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Patrick Barry, Shaun Banfield, Guy Edward Larke,  
Rudy Corrales, and Jean Jacques Machado

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**Creative Design** MMR Design Solutions  
**Production Manager** Mario M. Rodriguez  
**Photography** Jason Allan, Tom Fitzpatrick,  
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## ADVERTISING DEPARTMENT

Maxine Hung

Office (818) 767-7900 / Cell (818) 434-5550 / Fax: (818) 767-7922  
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## Editorial and Administration Offices

11048 Randall St., Sun Valley, California 91352

Phone: (818) 767-7900 • (818) 767-7930

Fax: (818) 767-7922

MASTERS™ Magazine (ISSN 1933-7183) is published quarterly by  
Empire Media LLC., 11048 Randall St., Sun Valley, CA 91352  
Phone (818) 767-7900 - Fax (818) 767-7922.

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## CONTRIBUTORS

**Patrick Barry** is a 3rd degree black belt in Toshin Ryu (the study of Japanese weapons including katana, tonfa, bo, bokken and other weapons) and a 4th degree black belt in karate with the International Karate Association. Barry has written for TV shows such as *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and *War of the Worlds*; computer games as *Command and Conquer* and *INOX*; and for McGraw-Hill, he has authored numerous textbook modules on professional communications. Barry is currently a product manager for a global network communications company.



**Shaun Banfield** has been practicing karate for 18 years in South Wales (UK), and travel far and wide to train with some of the world's finest Shotokan technicians, and bring this insight to the readers of *THE SHOTOKAN WAY*. He is the Editor of this Online magazine which serves as research centre designed to celebrate and promote shotokan karate. For more information, please email him to [mail@theshotokanway.com](mailto:mail@theshotokanway.com)



**Guy Edward Larke** has dedicated his life from a young age to the pursuit of the martial arts, Asian culture and hopology. It led him to Korea in 2000 and has lived there since then. He lives in Seongnam city with his wife Gi-Ryung and son Alexander. He holds black belts in Taekwondo, Hapkido, Taekgyeon, Bon Kuk Kumdo, Korean kickboxing, Karate-do, Wushu, and Cheonji-muye-do. Currently he teaches Taekwondo, Karate and Cheonji-muye-do full time in addition to writing for various magazines and running Kisa-Do Muye & Marketing. He can be contacted at: [kisa\\_do\\_muye@yahoo.ca](mailto:kisa_do_muye@yahoo.ca).



**Rudy Corrales** has a Master's Degree in Criminal Justice. He is an adjunct instructor at San Bernardino Valley College teaching for the Department of Criminal Justice and Physical Education. He developed for the college the first ever Kenpo Karate course for credit. In addition, he has worked for twenty-one years as a Law Enforcement officer supervising high-risk offenders released on parole and he is a certified defensive tactics instructor. As a youth, he trained in the art of Lima Lama, boxing, and in his twenties, Shito Ryu Karate. In 1999, he started training with the International Karate Connection Association and is a personal student of Kenpo Master Chuck Sullivan.



**Jean Jacques Machado** has spent decades studying and analyzing the different components of this revolutionary art. A fierce competitor on the mat, but a compassionate and supportive teacher off, he used his life lessons to transform himself into a complete individual, and inspiration and role model as a fighter and teacher. Jean Jacques is truly an international emissary for the art of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu.





# Shadows of

**T**he sound of a sword blade slicing through air, delivering its decisive cut, is a timeless phenomenon.

For those who train formally in the way of the katana—the Japanese sword—this sound carries countless stories that echo across oceans and centuries—stories of the masters. For those students who train formally in Japanese martial arts, a dojo meditation invokes the memory of those who went before: those who built the knowledge of the art, those who enhanced the art, and those who carried the knowledge and faithfully passed it forward intact, so that those today could benefit from that rich tradition so many years later, and all around the world.

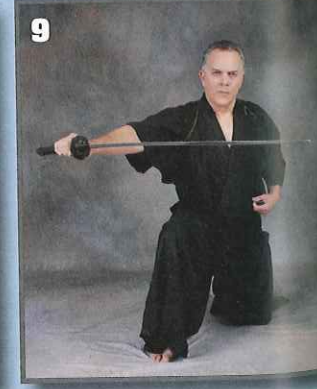
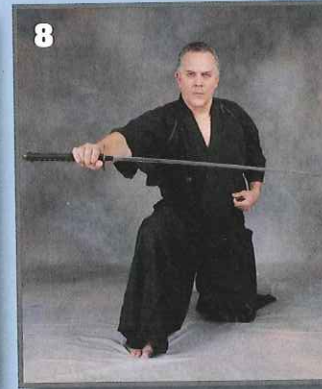
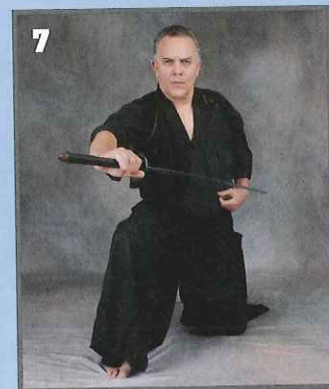
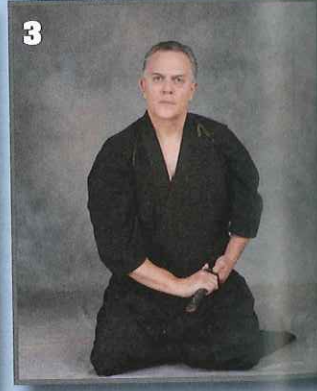
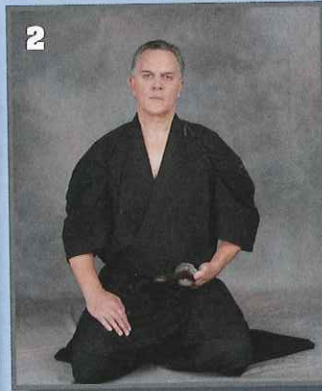
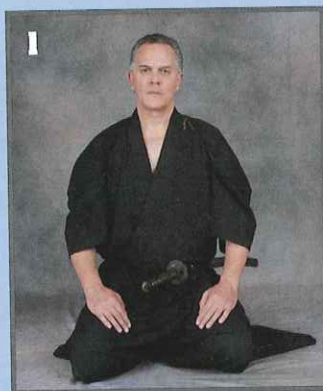
Acknowledging the origins of, and the powerful influences on, the study and soul of the way of the katana cannot be complete without recognizing the contributions of one particular school: the legendary Yagyū Shinkage School. To understand this school's impact, which endures to this day, knowing the story of the evolutionary influences of the first

three founding masters is crucial. Their stories spanned a tumultuous period of Japanese history, and their position in that history had a profound effect on the nation.



## Iai • Drawing the Katana

1. Kneeling ready position, hands at rest at knees
2. Left hand, moves to hold scabbard, rotating to horizontal position, with thumb on hilt guard holding blade in scabbard (See photos A & B).
3. Right hand takes sword handle, thumb and index finger knuckles against hilt guard
4. Right foot takes forward open stance, in anticipation of draw
5. Draw begins, third and forth fingers relaxed, wrist flexible, facilitating speed (See Photo D)
6. Leading with wrist, in forward motion, blade point exits scabbard
7. Cutting energy accelerates, blade edge moving in outward horizontal cutting arc
8. Targeting enemy's upper





# the Sword

By Patrick Barry

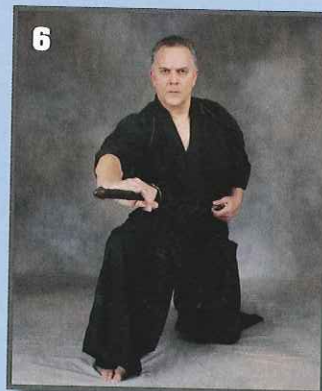
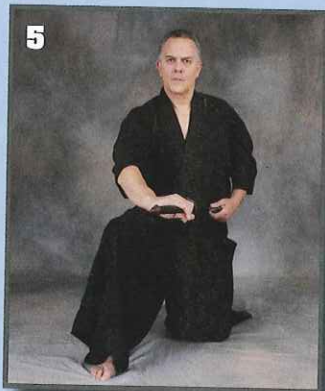
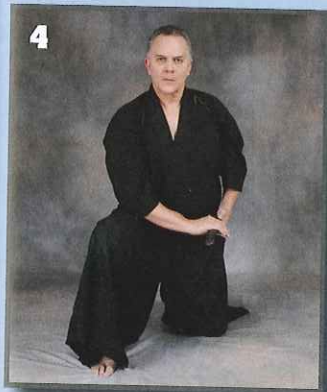
## Kamiizumi Nobutsuna (aka Hidetsuna)

The story of a tradition of legendary distinction in swordsmanship began in 1561, during the Age of Civil Wars, in the Kanto District of the Kanto Province in central Japan, at a small but strategically important military objective known as Minowa Castle. Located on a prominent point in a chain of hills overlooking the Kanto Plain, this castle would not yield to the warlord Takeda Shingen's vastly superior forces. Numerous tries over a month had failed, and more than a thousand of Takeda's soldiers had died in the effort.

In defense of Minowa Castle, Kamiizumi Hidetsuna had distinguished himself individually in numerous close battles, but also led a dynamic and lethal group of warriors known as the Sixteen Spears of Nagano. Hidetsuna's small but wildly effective force was indeed a major cause of Takeda's casualties. Hidetsuna had studied under the Kage Ryu (Shade school of swordsmanship), which he already had taken to new levels of application, constituting a new form of sword he called Shinkage (New Shade).

Minowa Castle's lord finally died in battle and, with that, the castle's defenders no longer had a reason to fight. Having surrendered with the rest of the castle's forces, Hidetsuna was granted his freedom by General Takeda, who was profoundly impressed with Hidetsuna's performance in battle over the preceding weeks. Takeda wanted him to join his own army, but Hidetsuna announced his true calling was to seek his perfection as a practitioner of the sword, and to travel widely to test and hone his martial knowledge. Takeda had come to respect Hidetsuna to the degree that, as a parting "gift" he gave Hidetsuna one of the characters of his own name to be incorporated into Hidetsuna. In doing so, he honored Hidetsuna, and in effect, associated him with his own family. His name now was Kamiizumi Nobutsuna.

Nobutsuna traveled with two disciples, seeking any way to improve upon his technique, while at the same time offer instruction and spread the awareness of his new style of swordsmanship. At one point in his travels, the trio came upon a small village where a young child had been taken



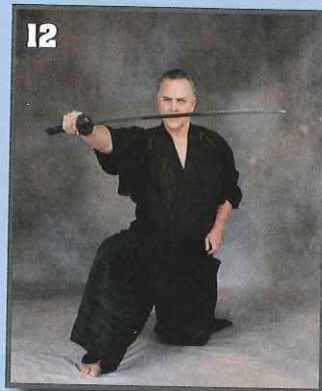
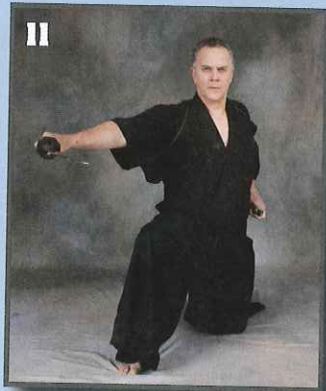
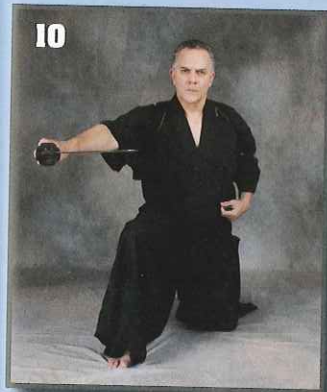
chest, horizontal cutting stroke accentuates as third and fourth fingers tighten, promoting lateral cutting action as cutting arc widens

9. A slight rotation torque from hips add additional cutting force, approaching peak velocity,

10. Striking target, sword and cutting energy continues through

11. Passing through target's mass, energy shifts, reversing direction of sword motion

12. Moving now toward left side, sword tip moves in a striking motion. (In one application striking a second opponent to the left with a stabbing motion, force of motion must have this execution intent.)





## Shadows of the Sword

hostage and held at sword point by a man in a small hut. Thinking quickly, Nobutsuna asked for a priest's robes, had his head shaved, and carrying only a rice ball in each hand, went in to the dwelling where the volatile drama was centered. In the guise of the priest, Nobutsuna calmly offered to feed the child and tossed a ball to the grateful youth. The sword master then offered the remaining rice ball to the massive assailant. And when he tossed the food to the desperate man, Nobutsuna jumped into action and quickly disarmed the criminal. The priest whose robe was used for this ploy insisted that Nobutsuna keep the sacred garment; by doing so, the holy man acknowledged the warrior's enlightenment in the ways of the sword and the peaceful path of Zen as well.

This legendary story has echoed in the annals of martial arts, and even was immortalized in the film *Seven Samurai*. The significance of this tale is crucial in understanding the distinctive evolutionary influences the Shinkage Ryu was to bring to the martial arts. Up to this point, sword training in Japan was focused almost entirely on physical techniques. Nobutsuna's approach to conflict represented a watershed in sword study, where the focus became the mind more than the technique. The Zen Buddhist concept of the Sword of

No Sword was engrained firmly in Nobutsuna's philosophy and technique, and his power as a revolutionary and original sword practitioner grew in capability and unsought prestige.

The significance of this single story offers added meaning to the term Kage, which is carried in the name of his sword style. The "shade" (or "shadow") in this context can mean absence of light (the Yin principle), meaning essential invisibility. Here, the outwardly visible characteristics of a Shinkage practitioner's technique were imperceptible, but were concealed inside the swordsman. This contrasted with sword styles of the day, in which the fiery force of a warrior commonly was communicated (the Yang principle) in the setting of mortal combat, as was normal when wielding a sword in combat. The idea of Kage speaks to the hidden force that resides in the mind, and the use of that force. In effect, Nobutsuna beat his opponent with his mind, meaning the use of the sword was unnecessary. Hence, the idea of the Sword of No Sword was taking root in this stage of sword evolution, and this philosophical theme would grow with those who followed the style of swordsmanship he founded.

Nobutsuna's journeys continued and the fame of his name grew until a fateful meeting at the Hozoin Temple in Nara.

13. With penetrating linear force, sword strikes with sharp jabbing motion

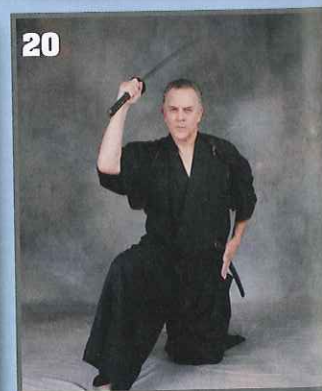
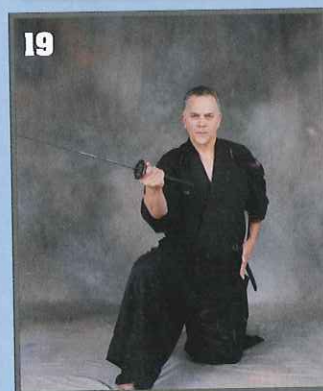
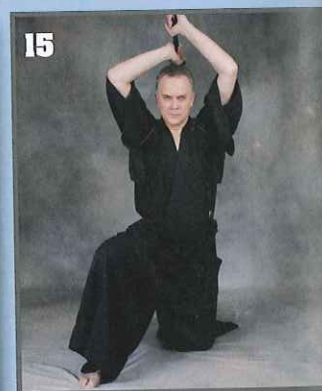
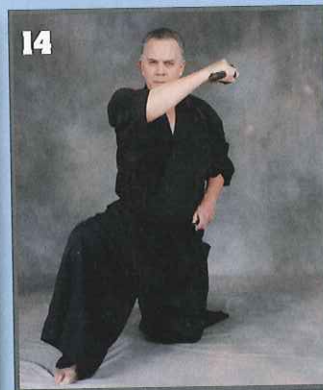
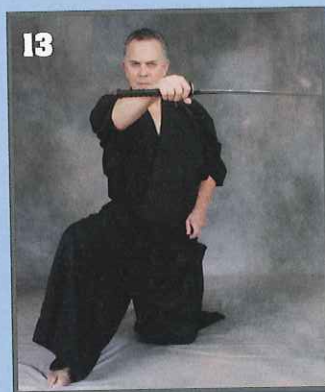
14. Withdrawing, from linear horizontal strike, sword swings around, wrist passing over head, as left hand releases scabbard to hold the base of sword handle

15. With both hands on sword, tip is brought back in line with the base of the spine, for powerful cut

16. Overhead cut is released, target being top of opponent's head.

17. Cutting of target: stomach tightens, pulling on arm energy, to promote execution of maximum force and velocity

18. Cutting stroke follows through to completion





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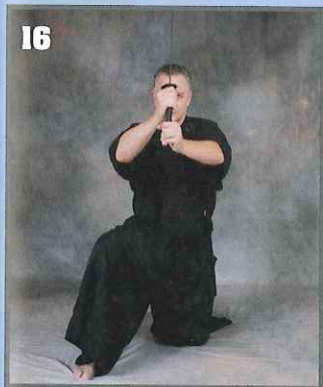


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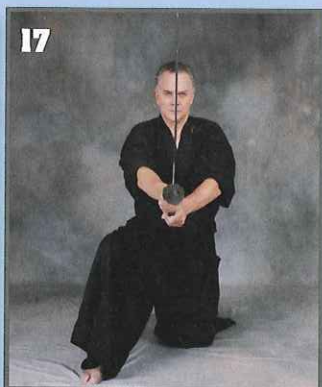


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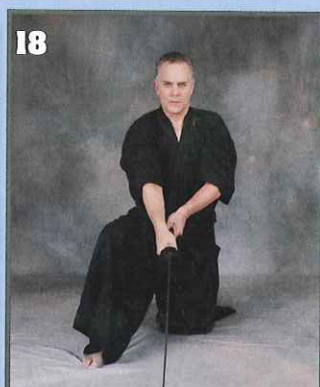
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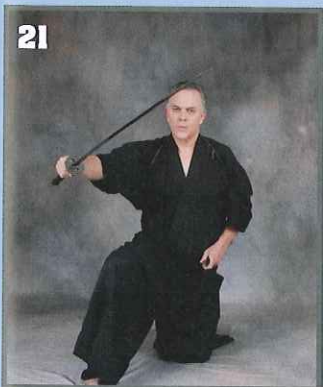


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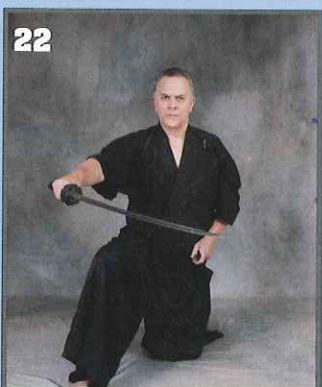


19. Withdrawing sword from cut, process of shaking of blood from the blade begins with point directed to right, left hand goes flat against scabbard  
20. A swinging and accelerating arc, with tip behind and wrist passing over head  
21. As arc passes over head, a downward stroke accelerates as left hand takes hold of scabbard  
22. Downward stroke stops abruptly, shaking off blood

21



22





## Shadows of the Sword

There, the head priest Innei sent a messenger to his friend Yagyu Muneyoshi to inform him of Nobutsuna's presence. A decorated and seasoned warrior, who saw battle as early as sixteen, Muneyoshi was known as the best swordsman in the Kinki district (Osaka, Nara, and Kyoto). At 35, and feeling the prime of his power, Muneyoshi "humbly" asked Nobutsuna for instruction, as was custom when challenging another swordsmen. Fully twenty years his senior, Nobutsuna accommodated the request in a way Muneyoshi did not anticipate. Nobutsuna complied by having one of his two traveling students, the scruffy and skinny Hikida Toyogoro, face the confident and proud, yet disappointed Yagyu sword master.

Hidika used a fukuro-shinai—which consisted of numerous bamboo slats tied together and placed in a long narrow leather sheath (designed by Nobutsuna)—and faced his opponent. Hikida did not use a bokken (wooden sword), which was normal for this sort of match. The bokken and fukuro-shinai were the same weight, but the bokken was known to cause serious injury or even death in matches as highly charged as this one. The fukuro-shinai allowed fencers to exchange blows, without the danger of serious injury. Face to face in the temple courtyard, Muneyoshi with his bokken

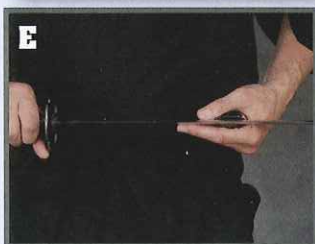


and Hikida with his fukuro-shinai began the historic match. Each sized up the other for an opening, shifting position for a striking advantage, when suddenly Hikida's lightening technique burst a quick strike to Muneyoshi's forehead, ending the match. Unconvinced that he had been truly defeated, Muneyoshi pressed a new attack, to which Hikida responded with another strike, which landed with equally decisive force and focus. The Yagyu master finally conceded defeat, and with it faced an unsettling realization that his pride in mas-

23. Standing abruptly, in an attitude of continued readiness, watching opponent  
24. Right foot begins to slide back, keeping a 'sticky' gravity with the ground  
25. Change in stance, as left foot now stands in the forward position  
26. Sword now swings horizontally to hand on scabbard, hand rotates to hold scabbard in horizontal position, thumb above, index finger below  
27. Back of blade meets notch between index finger and thumb, at mid-point of the blade  
28. Back of blade is drawn across front of body, with index finger below, guiding blade (See photo E)  
29. Tip of blade reaches opening of scabbard, index finger below aligns tip with opening (See photo F)  
30. Tip enters inside of scabbard opening, right wrist comes directly forward toward opponent  
31. As left hand rotates from horizontal to vertical position; right hand with sword follows this motion from horizontal to vertical alignment, as it slides slowly into scabbard (See photo G)








### Iai - Drawing the Sword

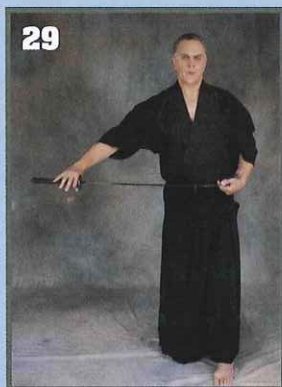
A. Left hand holds scabbard with thumb on hilt guard locking blade in scabbard; B. Left hand, rotates scabbard to horizontal position, thumb maintaining 'locked' attitude; C. In anticipation of the draw, thumb pushes sword slightly forward, facilitating speed and ease draw; D. Left thumb closes around scabbard, as draw begins

**Noto - Returning the Sword** - E. Back of blade is drawn across front of body, with index finger below, guiding blade; F. Tip of blade reaches opening of scabbard, index finger below aligns tip with opening; G. As left hand rotates from horizontal to vertical position; right hand with sword follows motion horizontal to vertical alignment, as it slides slowly into scabbard

tery of sword was hollow. At this point, Nobutsuna took Hikida's shinai and indicated that he now would be Muneyoshi's opponent. As the two faced each other, Nobutsuna opening with the same stance Hikida did, Muneyoshi studied the Shinkage master, then finally conceded defeat before any further movement. In alternate accounts of these two bouts, Muneyoshi faced Hikida three times, and lost three times, before Nobutsuna faced him three times empty-handed, and disarmed Muneyoshi three times. In any event, the once fiery

and proud, yet now humbled leader of the Yagyu warrior clan, asked to become Nobutsuna's student. The Shinkage master agreed. It is said that Nobutsuna saw vast potential in Muneyoshi in the moment they faced each other, and the Yagyu studied Nobutsuna's bearing. 

Part 2 will continue in the next issue of **MASTERS Magazine**.



32. Sword continues its return, as wrist dips slightly below opening third and fourth fingers relax  
33. While maintaining a readiness to draw again, left hand smoothly brings scabbard toward returning sword  
34. Sword and scabbard touch with single light tapping sound; the return of the sword is completed  
35. Right hand releases grip of sword, and slides open-handed along edge of handle, toward pommel end of the sword  
36. Reaching the end of the sword, fingers wrap slightly at end of sword, in slight pulling motion, left thumb moves into locking position with sword hilt  
37. Right hand drops to relaxed ready position, with left hand maintaining a thumb on hilt.