



The Kata of Muso Jikiden Eishin Ryu

Shoden Level or Omori-ryu

There are three levels of Iai (aware and ready) kata (formal techniques) in Eishin ryu. The first or shoden level consist of eleven forms developed by Omori Rokurozaemon, a student of Hasegawa Eishin and an expert in Shinkage Ryu kenjutsu. With the unification of Japan the samurai had no wars to fight (1615-1867). Omori combined a series of sword drawing exercises with the etiquette of the tea ceremony to create the formal Seiza Kata. This was the birth of 'Iaido' where techniques of self-defense became techniques of self-development.

These kata are used for grading for second dan and above in the All United States Kendo Federation. They are called the koryu kata, which means classical martial traditions or ancient forms. All but one, Oikaze, begin from the seiza (kneeling) position. The O chiburi (blood throw) is done standing with the feet together.

Present Name	English meaning and explanation of technique	
1. Mae	Front	The enemy is in seiza before you when he goes for his sword.
2. Migi	Right	You is facing right and your enemy is in seiza at your left.
3. Hidari	Left	You are facing left and your enemy is in seiza at your right.
4. Ushiro	Rear	You are facing the rear and the enemy is in seiza behind you.
5. Yaegaki	Barriers within	Your enemy survives your first over head cut and plays possum barriers until you begin noto. As he attacks again, you move back and draw to block a cut to the leg and

		counter-attack with kirioroshi.
6. Uke Nagashi	Flowing Block	Your standing attacker is facing from the left. You perform a rising deflecting block and counter-attack.
7. Kaishaku	Assist Onward	Acting as one who helps another, as he commits seppuku (Hara-Kiri).
8. Tsukekomi	Seize Opportunity	Your enemy is to the front. Using a flowing block, you counter-attack to the head and then to middle level. Then step back into hidari jodan. Lower to the left knee to the floor bringing the blade forward and perform a wiping chiburi and then noto.
9. Tsukikage	Moon Shadow	Your attacker is standing to your right. You rise and cut under his arms, push him back, and cut him down.
10. Oikaze	Chase the Wind	Standing, you chase the enemy and cut him down before he can escape.
11. Nukiuchi	Sudden Attack	Seated, you cut the enemy down as he bows before you.

Chuden Tatehiza waza (Middle level techniques)

The second level consists of Eight kata. These are self-defense techniques developed and added to the ryu by Hasegawa Eishin after 1610 when he became the seventh headmaster. Tatehiza means 'standing knee' and is difficult for westerners to sit in at first. It is a position the samurai used for resting when wearing a full suit of armor. The cleansing of the blade in these forms is performed with a yoko-chiburi by snapping the sword to the right almost parallel to the floor.

1. Yoko Gumo	Cloud Bank	This is similar to seiza mae except for the yoko-chiburi cleansing of the blade.
2. Tora-no-Issoku	One leg of a tiger	Stepping back out of tatehiza block a cut to the right leg and counter-attack.
3. Ina Zuma	Lightning Flash	Stepping back out of tatehiza cut up under the

		standing attacker's forearms and as in the seitei iai Kesa Giri then bring the left knee down and counter-attack with kirioroshi.
4. Uki Gumo	Floating Clouds	Sitting in tatehiza facing to the left, look right then rise away from a grab to the tsuka (handle) of your sword and counterattack, dragging the enemy to the ground and cutting diagonally from right to left.
5. Yama Oroshi	Mountain Wind	Facing left grab the tsuka with both hands moving it in a clock wise circle to avoid it being grabbed and counter attack with the butt end of the sword to his face. Draw the sword, drag him to the floor and cut with kirioroshi.
6. Iwa Nami	Waves breaking	Facing right step back with the left foot while drawing the sword. Draw the sword against the rocks left foot to the right turning 90% to the left and slide forward with the right foot thrusting forward into the attacker bringing the left knee to the floor. Drag him to the right and cut him with kirioroshi.
7. Uroko Gaeshi	Fish Scale Rollover	This kata is similar to seiza migi where you are seated facing right, but your enemy is standing to your left. The major difference besides the starting position is that you rise as you turn and step back after you turn

		instead going forward. Counter-attack moving forward and kneeling with a kirioroshi.
8. Nami Gaeshi	Returning Wave	In this form you are seated with your back to a standing enemy. Turn 180% pivoting on the balls of your feet and rise before stepping back and return forward to counter-attack with kirioroshi.
9. Taki Otoshi	Cascading Waterfall	In this form you are seated facing the rear when the enemy grabs the end of your saya to prevent you from drawing your blade. Step back rising and then forward pressing the tsuka down and up to tear it out of his hand. Step forward with the right foot turning 180%, tsuki, pull the blade out and step toward the enemy going down on the left knee performing kirioroshi.
10. Makko	Direct Cut	This kata is similar to the seiza Nuki-uchi, but instead of drawing the blade to Face to Face the left side of the enemy's head, lift it straight up blending nukitsuke, furikaburi, and kirioroshi into one movement. Perform yoko- chiburi and noto.

Okuden Suwariwaza
(Deep Level Crouching Techniques)

The eight core tatehiza kata and the ten standing tachiwaza were developed during the Sengoku Period (Age of Warring States) by Hayashizaki Jinsuke using a long tachi style sword. It was originally known as Hayashizaki-ryu. The kata were later

revised by Hasegawa Eishin, the seventh headmaster of the style, using the shorter and straighter katana that is thrust cutting edge upwards through the belt. The school became identified by his name do to his fame as a peerless swordsman. Toyotomi Hideyoshi, the ruler of Japan from 1582 to 1598, bestowed upon Eishin the title of *Muso Ken* (Sword without equal). The first seven headmasters of the style were contemporaries who lived through a great age of conflict. Each contributed to the development of what would become *Muso Jikiden Eishin Ryu* (Unequaled Direct-Lineage Eishin Style).

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| 1. Kasumi | Misty Haze | Moving forward step out with the right leg and cut across the enemy's eyes. As he leans away, turn the wrist and cut back at the level of the leg, then around behind to perform kirioroshi as you slide forward. Again it ends with yoko-chiburi and noto coming back into iai-goshi. |
| 2. Sune Gakoi | Shin Guard | This form is just like Torano-Issoku except the enemy is closer and it is performed faster. |
| 3. To Zume | Close/Near | Two enemies are seated before you. Turn 45% as you rise to a keeling position and cut down the enemy using just the right hand. Then turn 90% to the left to cut down a second enemy using a two hand cut. |
| 4. To Waki | Beside the Door | Seated between two enemies, draw and stab the one to the left before turning 180% as you rise to one knee and cut down the enemy to the right. |
| 5. Shiho Giri | Four Directions Cut | You are seated in the middle of four enemies, all facing the same direction. Draw and stab the enemy to |

- the left rear, then rise to one knee as you turn 270% and cut down the one seated to the right rear. Turn 180% to the left to cut the enemy to the front left and then turn 90% to cut down the one at the front right.
6. Tana Shita Under the Porch You are hiding in ambush under a veranda or cupboard. As you draw, slide your right foot forward as far as you can in a crouch and draw the body after it in a very low posture as you bring the sword back over your head. Then rise to one knee and perform kirioroshi.
7. Ryo Zume Both Sides Close In a narrow space, draw forward and bring the tsuka back toward navel. Thrust the kissaki to the front before pulling back and perform a kirioroshi.
8. Tora Bashiri Tiger's Run This is very similar to Oikaze, but from tatehiza. Rise to a crouch and run forward in short steps before drawing and cutting down the enemy. After noto run backwards in short steps and perform the kata again stepping back and coming down on one knee with kirioroshi.

Okuden Iai Tachiwaza
(Deep Level Standing Techniques)

1. Yuki Zure Walking Together You are prisoner being escorted by two enemies. You drop back two steps,

		draw and cut down the one to the right using the right hand, then turn 90% and cut down the one to the left using kirioroshi. End with yoko-chiburi and noto.
2. Tsure Dachi	Companions	<p>Same situation as above except the enemy to the right is ahead of you and the one to the left is behind. Draw the tsuka toward the front right while performing saya biki. Step left as you thrust into the enemy. Then turn 180% to the right and shuffle step and perform kirioroshi.</p>
3. Somakuri	All Around	<p>This kata is very similar to Sougiri of the Seitei-gata except it has a longer and lower power stance when cutting. Again it starts forward then retreats with a uke nagashi followed by a right cut to the head, left cut to the clavicle, right cut to the upper ribs, left cut across the lower stomach, and then straight down from head to groin.</p>
4. Sodome	Stop Everything	<p>In this form you have three enemies coming up a flight of stairs. On the third step draw forward and down to the right with a strong saya biki. On the next step perform noto without a Chiburi. Then repeat this twice before performing yoko-chiburi and then noto.</p>
5. Shinobu	Stealthily	<p>It is dark and you cannot see the enemy, but you</p>

know he is there. Move slowly and quietly forward and to the left crouching while drawing your blade. Lightly tap the kissaki on the floor in front of your original position. When the enemy cuts at the sound, you stand and cut down behind the sound of his sword.

6. Yuki Chigai

Passing By

As you walk forward two enemies pass on your left and more vulnerable side, going the other way, one in front of the other. Stepping forward with your right foot, strike the second one in the face with the tsukagashira. Withoutstepping, pivot 180% to the left as you perform uke nagashi and cut down the first enemy with a kirioroshi. Turn back to the right pivoting on the balls of the feet and bringing the blade over your head and return, cutting the other one down.

7. Sode Suri Gaeshi

Sleeve Touching

As you walk through a crowd, draw the blade and place it over your left shoulder as you cross your arms. Step up to the bystanders and put your arms between them. Being careful not to cut them, shove the bystanders apart and cut the enemy down with kirioroshi.

8. Moniri

Enter the Gate

Three enemies ambush you as you enter through a low

gate, two in front and one behind you. Draw your blade and from your hip thrust forward into the first. Turn 180% to the left, step completely under the gate before performing kirioroshi to avoid the beam overhead. Then repeat the same technique to cut down the third.

9. Kabe Zoe

Against the Wall

This form is against one enemy in a confined space. Draw the sword straight up while pulling down on the saya. The kirioroshi cuts through and ends pointing toward the floor. The chiburi is snapped down and to right. Noto is performed by return the blade in almost the same way it was drawn.

10. Uke Nagashi

Flowing Block

Your enemy is in front of you. Step forward with your right foot then step across in front of it with your left foot as you draw your sword half way out of the saya. Then step back and to right with your right foot bringing the blade up in a flowing block. Lift the left foot and stamp it down bringing the right foot to it while performing kirioroshi.

Sources; 'Flashing Steel', by Masayuki Shimabukuro and 'Kim's Big Book of Iaido', Kim Taylor