

## Iron horseman

Indulge me in the manner I have chosen to present the following on Kata Bunkai. There is a message in it besides being more interesting to write (and hopefully to read) than dry text on applications.

Let me introduce you to a new style of martial art. You have had to wait and your character has been tested. As an instructor who has grown to know you and to see you become the kind of person I can trust with our secret fighting techniques, I now want to share with you the family style.

We are modern people, and so these days, our family art has become known as "Iron Horseman". It is a little funny. Our martial art was originally hidden because we didn't want outsiders to glean what we were doing. Nowadays it is hidden because we have attached names to things because of the way that they look rather than what they are for. So Our style is Iron Horseman because when we perform our art it looks like we are riding a horse and we are made of iron! Let's begin with the simple ideas, recapping them from all our past lessons.

If you remain aware of your surroundings and those in them then or martial art should never have to be used. Firstly, if you can avoid trouble you should. Don't enter areas where trouble is known to reside. If trouble arrives where you are then leave that place. There is no dis-honour in walking away from a fight; our first priority is to the safety of ourselves and our loved ones. You cannot support your family adequately from a hospital bed or the morgue, so don't go there.

If trouble finds you and you cannot walk away, as to do so would make matters worse, perhaps further endangering your family, then we only use as much force as is necessary to end the conflict. Maim rather than kill. Stun rather than maim. Restrict the attacker rather than stun. To let our terrible art do more than this is to become the enemy.

When trouble begins and there is no way out, we use a guarded posture to try to keep the attacker away from us. If your arms are open wide then you are sending a subconscious message to the attacker to attack your center. If your hands are more narrow then you block the center from obvious methods and so you lure the attacker to the outside. They will try to go around your guard to strike in a natural, circular motion. This works to our advantage, as they will not only take a fraction of a second longer to reach us, but it is easier for us to perceive it coming.

As you know, there is a need to strike the vulnerable parts of the enemy with the correct weapon at the correct time. You must pay attention to the angle and direction that we will use to strike. You must make sure that your body follows the laws of nature - always point your knees in the same direction as your toes; never lock out your own joints; keep your head up and your airway open; to preserve your balance you must keep your head over your hips. If you forget any of these then you will lose your advantage over the untrained attacker.





As you practice the moves I will teach you, you must be able to work with a partner to perfect the targetting and aquisition of the targets. Do not strike your partner hard. They have given you the gift of friendship - it is a very friendly thing to do, to be so close to someone that they can hurt you; to trust them that far. Do not abuse this friendship, for such people are hard to find. When you wish to strike with power - and you must learn how to strike with power - use the pads and the other equipment. When you wish to perform all of the movements to full effect for mental conditioning then you must do so without a partner in a short-hand memory aid version of the whole art.

When we practice, there are some parts that should be common sense and I will not dwell on them during lessons. Never forget you are a rational human being and should be able to talk your way out of a situation. The permanent rule must be Don't Get Hit! If you fail in this then there may not be a chance to use any skill that you have. Move away from danger - dodge - parry. These things you will practice, but

they do not play any part in our short-hand memory aid as they should be intrinsic.