



Sanchin- The Three Battles

Sanchin kata is the 8th kata in the Isshinryu system. It's known for its health benefits using isometric breathing & a rooted Sanchin dachi, and is normally practiced with more traditional techniques such as the twist punch & bone blocks as an homage to the styles that Isshinryu came from, and is known as the "Father" of Isshinryu kata, represented by a single vertical line: | . Sanchin means three battles and to truly understand the kata and its applications, you must understand the different things that the 3 battles represent.

The traditional 3 battles within the kata. While most styles of karate on Okinawa have some form of Sanchin kata, Isshinryu's Sanchin is broken into 3 sections or battles within the kata. The 1st part of the kata is made up of punches and middle blocks being timed together, the 2nd part of the kata focuses on nukites (spear hands), and the 3rd part of the kata focuses on wa uke (circle block) & double shote (small hand or palm heel strikes). But this breakdown of the kata is not the only meaning of the 3 battles...

Lower- Middle- Upper. Another physical meaning of Sanchin's 3 battles is Lower-Middle-Upper with Lower being the stance with the rootedness of your toes and tightening of your leg muscles, the Middle being strong core and traditional upper body techniques, and the Upper meaning your eyes in what we call Karate-gaze, with mental focus so strong, it is as if you are looking through your opponent, instead of at them.

Mind- Body- Spirit. One of the traditional precepts of the martial arts is the concept of Mind, Body, Spirit which is emphasized in Sanchin kata. For the mind, it takes a lot of focus and is one of the best kata for moving meditation. In regard to the body, when you do the kata with the isometric breathing and the tightening and loosening of certain muscle groups and

gripping of the stance, it can be tiring to perform but is very good for your health. And when performed correctly, afterwards you can often feel the effects of mind and body which can give you energy and lift your spirit.

Outer Group- Inner Group- Self. Sanchin kata can take on different meanings depending on who you are performing it for and why. It's deep breathing, slower movements, and rooted stances make it an excellent demonstration kata whether you are performing at a demo for those who may not know much about karate, or even as your tournament kata. As it is, by a count of the number of moves, the shortest Isshinryu kata, and along with, again, the breathing & more drawn out movements, it is excellent for a group of you and your peers performing together for timing and to start to understand group kata and what makes it different from individual kata. And for Self, performing it alone, Sanchin is excellent as a moving meditation kata whether you're focusing on perfection of the movements or using it for reflection, Sanchin can help you fight your inner battles.

While Sanchin kata is the shortest of the Isshinryu katas when it comes to the number of moves within it, it has so many things to focus on such as proper breathing, proper stances, posture, proper muscle tightening (and loosening), strengthening of your core, focus and karate-gaze, mental training, and much more, and this is before you get to bunkai or history. Once you learn Sanchin kata, you can spend time learning to properly use all of the different types of 3 battles to strengthen yourself, and if you haven't learned it yet, keep practicing all of your other katas so that you can be ready for this one when it is time to learn it. It may be the shortest kata, but it takes a lifetime of study to understand everything within it, so it may be a while before you truly *know* Sanchin & its 3 battles.

Dojo News and Achievements

New F.I.S.T.- Congratulations to Ava Hopler, Ikkyu, on becoming an Assistant Instructor!. Miss Hopler is currently assisting in the Tuesday Evening Pre-Junior class. (The first F.I.S.T. member to teach in that class.)

New Baby- Congratulations to Instructors, Mr. Eric Hopler and Mrs. Leeann Hopler, on the birth of their daughter, Elizabeth Muriel. Elizabeth was born on May 20, 2023 and both baby and parents are doing well.

Graduations- Special congratulations go out to Michelle Alvarado Acosta, Nidan, who graduated this Spring with honors from NYU as well as to Grace Gentle, Shodan, who graduated this Spring from Villanova University. Both Miss Acosta and Miss Gentle will be moving into exciting careers very soon.

Fundraising- On June 3, 2023, the Dojo held its 7th annual fundraiser for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Many awesome performers including musicians, artists, dancers, and a magic show, both professionals and students, made this event another success. Special Thanks to Shodans, Douglas DaSilva, who put much of it together & emceed the event, and Sophia Keoskey, for her speech on why we do this as well as her other contributions. We have raised over \$2,000 this year and counting. Thank you!

Special Events- This year for the first time since 2019, the Academy held a Dojo Sleepover, and for the first time ever, also hosted a Board Game night. Both events went very well and had a lot of positive feedback, so there are plans being made to bring both events back next year!

Congratulations- to Anabella Henderson, Green Belt, for getting all straight A's for all 4 marking periods in school this year. Great accomplishment Bella!

Congratulations- Amelia Kozlowski, Nikyu, won her shotput championship for Lakeland County with a winning throw of 17'5". Congratulations Amelia!

Congratulations- to Iwona Pietrus, Purple Belt, whose daughter Claudia, graduated from Cornell University and will soon be starting her career at the L.A. Space Force base. Congratulations Claudia!

Accomplishment- Congratulations to Alexis Hanf, Orange Belt, who with her parents' help, is raising her 1st puppy for the Seeing Eye. Alexis teaches the dog basic obedience, house manners, and of course some playtime, before she returns the dog for formal guide dog training in about a year. As much as Alexis will be sad to see her go, she's very proud in her effort to give someone else the gift of Independence!

Congratulations- to James Allison, Purple Belt, who won 1st place at a horse show that he competed in this year!

Graduations- Congratulations to Jason DaSilva, Shodan, who graduated from Randolph High School as well as to Shodans Jarred Veljkovic and Anthony Helmstetter, who graduated from Randolph Middle School & will be going into High School this fall!

Awards- Congratulations to Ava Hopler, Ikkyu, who won the Diamond Award at her dance competition, and who also won the Most Creative award in her 5th grade class. Ava also achieved high honor roll 2 trimesters in a row. Great work Ava!

Congratulations- to Sophia Keoskey, Shodan, and her Rise as One teammates in winning the Hoop Group Championship basketball tournament in Washington DC this month.

Black Belt Promotions

Congratulations to the following students who were promoted in the past twelve months:

Kemi Folami– Shodan (Karate Camp 2022)

Jarred Veljkovic– Shodan from Junior Black Belt (December Shiai 2022)

Anthony Helmstetter– Shodan from Junior Black Belt (December Shiai 2022)

Great job by all. Excellent work & dedication. Kanpai!



Mr. Jason DaSilva began his karate journey in September of 2014 by accompanying his parents to our Dojo's Grand Opening and enrolling with his family just a couple short weeks later. He earned his Shodan (1st Degree Black Belt) in January 2021 at a special ceremony (due to the COVID pandemic). Over the past 8 (almost 9) years, Mr. DaSilva has been a student & F.I.S.T. member. He has a dedicated focus on leadership and perfection of character which he applies not only to his karate, but also to other passions in military training and team video game play. He recently graduated from Randolph High School & has a bright future ahead of him.

Here's what he has to say:

Ever since I was a child, I've had a strong sense of what my passions were. It started with playing with fire trucks at the age of 5 and waving to the FDNY as they came down the streets of New York. Now it's impossible to avoid turning my head to look when I hear the sound of that blazing Q siren coming down the road. When I was seven, I borrowed a DVD of Star Wars, the Clone Wars, from my downstairs neighbor, forever sparking my interest in the Military, becoming my dream job.

By the time I was eight years old, I had a very distinct understanding of what I wanted. Some kids may have been passionate about astronauts; but would never actually become one. I knew that I was going to pursue my passions, no matter if I knew how to get there or not.

Coming home one day from a fair in Succasunna, my parents and I passed by the grand opening for the Randolph Martial Arts Academy. All the students in their gis, holding signs, jumping up and down like madmen must have caught my parents' eye. After just about 10 minutes inside the dojo, my family and I were hooked.

However, my journey was slightly different from most. Starting at the age of nine with my parents, most kids would do their kids' class and then, if their parents studied, wait for their parents to do their teen/adult class. I, on the other hand, would complete my kids' class, take a ten-minute break before going back on the floor and prepare for the teen/ adult class. This not only furthered my interest in karate but forced me to practice outside the dojo due to the somewhat accelerated course I was on. I wanted to be as good as all the teens and adults.

This carried into my first year at camp, being not only the youngest in age from our Dojo, but also the youngest in rank. This trend continued as I became older and set my sights on different goals, such as becoming a F.I.S.T. member. I learned to lead and teach under the instruction of Mr. Hopler. I needed to keep up on not just what I was learning at the time, but the fundamentals and basics, in order to be able to teach the juniors. As I neared Black Belt, it became clear that I needed to stay on the same path of having that desire to learn. After earning my Black Belt through 6 years of hard work and dedication, I discovered that my work was nowhere close to finished: it only became harder. However, it comes with a sense of pride and enjoyment, to know how much more there is to be learned, and that you're allowed to be taught it.

Despite all that, one thing that I haven't emphasized yet is the dedication and work put in outside the dojo. This not only applies to the dojo, but in any facet of life. To be good or the best in anything takes more time than just the classroom time. Otherwise, you will be content with being average. Average is not a goal; it is the baseline that you need to cross. A few key examples come to mind, & these examples showed me that not only do you need to invest added time to get better, but also that other hobbies and such can help better your karate. One of my fondest memories was my second year at camp doing a terminology game, going up and down the line trying to get one another out. Nearing the end, the only people left were 4 brown belts and me, a green belt. Besting a bunch of brown belts showed me that it's not the rank that makes you better, it's the work you put in individually outside the dojo.

Another example was when the boredom kicked in at school, I would practice kata and drills just sitting in my chair. I would try to remember that last piece of kata I was

taught by only using my upper body and imagining the directions I would have to pivot in.

My favorite memory is how I found out that I had a passion for leadership and teaching through video games. From the ages of fourteen to seventeen, I played video games at a competitive team level. I was skilled mechanically, and especially in knowledge of the game. This led to my teammates having me be their I.G.L. (in game leader), a team captain, so to speak. This made me have to think extremely quickly on my feet, give commands to 4 other people doing different tasks, etc. But most importantly, it helped me immensely as a F.I.S.T. member. It helped very much in reducing stress and relaxing while talking to a group. It allowed me to think quickly when

Mr. Hopler asked me to demonstrate or lead an exercise. It showed me that if you take yourself, your job, your hobbies, & your karate seriously and professionally, then you can intertwine them with each other to better every aspect of yourself.

Therefore, remember that your work doesn't stop when you leave the dojo. You need to have the discipline to practice on your own to better yourself. And yet, it also comes with you in all areas of your life. All those other areas unknowingly can help you become a better ka.

Kanpai,

Jason DaSilva, #6-25-12

Words of Wisdom

"It is difficult to say what is impossible, for the dream of yesterday is the hope of today and the reality of tomorrow."

-Robert H Goddard

"It takes a noble person to plant a seed for a tree that will someday give shade to people they may never meet."

-D. Elton Trueblood

"Believe in yourself and there will come a day when others will have no choice but to believe with you."

-Cynthia Kersey

"Life is about balance. If the pendulum of your life swings too far one way, you can be sure, eventually, it will swing back the other."

- Unknown

Save the Date:

Dojo Picnic for our 9th Anniversary

We will be having our Dojo picnic in celebration of the Dojo's 9th anniversary!

When: Sunday, September 17th, 2023, 1:00- 4:00pm

Signups will be open to all Randolph Martial Arts Academy students & their families

Detailed information is coming very soon...

Looking forward to seeing everyone there to celebrate!