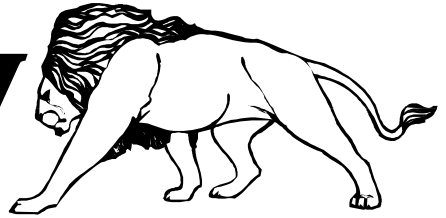


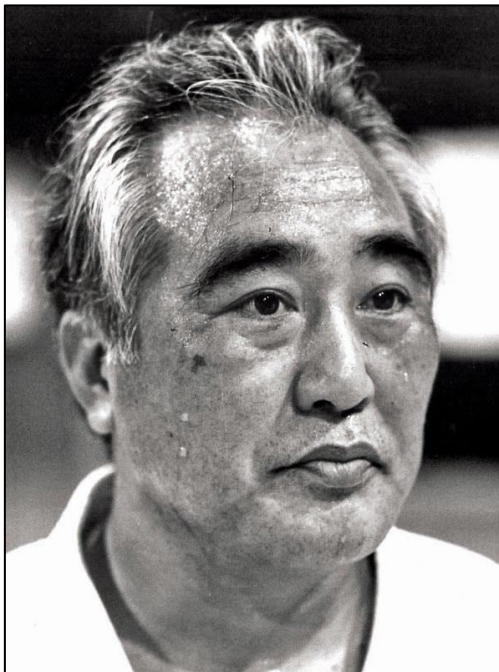
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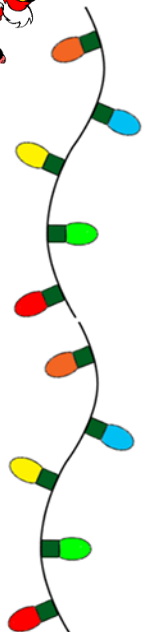
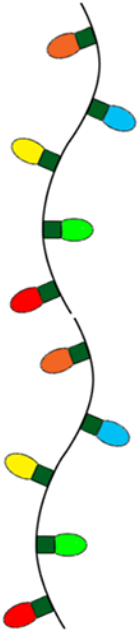


THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
CHILTERN KARATE ASSOCIATION

DECEMBER 2017



TAIJI KASE 1929 - 2004



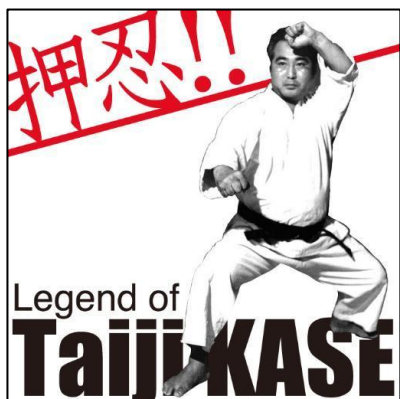
FOREWORD....



Osu!

Welcome to the December 2017 edition of **THE LION!**

The front page features the legend **Taiji Kase Sensei**. Born in 1929, he started his training with Gichin Funakoshi until he was enlisted in March 1945 into the Kamikaze unit of the Japanese Navy! After the war he re-joined with Funakoshi and passed Shodan in 1946 at the original Shotokan dojo, and Sandan in 1949 note the gap between the dates!



Kase joined the JKA (headed by Nakayama) in 1951 and taught the kenshusei at the Instructors Class (usually in kumite) who would eventually spread the gospel of Shotokan around the world from the late 1950s including Enoda, Shirai and Ochi.

Kase was the head of the French JKA for many years, eventually forming his own association with Shirai called the World Shotokan Karate Academy.

He often said “...all Karateka should practice at least for 20 years before making their mind up whether to continue or not. Only then all the hard work is starting to bear fruit. Then you will improve quicker and the training gets easier. When one reaches this feeling, one is not willing to lose it...”

Good luck to everyone grading today!

Dave Davenport

5th Dan EKF

(Material published may not necessarily represent the views of the CKA)



CKA DAN EXAMINATION – SEPTEMBER 2017



OMETEDŌ GOZAIMASU !

- Jason Guest - Shodan
- Aargaash Rajkumar - Shodan

We look forward to these karateka continuing their own path....

OSU!!

SCOTT LANGLEY COURSE 2017

HOLMER GREEN DOJO

SATURDAY 11TH NOVEMBER



Wow...

Scott Langley (HDKI) is a world class instructor, sought after to host seminars across the globe....and we managed to get him at Holmer Green!

I think I speak for everyone when I say we were simply blown away by his karate, his teaching and just what a nice guy he is. I promise you all that Scott will be back in 2018....

The main points he covered: -

- Correct use of turning – either on the heel or the ball of the foot
- Breathing
- “being alive” during transitional movements
- Engaging the core
- The importance of keeping the feet parallel to create a base
- The use of the hip and the ability to activate a “twitch” reflex
- The correct alignment from foot, through hip, to shoulder and hand



I contacted Scott after to thank him for his teaching and to share the following feedback and he replied “...it was very kind of you to send me those messages. I almost never get feedback like that (thank God!) so, thank you to your students....”

Here are the comments from those that took part: -

~ After 38 years of training, I have never come out of a lesson & felt so utterly deflated about my own personal technique. After training with Scott Sensei, I have come to the realisation that I have just about mastered 9th kyu.... the journey continues – **Dave Davenport**

~ Having trained in karate for over 35 yrs, this one session has made me realise that I have only just begun my journey. So much to think about & much practice to be done! - **Paul Massey**

~ Today undid a large proportion of what I've learned and has changed my understanding of the core philosophy to an unlikely, extremely challenging, simplicity - **Hugh Connor**

~ It was transformational and has completely challenged the way we both think about basic techniques – **Paul & Toby Allen**

~ An engaging session with some good high-level take aways which are well worth trying to incorporate. Good looking karate too. PS I've got all sort of muscle aches today - **Alex Ramsey**

~ An interesting and enjoyable experience – **Kelsie Wright**

~ The morning started with gyaku tsuki. I was thinking this would be the warm up but little did I know that Scott Sensei would introduce flinch and twitching into my karate i.e. flinch reflex and twitching of the hips. What an eye opener! PS my body really hurts today - **Jason Guest**

~ The time flew by and Scott Sensei left you wanting more. Three points from us: don't forget chest movement which is as important as the hip in generating power through the flex and into the punch; movement is all about and from the core; triangulate your power through the direction of the feet – **Damian & Jonathon Parmenter**

~ It was interesting to see that everything I have learnt about karate so far could potentially be wrong, and that there are so many interpretations for each technique in Bassai Dai and beyond – **Hugo Javard**

~ Principles before stances and techniques!! - **Olivier Javard**

~ An awesome day...a test of mental & physical agility. Scott Sensei is a truly inspirational character. The journey to find our own karate is definitely a long one! - **Juliet Guerri**

~ Amazing technical karateka! Awesome! Need to learn the twitch - **Paul James**

~ Absolutely brilliant!! Don't mention it is difficult to create significant power with gyaku tsuki as you will be chosen by Scott Sensei to experience how it should be done!! - **Bernard Murray**

~ It was an eye-opening experience to see someone with such control over their body, and to hear how just a few changes in translation of Japanese phrases puts a whole new perspective on technique. From now on I will strive to twitch first and focus on movement rather than shapes....also Scott Sensei hits like a sledgehammer - **Sam Green**

~ Amazingly inspirational! - **Tricia Myers**

~ What an eye opener! Lots to think about - **Mike Thornton**

TRAINING IN THE EARLY 1980's

*Come gather round people wherever you roam
And admit that the waters around you have grown
And accept it, that soon you'll be drenched to the bone
If your time to you is worth saving, then you better start swimming or you'll sink like a stone
For the times, they are a-changin'....*

Saturday 8th December 1984.

Montem Leisure Centre in Slough.

Over 80 karateka stood in front of the Chief Instructor of the KUGB (the organisation representing the JKA in the UK) in readiness for their black belt 1st Dan grading.....only 32 would pass that day.

33 years ago, nearly to the day, after five hard years of training, massive highs and debilitating lows, equal buckets of sweat and blood, I finally (!) heard the words pass Enoda Sensei's lips...

“.... pass **Shodan**...”

As I approach 40 years of training, it is only natural to look back and reminisce about the so called “good old days” and think to oneself how things have changed over the years, to question ...has that change been for the better or the worse?

THE CLASSES WERE BIGGER -

This picture is from a Tuesday night at Wanstead SKC circa 1986.....?

There is no doubt that class sizes are much smaller these days. There is so much more choice, not only within different styles of karate but now from a whole plethora of martial arts, all trying to get students through the door. Add to that the “new” arts like MMA, Krav Maga, Systema etc and the effect can only be a reduction in class sizes.



A quiet night at Wanstead would be 40 plus students whereas now I feel I am lucky getting 16! (and what a sixteen..... ☺)

IT FELT MORE SPECIAL –



For me there is something missing from the training today. Let me take you back to 1979... Maggie Thatcher has just come into power after defeating Jim Callaghan. The number one hits were the Bee Gees, Donna Summer and Chic. When you've only got 3 channels to choose from (channel 4 didn't launch until 1982), you tend to get up and do something – now there is choice overload and remote-control fever.

No computer games that are designed to keep you in & isolated physically in a virtual world – you think you are part of a team but instead you atrophy on a couch. I think there was a much stronger sense of belonging, of camaraderie. We felt as if we were doing something special that meant we were not part of the mainstream.

Karate magazines became a way to connect with this world and the likes of Fighting Arts International, Combat, Traditional Karate were devoured

There was no internet – we got together outside of class, hired a scout hut and learnt Heian Nidan from books!

THE TRAINING WAS TOUGHER –

Sorry! But the training was tougher! Black eyes for work the next day were common place. I don't think we even gave a thought about health and safety.... I remember once catching a fist in the mouth (thanks Scot's Andy), and having it repaired with Sellotape before getting back into the lesson.... now days that would be a trip to A&E for stitches! We worked through injuries and never missed a lesson, learning that "taking a knock" was all part of the training regime. There were no hand pads or leg pads in competition and the scoring range was "skin contact" i.e. if you hit them and they stayed up, you got a point!

Body conditioning was accepted as normal and if your legs & arms were covered in bruises you had "trained hard". The exercises we had to attempt were insanity and today if an Instructor insisted that



someone stood on your legs, whilst you sat semi-crossed legged on the floor, they would be charged with Incitement to Cause Grievous Bodily Harm...I remember a particular lesson, when our Instructor asked the Dan grades to lie on the floor, lift our legs 6 inches, and then conducted the lesson whilst jumping from stomach to stomach.....madness!

THE STANDARD WAS HIGHER —

Sorry again! But I truly believe the general standard of karate in the UK has been watered down over the last 40 years. When I took my Nidan in 1986, only 9 people passed out of circa 30 taking the grading.

We are lucky at the CKA in that we have a good standard of Shotokan – I am truly pleased with the karate-ka that train with me...I would happily take them on a time machine trip back thirty years and they could all hold their own.

I cannot emphasise enough how essential it is that standards are maintained, so that future generations don't aspire to a level taught by their peers & sensei that is mediocre at best, a pastiche of traditional karate-do at worst.

Never accepting second best, always aspiring & perspiring (!) to be better, are the traits that will keep you training week after week, year after year.



WE HAD HEROES —

As yourself a question.... who is your karate hero? If you are struggling to name at least one then you are unfortunately proving the point!



The early Eighties was a fantastic time to be training – we had an embarrassment of top notch Japanese instructors taking regular classes in the UK and our home-grown instructors have names that resonate across Dojo around the world...Brennan, O'Neil, Sherry, Hazard, Poynton...

What about now? Can you name the members of the England team? How about the GB team for the upcoming Olympics in 2020? Or what about Japanese instructors you admire? The “Golden Age” of Shotokan is coming to an end as the core gets older and eventually we will all shuffle away.....and the sad thing is, apart from a few notable exceptions, I cannot see where the next batch is coming from, who the current generation of beginners will revere.

A HIGH GRADE WAS A 2ND DAN

When I started karate a 3rd Dan was a rarity. Look at any licence book from that era and they only go up to 3rd Dan! I remember vividly one of my early instructors going for his 3rd Dan and appreciating the enormity of getting such a high grade....now licence books go up to 6th Dan.

When Jim Lewis came to our KUGB club in Wanstead, it was a major event....a genuine JKA 4th Dan in our midst!

Remember that when Ohta Sensei came to the UK in 1982 (to take over as Enoda's Assistant from Tomita) he was “only” a 3rd Dan.

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| 3 DAN | 26.6.82 | [Signature] | 3 DAN | 9.12.89 | [Signature] |

This is my KUGB licence book, one of my most cherished possessions.

A LOT OF WHAT WAS TAUGHT WAS NONSENSE

“Punch harder!”

“More time!”

If only I knew then what I know now...

You cannot “punch harder”. You can expel more effort in trying to move your limbs faster; you can grit your teeth and continue to perform at the same intensity demanded by your Sensei, even though your muscles are screaming at you; you can concentrate on relaxing your muscles during the process of punching so that you maximise your impact velocity and hence your force; you can look at how you are moving in relation to your body mechanics; you can understand why you are not using your whole body mass; you can explore what subtle

changes you have to make to your technique; you can work on eradicating any erroneous movements that are detracting from your technique. But you cannot just “punch harder”



When you do a technique, you will either achieve Kime or you will not. There are not levels of Kime. You cannot have “more Kime” just like you cannot have more eyeballs in your head. It is either achieved or it is not. Kime is the point of maximum force at the moment of

impact – as defined by Nakayama Sensei. Kime is a point in time, a moment when the body, mind and spirit come together as one in perfect harmony. My punch will be at it most powerful at the exact moment before I start to apply the brakes. Don’t forget that the rapid tensing of the muscles after Kime is called Sun-dome. Sun-dome means to arrest a technique just before contact with the target (Best Karate Vol 1 1978, Nakayama). A technique that has no kime can be when the heel of the foot rises off the floor, or when the hips don’t snap into place at the right time during punch. A technique with no kime is when you are off balance. A technique with no kime is when your back is not straight as you stand in zenkutsu dachi. A technique with no kime is when the retracting hand is weak, when the punching hand over-extends, when the shoulders are too tight, when the course of the punch is not straight, when the fist shakes or wobbles. And on, and on...and on. The quest for the “perfect” technique, Kime, is a never-ending process.

Now days we have a lot better grasp of body mechanics and how science & physics is as much a part of karate-do as wearing a clean dogi. Any instructor that cannot elucidate on how to achieve a harder punch or the essence of kime is not instructing.

Have things changed? Undoubtedly **YES**.

Has it been for the better? Only time will tell....



HOW TO PRACTICE EFFECTIVELY

“...just one more time...”

If I have heard that once in a dojo, I must have heard it a million times! Karate practice is based around repetition with the common wisdom being it will improve your “muscle memory”.

But is this true or just myth?

Here is an excellent piece by **Dr Don Greene** (a peak performance psychologist) and **Annie Bosier** (a musician) which explains the what happens to our bodies when we practice. It was subsequently turned into a TED-ed video which has been viewed over 11 million times...

Mastering any physical skill, be it performing a pirouette, playing an instrument or throwing a baseball, takes practice.

Practice is the repetition of an action with the goal of improvement and it helps us perform with more ease, speed and confidence. So, what does practice do in our brains to make us better at things?

Our brains have two kinds of neural tissue: grey matter and white matter.

The grey matter processes information in the brain, directing signals & sensory stimuli to nerve cells, while white matter is mostly made up of fatty tissue and nerve fibres. In order for our bodies to move, information needs to travel from the brain’s grey matter, down the spinal cord, through a chain of nerve fibres called axons to our muscles.

So, how does practice or repetition affect the inner workings of our brains?

The axons that exist in the white matter are wrapped with a fatty substance called myelin. And it’s this myelin covering or sheath that seems to change with practice. Myelin is similar to insulation on electrical cables. It prevents energy loss from electrical signals that the brain uses, moving them more efficiently along neural pathways. Some recent studies in mice suggest that the repetition of physical motion increases the layers of myelin sheath that insulates the axons.

And the more layers, the greater the insulation around the axon chains forming a sort of “super highway” for information connecting your brain to your muscles.

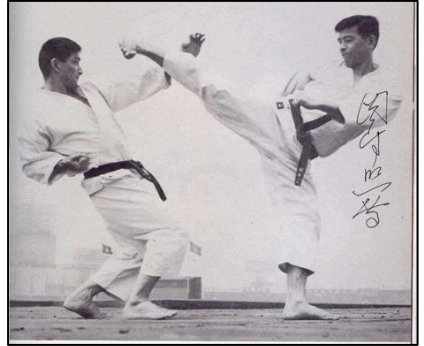
While many athletes and performers attribute their successes to “muscle memory”, muscles themselves do not really have a memory. Rather it may be the myelination of neural pathways that gives these athletes and performers their edge with faster and more efficient neural pathways.

There are many theories that attempt to quantify the number of hours, days or even years of practice that it takes to master a skill. While we don't yet have a magic number, we do know that mastery isn't simply about the amount of hours we practice.....it's also about the quality and effectiveness of that practice. Effective practice is consistent, intensely focused and targets content or weaknesses that lie at the edge of one's current abilities.

If effective practice is the key, how can we get the most out of our practice time?

Here are 5 key things you should be doing: -

- 1) Focus on the task at hand
- 2) Minimise potential distractions
- 3) Start out slowly or in slow motion – coordination is built with repetitions, whether correct or incorrect. If you gradually increase the speed of the quality repetitions, you have a better chance of doing them correctly.
- 4) Frequent repetitions with allocated breaks are common practice habits of elite performers – studies have shown that many top athletes, musicians and dancers spend 50-60 hours per week on activities related to their craft. Many divide their time used for effective practice into multiple daily practice sessions of limited duration
- 5) Practice in your brain in vivid detail – it's a bit surprising but a number of studies suggest that once a physical motion has been established, it can be reinforced by imagining it. In one study, 144 basketball players were divided into two groups. Group A physically practiced one-handed free throws while Group B only mentally practiced them.... when they were tested at the end of the two-week experiment, the intermediate and experienced players in both groups had improved by nearly the same amount.



As scientists get ever closer to unravelling the secrets of our brains, our understanding of effective practice will only improve. In the meantime, effective practice is the best way we have of pushing our individual limits, achieving new heights and maximising our potential.

***“FINAL 2017 AFTER TRAINING DRINKS”
AT HOLMER GREEN DOJO WILL BE ON: -***

MONDAY 18TH DECEMBER

***ALL CKA MEMBERS WELCOME!
TRAINING 7:30PM TO 9:00PM
AFTERWARDS AT THE OLD OAK !!***

DO YOU KNOW YOUR ASHI?

Movement is pivotal to karate-do...if you stand still, you will lose. There must be a constant movement of the feet as you strive to find the correct position for receiving and striking.

The Japanese do not usually distinguish a foot from a leg, anything below the torso is called "ashi"!

However different kanji's are used as & when appropriate, even though both are pronounced "ashi":-

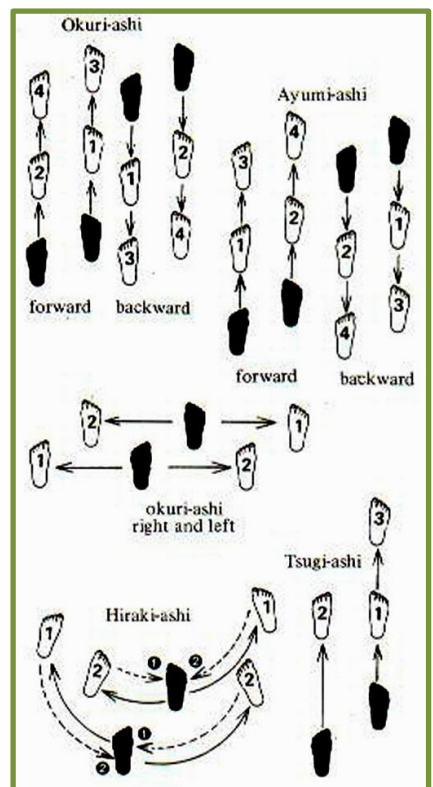
- A leg is 脚 – "ashi"
- A foot is 足 – "ashi"

Some you will know, some will be new, but take the time to study these different types of foot movement:-

SURI ASHI – this is the sliding movement of how you move your feet – this is the natural form of movement, which is always done with your feet in contact with the ground (suri – it means to "slide") - Suri ashi means the walk on the tatami, the feet are not lifted as in normal walking but "shuffle" over the tatami

OKURI ASHI – starting with left foot forward, move left, then right to go forward but move right foot then left foot to go backward - the back foot never passes the front foot. It doesn't matter if the right foot is the back foot or the left foot is the back foot. The back foot cannot pass the front foot and vice versa

YORI ASHI – very similar to Okuri Ashi – but a proper full on slide moving both feet at the same time (both feet moving at the same time, unlike okuri ashi when one foot moves and then the other) – pushing off the back leg and moving eg sliding gyaku tsuki, front leg mae geri etc (Yori – it means to "get closer")



TSUGI ASHI – this is like a half step with the back foot coming up to the front foot but not passing the front foot - the back foot moves first and it stops before it passes the front foot. If the back foot passes the front foot, it is called ayumi-ashi, which is described below.

AYUMI ASHI – this is walking - we can actually cross our feet like we are walking, but in suri-ashi (sliding). It is a walking with but sliding

SABAKI ASHI – feet movements either stepping or moving – can also be called Unsoko (working with the feet)

FUMI KAE ASHI - refers to the change in position of the feet without moving itself – like stepping back (front foot to the back) and then forward (opposite foot goes to the front – (Fumi Kae means to “change step”) – kae sho ippon?

SASAI ASHI – crossing the legs when you step – like Tekki Shodan etc

HIRAKI ASHI – moving to the side – whatever foot is forward, you can move to the left or to the right but each will have different footwork. When moving to the left, step with the left foot and follow with your right. It can also be used for moving to the right

HOLMER GREEN DOJO

KAGAMI BIRAKI (鏡開き)

MONDAY 4TH JANUARY 2018

***A SPECIAL LESSON TO MARK THE FIRST
PRACTICE SESSION OF THE NEW YEAR***

ALL CKA MEMBERS WELCOME!

TRAINING 7:30PM TO 9:00PM

AND THAT'S IT....!

I hope you have enjoyed this edition of The Lion! Please get in touch with any content you want me to include for the December edition. It doesn't have to be a literary masterpiece! Just write down as many words as you can manage and I will do the rest - contact me at: - david.davenport7@aol.com

- Any special events at your club?
- Your thoughts about karate?
- What is it like to take a Dan grading?
- Any courses you have been on with other clubs / styles / instructors
- Birthdays!

Remember this is your magazine and it needs to reflect the whole of the CKA.

We are also always looking for new content to add to our website, Facebook group, Twitter and YouTube. If you have any ideas we will be glad to hear from you, email info@chilternkarate.co.uk

FINAL THOUGHT

一期一会

ichi-go ichi-e

“one time, one meeting”

Every lesson in the dojo is unique and must be cherished as it cannot be replicated.

Grading Examinations

Grading examinations will cover all grades up to Black Belt 3rd Dan.

- **Sunday 4th March 2018**
- **Sunday 3rd June 2018**
- **Sunday 2nd September 2018**
- **Sunday 2nd December 2018**

Venue: Chiltern Hills Academy, Chartridge Lane, Chesham.

Time: 10.00 am start (prompt)

Grades: All grades

Cost: Standard grading fees apply

Grading training

Class will be divided into groups and training focused on the grading syllabus including the kihon (basics) kumite (sparring) and kata required for grading examinations.

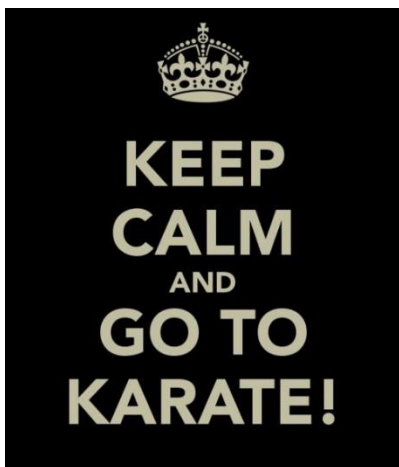
- **Sunday 14th January 2018**
- **Sunday 4th February 2018**
- **Sunday 25th March 2018**
- **Sunday 29th April 2018**
- **Sunday 24th June 2018**
- **Sunday 22nd July 2018**
- **Sunday 30th September 2018**
- **Sunday 28th October 2018**

Venue: Chiltern Hills Academy, Chartridge Lane, Chesham.

Time: 10.00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m.

Grades: All grades

Cost: Adults: £8.00 Juniors: £6.00



CKA KUMITE AND PARTNER WORK DVD

ALL THE CKA KUMITE SETS ON DVD.

AN ESSENTIAL LEARNING AID!

£15.00

SEE YOUR CLUB INSTRUCTOR