Preparation and Maintenance of New Weapons.

This outline is only a suggested procedure for the Bokken, Jo and tanto and is by no means the only way to care for and maintain your training sticks (*weapons*).

Firstly it is important that you undertake this task with all the necessary equipment ready, have the appropriate time and the correct frame of mind to do it. If you do it quickly to get it out of the way, it defeats the purpose of preparing your training weapons for use. This is a valuable time that you can learn to understand your weapons eg; the dimensions, the weight, the thickness and the imperfections of it. When training with your weapons they are an extension of your body so therefore you must learn to understand them.

Items you should have prepared prior to commencing,

* Linseed Oil - Cold pressed or raw

* Clean Cloths - 2 pieces

* Sandpaper - wet and dry - a sheet of 400, 600 and 800 or 1200 grit

- a single sheet of 120 or 180 grit glass paper

* Bowl with some clean water

* A quiet place to do your work.

- Step 1. Firstly sand the Bokken/Jo with the 80 grit glass paper. (If your are doing a Bokken, it may require extra paper to remove all the varnish or lacquer). Sand until it has a very smooth finish.
- Step 2. Once completed using a clean cloth, wet it with some clean water (not dripping) and rub it over the weapon once or twice to make it wet, but not soaking. Allow the timber to dry.
- Step 3. Once dry you will find that the timber will feel rough to the touch. This is because the water has caused the grain of the timber to stand up. Taking the 400 grit wet and dry, wet the sand paper and rub the timber until smooth again. Again wait for the timber to dry between each step until there is no grain left to stand up or it feels smooth to the touch after the timber has dried.
- Step 4. Once dry use the same procedure as in step 3 but this time using the 600 grit wet & dry and when completed you can repeat the process again with the 800 or 1200 grit. This final sanding process can be completed as many times as you wish until the desired smooth finish is achieved.
- NB. Avoid going back and using courser grade paper otherwise you will ruin the surface you have already prepared.
- Step 5. After all the sanding has been completed, the timber should feel very smooth to the touch. Now with the other clean cloth, pour a small amount of the Linseed Oil onto it and start applying it to the timber. IMPORTANT do not over load the cloth and try to reduce time by only doing it once. For best results apply about 4-6 light coats. You do not want the timber to sweat the oil out. After your final coat allow some time for drying, use a clean dry cloth and buff the surface until it is smooth and shinny.

This oiling process should be done again in about 6 months and then each year after that to maintain the timber does not dry out. Dry timber could splinter or crack.

IMPORTANT: The term weapons are only used in the dojo environment. At any time outside the dojo please refer to your weapons as TRAINING STICKS!