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**SHITO - RYU
KARATE - DO
GENBU - KAI**

Series #5

Nunchaku

Karate weapon of self-defense

沖縄古武道

双節棍

沖縄古武道連合会

OKINAWA KOBUDO ALLIANCE

History Of The Nunchaku

During the Japanese occupation of Okinawa some 350

years ago, invading warlords prohibited the use of ordinary weapons such as the gun, sword and spear. So, the Okinawans turned to karate and kobu-do (the use of karate weapons such as the bo, a staff; sai, a short sword with two prongs at the handle; kama, a sickle; and surushin, a length of rope with weights attached to both ends) for protection. Some kobu-do weapons were farm implements which the ingenious farmers

converted into effective protective devices. For instance, the forerunner of the nunchaku was an instrument used as a bit for horses, and was later put into practical use as a weapon. The nunchaku was constructed of two hardwood sticks which were securely connected by rope braided from horses' tails. (Today, the sticks are tied with rope or chain.) Because of its innocent appearance, the nunchaku could easily be mistaken for a toy or harmless bundle of sticks. In a defensive situation, however, it could be used to strike, block, hit, twist and pinch.

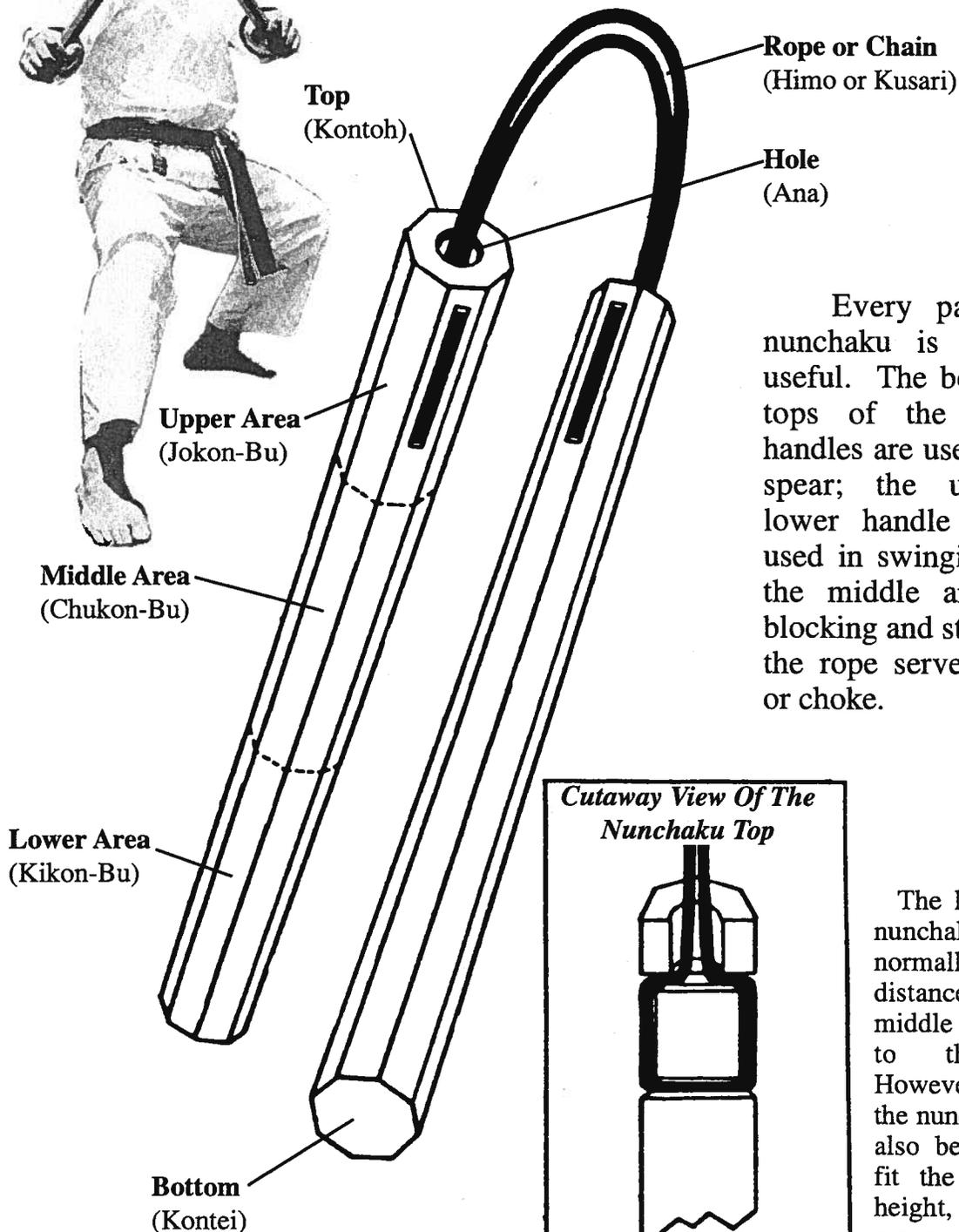
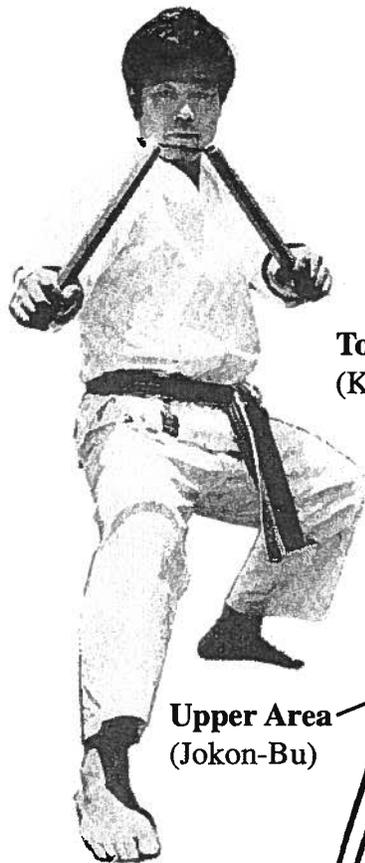
The early practitioners of karate in Okinawa quickly incorporated the art of kobu-do because of its effectiveness, and today many movements of the two arts are alike. Therefore, it is very important that the nunchaku student also have a good knowledge of karate basics.



Tommy

Anatomy Of The Nunchaku

Nunchaku handles should be made from a hardwood that, like oak, loquat or pasanie, is both strong and flexible. The nunchaku rope, originally made of horsehair, is now usually made of nylon or chain.



Every part of the nunchaku is potentially useful. The bottoms and tops of the nunchaku handles are used to jab or spear; the upper and lower handle areas are used in swinging strikes; the middle area is for blocking and striking; and the rope serves to pinch or choke.

Cutaway View Of The Nunchaku Top



The length of the nunchaku should normally equal the distance from the middle of the hand to the elbow. However, the size of the nunchaku should also be adjusted to fit the individual's height, weight and arm power.