



# TETSUZAN

By Masaaki Hatsumi

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## Fortune In - Demons Out!

January 1989 saw the birth of three new fifth dans in the Bujin world. It made clear to me the fact that there are various definitions of what passing the fifth dan really means. And I felt the breadth of this perception once again on February third, when John Willson, who had brought two students over from Canada, also passed the test.

In Japan, February third is called *setsubun-no-hi*, meaning the last day of winter and first of spring. It is also the day upon which Japanese traditionally carry out a ceremony to drive out all the demons lurking inside the house and bring in happiness by scattering beans. The head of the household opens all the doors wide and yells in a loud voice "Fortune in-demons out." When yelling "Fortune in!" he scatters beans inside the house, and when yelling "Demons out!" he scatters them to the outside, just like driving a demon out. Then he prays for the happiness and peace of the household.

As passed down in the secret tradition of Temmon Chimon (Studies of Heaven and Earth, i.e. astrology, geography etc.), I thought to myself, "Let the Bujinkan Dojo and all of the martial friends reach happiness, and let all demons be expelled!" as I prepared for John Willson's test. He passed first time, under the protecting eyes of fifty Buyu. And appropriately, one of them was Bo Munthe from Sweden.

The real meaning of the test is not simply to avoid a shinai strike from behind. I think most people have understood by now that, in fact, the godan includes something much more important. Everyone seems to have realized that if it was just a question of avoiding a shinai strike from behind, it would be no more than a kid's game.

After John passed, somebody asked the question "How many people have passed at first attempt?" At present, there are around 100 people around the world of fifth dan or above, and I answered, "Well, around 15% About 20% of those who have passed." There have also been occasions when it was necessary to demonstrate a fifth dan test for TV, times when it was best to show it publicly. So I told those at the training that day, that I had used Fumio Manaka (ninth dan) over ten times on such occasions, but never yet had he failed to demonstrate the art of thought-transmission, *sakkijutsu*, always performing magnificently.

This thought-transmission is referred to in Zen as passing on from master to student the truth that cannot be expressed in words, i.e., direct correspondence where the heart of one is passed on to the heart of another without passing through the medium of words. Some bushi also referred to this as haragei.

One day during practice at the dojo, the following event happened: I was speaking to the students about techniques and feeling, and was using slightly difficult words so that the Japanese interpreter was beginning to have problems translating them into English. I was looking at Mark O'Brien (fifth dan) and somehow felt that even though he doesn't speak much Japanese, he knew what I had just said. So I asked him to put my words into English, and



John Willson (Canada)



Mark O'Brien taking ukemi in a blazing fire.



although he seemed hesitant, this person with virtually no knowledge of Japanese translated what I had said superbly by means of his heart, i.e., via thought transmission. The fifth dan test shows what exists in the void, what *is* where nothing is. In other words, people do not have eyes in the back of their head, but they have Shingan, the eyes of the heart which can avoid a sword striking from behind. Ninja, true martial artists, all train to be aware through eyes where eyes shouldn't normally be, hearing where it shouldn't be possible to hear. The fifth dan test is one of the starting points for this awareness.

Mark later told me the following: "When I am in Japan, I should feel like a black belt, but when I go to Soke's place for training, I feel more like a white belt. However, when I return home I go back to being a black belt and I can move freely again."

I answered "That's a very important attitude to have. I always became a white belt when I went to Takamatsu Sensei, and that's why for 15 years after Takamatsu Sensei passed away I kept on practicing, and finally got the self-confidence to put on a black belt and be the Grandmaster. Moshe (fifth dan) also said the same thing recently when he came over from Germany. We both ended up laughing!"

Conversations at Bujinkan are clear, warm, and full of love. People are relating to each other beautifully and enjoyably.

Now let us have a look at practicing neck chokes with Mark O'Brien, extracting the feeling of the fifth dan test.

## Response to a Neck Choke

What would you do if they put on a choke like this?



1) First you contract the neck muscles (i.e. those of the sternocleidomastoid region) to guard the neck region.





2) Next, you hit both ears at the same time with the palms of your hands. The name of this strike varies from school to school - some call it Happa, some, Ryosode, some Ryosode, and others, Hae-tataki.

**NOTE:** You should never use this technique unless you're really desperate, as your opponent could lose consciousness as the eardrums inevitably burst.



3) Next I strike Mark's arms to open them both up.



4) Then I perform a strike called Kikaku-ken, driving my forehead into Mark's face to knock him down. This also could be very dangerous in practice unless done just as a controlled form. Don't do it for real at any cost.

## What to Do if Attacked from Behind?

This is another example of the meaning of the fifth dan test. You should feel the enemy coming up from behind and evade him, because if not, in a real fight, once he's got his grip on you could well be too late.



1) Mark starts the neck choke with his right arm, and then applies firm pressure with both right and left hands.



2) You now constrict your neck and use both your shoulders to turn your neck to the right. This is a change to guard your hyoid bone (Adam's apple) and reduce the opponent's pressure.



3) Now I can attack the nerve spots on Mark's body with my right elbow. My right knee attacks Mark's right knee.



It looks as though many techniques are used in the attack, but rather than classifying them into five stages, it's more important to look at all five variations being one flowing motion.



4) As he falls down, I fall down, I fall down with him and my knee attacks his knee again. This hurts! But even then my right hand must be in a position to guard against any retaliation.

5) I continue by punching with my right hand, then with my right elbow.

## Ichimonji-no-kame

(Tetsuji Ishizuka)



1) Make sure that the left arm is stretched out far enough, right to the fingertips. Hold the right hand near the left elbow with the thumb sticking up, and lower your body.



2) Move your right leg back along a diagonal. At the same time start to move your left hand lightly.



3) Send your left hand inwards as if drawing a circle.



4) Keep the left hand moving around until it is above your head height; at this time, it should have changed into a fist. The elbow joint should be at around 90 degrees.

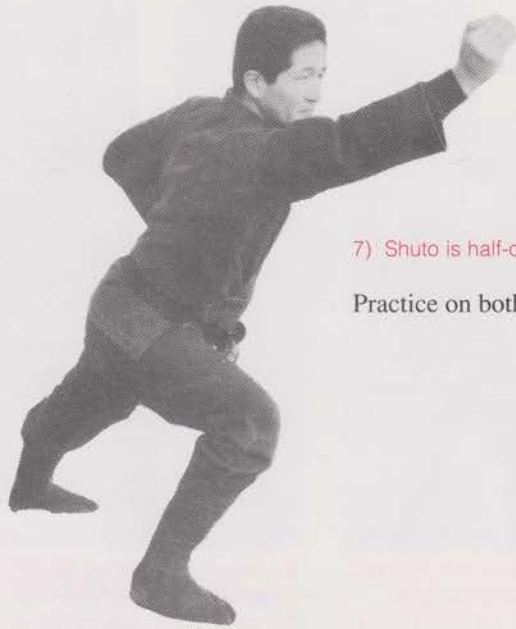


5) Move the right leg one step forward, and at the same time raise your right hand near to your head.



6) The right hand strikes with the body.





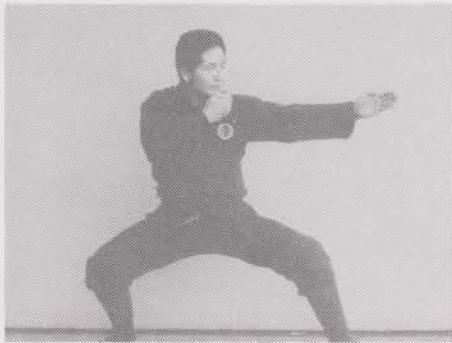
7) Shuto is half-open to have sufficient effect.

Practice on both the right and the left.

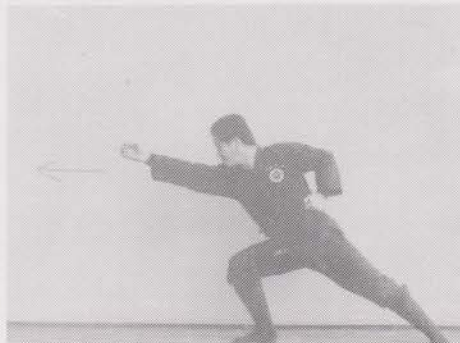
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## Punching from Ichimonji-no-kamae

(Soke and Tetsuji Ishizuka)



The position of the right hand in this stance varies slightly from school to school. Make sure the body is low enough. The angle between the two legs is around 90 degrees. Do not put any strength into your body. This example is the *Ichimonji-no-kamae* used in *Koto-ryu*.

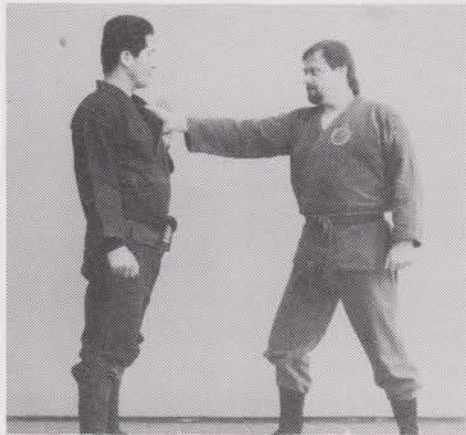


Bend the fingers at the second joint and punch in such a way that your body weight comes to bear on the fist. It is important to keep the arm sufficiently extended and to practice so that your body moves with bite.





**Omote Gyaku Dori**  
(Tetsuji Ishizuka and Bo Munthe)



1) The opponent grabs my chest with his right hand. I rest my left hand against his right hand. This is to stop him from punching with it.



2) I move my right leg back half a step diagonally. I move the thumb of my left hand to the back of the opponent's right hand.



3) I take the opponent's hand in Omotegyaku and raise it above head height. (Raising the opponent's arm above shoulder height means that one is in a position of strength compared to the opponent.)



4) I add my right hand to my left and watch how the opponent reacts/moves.



5) I move my body so as to bring my left leg one step back and the Omotegyaku works. It is important not to look away from the opponent.



6) The opponent falls down. I put pressure on the opponent's hand with my right leg so that he cannot escape. Zanshin (securing the final position in a calm mind) is important.

Practice on both the right and the left.



**Jumonji no Kamae**  
(Tetsuji Ishizuka)



1)



2)



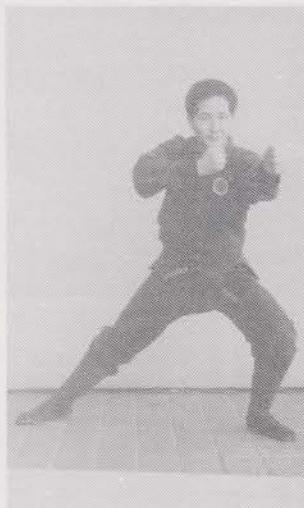
3)



4)



5)



6)



7)



8)



9)

1) Cross your arms with the left one in front, have your right leg slightly behind, and release any power. (Do not let your arms drop too low.)

2) Slide your right leg back diagonally, and block high section with your left hand. The right hand makes a defensive movement.

3) Make the left hand move as if drawing a large circle. (The fact that each stage of the changes is still a stance means that there is no gap open to attack, and the movement is flawless.)

4) After finishing the high-section block, stop the hand above your head height. The hand has changed into a fist.

5) Gradually move your body weight forward.

6) Use your left thumb to strike into your opponent's Butsumetsu nerve point on the side of the ribs.

7) Receive the next punch with your right hand, high section. (This change of position creates a space to avoid the opponent's attack.)

8) The open right hand has become a fist.

9) As before, drive your right thumb into the opponent's Butsumetsu, and return to the original Jumonji-no-kamae. (It is vital to realize that rather than punching with your hand you are punching with your body.)

**Practice on both the right and the left.**



## Omote Gyaku Dori from a Punch (Tetsuji Ishizuka and Bo Munthe)

1) I stand in Hira-nokamae; the opponent grabs my chest with his left hand. I rest my right hand against his left hand.



1)

2) The opponent punches with his right hand. I receive it high section with my left hand, and at the same time bring my right leg back diagonally.



2)

3) I prepare the opponent's left hand for Omotegyaku-dori with my right hand.



3)

4) I raise the opponent's left hand high up on Omoteghaku. My left hand is ready for the opponent's next attack, prepared so that it can change at any time.



4)

5) I join my left hand to my right hand and watch the opponent's movements, then pull back my right leg.



5)

6) The opponent falls down. So that he cannot counterattack after falling down, I keep pressure on the lock. You get the balance between the reverses (locks) on the elbow, arm, and shoulder joints so that you end up putting the whole body into Omotegyaku.



6)

Practice on both the right and the left.

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