

## **Rhythm**

The rhythm that applies to Karate is rhythm in the movements necessary to execute a proper technique. The Karate student must learn from the beginning that the three most important elements in Karate Techniques are: KIME at the right time, the CONTROL of speed and the FLUID movement of the body from one technique to the next. These requirements cannot be fulfilled without rhythm; these three elements COMBINED equal rhythm.

The Karate techniques performed by an advanced martial artist are powerful, rhythmical and consequently beautiful. Movements can be slow and soft yet rhythmical. There are different rhythms for the yori ashi of the legs and the kihon techniques of the upper body. In addition to sensing the rhythm of your brain waves, heartbeat and breathing, it is necessary to study rhythm in order to improve your fighting techniques.

### **To be effective in freestyle (Jyu) kumite, a competitor must:**

- Know different rhythms
- Know which rhythm is appropriate
- Know which rhythm will cause the desired effect

#### **I. *DIFFERENT KINDS OF RHYTHM***

- A. LONG STEPS – Rhythms of distancing; by taking long steps to study your opponent, keeping your distance or stalling for time.
- B. SHORT STEPS – Rhythms of closing in; by taking small steps in order to prepare for an attack.
- C. PRESSING STEPS – Stepping in slowly and carefully to force your opponent to panic attack or “freeze up”.
- D. NO STEPS – Waiting for your opponent to make a mental error.

II. ***CHOOSE THE APPROPRIATE RHYTHM***

- A. FAST STEPS – Against slow, tall and strong opponents, so that it confuses their sense of distance and timing.
- B. PRESSING STEPS – To intimidate smaller, faster, or weaker opponents.
- C. LONG STEPS – To maintain a safe distance and draw your opponent in.
- D. NO STEPS – Used against an experienced fighter.

III. ***WHICH RHYTHM WILL CAUSE THE DESIRED EFFECT***

- A. Learn your opponent's rhythm so you will not be "baited," set up, surprised or "drawn into" his rhythm.
- B. Attack with a rhythm NOT anticipated by your opponent – remain calm but alert and attack with one breath.
- C. Break your rhythm – fake/feint in order to distract, confuse, draw-in, throw off balance, or put your opponent on the defensive.
- D. Understand how to make your rhythm different from that of your opponent. Change your rhythm by short steps back and long steps forward or visa versa, **SO THAT YOU CAN ATTACK**.
- E. Learning how to intentionally upset your opponent's rhythm **SO THAT YOU CAN ATTACK** is a secret of combat. In the case of tournament kumite, it may well result in winning the match!