



The Bulletin

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In This Issue

What is Kata? John Cornish

Historical Note—Trevor Leggett

Sarah Mayer - New Photographs and letters to Koizumi

The Bulletin - Editor's comment

In this issue we are continuing a series of articles on Kata with John Cornish's 'What is Kata'. Next issues will include 'Judo Kata Led Astray'

News -

New photographs of Sarah Mayer have recently come to light when the widow of Ichiro Hatta died and these have been passed to us by his daughter Leiko Wooten. It therefore seems appropriate to include some of Sarah's letters in the Bulletin. These were first compiled by Richard Bowen and have also appeared on the EJMAS internet site - they are due to be republished in the near future also on the Judo Information website run by Neil Ohlenkamp in USA - www.JudoInfo.com

Meetings -

The AGM of the Kano Society will be combined this year with a film show on 16th May 4pm- at the Budokwai to be confirmed - see website)

Kata sessions are planned in autumn Sept 19th, Oct 17th and Nov 21st. Course £25 Single session £10—see you there.

Regards to all Diana Birch



Sarah Mayer c 1935
She studied in Japan and wrote letters to Gunji Koizumi

The Kano Society

What is Kata? - John Cornish

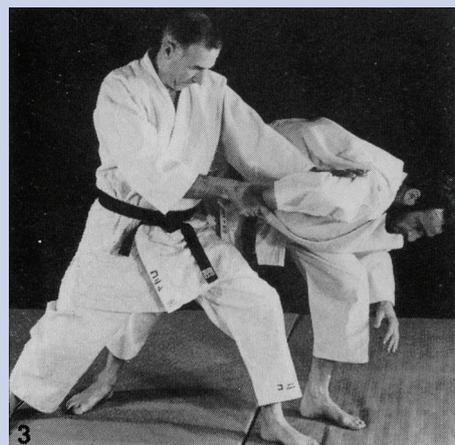
Syd Hoare once asked me "What is Kata?". Coming from him I knew it was not a simple question, so I answered "Kata is anything that is not the true thing". There was no need to elaborate, and as I was still wet from the shower, I was glad of this. For those I don't know, and who don't know me, I will try to explain what I meant.

I will call what most people known as Kata in Judo, that is a set of differing techniques, "Listed Kata". To me Uchi-komi (Repetition Practice) is Kata.

Uchi-komi, usually done with Uke standing still in a certain stance, the thrower, if that is what he is doing and not training at Katame-waza, can move in say nine times just picking the partner up to the point where his feet just start to leave the mat, and where very little more effort would throw the partner. Shall we call this point complete Kuzushi, or the point of Kake?. Then on the tenth time the partner is thrown.

I believe this Uchi-komi should also be done with the partners taking one or two steps before the technique is performed. To go on from this system it could be done on the move in a modified form of Ran-dori, but where the partners take turns at the technique. So far I hope you will agree this is Kata, as there is complete cooperation.

Ran-dori (Free Practice) is a form of Kata.



John Cornish demonstrating agotsuki from the Goshin jutsu-no-kata

In fact Prof. Kano called the Nage-no-kata and the Katame-no-kata the "Ran-dori-no-kata" so he thought there was a connection before I did.

It could be argued that the two Kata were to be studied before Ran-dori was attempted. Many Martial Arts schools do not allow "Free Practice" under certain grades, and controlled training, like this, that keep trainees safe were of course part of Judo. We can't say all the techniques in these two Kata are now used in Ran-dori.

Ashi-kan-setsu-waza was allowed in early Judo, but as there were some injuries to legs, they were banned in Shi-ai (Contest) and so also in Ran-dori.

When I started Judo, in Britain there was a restriction place on Sute-mi throws for people below Ikkyu (First-kyu-grade). As a nil grade, my first injury came about by someone trying a Sute-mi-waza on me that he had seen in a demonstration. I still have trouble with that injury, and agree with caution when it comes to what techniques are suitable for what grades.

Prof. Kano also called Kata the Grammar of Judo and Ran-dori the composition.

Ran-dori is misused when it is used as Shi-ai (Match, contest). The Ran-dori training sessions should be used to hone up certain points of our Tokui-waza (favourite technique), to try out our Tokui-waza with other techniques in differing combinations. We should also try out techniques we are weak at, especially if the partner is below standard. A battleship should not use it's big guns on a fishing smack. While we are doing these things we will be countered, if the partner is working on Kaeshi-waza. We will also leave ourselves open, to the partners techniques, especially if he is using his Tokui-waza.

As we are competing, not against the partner, and he should be thought of as a partner not an opponent, we should be competing if anything against our own self, we can lose in Ran-dori only by wasting our own time and effort by a bad attitude.

Like in the Olympics, we in Judo should always be in pursuance of excellence.

To go from one extreme of Ran-dori, that of fighting all out, to the other extreme, of being over cooperative, even jumping for the partner must be avoided, if Ran-dori is to be a worth while training method. This kind of

(Continued on page 2)

What is Kata (continued)

Ran-dori, which must be carried out correctly, I see as Kata. Even training with the Listed Kata, there are many pit falls, but they are the same ones that we have to avoid in all other training in Judo.

If the partners are equal in skill and have a little competitive spirit, they could fight for the first ippon, then for the rest of the training session, get down to the real learning training, that of getting more than the partner out of the session.

In some Traditional Martial Arts they have a form of training like Ran-dori, and it can be called Ji-Yu-Kei-Ko, or whatever word the school uses.

Shi-ai (Match) I think of as Kata as a step in training for higher level Shi-ai (the Olympic Gold?). To give another example of my idea why Shi-ai could be thought of as Kata. Many students start Judo with the aim of learning Self-defence. Coaches please note.

Any contest this kind of student has will certainly be Kata.

With the strict rules of Shi-ai, most of the most important parts of Self-defence training, those against blows, kicks and weapons, for the life or death struggle the student had in mind, will be missing.

He will also will be restricted to using techniques, and even grips, allowable in Shi-ai. Apart from the boundaries put on techniques in contest, the scores used in contest can lead to misunderstanding by the student if he thinks any kind of win is acceptable. There is no Ko-ka win in Self-defence, so there should be none in training.

At the inception of Judo, contest came in as an important part of training. Later contest was needed to make Judo into an international sport, but it was never thought of as a whole method of Self-defence. Having said what I think Kata is, it will be seen that I think Kata cannot be avoided in Judo, and Kata is where we can see the application of the principle of Ji-ta-kyo-ei. Let me now talk some more on the listed Kata..

Listed Kata has a bad press in Judo in the West. One reason is the difficulty with the translation of the word into English, maybe the reason I was asked the question in the first place. Even T.P.Leggett, for his books on Kata, calls it "Formal Demonstration". I have a great respect for him, and I admit all the words used, form, etc. don't fill the bill and a long-winded explanation is no good on the front of a book. If we think Kata is either formal or a demonstration or even both of those things together, we get led down the wrong

path.

When Kata is performed as a demonstration of high standard Kata, it will be formal, but the demonstration only takes a few minutes, while the training to get to this stage takes hours and hours of hard work most of which is not formal and never a demonstration. If the training is too formal, I think the Kata will never get to a decent standard. We have another problem with the word "formal", or is it the same problem as with "Kata"?

Formal, in relationship to Kata, to me means all the moves to get into the technique, directions and positions on the mat, even the order of the techniques. The bows can be less formal, a Tachi-rei (Standing Bow) at the beginning and end of the whole session is sufficient instead of a Za-rei (Kneeling Bow) demanded in some Listed Kata.

No matter what the session was about, even if I were to go into the Do-jo to sweep it out I would carry out one bow on entry and another when leaving, so I don't consider this formal, just ordinary Judo politeness.

Each of the Listed Kata, have do's and don'ts that apply in particular to that Listed Kata and deserve a long study, but let us continue with a general look at what is Kata.

I have already mentioned training with Kata, and if only we take a glance at the Eastern Martial arts, we will see that this is the true use of Kata. The schools all have Kata as a main method of training, some have Kata as the exclusive training method (see G. Koizumi's book).

People don't seem to notice that Kata is also used in the West. Here again maybe because we don't have a word for it.

In the Royal Navy they had a Kata, where a field gun is supposedly taken into the mountains where various problems had to be overcome. One problem was a small opening where the gun and limber had to be dismantled and after being passed through the opening put back together again. There was also a problem where the gun and limber had to go over an obstacle, and there was even a chasm that had to be crossed. The gun of course had to be fired at the end of each journey, which is the whole point of taking a gun on a journey.

This training Kata, like all good Listed Kata, is about as near the true thing as one can get without



Trevor Leggett with Gunji Koizumi

putting the trainees at undue risk. In the case of the gun, in the true thing there would of course be problems like snipers shooting at the team, but even in the armed forces you cannot have this kind of danger in training.

Judo began as a Martial Art, and to keep this tradition we need the Listed Kata. "Tradition" is another word we could spend time on, but let us move on and look some more at the irreplaceable practical use of Kata.

We must read up on what Kano said to find all the details of what he thought Judo should be, but one thing is obvious all Judo training must be safe to carry out, if it is not safe it is not Judo.

For the sake of safety some techniques were banned from Shi-ai. This had an influence on the unwritten rules of Ran-dori. Those potentially dangerous techniques, leg locks, wrist locks, spine locks and such like were not banned entirely, they are now in the Listed Kata, where they can be learned by Tori and yet keep Uke safe. So Judo Kata and Martial Arts Kata are used for the same reason, safety in training.

A thing that is easily overlooked in the Listed Kata are the things the attacker, Uke, must learn. In the Kime-no-kata and Go-shin-jutsu, for example, Uke must learn to use a sword, a knife, a stick and a gun.

Uke must also learn non weapon techniques such as kicking, poking, punching and hitting in other ways, to name just a few things that help to broaden the, dare I say it, the Judo education that cannot be learned in Judo sport training. If the Judo education were as broad as it should be, I think we would attract and keep more members.

Each of the Listed Kata can be looked-on as a study on its own, but a careful look will show us that the whole list has a balance so that each of the Listed Kata complements the other Kata.

For example we see the attack Ryo-te-tori (Both-hands-held) in Kime-no-kata, Go-shin-jutsu and Ju-no-kata, and in each Kata there is a differing response. So, by the practice of these Kata, we learn there is more than one way to react to, at least, this attack.

We know how much effort we have put in to learn just one throw.

For our Tokui-nage-waza we are traditionally told we need to carry it out in practice a hundred thousand times before we can be said to have any thing like a facility for the throw, (See T.P. Leggett's article "The Cherry Tree"). We know even then how difficult it is to pull it off in a competitive situation.

Banned in Shi-ai but in the Listed Kata, are throws that should be easier to execute, those that are done with a Kan-setsu-waza (joint-technique). Uke's balance is broken, not only by Tori, but by Uke trying to ease the danger to his joint.

Sometimes this kind of throw can be continued into a holding position with the Kan-setsu-waza still in place, so is very efficient in this way. Also the Katame-waza (control-technique) is sometimes finished with Uke held in a face downwards position, which is better in Self-defence.

To sum up, I think all training in Judo is Kata. Judo is a complete system on it's own, and if wholly used is a broad enough "Church" to attract and satisfy new members and keep those already in Judo with plenty to learn into old age.

Historical Notes - Trevor Leggett

Extract from article which appeared in the Times after Trevor Leggett's death

Trevor Leggett was the fountain head of British judo for more than 50 years. Although he was admired as a fighter and revered as a teacher, it was his approach to the character-building qualities of judo that was so significant to generations of pupils. He never wanted the physical aspects to be over-emphasized and instead guided his followers to develop their mental and cultural faculties. He saw training in judo not as an end in itself but as a way of providing lessons for success in other fields. He believed in judo for life.

In 1938, as captain of the British team and a 3rd Dan black belt, he went to Japan to continue his practice, sponsored by the Japanese

Ambassador in London. Six months later, he received his 4th Dan, an outstanding performance in that era for a foreigner. He then gained his contest 5th Dan before being interned when the Japanese entered the war in 1941. Leggett did not complain at being imprisoned, quoting to himself one of his favourite poems:

*"... We sweep up
the fallen leaves
in the garden
But we do not blame
the trees for
dropping them"*

He even practised judo with his jailers, until he and other British

diplomats were exchanged for their counterparts at the Japanese embassy in London.

Between 1943 and 1945 Leggett served in India at the British South-East Asia military headquarters, using his Japanese for intelligence work. From 1946 he combined his work at the BBC with judo teaching at the Budokwai. The sessions were extremely arduous and included classes in *katsu* (resuscitation) for black belts, in which individuals were strangled unconscious and then revived by their partners.

Almost all the British international competitors until the early 1960s were trained by Leggett in an era when Britain won the European men's team title three years in a row. But he then abruptly pulled out of direct involvement with judo having decided that he had produced enough competitors and coaches. His influence



Trevor Leggett at the BBC

endured, however, and many of Britain's successes in the Olympic Games over the past 30 years have been the result of his teaching, with most medal winners being taught by his pupils, or by his pupils' pupils.

Learning Judo In Japan - An English Woman's Experience

An Englishwoman's Description of Learning Judo in Japan: Letters from Sarah Mayer to Gunji Koizumi, 1934-1935, reprinted courtesy of Richard Bowen

On March 1, 1935, the Japan Times and Mail ran the following caption under a photograph: "Mrs. Sarah Mayer of London, who on Wednesday [February 27, 1935] realized her ambition when the Kyoto Butokukai awarded her the rank of shodan [first Dan] in judo which she had been conscientiously learning since May of last year. She is the first foreign woman to win such a distinction."

The following are transcripts of letters that Mayer wrote to Gunji Koizumi, of her experiences.

Calcutta Feb. 7th 1934

Dear Mr. Koizumi,

I got here yesterday after wandering across India. I went to Jaipur - Delhi - Agra - Benares and a host of small places near to them. It was all very interesting and very expensive! The

Taj Mahal is too lovely for description. I nearly burst into tears when I saw it. I was in four times to see it. At dawn - in the afternoon - at sunset and under the full moon which just arrived for my benefit. Apart from this I liked Jaipur best I think. It is so very Indian - quite unspoiled and most interesting. Jackals howled under my windows all night. A peacock walked into my bathroom and almost fell into my bath. Hundreds of monkeys run on the housetops and the birds and butterflies are wonderful because no one is allowed to kill anything... and the tigers seem to get about one man a week - but nobody cares. I went for miles on an elephant a most extraordinary sensation and I should think very good for the abdominal muscles!

The two Japanese that you gave me letters to -- Mr. Hamada and Prof. R. Kimura -- are neither of them in Lucknow but Mr. Kurihara, the consul in Bombay, was very nice to me

and took me to see the Towers of Silence and out once to a séance etc. The Calcutta consul here this morning and he has been very helpful. On Friday I leave for Rangoon and from there I go up the river to Irrawaddy and

then to Bhamo. After that I shall go straight to Singapore and try to find a small cargo ship which will call at plenty of places on the way to China. I shall have to miss out Siam and Indo-China for the time being because India has been so expensive.

I shall be in Japan for the cherry blossoms so please write to me there to tell me how you are getting on. I shall arrange for Thos. Cook -- Tokyo -- to send letters to me wherever I am -- so if you write them I shall be sure of getting your letter.

I have had too many adventures to tell you in a letter but I shall have plenty to relate when I see you again. I had a lovely time on the ship coming out. I sat next to the captain who was a most attractive person and he was most attentive. He moved me out of my cabin and gave me the best one on the ship and we had a lovely swimming bath and swam all day and danced every night, so I enjoyed myself thoroughly. If all the captains I meet are so kind to me, I shall never want to come back.

Every good wish to you all. Tell me how the house is progressing when you write. Good luck. Yours very sincerely,

Sarah Mayer

Yamato Hotel, 27th June [1934]

Dear Mr. Koizumi,
Forgive me for typing this, but in the first place it is so hot and damp that if I rest my arm on the table it sticks to it and secondly because I have burnt my hand with a box of matches which burst into flames a few days ago. I

had always understood that this was a safe country but the Japanese matches and the motors [automobiles] are a danger to life and limb. I have got so nervous of the matches which set light to the whole box every time I strike one that -together with the exhortations of my judo instructor I should not be surprised if I were not finally induced to give up smoking altogether!

I am still in Kobe. This is really because everyone is so kind to me at the Butokuden and Mr. Yamamoto is so patient with me that I do not feel inclined to leave here just yet.

I enclose some newspaper cuttings which may amuse you. The reporters have made rather a muddle of what I told them and all this talk about the stomach throw [*tomoenage*] is nonsense. It is the last thing I should do under any circumstances and you may remember that when I see it coming I generally give a scream of terror and give myself up. So on this memorable occasion -when all the Kobe Police sat down to watch me with stupefaction and amazement -you may be sure that whatever I did, it was not the stomach throw!

On the first occasion that I went there I was with difficulty persuaded to put on my judo costume and when I did I found to my horror that hundreds of men had left their practice of judo and kendo and were sitting in solemn rows waiting to see what I was going to do. Mr. Yamamoto looked quite unhappy too. He handled me as if I was a bomb that might explode at any minute. To

(Continued on page 4)



Sarah Mayer
Donated
by the
Hatta family



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The Bulletin



Learning Judo In Japan - (cont)

(Continued from page 3)

make matters worse a row of men with flashlight cameras were in attendance; and I've never wished myself out of a country as I wished myself far from Japan at that moment. Mr. Yamamoto allowed me to throw him about for a bit and as I was feeling desperate I attacked him with might and main -- feeling that death itself would be better than disgracing myself forever before such an assembly. When this had gone on for a short while Mr. Yamamoto tried in a very gentle way to get me down, but I have not been kicked on the shins by [Yukio] Tani for nothing and I was determined to stand on my legs for as long as possible if I broke every bone in my body.

During this awful experience an august personage of high rank in judo who wore kimono and fanned himself placidly, walked around us. In his face I thought was an expression of distinct lack of enthusiasm and he terrified me. Then the cameramen came forward, but just as they were about to take photographs, the august person stopped them with an imperative wave of his fan. I thought that he probably thought that I had brought all these reporters with me and that this was all against the spirit of judo, and I wished that I could explain to him that it was not my fault and that I had been dragged there very much against my will and that I had only gone to the place because I had been assured that I should not have to do anything but watch others doing judo. Nobody spoke English so I was helpless, but I need not have worried. All that august person did was untie my belt and cross my coat over the other way, and when he was sure that I was neatly dressed, he signed to the photographers to proceed.

After this I sat down to watch whilst an American wrestler tried his hand on Mr. Yamamoto and several others. This unhappy young man had been foolish enough to boast publicly that he could do anything he liked with any judo man

in the world once he got his arms round him. I had heard him boasting and I warned him, but he wouldn't listen to me. And for the next half-hour we watched him being handled like a child by various men who were picked out for the purpose. I thought that the American was a bit unlucky to have fallen into the hands of fifth Dan men - but I certainly thought that it served him right, as well as being relieved that it distracted attention from me and gave me time to recover my wind. And so now I go every morning to the Butokoden at eight o'clock and Mr. Yamamoto gives me a lesson. He is very gentle and kind, but he no longer treats me as if I were a delicate piece of porcelain. In fact after a couple of hours I feel as if I had been in the clutches of a playful elephant! He seemed rather astonished and embarrassed that I was not averse to ground work and told me through an interpreter that it was because I was a woman and he thought I should object to it for that reason. I told him that I did not consider myself to have any sex when I was doing judo so he took heart and sat on me for a time until I began to repent of my rashness, and now he shows me no mercy. He weighs over 200 lbs. and if he leans on me I might just as well try to remove a mountain.

The other day there were contests and I was invited to attend. I sat from 7 a.m. until 5 p.m. at a table with the judges (thank heaven we didn't have to sit on the floor) and had lunch with them in the interval. Many important judo men had come to watch and they were very nice to me and gave me cards upon which they wrote their rank 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th Dan. I gave them my cards and wondered whether I ought to write "white belt" on it in large letters, but decided on the whole that the least said was soonest mended.

Anyway I am getting used to them all now and they are getting used to me. I have even recovered from the shock of finding that I was expected to share the bathroom -- not to mention the bath -- with the entire Kobe police

force. And how lovely the Japanese bath is after hard exercise -- especially the buckets and buckets of cold water which I pour over myself afterwards. And everyone is so kind to me, and send me flowers and presents and take me all over the place. Fortunately there is a Japanese journalist here who speaks English perfectly and who I am able to consult on the difficult question of proper behaviour so that I don't do the wrong thing too often.

Mr. Yamabe has written to me and says he will arrange everything for me in Kyoto when I go there and [Ichiro] Hatta has written urging me to go straight to Tokyo and let him teach me judo there. He also says that he will take care of me there. He has sent me an introduction to the head of the judo place at Kyoto, but Mr. Yamamoto says that he will write to them there when I am ready to go. I must go to Kyoto and see other places as well, but if I find that I don't get such good judo practice there I shall return here.

In any case I shall stay in Japan until October or November and I must learn the language because it is so awkward sometimes not to be able to understand a word that is said to me. I am having lessons every day now.

I am feeling very fit in spite of having burnt my hand, cutting my foot on broken glass, having an electric fan fall on my head the other day and a few minor accidents of that kind. To say nothing of landing upon my head this morning several times running, when Mr. Yamamoto did the stomach throw. I suppose if he does it often enough I shall learn to fall on some other part of my anatomy -- at least that seems to be his theory.

He is aided in his lessons by a number of others who stand round and tell him what I am doing wrong if he can't see it for himself. Under this treatment there would be hope for me yet if I were twenty years younger, but as it is they are keeping me in very good condition which is the main thing. With collar bones being broken on all sides of me and shoulders and elbows being put out every day by these strenuous young men, I haven't the face to protest when I bump my head or to squeal with fright when I see the stomach throw coming. And if I break my

neck I break it and that's all there is to it.

One lesson I have certainly learned since I left home, and that is that I am not so fragile as I thought, and that it is amazing what dangers one can come through unharmed. That I ever returned from the interior of China and got by Tibet is a miracle in itself, and now when I sit in a Japanese motorcar and it careers through the streets at sixty miles an hour I just think that if we have a head-on collision, we have one, and that's all there is to it. At one time I should have sat there with every muscle in my body at tension and with my nerves worn to a shred.

I suppose it is because I am in good health and enjoying myself and because nothing very serious has happened to me so far. If it were otherwise I might feel different. They say that no man is a philosopher with the toothache!

Robin [Mayer's husband] has gone to America for a trip. He has gone on the "Berengaria" How that would bore me! One might just as well be in an hotel as travel in one of these huge luxury liners. I have so enjoyed the small ships that I have been on, where sometimes I have been the only passenger. No rules, no regulations, dress as you please and the whole of the crew to wait on you. What more can a woman want?

I've written you a terribly long letter but I thought it might interest you to hear about it all.

My permanent address in Japan is c/o Thos. Cook, Kobe. Do write and tell me how the moxa treatment is getting on.

My love to Hanna [Koizumi's daughter] and Mrs. Koizumi, and best wishes to everyone at the Budokwai. Tell Mr. Tani that I am having a lovely time but that no one here treats me as gently as he did. I now realize how tenderly he used to drop me upon the mat!

Kindest regards,
Yours very sincerely,
Sarah B. Mayer