

THE HISTORY, PRINCIPLES, & PRECEPTS OF SAKUGAWA KOSHIKI SHORINJI-RYU KARATE-DO

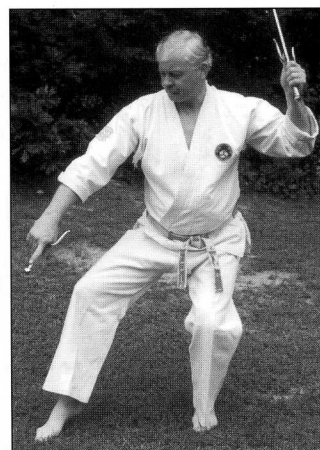
WAYNE W. VAN HORNE, PH.D.



Sakugawa Koshiki Shorinji-ryu Karate-do is a unique system of karate in part because of its comprehensive and encyclopedic nature. It has eighty-five kata and emphasizes classical *bunkai* (interpretation of techniques), theories of movement, generation of power, and the development of *ki*. It also incorporates systematic training in *taijutsu* (body art, body movement) and other aspects of Japanese unarmed martial systems. Most significantly, it focuses on the classical precepts of budo and the training of an individual's character through karate-do. The current director of the International Division of Sakugawa Koshiki Shorinji-ryu Karate-do is Dr. Thomas Cauley, who studied karate in Japan for seventeen years and was promoted to seventh dan while there. One of the most highly trained karate teachers outside of Japan, Dr. Cauley seeks to transmit to Americans a rich and complex art dedicated to the principles of *budo*, the Martial Way.

HISTORY OF THE SYSTEM

Sakugawa Koshiki Shorinji-ryu roughly translates as "Sakugawa Orthodox Shaolin Temple System." The name characterizes the system's emphasis on the classical kata and theories of the tradition founded by "Tode" Sakugawa (c. 1733-1815), who is viewed by many karate historians as a founder of the modern karate tradition in Okinawa (McCarthy, 1987:28). It also emphasizes its legendary derivation from the Chinese Shaolin tradition. The addition of the suffix "-do" to karate further explicates its relationship to the Japanese budo and Zen traditions.



ABOVE:
DR. THOMAS CAULEY
PRACTICING A SAI KATA.

PREVIOUS PAGE :
THE ATTACKER
(MICHAEL TA) DOES
A FRONT THRUST KICK.
THE DEFENDER
(THOMAS CAULEY) STEPS
OFF LINE AND FORWARD
AND CAPTURES THE KICK
WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY
STRIKING THE ATTACKER'S
CHIN WITH HIS FOREARM.
BY CONTINUING TO ENTER
AND LIFT THE LEG, THE
ATTACKER WILL BE
THROWN BACKWARD
TO THE GROUND.

*All photographs courtesy
of W. Van Horne.*

According to oral tradition passed on to Dr. Cauley by his teachers in Japan, Ogasawara Jiro (1901-1958), a member of the aristocratic Ogasawara family of Aomori Prefecture in northern Honshu, traveled to Okinawa in 1926 and learned karate from Hanashiro Chomo (1869-1945) (Cauley, 1978:12-13). Hanashiro is reputed to have been an exceptional karate practitioner and teacher, and was one of the main people responsible for the introduction of karate into the public school system of Okinawa (P. McCarthy, personal communication, January 12, 1997). In turn, Hanashiro learned karate from both Itosu Anko (1832-1915) and "Bushi" Matsumura (1809-1901). Matsumura was a student of "Tode" Sakugawa. Both Matsumura and Sakugawa were legendary figures of early karate, having studied indigenous Okinawan fighting arts, Chinese martial arts, and Japanese weapons systems (McCarthy, 1995:34, 51). Both Sakugawa and Matsumura synthesized their knowledge of these various arts and were major figures responsible for the origin of the modern karate tradition. Sakugawa Koshiki Shorinji-ryu preserves the kata, techniques, and theory of the Sakugawa-Matsumura-Hanashiro lineage.

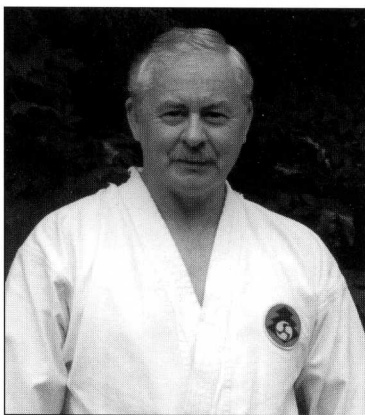
Ogasawara Jiro returned to Aomori Prefecture in 1946. He had previously learned a system of empty-hand and weapons fighting passed down within his family.¹ To his knowledge of Okinawan Shorinji-ryu, he added aspects of this family system, most notably *nage waza* (throwing techniques), *kansetsu waza* (joint techniques), *shime waza* (choking techniques), and *osaekomi waza* (holding or immobilization techniques) (Cauley, 1978:14; T. Cauley, personal communication, October 18, 1996). Ogasawara Jiro's son, Tokushiro (1958-1986), succeeded him as director of the system he founded. In 1986, a Zen priest named Yamazaki Masanao became the current director.

Sakugawa Koshiki Shorinji-ryu also incorporates training in Yuishinkai kobudo, most likely at Ogasawara Jiro's initiative. Thomas Cauley studied this kobudo style under Konishi Yasuhiro (1893-1983), founder and director of Shindo Jinen-ryu karate-do. His direct teacher was Fukuda Shoen, director of Northern Japan Yuishinkai Kobudo. He also studied briefly under the directorship of Inoue Motokatsu and his son, Takekatsu. Both Konishi Yasuhiro and Motokatsu Inoue learned kobudo from Taira Shinken (1897-1970), founder of Yuishinkai kobudo. Taira had studied kobudo with Okinawan kobudo master Yabiku Moden (1878-1941).

Sakugawa Koshiki Shorinji-ryu has retained its classical Okinawan karate roots, including both the kata and theory of the empty-hand and weapons traditions. In addition, it has augmented this tradition with techniques from classical Japanese martial arts, and integrated them into a highly effective martial art.

THE INTERNATIONAL DIRECTOR

Thomas Cauley is the chief instructor for Sakugawa Koshiki Shorinji-ryu in the United States. He was born on April 1, 1943 in Kinston, North Carolina. He is presently celebrating his forty-first year of practicing and



DR. THOMAS CAULEY

teaching Shorinji-ryu. He lived, and trained, in Japan from 1961 to 1969 and 1974 to 1979. Cauley Kyoshi was appointed chief instructor after seventeen years of resident training in Japan under Okada Jiro, Ogasawara Tokushiro, and Yamazaki Masanao.

Due to his persistence and dedication while in Japan, he also earned rank in other systems through cross-grading, most notably a fifth dan in Shindo Jinen-ryu awarded by the founder of the system, Konishi Yasuhiro. He also received a fifth dan in Shotokan, a fifth dan in Motobu-ryu (by Toma Shian 5 October 1974), a fourth dan in Matsubayashi Shorin-ryu, a third dan in Okinawan Kenpo, a second dan in judo, a second dan in aikido, a first dan in Hakko-ryu jujutsu, and a first dan in kendo. While in Japan, he also attained his doctorate in Asian Studies from Waseda University, the rank of captain in the U.S. Air Force, and the designation of *Kyoshi* in Konkoyo Zen. After Cauley Kyoshi returned to the U.S. in 1979, Ochiai Hidy awarded him a fourth dan in Washin-ryu karate.

While in Japan, he married the now deceased sister of then headmaster Ogasawara Tokushiro. According to Cauley, it was after his marriage into the family that his training started in earnest. Seen as a family member by the Ogasawaras, he was expected to devote all of his time to the pursuit of karate-do. He received instruction in the highest levels of Sakugawa Koshiki Shorinji-ryu as well as instruction in the family's traditional arts. Upon returning to the U.S., he was appointed to his current position. Upon the death of Ogasawara Tokushiro in 1986, he was asked to return to Japan to assume the role of head instructor, an honor he refused in order to continue teaching in the U.S.

While training in Japan, he experienced traditional martial arts culture that few in the U.S. have glimpsed first hand. For example, his account of his introduction to his first Shorinji-ryu teacher in 1961 when he was nineteen sounds like a classical Japanese martial arts parable. At the time, he was training in Shotokan (JKA) with Ueki Masayuki at Fuchu Air Force Base:

I worked with master Ueki Masayuki for three months and then, one night after practice, he introduced me to a kind-looking old man named Okada Jiro. Master Okada taught the Sakugawa Orthodox Shorinji-ryu system. I asked for permission to visit his dojo and study with him. He gave it immediately. The following Monday night, a friend and I traveled to Fuchumura [Fuchu Village], about five miles away. We were promptly thrown out by the senior student. His instructions were that no new students would be allowed into the dojo without prior approval of the master. We were perplexed and stood outside looking at the practice session inside. For three weeks we stood outside the dojo, night after night, wishing we could enter. Finally, Mr. Takahashi told us that master Okada wanted us to go to his home after practice and discuss our desire to learn karate-do.

We ran all of the way to the master's home, were let in the back door, and proceeded to make fools out of ourselves. The master, his wife, my friend, and I were all seated at a low table and Mrs. Okada poured the

tea. "Oh boy," I thought, "I am going to drink tea with a karate master!" As soon as I tasted my tea I felt hot tea splashed all over my face and neck. Master Okada had thrown his cup of tea into my face for rudely drinking ahead of him! He rose, called out to his wife, and retired for the night. My friend and I sat for a moment, and then rose to leave. Mr. Takahashi came in and asked us if we were leaving. "Yes, I think it is time," was my answer. "But don't you want to learn about karate-do?" he asked. He instructed us to stay in master Okada's home and to sleep on the floor. The next morning Mrs. Okada kicked us awake and fed us. From that day onward Okada Jiro was like my father. The training in the Okada dojo was extreme.

– Cauley, 1978:39

The martial culture that Dr. Cauley experienced focused not only on rigorous physical training, but also on individualized moral lessons intended to foster the development of ethics and personal character. Another example of the intense training that Dr. Cauley encountered is related in his story of the first time he trained as a student in Konishi Yasuhiro's dojo when he was in his early twenties. Konishi is an important figure in Japanese karate, having studied under Funakoshi Gichin (founder of Shotokan karate), Miyagi Chojun (founder of Goju-ryu karate), Mabuni Kenwa (founder of Shito-ryu karate), Motobu Choki, and Ueshiba Morihei (founder of aikido). Konishi went on to found his own system, Shindo Jinen-ryu karate. The following incident occurred when Okada Jiro took his advanced students to visit Konishi's dojo for black belt training:

As I stepped out onto the practice area I noticed that I was the only *yudansha* [black belt] who had worn his black belt. I knew that I was in for a bad time. I had forgotten that when you visited another dojo you took off your *obi* [belt] and wore a white belt until that particular teacher asked you about your true rank, or told you to wear it in his dojo. I didn't realize that it was a tradition. . . . After practice the sensei [Konishi] directed me to the head of the line with his black belts, all thirteen of them. As I sat at the head of the class, feeling like someone special, all thirteen of those black belts proceeded to choke me unconscious, one by one. After being choked thirteen consecutive times without a break I suddenly developed a certain dislike for my black belt. In fact, it was never again in my mind that it was important to impress my rank upon anyone.

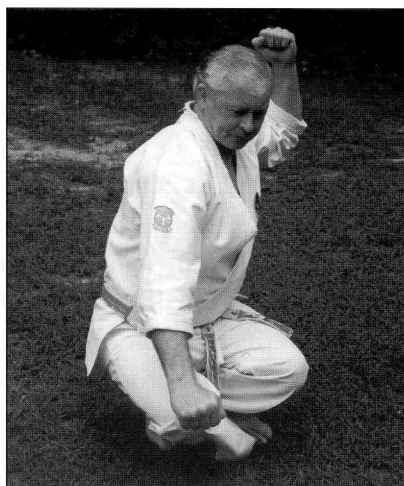
– Cauley, 1978:39

The traditional training that Dr. Cauley received is reflected in his own rigorous teaching. Strict etiquette is enforced in all his dojo, and training is meticulous, precise, and physically demanding. He seeks to transmit the art he learned in Japan to Americans with its utility and rich knowledge intact.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ART

Sakugawa Koshiki Shorinji-ryu is characterized by systematic, integrated, and progressive training that is based on classical methods, tech-

niques, and kata (Van Horne, 1986). There is a structured order for learning basic techniques and kata, with simpler elements learned first and then combined into more complex techniques and combinations only after a significant degree of competency is acquired. Teaching methods are based on the synthesized knowledge, experience, and insight of generations of master teachers, and they have been refined to be extremely efficient and effective.



This systematic method of learning incorporates many principles: coordinated movement, generation of force through body mechanics, distancing and timing (*ma-ai*), movement off the line of an attack (*taisabaki*), various levels of force in offensive and defensive techniques, coordination of breathing with movement, the use of the contraction and expansion of the body, specific meditative states of mind (*mushin*, *zanshin*, etc.), the generation of *ki*, etc. Ultimately, this training progression teaches a practitioner to synthesize all of these principles and apply them.

The art is also comprehensive, encompassing the practice of a number of specialized categories of techniques that are again ultimately integrated in the art of the practitioners. These include numerous open-hand techniques listed in the column at the right side of this page.

Sakugawa Koshiki Shorinji-ryu also focuses on meridian theory and the flow of *ki* throughout the body. Applications of many of the categories of techniques noted above focuses on striking, pressing, or otherwise manipulating the many vital points of the body for various effects. The classical interpretations of techniques from kata (*bunkai*) also focus on attacking vital points.

Four primary methods of training are used to practice principles and techniques. First, there is an emphasis on the continual practice and perfection of individual techniques through repetitive group practice of *kihon waza* (basic techniques). Another method is the practice of advanced techniques with a partner including kata applications as well as throws, holds, chokes, joint techniques, etc.

There is an emphasis on kata. There are eighty-five kata: forty empty hand and forty-five with weapons. One aspect of the extensive kata training in Sakugawa Koshiki Shorinji-ryu is that it is encyclopedic: it preserves the classical kata derived from the various traditions of the Okinawan towns of Shuri, Naha, and Tomari, as well as the kobudo kata from various places in Okinawa. However, instead of being a haphazard collection, they have been organized into a very effective progression that cumulatively teaches a student the art's various principles. Learning the kata in sequence takes a student from the basic principles of body movement and mechanics to an understanding of *ki* and meditative states of awareness. The *bunkai* also have been rigorously preserved.

Techniques (*waza*):

- *tachi waza* (stances)
- *tsuki waza* (punching)
- *uchi waza* (striking)
- *uke waza* (blocking)
- *geri waza* (kicking)
- *kansetsu waza* (joints)
- *shime waza* (choking)
- *nage waza* (throwing)
- *ne waza* (grappling)
- *ukemi waza* (breakfalls)
- *osaekomi waza*
(holding and immobilizing)

Weaponry:

- *bo* (staff)
- *sai* (three pronged short swords)
- *kama* (sickles)
- *tonfa* (wood handles)
- *nunchaku* (flail)
- *suruchin* (weighted chain)
- and other esoteric weapons.

Last, *kumite* (sparring) is done full power without the use of protective padding. Participants are not allowed to strike, punch, or kick their partners, but instead are required to have enough control over their techniques to stop them a few centimeters from their partner's body (*sundome*). Kumite also typically involves the application of joint techniques, throws, sweeps, chokeholds, etc., in addition to striking techniques.

Although the physical art of Sakugawa Koshiki Shorinji-ryu karate-do is highly effective, the teachers see the practitioner's moral and spiritual development as its primary purpose. The physical art of combat is simply a venue for the continuing development of a better self through *budo*, the Way of the Warrior. Thomas Cauley views the teaching and dissemination of *budo* as Shorinji-ryu's primary goal.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE ART

Cauley Sensei's teaching also emphasizes that situations encountered in training foster insights that promote personal development. He is astute at perceiving aspects of both technique and character that need improvement in individual students. His lessons often focus on correcting these weaknesses through individualized experiences. For example, when I was a beginning student, I once slipped on a puddle of sweat while performing a high kick during *kumite*. I fell, struck my head, and sustained a concussion. After I recuperated and returned to classes, I was unaware that I had developed an unconscious fear of falling and was inhibiting myself from properly performing high kicks. Cauley Sensei recognized this problem, and one evening he devoted an entire class to kicking practice. Throughout the evening, the kicks we practiced became progressively stronger and higher and eventually included many jumping techniques. As we all became increasingly exhausted, I was forced to perform my kicks without reserve to simply continue the practice. After the class finished, sensei came over to me and stated, "Now you're no longer afraid to do high kicks." I realized then that the session had been in part for my benefit, and learned a lesson about confronting problems to solve them. This insight had been Cauley Sensei's goal. Similar accounts of personal insights generated from Cauley Sensei's lessons are commonly shared among his students.

During the interview for this article I asked Cauley Sensei about the distinguishing characteristics of Shorinji-ryu. Expecting a discussion of theory, training methods, or some similar physical aspect of the art I again learned a lesson when his reply focused on the philosophical fabric of the art:

What makes Shorinji-ryu a fine art and sets it apart from other systems is the *budo* aspect. It is a whole educational concept rather than just a physical form of karate. It's a full system of life, centering not only on the physical, spiritual, and mental aspects of the art, but also entailing education and morality. One of our responsibilities as much as possible, one of our foremost goals, is to get oneself into the higher educational system. We stress Chinese classics, *anma* [massage],

shiatsu, acupuncture, studying the meridians of the body, holistic medicine, Zen. That's why we call our schools Isshinkaikan Institutes of karate-do, not dojos. They're universities of life. Shorinji-ryu is a life pursuit, not a goal. The only goal we have in Shorinji-ryu is to appreciate wisdom.

Most [karate] systems today are sport and tournament oriented. There's a difference between *bugei* and *budo*. Bugei is martial art. Martial means military, and the goal of a martial art is to beat another person in battle. At all costs, do not lose. The main goal is to defeat your opponent.

Budo is the Warrior Way. *Do* means the philosophical search for truth, that's what the word means in our system. In a Martial Way we do not have an opponent, we are our only opponent, and learning of our self is our biggest stepping stone. We learn that winning and losing are not important.

For example, we don't place any emphasis on tournaments. We only have in-style tournaments, we don't have any open tournaments. It's the nature of our art because we really can't compete. In Japan Shorinji-ryu is full contact. There's no protective gear whatsoever — no mouthpiece, no groin protector, no pads. Full power. So it goes both ways; if you and I are going to spar full power, I owe you the respect not to strike you in the face or the groin or any other spot, and I have the utmost respect for my opponent. It's an unwritten thing in our system that you never injure another human being.

That's the basic difference. It is a martial Way, not martial art. We stress harmony, and unity with nature, and cohesiveness with all mankind. Shorinji-ryu teaches us not only how to live, but how to die properly. It is steeped in ancient traditions. It is a Zen way — it's very much a Zen oriented art.

Thus, Shorinji-ryu is a way of life centering on the morality of budo, Zen training, and continuing education in all facets of life. Cauley Sensei also emphasizes the application of personal and moral lessons learned through physical training to personal development and daily living. As with other aspects of his teaching, he often cites personal experiences as examples, such as the following incident that occurred when he was a student in Japan:

One night, master Okada had accompanied me to the train station and we had stopped at a market and he bought a handful of bananas for his child. We were standing at the train station and talking when a young man, about seventeen years old, came up and grabbed the bananas out of Master Okada's hands and started to run. Master Okada casually reached out and caught the young lad in a tremendous joint technique. He didn't even look at the lad, but asked me if I could accompany him for dinner. I was overwhelmed and baffled. He dragged the young man about three blocks to a Japanese restaurant and threw

the boy inside the seating area beside me. Only then, to my surprise, did he look at the young boy. He calmly asked the boy what he wanted to eat. The lad refused, but sensei Okada ordered him the very best on the menu, beef and rice. The boy would not look up at us, and when Master Okada spoke of things not concerning the incident the lad acknowledged with a red face. Finally, Master Okada asked the lad where he was from. He reported that he had run away from home in Kanagawa City and was going to Tokyo to visit a friend when he ran out of money. After he had finished eating Mr. Okada told the lad to go to his dojo, pry open the back window and take the money and food that was there. "Just don't break anything, and shut the window back so it will not rain on my tatami mats!" said sensei. The lad left with a strict apology. The next day we found him sitting outside the dojo asking permission to learn karate. Sensei found him a job, and the young man is still learning about karate-do today. He has become a fine, young teacher of the Way.

– Cauley, 1978:39

As an art, Sakugawa Koshiki Shorinji-ryu is rooted in the classical tradition of karate and retains the original theories, applications, and training methods developed by generations of master teachers. As such, it is an extremely effective martial art. However, Sakugawa Koshiki Shorinji-ryu is more importantly a budo, a martial way devoted to moral and intellectual education, to the training of the minds, bodies, and spirits of its practitioners. Today, teachers in both Japan and the United States strive to preserve and impart the training, knowledge, and benefits of this classical art.



NOTE

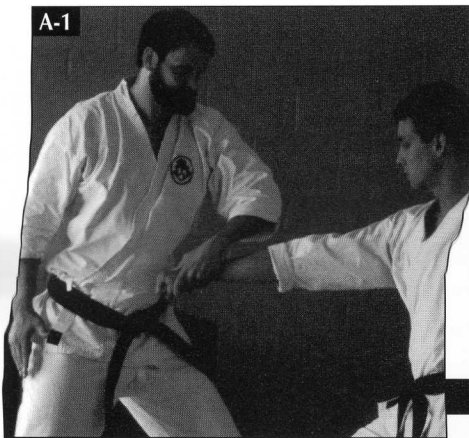
¹ Due to personal reasons, the style's name has been withheld.

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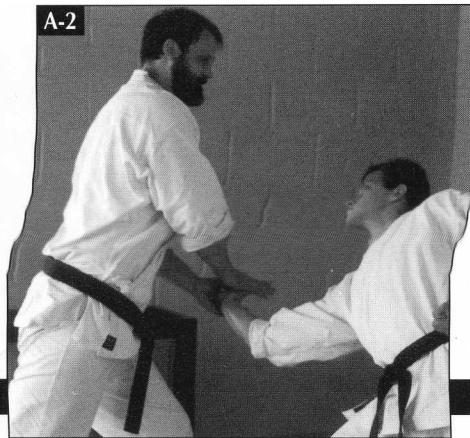
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Technical Section

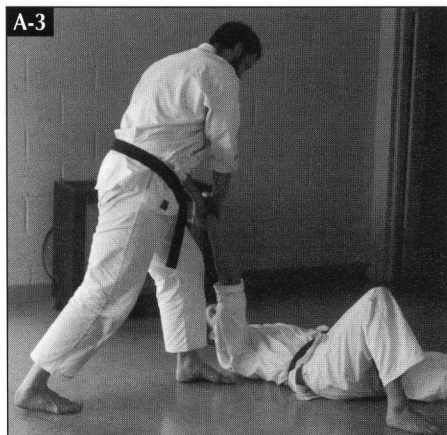
AN EXAMPLE OF A JOINT TECHNIQUE



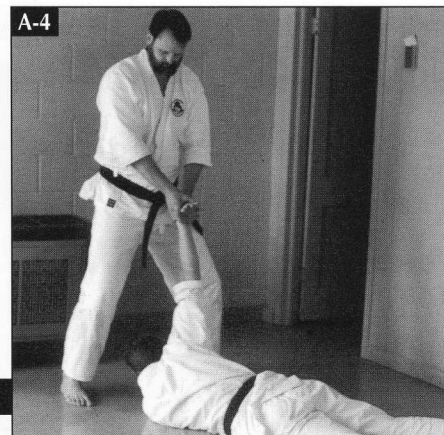
A-1 As the attacker (Randall Brooks) does a middle punch, Wayne Van Horne (the defender) moves forward to the outside of the attacker and off line at a forty-five degree angle.



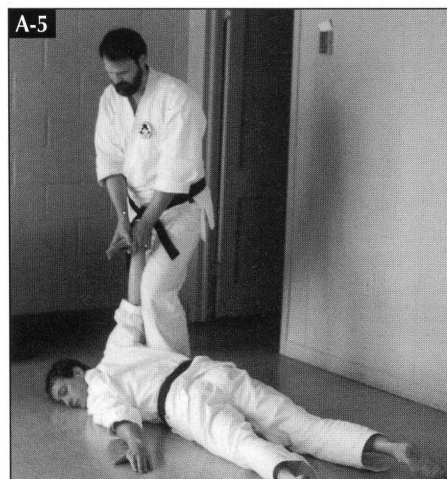
He simultaneously deflects and grabs the attacker's wrist.
A-2 Van Horne rotates his hips to turn the attacker's wrist and break his balance.



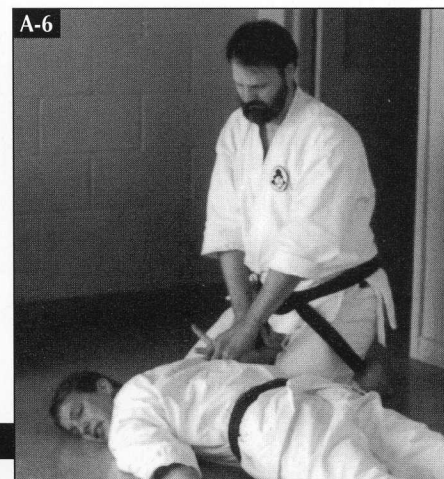
A-3 Van Horne continues to rotate the wrist until the attacker must do a back breakfall.



A-4 Van Horne then moves around the attacker's head while rotating the wrist to force the attacker to roll to his stomach.



A-5 Van Horne then applies pressure to the wrist and uses his knee to keep the attacker from being able to bend his arm, effectively immobilizing him.



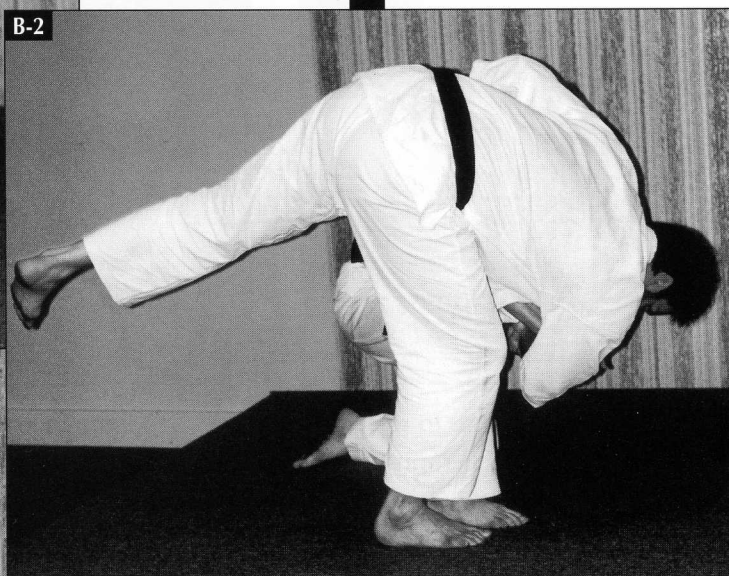
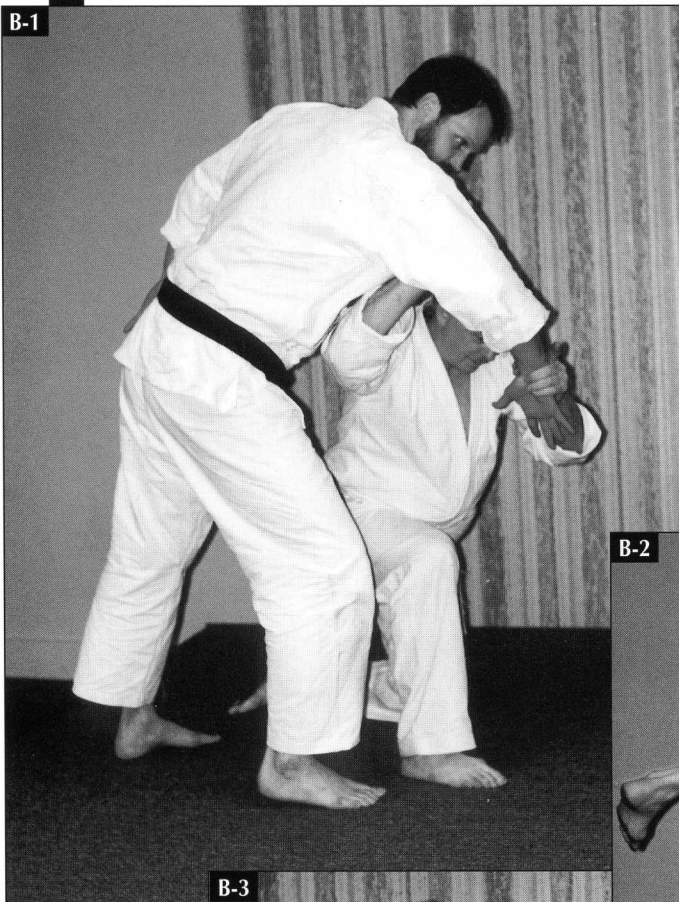
A-6 Van Horne lowers the arm and securely immobilizes the attacker with a joint hold.

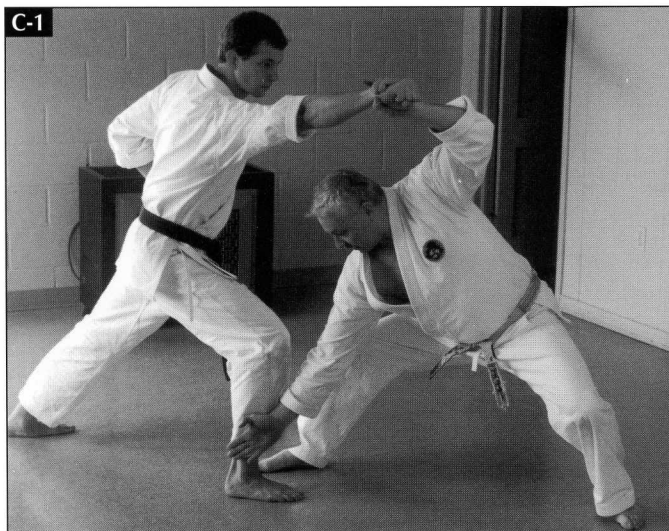
AN EXAMPLE OF A THROW

B-1 Throws typically rely on moving in harmony with the attacker's force and controlling their motion. As the attacker (Wayne Van Horne) performs an overhead strike, Thomas Cauley (the defender) steps off line and turns away from the attack while grabbing the wrist and elbow of the attacker.

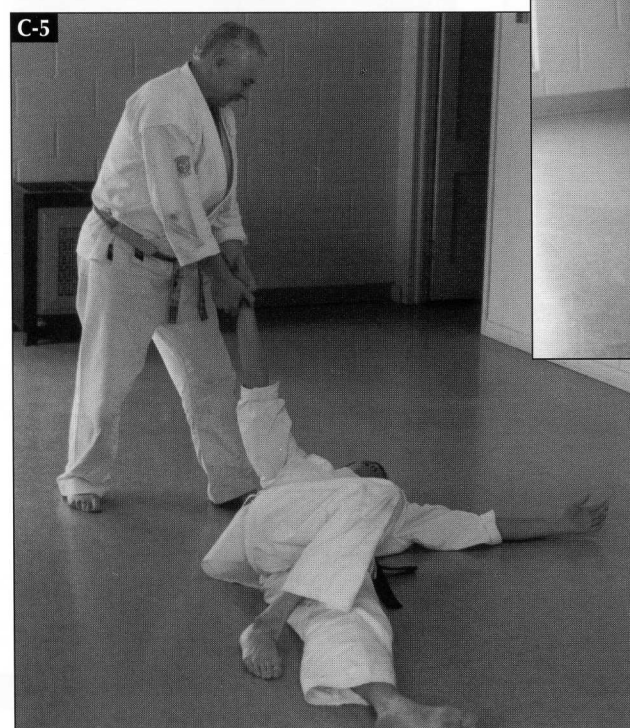
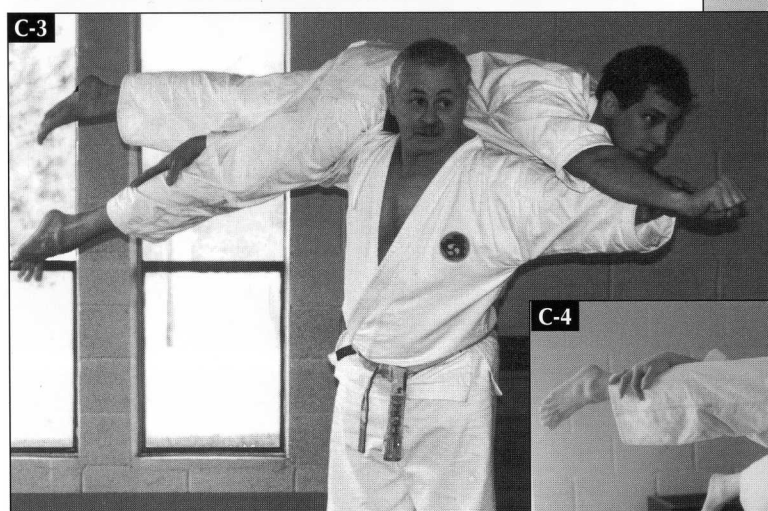
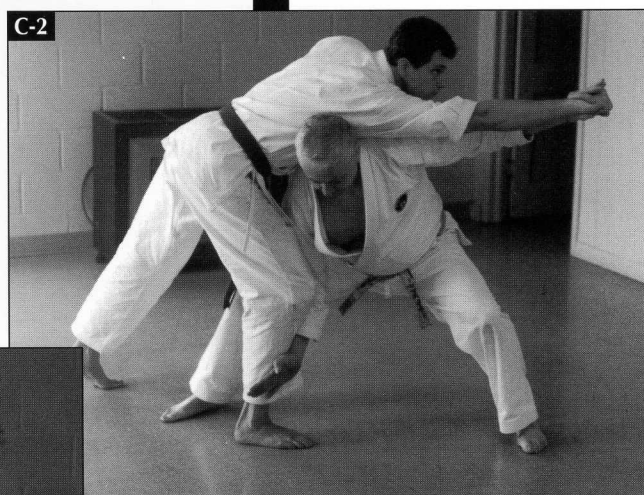
B-2 Using the attacker's forward momentum, Cauley controls the arm, causing the attacker to lose balance. The attacker is pulled into a forward breakfall and somersaults in mid-air.

B-3 The attacker lands on his back with the defender in control.





**AN EXAMPLE
OF A
THROW**



C-1 The attacker (R. Brooks) punches to the defender's (T. Cauley) head. The defender steps in and under the punch, grabbing the hand and controlling the front foot.

C-2 The defender uses the attacker's momentum to pull him forward until he is under his center of gravity.

C-3 Still using the attacker's forward momentum, the defender lifts the attacker.

C-4 & C-5 The attacker is thrown onto his back.

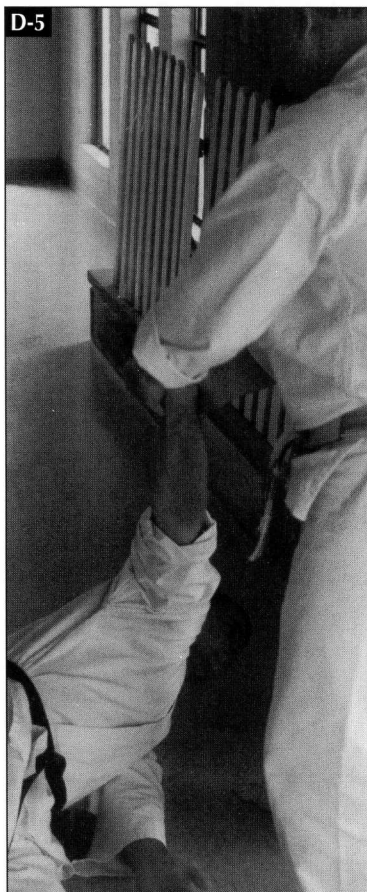
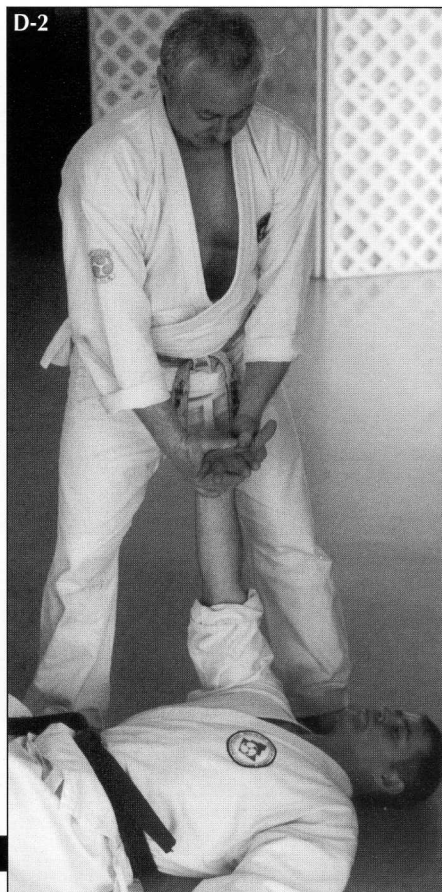
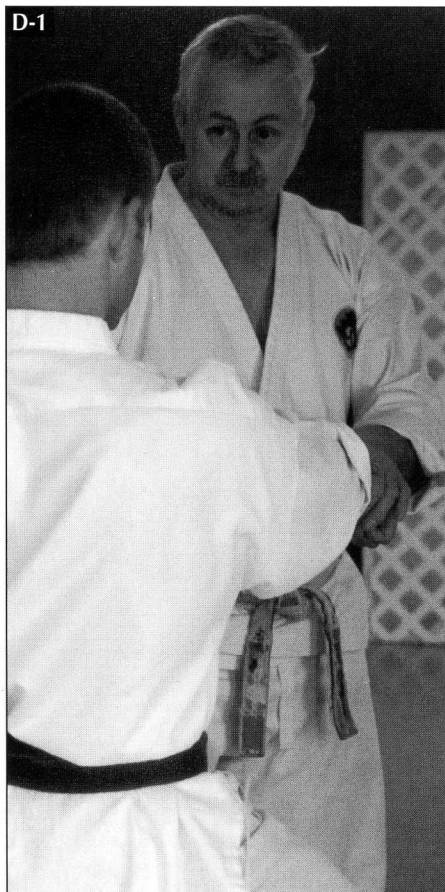
JOINT TECHNIQUE

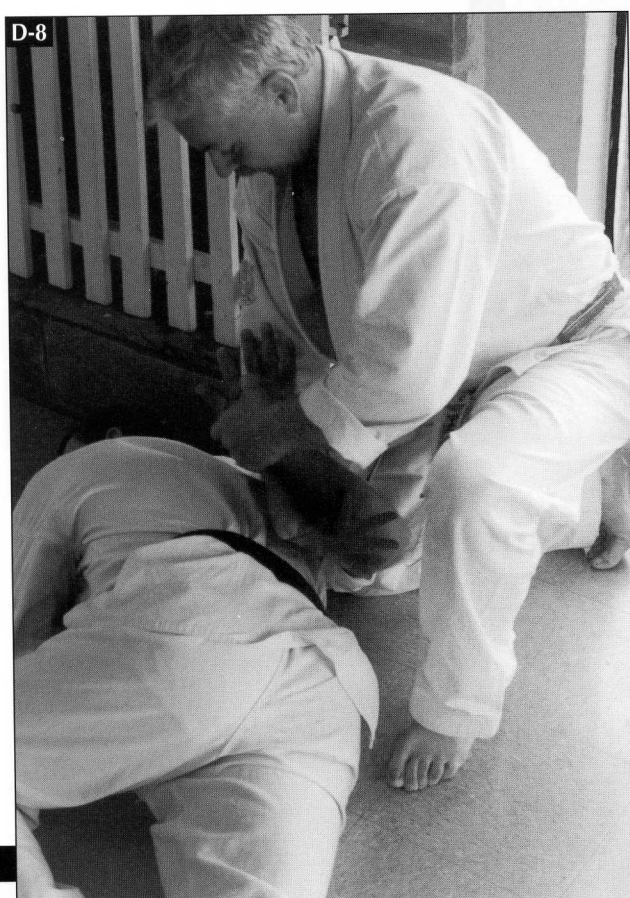
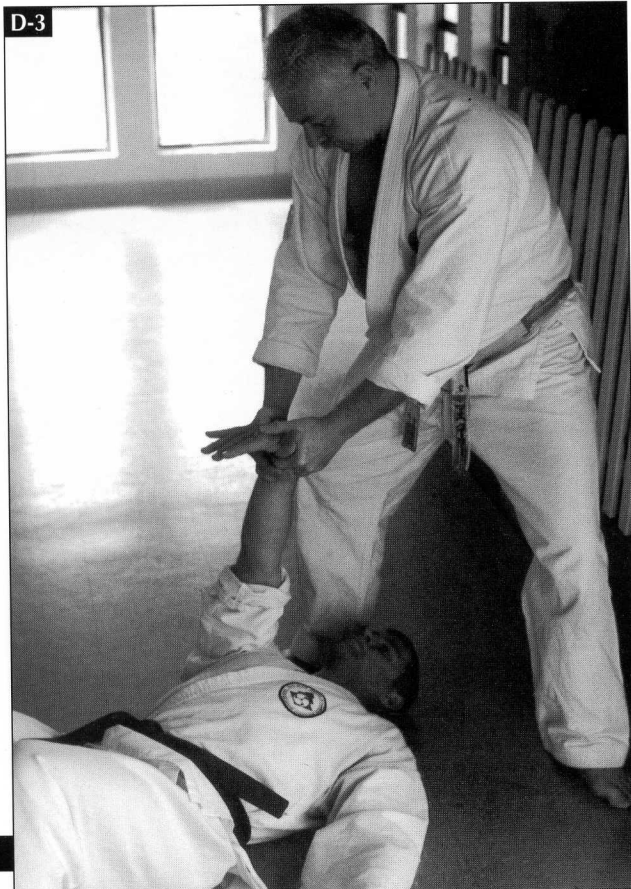
Same sequence as the "A" photos above, but from a different camera angle.

D-1 As the attacker (Barney Foreman) does a middle punch, T. Cauley (the defender) moves forward to the outside of the attacker and off line at a forty-five degree angle. He simultaneously deflects and grabs the attacker's wrist.

D-2 Cauley rotates his hips to turn the attacker's wrist and break his balance, throwing him to the ground.

D-3 to D-6 He then moves around the attacker's head while rotating the wrist to force the attacker to roll to his stomach.





D-7 to D-9
He lowers
the arm and
securely
immobilizes
the attacker
with a
joint hold.

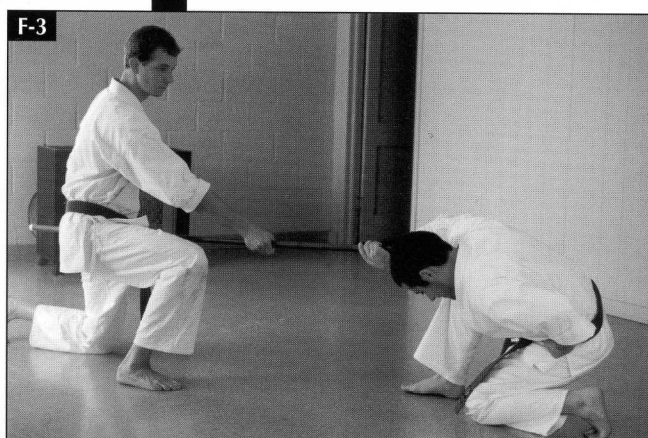
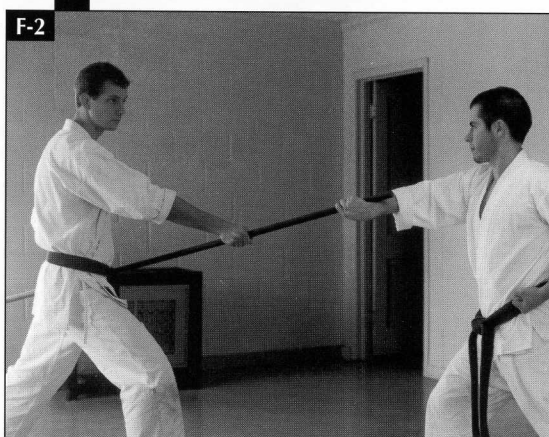
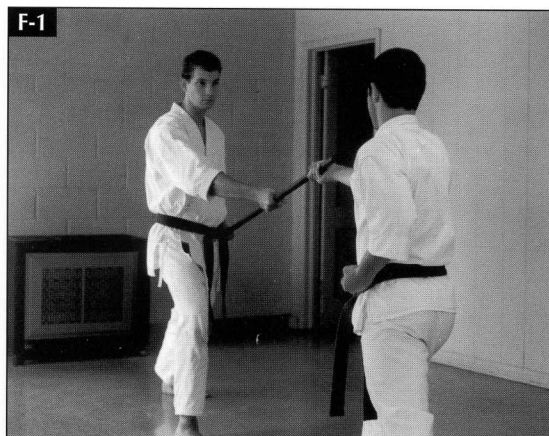
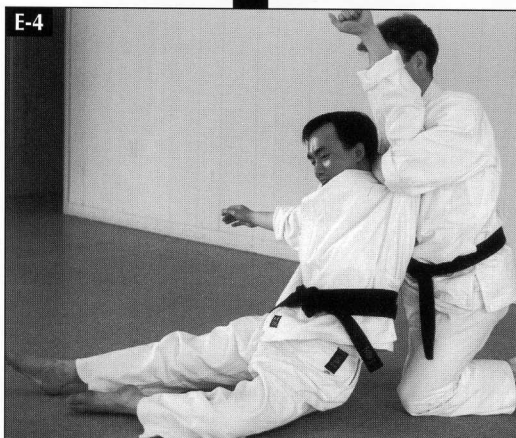
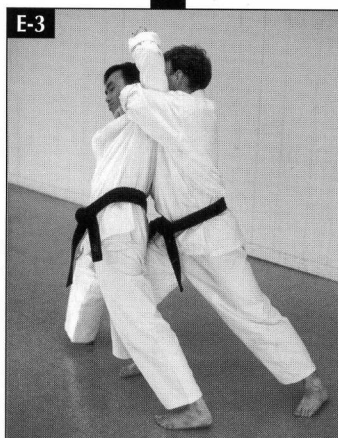
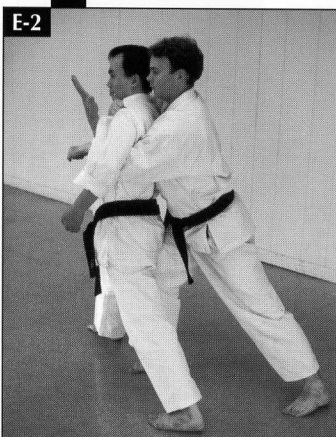
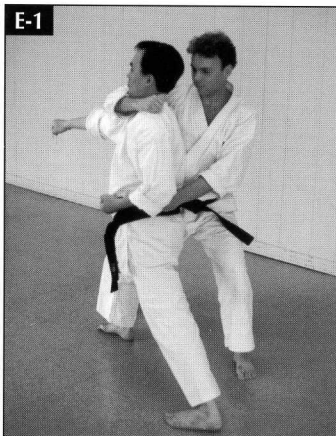
A CHOKE HOLD

E-1 The attacker (Michael Ta) throws a middle punch. The defender (Jarret Bailey) parries it and moves forward at a forty-five degree angle to the outside until he is behind the attacker, simultaneously grabbing the attacker's collar.

E-2 The defender slips his hand under the attacker's elbow and raises it.

E-3 Bailey continues to reach across with his left hand and grabs his own right sleeve. He then tightens his choke hold.

E-4 The defender lowers himself backward onto one knee, pulling the attacker backward and off balance, effectively securing his hold. A brief application of this technique quickly causes unconsciousness.



JOINT TECHNIQUES WITH WEAPONS

F-1 The attacker (David Rappenhagen) seizes the defender's (Randall Brooks) bo (staff).

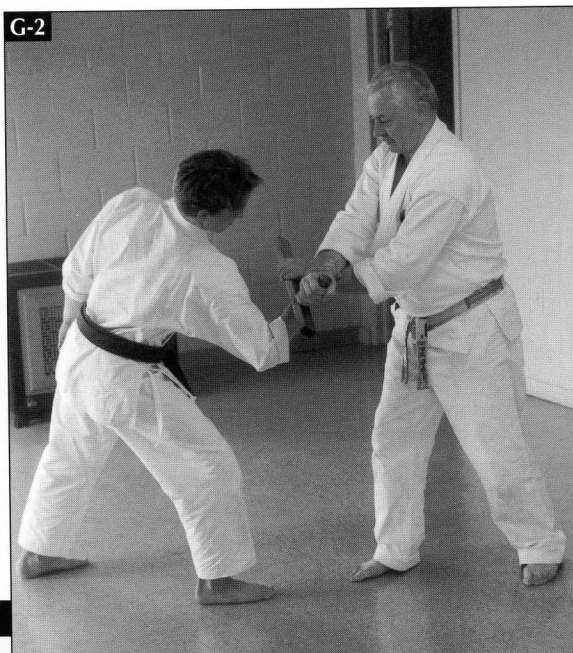
F-2 The defender rotates the bo with a quick wrist motion.

F-3 He steps back and down while cutting downward with the bo.

This creates a joint technique that can break the wrist, or cause the attacker to release his grip.

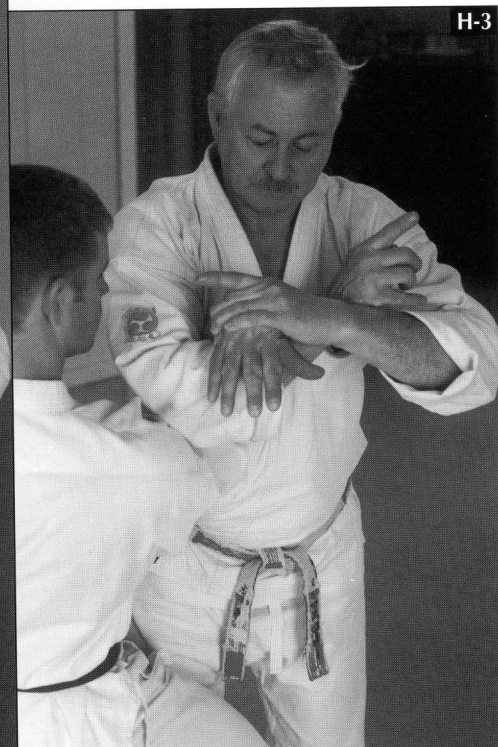
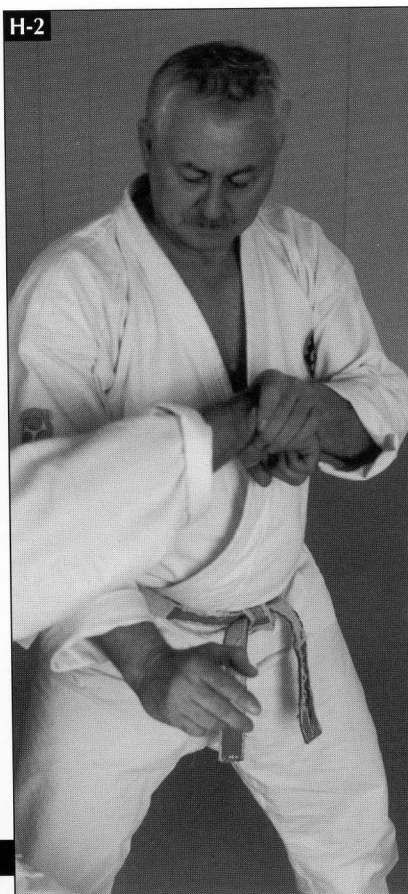
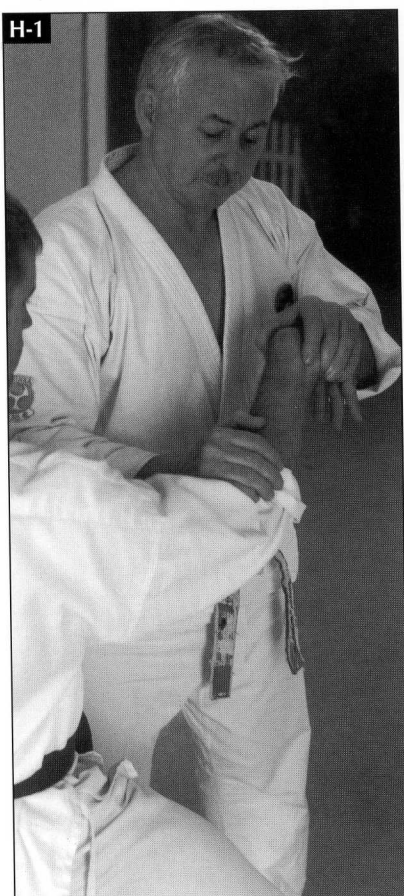


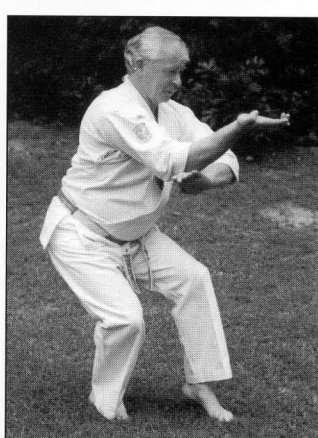
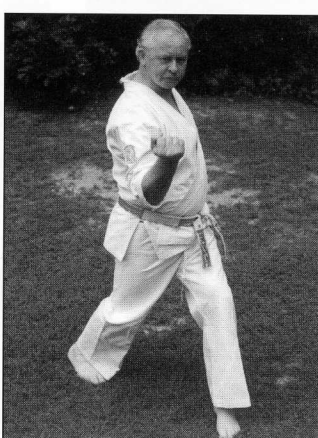
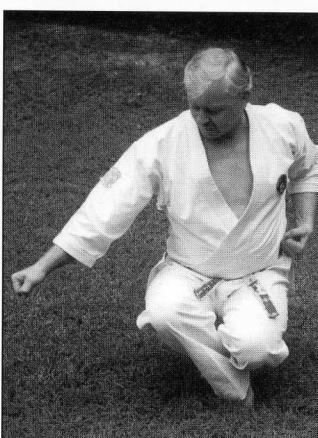
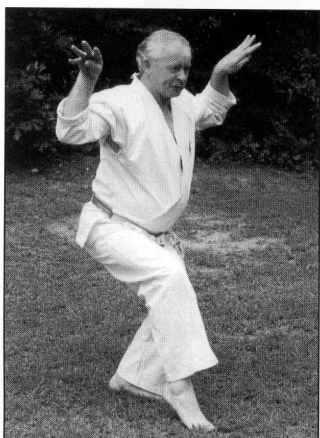
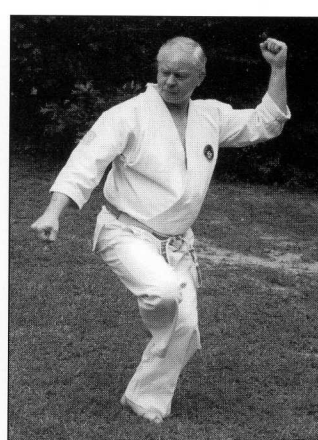
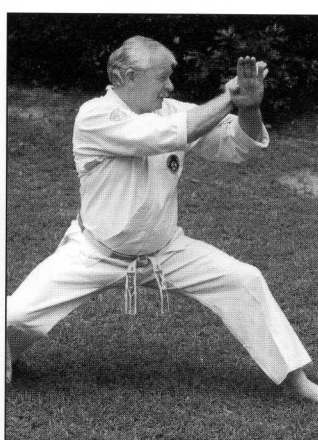
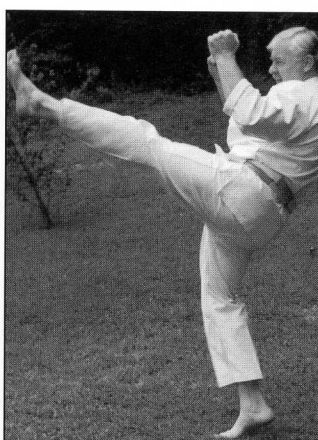
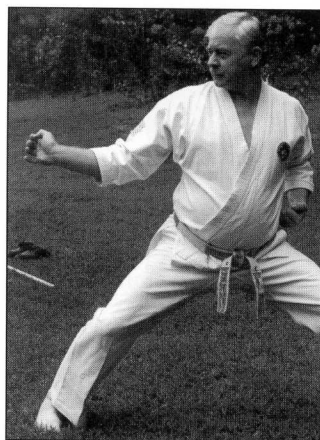
G-1 The attacker (Timothy Garrett) performs a middle punch while T. Cauley (the defender) steps off line and parries with a tonfa.
G-2 Cauley reaches underneath with



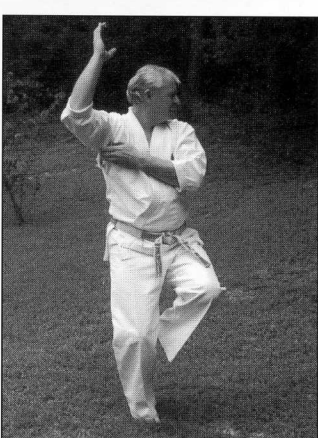
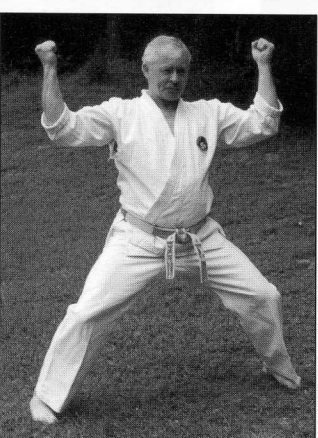
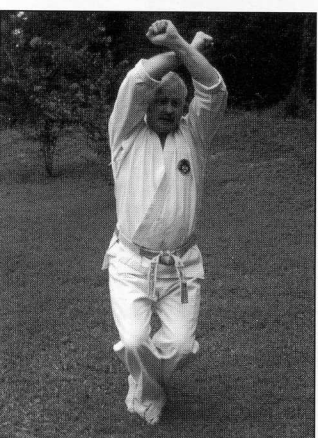
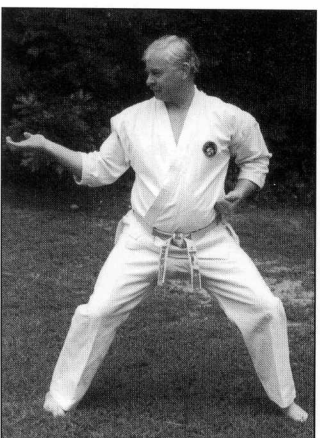
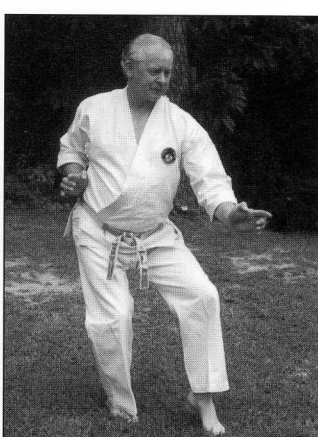
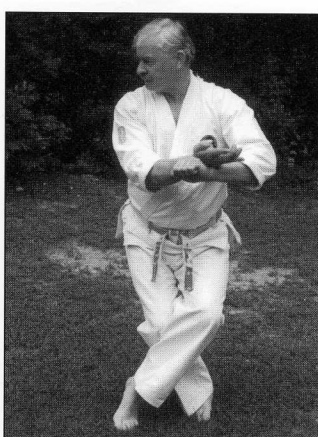
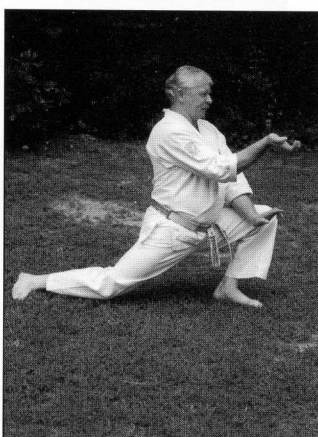
his other hand and grabs the tonfa, securing the attacker's wrist. Application of pressure to the wrist with the tonfa will cause severe pain and subdue the attacker.

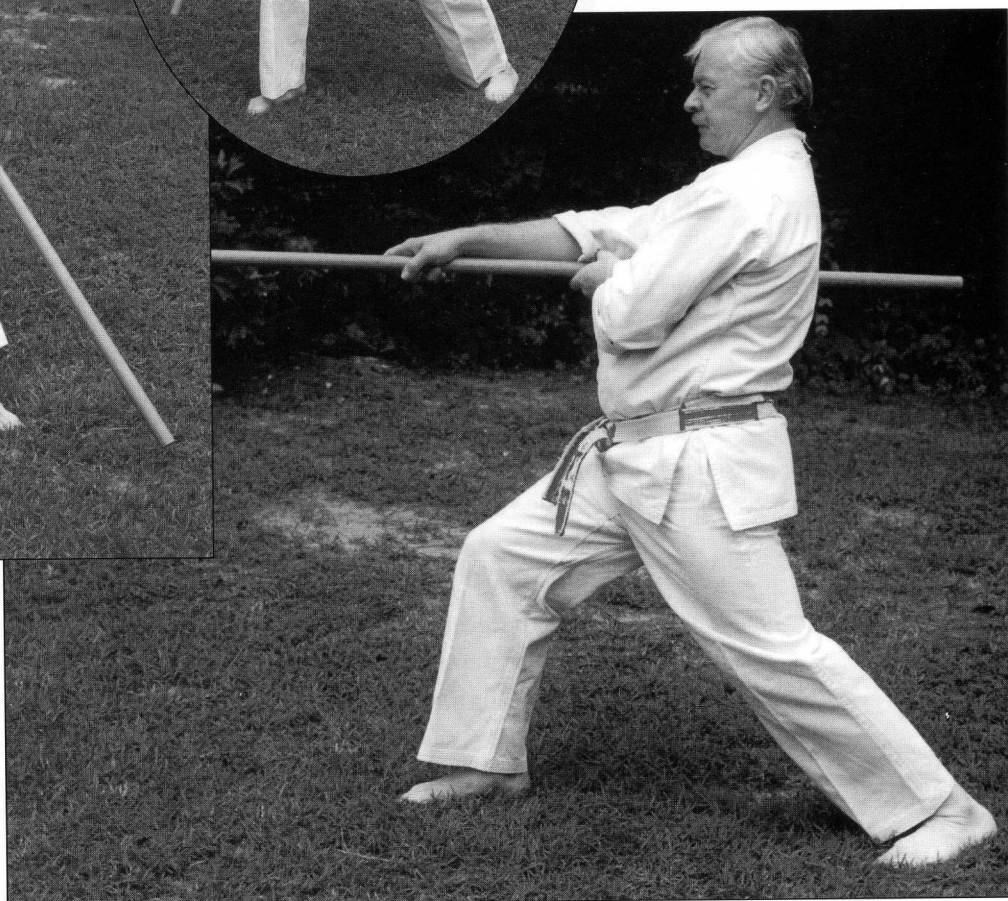
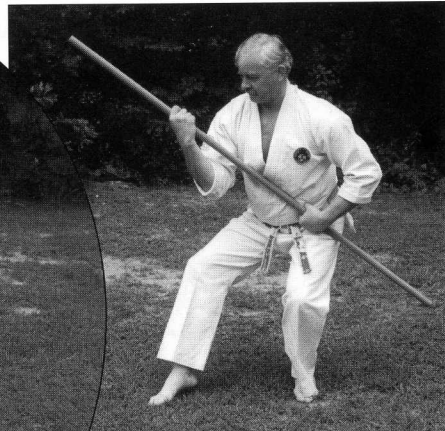
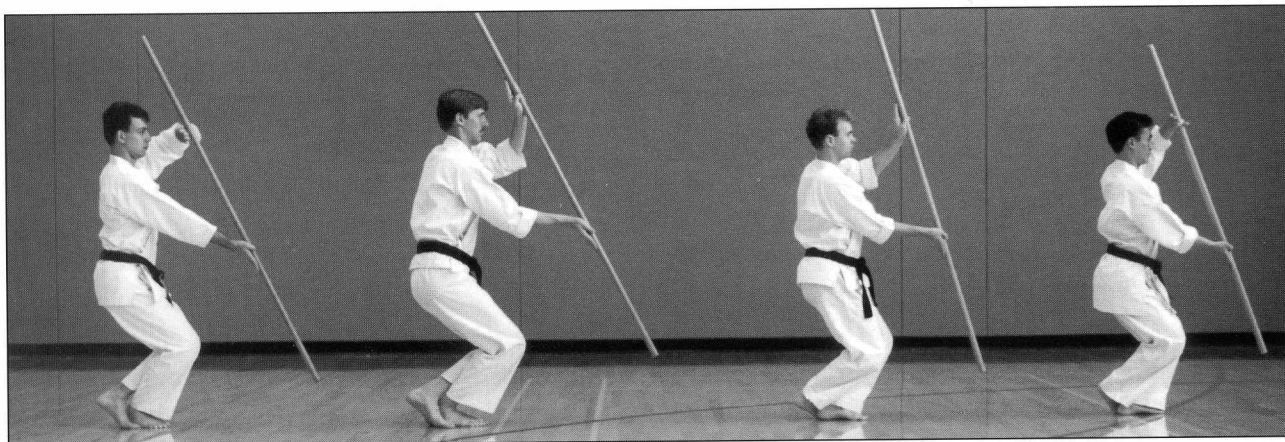
H-1 to H-3
 Thomas Cauley demonstrates three different joint techniques on Barney Foreman.





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