Following on from KIHON and KATA, this fourth book in the series covers the third pillar of Shotokan Karate – KUMITE – meaning sparring. In it, the various forms of combat sparring in Shotokan Karate are explained and covered in a wide span between the simple ones to the more complex ones. In this way, a broad palette is covered from the first exercises with a partner in the grading programme up to the more flexible forms of sparring. Using numerous photos, the Kareteka is lead, step by step, through the techniques. The reader also goes through which techniques and actions promise more success in competition. Likewise, further themes cover tactics in competition as well as preparatory training for competition. Tips on self-defence apart from the competitive variants round off the subject.

Joachim Grupp has been practicing Karate since 1976. He holds a 4th Dan in Shotokan Karate and is instructor of a Karate Club in Berlin. He has already published three earlier works on this subject entitled 'Shotokan Karate – Kihon, Kumite, Kata', 'Shotokan Karate – Kata Vol 1' and 'Shotokan Karate – Kata Vol 2'.
Shotokan Karate
Kumite
Shotokan Karate
Kumite

Meyer & Meyer Sport
Index

Foreword ...................................................... 9

1 Introduction – Kumite in Shotokan Karate ................. 13

2 Elementary Kumite Exercise Forms in Shotokan Karate .... 20
   Preliminary Remarks ...................................... 21
   2.1 Pre-exercise Formalities ................................. 22
   2.2 Gohon-Kumite .......................................... 24
   2.2.1 Gohon-Kumite 1 .................................. 26
   2.2.2 Gohon-Kumite 2 .................................. 27
   2.3 Sanbon-Kumite ......................................... 28
   2.4 Kihon-Ippon-Kumite ................................... 29
   2.5 Kaeshi-Ippon-Kumite .................................. 32
   2.5.1 Kaeshi-Ippon-Kumite 1 ............................. 32
   2.5.2 Kaeshi-Ippon-Kumite 2 ............................. 34
   2.6 Okuri-Ippon-Kumite .................................. 37
   2.7 Happo-Kumite .......................................... 38
   2.8 Jiyu-Ippon-Kumite .................................... 40
   2.8.1 Jiyu-Ippon-Kumite 1 ............................... 40
   2.8.2 Jiyu-Ippon-Kumite 2 ............................... 44
   2.8.3 Jiyu-Ippon-Kumite 3 ............................... 45
   2.8.4 Jiyu-Ippon-Kumite with other Counter Techniques ... 45

3 Jiyu-Kumite – Sparring .................................... 48
   Preliminary Remarks ...................................... 49
   3.1 Partner Exercise in Sparring ........................... 50
   3.1.1 Partner Exercise in Sparring 1 .................... 50
   3.1.2 Partner Exercise in Sparring 2 .................... 52
   3.1.3 Partner Exercise in Sparring 3 .................... 53
   3.1.4 Partner Exercise in Sparring 4 .................... 55
   3.2 Strategies and Principles of Sparring .................. 56

4 Kumite-Shiai – Kumite for Competition ..................... 62
   4.1 Demands and Basics .................................... 63
   4.2 Stance, On Guard Position – Kamae .................... 66
   4.3 Movements .............................................. 67
4.4 Control, Timing and Feeling for Distance .................70
4.5 Tactical Training, Fighting Spirit and Psychology ..........73
4.6 About the Rules ..................................77
4.7 Basic Principles ..................................80
4.7.1 Defence – Counters ...............................80
4.7.2 Sabaki ...........................................82
4.7.3 De-Ai ............................................84
4.7.4 The Defensive Situation ...........................86
4.8 Attacking Techniques with Zuki and Uchi ..............88
4.8.1 Single Techniques .................................88
4.8.1.1 Kizami-Zuki ..................................88
4.8.1.2 Gyaku-Zuki ..................................91
4.8.1.3 Uraken .........................................92
4.8.1.4 Oi-Zuki .........................................93
4.8.2 Kicks .............................................94
4.8.2.1 Mawashi-Geri .................................94
4.8.2.2 Ura-Mawashi-Geri ...........................98
4.8.2.3 Mae-Geri ......................................100
4.8.2.4 Ushiro-Geri ....................................101
4.9 The Feint – Build-up and Technique ..................103
4.10 Punching Combinations .............................108
4.11 Punching and Kicking Combinations ..................113
4.12 Sweeps and Throws ................................116

5 Karate Techniques for Close Range Fighting ............127
5.1 Positions ..........................................129
5.1.1 Neko-Achi-Dachi .................................129
5.1.2 Sanchin-Dachi ..................................131
5.2 Age-Uke, Soto-Uke and Uchi-Uke ...................132
5.3 Empi-Uchi .........................................133
5.4 Taisho-Uchi .........................................135
5.5 Ura-Zuki ............................................136
5.6 Tate-Zuki ...........................................137
5.7 Shuto-Uchi .........................................137
5.8 Tetsui-Uchi .........................................138
5.9 Mawashi-Zuki .......................................138
5.10 Hiza-Geri ..........................................139
Index

6 Other Karate Techniques for Medium and Longer Distances . .140
   Preliminary Remarks ..............................................141
   6.1 Kin-Geri ..........................................................141
   6.2 Mawashi-Geri Gedan ...........................................142
   6.3 Kakato-Geri .......................................................143
   6.4 Stopping Kicks ..................................................144
   6.5 Mikazuki-Geri ....................................................146

7 Punching Bag, Training Pads and Makiwara .................147

8 Conclusion .............................................................151

9 Appendix ...............................................................153
   9.1 Bibliography .....................................................153
   9.2 Glossary ..........................................................154
       Acknowledgement ..............................................160
       Photo & Illustration Credits .................................161
Foreword

Kihon, Kata, Kumite. My first three books in the Meyer & Meyer Publishing Company series, comprehensively covered the basis of Shotokan Karate, Kihon and Kata. In the series so far, only the framework of the grading programme for Kumite has been covered, so I would now like to go into the theme of Kumite, systematically and in detail. This book – Shotokan Karate Kumite – will round off the three elementary components of Karate.

The purpose of this book is to get to know the various areas of Kumite in a systematic manner, beginning with the first exercises. It will also give tips for training thus serving to improve performance in this sport. However, all this does not replace the requirement to train intensively.

The reason for dealing with Kumite lies in the subject itself. The character of all martial arts is fighting with an opponent, or conducting exercises with a training partner in the Dojo, with the aim of defending oneself in a situation of conflict. In the beginning, as in all martial arts, practising the individual technique, time and time again, is the main thing, whether it is in the basic training school, in exercising the Kata or when using the Makiwara i.e., the punching bag.

In order to be able to use techniques with a partner perfectly and at the intended rate, the basic characteristics must be learned and understood. In martial arts, it is not without reason that a lot of time is spent in working on the perfection of the techniques in Kihon training. This process never ends and should belong to continuous work at improving the physical constitution and technical ability. On the other hand the Karate techniques with a partner must also, of course, be studied.

In training, the transition between Kihon and Kumite is a flowing one. Even after the first exercise sessions, you have to learn how to judge the right distance to the partner. The degree of difficulty in training with a partner is increased automatically by virtue of what is learned and mastered in the repertoire of the basic techniques.

All the techniques that we practise in Karate are aimed at being used in the fight with an opponent. This principle must not be forgotten regarding Kihon as well as Kata training. In Kumite and the various exercise forms, the skills and the way of using the techniques in a situation with an opponent are practised. The word opponent is used here deliberately, because in a conflict situation we are actually
confronted by an opponent. In training it is a partner. We would very much like to see the partner again in the next training session, so we should treat him accordingly. The most important basic principle in training for Kumite is looking after a partner and his safety and health. This should be kept in mind without losing the serious nature of the Karate techniques.

In this book I wish to show you the sequence of training in Kumite, from its simple to its more complex forms and then go on to training for competition. Progression from Gohon-Kumite to Kihon-Ippon-Kumite, as well as Jiyu-Ippon-Kumite is included world-wide in the Karate programme and should be mastered before going on to free sparring.

I have constructed the introduction according to the Shotokan Grading programme of the German Karate Association (Deutscher Karate-Verband (DKV)). I go into these first Kumite forms more deeply than covered in my first book Shotokan Karate – Kihon-Kumite-Kata. The programme laid out covers fighting forms such as Hatto-Kumite and Okuri-Kumite as well as extensions of these. The logic of the martial art of Shotokan Karate is based on this practical, modular build-up of the learning system.

The chapter covering competitive Kumite carries on from the description of free fighting. Although there are only a few Karateka who take part in competitions, the analysis of the application of the techniques, as well as the typical way of behaving in tournaments, should be useful for those competing, as well as providing a way of being able to improve their Jiyu-Kumite exercises where required. Which of my techniques actually work? What strategy should I use? How do I react in a situation of stress?

In Jiyu-Kumite and its most completely developed form – in the Kumite competition – you will be able to find the answers to these questions. The techniques and examples of the combinations represent, of course, only a small selection of the numerous possibilities for Kumite.

If you practise Kumite, and in particular free fighting or sparring – by watching out for your partner – besides providing a benefit on the specifics of the art of Karate as well as a gain in fitness, it is also a great deal of fun. This facet must be mentioned here. Altogether, one should devote as much to Kumite as one does to training for Kihon and Kata.
**What about Self-defence?**

Firstly: Karate is about self-defence.
Secondly: Karate is a lot more than just self-defence.
Thirdly: In this respect, Karate is not any better or worse than any other martial art.

Karate is not one of those martial arts, which promises that you can achieve rapid success after just a few hours of training. Therefore, you have to be clear that we are not talking about something that will bring you to be an infallible fighter, who can react reliably in every situation without a lot of effort and years of training. Advocates of certain styles of martial arts, who promise this, have to carry the blame for certain failure of such promises as these.

Every martial art will improve the basic ability to carry out self-defence, but none can guarantee success in a conflict. Here, there will be other influences and factors, which, on the one hand, can be prepared for in training, but on the other hand cannot always be predicted. Karate is a martial art, where in order to master it, just like all Budo types of sport, you need to apply much patience and commitment and you require to put in a lot of effort in training and time. The saying, "No pain, no gain" is valid also in considering the apparent superiority, or the pros and cons of differing styles and methods in martial arts.

If one reduces the basic characteristics of the different Asian and European martial arts down to the same principles for them all, more similarity than disparity is found. All martial arts start off trying to deliberately use the limbs of the body accurately and effectively as a weapon for self-defence. And the mastering of this demands extreme preparedness to do intensive training. No style is better or worse than another. Indeed, in a conflict it is not the styles and the methods that are ‘fighting’ each other, it is the people themselves. The style and its peculiarities must match the individual. One must feel at home with the content of the training. The basics, the techniques and their style must all be mastered, and then one can – perhaps – begin to develop an optimal effectiveness.

This important and considerable aspect of the martial arts – to teach a means of self-defence in a situation of conflict – is rightly and completely emphasised in the martial arts themselves. Other aspects come seldom into discussion. Karate certainly contains a very good method of self-defence, but, on the other hand,
Karate-Do also teaches modesty and respect for the opinions of others as well as teaching one to take steps to avoid a confrontation where possible, and to use the least amount of force.

Self-defence is important, but Karate-Do has considerably more to offer. The road to one’s inner self by mastering the techniques, the opportunity to pursue a sporting challenge, which has a health benefit, and above all, the fun at taking part in this effective and also very aesthetic, lifelong martial art must be mentioned here.