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Interpretation of the Pattern Choong-Moo

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Choong-Moo is the pattern required for advancement from First Kup (Black Tag) to First Dan (Black Belt). This is a huge step for a Tae Kwon-Do martial artist as it signifies the transition from colour belt to black belt. Choong-Moo was the name given to the great Admiral Yi Sun-Sin of the Yi Dynasty. He was reputed to have invented the first armoured battleship (Kobukson) in 1592, which is said to be the precursor of the present day submarine. The reason why this pattern ends with a left hand attack is to symbolise his regrettable death, having no chance to show his unrestrained potentiality checked by the forced reservation of his loyalty to the king.



Admiral Yi Sun-Sin

Of the many great military leaders honoured throughout history for service to their countries Admiral Yi Sun-Sin must belong with the best in any part of the world. He is considered to have been a master naval tactician and been compared to Sir Francis Drake and Lord Nelson of England. His name is held in such esteem that when the Japanese fleet defeated the Russian navy in 1905, the Japanese admiral was quoted as saying,

“You may wish to compare me to Lord Nelson but do not compare me with Korea’s Admiral Yi Sun-Sin

... He is too remarkable for anyone”.

Admiral Yi Sun-Sin was born on the eight day of the third moon(April 28) at one o'clock in the morning 1545 in Konch'on-dong(Inhyon-dong), Seoul. He began to study the military arts of archery, horseback riding and swordsmanship in the winter of 1566. While taking the Military Training Command examinations in 1572 he fell off his horse, breaking his left leg. However according to the legend he immediately got up on his right leg and splinted his broken leg with a willow branch and continued. Admiral Yi Sun-Sin was appointed as Commander of Cholla Left Naval Station, in Yosu in 1591 where he began construction of the Kobukson in anticipation of fending off Japanese pirates.

Admiral Yi Sun-Sin is famous for his invention the Kobukson, or turtle-boat. This was a galley ship covered with iron plates to protect the crew and soldiers. The curvature of the iron plates covering the top decks made it resemble a turtle's shell hence the name. It was 110 feet long and 28 feet wide with a lower deck for cabins and supplies, a middle deck for oarsmen and an upper deck for marines and cannons. Most of the timber was 4-inches thick, giving the ship protection from arrows and musket balls. It had a large iron ram in the shape of a dragon's head, the legendary creature of Asian culture, with an open mouth from which smoke, arrows, and missiles were discharged. There was another such opening in the rear and six more on either side for the same purpose. The armoured shell was fitted with iron spikes and knives that were covered over with straw or grass to impale unwanted boarders.



A model of Admiral Yi Sun-Sin's Kobukson

The Kobukson was not only impervious to almost any Japanese weapon, it was also heavier than Japanese

vessels and built for speed, and could overtake anything afloat. It was also very nimble due to the flat bottom of the main body in contrast to the other more streamlined vessels. As a result it was far more manoeuvrable. The ship carried approximately 40 3-inch cannons that fired shot or steel headed darts, and had hundreds of small holes for firing arrows or throwing bombs. In comparison, the Japanese ships usually carried one cannon, many muskets, and no protective armour. The Kobukson was, therefore, very effective in chasing down and sinking large numbers of Japanese troop and supply ships as well as successfully attacking numerous heavy Japanese battleships head on. It was the most highly developed warship of its time.

At the time, the Japanese army was considered superior at hand-to-hand fighting through numerous battles during the 100-year-long Japanese internal war know as the “Warring States period”. In sea battles the Japanese soldiers jumped on the deck of the enemy ships and began the deadly hand-to-hand fighting. Furthermore, it was the highest honour to be designated as the first allowed jump onto the enemy ship. But when it came to the Kobukson, this honourable jumping meant an immediate death.

Thus the strange appearance and destructive charging of the Kobukson did much to deal a blow, both psychological and real, to the Japanese army.

In 1592 Toyotomi Hideyoshi gave the order for Japanese forces to invade Korea. His plan was to sweep through the peninsula and then conquer China. Hideyoshi’s plans may have been accomplished if it weren’t for the leadership of Admiral Yi Sun-Sin. He alone was responsible for turning the tide of this important era of Asian History.



The Battle of Okpo (1592) Painting by Moon Hak Jung

In the fifth month of 1592, assisted by the admiral of the Left Division of Chulla Province, Won Kyun, Admiral Yi Sun-Sin engaged the Japanese at Okpa. In his first battle, Admiral Yi Sun-Sin commanded 80 ships compared to the Japanese naval force of 800 ships. The Japanese were trying to re-supply their northern bases from their port at Pusan. By the end of the day Admiral Yi Sun-Sin had set fire to 26 Japanese ships and the rest had turned to flee. Giving chase, he sank many more, scattering the entire

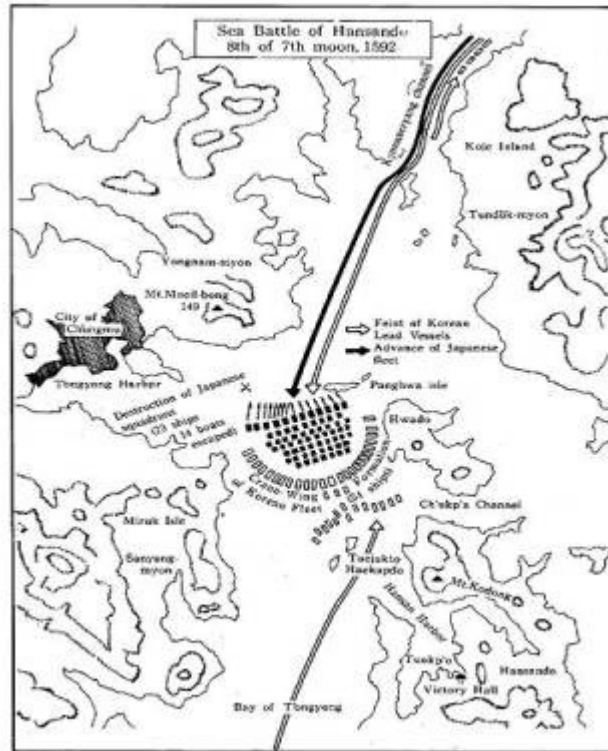
Japanese fleet. Several major engagements followed in which Admiral Yi Sun-Sin annihilated every Japanese squadron he encountered. Courageous and a tactical genius, he seemed to be able to outguess the enemy. In one incident, Admiral Yi Sun-Sin dreamt that a robed man called out

"The Japanese are coming."

Seeing this as a sign, he rose to assemble his ships, sailed out, and surprised a large enemy fleet. He burned twelve enemy ships and scattered the rest. In the course of the battle, he demonstrated his bravery by not showing pain when shot in the shoulder, with the bullet lodging in his back. True to form, Yi refuses to acknowledge the wound until after the battle, at which time he bared his shoulder and ordered that the bullet be cut out.

Admiral Yi Sun-Sin led several more successful actions against the Japanese fleets, including his famous battle at Hansando. Yi Pun's biography of his uncle describes the battle.

"On the eights of Seventh Moon, hearing of the enemy's departure from Yangsan toward Cholla province, Ch'ungmu-kong [posthumous title of Admiral Yi Sun-Sin], Yi Ok-ki [Commander of Cholla Right Naval Station], and Won Kyun [Commander of Kyongsang Right Naval Station] sailed to Kyonnaeryang (in Kosong), where they saw seven enemy vanguard vessels advancing in their direction, followed by many other crafts spread out all over the sea. Ch'ungmu-kong said, "Here the sea is narrow and the shallow harbour unfit for battle, so we must lure them out to the open sea to destroy them in a single blow." He ordered his warships to pull back with feigned defeat till the jubilant enemy vessels pursued our fleet as far as the sea off Hansando, where they concentrated their total strength. Ch'ungmu-kong waved his flag, beat his drum and shouted the order to attack. In an instant, our warships spread their sails, turned round in a 'Crane-Wing' formation and darted forward, pouring down cannon balls and fire arrows on the enemy vessels like hail and thunder. Bursting into flame with blinding smoke, 73 enemy vessels were soon burning in a red sea of blood. This is called "The Great Victory of Hansando.""



The Sea Battle of Hansando

Unfortunately, Admiral Yi Sun-Sin never got to see the rewards of his heroic efforts and brilliant strategy. On November 19, 1598, Admiral Yi Sun-Sin was shot during the final battle of the war. He commanded that his body was hidden behind a shield so that his enemies could not see that he had fallen. To his oldest son, he whispered,

“Do not weep, do not announce my death. Beat the drum, blow the trumpet, wave the flag for advance. We are still fighting. Finish the enemy to the last one”.

He was 54 years old when died.

These are entries from Admiral Yi Sun-Sin's War Diary (Nanjung Ilgi), which are as relevant today as when they were written in the Sixteenth century.

There are numerous books that praise Admiral Yi Sun-Sin's feats of glory, and several statues and monuments commemorate his deeds. In April 1968, a 55-foot high statue of Admiral Yi-Sun-Sin (reportedly the tallest in the Orient) was dedicated in Seoul, Korea. His statue on the peak of Mt. Nam-mang, life-size, indicates that he was a very large man, as judged by the size of the sword on it. The shrine of Chungnyol-Sa, meaning "faithful to king and country," established in 1606, is now both a museum and shrine dedicated to the admiral. The eight relics on display in this shrine were gifts to Admiral Yi Sun-Sin from the Chinese emperor and include a 7-foot commander's bugle, a 5-foot sword, a ceremonial sword (weighing 66 pounds), Admiral Yi Sun-Sin's seal, and several flags. Another Korean treasure is the war diary of Admiral Yi Sun-Sin, which, in addition to some of his personal articles, is preserved at the shrine of Hyonchung-Sa. In addition, a small museum in the city of Choong-Moo, a traditional seaport named after him, displays a replica of the turtle ship as well as other articles of that period.



Admiral Yi Sun-Sin's Statue in downtown Seoul

Not only is Admiral Yi Sun-sin remembered as being a tactical genius he is also remembered as a man of personal integrity. His posthumous title, Choong Moo-kong (Lord of Loyalty and Chivalry) is used in Korea's third highest military honour, the Order of Choong-Moo.

He believed in three essentials for the warrior: Humility, discernment and courage. He embodied all of them and liked to call them “*Chivalry*” thus differentiating it from the brutal “*Samurai Spirit*”. Admiral Yi Sun-Sin lived with integrity throughout his life. When Admiral Son Ko-I died in 1598, a letter was found among his possessions from Admiral Yi Sun-shin, and in it was written.

“My life is simple, my food is plain and my quarters are uncluttered. In all things, I have sought clarity. I face the troubles and problems of life and death willingly. Virtue, integrity and courage are my priorities. I can be approached, but never pushed, befriended but never coerced, killed but never shamed.”

Admiral Yi Sun-Sin is truly one of the great warriors of the past, and his legacy and teachings are a blueprint for success for any modern martial artist and warrior. His patriotism and integrity can be a role model for all.



Admiral Yi Sun-Sin.

The Movements of Pattern Choong-Moo



Parallel Ready Stance.

Ready Posture : Parallel Ready Stance.

Narani Junbi So.

1. Twin Knife-hand Block L-Stance.

Sang Sonkal Makgi Niunja So.

2. Knife-hand High Section Front Strike Walking Stance.

Sonkal Nopunde Ap Taerigi Gunnan So.

3. Knife-hand Middle Section Guarding Block L-Stance.

Kaunde Sonkal Daebi Makgi Niunja So.

4. High Section Flat Fingertip Thrust Walking Stance.

Nopunde Opun Sonkut Tulgi Gunnan So.

5. Middle Section Knife-hand Guarding Block L-Stance.

Kaunde Sonkal Daebi Makgi Niunja So.

6. Bending Ready Stance.

Goobooryo So.

7. Middle Section Side Piercing Kick.
Kaunde Yopcha Jirugi.
8. Middle Section Knife-hand Guarding Block L-Stance.
Kaunde Sonkal Daebi Makgi Niunja So.
9. Flying Side Piercing Kick, Middle Section Knife-hand Guarding Block L-Stance.
Twimyo Yopcha Jirugi, Kaunde Sonkal Daebi Makgi Niunja So.
10. Low Section Forearm Block L-Stance.
Palmok Najunde Makgi Niunja So.
11. Grab the Opponent's Head Walking Stance.
Gunnan So.
12. Knee Upward kick.
Moorup Ollyo Chagi.
13. Reverse Knife-hand High Section Front Strike Walking Stance.
Sonkal Dung Nopunde Ap Taerigi Gunnan So.
14. High Section Turning Kick.
Nopunde Dollyo Chagi.
15. Middle Section Back Piercing Kick.
Kaunde Dwitcha Jirugi.
16. Middle Section Forearm Guarding Block L-Stance.
Kaunde Palmok Daebi Makgi Niunja So.
17. Middle Section Turning Kick.
Kaunde Dollyo Chagi.
18. U-shaped Block Fixed Stance.
Dogutja Makgi Gogung So.
19. Middle Section Knife-hand Guarding Block L-Stance.
Kaunde Sonkal Daebi Makgi Niunja So.
20. Upset Fingertip Low Section Thrust Walking Stance.
Dwijibun Sonkut Najunde Gunnan So.
21. Back Fist Side Back Strike, Forearm Low Section Block L-Stance.

Dung Joomuk Yop Dwi Taerigi, Palmok Najunde Ap Makgi Niunja So.

22. Middle Section Straight Fingertip Thrust Walking Stance.

Kaunde Sun Sonkut Tulgi Gunnan So.

23. High Section Double Forearm Block Walking Stance.

Nopunde Doo Palmok Makgi Gunnan So.

24. Forearm Middle Section Front Block, High Section Back Fist Side Strike Sitting Stance.

Palmok Kaunde Ap Makgi, Nopunde Dung Joomuk Yop Taerigi Annun So.

25. Middle Section Side Piercing Kick.

Kaunde Yopcha Jirugi.

26. Middle Section Side Piercing Kick.

Kaunde Yopcha Jirugi.

27. X-Knife-hand Checking Block L-Stance.

Kyotcha Sonkal Momchau Makgi Niunja So.

28. Twin Palm Upward Block Walking Stance.

Sang Sobadak Ollyo Makgi Gunnan So.

29. Forearm Rising Block Walking Stance.

Chukyo Makgi Gunnan So.

30. Middle Section Punch Walking Stance.

Kaunde Jirugi Gunnan So.

END : Bring the left foot back to a ready posture.

Narani Junbi So.

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The Movements from Pattern Choong-Moo performed by Mr Ruairi Buckley

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