and cool-down periods. For an individual not used to exercise, it is important to gradually increase the effort level over many weeks. It is possible to begin with as little as 4 to 6 periods of 5 minutes of exercise interleaved with rest periods. The recommended frequency is 3-5 times per week, depending on the intensity of the exercise performed.

The second type of exercise is strength and resistance training (e.g.: weight training). This type of exercise is safe for cardiac rehabilitation and has been demonstrated as beneficial for reducing the occurrence of angina symptoms. It is recommended to do between 10 and 15 repetitions with weights of about 40 % to 60 % of the maximum load of a movement, with a frequency of 2 to 3 times a week.

This type of training is particularly useful with older people where musculo-skeletal problems limit aerobic exercise.

Patients with problems with cardiac valves (stenosis or regurgitations) should avoid exercises with isometric contractions (lifting heavy weights, maintaining intense contractions for long periods of time), because these exercises may worsen momentarily the valve problem and lead to a loss of consciousness.

Following a myocardial infarction, intense exercise must be avoided for a 6-week period. During this time, the heart goes through a remodeling (healing process) that is critical for the preservation of the cardiac function.

A patient with heart disease has no restrictions for karate training. In karate, aerobic training as well as muscular resistance training, both beneficial for the cardiovascular health, are equally used. The important point is to train regularly and to respect our limits. Listening to our body is the most important thing!

Btissama Essadiqi, medical doctor
[Karaté Cama](#) Student

Translation: Marc Bolduc

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TSUKI

(RESEARCH ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE TSUKI)

The learning of **tsuki** rests on the knowledge of two concepts, namely the external and the internal functioning of the body. An analysis of movements according to biomechanical principles gives us objective information necessary for the comprehension of the external side of techniques. On the other hand, the awareness of internal sensations (bio-feedback) permits one to subjectively grasp the value of techniques. According to the first concept, the body appears to act as a solid form in articulated and mobile sections, while the second suggests a more liquid and fluid perception.

“A flexible container full of liquid”¹.

Should a **tsuki**, as with other **atemi**, be a technique that breaks the container or one that perturbs the interior? The effectiveness of a *strike to the body* can be defined by its objective – to cause external injuries or to affect an internal organ. Depending on the case, to be effective one must be capable of correctly focusing the force of the strike, and so one must research this ability.

In karate, the search for effectiveness is made by **kime** with the repeated execution of techniques, hundreds or thousands of times, usually in empty space. This urges the karateka to concentrate on the sensation of the force exerted at the end of his **tsuki**, often neglecting the motor (external) and sensory

(internal) aspects of his technique (motor-sensitive perception). This leads to the confusion between the “force of impact” sought with kime and the “braking force and sudden stop of the fist”, the **itsuki**.

The itsuki is a subjective (imaginary) sensation because it is without contact, a sensation of the antagonist muscles of the tsuki rapidly stopping the fist at the end of the trajectory and avoiding snapping the elbow; it is a sensation confused with that of the force of impact. This sensation is felt especially in the elbow, but also in the wrist, the shoulder, the back and even the head, at the moment when the fist stops. At this moment, the body and the mind are, for an instant, *frozen, or stuck*; in Budo, this is itsuki.

“Itsuki is produced by an excessive braking of the movement. In karate, we confuse this braking with the effect of force; this illusion is so strong that karatekas continue to repeat the exercise with ill-placed braking and say that it’s kime.”²

Itsuki is characterized by a stopping time, an unmoving rigidity; a useless and dangerous holding back that breaks chaining with other techniques and allows a counter attack. Itsuki is produced at the end of movement when the body stops; at this moment you must avoid being in a position where the inertia of your centre of gravity fixes you to the floor and prevents you from transforming your kinetic energy into the force of the strike.

“In combat in kendo, when you freeze, you quickly receive a blow. The situation is the same in karate, judo, jujutsu... the itsuki represents a situation when you are technically vulnerable... In effect, eliminating itsuki constitutes one of the central problems in the technique of budo.”³

With a tsuki, even if the **gi** snaps it does not mean that the technique really effective. In fact there is no *real kime* with a tsuki in empty space, because without impact, there is no concentration or transfer of energy into a target. There is no external actualization of the energies that we wish to use, no *external kime*.

“A tsuki becomes a tsuki after it touches the body of the opponent.” Me Egami⁴

“Now, in the majority of cases, if you apply kime when you touch the opponent, the force is already neutralized and the shock effect is dulled instead of being percussive and penetrating. It’s the result of the integration of a *false kime* that brings about a blockage of the force of the end of the fist instead of prolonging it after contact. The effectiveness of a tsuki is determined principally by *the speed of impact and by the extension of the pressure at impact* that allows the injection of the force of impact into the interior of the body of the opponent.”⁵

An excessive muscular contraction, cramping, improper hip rotation or vibration, pulling back the body during or after the technique, ill-adjusted breathing, and mental stiffness are all causes of itsuki. Kime is neither a hyper-contraction of the body, nor a mental fixation after the execution of a technique.

Kime is the instantaneous and penetrating expression (kikomi: ki=energy, komi=penetrating) of all of the physical and mental energies focused (in space and time) into a technique; block, projection and strike (uke, nage and uchi), followed by a relaxation and zanshin permitting a continuous flow. Kime is the result “...of physical and mental actions that take place simultaneously in the last phase of a movement, a little before impact and maintained a little afterwards, and that allows the energy developed by the strike to penetrate the target. ... It only takes place in the last part of the trajectory of the striking mass, hand, fist or foot, at the moment that all of the body’s force is entirely concentrated

in this mass thrown at a high speed; it is stopped abruptly *at impact* and the kinetic energy is transformed into a striking force.”⁶

Looking for the real kime must be done internally while concentrating on the alignment of internal forces as well as externally by the constant improvement of the motor patterns of our techniques. We must look for the penetrating sensation in the continuity of the motion in the contact (and not in its stop). Kime must be perceived as much in the hara as in the parts of the body used in the technique (again, the dual internal and external aspects of kime). This is the research into the unification of spirit, energy and body (shin-ki-tai).

To clearly feel kime, one must include with it proper breathing, a deep breath without being total ($\pm 70\%$) in the last phase of the movement, which is the **ibuki**.

“Ibuki aims to mobilize the energy and the muscular tension at the time of exhaling, which corresponds to the final phase of a movement of a martial art.”⁶

Ibuki produces a guttural sound of air forced out by the hara. Kime is also accompanied sometimes by a kiai, followed by a large relaxation and Zanshin.

Kime is also present in blocks, where it comes in at the contact of the member or object that attacks, and it equally applies in projections in the third phase of movement, **kake** (Kuzushi, Tsukuri and Kake).

One must not confuse kime with shime (Shimeru – strangle, twist) which is the crossed application of muscular forces in the form of torsion in the legs, torso, arms or hands (examples: sanshin-dachi, kakiwake-uke or shibori in the hands on the handle of a sword).

To avoid the development of itsuki one must vary one’s training methods – training in empty air, with a target (punching bag, makiwara and others) and with a partner wearing padded protection. Finally, one must at all times train while searching for fluidity in one’s movements, with supple stops in the techniques and with zanshin. Good training with kime and follow the precious advice of your Sensei.

KEREDOMO

Good training

Louis-France Lemieux,
Certificate in sports training, UQTR.

Translation: Paul MacKenzie and Marc Bolduc

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SENSEI HIGASHI SEMINAR

This past April 28th and 29th, Quebec had the pleasure of welcoming ***Sensei Higashi***, kyoshi 8th dan in Chito-Ryu karate, and chief instructor of the style in Canada. The visit from Sensei Higashi was, as always, very much appreciated by the participants who were eager to learn and to have fun. With his great sense of humour, he always finds an amusing mental image to help us understand what he is teaching.

Friday, April 28th

After the black belt exams there was a training session until about 18h00. The dominant theme was the stability of the uchi-hachiji-dachi, sanchin dachi and seisan dachi positions. One of the details worked on was keeping an angle of 10°-15° toward the interior with one's feet. The participants also worked on Henshuho, with the emphasis placed on the more problematic movements observed during the exams earlier in the day. The evening finished with a surprise celebration for the ***25th anniversary in karate*** of Sensei Thierry Debeur (see the article by Bertrand Julien in this issue of Chinto for more details).

Saturday, April 29th

In the morning, the [Chito-Ryu Montréal](#) dojo at the downtown Montreal YMCA welcomed Sensei Higashi. Sensei stressed the fundamental importance of the basic principles of karate, *i.e.* Ichi gan, Ni soku, San tan, Shi riki: first, the direction of one's view (the spirit); second, positioning (of the feet and body); third, abdominal contraction (tension at the level of the center of gravity, pushing down and pulling up at the same time); and fourth, force (the power of the technique). According to Sensei, these principles should be an integral part of our daily training, but they are often neglected.

Sensei stressed the balance of the position uchi-hachiji-dachi (the width of the shoulders, feet on the same line, toes toward the interior at an angle of 10° to 15°). He demonstrated that even a minimal departure from the ideal placement of the feet can have a negative impact on the stability of this position.

Sensei also mentioned the principles Muri, Mura, Muda (see the March 2006 issue of "[Chinto](#)"), especially in a demonstration of the technique kaki-wake-uke in the kata Niseishi-sho (showing the importance of Shibori).

We then practiced together the kata Shime no Dosa, trying to integrate the foot position that was new for some belt levels (Sanchin dachi: one foot shifted forward with the toe of one foot on the same line as the heel of the other) while paying attention not to lift the shoulders when inhaling. He gave the following example: buildings are designed from the top down, but they are built starting from the foundations. The spirit must prevail over the body, but the body must be solid to support the spirit. The two must meet at the center of gravity.

In the afternoon, the seminar continued at the L.-H. Lafontaine hospital. The first class was reserved for children, and they practiced combat combinations with partners. The children then demonstrated a kata before the group according to their belt level. In the following two classes, for adults, the participants worked on forward and backward displacements in combat as well as a few combat combinations. In addition, certain katas and movements from Henshuho were covered.

Sunday, April 30th

In his usual great form, Sensei Higashi gave three classes in Masson-Angers. More than fifty karatekas profited from these training sessions. The morning class welcomed karatekas of all levels. Sensei Higashi had them practice simple combat combinations. Working two by two, the participants also worked on backward and forward displacements. Sensei Higashi stressed the importance of mastering these simple displacements. It is important when pushing forward to slide the front foot first and let the back foot follow. In a backward displacement, the back foot must slide first followed by the front foot. Very important in kumite, these displacements allow rapid attacks and feints.

The afternoon was reserved for classes for green belts and up and for brown and black belts. As in the sessions in Montreal, Sensei Higashi put the emphasis on foot position (interior angle) and the general body position in order to stay well connected to the ground. The participants practiced exercises two by two in order to better grasp the nuances of foot positioning and its effect on balance (the notion of kozuchi). Sensei Higashi also explained the notion of one's view when practicing karate, insisting on the fact that we must always have a global view of the action in front of us, thereby avoiding concentrating on any particular point of the opponent, which can provoke a "tunnel vision" effect. By keeping an alert spirit (zanshin) and watching all of the action together, one's attacks, counter-attacks and evasive movements will be more effective.

At the end of the day, following a question posed by Sensei Bisson, Sensei Higashi explained that for him, competition, the practice of katas, teaching, and judging competitions are all components of karate that allow him to live and breathe the notion of Budo, a notion characteristic and at the basis of karate. According to him, none of these components are more important than another, and each karateka can by practicing one or several of them in accordance with his or her own personal abilities, discover the notion of Budo.

François Veillette, Dojo [Chito-Ryu Montréal](#) (Saturday AM)

Noël Blais, [Chito-Ryu Longueuil - SportsPourTous](#) (Friday, Saturday PM)

Sylvain Frappier, in collaboration with Sylvain Chartrand, Dojo [Karaté Cama](#) (Sunday)

Translation: Paul MacKenzie and Marc Bolduc

Children's class in
Montréal on
Saturday afternoon.



Adults' class in Montréal on Saturday afternoon.



The Sunday morning class at Masson-Angers.



The Sunday afternoon class at Masson-Angers.



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ANOTHER LOOK AT THE SENSEI HIGASHI SEMINAR

During his last seminar, Sensei Higashi shared four important and essential principles with us for anyone wanting to develop good technique (see “Sensei Higashi Seminar” in this issue of Chinto). Sensei Higashi told us to enter the dojo thinking of these four principles. They are presented below with short explanations for each.

ICHI-GAN (One – Eyes)

In martial arts, where we deal with individual techniques, we have a tendency to attach an excessive importance to the progression of our technique. However, this is not the final goal of martial arts, which is the progression of the spirit; technique is simply a way to reach this goal.

In fact, combat is not just a fight between the techniques of one person and that of another – it is more of a *confrontation between the spirit of one person and that of another*. This spirit is best reflected in the eyes, and so they must be given a priority when training. In effect, a “good eye” permits:

- observation of the opponent, as well as his physical and mental movements
- reading the thoughts of the opponent and anticipating his actions
- seizing an opportunity to attack or counterattack, or to just threaten the opponent

This is why simple observation of combats is considered in kendo as training (Motori-Geiko^{1,3}). When an instructor is demonstrating a technique, whether a new one or one already learned, we must, for example:

- turn our gaze toward the instructor
- try to detect the precise moment that the professor makes an attack or counterattack, and
 - at what distance
 - with what part of his body
 - against what part of the body of the opponent
 - using which successive movements or displacements,
 - etc.

NI-SOKU (Two – Feet)

Sensei showed us the importance of having a good position in our training; in effect, a difference of only a few centimeters when using Shime-Shibori (closing – torsion) sets a stable position apart from a bad position. We must therefore try to keep a good position at all times.

SAN-TAN (Three – Mental Force)

In martial arts, it's about vigour, desire, perseverance and persistence, which permits us:

- to dominate of the 4 weaknesses of the spirit called *Shikai*, namely^{2,3}: surprise (Kyo), feat (Ku), doubt (Gi) and confusion or puzzlement (Waku)
- to deliver a quick and serious attack to an opponent technically superior to ourselves

SHI-RIKI (Four – Physical / Techniques)

Techniques are the least important. We must not neglect them, yet, if we have not concentrated on the first three points, the techniques will have no value. The four principles must be as one.

By applying these principles, we are able to connect ourselves to the ground, and to be stable and powerful. This is another big yet basic principle of martial arts: be connected to the ground.

Think about all of this the next time you are doing a punch: where are my eyes looking? Where are my feet? What am I thinking about? Is my technique good?

Domo Arigato!

Mathieu Valotaire

[Dojo Chito-Ryu Drummondville](#)

Translation: Paul MacKenzie

References :

- 1- H. Shioiri Sensei and Mr. M. E. Keith, Japanese-English Kendo Dictionary, published by Kendo-USA, 2002, http://www.kendo-usa.org/reference/j_e_dictionary.htm, (consulted on April 30th, 2006).

- 2- Concepts in kendo, published by the Southern California Kendo Federation, 2002, <http://www.eanet.com/sckf/refinfo/keyconc.htm>, (consulted on April 30th, 2006).
- 3- The All Japan Kendo Federation (Zennihon Kendo Renmei), Japanese-English Dictionary of Kendo, published in Tokyo by Sato-Inshokan Inc., 2000, consulted on May 1st, 2006 at the Drummondville municipal library.

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TRAINING WITH THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

On Sunday, April 2nd 2006 at Sensei's Blais' dojo there was a preparatory training session for the candidates for the exams for sandan, nidan, jun-shidoin and shodan, given by Sensei Blanchette, Sensei Bisson, Sensei Blais and Sensei Debur. Dojo instructors were also invited. In all, 22 people participated.

The goal of this training session was to improve the exam candidates' weakest points, identified during the pre-test of February 26th, under the supervision of the Technical Committee of the [ACRTQ](#) (Traditional Chito-Ryu Karate Association of Quebec). Three points in particular stuck with me.

First of all, during training, it is better to continually work on the improvement of basic techniques, because a better technique (a mae geri, for example) makes the execution of any kata that much better. This advice was not applied on this day, instead leaving the task of working on basic technique to the participants in their own respective dojos.

Second, avoiding parasitic movements is fundamental, not only to respect the esthetics of the katas, but also to prevent one's opponent from sensing that an attack is imminent, especially in combat. As katas prepare one for combat, it is important to avoid bad habits.

Finally, excessive contraction of the muscles during the execution of the kihons can give the impression of power, but this tension actually slows down the movements since a relaxation prior to an explosive motion must take place. A relaxed person therefore has an advantage.

Alain Gervais
[Dojo de l'Université de Sherbrooke](#)

Translation: Paul Mackenzie.

Photo: Training Session Participants

Attendees of the training session.



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NEW GRADES

Black belt exams took place on Friday April 29th at the [Chito-Ryu Longueuil](#) dojo. This Friday was the first day of Sensei Higashi's three-day visit to Québec. The following 19 karatekas successfully passed their exams. For the grade of sandan: **Aymeric Kron** (University of Sherbrooke); for the title of jun-shidoin: **Lyne Bisson** (Karaté Cama), **Sylvain Chartrand** (Karaté Cama), **Guy Chartrand** (Karaté Cama), **Louis Thibaudeau** (Karaté Cama), **Chad Durocher** (Karaté Cama), **Jean-Pierre Gaudreau** (Chicoutimi), **Paul MacKenzie** (Chito-Ryu Montréal), **Marcel Guitard** (Karaté Cama); for the grade of nidan: **Mélanie Guindon** (Karaté Cama), **André DesRosiers** (Karaté Cama), **Martin Grégoire** (Chito-Ryu Longueuil), **Anja Rodenbrock** (Chito-Ryu Montréal); and for the grade of shodan: **Denise Gauthier** (Karaté Cama), **Normand Arsenault** (Karaté Cama), **Michel Fournier** (Karaté Cama), **Sylvie Moncion Renaud** (Karaté Cama), **Alain Gervais** (University of Sherbrooke), **Edwin Campo** (Chito-Ryu Montréal).

Those applying for the title of jun-shidoin had the additional challenge of an oral exam. Each was asked a dozen questions, chosen by Sensei Higashi.

Congratulations to all from the Technical Committee!

Noël Blais

Instructor [Chito-Ryu Longueuil - SportsPourTous](#)

Translation: Paul Mackenzie.

Attendees of the training session that followed the black belt exams.



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TWO KARATEKAS FROM DRUMMONDVILLE AT THE MONTREAL OPEN 2006

Two students from the Chito-Ryu Karate School of Drummondville (École de Karaté [Chito-Ryu de Drummondville](#)) experienced their very first competition, for which they both obtained good results. Mathieu Valotaire (left), in the Senior Yellow/Orange Belt category (age 18+), won a gold medal in kata and a bronze medal in combat. Louis Pelletier (right), in the Master Yellow/Orange Belt category (age 40+), placed 4th in combat. Congratulations to both!

Eric Lefebvre, physical educator and instructor
[École de Karaté Chito-Ryu de Drummondville](#)

Translation: Paul MacKenzie



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TOP TEN SIGNS THAT KARATE HAS TAKEN OVER YOUR LIFE

10. When you climb stairs, at every fourth step you add a kiai.
9. Every wall you walk past becomes a makiwari.
8. You turn on and off all lights with your feet.
7. If you make a mistake at work, you start doing push-ups.
6. You step on broken glass with your bare feet... and don't notice.
5. You are very happy to discover that you have fewer bruises than fingers.
4. From indoor weapons training, you have broken at least 3 light bulbs, 8 dinner plates, the microwave, a coffee table, the entrance light fixture and the television, as well as having terrorized the neighbour's cat.
3. When waiting at a red light, you shout "hajime!" when the light turns green.
2. One of your fondest memories is being thrown to the ground in searing pain in a karate demonstration.
1. You have more gi's than shirts in your closet.

Paul MacKenzie and Marc Bolduc
[Chito-Ryu Montréal](#)

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NEWS IN BRIEF

- The Traditional Chito-Ryu Association of Quebec (ACRTQ) has an **event calendar** that is regularly updated. You can access it (in French only) via the Association's web site at <http://pages.infinit.net/debeur/chito-ryu-quebec.html>.
- **The next issue** of Chinto: **September 2006**. Please send your contributions to blaisbenoit@hotmail.com.
- For any and all **comments** or **suggestions** for Chinto, please send a short email to blaisbenoit@hotmail.com.

Noël Blais
[Chito-Ryu Longueuil - SportsPourTous](#)

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