



# Welcome to the Wind River Kempo Karate Club



Background: Thank you for your interest in the Wind River Kempo Karate Club! It was created in January 1998 by Sensei Karen Rogers in Pinedale, WY. Sensei Karen grew up in Cheyenne and went to school in Laramie at the University of Wyoming, graduating with Honors in Anthropology. It was there she began taking Okinawan Kempo Karate from Shihan Amber Travsky in 1991. Sensei Karen earned her 1<sup>st</sup> degree Black Belt in 1996, her 2<sup>nd</sup> in 2000, and her 3<sup>rd</sup> degree in 2003. Sensei Karen trained in Hawaiian Kenpo as well, earning a 3<sup>rd</sup> degree Black Belt under Professor George Lim in 2005. The style she now teaches is a hybrid of Okinawan Kempo and Hawaiian Kenpo. The traditional drills and katas are the focus of the Okinawan Kempo, while real life self defense techniques are the focus of the Hawaiian Kenpo style. Together, they form a very fun and challenging martial art that will help improve the physical shape, self confidence, self discipline and mental focus of its practitioners.

★ Is there a difference between Kempo and Kenpo? Not really. Primarily, it comes down to difference in translation, like Beijing and Peking. When spoken, they sound nearly identical.

Instructors: Shihan Karen Rogers is the head instructor. She is assisted by Miss Heather Hankins of Friday Harbor, WA, Miss Kastle Grimm of Laramie, WY, Miss Monica Hollibaugh of Idaho, now Pinedale and Miss Dari Quirk of Boston, now Pinedale. David Rule is a junior assistant instructor.

Where We Come From: Sensei Karen's instructor is Shihan Amber Travsky of Laramie, WY. Her instructor is Grandmaster Steve Blackburn of Virginia. Hanshi Steve claims three main lines of influence in his style of Okinawan Kenpo, two of which lead back to James Mitose, considered to be the founder of karate in America. These two lines are in Kenpo Karate:

Line 1: James Mitose ► William Chow ► Ed Parker ► Jack Farr ► Jim Lloyd ► Steve Blackburn ► Amber Travsky ► Karen Rogers

Line 2: James Mitose ► Bruce Juchnik ► Steve Blackburn ► Amber Travsky ► Karen Rogers

In Okinawan Kenpo, the line is shorter and is as follows: Shigeru Nakamura ► Hideka Nakayama ► Jim Lloyd ► Steve Blackburn ► Amber Travsky ► Karen Rogers  
Shihan Karen has also been influenced by Hawaiian Kenpo under the instruction of Professor George Lim. Professor specializes in self defense techniques tested in the Palama neighborhood of Hawaii, a proving ground for young sailors and Hawaiian natives. His lineage is direct to the roots of Kempo Karate too:

James Mitose ► William Chow ► Adriano Emperado ► George Lim ► Karen Rogers  
Call it what you will, Shihan Karen's style is unique, demanding, and full of fun drills and techniques. She aims to balance real life self defense techniques with more traditional mental focus drills, pushing students beyond their expectations, both physically and mentally.

Belt Progression: Rank promotion may seem slow in the WRKKC, and that may be due to the lengthy test requirements to include Okinawan and Hawaiian Kempo techniques. Students who are dedicated in class attendance and put in extra effort at home will be promoted more quickly. There is a \$25 testing fee for each rank.

Yellow stripes on a white belt are not the same thing as other colors of stripes. Yellow stripes are used for kids only and are merely stepping stones of encouragement for them. All other colors of stripes indicated below DO signify a distinct rank. Kyu, meaning rank, is used with colored belts only. Dan, meaning degree, is used with black belts only.

Junior ranks are also used (these are indicated by a black stripe running the length of the belt). These are used for kids up to the age of 16. When a student turns 16, he or she will test for an adult rank which may be the same or lesser kyu. Junior ranks are deemed necessary because of the difference in power, comprehension, and ability between kids and adults. The table below shows the belt progression:

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Belt Color</b>
9 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	White Belt
8 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Yellow Belt
7 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Yellow Belt with Blue stripe (High Yellow)
6 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Blue Belt
5 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Blue Belt with Green stripe (High Blue)
4 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Green Belt
3 <sup>rd</sup> Kyu	Red Belt
2 <sup>nd</sup> Kyu	Red Belt with Brown stripe (High Red)
1 <sup>st</sup> Kyu	Brown Belt
1 <sup>st</sup> Dan	Shodan Black Belt
2 <sup>nd</sup> Dan	Nidan Black Belt
3 <sup>rd</sup> Dan	Sandan Black Belt
4 <sup>th</sup> Dan	Yodan Black Belt
5 <sup>th</sup> Dan	Godan Black Belt

Remember that a belt is just is colored piece of fabric to hold your gi together. Don't get hung up on what colored belt you have or want to be. You should continue in the martial arts to learn and improve, not just to think of getting a black belt as the ultimate goal or end.

## Club Purpose

The number one goal of the Wind River Kempo Karate Club is to help all students realize their personal best. As instructors, we will strive to assist with the physical excellence as well as spiritual well-being. Our focus is on self-discipline and self-esteem, NOT on tournaments and winning trophies.

The martial arts is a science and philosophy of fighting which has developed over the centuries on the Orient and which is now popular around the globe.

The martial arts are all too often regarded only as techniques for fighting, when in fact they are much more than that. Studying the martial arts is a way of life, the purpose of which is to enable individuals to realize their full potential, both physically and spiritually. If the spiritual side of karate is ignored, its physical side is meaningless. The ultimate purpose of the martial arts is to develop the better features of the human character rather than merely to strengthen human beings against physical enemies.

The martial arts would not have survived long if they were no more than techniques for fighting. Their vitality and continued appeal derive from their nature as a fusion of formal techniques with a deeper way of the spirit. For this reason, the martial arts should not be regarded only as the means to defeat an enemy, but also as a means of self-development in both the physical and spiritual sense. In sum, the martial arts, properly viewed, are a way of perfecting one's character.

Rank promotion in the Wind River Kempo Karate Club may seem to be a slower pace than some other clubs. The reason for this is a focus on character, rather than basing promotion primarily on technique.

(adapted from Amber Travsky, Laramie Kempo Karate Club)

### Vocabulary:

Karate - Empty Hand

Kempo - Way of the Fist

Sensei - Teacher (Japanese)

Shihan - head of a school

Dojo - Room of Enlightenment or Training (Japanese)

Kata - Traditional pattern or form

Kiai - Yell of energy

Gi - Uniform

Kumite - Sparring

Kobudo - Weapons

## DOJO (TRAINING HALL) RULES

1. No jewelry, watches, rings, ankle bracelets, etc., are allowed unless special exceptions are requested. The reasons for this rule include safety plus the fact that martial arts classes, traditionally, allow no decorations with a uniform.
2. No chewing gum or hard candy.
3. No shoes are to be worn in the dojo. Shoes should be taken off in the hallway and carried in the dojo, or else taken off right inside the doorway.
4. Bow when entering and leaving the dojo. This is a traditional expression of respect for the martial arts and shows you are ready to begin karate class.
5. No leaning on the wall during class. This rule shows self-discipline. Penalty is five pushups (ten for adults).
6. No yawning in class. Also a display of self-discipline, but also of energy and endurance. Another five pushups (ten for adults).
7. No profanity is allowed (this includes \*rap).
8. Uniforms must be neat and clean. If t-shirts are worn, they MUST be tucked in.
9. Talking back to the instructor is not tolerated; if instructions are given they should be followed with no questions or complaining.
10. Bathroom breaks during class now earn the 50/50 Rule, meaning the person must do 50 sit-ups and 50 push-ups when they get back.
11. Late arrivals cannot join the class until bowed in by the instructor.
12. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Three warning will be given, and if the behavior continues the student will be asked to leave the club.
13. No kicking or striking other students unless it is part of a class drill. Any student who breaks this rule must sit out the remainder of the class.
14. Any person using excessive force against another student or instructor may not be allowed to return to the club if the actions persist. We are all here to learn the martial arts - not to hurt our fellow students.
15. Never handle a weapon unless you get permission from its owner first.
16. If you forget your belt at the dojo, it will be returned given a 200 pushup ransom.

\* Remember, only hit as hard as you would want to get hit!

# HISTORY OF KEMPO

Prepared by Amber Travsky, 6th Dan and Edited by Stephen Blackburn, 10th Dan

The art of Kempo is unique, as far as its history goes in two respects: it is considered by many to be the very first eclectic martial art, as well as having reasonably firm roots dating back to 520 b.c. The person who was the catalyst of Kempo was a prince of southern India named Bodhidharma (P'uT'iTaMo in Chinese). According to the records of LoYang temple, Bodhidharma was a Buddhist monk under the tutelage of Prajnatarā. It is presumed that upon his deathbed, Prajnatarā requested Bodhidharma to travel to China where the principles of Buddhism were in decline, and spread the knowledge of dhyana (zen Buddhism or Chan Buddhism).

It is estimated that in 520 during the Southern dynasties, Bodhidharma entered China and traveled northward to the kingdom of Wei where he met Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty. During this meeting the emperor and Bodhidharma entered an intense period of discussion over Zen koans. Bodhidharma did not convince the worldly emperor so he left his court to travel to the Honan province and enter the Shaolin Monastery.

Upon his arrival, Bodhidharma fell noted the haggard condition of the monks. The monks it seemed spent all their time in passive meditation and carried on with little or no physical exercise. Many of the monks would often fall asleep in meditation, while others needed assistance in the basic necessities of life due to their weakened condition. For several days, Bodhidharma himself meditated on the predicament in a cave outside of the temple, seeking enlightenment to the situation. Upon his return, Bodhidharma began to instruct the monks in an art he called Shih Pa Lo Han Sho, or 18 hands of Lo Han. The techniques of Lo Han were used as a method of physical and mental conditioning, and never intended to be used in the arts of war.

During the Sui period of China's history, approximately 40 years or so after Bodhidharma's death, hoodlums furiously assaulted the Shaolin monastery and the monks' attempts at defense were next to futile until a priest, referred to as the "begging monk", defeated several of the outlaws with an extensive array of hand and foot techniques. The techniques of this monk so inspired the other priests that they requested instruction in the martial style as a way of protection. This art was later to be known as Shaolin Chuan Fa or "Fist Method".

Several decades after Bodhidharma's death, a Chuan Fa master known as Ch'ueh Tuan Shangjen (Chin Gempin in Japanese) rediscovered the original Lo Han techniques, lost for many years and adding his knowledge of Chuan Fa to the repertoire, increased the total number of techniques to seventytwo. Ch'ueh then spent the next few years traveling, promoting his art, until he met Li in the province of Shensi. Li, a master of Chuan Fa as well as other arts, further developed the techniques of Ch'ueh, and together formed a total of 108 techniques. Furthermore, they categorized these techniques into five categories, distinguished by various animals whose instinctive actions reflected the movements of this new version of Chuan Fa.

At this period in time, the evolution of Chuan Fa into Kempo breaks off into two separate branches one to the Ryukyu kingdoms of Okinawa and the other to the islands of Japan. Little is known about the actual development of Kempo in Okinawa, much coming through mainly due to legends or comments of certain Karate masters of the 20th century. It is believed that sometime between the Sui and Ming dynasties (800-year gap) Chinese monks brought over Chuan Fa to be taught at various temples. What happened at this point is unknown.

One of the legends that is much easier to follow and well documented concerns a man named Sakugawa who traveled from his province of Shuri to China in the 18th century to learn the secrets of Chuan Fa. After several years Sakugawa returned to Shuri, much to the surprise of his kin who believed him dead, with a mastery of Chuan Fa. Over the years, Sakugawa refined the techniques of Chuan Fa and formed the art of Shurite, the predecessor of modern Karate.

Another member of Shuri, Shionja, returned to Okinawa from China around 1784 with a Chinese companion, an envoy from the court of Peking, named Kushanku bringing with them the art of Chuan Fa which both studied in China and traveled around Okinawa demonstrating their art.

Aside from these two brief tales, little can be said about the development of Kempo in Okinawa for little or no mention of its being is mentioned until the popularization of Karate in 1903. None the less, the development of Chuan Fa can be clearly seen in the arts of Shorin ryu and Goju ryu Karate, as well as Ryukyu Kempo.

In 1609 Okinawa was taken over by the Shimazu clan of Japan who passed a number of prohibitive ordinances including a ban on all weapons. In 1629 Okinawans banded together to resist the enemy, resulting in a new fighting style called "te" and translated "hand". This style is the first recorded instance of an art that closely approximates modern karate. The study of this art went "underground" to avoid detection by the Japanese samurai. Because of this, 'te' took on two characteristics: it became secretive and it became extremely violent since the sole purpose of its practitioners was to maim or kill.

In 1875 Japanese occupation ended but the secrecy of karate continued for some time. Rivalry between schools developed as each began vying with others for supremacy in these arts. Some schools developed a competitive sport emphasis while others preferred to keep their art on a higher level, disdaining from competition of any sort and practicing only kata.

The evolution of Chuan Fa is far from clear in Japan and many gaps still remain. The term Kempo is the Japanese pronunciation of Chuan Fa and translates as "Law of the Fist" or "Way of the Fist". One of the main theories behind the development of Kempo is similar to that in Okinawa that concerns the various Buddhist temples teaching the art to various young monks. The actual practice of Kempo in these temples was kept secret until the 17th century, at which time the art of Shorinji Kempo began to be taught outside the temple.

The true flowering of Kempo in Japan was a result of Hideyoshi Toyotomi's moves to invade and conquer China. In Japanese tradition it is stated that three Samurai returning from China brought with them an extensive knowledge of Chuan Fa, learned from Chin Gempin. Starting in the 16th century, Kempo included these techniques of punching, grappling, and nerve strikes with the extensive array of weapon and hand to hand arts that became Atemiwaza and Jujutsu or Aikijutsu. Hideyoshi's samurai can be given much credit to the spread of Kempo to its present state and are the greatest influence in its evolution in Japan since Ch'ueh and Li.

At the beginning of the 17th century two families, the Kumamoto and the Nagasaki brought knowledge of Chuan Fa from China to Kyushu in Japan. This art was modified throughout the years into its current form known as Koshoryu Kempo, or "Old Pine Tree Style". The most modern versions of Kempo have sprouted from this form.

In 1916, at the age of five, James Mitose was sent to Kyushu from his homeland of Hawaii for schooling in his ancestor's art of selfdefense called Koshoryu Kempo. For fifteen years he studied this art which was a direct descendant of original Shaolin Chuan Fa. After completing his training in Japan, Mitose returned to Hawaii in 1936 and opened the Official Selfdefense Club in Beretania mission in Honolulu where five of the major participants responsible for Kempo began: Thomas Young, William Chow, Edward Lowe, Arthur Keawe, and Paul Yamaguchi.

In 1934 the term Kempo Karate was first used in the Yoen Jiho Sha newspaper advertising the visit of Karateka Chojun Miyagi's visit to Hawaii. It's interesting to note the use of the term Kempo and Karate here in unison. Certain theories state that all Karate is Kempo but Kempo is not Karate. Some speculate that the terms were used in conjunction as an advertising scheme while others state that Chojun Miyagi's Gojuryu Karate was a unification of Chuan Fa and Okinawan Karate and used the term as it was the best description of his art.

William Chow perhaps is responsible for creating the next big leap in Kempo. A student of Mitose's Kempo, Chow united his skills and renamed his art Karaho Kempo. In 1949, Chow who had attracted a large number of students opened a club of his own at the YMCA and started to call his own variation Kenpo Karate.

One of Chow's pupils was Edmund Parker, a Hawaii native born in 1931. Ed Parker as he was known, was to be the last significant person to propel Kempo into its present form. In 1954 Ed Parker earned his black belt in Karaho Kempo and two years later became a household name teaching his art to the likes of Elvis Presley and Steve McQueen. Ed Parker further refined his techniques into the American Kenpo system

himself and his martial arts style. Lao Hu means Old Tiger, which he feels represents him in the martial arts. Lao Hu is influenced by Okinawan Kempo, Shaolin Gung Fu, and Filipino Weapons arts. Only a handful of students are taught at a time, and they are carefully picked. Hanshi Steve Blackburn, recently promoted to 10<sup>th</sup> Degree Grandmaster by Soke Jim, is the inheritor of this style. Sensei Karen is currently under their direction, although she continues to primarily teach the Okinawan Kempo katas and techniques that Soke Jim taught in Cheyenne in 1973-74.

#### The Laramie Kempo Karate Club

Shihan Amber Travsky began the Laramie Kempo Karate Club in 1985. Her Instructor, Shihan Stephen Blackburn, had taught in Laramie for a number of years and had established the Okinawa Kempo school. When he moved to Washington, D.C., he passed on the club to another black belt but promoted Ms. Travsky to Shodan (1st Dan black belt) just before leaving. Ms. Travsky continued with the Okinawa Kempo club until choosing to establish a separate dojo. Shihan Blackburn continues as her instructor and has established a dojo in Virginia.

Prior to studying kempo with Mr. Blackburn, Shihan Travsky studied Tae Kwon Do, beginning in 1973, and Tang Soo Do Moo Duk Kwan, beginning in 1978. She received her Shodan for Okinawa Kempo in 1982, her Shodan in Moo Duk Kwan Karate in 1985, her Nidan (2nd Dan) for Okinawa Kempo in 1986, her Sandan (3rd Dan) in 1989, her Yodan (4th Dan) in January 1997, and Godan (5th Dan) in April 2000.

What's the difference between Kempo and Kenpo?

The only difference is in spelling. Both Kempo and Kenpo are technically pronounced the same and both are the English representation of the word "Kempo" which means Way or Law of the fist. Generally, most offshoots of Karaha Kempo such as Ed Parker's American Kenpo Karate utilize Kenpo instead of Kempo. William Chow was the first person to use Kenpo to show his break off from Koshoryu Kempo.

Styles of Kempo (This is not a complete list of Kempo styles)

**Koshoryu Kempo** This style of Kempo was brought by visiting monks to the Mitose family monastery in the 15th century. Over the centuries this form of Shaolin Chuan Fa was blended and refined with forms of jujitsu that were common in the area. Koshoryu (name of the Mitose clan) not only teaches the hand techniques of Kempo but also includes methods of archery, flower arranging, rinzai zen Buddhism, and philosophy. The current grandmaster of Koshoryu Kempo is Bruce Juchnik who uses the term Sei Kosho Shorei Kai (S.K.S.K.) Kempo to describe Mitose style.

**Shaolin Kempo** The Shaolin Kempo system was formed by Fred Villari a student of American and Shorinji Kempo systems. Fred Villari's system tended more towards the KungFu element and utilizes the techniques of 5animal Chuan Fa to a larger extent than most systems. Added to the Kempo system was the white tiger Chin Na (grappling) techniques and various new forms.

Karaho Kenpo Founded by William Kwaisun Chow, this was an offshoot of Koshoryu Kempo that was blended with the Chow family 5-animal Chuan Fa. Karaho Kenpo utilizes many circular as well as linear techniques and requires 500 such techniques be learned for blackbelt status. Currently, Karaho Kenpo is under the evolution of Sam Kuoha who has added various new techniques as well as 12 kata based on Chow's original 12 base linear techniques. In the 50's Chow's system was called Chinese Karaho Kenpo Karate but in the 80s he changed the spelling to Kempo to differentiate his style from other sub systems.

American Kenpo An offspring of Karaho Kenpo, Ed Parker's American Kenpo system is the largest and most well known Kempo system in existence. Parker took what Chow taught him and organized every technique and movement into a format that could be broken down into levels for all students. Parker felt that the innovations he added to his Kenpo eventually made up 85% of the system, thus he renamed it American Kenpo. American Kenpo system can be seen in the movies "The Perfect Weapon" and "Street Knight" starring 4th Dan Jeff Speakman head of the United Kenpo Karate Association.

Additional Kempo Styles:

Nippon Kempo

Okinawa Kenpo

American Shaolin Kenpo

White Tiger Kenpo

Does Kempo use other weapons aside from its fists?

In Kempo schools, defenses against knives and clubs are seen from yellow belt and up as being the prime weapons for attacks. Kempo also teaches its students how to use various ancient weapons with emphasis on 6 main weapon types in many schools. Students can learn weapons in most schools from green belt and up although certain schools restrict the usage to black belts. It's required for students to acquire at least 5 weapon proficiencies by 2nd degree.

Kempo forms

Kempo has many forms with a notable characteristic of having both circular and linear movements as well as hard and soft techniques. Kempo forms are used to teach speed and coordination of strikes, as well as various principles such as angling, zone theories, and combination succession.

Black and White Gis

A common conversation is the Gis worn by Kempo students. In most other traditional martial arts styles, white is the traditional gi. In traditional Kempo schools, all beginning students wear the traditional black gi, but as they progress they are allowed to wear any gi. It is common for many highranks to wear either a white or a black gi, and at black belt level it is common to mix both white and black gi tops and bottoms.

Similarities between Kempo and other arts

Kempo and other martial arts have various similarities primarily because of Kempo's diverse background and "borrowing" nature.

Tae Kwon Do and Kempo: Many of the aerial kicks and spinning kicks can be found in Kempo. The crescent and axe kicks are very common as are jumping side, roundhouse, and front kicks. Also common are jump spinning back kicks, jump spinning crescent kicks, as well as scissor kicks. After all, TaeKwonDo forms were taken from Shotokan and Okinawa-te, which were both influenced by Kempo.

Karate and Kempo: Karate and Kempo share the closest similarities in techniques due to similar backgrounds. Beginner students utilize the hard blocks, and fist techniques of Karate to a large extent as well as include various circular and soft blocks found in Gojuryu and Shorinryu. Another similarity is in training, using the horse stance as a training stance as well as the torque of the hips to create power.

Jujitsu and Kempo: Jujitsu derives many of its throwing techniques from Kempo, primarily its sweeps, hip and shoulder throws. Recently, many Kempo schools have started to add back the various loin/reap throws as well as sacrifice throws. Jujitsu has a greater amount of throwing techniques over Kempo and will most likely stay that way.

Aikijutsu and Kempo: Certain projection techniques found in Aikijutsu originated in Kempo, primarily Shihonage IrimiNage techniques as well as ennoirimi. Like Jujitsu, Kempo took many projection techniques of Aikijutsu that would fit with Kempo's postures and overall techniques.

Kung Fu and Kempo: Although Kempo has many origins in Kung Fu styles its evolution has thrown many of the soft techniques out the window so to speak. The principles derived from animals (dragon, snake, crane, leopard, tiger, monkey) have been kept as well as key techniques, but the overall division of techniques has changed drastically.