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**KEINOSUKE
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MASTER ENOEDA: THE LEGEND.

By John Cheetham.

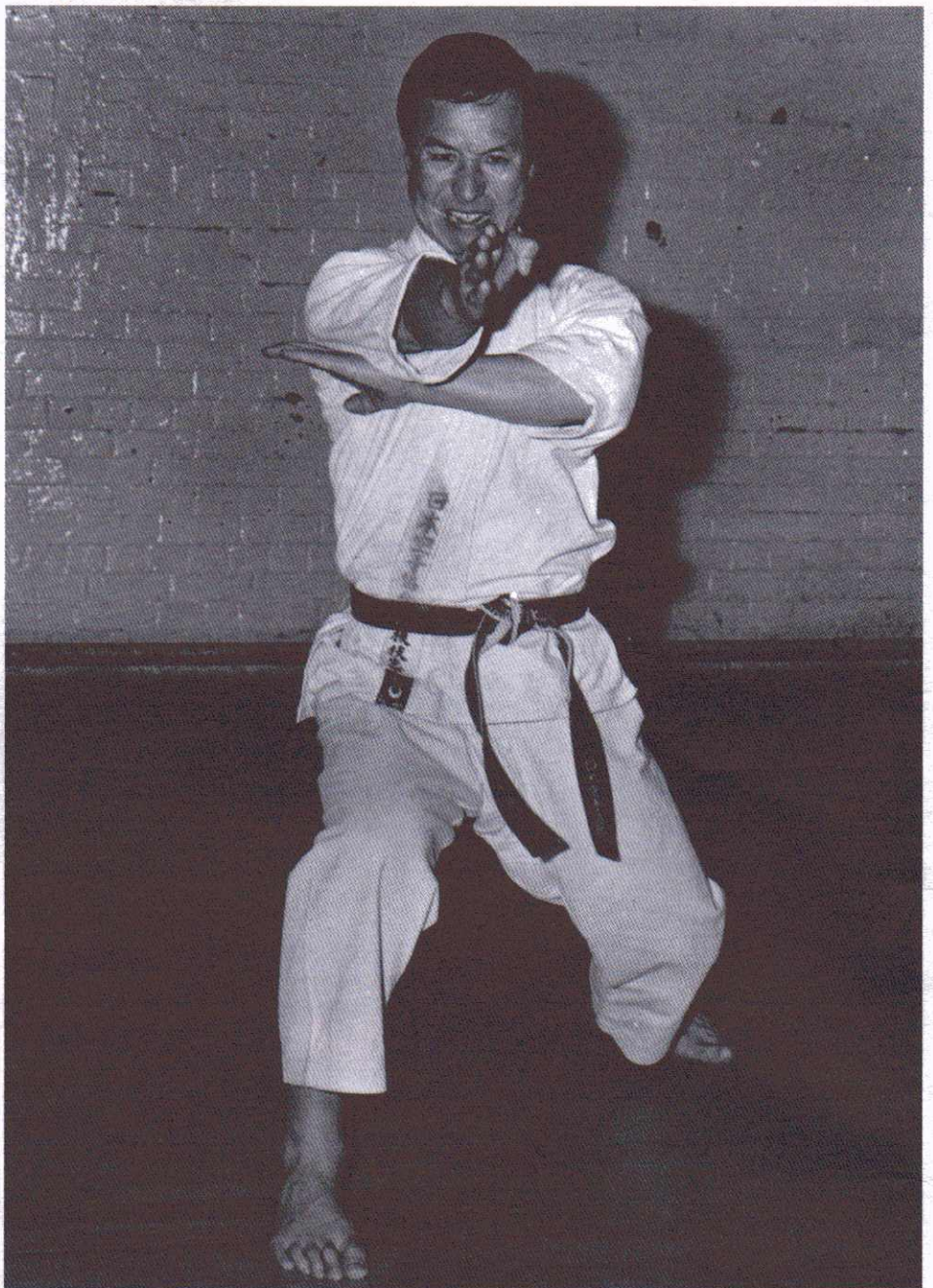
Keinosuke Enoeda was born on the 4th July 1935 in the city of Fukuoka in the northern part of the island of Kyushu, Japan. He was the second of four children, his father and mother were both descended from samurai lineage. His father, a businessman in import/export, was also an excellent athlete, a strong runner, who also practiced kendo. Enoeda sensei's martial arts career began at the age of six when he took up judo, he also practiced kendo. He continued judo up to the age of seventeen reaching nidan level. It was at this time that he witnessed a karate demonstration by two members of Takushoku university (Tokyo) karate club, senseis Okazaki and Irea. He



Enoeda at Takushoku university in 1953.

was so captivated that shortly afterwards (1953) he registered on a four year degree course in business studies at Takushoku – primarily so that he could study karate-do. He was graded shodan after two years at the age of nineteen and two years later in 1956, and now sandan, he was promoted to captain of the university karate club. Master Masatoshi Nakayama was his main teacher at Takushoku. Master Gichin Funakoshi also instructed at Takushoku about once a month whilst Enoeda sensei was there. Funakoshi died during Enoeda's last year at Takushoku, in 1957.

After receiving a degree in Commerce, Enoeda was invited to join the elite JKA Instructors course in 1959. His main teachers were masters Nakayama and Nishiyama. In 1961 he reached the semi finals of the All Japan Championships being beaten by



Enoeda (1972) put the 'Fear of God!' into many students with his fearsome approach to teaching!

Tetsuhiko Asai who won the event by beating Hiroshi Shirai. In 1962 Enoeda lost in the final to Shirai and then in 1963 he won this prestigious title, this time beating Shirai with mae geri and gyaku zuki. Enoeda also placed fourth on three occasions in the Kata finals with kata, Bassai sho, Jitte and Sochin. It was during this period that he picked up the nickname, TORA – The TIGER, after Nakayama sensei said that he had fought like a tiger during a championship. The 1963 championships were watched by the President of Indonesia, Mr Sukarno and he was so impressed by Enoeda that he invited him to Indonesia to instruct his personal bodyguards and to teach the

military and police. Enoeda sensei along with Nakayama sensei spent several months in Indonesia. Later, Enoeda toured the USA, Hawaii, South Africa, Great Britain and Europe with fellow JKA instructors, Kase, Kanazawa and Shirai. In 1965 he stayed with Stan Schmidt in South Africa for six months. I spoke to Stan on the phone from South Africa when he had just got back from Enoeda sensei's funeral in Japan and he will be writing an article in the future about his time spent with sensei Enoeda.

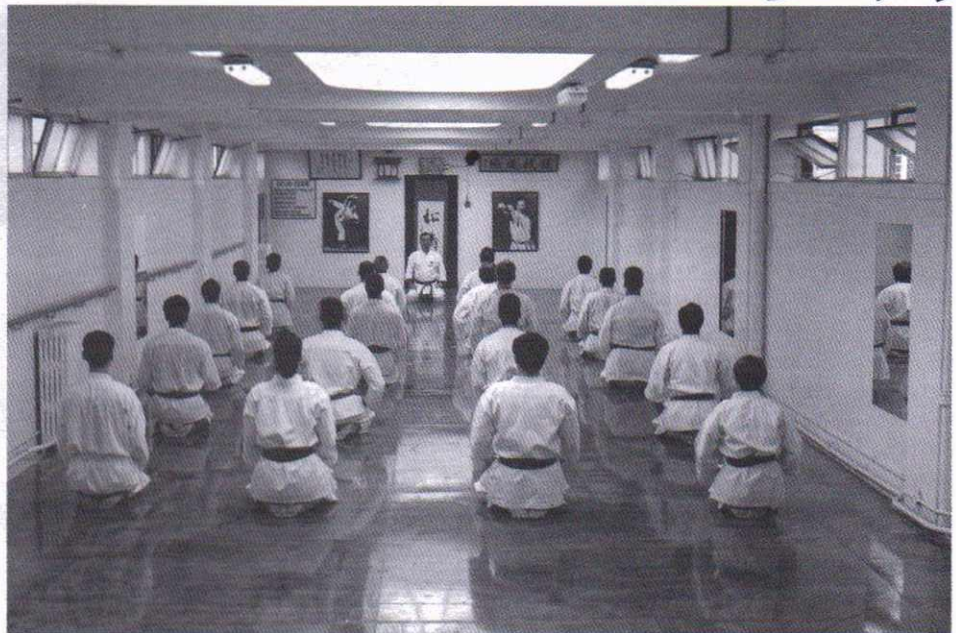
During part of 1966 Enoeda assisted Kanazawa in Great Britain. Enoeda sensei also taught in the USA in 1966 with Nishiyama sensei then he came back

to settle in England and later took over from Kanazawa sensei as the JKA Chief representative here. He spent his first year in Liverpool before moving to London and setting up the world famous Marshall Street dojo in the West End of London, which sadly closed on the 30th Sept 2000. He was also made the Chief instructor to the KUGB (Karate Union of Great Britain) a position he held up until his passing.

In an interview in SKM issue No. 5, Enoeda said.... *"In those days karate in England was very small and the KUGB consisted of only a few clubs mainly in London, Liverpool and other major cities. I believe that the foundation of the KUGB comes from the influence of senior instructors from Liverpool. I remember Terry O'Neill was only a young kid at the time but I particularly remember Andy Sherry who was so keen and never ever missed any training when I was living in Liverpool. In fact he was so keen that early morning he would knock on my door and ask for some extra special training. When I started in Liverpool I decided that they should train exactly as we had done in Japan so that this would give them a good karate foundation."*

Enoeda sensei had four Japanese assistants here in the United Kingdom over the years, firstly was sensei S. Kato, then H. Tomita, then M. Kawasoe and finally sensei Yoshinobu Ohta for the past twenty years. Sensei Tomita went back to Japan, sensei Kato set up his own organisation here as did sensei Kawasoe.

Although I trained under Enoeda sensei many times, and took 1st, 2nd and 3rd Dan under him, I did 'not' know him personally at all, and like the majority of readers, this 'memorial tribute' and SKM 'special' has been an insight into the man



1996, Marshall Street dojo in London. Sensei Enoeda leads 'mokuso'. (photo by Rod Butler).

himself, to me also. In the 1970's and 80's I used to hear people say, *"Oh! He's really nice if you get to know him, he's got a great sense of humour."* Well, to be truthful, I couldn't see that at the time because on training sessions he was, to me, and many others... *bloody frightening!*

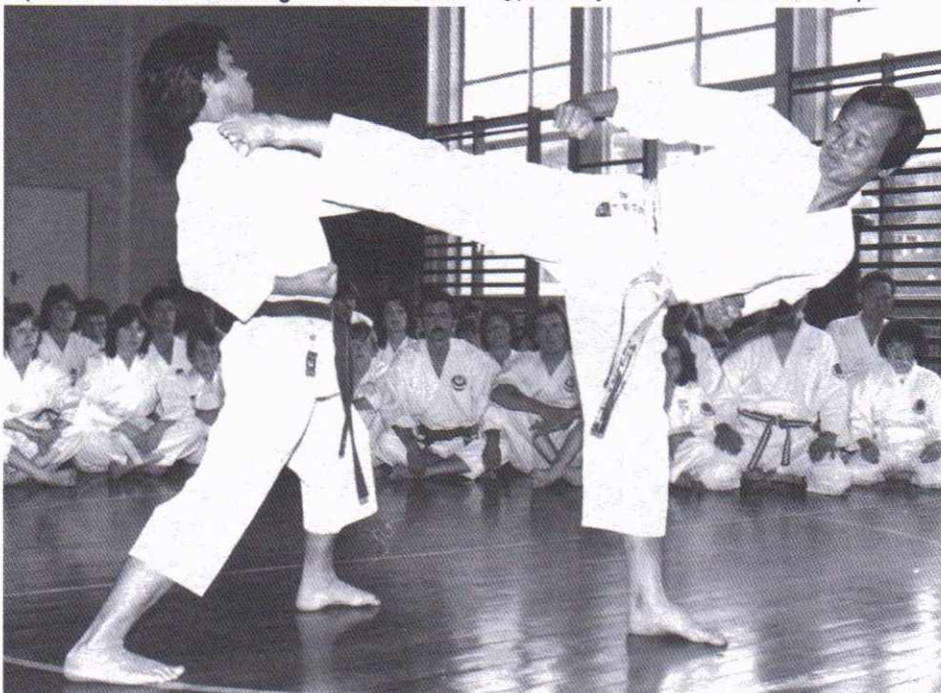
I remember in the mid-70's going for an Indian meal after a training session with a group of students (plus Enoeda) and I was sat directly opposite him. He was like a 'celebrity', at the time. I eventually plucked up the courage (after about three pints of larger) to ask him if he liked his curry? He said, *"Yeah! Good, good!"* and that was it. It was a Vindaloo and 'very hot', sweat was pouring down his forehead and he kept wiping it off with a napkin, he was really getting 'stuck-in' to his food and the guy sat next to me, in typical dry Northern humour, whispered to

me.... *"Tell him it's O.K., no one is going to take it off him!"* Someone said afterwards on the way home, *"Bloody Hell, he could eat and drink for Japan!"*

I think, with all due respect, that unless you were a member of the KUGB (Karate Union of Great Britain) at some time and trained many times under Enoeda sensei, then it's hard to imagine or even believe, what a MASSIVE IMPACT and INFLUENCE this man could have on your view of karate. Even though you had your own club instructor (sensei) and also often trained on courses and grading sessions with all the big names in Shotokan here in the U.K., senseis Andy Sherry, Terry O'Niell, Bob Poynton, the late Steve Cattle, Billy Higgins etc., who were all senior KUGB instructors, you always felt that ENOEDA was your sensei, or rather 'THE' SENSEI. He was the leading light, the inspiration, the driving force, the Boss!

For me personally I remember that Enoeda sensei came to Jack Tilley's dojo in Stockport, Cheshire many times during the 1970's and to see Enoeda's karate, in his prime, in a very small dojo was awe inspiring and unforgettable! Jack was an incredibly strong karate-man but he always used to say after Enoeda had gone, *"Where does he get his power from?"*

I remember 'vividly' on one of those classes that I personally 'learned' what traditional karate and the traditional method of 'learning' was all about! And who better to learn it from, as an average, ordinary karate student, than a true MASTER of karate-do - ENOEDA Sensei. We were doing combinations up and down the dojo, typical Dan-grade combinations. It was a 'joy' to watch Enoeda sensei doing these combinations, he'd got it down to perfection! After "Yame," Enoeda sensei was stood right in



(1979 Plymouth) Enoeda demonstrates with then assistant, Tomita (photo courtesy of Colin Putt).

front of me. He was looking directly at me and I thought, "Oh! shit, I'm in trouble here!" Enoeda sensei said to me, "You need to make your combinations smoother," and walked away. After the class (before we went to the pub 'of course') I asked sensei Enoeda.... "Sensei, how can I make my combinations smoother?" He smiled, and said, "You'll find a way." I went away and thought about it for months and months, I tried everything, then suddenly the penny dropped! "Bloody well RELAX more, get rid of all that tension man!" Students nowadays want to know everything.... "WHY, HOW, WHAT DO YOU MEAN, SHOW ME!" They miss the whole point and traditional philosophy contained in Enoeda's few, simple words, spoken with a lifetime of karate wisdom.... **"You'll find a way."**

When asked about competition in his day, in the 1984 interview, Enoeda said... *"It is completely different now, it is still serious but there is now far less emphasis on blocking, more on making winning techniques. In the early days, failure to block properly would result in injury. The fighting then was perhaps more traditional and blows were generally solid like big hammers to the body! Today I think we must keep power in the technique, otherwise if we only think of 'sports' karate it will destroy the real meaning of karate. For instance, we always practiced to make a good punch on the makiwara, hundreds every day. We must always keep in our training the real meaning of the whole of karate."*

In the 1997 interview Enoeda said, *"Traditional Karate-do is a 'martial art' which requires both physical and mental training for the whole mind and body. My objective is to train everyday whatever the weather or the condition I am in. I never neglect my daily training. I have never missed a day's training since my very young age. There are many benefits which can be gained with practice, by both young and old throughout your whole life. If you want these benefits then you should practice in the Traditional way. If too much emphasis is placed on sport karate, you are in danger of missing the whole point of karate training."*

Sensei Enoeda did not in fact write many books on karate but I think if there is one 'masterpiece' in book form by Enoeda sensei, it has to be his brilliant three volume work from 1983, 'SHOTOKAN ADVANCED KATA'. Unfortunately these are now out of print. His masterful technique is clearly evident and his 'spirit' jumps right out of the pages! This is undoubtedly classic Shotokan material and have become 'collectors' items. He also 'solely' featured in two other books, 'Karate Defence and Attack' (P.H. Crompton 1972) and



Sensei Enoeda (1983) performs kata Gojushiho-sho at his annual summer course at Crystal Palace, London. (photo by Bernard Rose).

'Shotokan Karate Free Fighting Techniques' (P.H. Crompton 1975). He has appeared in many other publications and books by other people but these are the only one's he solely starred in.

Thankfully there is considerable footage of Enoeda sensei on film and video. (See SKM Video Club advert for older footage). And his own marvellous four volume series of videos, 'Advanced Shotokan Kata' from 1996 which also features sensei Yoshinobu Ohta 6th Dan, Enoeda sensei's Japanese assistant.

Sensei Stan Schmidt (JKA South Africa), told me some stories and anecdotes about Enoeda sensei in a recent phone conversation: when he (Stan) first encountered



Sensei Enoeda's 'dynamic' style was characterised by long, deep stances and big, powerful techniques. (photo by Bernard Rose).



Defence against Bo attack, kata Jitte from the 1996 video series. (photo by Rod Butler).

Enoeda it was at the JKA honbu dojo in Tokyo in the early 1960's (1963 I think he said). He'd only been training there a short time and one day he was sparring with a Japanese student, and Enoeda was watching! Stan said that quite by accident (really Stan?) he knocked this guy out with a spinning back kick (ushiro geri). Enoeda came up to him afterwards and said in his broken English... "I like you, you good spirit, I teach you good karate, I give you special training." And a bond was struck between them from that moment on! And Enoeda kept his word and gave him special training.

A few years later Enoeda sensei stayed with Stan in South Africa and taught at his dojo every day. Stan Schmidt said... "In 1965 he stayed for 6

months with my family in my home and we trained everyday, mostly in a nearby park and it was 'one on one' – hard training – kihon, kata and sparring techniques. The mood was always buoyant and carefree, however on Friday mornings we went to the dojo where we did serious kumite (free sparring) and that was always big pressure for me but when it was over, it was always joy and laughter over a few beers and anecdotes of his experiences in Japan.

One of these was when he visited a restaurant (bar?) in his university days where he was challenged by a boxer to a real fight and he told me... "After the boxer had given me a bloody nose, I braced myself in sochin dachi and as he came bouncing into me I shot my fist forward right through his guard and knocked him out." This was the type of fighting spirit that Sensei Enoeda possessed... no fear, total commitment coupled with dynamic technique."

Stan said that Enoeda was desperate to improve his English at the time. Stan said... "So, one day a student of mine Cecil Wolov recommended that he sing along with certain records to make the learning of English more enjoyable, and that Enoeda should choose a record and learn the words!" Enoeda sensei thought this was a great idea and chose, 'Love is a many splendid thing'. He played it over and over and over ad nauseum! Stan said, "Sensei I have to go out for a couple of hours," and off he went, with 'Love is a many splendid thing' blaring away on the record player! A few hours later he came home. Stan said... "I could hear from about 2 blocks away this Pavarotti type voice ringing out over the roof tops..... it was a 'deafening', guttural Japanese



Always remember... Do NOT disturb a 'TIGER' during a Tea-Break! (photo By Rod Butler).

voice **booming** out at full volume! "LOVE IS A MANY SPLENDID THING, IT'S THE APRIL ROSE, THAT ONLY GROWS, IN THE EARLY SPRING." You could hear him right down the street and beyond!"

In the summer of 2000 Sensei Enoeda and Stan Schmidt were both teaching on the annual summer camp in Philadelphia USA, organised by Okazaki sensei. One morning, very early, about 6am Stan and Enoeda sensei were walking through the woods (in their karate gi's) whilst on their way to teach on an early morning class. The sun was filtering through the trees and the birds were singing, it was a beautiful, idyllic day. Enoeda sensei said to Stan, "Isn't it great to be alive Stan, and to be so fit and well at our age." Then he said, "Stan, will you have a competition with me?" Stan wondered what he was about to let myself in for, but said, "Yes Sensei, of course I will have a competition with you." Enoeda sensei then said,

"Let's see who is the fittest in ten years time eh!"

It just shows that none of us know what lies ahead. Sensei Enoeda didn't know that he had cancer at that time. It's hard to believe that someone so 'fit', so 'dynamic', so full of 'energy', so blessed with a 'love of life', can be struck down by an enemy so powerful that even the 'spirit' of Sensei Enoeda could not overcome.

Master Enoeda sadly died in his home country Japan (he had gone back to Japan at the end of 2002 to have an operation for stomach cancer).

Sensei Keinosuke Enoeda married his wife Reiko in 1969 and had two children, a son Daisuke aged 32 and a daughter, Maya aged 27. There's a book of condolence where you are free to add your own message of respect (which is due to be presented to his wife Reiko at the end of the year) it's been set up at: (website) www.karatelondon.co.uk



Enoeda (right) in South Africa in 1965 with his close friend Stan Schmidt, seen here sparring on one of their daily training sessions in the local park. (Photo courtesy of Stan Schmidt).

ENOEDA SENSEI'S TECHNIQUE.

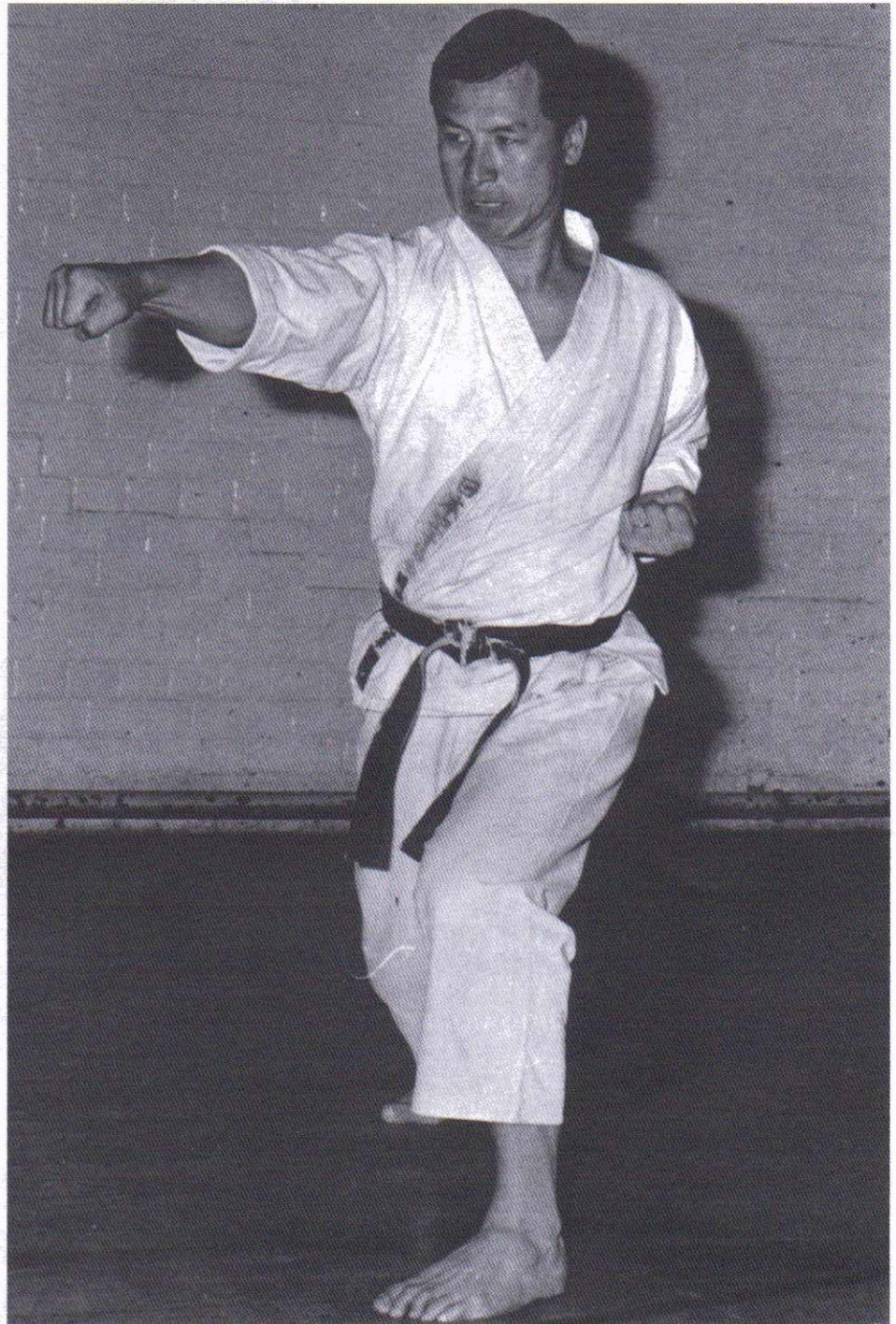
Where do you start? At one time he was attributed to having the 'strongest' gyaku zuki in the whole of Japan. Someone likened it to, "The sound of a bank's vault door slamming shut." He always used big, larger than life techniques, characterised by the use of long, deep stances. He could still do the full box splits in his late 60's. Many of us have seen him walk onto the dojo floor maybe at an early morning session on a course somewhere and casually, slowly slide down into a full box splits whilst having a quiet yawn!

His 'timing' in kumite was also amazing. Look at the action photo here which is a 'still' from a video clip, kindly donated by Ged Moran from Legend Productions, (www.legendtv.com) where Frank Brennan attacked Enoeda with a lightning fast gyaku zuki and Enoeda perfectly executed a slight forward step to the left (*tai sabaki*) and intercepted (*tai no sen/deai*) with his own kizami zuki.... perfect timing, marvellous! Frank's head jolts back a bit though!!

Enoeda's kicks have been described as impossible to block! His ashi barai (and sweeping techniques generally) were breathtaking and you will see no better example of the dynamic application anywhere, which were thankfully filmed and photographed; just take a look at Nakayama's book, 'Best Karate Kumite 2' (Kodansha International ISBN 0-87011-359-3) or watch it for 'real' on the film (SKM Video Club Tape 1). It's been stated many times that Enoeda's favourite and best, most powerful techniques were, gyaku zuki, mae geri, mawashi geri and ashi barai, in no particular order. Nakayama said of Enoeda's technique,



The 'famous' Enoeda 'mawashi geri'. Marshall Street dojo 1997. (photo by Rod Butler).



Sensei Enoeda was credited at one time with having the 'strongest' gyaku zuki in all Japan! from the book, 'Best Karate Kumite 2'.....

"Keinosuke Enoeda has a reputation for achievements that stir the imagination. Using the power of thoroughly strengthened legs and loins, he delivers strikes and kicks of great force, which cannot be blocked easily with simple evasive tactics. His ashi barai (leg sweep), which uses the whole body, is very strong. Especially amazing is his ability to cut in deeply, catch his opponent's rear supporting leg and send him flying. Enoeda has mastered these tactics." Masatoshi Nakayama 1979.

Enoeda sensei's Kata can be summarised in a few words; spirit, power,

and zanshin - total concentration, intention and awareness! His favourite kata were Bassai Sho, Bassai Dai, Jitte and Sochin. On the old JKA films from around 1960, the young Enoeda performs Bassai Dai and Jitte (SKM Video Club Tape 3). They are simply awesome examples of 'power karate'. And remember that he was placed 4th on three consecutive occasions in the JKA Championships when people like, Kanazawa, Asai, Shirai and Mikami were in their heyday! So not only was his fighting ability and notorious fighting 'spirit' at the highest world level, but also his powerful Kata performance.

It's interesting to compare Enoeda sensei's Kata from the early years (early 1960's) when he was in his mid-twenties to his 1996 videos (at the age of 61). The movements became smoother, more fluid, more relaxed, yet the un-questionable 'power' is still in evidence. And the unmistakable 'kiai'.... EEEEEEE! Which could put the fear of God into anyone.... it's definitely, THE TIGER - ENOEDA!

Enoeda sensei felt passionately about Kata and maintaining its tradition, which is why he wrote the Kata books and later produced the Kata videos. In his 'Introduction to Kata' from his 1983 book, 'SHOTOKAN ADVANCED KATA' Vol 1, Enoeda sensei stated.....

"The final point about Kata that I would like to bring to your attention is an important one, that nevertheless is often missed, or not recognised for its importance. It is that etiquette is of the utmost importance in Karate-Do, and must be maintained at all times. Therefore, whenever you practice (Kata) do so with modesty, but not timidity. Be ready at all times to express yourself through the Kata you are performing by bringing together your mind, body and the movements of the exercise. Avoid however at all costs becoming preoccupied with the rules and method of the performance of the Kata, to the exclusion of the fighting methods that they contain, the learning of which were, and are, the principal purpose of these important and exacting exercises."

In full flow, Enoeda sensei's 'special' demonstration kata, accompanied by



Master Nakayama once said, "If you want to see Jitte performed well, Enoeda is the one to watch."



Frank Brennan 'feels the force'. Enoeda sensei shows his fantastic 'timing' with jodan kizami zuki.

Japanese music, in total darkness with just a spotlight on him, which he often performed at the KUGB National Championships each year, was like taking a trip back in time to the days of the samurai; it was quite simply, magnificent, beautiful, pure theatre, like a work of art. When asked about this special kata he stated... "This was devised from various moves from different kata which show the true feeling of Karate-do. The music was written especially with this in mind and through the music and the kata, I try to show the special fighting spirit of the Samurai warrior." You can see this demonstration Kata on the video available from Tiger Corp, 'Beginner To Black Belt - The Master Text' and on KUGB footage available from Kamae International.

Regarding technique, Sensei Enoeda said.... "Technical points are not enough on their own. It is important to understand the 'philosophy' behind it."

I hope you have enjoyed this special memorial tribute to a truly great karate master, who has without doubt been one of the most **influential, inspirational** Shotokan instructors ever. This is a tribute to Enoeda sensei's **KARATE** life, and his **'massive contribution'** to the art. Editor.