



Inside this issue:

- Interview with sensei Marc Decroos 4th Dan 01
- Interview with sensei Marc Decroos 4th Dan 02
- Interview with sensei Marc Decroos 4th Dan 03
- Interview with sensei Marc Decroos 4th Dan 04
- First seminar in Sweden - report by S. Pook 05
- First seminar in Sweden - report by S. Pook 06
- Sweden - report - One Minute Dojo. 07
- Upcoming Seminars 08
- Online Shop 09

Kissaki-Kai Instructor Profile

Interview with
Marc Decroos 4th
Dan Asahi Dojo,
Poperinge, Belgium

Introduction by Sensei
Christian Maes, 5th Dan



Sensei Marc Decroos is one of the most remarkable persons I ever met. His life has known many ups and downs but these never prevented him from continuing his karate trainings.

His endeavour and will power are enormous. Even having suffered a complete paralysation and two cardiac arrests, He never gave up. He simply refused giving in.

Prior to his paralysis, Sensei Marc was a very agile and energetic karateka. He used the mind-set that he had been developing for years to learn how to walk and how to run

again. To me, he is the living proof that martial arts is much more than physical strengthening and preparing for battle.

It also has the potential to prepare one mentally for the absolute worse.

He is my karate father and best friend. I owe it to him that I became the karateka that I am today. I sincerely hope that our Asahi Dojo at Poperinge, Belgium and myself may still enjoy his friendship for many years to come.

"It doesn't matter how many times you fall, what matters is how many times you rise".
Respect Shihan Marc

Sincerely
Sensei Christian Maes



Interview with Sensei
Marc Decroos, 4th Dan.

Marc, what is your age?

I am 60 years old.

60 years and still a

dedicated karate practitioner?

Oh, for sure and on a very frequent basis. Usually 5 days out of 7.

Marc, can you tell us something about your origin? What is your family background, and how did you eventually got to know about karate?

I grew up in a small family; one brother and looking back I have always been a kind of a maverick. I felt a bit of an anarchist. I was an adolescent in the hippie period and had a rebellious attitude.

It was the same period during which Bruce Lee scored big time with his movies and that triggered my interest in karate.

I have always liked to fight. It is in my genes which I inherited from my father. I soon realized that I needed to learn managing this so I started practicing at the age 20.

Was it the concept – so to speak – of the fight that attracted you or were you merely looking how to deal with the frequency of

your involvement in fights?

I was not really interested in the art of fighting as such. I just wanted to be the fastest, the strongest, the untouchable. There was nothing more to it. On the other hand, I wanted more self-control and some introspective. A street fight is not that interesting after all (bleeding noses, trouble with the police, mum and dad angry ... (Marc chuckles). Situations that could not last forever, you know.

So how did you actually start practicing karate?

Back then, I was a hairdresser. One of my clients was a Karate Sensei and he convinced me to give it a shot. What I immediately liked was the structure approach. It was not just hitting and smashing. I was dragged into the classic Shotokan karate training that was so typical at that time. After a while, a friend of mine started up his own Dojo in Poperinge that I soon joined afterwards.

I got a very hard education and the courses



Why Kissaki-kai?

- * Kissaki-Kai teaches effective defensive karate
- * Kissaki-Kai promotes reality in training
- * Sport & Fun are not forgotten!
- * Family atmosphere
- * No Politics
- * Not Style dependent.
- * Recognized world-wide
- * International Dojo



were incredibly tough. Sunday started with thirty minutes of running followed by one hour and a half of non-stop training. Competition came later.

Did you start somewhere in the seventies, Marc?

I began training in 1976. The Karate Federation back then, legacy Flemish Fighting Association, fell under the authority of the Judo Association. Competition in those days was also different those days.

My Sensei had been practicing non-contact competition for a long time and was of the opinion that the strongest always lost. That is why we shifted to semi-contact or “point system” and we felt at home there.

Again, it was different then. “Reasonably hard” contact was pretty much OK those days. This has been softened much today but back then just about everything was allowed (Marc smiles). I recall that my first competition took place in the backroom of a pub and in an abandoned Protestant Church in England. We had a marvellous time!

Was there a difference between the Dojo Menen and the one later on in Poperinge?

The Sensei was Luc who also originated from the Dojo in Menen. In Poperinge, he could bring in his own style and vision. Luc was a “leg specialist,” which also became the trademark of the Dojo. I myself was also pretty good with ushiro-mawashi

tobi-geri as speciality. I passed this on to one of my students, Christian Maes, who specialized in it.

So in short, through your own experience and the way you your Sensei educated you, you got familiar with the spirit of competition.

Absolutely. I competed very intensively for about ten years ranging from non-contact Kumite to contact ring fights.

Was there later on a kind of shift towards kata or did you actively practice both Kumite and kata?

Even though I frequently competed, I found that I was good at neither of them. *What really puzzled me was that I practiced many moves whilst I did not have the faintest clue what they were supposed to be used for anyway.*

If I asked concrete questions to my Sensei or to my Japanese Sensei, Kasajima Kaiji, with whom I trained for twenty years, I never got an answer. Sensei Kasajima worked together with Sensei Miyazaki and Sensei Sawada. I also trained with Sensei Kaze, Sensei Moyuda and Sensei Oshi. *Nobody was able to provide me with answers so I had no other option than to search elsewhere.*

Meanwhile we got into the nineties. Where were you then with karate?

At that point in time I was a second Dan. I took my grading twice. Once at national level in Brussels and once before the International Budo Federation in the Netherlands. I just wanted it that way (Marc grins).

Around that same time, you started working as a Prison warden. How did you experience that taking into account your karate background?

I was forty-two when I started as a warden and I did this for eighteen years. I actually started as a member of the intervention team in the penitentiary of Brugge. The escorting of the prison inmates happened in groups of sixty and I had to wait for them at the end of a corridor all alone by myself with nothing else but a small walkie-talkie. I can assure you that in the beginning, seeing such a group of prisoners coming at you was always a deeply worrying experience! What you feel is nothing more but plain fear, whatever your background may be.

I can guarantee that prison inmates almost sense when you are scared. It is as if they can smell it!

The penitentiary in Brugge was my first learning experience in that regard. From there I transferred to the Antwerp prison and that was a major difference.

I entered into a very ag-

gressive environment with frequent “smash and hit work” (Flemish Dutch expression). It is especially there that I learned how to deal with the reality of a fight.

At one time I had to intervene in a riot and got attacked with my back against the wall. So much for my third Dan!

Rather than being frustrated, it felt more like disenchanting. How was this possible? Third Dan and I was nowhere. Few people train to the point of reality, but reality as such is every time very different.

Prisoners pumped up with adrenalin, can psychologically lose it, can have drugs in their system etc. These factors can have an enormous influence on the levels of aggression.

Try to picture this: in that moment there is no boundary, there is no borderline, there are no rules at all and you need to manage to remain calm and to be able to put your own fears aside.

Your worst enemies are your own emotions, your own stress. Most martial arts practitioners do not realize this.

There is an immense difference between knowing what will be coming at you in the Dojo and the unexpectedness and blurriness of problematic situations.



The same goes for responding in a tested and trained way to violence – as Kissaki-Kai teaches so well – but then you also must apply it correctly when you see a real fight starting to emerge.

This is the moment where fear rushes in and in my experience this is not to be underestimated. Those who say it is not true have simply never been confronted with life threatening situations. It is as simple as that.

Fear, prior to and during a real fight, is what you need to learn to master. So always keep it simple. It is already difficult as it is.

You need to train the simplest techniques, practice them, practice them again and again and over again until you reach a point that they do not require any thought any more. When the moment comes, you will act automatically and you will then have at least the time to think about the next step. For me, this is essential. Going to the second step without mastering the first is completely wrong.

What was the attitude of the prisoners towards you over time as you grew in knowledge and experience? How did they act towards you?

I think they thought: “We better leave this guy alone” (Marc smiles). They sensed

it, I guess. I was always very respectful towards them, polite and correct but never showed fear, even though that I needed to suppress it on some occasions. You can already avoid many issues by being respectful and open.

You kept on training all that time at your Dojo. At a certain point, you were introduced to Kissaki-Kai. How did that go?

Christian took me one day to what he called ‘this training’ – a Kissaki-Kai training – and I still recall that during that training I thought: *“This is it, this is what I want.”* It must have been somewhere in 2005. It was like the scales fell from my eyes. The gate opened. I recognised the movements from the kata’s and I actually started to reflect on them.

In the beginning, I did not see the utilitarianism of it all on the work floor. When you start with this system, it is a matter of continuous learning and monkey see monkey do (Marc laughs). But I was OK with that because I wanted to get acquainted with the fundamentals. Slowly, I started using those techniques that fit my body and above all, my physique; techniques that are useful for me. I started subsequently to slowly integrate it into my working experiences.

Do you have practical examples of that?

One situation when I was threatened with a knife. I did not use any physical violence but because of my Kissaki-Kai training and more in particular the mental mind-set, I stone-cold talked the knife out of his hands.

You do not necessarily want to engage into a fight. It is already a great deal if you can handle it that way whilst knowing that you are able to deal with the situation should things still get out of hand. That is what the real impact is of the Kissaki-Kai system on a well-trained person.

A second situation was one whereby I was assigned to escort a prisoner to the isolation cell. I approached the person in a very calm way and explained to him quietly explained to him what was decided as a consequence of his earlier behaviour. At the point, the man snapped and totally lost self-control. I did not wait long and combined a mawashi uke with an immediate strangle. The attacker unconscious then my colleagues took him with them. However, the person gained consciousness again too early and was able to get his hands on a iron bar. I intervened again and noticed that he was aiming for a head-butt .. but mine was faster (Marc’s pupils twinkle), the tsuki and the strangle that followed were even faster!

Then eventually I escorted him to his isolation cell.

Another example that I can give you is the situation when a colleague and I were called in to assist with a problematic situation in a cell.

My colleague, who was as big as a bear, 1.90 cm (over six feet) and over a 100 kilos heavy (over 220 pounds), opened the cell door. The prisoner was standing ready to throw boiling water. Lucky for us, his cellmate was able to prevent him from doing so.

My colleagues stormed in and knew to overpower the prisoner. I was the foreman so I subsequently entered into the cell and stood in front of the man.

My colleague was standing behind me. Unexpectedly, he jumped beside me and I banged my head against the iron cell door. When I recovered after a few seconds, he was beating my colleague very severely. I pulled the prisoner underneath his jawbones away and took him – again – in a strangle. I only let go when he was in the isolation cell and followed-up there to make sure that nothing would go wrong anymore. My colleague was seriously injured.

What was the opinion of your colleagues regarding your way of dealing with these kinds of situations?



My colleagues were very positive as regards my approach towards these specific matters. They knew that we were all in the same boat. Let us say that this was not always the case with my superiors - which disappointed me.

There was, for example, an issue in the last year of my career where I was summoned to intervene in a cell. I asked the executive involved if I could act at my own discretion. When I was told that this was not allowed, I indicated that I was not willing to intervene under such circumstances.

If I were not allowed to act in the way that was most efficient to me at that moment, than I was not willing to take any chances either. That was obvious to me. The risk is simply way too big if you are being hindered by various rules telling you what is allowed and what not. Since then, I was also finished with interventions. You cannot expect someone to solve very risky situations and subsequently hold that person liable. That is simply not realistic!

Back to the Dojo. What was the point of view of your Dojo members when it comes to the Kissaki-Kai method and what was the evolution in this respect?

I had established in the first instance a Kissaki-Kai group in our Dojo and

some people showed interest. Perhaps I was a bit too energetic and forward looking, let us say “in my wild period”, and I actually all made them turn away from it. My practice was way too hard.

So I drew lessons from this and the experiences and insight from Sensei Guy Janssens* and his Dojo. The Nintai Dojo (Sint-Martens-Latem, Gent area, Belgium) which adopted the Kissaki-Kai system with, initially, an enormous hit on the number of their members.

Thereafter, and in discussion with Sensei Christian Maes, we started integrating Kissaki-Kai very slowly in the karate practice of our Dojo. The students go through a normal evolution pattern – so to say – of kata, competition, Kumite etc. But compared with the past, we practice far more Bunkai now and this time with good guidance and explanation. We gradually integrated Kissaki-Kai into the total picture, if you like. So we tried to develop a long term strategy to get the right potential out of it.

We noticed that this approach works better for our members. What do you expect? The effect is less shocking, you know. We also take into account that, in my view, not everyone is up for using the Kissaki-Kai method.

I mean not in an elite kind of way but touching on the

harshness of the system and its demanding characteristics.

What is your strategy between here and the next 5 years? Where do you plan to



Sensei Marc applying finger control arm lock

Above all, there is also the confrontation aspect. Do not underestimate it: I myself had been training for more than 30 years and I felt that I started from the bottom all over again. This is perhaps a bit drastically stated but that is how it felt. Now that I have much more experience I realise that these 30 years served me very well and that I was able to start from a very solid basis.

be at the point in time?

I now teach one Saturday per month to black belts with the purpose of stimulating interest. I do this in a gentle way and make the applications harder and harder gradually progressing. The interest is growing slowly but steadily. If I think certain people are good, I drag them with me to Gent (where Nintai Dojo is located). To me and Sensei Christian Maes,



this is the Dojo where we keep on “getting our mustard from” and especially from Sensei Guy Janssens.*

(* Guy Janssens 7th Dan Kissaki-Kai Chief Instructor - Benelux Countries.)

For me personally, he is one of the best technical persons I have ever seen.

We also give sometimes our own interpretation to what we learn there but then again in view of techniques that suit us. This is also

book throughout my life. It has taught me mercy as I have seen the damage that you can do with someone else. I learned that morals soften.

Learn to accept your own dark sides but also learn managing them. That is an everyday's work.

Respecting one another is an absolute basic condition, especially if you want to teach someone.

Marc, thank you very much for this open interview and for sharing your experience and vision.

It was a pleasure. (Thanks to Boris Deraeve for the Interview.)



one of Bruce Lee's principles, if you like: try to learn as much as possible; throw away what you are not really good at; practice what you are really good at (Marc's eyebrows make friendly upward “I-am-sure-you-know-what-I-mean” move).

Marc, to round it up, I think this was a nice interview. Would there be something that you would like to share with the reader as a final thought?

Karate has been the guide-

Sweden Vastervik 2015

This was definitely not one to miss. Three seminars over two days with sensei Vince Morris on fine form and ably supported by the UK's and Ireland's Head Instructors Don Came and Gerard Smullen respectively. The event was organised and put together by the instructor of Praktisk Karate Vastervik, Johannes Regall, who did a fantastic job to make the event run like clockwork. This included not only organising the venue, accommodation, meals and transport but also media coverage of the event.

The seminars were not only attended by Kissaki Kai practitioners but also by rep-

resentatives from Shotokan, Shito-Ryo, Wado-Ryu, Kyokushin, Taekwondo ITF, Silat and MMA. Many had come from the area around Vastervik but many had also travelled from as far afield as Stockholm, Linköping, Vimmerby, Kisa and Rimforsa so as not to miss the event.

Each of the two hour sessions dealt with the use of the so called uke 'blocking techniques', and throws. As usual, on a Sensei Morris seminar there was no gentle pre-ambles on the reason why blocking has been taken out of context by 'modern' karate; the message was emphatically delivered using all of his considerable research and cogent argument to

clearly establish that the so called blocking techniques are, as the term 'uke' ably describes, receiving techniques designed to unbalance the attacker and give the defender the advantage.

As with all sensei Morris's seminars he makes it completely clear from the start that Kissaki Kai is an intelligent system that requires high levels of concentration, technical ability and control. He requires all participants to be aware that they are responsible for their partner's safety when it comes to practising and training what are very effective and dangerous techniques with the potential to cause serious harm and injury; it should not have to be pointed out to



First Swedish Seminar



any decent practitioner of karate that its original purpose was designed to protect life and family against every level of assault.

Allied to this is the very foundation of Kissaki Kai, the Rules of Combat; without them, effective self-defence cannot take place; as Sensei Morris makes abundantly clear Kissaki Kai is not about fighting, picking up a challenge, squaring off **or going toe to toe; it's about getting it done quickly, effectively, with serious intent and, above all, control.**

The initial demonstration made good use of shuto-uke against a hook punch, especially a **'typical Saturday night special' is the perfect example to give life to applied bunkai.**

The reality of this uke technique delivered by sensei Morris left no one in the dojo with any doubts of its effectiveness and how the power delivered by this kind of brutal assault is used against the attacker.

Sensei Morris used this type of attack to the inside to **demonstrate how to 'sucker' the attacker in by covering the lead hand so as to draw out the hook punch to the open side of the head and jaw line.**

The delivery of shuto technique to the pressure points located at the elbow crease of the attackers arm left no one in any doubt whatsoever of how this breaks down the **body's structure, bringing the attacker's head forward and into striking range, allowing a variety of weapons**

to be used, head-butt to the face, forearm to the jaw line or neck points, to name but a few; followed up by knee strikes or kicks, and finally to a controlled throw.

This is only one example of the opening session. Sensei Morris expanded on these techniques throughout the evening, always reinforcing the rules of combat and constantly addressing any fail-



Sensei Morris demonstrates yet another function of Manji-Gamae.

ings and shortcomings by all the practitioners in his own inimitable way. All this was further explored and expanded upon by **the UK's head instructor, Don Came, who employed the use of soto and uchi uke to demonstrate both these can be used not only to receive and redirect but also what effective striking tools they are when delivered to the right areas.**

The Saturday sessions expanded on the uke techniques but also began to move away from mainly kihon applications and began to explore the real applied structure of kata.

Bringing the applied bunkai to life within Tekki Shodan, Kanku-Dai and Chinte was not only a seminal moment for many of those who had attended for the first time but also an opportunity for those who had been with Kissaki Kai for many years to witness Sensei Morris **apply these 'simple' forms with devastating effect!**

"Simple" was a term used often by Sensei Morris but was always quickly tempered by clearly stating that: **'simple' does not mean 'easy.'**

For these applications to be used successfully at such close ranges the use of the **'Rules of Combat' goes without saying, but is also essential to be able to deliver the**

techniques with accuracy and power; for this to happen the use of ashi-sabaki and tai-sabaki is paramount **and enables the body's mid-line to have the correct positioning in relation to the target areas.** It goes without saying that this is not an **'easy' thing to learn.**

All those within Kissaki Kai know this to be true and, as Sensei Morris stated on many occasions during the seminar, it takes practice, practice and more practice for techniques to graduate from the **'ichi-ni-san'** type of delivery through to a smooth system of devastatingly powerful strikes.

This was also reinforced by **sensei Don Came's use of the opening move from Passai/Bassai Dai** where it was clearly shown that this simple opening move has tremendous opportunities for the use of multiple strikes being made available when the power is delivered **through the body's mid-line.** Here, once again, the use of ashi-sabaki and tai-sabaki were key in ensuring success.

The last part of the Satur-



Reporter - Steve Pook demonstrates being thrown!



day afternoon session looked at defence against edged weapon attacks.

Those who were attending the seminar for the first time especially benefited from Sensei Morris's wide experience and knowledge of teaching law enforcement through the LETS programme.

The set-up, use of the body's vital points and ensuring that as someone defending themselves it is essential to get between the assailant and the weapon, were at the heart of the session. This was an ideal way to bring the seminar to a close because not only did it deal with what to do when confronted by someone with a weapon but it also encompassed everything that had

been built on from the previous sessions.

This is only a brief overview of what I consider to have been a brilliant seminar, with Sensei Morris demonstrating why these seminars are must to attend with great support from his wife Eva, Don Came and Gerry Smullen. Also a lot of gratitude and appreciation must go to Johannes Regell and Praktisk Karate Vastervik for hosting the event.

To prove action speaks louder than words and if you want to get a real flavour of the Swedish Spring Camp you can check out the videos that are on Facebook and YouTube, and see for yourselves what real karate is about. *(search- Kissaki-Kai)*

Stephen Pook. 2nd Dan



Kissaki-Kai One minute Dojo

New series of short instructional Videos by sensei Vince Morris now on Sensei's page on Facebook.

Training hints, Kata bunkai, body mechanics, correct techniques, Rules of Combat - all your questions answered in short, to-the-point video clips.

Email or post your queries on training, or about Kata applications on the FB page:

Kissaki Karate International

Or FB page:

Vince Morris.





Forthcoming Seminars

7th March 2015 Venlo, Holland

Health and Racketclub Venlo, Heymanstraat 101, 5927 NP Venlo Boekend
 Training times; 10-12hrs and 13-15hrs
 contact Guy Janssens on 0032-483-065-516 or e-mail guy.janssens2@gmail.com

28/29 March 2015 Sweden

Contact: Johannes Regell: xjojex@hotmail.com

25/26 April 2015 Wächtersbach, Germany

Contact: Matthias Fischer: karate.aufenau@gmx.de

29th April, Jena, Germany

Wed 29th of April, 19.30-21.30hrs- contact Sensei Dieter Kluziok for details: dieterkluziok@web.de

2nd, 3rd May 2015 in Fürth, Germany

Contact: Stephan Kohler: kohler.stephan@googlemail.com

31 July, 1st, 2nd Aug 2015 US Summer Camp in Michigan , USA

Exact details will be announced soon. In the meantime please get in touch with Sensei Phil Oakes if you would like to know more: herbscarpettile@sbcglobal.net

New Video series on Face Book!

Kissaki-Kai One Minute Dojo Short one to two minute examples of Kata bunkai explained and training advice to increase your combat effectiveness and understanding.

See them free on sensei Vince's Facebook page - go to: 'Vince Morris.'

Contact us if you would like to host a seminar in your own Dojo, in Europe or in the USA. It will not impose any financial stress, and we will work with you to ensure it is a success. Email us for details at ~ info@kissaki-kai.com



2014 seminar in Fürth, Germany

Books, DVDs, & Pads - order from www.kissakikarate.com



Chinte Kata

The essential bunkai of the kata 'Chinte' - 'Strange' or 'Unusual' hands. Chinese in origin, this kata is a toolbox of rapid and effective defensive methods of countering a variety of commonly occurring attacks. Long-time denoted as a female defensive kata, it contains many examples of vital point centered techniques, demonstrated by one of karate's most acclaimed and respected sensei. The principles of self-defence should be studied by all karate-ka. Over an hour of instructional video. \$45 NTSC (USA) €29 PAL (Europe)

Genesis of Kissaki-Kai - Set of 4 DVDs

The Genesis set is a re-mastering of seminar samplers 1,2,4 and 5, charting the development of Kissaki-Kai Karate-Do: These 4 DVDs, recompiled from the earliest seminar videos, analyze and demonstrate the use of Kyusho points, the Flinch Reflexes, the 'Frisbee-uke' - the 'Rules of Combat' and much more. See how the application of research and logic altered the perception and practice of Kata Bunkai! The quality is not as good as current DVDs but the content is important! \$50 NTSC (USA) £33 PAL (Europe)

The Secret Art of Pressure Point Fighting: Book & DVD-combo

Martial arts lore tells of masters who possessed a mysterious ability to defeat an opponent with a single perfectly placed blow. This book transforms the ancient legend into a modern reality - an anatomically based fighting and self-defence system that allows a small defender to defeat a larger attacker. - Over 300 step-by-step photos show each point and strike.

\$28 NTSC (USA) £22PAL (Europe) DVD shows detailed action and more than the book.

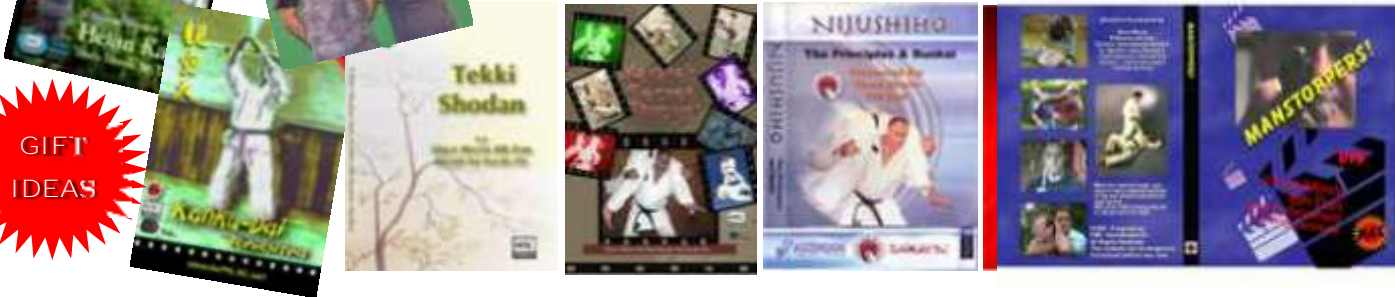
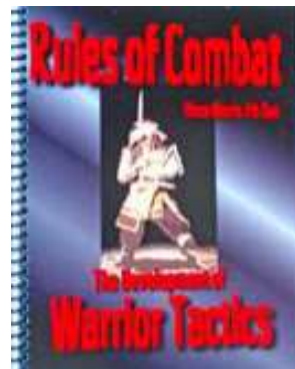
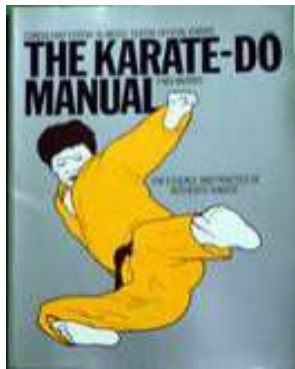
Essential Kissaki-Kai Karate-Do - Double DVD

This set is giving detailed instruction in the 5 levels of Kissaki-Kai Karate-Do: Atemi-waza, shime-waza, nage-waza and kansetsu-waza. A masterful compilation of real, effective, defensive combat techniques which should be studied by all karate-ka wishing to gain a full understanding of this defensive art. Based upon the 3-year distance learning program, but including much new material, this DVD set is an invaluable insight into how to make karate truly effective. Shin-ippou Kumite, the 'Rules of Combat', the use of Kyusho points, the flinch reflexes, the 'Frisbee-uke' - and much more is covered here!

\$45 NTSC (USA) £29PAL (Europe)



Go to the website shop to see all the books, DVDs and other items available (T-shirts, Protective pads etc.)



Available now from: www.kissakikarate.com/shop.htm