



On Competition

In the martial arts many new students speak of attending competitions.

Asking if I would support or allow them to "test" their skills.

I personally don't see the value of competition in this art... It not set up that way.

The skills in distance, timing and the mental training can be utilized in a competitive arena – however ... it's still not a true fight. There are many other factors

1. You both know you are both going to fight
2. You both know it will be one on one
3. You both know what weapons are to be used
4. The both know chance of permanent injury is slim
5. You both know the approximate skill level of your opponent....

--- There are many other factors that detract from the focus of a realistic martial art such as ours ... Not to say these are excuses... but Ninpo relies somewhat on the deception and psychological factors mentioned above.

There is a story of the famous dueling swordsman Musashi fighting a Ninja ...

The Ninja is said to have defeated Musashi with a paper fan....

Most would think that the Ninja was more skilled and powerful than Musashi.

This may not be entirely accurate -

I know that Musashi lived through the duel and I believe if the Ninja used a sword – the Ninja would have most likely lost.... There was a reason he used a paper fan...

think about that.

A very paraphrased conversation on this subject with Shidoshi Jack Hoban on this subject.

"Violence for entertainment or personal gratitude is inappropriate and not the warrior way... it is definitely not what the world needs at this time in history"

"Violence should only be applied when there is defined need – and then it should be only applied as efficiently and professionally as your current skill allows."

Jack takes a very different look at this subject than I did... More mature and thought out. Actually I gained a deeper respect for his perspective and felt better about who I am after this conversation. In short it helped me.

Personally, I competed in Judo and wrestling --- as well as a league racquetball champ - I know competition and I know my self... I really don't like the way it affects me. If you are a good competitor – it becomes a matter of winning – not the playing of the game. Competition brought out the worst in me – as a person... but the best in my racquetball technique. Not to say everyone is like me – some are – some aren't.

But all things considered – Think about the why, and the value and the cost.

Then decide for yourself.

Victor Siedleski
Kanshi ShoRi Dojo
August 2002

勝利者