

Incorporation of the Traditional Okinawan Kobudo Weapon into American Kenpo Karate



**Black Belt Thesis
Universal Kenpo Karate
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I. Sai History

The history of the sai is varied depending on whom you're speaking with, although there is one overall origination belief that the majority accepts as true, which would be its use as a farm tool. The following excerpt details the history of the Okinawan weapons ban and the subsequent use of farm tools as make shift weapons; the author describes the Okinawan warrior class as *samurai*.

“Any penetrating review of Okinawan weapons history is a mixture of hyperbole and fact. Most modern martial arts students have been taught that Okinawan kobudo developed as a result of the Okinawan samurai being stripped of their weapons at two different points in their history. But a review of these incidents shows that our current view of the roots of Okinawan kobudo might be based on misconceptions.

The first time that the Okinawan samurai's weapons were supposedly confiscated was during the reign of King Shoshin (1477 - 1526). While it is documented that King Shoshin ordered his provincial lords, or aji, to live near his castle in Shuri, many historians no longer believe that he totally disarmed his ruling class. A famous stone monument, the Momo Urasoe Ran Kan No Mei, which is inscribed with the highlights of King Shoshin's reign, talks about the King seizing the aji's swords, and how he amassed a supply of weapons in a warehouse near Shuri castle. But some Okinawan historians now interpret that King Shoshin was actually building an armory to protect his ports and prepare for any potential invasion by wako, or pirates, not that he was stripping the Okinawan samurai or the general population of their weaponry.

The second time that the Okinawan samurai were purportedly disarmed was after the Satsuma invasion of 1609. But documents have been recovered that state that the Satsuma outlawed the ownership and sale of firearms, all the Okinawan samurai of the Pechin class and above were allowed to keep those muskets and pistols that were already in their family's possession.

There is further documentation that in 1613 the Satsuma issued permits for the

Okinawan samurai to travel with their personal swords (tachi and wakizashi) to the smiths and polishers in Kagushima, Japan for maintenance and repair. From the issuance of these permits, it is logical to infer that there were restrictions on the Okinawan samurai carrying their weapons in public, but it is also clear evidence that these weapons were not confiscated by the Satsuma.

Based on this misconception that the Okinawan samurai were stripped of their weapons by the Satsuma most modern martial arts students are taught that Okinawan kobudo developed because the Okinawans turned to farm implements for their self-defense and training. When we consider the sai specifically we can see that the plausibility of this common myth is significantly strained.

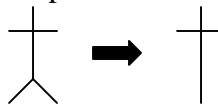
Sensei Toshihiro Oshiro, long time practitioner of Yamanni-Chinen Ryu Bojutsu and the Chief Instructor for the Ryukyu Bujutsu Kenkyu Doyukai - USA, says that he has never found any evidence in his own extensive research to support the theory that the sai was used as a farming tool. Nor has he been told that by any of his teachers. He asserts that the sai has always been a weapon.” (Toshihiro Oshiro and William H. Haff http://www.oshirodojo.com/kobudo_sai.html)

Due to the lack of documentation for use of the sai as a farming tool, it is still the most wide spread theory of where it originated from. The most recognized possible origin is from a tool used to plant seeds to create evenly spaced rows. A practitioner, with many years of throw and flipping, could become quite fluent with the sai. Other possible uses for the sai on the farm were: to bail hay as a miniature pitchfork; as a way to hook fish and bring them into the boat (*manji sai*); using the blade as a hitch between a cart and oxen; or to spear fish (*nunti bo*).

Some other possible uses for the sai were as a makeshift step to climb castle walls. An individual would thrust the blade in between the stones on a castle wall and, by using it as a step, could get to the top. Also, others believe that the sai was strictly

created for endurance training. The oldest possible origin of the sai is that it came from Buddhist monks traveling from India through China and eventually ending up in Okinawa.

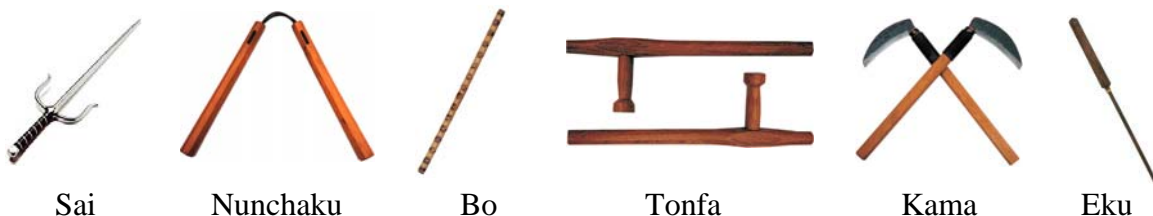
The Buddhist monk theory came about from the fact that there is very little iron on Okinawa and therefore, the sai probably would not have been readily found. Also, it appears that the sai is in the general shape of a human body and thus adapted to form

what today is known as the sai.  The diagram consists of two simple line drawings. The first drawing on the left is a stylized human figure with a vertical line for the torso and two diagonal lines for the legs. A thick black arrow points from this figure to the second drawing on the right, which is a simple cross shape with a vertical line and two shorter horizontal lines.


Due to the lack of metal on the island of Okinawa, the theory that monks brought the sai seems very logical and thus, the sai may have been intended for use as a weapon. Consequently, the people of Okinawan may have disguised the sai as a planting tool, hitch bolt for carts, a miniature pitchfork, or a fishing spear to throw off the ruling parties on the island.

Because of the law that the people of Okinawa weren't allowed to carry around weapons, they improvised other common farm tools, which is what Kobudo studies today. Other traditional Okinawan weapons include:

Name	Description
Sai	Often made of metal and resembles the top portion of a “devil’s” pitchfork, but the side guards are shorter than the sixteen inch middle blade.
Nunchaku	Two sticks connected together by a rope or chain, and was used as: A flail to beat rice, a kind of horse bridle, or may be adapted from the Chinese 3 sectional staff.
Staff/Bo	Has many different uses, such as herding livestock to guiding boats. It was usually about 6 feet long with a diameter of ½ to 1½ inch.
Tonfa	Used as a grinder for wheat and other crops. Today, police personnel use it as their nightstick. Nicknamed “spinning fury”.
Kama	Kind of sickle. Referred to as “Okinawan lawn mower”. May be connected to a staff by a rope or chain for added reach and versatility (kusarigama).
Ekū	Boat oar used to paddle the boats



Due to the tighter weapon restrictions put on the working class in Okinawa, the people decided to hide their weapons in case of an attack from either the samurai or individuals of the Satsuma clan. As a result, the sai is in a class of so-called “concealed” or “first strike” weapons, of which the nunchaku is also a member. The reason for these terms is because the sai was easy to hide in garments and very effective at getting the initial strike in, such as a throw. The Okinawan people used to carry the sai inside of their sleeves or in their *obi* (belt). Because the sai was often thrown, mainly as the first strike, the villagers often carried an extra, or third, sai in their *obi*.

Throwing the sai was a very useful technique for the Okinawan’s because it allowed a person to either stab or injure an opponent. For example, if the blade would miss the attacker, the sheer weight of the weapon would knock them down, thus it was effective in getting their enemy off of their horses. Since the sai was effective in defending against the bo and the swords of the samurai, the Japanese police adapted it and the *Jutte*  was created.

A variety of names came about for the individual study and practice of these traditional weapons. For example, *saijitsu* basically means the study of the sai. In Japanese terms, it’s also a national holiday or festival day. Some of the other terms are *tonfajitsu* and *bojitsu*.

Modern Approaches

In today’s society, carrying around any of these weapons is impractical and in some cases, against the law. So what’s the point in studying them? There are a few different uses for the practice of traditional weapons. First, it’s a way to preserve the

history of a certain aspect of the martial arts and in fact, the kama is still used in Okinawa today for chopping and tree trimming. Second, it's excellent endurance and strength training. Training with weapons are extensions of the open hand, thus referred to as karate's sister, kobudo, and will therefore make your empty hand strikes stronger.

Another reason for studying kobudo is to develop forearm muscles and wrist flexibility. With all of the whipping motions from the various weapon types, it takes strong muscles to control them and move the weapon where you desire. In standard karate techniques, there can be pauses in between moves depending on your type of attack, but when using weapons, you can't always take these pauses. For this reason, kobudo training creates hand eye coordination, forces you to trust your own instincts, and to do what your body has been trained for. In Okinawan karate, there is more fluidity in their movements, which compliments with Kenpo Karate, a style that is also very fluid in their actions.

When you first begin studying a weapon, it takes a certain basic knowledge. Once you begin to understand more of the weapon and can perform movements without having to think about it, it then becomes a "conscious reflex". In other words, you can execute these movements without having to think about it.

Finally, and most obvious, is that weapon training is cool and flashy. After spending years training with empty hands, the idea of training with a "tool" adds so much more to your drive to go further into your martial arts training. Children, and adults alike, look at weapon training as cool, and for that reason, want to learn it.

II. Sai Composition

Point

The point is sometimes sharp, but more often rounded.

Blade

The blade is either rounded or hewn into six or eight symmetrical facets. The faceted type blade is considered most practical. Some blades are also flat like that of a sword.

Prong

The prong or guard, are usually curved like a trident and useful for halting the stroke of a sword or bo.

Guard

Center of Balance

Guard Center

The guard center is the hub where the prongs meet the handle.

Handle

To provide a firm grip, the handle is often wrapped with cotton tape or thick string.

Butt

The butt is designed in various shapes and can be used in the same manner as a karate punch.



III. Sai Basics Curriculum

From Normal position

Blocks:

- Inward
- Upward
- Outward (uses handle)
- Extended Outward
- Downward
- Parries

Strikes:

- Punch (thrust/snap)
- Elbows
 - Inward, outward, back, upward, obscure, inward overhead, outward overhead
- Hooking/slashing (using prong)
- Stabbing
- Outward Handword
- Inward Handword
- Reverse Handword
- Whip (flip out and back quickly)

With blade out

Blocks:

- Inward
- Upward
- Outward
- Extended Outward
- Downward
- X-block (up and down)
- Parries

Strikes:

- Stabbing
 - Thrusting, up, mid, down, etc.
- Horizontal (starts from standard position)
 - Flip out from body, or circle overhead (umbrella strike)
 - Neck, ribs, etc.
- Vertical (start with blade out)
 - Head, groin, leg, etc.
- Throwing (legs)
- Slashing (form of slicing)

- Can hold the blade and throw, hook/tear through body

Maneuvers:

Flipping:

- Standard to blade out
 - Regular vertical
 - Regular horizontal
 - Umbrella horizontal
- Blade out
 - Vertical
 - Retraction

Techniques:

- Brushing Sai
- Locked Sai
- Circling Sai
- Defensive Sai
- Falling Sai
- Thundering Sai
- Storming Sai
- Disarming Sai

Forms:

- Kyan No Sai
- Ni-cho Sai
- Tawada No Sai
- Nakiama No Sensei No Sai Dai Ni
- Short 3
- Kenpo Sai

IV. Sai Basics: with Reference Pictures

Normal position – Standard way to hold or grip the sai, also called a “defensive hold”. Notice how the blade is tightly pressed against the forearm with assistance from the index finger. The index finger keeps constant pressure on the handle, thus making the blade snug against the forearm.



Blade out – The blade of the sai can be used for many things, such as stabbing, striking, blocking, etc.



Blocks – All of the blocks found in Kenpo can be executed in either the Normal position, or with the blade out. It's important to block with the blade of the sai, firmly placed against the forearm, to reduce the chances of the blade striking your forearm. For all practical purposes, it's better to block using the Normal position due to increased power generated from your forearm. The pictures below demonstrate the two different downward blocks.



Strikes – Most of the strikes found in Kenpo can be incorporated with the sai. As with blocks, the strikes can be performed with the blade out or in the Normal grip position. Some of the possible strikes that can be executed are: punches, elbows, hand swords, and whipping motions. Some strikes that the sai can do which you cannot do with the empty hands are: hooking, slashing, and stabbing.

Horizontal flipping – Various kinds of flipping the sai out from the Normal position for striking or blocking. The pictures below show how to flip the sai horizontally to block or strike. All of the fingers rotate around the handle, regrab, and then you whip out the blade using your wrist and body movement.



Vertical flipping – For this flip, the sai blade is already out and is used to strike the target vertically, usually on top of the head. Can also begin with the sai in the Normal position and flip the sai out to strike up vertically to the groin, knee, etc.

For flipping with the left sai, begin with blade out and move your thumb over inside of the right prong. From there, you can flip the sai down and back up to restrike the head.



Umbrella flip – Circular motion of the sai, above the head, to flip the blade out and strike or slash. The following pictures demonstrate how to do this maneuver. As for most flipping, most of the fingers rotate around the handle to get the full whipping action of the blade with the strike.



Retraction – This is the method for returning the sai in the blade out position, either from vertical or horizontal flipping, back to the Normal holding position. For this movement with the right hand, begin by placing the thumb inside the right prong.



Spear Hold – This unique holding position isn't used very often because of the obvious placement of your index finger inside the guard, as shown below. This hold is used mainly for striking, but also for some blocking, such as downward blocks. Of course, great care should be taken when blocking this way as to not injure your finger due to a weapon sliding down the blade.



V. Warm Up Exercises

Horse Stance:

- Vertical flips (Normal to blade out and back) to 9 and 3 o'clock simultaneously
- Horizontal Flips
 - Standard
 - Umbrella
- Star Block Set (Normal position)

Leg Exercises:

- Squat down and back up with a downward blocking motion
 - One legged stance with downward block, blade out

Push-ups:

- Head of sai on floor in the Normal grip position
- Hands and feet shoulder length apart

Sit-ups:

- Feet as wide as shoulders and flat
- Keep heels down at all times
 - Sit up, strike and thrust
 - Horizontal strike from around the head (umbrella) and then thrust
 - Sit up and thrust only
 - Horizontal flipping motion, then thrust

Striking Points

Normal position:

- Chin/mouth
- Throat
- Solar plexus

Stabbing with blade out:

- Throat
- Stomach
- Groin

Striking with blade out:

- Top of head
- Neck
- Arm
- Knee
 - Striking usually followed by thrusting of the sai forward

Throwing:

- Usually goes to the legs
- Throw with the prongs facing horizontally in case you miss with the blade because then the prongs could hit the target
- Keep wrist straight
- For long distance, grip the blade (length of distance depends on where you grip the blade)
- For short distance, grip the handle, loop sai around head, and throw

VI. Forms: Kyan No Sai

For **Bold** faced terms, refer to section X: terminology

1. Bow and Salutation.
2. Step back with right foot into horse stance facing **3**, but looking to **12**; sai are in **Normal** downward block position.

Group 1:

- 3a. **Shuffle** to **12**, into a **LNB**, as you execute a left overhead vertical strike, **blade out**. Prongs are horizontal. (Blade should be striking in a downward motion to the top of head or collarbone; other sai is in **check** position)
- 3b. Step through forward into **RNB** as right sai does an overhead strike, **blade out**, (same as position 3a), with left sai checking in **Normal position**.
- 3c. Step through forward into **LNB** as left sai does an overhead strike, **blade out** (same as 3a).
- 3d. **Shuffle** to **12** and execute a left, **Normal**, downward block in, followed by two punches: right then left.



Group 2:

- 4a. Cover with left foot so you are facing **6** and do a right **horizontal strike, blade out**, to the ribs/med section. The prongs are vertical for this group, while the other sai is checking in **Normal position**.
Note: when doing the horizontal strikes, flip the blade out as you step, place it along your hip, then draw it like a sword and strike horizontally as you settle in your stance
- 4b. Step through forward, to **6**, into a **LNB** and execute a left **horizontal strike, blade out**, with prongs vertical; other hand is **covering**.
- 4c. Step through forward, to **6**, into **RNB** and execute a right **horizontal strike, blade out**, with prongs vertical. Other hand is **covering**.
- 4d. **Shuffle** forward, to **6**, as the right sai **retracts** and executes a, **Normal** downward block, followed by two punches: left then right.
*Note: after every strike for Groups 1 and 2, retract sai to **Normal position** (with arm still extended); turn hand over with palm down then go into a forward bow and finally step through with the next move and strike*



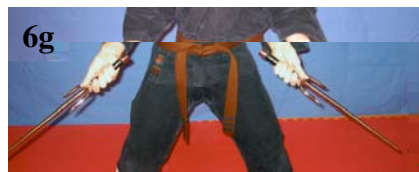
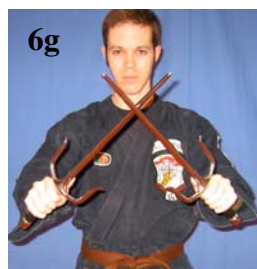
Group 3:

- 5a. Step to **3** with left foot as you do a left, **Normal**, upward block.
- 5b. Step through to **3**, with right foot as you execute a right middle block strike, **blade out** (usually aimed at wrists). Follow up with two slashes at the wrist using the right sai, (left then right with blade still out).

- 5c. **Shuffle** to **3** as you execute a right, **Normal**, downward block, followed by two punches: left then right.
- 5d. Following the two punches, execute a right upward block.
- 5e. Repeat steps b→d with left side.
- 5f. Repeat steps b→c with right side.
- 5g. Following the double punches from your **RNB**, cover with right foot so you are facing **9** in a **LNB** and execute a left upward block.
- 5h. Repeat steps b→d facing **3** with right side.
- 5i. Repeat steps b→d with left side.
- 5j. Repeat steps b→c with right side.

Group 4:

- 6a. Following the double punches facing **3** in your **RNB**, pull right foot back to left (natural/attention stance) and have sai cocked on your left hip (**Chinese hind fist**), with prongs horizontal, as you look towards **12**.
- 6b. Step to **12** with right foot as you do an **umbrella** motion with the right sai, land into your **RNB** and throw the sai, **blade out**. (For form purposes, don't actually throw the sai)
- 6c. Step back into a **LNB** as you middle block with left sai, **blade out** (similar to 5b.) Do not **retract** right sai, stay with **blade out** near right hip.
- 6d. **Retract** left sai and follow with a left, **Normal**, downward block as you step forward into a **RNB**, and stab using right sai, with **blade out**.
- 6e. Next, **retract** right sai and execute a downward block. Step through to **12** into a **LNB** and execute a left **horizontal strike, blade out**, to the neck using the **umbrella** motion. Follow with a left stab to the throat.
- 6f. **Retract** left sai, **shuffle** forward, and execute a left, **Normal**, downward block followed by two punches: right then left.
- 6g. Step back with left foot into horse stance facing **12** and flip both sai out and up, **blades out**, essentially making an X block. Have the blades slide against each other as the right goes out and down to **3** and the left to **9**. (Known as "Deblooding of the blades.")



- 6h. Reverse the motion from the previous move as you **retract** the sai, pull left foot to right, and end at attention stance facing **12**.



7. Salute and bow.

Bunkai: Kyan No Sai

Group 1:

The vertical overhead strike can be used as a strike to the head or as a strike to the fingers/hand, if attacking with a weapon. The other hand is in an augmented block/cover to protect the rest of your body as one hand strikes/blocks. This movement is repeated three times total.

Group 2:

The horizontal middle level strike can be used in a similar fashion as Group 1. This strike can be to the ribs or fingers/hands. The other hand, as in Group 1, is in cover position. This movement is repeated three times also.

Group 3:

The series of these moves are to block and disarm an attacker coming at you with an overhead strike from a staff or possibly club.

The first move is to block the strike by either striking the weapon or fingers of attacker. Next, step through with a slash, blade out, to the attacker's wrist. Finally, clear the arm/weapon and double punch. These movements are repeated three times facing 3 and three times facing 9 o'clock.

Group 4:

This set of moves is for a defense against a staff or possibly a club or sword. As the staff comes in, you throw the right sai at the opponent's legs, forcing them to step

back. Next, the attacker comes in with a right, mid level, horizontal strike. You execute a middle block, blade out, while you grab your third sai in your *obi*. Then, clear the weapon/arm and step through with a right stab to the fingers/hand, or body if possible. Retract the sai, clear arm, and step through with a left umbrella strike to the neck followed with a thrust to the throat. Finally, clear the arm and double punch. Step back into a horse stance and “deblood” the blades.

Discussion:

Kyan no sai is used as the first form because it demonstrates how to properly flip and retract the sai and implements varying types of blocks, strikes, and combination movements.

The first group of this form demonstrates what the sai was mainly used for, a “first strike” weapon. Also, the final group reveals that another sai was usually carried for use once one was thrown or dropped.

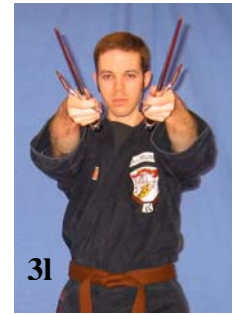
A lot of push or step drags, used mostly for advancing towards your opponent, are used in many of the Groups in these sai forms. In most cases when using a weapon, the attacker, as well as yourself, probably have a weapon. In these cases, push/step drags get you in closer to strike the opponent, such as the fingers, rather than the weapon.

Ni-Cho Sai

1. Bow and Salutation
2. Begin with sai in both hands, **Normal**, and natural stance.

Group 1:

- 3a. Begin with left arm extended in punch position.
- 3b. Step to **12** into a **RNB** and execute a right punch.
- 3c. Downward block with the right sai, **blade out**, as you pull into a cat stance.
- 3d. Step back out to **12** as you thrust the right sai toward throat.
- 3e. **Retract** sai to **Normal position** and downward block.
- 3f. Step to **12** with left foot and left punch.
- 3g. Repeat steps 3c→3e on the left side.
- 3h. Repeat steps 3b→3e, and follow with a double punch: left then right.
- 3i. Step back with right to **6** as you extend **blades out** and down (downward blocks) towards **6** and **12**, while looking at **12**.
- 3j. Bring left sai back to right hand, at **6**, and connect sai for the X block and/or weapon 'trapping'.
- 3k. Bring up both sai to **12** and X block (sai are connected)
- 3l. Step to **12** with right and execute double horizontal throat strike with both sai.
- 3m. **Retract** both sai and execute a dual double downward block.



Group 2:

- 4a. While facing **12**, look to the left and pull your left foot up to a cat stance facing **9** as your left hand downward blocks.
- 4b. Step out to **9** into a **LNB** and execute a left upward block, which continues to move counter clockwise into an extended outward block (used to 'hook' opponent's weapon).
- 4c. Repeat steps 3b→3h.

Group 3:

- 5a. While facing **9**, cover with right foot so that you're in a **LNB** facing **3** and execute a left upward block that continues over into an extended outward block.
- 5b. Repeat steps 3b→3h.

Group 4:

- 6a. From your **RNB** facing **3**, step counter clockwise with left foot to **6** (your back does face 'attacker' for a moment) as you throw the left sai toward **6**, using the **umbrella** motion. (For form purposes, don't actually throw the sai).
- 6b. Step to **6** into a **RNB** and execute a right punch.
- 6c. Step drag to **6** as you **flip** the right sai using the **umbrella** motion and execute a **horizontal strike** to the throat.
- 6d. **Retract** right sai and downward block.
- 6e. Step left foot clockwise so you are facing **12** as you execute a right middle block, **Normal position**.
7. Salute and Bow.

Bunkai: Ni-Cho Sai

Group 1:

The series of movements of this group are used to defend against a sword, or club/staff. The initial punch drives the opponent back a step, then they come in with a low number three or four strike, depending on which side you're on. For example, if using your right hand, attack is with a number four strike. You block the strike with a downward block, blade out, followed with a thrust to the throat. Next, retract the sai and downward block. Repeat these movements for a total of three times and end the third with a downward block followed with a double punch.

Next, step back and execute a dual downward block, blade out, to clear anyone around you. You then set up the sai for the next attack, which is an overhead sword strike. Execute an upward X-block to the sword and step through, pushing the weapon off to the side, and execute a dual horizontal neck strike. Follow with a dual Normal downward block, used to clear anything in the way, and to stay with the theme of second half of this group, which is the use of both sai.

Group 2 and 3:

These two groups are just like the beginning half of Group 1, except it starts with a different transition. These transitions demonstrate how you should move to block an attacker from different positions.

Group 4:

The initial move is used to draw back the attacker or to impale them by striking the leg with your throw. Next, you step forward to punch the opponent, which makes them move back. You then follow with a final strike to the neck. End with a downward block to clear the attacker.

The ending of this form actually can allow you to add more once you clear the arm. Thus, it's telling you to think of other things you could do, such as a double punch, which is used quite a bit with these sai forms.

Discussion:

Ni-cho sai appears to be a simplistic type of form, a combination of EPAK's Short Form 1 and Coordination Set 1. In this form, we are going to the four major directions, using different transitions for the next attacker, and drilling a basic combination technique. Because of these different transitions and movements, it is placed as the second form that a student would learn.

Towada No Sai

1. Bow and Salutation
2. Begin in horse stance facing **12** with sai in a **Normal** double downward block position.

Group 1:

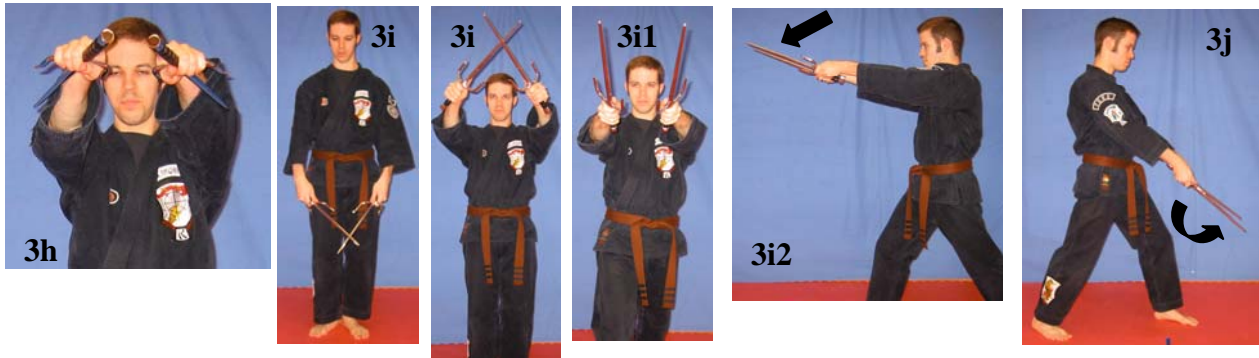
- 3a. Step to **12** into a **LNB** with a left extended outward block.
- 3b. Step forward into a **RNB** with a right mid-level **horizontal strike, blade out**.
Note: with striking, place sai blade on hip and draw it out like a sword, or can flip it out in front of you.
- 3c. Step forward into **LNB** with a left mid-level **horizontal strike, blade out**.
- 3d. Step forward into **RNB** with a right mid-level **horizontal strike, blade out**.
Note: for steps 3b→3d, with one sai strikes out, the other retracts and is chambered in Normal position.
- 3e. Stay in **RNB** and execute a **Normal** right downward block and double punch: left then right.
- 3f. Pull right foot back into a cat stance while hands cock on left hip (**Chinese hind fist**).
- 3g. Right foot and right sai, using prong, do a circular motion (clockwise and parallel to ground) – right sai stops on right hip.



Step 3g: shows motion that the sai goes through and where you finish.



- 3h. Step back out to **12** into a **RNB** with a dual punch to eye level using butt of sai.
- 3i. **Flip** both sai out and down toward your legs and cross them in an X, then move them up to an upward X block; simultaneously pull your right foot back to left. Once feet are together and sai are in upward X block position, step forward with right foot as you strike down with both sai blades on opponent's collar bone area.
- 3j. Cover with left foot to **6** and double downward block/strike with **blades out** to **6** (blades are moving in same direction).
- 3k. **Retract** both sai and do a left **Normal** downward block and double punch: right then left.



Steps 3h-3i: these pictures demonstrate the series of moves and placement of sai during each of the moves. (3i1 and 3i2 are same movement/stance, just different angle).

Group 2:

- 4a. From your **LNB** facing **6**, pull left foot into a cat stance facing **4:30** with a **Normal** left downward block and a **Normal** right upward block.
- 4b. Step forward to **4:30** into a **RNB** with a **Normal** right downward block, followed but a double punch: left then right.
- 4c. Pull your right foot into a cat stance facing **6** with a **Normal** right downward block and a **Normal** left upward block.
- 4d. Repeat steps 3b→3k.

Group 3:

- 5a. From your **LNB** facing **12**, step up circle or seven step to face **3** in a **RNB** and execute a right **horizontal strike, blade out**, to the head/neck level.
- 5b. Continuing the movement from 5a (strike doesn't stop at neck level), execute a right cat stance, pulling right foot back, as your sai follows through the neck and comes back to right shoulder and makes a triangle with your head and neck.
- 5c. Continuing the motion from 5b, step back out to **3** into a **RNB** with a **vertical strike** to top of head.

***Note:** steps 5b and 5c is just describing a vertical flip with an added cat stance, beginning with blade of sai already out.

This move is also described in the basics (flipping) section.*

- 5d. **Retract** sai and downward block, then double punch: left then right.
- 6a. Cover with right foot to face **9** in a **LNB** and execute a left **horizontal strike** to head.
- 6b. Repeat steps 5b→5d using opposite side and facing **9**.
- 6c. From your **LNB** facing **9**, step to **12** with right foot and repeat steps 3b→3k.

Group 4:

- 7a. From your **LNB** facing **6**, pull your left foot back to right and “7” step out as you end in a **RRB** to **9** and execute a **Normal** right downward block and **Normal** left upward block.
- 7b. Pull right foot back into one-legged stance and right downward block, **blade out**.
- 7c. Set back down into **RNB** to **9** and **Normal** downward block followed by a double punch: left then right.

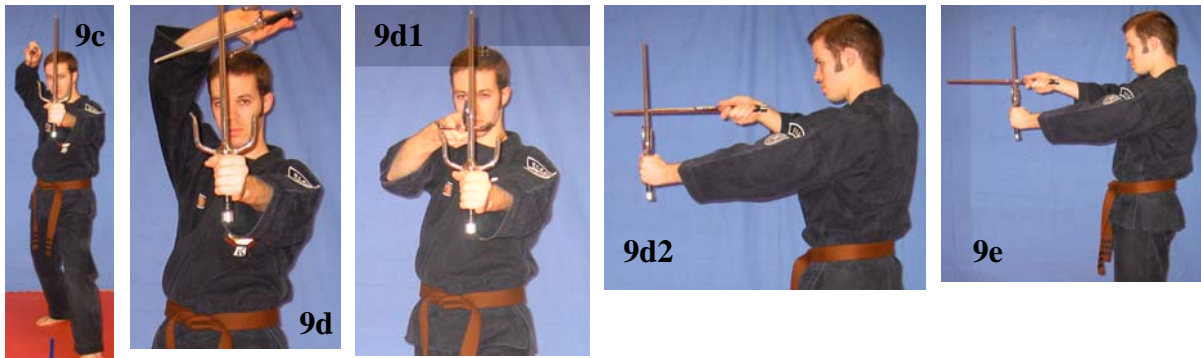


- 8a. From your **RNB** facing **9**, pull right foot back to left and step back out to **9** (“7” step), but now you’re in a **LRB** facing **3** with a **Normal** left downward and **Normal** right upward block.
- 8b. Repeat steps 7b→7c on left side facing **3**.
- 8c. From the **LNB** facing **3**, step to **6** with right foot and repeat steps 3b→3k.

Group 5:

- 9a. From the **LNB** facing **12**, **flip** both sai up to make an X block with **blades out**.
- 9b. Step right foot towards **12**, then slide left foot up to the right on the **9** o’clock side (on ball of left foot). While moving your feet, the left sai **retracts** to **Normal position**, and is in chamber or **covering**, while the right stays with **blade out** and does an up and down motion to **vertically strike** at head level. The right sai ends up being perpendicular with the ground.
- 9c. Step your left foot back into a **RNB** facing **12**, then immediately step your right back into a **LNB** as your right sai **retracts** and does an upward block and the left sai **flips** out in a counter clockwise motion, and does a middle block with blade at head level. Sai should also be perpendicular with ground.
- 9d. Next, the right sai executes an **umbrella flip** and strikes the left sai blade (blade to blade) making a + design.
- 9e. Slide right foot up to left as right sai thrusts straight forward, but stays in contact with blade of left sai.





Steps 9c-9e: series of movements and placement of sai during the corresponding steps. 9d1 and 9d2 are same movement/stance, just different angle.

- 9f. Left foot steps back toward **6** into a horse stance facing **9**, but looking at **12**, as both sai **retract** and do a dual “moving block” in front of your body, going from **12** to **6**. The block is a **Normal** left downward and a **Normal** right inward (used as a defense against a bo or spear thrust).
- 9g. Step right foot back toward **6** into a horse stance facing **3**, while both sai do the same blocks as 9f, but on opposite side, right downward and left inward.
- 9h. Finally, pull left foot into one-legged stance facing **12** with a **Normal** left downward and **Normal** right upward block.



- 10. Set left foot down into horse stance facing **12** and sai are in **Normal** downward block position.
- 11. Salute and Bow.

Bunkai: Towada No Sai

Group 1:

This form begins with a defensive movement, which is what the sai and weapons in general are for, defense against aggressors. The following horizontal strikes can be used to block or strike an incoming weapon, the fingers, or ribs of an attacker. These strikes are repeated three times and ended with a downward block/clear and double punch.

Repetition cycle: Following the double punches, you pull into a cat stance with your sai chambered. Next, you circle out the right sai so as to hook your attacker and slash through them. Next, step forward and execute a dual double punch, Normal, to the face.

Then, pull your front foot back and execute an upward X-block, blade out, to stop an overhead strike. From there, step back out into stance with a dual strike to the collarbones, the weapon and attacker's head, or other available targets. Cover to face the opposite direction with a dual downward block, blade out to block or clear anyone behind you. Finally, retract sai, downward block/clear, and double punch. This last block and double punch is to perform this sequence of movements on the opposite side as a complement to the first side.

Group 2:

The initial block is to stop a #3 strike, followed by a downward block/strike to the attacker's hand and double punch to their body. Next, the downward block is performed on the opposite side and instead of continuing with the previous motions, you begin the *Repetition cycle*. For this set, it starts with an attack with a #4 strike, and then goes into your horizontal strikes, etc.

Group 3:

For this group, the initial movement is a block from your attacker's overhead strike (staff, club, sword, etc.). Then you vertically flip the sai and come back down with a strike to the attacker's hand or head, if possible. End with a downward clear and two punches. Repeat on the other side, and then begin with the *Repetition cycle*.

Group 4:

The start of this group begins with the attacker throwing a horizontal mid/head level strike. You go into a reverse bow to avoid the attack, but then they come in with a low strike, to which you downward block while getting your leg out of harms way. Next, you set down with a downward clear and double punch. Repeat on the other side and begin the final set of the *Repetition cycle*.

Group 5:

The attack is an overhead strike of which you execute an upward X-block, blades out. Follow with moving forward, simultaneously moving their weapon off to one side and vertically striking them on the head. You step back as the next attack comes in,

which is a head level horizontal strike. Block the strike and follow with a right sai strike against your left sai either hitting the opponent's weapon or hand, if possible. Follow with a push of the sai in to stab the attacker's hands or, if possible, his/her body.

End with a dual block to parry away a staff thrust on both sides, or the first parry can block and the second one can be used to pull them in for a strike.

Discussion:

There are many complicated movements in this form, but each one demonstrates a different way to either block or strike your opponent.

Nakiama No Sensei No Sai Dai Ni

1. Bow and Salutation
2. Begin in horse stance facing **12** with sai in **Normal** downward block position.

Group 1:

- 3a. Start by stepping to **12** into a **RNB** with a **Normal** right extended outward block with the left sai chambered.
- 3b. Step to **12** into a **LNB** with a **Normal** left extended outward block, while the right sai is in chamber.
- 3c. Step to **12** into a **RNB** as you execute a right **horizontal strike, blade out**, at head level and continues (non stop motion) to your right shoulder as your right foot pulls back into a cat stance. Then your right foot steps back out into a **RNB** as the right sai completes its **vertical flip**, in a **spear hold**, and strikes the top of opponent's head (prongs are turned vertically).
As your right hand is moving, the left sai stays in **Normal position** and the butts of the two sai stay in a straight line with each other. As the right sai is at the your shoulder, as part of the **vertical flip**, left sai is vertical in front of you with your palm facing you. Then step back down and your sai end butt to butt with your left palm up.
- 3d. Repeat step 3c on the opposite side.



Step 3d: arrows demonstrate the motion that the sai will go to get to the following picture.

- 3e. **Retract** sai and step to **12** into a **RNB** with a right downward block, followed with a double punch: left then right.
- 3f. Next, step left foot to **12** just in front of right foot (left is on the ball) as both sai extend out, in **Normal position**, at mid level, and pull back to chamber.

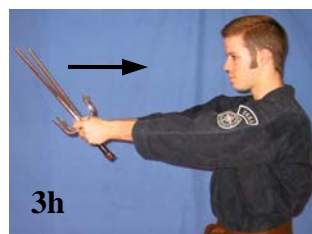


- 3g. Next, step out into a **RNB** with a dual double strike to head level. Hands actually cross, so that the right sai is hitting opponent's right eye and left sai is hitting left eye with the left hand on top.



3g1 and **3g2** show same movement, just different camera angle.

- 3h. **Flip** sai **blades out** and cock over left shoulder and push drag to **12** as you thrust the blades of the sai straight out at collar bone area.
 3i. Cover with left foot and turn facing **6**, push drag and move sai in a straight line to **6** at collar bone area.



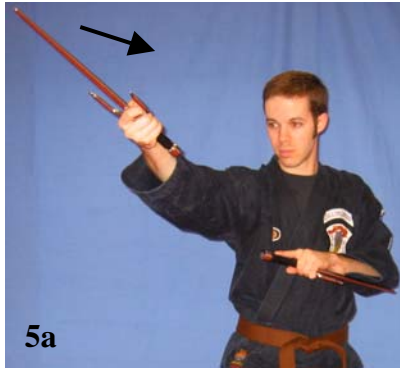
- 3j. In your **LNB**, **retract** sai and execute a left downward block and double punch: right then left.

Group 2:

- 4a. Step to **7:30** into a right “elephant” stance with a **Normal** right upward block.
- 4b. Push drag into a **RFB** at **7:30** with a double punch: left then right.
- 4c. Seven step into a left “elephant” stance to face **4:30** with a **Normal** left upward block.
- 4d. Push drag into a **LFB** at **4:30** with a double punch: right then left.
- 4e. Step to **6** into a **RNB** and repeat steps 3c→3j, facing **6**.

Group 3:

- 5a. From your **LNB** facing **12**, step right foot to **1:30** in an “elephant” stance as right sai **flips** out, into the **spear hold**, palm up, at head level. Left sai is in chamber.
- 5b. Push drag to **1:30** into a **RFB** as the right sai reverses its motion and does a downward block, **blade out**, with palm down and still in the **spear hold**.



- 5c. **Retract** right sai and double punch to **1:30**: left then right.
- 5d. Step left foot to **10:30** in an “elephant” stance with a left sai flip, **blade out** in a **spear hold**, palm up, to head level (just like 5a). Right sai is in chamber.
- 5e. Push drag to **10:30** into a **LFB** as the left sai reverses its motion and does a downward block, **blade out** with **spear hold**, and palm down.
- 5f. **Retract** left sai and double punch to **10:30**: right then left.

Group 4:

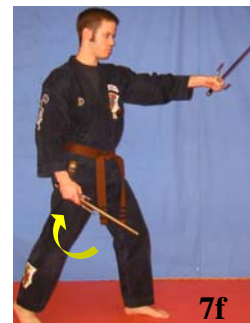
- 6a. Lift your left knee, as if ready to stomp or just like the chamber for a knife-edge kick, and plant the foot at **6** while looking at **12**.
- 6b. Next, lift the right knee, just like 6a, and **flip** out the right sai in a **vertical**, overhead motion, **spear hold**, and strike at mid level, to **12**. The blade is parallel with the ground and prongs are vertical.
- 6c. Place right foot down into a **RNB** facing **12** as right sai **vertically flips** in a clockwise motion, blade passing by the left hip with the same strike as in 6b. Be sure to land in your **RNB** *with* the strike.
- 6d. Push drag to **12** as right arm pulls back a little and, releasing from the **spear hold**, thrusts back out at midsection level with prongs starting horizontal and rotating to vertical once settled in **RNB**.



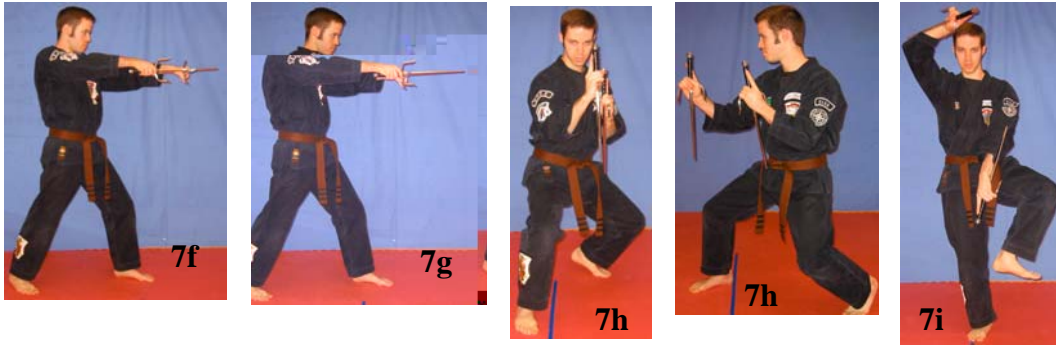
- 6e. **Retract** right sai, downward block, and double punch to **12**: left then right.
- 6f. Repeat steps 6a→6e on the opposite side facing **6**.

Group 5:

- 7a. From your **LNB** facing **6**, step right foot to **6** into a horse stance facing **3**, but still looking toward **6** and execute a dual double **vertical strike** to head (**blade out**). The right sai should be at **6** and left at **12**, prongs are horizontal.
- 7b. Rotate head to look at **12**, then step back with left foot into a **RNB** facing **12** as the right sai makes a counter clockwise motion (forward on the circle) and hits the left sai blade making an **X** facing **12** (blades still out and at a 45° angle).
- 7c. Push drag to **12** as both sai circle above the head and out to execute a dual double **spear hold horizontal strike** to neck.
- 7d. Step right foot back into a **LNB** facing **12** as right sai cocks at right shoulder and left stays straight out (prongs are vertical).
- 7e. Step back with left and do the same strike as 7d, except on other side, still with the **spear hold**.
- 7f. Step back with right foot, facing **12**, as the right sai circles down and over (counter clockwise or forward on the circle) back to **12** and strikes the left sai making a + pattern. Left sai is sideways (pointing at **3**) and right is on top of left. Prongs are vertical with a normal grip (release the **spear hold**).



- 7g. Push drag to **12**, in your **LNB**, as right sai thrusts straight toward **12** (left stays in place as a guide).
- 7h. Step left foot back into **RNB** facing **12**, **retract** both sai, and sink into your stance (wide kneel), and execute a dual double stab to attacker positioned between and in front of your legs.
- 7i. Lift right leg up (knife edge chamber) and move it back to **6**, then lift up left leg in same manner. You're basically in a one legged stance with left foot slightly in front of right leg. Left sai is positioned "punching" down on the inside of your left leg and right is doing a **Normal** upward block.



- 8a. Set left foot down at **9** into a horse stance facing **12** with two **Normal** downward blocks.
- 8b. Salute and Bow.

Bunkai: Nakiama No Sensei No Sai Dai Ni

Group 1:

This form begins with two defensive extended outward blocks followed with two horizontal blocks/strikes into vertical strikes to the head. The strikes could be used for a high thrust or overhead strike attempt.

Repetition cycle: The horizontal to vertical strikes are the start of the forms *repetition cycle*. Next, comes the downward clear and double punch. Then, you move closer to the attacker and chamber your sai to execute a dual head/eye strike, followed by a dual strike to the collarbones. Finally, cover and execute the same collarbone strike followed with a downward clear and double punch. This last clear and punch is the complementary, opposite, side from the one in the beginning.

Group 2:

This movement is to block an overhead attack and follow immediately with hooking of the weapon and a double punch. Repeat on the other side and begin the *Repetition cycle*.

Group 3:

This set is to block a staff overhead attack and pursue with a strike to the fingers/hand. Downward clear and double punch, then repeat entire sequence on opposite side.

Group 4:

Lifting of the leg, in this group, is to get out of the way of a low strike or thrust attempt. As one knee comes up, you strike down on the attacker's weapon and follow with a vertical strike to the opponent's hand and finally end with a thrust into their body, if possible. End with a downward clear and double punch, then repeat sequence on the other side.

Group 5:

This first movement is to clear the last attacker and strike behind you in case anyone is there, as a form of clearing motion. Next, comes an X-block for an overhead attack. Pursue with a push drag in as one sai clears the attacker's weapon and you execute a dual horizontal strike to their head. The next two movements are blocks to a staff thrust. After the second block, the next movement blocks the weapon and sets up your sai for a thrust to the hands//body.

End with a dual hooking move to the attacker or attacker's weapon. The final "pose" is supposed to be that of an ancient Okinawan God of the martial arts, of which I have been unable to locate a picture of.

Discussion:

This form was placed as the final sai form, besides a modified short form 3, due to the complexity of the movements. I attempted to place these four traditional forms in order of increasing difficulty and thus this arrangement came about. For the teaching aspect of these forms, following this one would be the modified short form 3.

VII. Sai Techniques

Technique #1

Brushing Sai

(Front, straight right shoulder grab – 1 sai at end)

1. Pin their left hand with your left hand as you step back into a **RNB**. Simultaneously, execute a right forearm strike to their left elbow.
2. Rotate your right arm above their arm and parallel to the ground. Next, pull your arm into your body, drawing your attacker in.
3. Execute a right outward hand sword.
4. Step your left foot around to the back of your attacker into a **RNB**, get the anchor on their head with the left hand, and execute a right inward hand sword.
5. Right knife edge kick to attacker's knee and grab the right side of their neck with your left hand.
6. Execute a left knee to their neck as your right hand begins to pull one sai from your left hip.
7. Set the left leg back, continue pulling the attacker down, as you rotate into a **LFB** facing **3** and stab your attacker, **blade out**, as they're falling or after they hit the ground. If need be, can go into a left wide/closed kneel.

Discussion:

The beginning three moves of this technique are from a Chinese Kenpo technique entitled "Brush of Danger"; the second movement is also similar to EPAK's "Mace of Aggression." I felt "Brush of Danger" could be advanced further to incorporate the sai and numerous other strikes. Therefore, I decided to include the middle portion of "Circling Destruction."

What I was trying to accomplish with this technique was to take the attacker to the ground. It seemed that using the ending of "Destructive Kneel" best complimented my intent with this technique.

Technique #2

Locked Sai

(Front right straight step-through push – 1 sai)

1. Step up into a **LFB** with a left vertical/extended outward block and a **Normal** right punch to the chest/head.
2. Execute a right front snap kick to groin/bladder, landing forward into a **RNB**.
3. As you kick, **flip** out the right sai and, as you land into a **RNB**, strike the right knee taking your attacker to one knee. Immediately place the blade of the sai onto the attacker's right triceps or elbow.
4. Execute a back to front switch and step your right foot back to **9**, or square with the attacker's center line. Also, the attacker's right arm should be bent around the sai and behind them, and your left hand slides up to their neck on their left side.
5. As you settle into your **LNB**, execute a left anchor as you pull up on the handle of the sai, thus inflicting pain on the shoulder. The two counter moves, the anchor and arm bar, should keep the attacker upright. The position of the sai for this arm bar is that the blade is on top of the triceps and the bottom part of the blade is near the wrist or forearm. Also, be sure the prongs of the sai are vertical to the ground because this will keep your attacker's arm in place. The prong acts as a stopper to prevent them from bending over and getting out.

Discussion:

In this technique, I found myself ending up behind my attacker and didn't want to do the standard methods of finishing them off. Therefore, I created a type of hammerlock using the sai, which turned out to work very well, and placed my opponent into a position from which they couldn't get out.

Technique #3

Circling Sai

(Front, right, straight step-through punch – 2 sai)

1. Step back into a **RNB** with a **Normal** right inward block.
2. Execute a **Normal** right outward slicing hand sword to neck, as the left sai executes a punch to the face.
3. Next, step up circle with the left foot into a **RRB** to **4:30** (depends on the attacker's centerline), **flip** both sai, **blade out**, and execute a right hammer fist, to the groin. (If necessary for the next move, you can follow up the groin shot by striking with the butt of the right sai to the chest or head. This is used to straighten the attacker up, thus making the following move easier.)
4. Finally, shift back into a **RFB** as you execute a left stab to the chest/head, followed by a left front kick. Cross out from point of contact.

Discussion:

I decided to use “Five Swords” in this technique, seeing as how predominate it is in the Kenpo system. For the remainder of the technique, I wanted to stay in the front of my attacker to come up with various strikes that could be performed.

The middle portion of the technique is borrowed from the end of “Circling Wing”. Because “Circling Wing” ends in a reverse bow, I wanted to add a bit more, hence the follow up with an uppercut and front kick.

Technique #4

Defensive Sai

(Right front kick followed by a right round punch – 2 sai)

1. Step left foot back into a rear twist with a **Normal** left parrying downward block followed by a **Normal** right inward block as you rotate into a **RNB**.
2. Execute a front right kick followed by a **Normal** right outward hand sword to the neck.
3. Using the prong of the right sai, pull the attacker in as you step forward into a **LNB** with a **Normal** left inward overhead elbow/stab to attacker's back or kidney.
4. Following the stab, execute a right rear knee to the head, landing back into your **LNB**.

Discussion:

In creating a kick technique, I found it seemed more natural to follow up a kick with a punch. Normally, I want to place a hand by my head as a cover anyway, seeing as how I'm blocking low initially.

From the previous techniques, I noticed a lot of knee strikes to take the attacker to the ground; therefore, I wanted to change at least one of them to something different. This time, I used an ending similar to "Defying the Storm", but instead of landing forward with the strike, I'm landing back, just like the second movement of "Intercepting the Ram."

Technique #5

Falling Sai

(Rear full nelson – 2 sai)

1. Go with the full nelson (bending over), as your right leg steps down into a horse stance as you execute a **Normal** left hand sword to the groin.
2. Next, slide or seven step your left foot around your attacker's right and execute a **Normal** left obscure elbow to the attacker's chest or head.
3. Follow through into a **LFB** with a **Normal** right uppercut/reverse punch to the chest or face. You could also stab the opponent's throat or chest.
4. Finally, execute a right rear leg front thrust kick to the groin or solar plexus, landing into a front cross over, then finish crossing out. You could also push drag back after the kick.

Discussion:

Thinking of a technique for a hug or hold was one of the more challenging to do with the sai. The beginning of the technique is reminiscent of "Twirling Sacrifice", and the middle is borrowed from "Grip of Death".

I was initially going to have the technique go from "Twirling Sacrifice" into the end of "Crashing Wings", but the placement of my arms, as well as the attacker's, seemed less likely to actually work. Therefore, I chose to go with the ending of "Grip of Death".

Technique #6
Thundering Sai
(Rear straight two hand choke – 2 sai)

1. Step your left foot to **4:30** into a rear crossover, as you Simultaneously execute a **Normal** left blind hand sword striking your attacker in the groin.
2. Unwind towards your attacker, ducking under his arms, into a left wide/closed kneel as you execute a **Normal** right reverse hand sword to their groin.
3. As you execute the right hand sword, the left sai **flips** out and cocks above your head.
4. When the attacker bends over from the groin strikes, pivot into a right closed kneel while executing a left hammer fist, using the butt of the sai, to their kidney/spine.
5. **Retract** the left sai as you strike the attacker in the head and cock the right sai above your head.
6. Next, pivot back into a left closed kneel as you execute a **Normal** right stab to the attacker's neck/back.
7. Finish by stepping with your left foot to **3** into a **RNB** and, using the right sai prong, pull your attacker in as you execute a rear left knee to his/her body.
8. Land back into a **RNB** and cross out.

Discussion:

For this set, I have adapted another Chinese Kenpo technique entitled “Dancer” or “Dancer with Cover”. From the end of the technique, I was in a recognizable position, which turned out to be from EPAK’s “Thundering Hammers”. Thus, I used the “thunder” from that technique as the finish.

Technique #7
Storming Sai
(Front left step-through overhead club – 2 sai)

1. Step left foot forward into a front twist and execute a **Normal** left upward block.
2. Execute a right knife-edge kick to attacker's left knee landing forward into a **RNB**. As you settle into your **RNB**, execute a **Normal** right outward hand sword to the neck.
3. Step right foot back to **3** as the right sai prong rips through the neck and chambers back at your hip. The left sai/hand is **checking** the shoulder/back to keep them upright.
4. Finally, **flip** the right sai, **blade out**, and stab the attacker in the back. If the attacker falls backwards to the ground from the rip, omit the flipping and stab straight down into the chest, going into a wide or closed kneel.

Discussion:

As in Kenpo, I needed to create a technique for a left-handed attack to complete certain categories. Since I was unable to recall any left-handed club techniques from EPAK, I chose to construct my own. For this technique, I opted to have a little bit of overkill. Needless to say these are just suggestions of what you *could* do to finish off your attacker.

Technique #8

Disarming Sai

Two Person Attack (2 sai)

Attacker 1: At 12 with staff, executing a #3 followed by a #2 strike

Attacker 2: At 6 with club, executing a right step-through overhead strike

1. Step back into a **RNB** with a **Normal** left downward block, followed by a **Normal** right extended outward/upward block.
2. Using the prong on the right sai, hook the staff or hand/wrist as you step to **12** into a **LNB** and execute a left punch to the head/chest. Continue in a “spiral” motion, as your right foot steps through to **12** and the right sai **flips** out and strikes attacker’s head. Your back will momentarily face your attacker.
3. As the second attacker comes at you from **6**, **shuffle** forward (to **6**) into a **LFB** and execute a **Normal** left upward block and a right reverse hand sword, **blade out**, to the groin.
4. Execute a rear right kick/knee to head/chest as you chamber the right sai. Land forward into a **RNB** as you stab the attacker in the chest.
5. Following the stab, execute a left front thrust kick to attacker 2, kicking them off your sai, and follow with a right rear kick to attacker 1 at **12**.
6. Cross out accordingly.

Discussion:

This two-person attack came about from being unable to think of another strike to give my first attacker. Therefore, I decided to have one of his/her buddies come in from behind. A portion of movement in number two is from “Spiraling Twig”. I wanted to be in a **LNB** facing my second attacker and the spiral move seemed to fit very well, although I did not have it there initially. The very end is reminiscent of many of the two person techniques from EPAK, a front kick followed with a rear kick.

VIII. Thesis Form Kenpo Sai

Tech:	Attack From:	Side:	End Facing:	Transition to Next Technique:
1	12	Reg.	3	Right front crossover into LNB
1	3	Opp.	12	Step-through reverse to 4:30 then step to 4:30 into LNB
7	4:30	Reg.	3	Cover into a twist to 10:30 with the upward block
7	10:30	Opp.	12	No transition. Horse stance facing 9
6	3	Reg.	3	Plant left foot to 12 into a horse stance facing 3
6	9	Opp.	9	Right knee lands to 7:30 into RNB
3	7:30	Reg.	7:30	Plant the left front kick to 7:30 , step-through to 1:30 into LNB
3	1:30	Opp.	1:30	RNB at 3 , step left to 6 into a twist at 12 with a left downward block, twist out with into RNB with next block
4	12	Reg.	12	LNB at 12 , cover with left into RNB to 6 with a right downward block and step-through to 6 with next block
4	6	Opp.	6	After left knee strike, land into a horse stance facing 4:30 , then right foot moves
5	10:30	Opp.	10:30	From kick, crossover and step right foot out into a horse stance facing 10:30 , then left foot moves for next technique
5	4:30	Reg.	4:30	From kick, crossover and step left out into RNB at 7:30 , step-through into LNB
2	7:30	Reg.	9	Adjust right foot to face 1:30 in a RNB
2	1:30	Opp.	12	RNB at 12 , step right to 6 into a rear twist and a left downward block. Step left out to 6 into a RNB facing 12 and execute the right hand block.
8	12 then 6	Reg.	6	LNB at 6 , plant right kick to 12 , then turn to face 12 in a RNB with the next downward block. Step-through with left block
8	12 then 6	Opp.	6	RNB at 6 , have the left rear kick plant at 3 (facing 12) into a front crossover, then go into a one legged stance (right foot down) as your hands cock by your right ear. Set down left foot into meditative horse stance. Salute and bow.

IX. Conclusion

The sai, as you have seen throughout these many pages, is complex and exciting at the same time. Because of these characteristics, I became very interested in learning the sai for myself. Therefore, I took it upon myself to get the necessary resources, which would allow me to learn the fundamental basics of this unique weapon.

Due to the area in Iowa where I lived, I was unable to locate a personal instructor of Okinawan kobudo and therefore, was reduced to learning the basics from videocassettes. Videocassettes do contain a lot of useful information, from which I learned the basic movements, and that enabled me to learn two traditional forms from Mr. Tom Ward at a quicker pace than the average individual.

Before training with Mr. Ward in Crawfordsville, Indiana, I had been training on my own for over a year. When my instructor, Sensei Clint Hughes, gave the okay for me to do my black belt thesis on the sai, that's when I was introduced to Mr. Ward, who is a sixth degree black belt in Shorin-Ryu Shorin-Kan. The knowledge that I received from Mr. Ward is valuable and reinforces the importance of having a real instructor as opposed to one on a video.

From my training with one type of Okinawan weapon, it has peaked my interest in learning some of the others, such as the tonfa and kama. Training with the sai, I have discovered new formations and ideas dealing with proper blocking and striking with and without a weapon. In general, training with a weapon teaches many important aspects of coordination, flexibility, and proper motion. To ensure that your empty hand blocks/strikes are being executed properly, learning how to block or strike using a weapon will enforce the proper placement with empty hands.

It is amazing how much I have come to learn about the martial arts and Kenpo in general by only training with a different kind of weapon. The main reason for learning this weapon and doing my black belt thesis on the sai is to try to incorporate it into the American Kenpo training, thereby giving students, and instructors, a more rounded training experience and knowledge with a more traditional weapon. My hope is that this will be the beginning of a curriculum that can be instated into our training methods at Universal Kenpo Karate Dojos.

In conclusion, the time I have spent in the art of Kenpo has served me well in too many ways to describe in words. I have enjoyed these past six years and look forward to many more years of training. Thank you to all of those who have helped me along the way to achieve my goal.

Special thanks:

Sensei Clint Hughes for all of his guidance and support.

Mr. Tom Ward for his time and knowledge.

My family for supporting my decision to continue my training in Indiana.

My girlfriend Jill and new baby Cole, I would like to say thank you for all of your understanding and support through these difficult months of training. I love you both very, very much.

X. Terminology for Sai Techniques and Forms

LNB – Left Neutral Bow

RNB – Right Neutral Bow

LFB – Left Forward Bow

RFB – Right Forward Bow

LRB – Left Reverse Bow

RRB – Right Reverse Bow

Normal or **Normal position** – Standard way of holding the sai with the blade held tightly against the forearm.



Blade out – Indicates the sai blade is out.

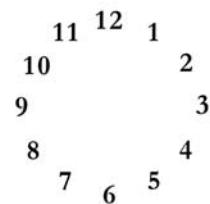


Flip – Method of moving the sai from Normal position to Blade out or from Blade out, to restriking the target (vertical flipping).

Umbrella flip – Circular motion that goes around and above the head, then strikes. Only makes one revolution around head and usually lands with blade out for the strike.

Retract – Returning the sai from Blade out back to Normal position.

3, 4:30, 6, 7:30, 9, 10:30, 12 – Refer to positions on a clock.



Shuffle – Step or push drag forward or backwards, unless stated otherwise in specific movements.

Check or Cover – Normally indicates what the non-striking hand is doing; a type of augmented block.

Horizontal strike – A strike, usually using the blade of the sai in a \longleftrightarrow motion. Targets are, but not limited to: head, neck, ribs, knee, etc.

Vertical strike – A strike, usually using the blade of the sai in a \updownarrow motion. Targets are, but not limited to: head, groin, knee, etc. Depending on the target, can be called Over or Under Vertical strike.

Chinese Hidden Fist – Placement of hands/sai on hip, while in a cat stance with the sai prongs horizontal. Ex: Left cat stance with hands on right hip (left palm down; right palm up) -OR- Right cat stance with hands on left hip (left palm up; right palm down).

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