







## 4. Summary

So far the importance of the connection between Kihon-geiko, Kata-geiko and Jigeiko, and how Jigeiko should be approached at each level has been discussed. In the next article, therefore, what attitudes should be taken in Jigeiko and how to tackle Jigeiko with various types of opponents will be covered, and the examples on how to tackle Jigeiko with lower grades, higher grades, the same grades, someone much older, women and so on will be discussed.

## References

The All Japan Kendo Federation. (2000) Japanese-English Dictionary of Kendo, Tokyo: Sato-Inshokan Inc.  
Sumi, M. (2000) Michi no Kaori. Tokyo: Taiiku & Sports Publishing. Co., Ltd.  
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## The Article Part 2

### Introduction

In the previous article, I discussed the relationship between Jigeiko, Kihon-geiko, and Kata-geiko and examined how Jigeiko should be approached. I only mentioned in general, how Jigeiko should be done at each level; elementary, intermediate and advanced. In this article, I would like to discuss how one should approach Jigeiko when confronted by different types of Kendoka, focusing on the following; namely, Jigeiko with someone senior, junior, of the same level, older, or of the opposite sex.

### 1. Jigeiko with Seniors

What should be mentioned, firstly, is to try to get Sho-dachi (the first cut) no matter with whom you are having the Jigeiko, irrespective of the difference in rank and experience. Jigeiko should start with Ippon Shobu played seriously in an equal fifty-fifty situation, with the philosophy that there is no second chance in a fight with real swords. It is important to understand this philosophy in Kendo as Budo and try to get a successful Sho-dachi by utilizing all of your abilities to the full. After attacking and defending Sho-dachi, in this Jigeiko with someone senior, you are recommended then to focus mainly on Shikake-waza. However, this does not mean merely attacking randomly against seniors. If you are of a low rank such as 1-kyu or Sho-dan, it is important to attempt to break the senior's Chu-shin [center] by making the best use of your footwork, Shinai, and body movement. It is also important not to be afraid of being avoided and counterattacked, and not to stop attacking in the middle of your action, but to always try to complete your attack. You are supposed to develop various ways of Shikake-waza despite being avoided or being repeatedly struck by Debanawaza and Ōji-waza. However, it is not profitable for you to be struck as a result of waiting for the senior to attack you. Try to use all the Waza you have and give 100 percent effort. Sumi Sensei (2000) points out that juniors should focus only on Shikake-waza and try to do Jigeiko that makes them use up all of their energy in 5 minutes when they have Jigeiko with a senior. If you are 2nd dan, 3rd dan or 4th dan, you should focus more on developing a way of dominating the Chu-shin by using less footwork and Shinai movement against seniors. It is important to attempt to dominate the Chu-shin, by using various ways and not just using the same way. But it is still important to try to strike fully without being afraid of a senior's counter attack. Summarizing this section, whatever your rank is, it is important to focus on your Shikake-waza when you do Jigeiko with a senior. After doing Jigeiko with them, always reflect on how your Seme worked against them and what you need to do when practicing Shikake-waza in the next Jigeiko.

### 2. Jigeiko with Juniors

There is no need to stress the importance of Sho-dachi here anymore. What you should consider when doing Jigeiko with a junior is not to lapse into a Jigeiko that you intend to satisfy only by merely beating them. People tend to feel that they want to impress other people who are watching their Jigeiko. Such vanity should be severely admonished. As a senior, you have a responsibility to develop the junior's skills by making them realize their weak points by striking them in that weak moment, but also by letting their strong points come through by letting them strike you during the Jigeiko. This type of Keiko is called **Hikitate-geiko** (All Japan Kendo Federation, 2000) and is one of the most difficult Keiko to do in Kendo. Juniors will lose their enthusiasm and concentration if seniors just keep on striking them for their satisfaction or if the opportunity to strike is too obvious. Seniors are expected to perform as if their skill level is 1/2 dan higher than the junior to enable the junior to improve and to concentrate 100 percent when facing them.

The seniors should counterattack when the juniors make an attack without first making an effective Seme and when there was no appropriate opportunity, but let them strike when they come to attack after making a good Seme and when there is a good opportunity. Seniors should encourage juniors to grasp and understand the correct opportunities to strike through this Hikitate-geiko. Seniors are also expected to encourage juniors to understand the importance of maintaining concentration by attacking when juniors are careless after their attacks. There is an old saying that explains how a senior should approach Jigeiko with a junior: “**Ware igai mina shi nari**, 我以外皆師成り” (everyone but me is my teacher). That is, there is always something to learn through Jigeiko no matter with whom one does Jigeiko. One quite often hears, I am the highest rank in my Dojo, and I have no one to teach me – This is not true. It depends on the way you think. Keep in mind that you can learn a great deal from whoever you do Jigeiko with. It is often taken for granted that seniors can strike juniors easily in Jigeiko, so for your further improvement, you should not just focus on striking but tackle Jigeiko with a clear task(s) or by giving yourself a handicap in this Jigeiko with juniors. However, you must not stick to a form of Jigeiko whereby you only focus on cutting Men for instance. As even if you try to focus on cutting Men, you need to have a clear idea, for example, from what distance to cut Men and on how to make an opportunity. As to giving yourself a handicap, it is also important to explore how to perform under adverse conditions. For example, dare to face in Chika-ma during Jigeiko with someone smaller than you and watch for a chance of doing Debana-waza (instead of waiting, you should try to lure your opponent into attacking the target you want them to strike!). I would like to repeat the point that seniors must not lapse into Jigeiko that you intend to satisfy only by merely beating them.

### 3. Jigeiko with Someone on the Same Level

Jigeiko with someone of the same level gives you a good opportunity to reflect on your progress and the fruits of your efforts. It is even better if you are both about the same age. It is very important for you to know someone of the same level and age, and to do Jigeiko with them. It's quite normal that you do not want to be struck by this rival, but it is very important to have an attitude that you try to show your best Kendo no matter what happens. People tend to return the attack right away before making enough Seme after they are struck. It is important to control this feeling of attacking without enough Seme and to try taking or retaking the Chu-shin. You should compare how your Seme and Waza, which worked ok against juniors, work against someone of the same level and find out there is anything your rival has but you don't and vice versa by doing Jigeiko. It is expected that all the same level people will try to train harder to improve Kendo in the way of Shugyo with the spirit of mutual support and friendships.

### 4. Jigeiko with the Old

Here, the difference in age is considered rather than the difference in grade. This section is about attitudes to Jigeiko with someone old. It is strictly prohibited to do powerful Tai-atari and Tsuki to an older adult in Jigeiko. However, there may be some older adults who are bigger and have more power than you. In that case, then, it might be okay to some extent, to use your power and weight against them. If that is not the case, then, direct physical contacts that rely on strength using Seme and Waza should be restrained. That does not mean cutting corners in the Jigeiko. It is still important to try to complete your strike and to strike again in response to your opponents when their first strike is inadequate [but without Tai-atari or relying on physical power]. It is up to you to decide whether you can have a worthwhile Jigeiko with an older adult despite the age difference. Old Kendo-ka who has great experiences may not be able to use many types of Waza, and their speed and power may be inferior, but they have a brilliant ability to read the situation (opponent's intention, movement, Waza and so on). Old Kendo-ka is a model of lifetime participation in Kendo. We will receive many suggestions on how we should tackle Kendo by observing old high-rank Kendo-ka doing Jigeiko or by having Jigeiko with them. We will be able to enjoy kendo throughout our lives just like them.

### 5. Men Doing Jigeiko with Women

In the case of men doing Jigeiko with women, Tai-atari and the use of Waza that rely on physical power should also be restrained. Men should not fall into the habit of being afraid of being struck by women or getting frustrated when you cannot strike as you wish. This habit causes you to strike ignoring opportunities, differences in physique and physical strength. That is the worst type of Kendo because it shows no respect for your opponent and creates nothing between you and your opponent, even if you can strike your opponent by doing such Kendo in the Jigeiko. Your opponent is not an enemy to destroy; rather, she is your partner who should help each other to improve by working together in the spirit of Shugyo.

It can quite often be the case that you are much taller when doing Jigeiko with women and juniors. That is a good opportunity to do Jigeiko in Chika-ma [if there is a difference of height between two Kendo-ka, the one who is taller feels cramped normally and uncomfortable playing in this close distance]. Men should realize that having Jigeiko with women is a good opportunity to learn how to play (without relying too much on physical strength) by facing in Chika-ma. Moreover, men can practice how to acquire the timing of Debana-waza that catches the moment when your opponent comes to move to Chika-ma through this Jigeiko with women.

## 6. Women Doing Jigeiko with Men

It is often thought that most women find it difficult to do Jigeiko with men who are bulkier and taller. Just imagine the thought that powerful, well-built men may be scary when they attack. However, everyone has a weak point. For instance, there is Ma-ai (distance) or a type of opponent which they may find uncomfortable or awkward to fight. That applies not only to women but all Kendo-ka. Avoiding to practice with people who are hard for you to deal with in Jigeiko is not a solution because it will remain as your problem. If they are hard to deal with in Jigeiko, it is suggested that you should try to do Jigeiko with them more than with anyone else and try to overcome this weak point through being struck again and again and by trying to find a solution. If you find such people who are difficult to handle, then they are the ones with whom you need to do Jigeiko more to overcome your fear and problem. Tall people are not good at playing in Chika-ma because it is too close for them to kick the floor hard with their left foot and they feel cramped in this position. The important point is therefore how to reach Chika-ma, the distance that is advantageous for you. If you try to reach Chika-ma by merely stepping forward, your opponent will try to do a Debana-attack. It is important therefore to contrive various ways of getting Chika-ma from different directions. In the case when your opponent comes to attack before you do, you will be knocked over if you just check their attack and do Tai-atari. It is important, therefore, to acquire proper Ashi-sabaki and Tai-sabaki that enables you to avoid direct strong physical contact [using body movement]. I would like to add one piece of advice here. One sometimes hears, unfortunately, that some men behave in Jigeiko as if they are trying to hurt women. There is nothing to be learned from such people with this bad attitude in the Jigeiko. It is strongly recommended that you stop Jigeiko immediately if you discover your opponent is one of these types, or that you refuse to do Jigeiko with them if you are asked.

## 7. Last words

What should be expected of all Kendo-ka when doing Jigeiko, is that you make your opponents feel that they want to have Jigeiko with you again. It will give me great pleasure if this and the previous article, which reexamined the relationship between Kihon-geiko, Kata-geiko, Jigeiko, and how Jigeiko should be approached, give you something useful in your Kendo Shugyo now and in the future.

## References

The All Japan Kendo Federation. (2000) Japanese-English Dictionary of Kendo, Tokyo: Sato-Inshokan Inc.  
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