

Vince Morris

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FIG. 1: First Position Angle.



FIG. 2: Second Position Angle, Approx. 20%.



FIG. 3: Third/Final Position Angle, Approx. 40%.

An experienced judoka - at least when I used to train in that art many years ago would always include a number of Shime-waza (methods of strangling) which would be applied in most cases during groundwork.

From my own experience (I actually applied one to my opponent during a championship which rendered him unconscious without the referee even noticing!) I found them

to be a very effective control technique, as, properly applied, one's opponent had no choice but to 'tap out' in submission.

Essentially the aim of the waza was to apply pressure to various areas of the neck, often - but not exclusively - using the opponent's jacket collar as a means of achieving this either by wrapping part of it tightly around the throat or by using it as a fulcrum by inserting the

thumbs or fingers under it and twisting the knuckles into the carotid area.

When I turned to Karate, however, it was very many years before I found

Strangles & Chokes



First Position.

of various methods of self-defence as my interests in Law Enforcement Training began to assume a greater importance than the simple sporting concept of winning medals.

Rough and tough, fast and furious as this undoubtedly is - and I will not deny that which I enjoyed so much and which taught me so

the trachea, whilst the latter was careful to avoid compressing the front of the neck (and thus the trachea) and directed a squeezing force to both sides of the neck in specific to the carotid and jugular structures, cutting off the supply of blood to the brain.

Whilst temporarily denying oxygenated blood to reach the brain would cause unconsciousness for a brief period, following which the subject would recover with few if any ill effects, the crushing of the windpipe could seriously damage the subject, even to the point of causing death!

The technique which I teach and advocate is based upon that devised by Kansas City Police Officer James Lidell. Combined arm, neck and body controls are not as effective for most officers as the direct, rear, side neck-specific compression which requires minimum physical effort using the Lateral Vascular Neck Restraint vs. maximum physical exertion for other methods. Statistics show that 50% of all subjects will cease resistance at Level One with low-level compression on the sides of the neck; 25% will comply at Level Two with medium compression on the neck; and the other 25% will comply at Level Three or be rendered unconscious in 4 to 7 seconds. Result: No death, injury or litigation for excessive use of force for 55 years against agencies using the certified (LVNR®) System!

(Note the 3 levels refer to the angle of the subject to the Officer applying the technique, which I demonstrate in the full article in Traditional Karate magazine.)

So why, then, are police neck restraints being banned in so many jurisdictions and even in some countries in Europe?

RE-EVALUATION!

Many years ago - in 1976 to be precise, I wrote an article in Traditional Karate entitled: 'Strangles and Chokes' in which I discussed the pros and cons of using a choke hold to temporarily disable an assailant without causing significant injury.

I set out in detail the two distinct methods of applying the technique, and the differences were very important, in that one was much more capable of seriously damaging the attacker, whilst the other was a much safer option.

Evolving from two concepts from Shaolin Chin 'Na, one denoted as 'Sealing the Breath' the other as 'Sealing the Blood.'

The differences between these two concepts created very different outcomes. The former worked to cut off the air supply to the brain by direct pressure to

referees to ensure 'fair play' nor indeed any rules at all to ensure that if broken bottles, knives, guns, baseball bats, heavy ashtrays and fist friends are kept out of it!

Being concerned with Law Enforcement also placed me in a rather different position, as, unlike members of the public, police officers cannot simply flee the scene of trouble. They are expected to be able to step in and halt affairs, protect innocent civilians, deal with often extreme levels of violence, and many times control those who are drunk, drugged or mentally unbalanced. Frequently this is only possible by physically restraining the offender.

Now as well as this, each officer is under an obligation to use only such degree of force as is necessary to ensure his or her safety and the safety of any civilians involved.

There is a duty to consider the safety of the offender. We may not like this; nonetheless the fact is that any force applied must be justifiable!

Indeed in the USA there is a vast industry involved in the offenders using the arresting officers for the use of excessive force. Sometimes, unfortunately, it is proved to be correct, as in the infamous 'Rodney King' case (which I tend to think derives from poor training, not intent).

What became apparent was that although many hundreds of years ago the Shaolin Chin 'Na distinction between sealing the blood and sealing the breath might have been well understood, it seemed that many of the techniques in the Kata made little distinction between the two concepts.

This had no effect at all on the efficiency of the techniques of course, but in terms of defensibility in the 'Use of Force Continuum' it had definite consequences.

It meant that many techniques that would rapidly induce pain and unconsciousness were too inherently dangerous to teach as acceptable control tactics.

To the best of my knowledge, from the time Dr Jigoro Kano introduced the emergent art of Judo, which included as I said before, a number of Shime-waza, there have been no deaths due to their application.

Having said that, there is no doubt that many of the techniques,

officers, especially those which placed inordinate pressure upon the trachea. This sensitive area of the throat is extremely vulnerable, and force applied here can cause a fracture of the small bones, obstruction of the airway and consequent death.

Indeed in some states in the USA the use of neck restraints is either banned or placed high up on the Use of Force scale alongside the use of deadly weapons.

Other states have taken a different approach, however, and in 1970 the Kansas City Police Dept. Allowed the use of what became known as the 'Lateral Vascular Neck Restraint' system.

Developed by 3rd Dan Judo and Police Academy instructor James Lidell, his system offered a defined method of applying pressure to the neck in a way which was not affecting the airways, and which was capable of being applied in three stages of intensity, thus

Front View shows no pressure on the windpipe.

The Forgotten Art

It became clear to me that it was necessary to devise a method of restraint that would on the one hand be effective and on the other be safe.

These considerations took me back to the Kata, and to look again at the applications that seemed best explicable as chokes and strangles.

if not directed initially at the larynx and trachea, in the heat of battle many times ended up with direct pressure on this area.

There have

Second Position, Angle slightly increased.

Knee-jerk reactions to the unfortunate death of George Floyd in Minneapolis was the major instigator, even though his demise was not as a result of the application of such a technique!

Research from the videos available show Office Derek Chauvin kneeling on George Floyd's neck/upper back, not applying a classic choke-hold (i.e., a hand/arm wrap that directly compresses the airway). CCTV, body-cam, and bystander footage clearly depict a knee on Floyd's neck/upper back for about nine minutes; that is positional compression from a knee, not an arm-applied choke.

The general misinformed uproar eventually scared Police Departments (and their Lawyers) to place severe restrictions upon the use of the Bi-lateral Neck Restraint, even to banning it altogether.

And what are the consequences when agencies remove them from the force continuum?

When the ban came into operation in LA, for example, prior to that many street officers considered the carotid control hold to be one of the most effective ways to control violently resisting suspects without escalating to higher levels of force.

I stated at the time, that removing this technique would inevitably have consequences!

It seemed obvious to me that removing this very effective control method would mean that officers faced with the task of defending themselves from a violent aggressor or detaining such an individual would inevitably lead to policy changes which, in the LAPD for example, generated officer training manuals which advised: *"Don't tie up with the suspect, use your baton."* A later training video issued advised officers to *"push away and use your baton and/or kicks to control the situation."*

Frankly, the results of this abrupt change in Officer training should have been obvious, and some 18 months after the change, the LAPD reported that injuries to confrontational suspects had increased by: *'661%, while injuries to officers rose by 521% in the year following the policy change.'*

That debate has intensified in the years following George Floyd's death in Minneapolis. In response, lawmakers in many states moved quickly to ban so-called chokeholds or restrict neck restraints to deadly-force situations only. But while the political momentum behind those bans is recent, the debate itself is not new.

More than four decades ago, the Los Angeles Police Department eliminated the carotid control hold — a tactic similar to the lateral vascular neck restraint (LVNR) — after years of public controversy surrounding police "chokeholds." At the time, many street officers considered the carotid control hold one of the most effective ways to control violently resisting suspects without escalating to higher levels of force.

The question policymakers should ask today is the same one that should have been asked then: What happens when officers lose an intermediate-force option that many considered effective and relatively safe?

The LAPD's 1982 ban on the carotid control hold significantly changed how officers were trained to respond to resistance. According to department training materials at the time, officers were instructed: "Don't tie up with the suspect, use your baton." A later training video advised officers to "push away and use your baton and/or kicks to control the situation."

Critics argued the policy change created a gap in the force continuum by removing a hands-on restraint option without replacing it with an equally effective alternative.

Eighteen months after the ban, then-LAPD Chief Daryl F. Gates reported that injuries to suspects had increased by 661%, while injuries to officers rose by 521% in the year following the policy change. Those numbers became a central argument for critics who believed the department's revised tactics resulted in more violent physical encounters and increased reliance on impact weapons.

In a national study published by the Canadian Police Research Centre it was concluded: "... while no restraint methodology is completely risk free, there is no medical reason to routinely expect grievous bodily harm or death following the correct application of the vascular neck restraint in the general population by professional police officers with standardized training and technique."

Of course, so many of the ill-informed public seize upon and use fallacious statements about the dangers of the neck restraint, and use them as a weapon to demonise Officers and promote their own - often divisive - social objectives.

Whatever their reasons, it cannot be good, especially for perpetrators, to end up with the unintended consequences of being beaten with batons, incapacitated by tazers or even shot!

The art of choking techniques is one of the fundament essential levels in the Kissaki-Kai syllabus, taught on many of the seminars as a basic requirement for effective self-defence.

most cases with a few exceptions, using these well-established and - if the evidence is considered carefully - reasonably safe control methods.

Now Law Enforcement has to resort to pepper spray and Tazers, neither of which have a brilliant success record.

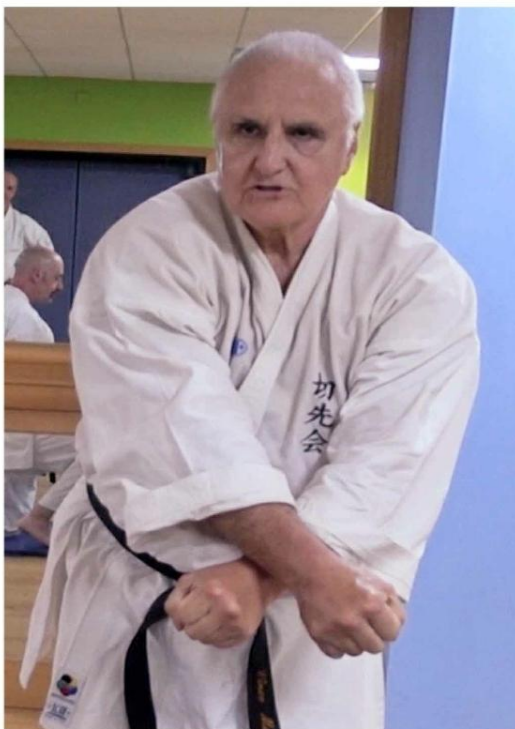
Civilians, however, are still free to use these methods within the constraints of 'Reasonable Force!'



Remember to check us out on the Vince Morris FaceBook page.

You are welcome to email for information or to ask questions. Also see dates on website for other seminars

vincemorris@kissaki-kai.com



Above you see an example of a technique (Juji-Uke) found in various Kata and invariably explained as a downward cross block. In the majority of cases, it blatantly is not! Just another attempt by some sensei to convince their students that they know the 'secrets' of Kata by demonstrating their actual ignorance!

**Upcoming Seminars in Belgium
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Find details of all seminar and training dates on the International website:

www.kissakikarate.com

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