
HANDING OVER TO SHIHAN OF THE KSK ACADEMY

Sensei Dirck Heene, Pascal Petrella, and now Michaylo Fedyk, third Shihan of the KSKA answering to our own and unchanging questions. Sensei Fedyk practise in England...

When did you begin with practicing karate and who were your instructors?

Michaylo Fedyk : I first started training in 1969 under Sensei Glen Haslem 3rd Dan who at the time was a senior member of the Karate Union of Great Britain and a member of the British All Styles National Team. Sensei Haslem was a well-respected and renowned karateka.

When and how did you meet Sensei Kase?

I first experienced training under Sensei Kase during the early 1980's. Sensei Kase was often one of the guest senior instructors on Sensei Enoeda's summer and autumn International courses held at Crystal Palace (London).



Why did you select Sensei Kase as your teacher?

My karate mentor and friend was the late and great Sensei Steve Cattle¹. I trained with him from 1978 as a member of Kirkdale KC and the KUGB. Steve was always interested in enhancing our karate knowledge and skills. Steve was an ardent follower of the teachings of Sensei Kase and in 1990 made a monumental decision to leave the KUGB to follow Sensei Kase, of course my loyalties were to remain with Steve and embark on the remarkable journey that Sensei Kase was to offer.

Did you follow him regularly or have there been cuts in the relationship with him, and why?

I followed Sensei Kase and his teachings from 1990 on a regular uninterrupted basis. I enjoyed travelling on an annual basis to many courses throughout Europe and as a member of the then WKSA and now the KSKA. Every course I attended was eagerly awaited and like a new experience, always building on the skills and knowledge of the Kase Ha system. The last training with Sensei was 2003 in Andorra, a truly memorable event.

Since when are you teaching?

My teaching experience dates back many years to 1973 when as a 4th kyu I started my own small club. Throughout the years I have enjoyed my own self-development as a coach and enjoy very much being able to pass on my experience to karateka willing to strive towards improvement in both mind and body.

Do you think that it is possible to save the teaching of Sensei Kase or will history and individual personality influence it in the future?

I believe it is possible. Within the Shihankai we have a group of people dedicated to making this happen. It is down to all of us to ensure we deliver and further develop the teachings of Sensei Kase. We must consider it our responsibility to ensure our own students are able to do this once we are gone.

Now you are a representative of the Sensei Kase's teaching; according to you, which qualities do we need to be a good "practiser"?

In 1999 I went back to university as a mature student and my core study was in coaching principles. I learned so much about the scientific principles of coaching. Having said that I am a serious believer in the individual character and qualities we each have. Some people despite good practical ability will for various reasons not be able to pass on the Kase Ha system methodology to best effect.

¹ See the insert at the end of the interview.



I believe good coaching is about patience and humbleness, we have to have empathy with all who stand in front of us, Sensei Kase treated us all as his family and at the right moment had time for everyone, this is the way.

The Kase Ha School is a way of research in the Shotokan style. Do you think the morphology indicates the style one is choosing? For example, the open hand allows the cosmic energy to enter through the body, and to root it to the ground and stabilize around the centre of gravity. It is quite a workout to introduce this sensation, isn't it? What is your opinion?



I agree. To understand the principles of Kase Ha Ryu overnight is impossibility. It is only in the past two or three years that I have began to truly understand the system despite regular training from 1990.

I think the Kase Ha system allows people to find there own strengths and weaknesses; at this point an individual may make decision on which areas to progress more. I personally like the open hand techniques delivered with breathing variation and the strong rooting sensation connected with correctly timed application. I believe the breathing is key to creating use of unknown / unseen cosmic force.

You belong to the circle of people chosen by Sensei Kase to create the International Academy in 2002. You must be proud of that because it is a big responsibility; what's your feeling about?

I was surprised when approached by Sensei Heene. I asked the question why me? I was unsure of why I was chosen as although I was a regular attendee on courses throughout the years I still felt I was on a vast learning curve and indeed still do.

Sensei Heene assured me that it was as much about personal character as it was prowess on the dojo floor, you are chosen for the reason that Sensei Kase has seen you develop over the years and knows you to be a caring and family orientated individual.



I certainly am very proud of the fact I was chosen and will always endeavour to do my best for the furtherance of Kase Ha Ryu and all members of the KSKA.

You created your own organisation Kase Ha. Can you please tell us your organisation and its influence in your country?

The organisation was created and named English Shotokan Academy by my late Sensei Steve Cattle. Since the loss of Steve I have strived to maintain Steve's vision. There have been many obstacles along the way which at times have been soul destroying. Perhaps one of the best characteristics an individual can develop via martial arts practice is

the determination to carry on whatever barriers one faces. Having a core of like-minded friends is also a key factor.





I now have a developing group of karateka that are regularly attending specialised Academy training sessions, which are progressively designed to build on the principles of Kase Ha Ryu. Four structured courses have recently been completed with the fifth taking place early May 2008.

Course reports are available via KSKA newsletter or the English Shotokan Academy website: www.englishshotokan.net

According to you, what are the factors to develop Shotokan Ryu Kase Ha?

There are many factors. The main factor is having a genuine interest in the Traditional methodology of practice set out by Sensei Kase.

Other key factors include: Perseverance, regular training, training with like-minded people, gaining the correct input from senior karateka and the understanding that practice is not short term: It is a “Life Time Study”.

Which are the perspectives of evolution of the KSK Academy?

Throughout my discussion I have mentioned many different aspects connected with the future evolution of KSKA. We all need to work together and be diligent in the practice of the many associated criteria of KSKA system development.

I have listed thirty-two different criteria to work on through my ESA scheduled progressive training courses, this is not an exhaustive list and as we all progress and understand the system more, the list will grow.

We all need to continue working together as the family group and be prepared to accept slightly different teaching methodology from senior individuals. This is ok as long as we all strive to reach the same outcome.

Sensei Kase was rigorous and astonished his western students because of his spontaneity. Would you please tell us an anecdote from which you still remind, among all those punctuating your own experience with him?

One of the many outstanding memory’s I have is when: One time whilst training in Frieberg (Germany) and whilst practicing Tekki Sandan, Sensei noticed I was making a movement incorrectly and pulled me out to the front of class to demonstrate to all, the correct application of technique.

Whilst making my way to the front of class Sensei observed that I looked very worried about my mistake and that I had an obvious fear of what was going to happen.

As I arrived at the front of class Sensei came close to me and whispered into my ear the words “ *Don’t worry Mike I only show you the correct way*” well what a relief and wasn’t that what Sensei was always trying to do with all of us.

Thank you very much Sensei, for your participation...

Best regards !



Steve Cattle started martial arts at the age of 12 years, with judo in 1960 then Karate in 1962. He was awarded his Shodan by Sensei Enoeda five years later. He was a member of the British team from 1966, until he stopped competing in 1989. He was one of Kase Sensei’s closest students. He said « Sensei Kase is planning a system of Shotokan Karate which will take us not into the 1990’s but into the next century ».

Sensei Kase awarded him his 6th dan in 1994. He died suddenly the year after.

From Steve Cattle, a bunkai expert, we’ll keep in our mind that: movements in kata are « heart and soul » of Karate.

<http://www.oxfordshotokan.org>

