



KOKUSAI TATSU BUGEI RENMEI



OSU!

The word OSU is considered by many karateka, both Japanese and non-Japanese to be a crude word, not acceptable for use in the dojo. This is because it is interpreted as a contraction of "Ohayo gozaimasu", and through its use in the docks and barracks it is therefore the Japanese equivalent of "Waazzup man!".

The OSU! in Tatsu Ryu Karate Do however does not have the same origin. It comes from the expression "Oshi shinobu!" which means to push oneself to the limit of one's ability and yet to continue, to persevere under pressure, and to endure.

It is used as a word of many meanings, expressing the willingness to strive against all odds, to persevere on the road to physical, mental, and spiritual strength, an expression of respect of one's seniors and responsibility to one's juniors.

It is pronounced "OSS!", with a long "O", and not "Oosh" or "Oos" as is commonly heard outside of Japan" and I'll be the first to admit that I'm usually guilty of mispronouncing it myself!

In the schools of Tatsu Ryu Karate Do it is also a greeting and can be used to replace words such as "yes", "alright", "good", "I'll do it" and "excuse me". It is also used to mean "hello", "goodbye", "have patience with me", "I'm trying", "well done!" and just about anything else. Fans of Robert Heinlein will appreciate it when I say it has the same range of meaning as the word "grok" in *Stranger in a Strange Land*. Unlike many other karate styles, a student is never expected to say "yes sir" (HA!) when given a command in the Tatsu Ryu Karate Do dojo but to use the word "OSU" instead.

As students of Karate, we are all expected to strive and develop this positive attitude (spirit) of perseverance, determination and respect for others in our training as well as in our daily life (i.e. business, work, studies etc). But you don't have to be a karateka to have spirit of Osu! Any competitor in the Paralympics has it, probably more than any karateka, simply for not letting their physical incompleteness stop them from doing their best. A parent, doing three jobs to feed his or her children has OSU! (but should probably have got an education instead).

If it is at all possible to express the philosophy of Tatsu Ryu Karate Do in a single word, then "OSU" would be that word.

OSU!

Shihan Niklas Albrecht

**FATSU-RYU-KARATE-
DO.CH**