



2020

Kuronuma Double Nunchaku Kata

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The nunchaku is a traditional weapon of the Kobudo and consists of two sticks connected with a short chain or rope. Kobudo is the traditional martial arts weapons training. This happens to be my Kobudo weapon of choice which used to be fairly common tradition in Shotokan at least when I started a half century ago. It is very unfortunate that modern day Shotokan has dropped Kobudo from its regular training in most dojos but I was happy to see at Ki Haku Dojo continued the tradition to teach students the capabilities of the weapons in order to be able to at least defend oneself against them.

I chose the Nunchaku at the age of 12 because of the quick swings and striking motions which were very impressive not only to myself, but to most people. And they were very common where I grew up. Anybody could make a pair with a mop handle and rope. And out of a dozen or so different kinds of Okinawan Kobudo weapons such as Nunchaku, Sai, Bo and Tonfa, the Nunchaku is most popular or known by the public.

The Nunchaku can produce the most dynamic and versatile techniques among the Kobudo weapons due to its construction of having two sticks joined by a chain or a rope, and it can be used at close and medium ranges striking in all directions at any time with multiple types of strikes. I am not saying Nunchaku is a better Kobudo weapon. Just as one cannot say a certain style of karate is better than another, (although we know Ki Haku Ha is the best) different weapons have their own particular uses and advantages thus, cannot be compared by a simple set of observations.

Even though the destructive power of Nunchaku, engineered so that it can be used as a fulcrum, so at a full impact it is said to be more than 1,000 pounds of force⁽¹⁾, which is far greater than Sai or Tonfa and Bo could produce they also cannot match its speed.

Remember speed is more important than mass for kinetic energy $E_c = \frac{1}{2}mv^2$

One-half mass times velocity squared. For a regular hard strike for example, you would generate 340 joules which is similar to that of a 1911 45 ACP pistol ⁽²⁾.

"The energy generated by a Nunchaku strike is 150 joules superior to the one generated by a flashball, is equivalent to the one developed by an explosion of 0.5 grams of TNT, and is equal to the one generated by a Colt M1911 bullet." (2)

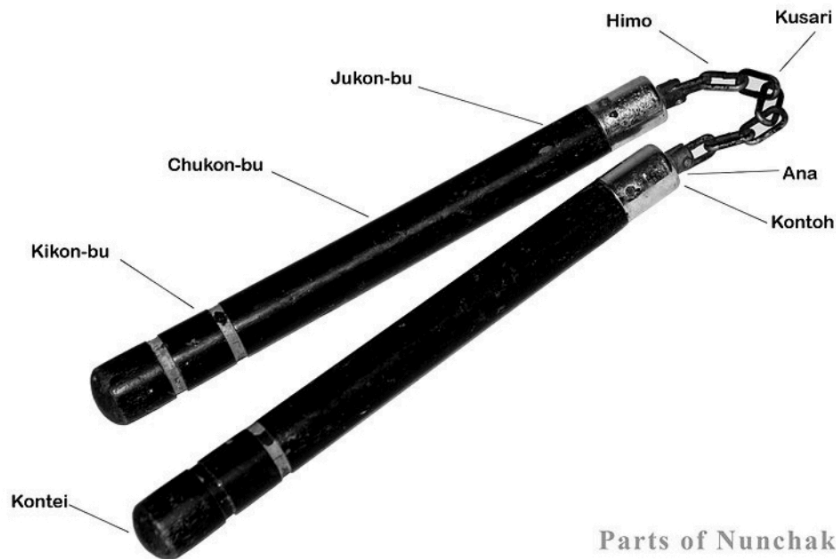
Also, unlike the Sai and Katana the Nunchaku can be controlled so one can stop an attack without having to kill or maim an attacker who may be under the influence or out of control with rage. Also arm and leg locks as well as choke holds can be utilized for this purpose.

Another benefit of the Nunchaku is it allows the development of quicker hand movements and helps improve posture.

The Nunchaku can be made of wood, metal, fiberglass, or plastic. And has been called by many names such as nunchucks, nunchaku, karate sticks, nimchucks etc...

Proper measurements are the width of your hand for the chain or cord, and the handle should be the length of your olecranon bone shown in the pictures below.





Parts of Nunchaku

- *Ana*: the hole on the *kontoh* of each handle for the *himo* to pass through—only nunchaku that are connected by *himo* have an *ana*.
- *Himo*: the rope which connects the two handles of some nunchaku.
- *Kusari*: the chain which connects the two handles of some nunchaku.
- *Kontoh*: the top of each handle.
- *Jukon-bu*: the upper area of the handle.
- *Chukon-bu*: the center part of the handle.
- *Kikon-bu*: the lower part of the handle.
- *Kontei*: the bottom of the handle. ⁽³⁾

A little about the history of this weapon

Even though The Los Angeles Times advertised the nunchaku in 1965...

“Protect Yourself From Assault!

For women of all ages, especially if living alone. The incredible nunchaku is the best non-lethal hand weapon that even very old and very young can use. Works for you when fears are aroused.”

The Nunchaku has been around for hundreds of years. There is debate on its origin either from China or Okinawa, but there is agreement that it started as an agricultural tool like the kama used to thresh rice and soybeans that later was adapted as a self defense weapon. Another theory is that it was developed from the clapper of the village night watch in Okinawa made of two blocks of wood joined by a cord used to get people’s attention to warn against fires and other threats. According to Chinese folklore, the Nunchaku are a variation of the two-section staff.

Nunchucks and the Law.

Keep in mind possession of this weapon is illegal in some countries and states, except for use in professional martial arts schools. Most states allow them. However as of 2019, four states, Arizona, California, New York and Massachusetts banned them, but bans in Arizona and New York were overturned holding that the Second Amendment extends to these state laws.

Our Double Nunchaku Kata, Kuronuma (Black Swamp)

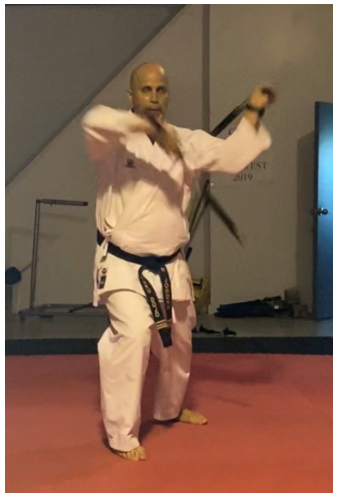
At the beginning of this year part of my assignment was to do a double Nunchaku kata. I have seen and done many but have not found one that covers as much as I would want to demonstrate in a single kata for junior master level testing so with permission and guidance from Soke Caseres I formed a new kata. The next step was to prove that it can be taught. For this test the Kata Kuronuma Double Nunchaku Kata was divided into the Sho and Dai forms. Kuronuma Dai was taught to Sensei Ben Mitchel and Kuronuma Sho was taught to Sensei Roger Veliz.

Nunchaku katas in competition you will see a lot of spinning as with batons, splits, cartwheels and spinning kicks but not many useful techniques. With this kata I hope it will not only be fun to learn, but give a solid base for double Nunchaku techniques.

A brief overview of the kata: there are 65 strikes and 22 patterns.

The kata starts with a Kami demonstrating that the front back and sides are all covered by the weapon.





Next four strikes and set in ready position. From there cross strikes,





180 overhead strike to an attacker at

6, 9 then back to 12 o'clock



From here four strikes going clockwise at 12, 3, 6

kick with Kia then 9 o'clock





This point at 12 o'clock, a series of over head strikes, double strike and horizontal strikes turning to 3 o'clock





At 3 o'clock reverse figure 8 right hand, then forward figure 8 left hand moving forward, then with right hand spinning and maintaining at all times speed and angular momentum of the Nunchaku, four 180 degree turns counterclockwise with double strikes then pattern of overhead strikes then reverse direction to the starting point with same pattern of turns and strikes and overhead pattern as before.









Then going right to the starting point with the same and finishing with a flurry of kick, strikes and then back to the kamae and finish.

Please refer to the video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9XZY3gkgQIE>

















References

- (1) 7 World Records Held by Bruce Lee, The Martial Arts Guinness By Rohan Jaitly, July 26, 2017
- (2) Le Nunchaku et la science-Nunchaku-SFW, April 27, 2010
- (3) Demura, Fumio (10 May 1971). "Nunchaku: Karate Weapon of Self-defense". Black Belt Communications – via Google Books