

The Ultimate RUROUNI KENSHIN FAQ

by

Iyouboushi

with help from

Mr. Hitokiri

Kagebu

finiteyoda

Niwashi

Karasuhebi

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[Introduction & Purpose]

In March 2004 James "Iyouboushi" decided that he should try to create the most complete RUROUNI KENSHIN FAQ ever written. He set out on his journey with nineteen initial questions and answers. Wanting to get the best exposure for his creation he decided it would be best to post it on the [adult swim] message board.

There it continued to grow to what it is today. Several other members have asked questions that have made it into the official FAQ and others still have helped in answering them. This is the fruit of their labor and it will hopefully continue to grow.

The purpose of this FAQ is not to give away all the plot points of the series or answer simple questions that are answered in the series (there are a few exceptions though). The purpose of this FAQ is to answer various other questions that have been floating around and asked quite often, such as "What is 'Samurai X' and is it different?" It also serves as information about the true history of Japan when compared to the history of RUROUNI KENSHIN.

[How do I submit a question?]

Because we want to keep this FAQ growing, we're accepting questions on James' own personal board in addition to the LJ community. Posting them on the LJ community is guaranteed way to get a response.

The URL to the LJ community is:
<http://community.livejournal.com/rkfaq/>

For other links, and the most updated version of this FAQ, check the website at:

<http://iyouboushi.netfirms.com/rk/Kenshinfaq.html>

[I want to host this FAQ on my site, is this okay?]

YES! We encourage Kenshin fans to do this! We want to help spread the FAQ across the web so that everyone has access to it. HOWEVER, there's just one rule that needs to really be obeyed: DO NOT HOTLINK THE FAQ FROM IYOUBOUSHI'S SITE!! In other words, *download* the FAQ and *upload* it to your own site then link to it there. Why?

First off, chances are it won't even work (Netfirms has a no "hotlinking" policy). Second off, it drains bandwidth which would make it go down (and no one wants that). Third, it's just better if you host it from your own site.

Also, if you download it and host it, be sure to check back occasionally for updated versions (nothing worse than seeing a 6 month old FAQ when there's a brand new version just waiting for people to view).

If you're unfamiliar with how to upload or would rather make it easier on yourself, just link to the website and let viewers come download it themselves.

Thanks.

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Due to the increasing size of this document this section has become a part of the website rather than inside this document. If you're wondering how to find out which questions were asked: use the outline feature, sometimes known as the "Navigation Pane" (usually accessed with F5) to navigate through the questions in this FAQ.

I'll also restate: PLEASE DO NOT ASK QUESTIONS THAT HAVE ALREADY BEEN ANSWERED! Repeating questions will most likely be ignored most of the time and you'll be told to check the FAQ. So don't waste your, and our, time.

[General Questions]

WHO CREATED RUROUNI KENSHIN? WHEN?

RUROUNI KENSHIN was created by Nobuhiro Watsuki. The first tankoubon volume of the manga was published in 1994, with the first kanzenban volume of the manga being published in 2006. It ran in Shukan Shounen Jump previous to it being compiled into tankoubon. The animated series began in 1996 and was shown on Thursday nights at 7:30 P.M.

In case you're wondering: Nobuhiro Watsuki was born May 26, 1970 and has made several other mangas including: Gun Blaze West, Busou Renkin, Rurouni: Meiji Swordsman Romantic Story (two short stories that basically served as the RK pilot), and Meteor Strike (a short story done for a Shounen Jump artist competition).

HOW MUCH OF KENSHIN IS THERE?

Currently there are: 28 tankoubon volumes, 22 kanzenban volumes (both consisting of 255 chapters total) if you don't count the special "Yahiko no Sakabatou" one-shot story or the special that was printed in the "Kenshin Kaden" (which was called "Haru ni Sakura"); 95 animated episodes; a "Memorial Box" episode; 2 specials; 1 90-minute movie titled "Ishin Shishi no Requiem"; two OAVs consisting of 6 parts total (the OAVs are titled "TsuiokuHen" and "SeisouHen.") and two novels.

Of course there's also a ton of fan-made doujinshi and stories out there, but I don't consider that part of the official amount.

YOU'RE WRONG, THERE'S ONLY 94 EPISODES!

Actually, that's not correct. There's 95 episodes total. There's also a Kenshin Memorial Box episode that was basically a summery of TsuiokuHen and the series. The 95th episode is included on volume 22 of the English DVDs but the Memorial Box episode is only available if you buy the Japanese box set.

WHAT ORDER SHOULD I WATCH/READ THE SERIES?

You can read all of the manga straight through. In fact, it's preferred to read all of the manga BEFORE seeing the series (this is the case with most anime, by the way); however, if you want to jump straight into the anime, here's MY (Iyouboushi's) PERSONAL OPINION on what order to watch it. You may disagree or feel differently.

TsuiokuHen [4 parts] -> Animated Series up to episode 62 -> Read the manga from the beginning of the Jinchuu Arc (starting with chapter 152, found in volume 18) to the end -> Ishin Shishi no Requiem (movie) -> SeisouHen [2 parts] -> go back and finish up the rest of the series (which ends with fillers) and read the rest of the manga (it's up to you on which you want to do first).

madpierrot of [adult swim]'s message board suggests a different order, however.

Animated series up until episode 62 -> TsuiokuHen [4 parts] -> finish with the manga and the rest of the series.

His reason? "One of the greatest points about Kenshin is not knowing anything about his past and wondering about it and asking questions just like all the other characters in the show. If you know all of that before you watch it seems like it would take half the fun out of watching the show." The manga doesn't reveal his past (what's presented in TsuiokuHen) until the end of chapter 164 in volume 19, hence his decision to wait until mid-series before watching it.

Either way you choose, it will let you experience the most out of the series for your first time. You'll get to see how Kenshin began (his origins are in TsuiokuHen), how he meets the "Kenshin-gumi," the entire Kyoto Arc and then you'll read the best arc of the entire series (the Jinchuu Arc) then top it all off with the movie and how they chose to end the series completely (SeisouHen).

WHERE CAN I SEE THE SERIES?

As of now Rurouni Kenshin is currently NOT showing on any channels.

In the past, the series aired on Cartoon Network's "Toonami" block. First on weekdays, it was soon moved to Saturday's at 10:30 PM EST. Keep in mind that the Cartoon Network used to air a seriously cut show that cut entire episodes and arcs.

The only other way to see the series right now is to either watch the DVDs or VHS tapes.

If anyone knows of another channel that is airing the series, let me know.

WHAT IS SAMURAI X? IS IT DIFFERENT?

When the saga of RUROUNI KENSHIN was brought over, there was a problem with the rights when two different companies tried to dub different parts of it. The series rights were owned by Media Blasters. The OAVs and the motion picture, however, were brought over by ADV. Because of legal matters, ADV had to find themselves a new name and settled for Samurai X, naming it after Kenshin's obvious scar. It is not different, as they are all part of the same "saga" and are all part of the story.

The official (original) names for the OAVs and movie (as stated in question 2) are:

Rurouni Kenshin: TsuiokuHen (it has four parts)

Rurouni Kenshin: SeisouHen (it has two parts)

Rurouni Kenshin Motion Picture: Ishin Shishi no Requiem

WHAT IS TSUIOKUHEN?

TsuiokuHen is the beginning of the saga. That is to say, it shows Kenshin's life when he was known as the Hitokiri Battousai. In all practicality, it's the animated version of when Kenshin pulls everyone aside to talk about his past in the Jinchuu Arc. In the manga his backstory begins at the end of chapter 164 in volume 19. It is being sold in the US under the titles "Samurai X: Trust," "Samurai X: Betrayal" and "Samurai X: Trust and Betrayal - Director's Cut."

The animated version uses quite a different art style (more realistic) and is EXTREMELY bloody/graphic. Why all the blood? Two reasons. First, because it's Kenshin's life during the Bakumatsu--a WAR! War is violent and brutal. That's just life. Second, because it's an OAV. OAVs have more freedom in the content side of things (they can show graphic violence and extreme sex scenes) because they are (usually) not going to be aired on TV so they don't need to worry about TV ratings and censors.

If you don't want to see gushes of blood or men being sliced (literally) in half, I would recommend just reading the manga versions, as it's nowhere near as bad.

One other fact about the OAV/backstory: it explains how Kenshin received the X-shaped scar on his cheek. I won't be covering this in the FAQ because I feel it is too big of a spoiler and just reading it without seeing it takes away the power and emotion behind it. Please don't ask me because I refuse to answer. If you seriously want to know without watching or reading, just look it up online.

As mentioned before, there's four parts to it. Here's the title list for those four parts:

1. Kiru Otko ("The Man of the Slashing Sword")
2. Mayoi Neko ("The Lost Cat")
3. Yoisato Yama ("The Previous Night at the Mountain Home")
4. Juji Kizu ("The Cross-Shaped Wound")

TsuiokuHen was directed by Kazuhiro Furuhashi and was released in 1999 in Japan.

WHAT IS SEISOUHEN?

SeisouHen is sort of a "thank you" OAV created for the fans. It takes place in Meiji 11 and 26. Part 1 was released December 19, 2001. Part 2 aired February 25, 2002. Both of these are combined and sold on one DVD in the US under the name "Samurai X: Reflection."

The first part is sort of a short series recap told in the perspective of Kaoru. It also informs us that Kenshin has gone off to China because a war is brewing. The second part continues with the memories of Kaoru where she remembers speaking with Enishi (the main villain of the Jinchuu Arc) and ends the series once and for all (in a sad way, I'll add). There are other points that I would mention but I consider them to be spoilers so I don't want to.

SeisouHen was directed by Kazuhiro Furuhashi.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE DIRECTOR'S CUT AND ORIGINAL FOR TSUIOKUHEN?

There are a few minor differences between the "Director's Cut" and the original cut for TsuiokuHen. The first being that the original was released as four parts, and the DC was released as a two hour movie. The DC also adds a few extra scenes and tries to make it widescreen (meaning some of the picture is cut off) even though the original was never done that way. It also removes some of the background music.

WHAT IS THE KENSHIN KADEN?

The Kenshin Kaden is an illustrated guide to the Rurouni Kenshin manga. It contains thousands of panels, illustrations from the Rurouni Kenshin manga series, guides to the characters, weapons, martial arts techniques and battles of the manga story. A bonus full color section reprints a special selection of color paintings, pin-up images and "Naru ni Sakura" by Nobuhiro Watsuki.

WHAT IS "YAHIKO NO SAKABATOU"?

Yahiko no Sakabatou is a 42 page (43 with the cover) "one-shot story" that ran in combined issue 3-4 of Shuukan Shounen Jump in 2000. It was also published in the September 2006 issue of the American Shounen Jump. Watsuki has been quoted as saying that this is his "final" Rurouni Kenshin installment and that he has moved onto new works.

NOTE: This next paragraph contains a few spoilers for those who have not read the end of the Rurouni Kenshin manga. Please skip this and come back after you have.

It takes place in the year Meiji 15 after Yahiko has inherited the Sakabatou from Kenshin. Yahiko and several others are being held hostage in a dojo by three escaped prisoners. The story shows how Yahiko handles the situation and how he has been shaped from Kenshin and Kaoru's ideals.

WHAT IS "METEOR STRIKE"?

You're probably wondering why I included this in a Kenshin FAQ, but it's because it appears in the final volume of Rurouni Kenshin (volume 28) as a bonus story. Meteor Strike is a short 31-page story from Watsuki-sensei. He has commented on it as saying "it's a bit different from RUROUNI KENSHIN and I think this will be a good story to improve my future works." It was originally done for a Shounen Jump artist competition.

WHAT IS "NARU NI SAKURA" THAT'S FOUND IN THE "KENSHIN KADEN"?

It's a short, six page long, full colored manga that appears in the Kenshin Kaden. It's basically the wrap up of the series.

WHAT ARE THESE "NOVELS" THAT YOU MENTIONED?

Believe it or not, Rurouni Kenshin was so popular that novels (actual novels) were created based on the series. There were two novels. One was a completely original story and the second was based on two sections of the series (where Yahiko has to save Tsubame and the other is where Kenshin has to fight Jin-e). The novels can be found in Japanese, Chinese and English.

TITLE: Rurouni Kenshin - The novel 1
 contains "The Moon Up There" and "Sanosuke and the Nishiki-e"
 AUTHOR: Nobuhiro Watsuki and Kaoru Shizuka
 EDITOR: Jump J Books
 JAPANESE ISBN: 4-08-703051-2
 ENGLISH ISBN : 1421506041
 ORIGINAL RELEASE: 10/04/1996
 PAGES: 236

TITLE: Rurouni Kenshin - The novel 2
 contains "Yahiko's Fight" and "Black Hat"
 AUTHOR: Nobuhiro Watsuki and Kaoru Shizuka
 EDITOR: Jump J Books
 JAPANESE ISBN: 4-08-703063-6
 ENGLISH ISBN : unreleased
 ORIGINAL RELEASE: 10/03/1997
 PAGES: 244

WHAT ARE ALL THE STORY ARCS?

In my eyes there are three main story arcs in the series, not including the special Yahiko story of the Kenshin Kaden. Here's a list of the story arcs and the episode #s and manga chapters. The episode #s skipped imply that they are fillers, not part of the actual story arcs. They are:

* Tokyo Arc

TV episodes: 1 to 12, 19 to 21, 23 to 24

Manga chapters: 1 to 47

* Kyoto Arc

TV episodes: 28 to 62

Manga chapters: 48 to 151

* Jinchuu Arc (also known as the "Revenge Arc")

TV episodes: not animated, though it does make a brief (and horribly mutilated) appearance in the SeisouHen OAV.

Manga chapters: 165 to 178

There are other "arcs" that were created for the animated series only. Remember, these are all fillers and are not part of the manga in any way. They are:

- * Shimbara Arc (also known as the "Christian Arc"), episodes 67 to 76
- * Misc (Knight/Medicine and Magic episodes): episodes 76 to 94

WHAT ARE THE TITLES OF THE ENGLISH DVDS?

Here's a list of all 22 English DVD titles and which arcs they fall under.

[Tokyo Arc]

01. The Legendary Swordsman
02. Battle in the Moonlight
03. The Shadow Elite
04. False Prophet
05. Renegade Samurai
06. The Flames of Revolution

[Kyoto Arc]

07. Shadow of the Wolf
08. Ice Blue Eyes
09. Heart of the Sword
10. Between Life and Death
11. Faces of Evil
12. Blind Justice
13. Innocence and Experience
14. Fire Requiem

[Fillers]

15. Firefly's Wish
16. Son of God
17. Holy War
18. Fall From Grace
19. Dreams of Youth
20. Soulless Knights
21. A Shinobi's Love
22. End Song

WHAT ARE THESE "SPECIALS"?

The specials are episodes that are not part of the series. They were generally aired as a review of certain things to prepare the viewer for upcoming episodes/story arcs.

There are two serious specials and one very short special (I listed it above that you may not even consider it as a special since it's so short). The three are: An episode review starring Yahiko and Kaoru as Plushies, a Hiten Mitsurugi Ryuu Technique episode, and a very short "Oro Moments" special.

REVIEW EPISODE:

This episode aired right before episode 45. It is considered the funniest of the three because Kaoru and Yahiko were hosting the episode as plushies. Included in this was a very basic summary of Kenshin (who he was and how he came to be in Tokyo with Kaoru & the gang); "Himura Kenshin's Greatest Hits" (basically him using his Hiten Mitsurugi Ryuu moves on various opponents, though it doesn't go into detail of how they work like the techniques special); a feature showing Kaoru getting angry over and over (similar to the Oro special) with Kaoru commenting "Hey, Yahiko! Are you implying that Kenshin is more afraid of me than of them [the villains]?" and her plushie crying in a corner. It finished with more summary talking about the Kyoto saga and how they lead up to episode 46. At the very end of the episode the two plushies say that there's more to come in the series and that they hope you watch.

TECHNIQUES EPISODE:

Similar to the "Himura Kenshin's Greatest Hits" from the first special, this episode goes through every technique of the Hiten Mitsurugi Ryuu and explains how it works. First they show a clip of the anime (for example: Kenshin facing Senkaku) leading up to where Kenshin uses a technique (in this example he used Ryuu Shou Sen). Next they would cut away to a black screen with the technique name written out and begin analyzing it piece by piece. In the example with Ryuu Shou Sen here is what it had to say:

HITEN MITSURUGI RYUU

RYUU SHOU SEN

"As the name implies*, the technique rises towards the enemy's throat. This is a very lethal attack. The enemy's falling weight combines with Kenshin's upper-thrust and delivers more damage than a regular attack would."

The special would then resume with another clip of another villain and another technique. At the end there's a preview for the Shimbara Arc and it tells you that the first ep of that arc will air a week from the day the special aired (and that they hope you watch it).

* Ryuu Shou Sen literally means "Rising Dragon Flash"

ORO MOMENTS:

Being only a minute long is what causes most people to think this isn't a special. Basically it's about 50 seconds of Kenshin going "ORO!" over and over again (different scenes). Pretty funny regardless if you think it's a special or not.

WHAT DVD ARE THE SPECIALS ON?

I hate to break it to everyone here in America, but as of now the specials have not been translated and brought over here. So, to answer the question, they're not found on any DVD. You're out of luck. Sorry.

WILL THEY EVER ANIMATE THE JINCHUU ARC?

I seriously doubt it. A little fact time: they had originally planned to animate it in the series (if you can read the Japanese credits you'll notice they credit some of the Jinchuu characters) and Tomoe was shown in ending #6, but since the ratings dropped after they went to making all the fillers (in addition to losing their budget as a result of this), they canceled it before they could. They then animated some of it (poorly) in SeisouHen and a gut feeling tells me that's about as far as they're going to go with it. I could be wrong, however.

ARE THERE ANY KENSHIN GAMES?

Yes! There are three total. There are two for the Sony Playstation. There's a fighting game and an RPG. The fighting game is titled "Rurouni Kenshin: Ishin Gekitouhen" and the RPG is titled "Rurouni Kenshin: Meiji Kenyaku Romantan: Juuyushiji Inbou Hen."

The PSX fighting game is fairly basic but has ten playable characters: Kenshin, Sanosuke, Sano as Zanza, Jin-e, Hyottoko, Hannya, Shikijou, Aoshi, Kaoru and Saitou. There's also alternate outfits for the characters and the ability to use Sano's Zanbatou during the game.

The RPG takes place after the Kyoto Arc. It does not star any of the main characters, but it is possible to get them in your party to help you.

On September 14, 2006, a PS2 game titled "Rurouni Kenshin: Enjou! Kyoto Rinne" was released. The game takes place during the Kyoto arc and follows the series fairly closely. The game play is very similar to a Devil May Cry type.

Playable characters include Kenshin, Sano, Saitou and Aoshi.

WHAT NOVEL DID WATSUKI REFER TO AS HIS 'BIBLE' WHEN WRITING RUROUNI KENSHIN?

That was "Moeyo Ken" (Burning Sword) by Shiba Ryoutarou. He also used "Shinsengumi Keppuuroku" also by Shiba Ryoutarou. I'm unaware right now if there is an English translation available.

WHAT ARE THE NAMES OF THE ENGLISH DVD BOX SETS?

There's several box sets that have been released in America that contain all of the series and the OAVs. Here's the titles:

Premier Box set #1: Rurouni Kenshin Wandering Samurai
 Premier Box set #2: Rurouni Kenshin Legend of Kyoto
 Premier Box set #3: Rurouni Kenshin Meiji Era
 Samurai X - OVA Collection
 Samurai X - Director's Cut Collection
 Economy Box TV season 1
 Economy Box TV season 2
 Economy Box TV season 3

HOW ARE THE ENGLISH DVD BOX SETS SPLIT UP? (THAT IS, WHICH EPISODES ARE IN WHICH BOX SET?)

Premier box set #1 contains episodes 01 to 28.
 Premier box set #2 contains episodes 29 to 62.
 Premier box set #3 contains episodes 63 to 95.
 The "Samurai X" boxset contains the two OAVs.
 The "Samurai X" Director's Cut Collection contains the two Director's Cuts of the OAVs
 The Economy box sets are the same as the premiers except the economy box sets do not contain no custom sleeves for each DVD and no deluxe box to hold them in.

Note: none of the boxsets contain the lost specials or the Memorial Box episode.

WHAT'S THIS I HEAR ABOUT DOUBLE SIDED COVERS FOR TSUIOKUHEN, THE MOVIE AND SEISOUHEN?

If you are not currently aware, the non-box and black box sets of TsuiokuHen, SeisouHen and the RK movie have reversible covers.

On one side is the "Samurai X" artwork and on the backside of it is artwork with the original "Rurouni Kenshin" (written in Japanese) name. If you haven't already seen them, I suggest checking out the TsuiokuHen artwork for sure, as it's beautiful.

WHAT IS THIS JAPANESE BOX SET I HEAR ABOUT?

It is a huge box set containing all of the television episodes, both theater versions of the OAVs, and presumably the movie. It was released on December 20, 2006. It also comes with several art books and various extra gifts (such as a small model of a sakabatou). The box set runs about 84,000 yen retail (some places will offer it for about 64,000 yen) including tax.

[Ordering Questions]

WHERE DO I ORDER/GET THE MANGA (ALL VERSIONS)?

If you're looking for the original Japanese tankoubon release, or the new kazenban (perfect) volumes, you can find both at SASUGA JAPANESE BOOKSTORE (www.sasugabooks.com) or AMAZON JAPAN (www.amazon.co.jp). The English versions of the tankoubon can be found at Amazon (www.amazon.com).

WHERE DO I ORDER/GET THE SERIES/OAVS/MOVIE?

You can find them in most stores that sell anime. Online, AMAZON.COM is still your best bet.

WHERE DO I ORDER THE NOVELS?

For the Japanese or Chinese versions you will have to import them. Check out SASUGA JAPANESE BOOKSTORE (www.sasugabooks.com) for one such place to order them. VIZ Media is translating and releasing them in English to the United States and Canada. Check your local bookstore.

WHAT IS A SAKABATOU? CAN I OBTAIN ONE?

Literally, "sakabatou" translates to "reverse-blade katana" and that's what it is. The Sakabatou is the weapon Kenshin uses because the blade is on the other side, making it harder for him to kill someone. Make no mistake though, if he wanted to, he could easily kill with the dull edge as well (imagine a metal baseball bat being slammed into you by Kenshin and you'll get the picture). Yes, you CAN obtain a real Sakabatou, however, IT'S A REAL WEAPON! It's NOT a toy. You can SERIOUSLY injure yourself if you're playing around with it (even more-so than a normal katana because the blade is on the inside instead of out). You can buy one at KNIGHT'S EDGE. <http://www.knightsedge.com/swords/reverse-blade-sword.htm> I've also been informed that many anime conventions in the US will carry and sell Sakabatou replicas for around \$30~\$60.

WHERE DO I ORDER/GET THE ENGLISH BOX SETS?

You can find the (pretty expensive) box sets at AMAZON.COM (www.amazon.com). I imagine you can find them at other stores as well (check your local video store).

WHERE DO I ORDER/GET THE JAPANESE BOX SET?

You can find the Japanese box set for sale on Amazon Japan (www.amazon.co.jp) for a whopping 63,000 yen (which is about \$551.23). As far as I know, this is the cheapest place to order it from.

WHERE DO I ORDER THE GAMES?

The PSX games are long out of print, so EBAY (www.ebay.com) is more than likely your only shot at obtaining these. There is also another site, http://www.toysnjoys.com/psximport_r.html, that may sell them. Buy at your own risk.

The PS2 game, however, can be purchased via Play Asia (www.play-asia.com) and will run about \$34.90.

Please note that you will need a Japanese PSX or PS2 to run the games.

[Music-related Questions]

WHAT ARE THE OPENING/CLOSING THEMES? WHAT EPISODES ARE THEY USED FOR?

If it's one thing everyone knows about Kenshin, it's that it has some great opening and closing themes. And yes, there's quite a few of them, with many of them being really addictive and just plain wonderful. If you're curious on what they are, who the artist is and what episodes they aired with, look no further.

*Openings

#.	Title	Artist	Episodes
1.	Sobakasu	Judy and Mary	01 - 38
2.	1/2	Kawamoto Makoto	39 - 82
3.	Kimi Ni Fureru Dake De	Curio	83 - 95

* Note that there is also an English version of "Sobakasu" sung by Sandy Fox.

*Endings

#.	Title	Artist	Episodes
1.	Tactics	The Yellow Monkey	01 - 12
2.	Namida wa Shitteiru	Suzukaze Mayo	13 - 27
3.	Heart of Sword ~Yoake mae~	TM Revolution	28 - 38
4.	Fourth Avenue Cafe	L'Arc En Ciel	39 - 42
5.	Heart of Sword ~Yoake mae~	TM Revolution	43 - 49
6.	It's Gonna Rain	Bonnie Pink	50 - 66
7.	1/3 no junjouna kanjou	Siam Shade	67 - 82
8.	Dame!	Izumi You	83 - 95

If anyone wonders, the song that is more often-than-not associated with RK is "Heart of Sword." If you've ever seen the way Toonami decided to air the credits, the music that plays is Heart of Sword (although I'll point out that not only do they air the wrong song per episodes, they also air the wrong footage in the background--all of that is from the opening, Sobakasu).

And one last note: the opening theme to the RK movie (Ishin Shishi no Requiem) is "Niji" performed by L'Arc~en~Ciel.

HOW MANY SOUNDTRACKS ARE THERE?

A lot. Here's a list (hopefully complete):

Rurouni Kenshin OST 1
 Rurouni Kenshin OST 2
 Rurouni Kenshin OST 3
 Rurouni Kenshin OST 4
 Rurouni Kenshin OST - The Director's Edition
 Rurouni Kenshin OST - The Brilliant Edition
 Rurouni Kenshin Songs Album 1
 Rurouni Kenshin Songs Album 2
 Rurouni Kenshin Best Theme Collection
 Rurouni Kenshin TsuiokuHen OST
 Rurouni Kenshin SeisouHen OST
 Rurouni Kenshin Motion Picture OST
 Rurouni Kenshin Game 1 OST
 Rurouni Kenshin Game 2 OST

In addition, there's a "Rurouni Kenshin Complete CD-Box" that contains the four TV OSTs, the two OAV OSTs, the movie OST, the two game OSTs, an Opening&Closing theme collection, and the two Character Songs albums.

There is also a "Premium Collection" set that contains three CDs. The first CD contains nine tracks of openings and closings; the second CD contains 11 tracks that are background music; the last CD contains 10 tracks that are from TsuiokuHen.

WHO COMPOSED THE SOUNDTRACKS?

Taku Iwasaki did the two OAVs soundtracks
 Taro Iwashiro did the Movie soundtrack
 Various people did the rest of the soundtracks

WHERE CAN I FIND THE LYRICS TO THE OPENING & ENDING SONGS?

Your best bet is to try a place like ANIME LYRICS (www.animelyrics.com).

WHY WAS 'HEART OF SWORD' USED TWICE AS AN ENDING?

I have heard two reasons. First being that it was the most popular of the ending songs. However, I don't think this was the real reason. The second reason, and perhaps lesser known, is that there were drug charges brought up against L'Arc~en~Ciel (who did the 4th ending "Fourth Avenue Cafe"). Because of this Sony pulled their song and replaced it with "Heart of Sword" with the 4th ending's footage.

WHAT IS THE BACKGROUND PIECE THAT PLAYS WHEN KENSHIN SAYS HIS FAREWELLS TO KAORU BEFORE LEAVING TO KYOTO (EPISODE 31)? I CAN'T SEEM TO FIND IT ON ANY OFFICIAL KENSHIN OST.

The song is Intermezzo Synfonica. I believe this song was composed by Pietro Mascagni. I'm pretty sure that they were given the right to include it in the show (episode 31) but weren't given the right to include it on any of the OSTs, hence why you can't find it on any.

WHAT IS THE NAME OF THE SONG THAT PLAYS IN EPISODE 24 WHEN SANO FIGHTS KENSHIN?

The name of the song is "Kokoro no Hadaka" which roughly translates to "Nakedness of the Heart." This song is on the "Rurouni Kenshin: Character Image Song II" album. It's not found anywhere else (i.e. you can't find it on any of the TV OSTs). Another really interesting point about this song is that it's sung by Yuji Ueda, who voiced Sanosuke in the original Japanese version.

WHAT IS THE NAME OF THE SONG THAT USUALLY PLAYS WHEN KENSHIN SAVES SOMEONE IN THE TOKYO ARC?

It was rather difficult to try and phrase this question but basically the question was what was the popular song that plays a lot in the Tokyo Arc, usually when Kenshin ends up saving the day? The answer is Kimi Wa Dare Wo Mamotte Iru (acoustic version). The song can be found on the first TV OST.

HOW MANY TRACKS ARE THERE FOR THE SEISOUHEN OST?

This question came from the difference between the original SeisouHen OST and the extended version found within the Complete CD Box Set. The original OST contains 18 tracks (ending with the song "Pie jesu"). The extended version adds an additional two tracks, bringing the total to 20. The two tracks are "You By My Side (extended version)" and "Eternal."

DOES TSUIOKUHEN HAVE AN EXTENDED OST?

No. Unlike SeisouHen, which got an additional two tracks in the Complete CD Box Set, the track list for TsuiokuHen is exactly the same.

WHAT ARE THE NAMES OF THE ANIMETAL KENSHIN SONGS?

Animetal, a popular metal group in Japan, produced three songs related to the "Rurouni Kenshin" series. One is called "Shukutei Kenzan," another is called "The Juppongatana" and the final one is called "Towa no Mirai." They can be found on the Best Theme Collection.

WHAT IS THE NAME OF THE SONG THAT SAYO AMAKUSA PLAYS ON THE PIANO IN EPISODE 72?

The song is Beethoven's Piano Sonata No. 14 in C sharp minor--better known as the Moonlight Sonata. You won't find it on any of the Kenshin OSTs.

WHAT IS THE NAME OF THE SONG THAT PLAYS IN EPISODE 61 WHEN KENSHIN WAKES AND GETS UP?

The song is the second movement of Beethoven's Sonata No.8 in C minor--better known as Adagio Cantabile.

WHAT IS THE NAME OF THE SONG THAT PLAYS IN EPISODE 26 AFTER SHURA SAVES KENSHIN?

"Tsuioku ~in the Past~" from the fourth television soundtrack. Or at least that's what it's called on the 4th TV OST in the "Complete CD Box Set." The part this question is referring to doesn't take up the entire song, it's just part of it.

[Animated-related Questions (series, OAVs, movie)]

WAS SEISOUHEN WRITTEN BY NOBUHIRO WATSUKI?

Sadly, no. SeisouHen was written by Reiko Yoshida. If it had been written by Watsuki there's a good chance it wouldn't have ended the way it did as Watsuki has been quoted as preferring happy endings (such as the way the manga ends).

PLOT HOLE! KENSHIN SHOULDN'T HAVE HIS SCAR IN (INSERT FLASHBACK), RIGHT?

This has been brought up quite often now, and I want to address it in here, hopefully without giving away too many spoilers. But before answering the question we need to understand that after Kenshin received his full scar he continued to fight in the revolution, except that he was no longer a shadow hitokiri--that role was filled by Shishio. Also, Kenshin never fought Saitou or Okita when he was still a shadow hitokiri, he only fought them AFTER he was no longer in that role. This means he had his scar when he fought Saitou for the first time. In fact, if you watch the last bit of TsuiokuHen Saitou mentions that he had heard of Kenshin by his description (red hair, cross-shaped scar on his cheek) before they fight.

So now to address the flashback questions and whether or not the scar on Kenshin's cheek is a plot hole. There are two types of flashbacks used in the TV series version of Kenshin. The first is when Kenshin was still in the war, fighting to make a better tomorrow. This type of flashback can be from Kenshin remembering or someone else (like Jin-e or Saitou). Regardless, they're from the war. The second is when Hiko is remembering Kenshin's past, aka when Kenshin was still in training. There are no plot holes because the war flashbacks are always after he has received his scar. For example, the flashbacks of Kenshin fighting Saitou take place after he received his scar (remember, he never fought Saitou before then).

In short answer: no, they're not plot holes in the TV episodes. The war flashbacks take place once Kenshin was no longer a shadow hitokiri and thus has the full scar on his cheek. And the Hiko flashbacks are also correct since he doesn't have his scar in any of them.

ARE THERE NAZIS IN KENSHIN?

No. The reason this question is asked is because Swastikas appear on screen during one of the fillers. People naturally assume that Swastikas = Nazis, when this is just not true. Everyone has to understand that the symbol, the swastika, has been in use looooooong before Hitler ever took it and made it into an "evil" symbol. It is thought that the first mention or use of the symbol was in the holy texts of Hinduism. It was commonly used in Indic religions, like Buddhism. Its traditional meaning was "good luck" or "well being" (literally "it is good"). So even though they are shown in Kenshin, they don't mean that they're nazis.

One more reason why the Swastika symbol could not represent the Nazis in Kenshin: Kenshin takes place in the 1800's and the Nazis didn't come around until the 1900's.

One more note: Cartoon Network has basically refused to show the episodes where swastikas have appeared. The only way to see them is to watch the DVDs.

WHO WAS SHISHIO REFERRING TO WHEN HE TOLD SAITOU "YOU" DURING EXPLAINING WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM AFTER THE REVOLUTION?

The question was: When Shishio was talking to Saitou after being struck in the head with a Gatotsu, he specifically said "you" to Saitou, referring to who knocked him out and shot him. Was he referring to Saitou himself or the people he worked for?

My answer is that I'm positive that Shishio was referring to the Meiji government. Remember that by that time Saitou was working for the government and it was the government that burned him. He was generalizing.

WHO IS THAT MYSTERIOUS GIRL IN THE ENDING CREDITS OF EPISODES 67-82?

Those who have seen TsuiokuHen will recognize it instantly: it's Tomoe, Enishi's sister. The series was originally going to animate the Jinchuu Arc but was waiting for Watsuki to get further ahead in the manga. While waiting they aired filler episodes, which caused the ratings to die and thus killed the show.

WHAT NETWORKS HAVE SHOWN RUROUNI KENSHIN?

Japan	- Fuji Television
Argentina, Mexico and The US	- Cartoon Network
Brazil	- Rede Globo & Cartoon Network
Russia	- STS
Puerto Rico	- Telemundo Puerto Rico
India	- Animax

WHAT ARE THE NAMES OF THE ANIME EPISODES AND WHEN DID THEY
ORIGINALLY AIR?

EP #	AIR-DATE	JAPANESE TITLE (translated)
01	1996-01-10	The Handsome Swordsman of Legend
02	1996-01-17	The Bratty Samurai... Why Don't You Become My Student?
03	1996-01-24	The Swordsman in Sorrow. The Man That Cuts The Past
04	1996-01-31	One Word: Evil. The Fighter Sanosuke Appears
05	1996-02-07	Sakabatou vs. Zanbatou. At the Battle's End!
06	1996-02-14	Visitor From The Darkness... The Kurogasa Appears
07	1996-02-21	Fight to the Death Under the Moon... Protect the Ones You Love!
08	1996-02-28	A New Battle! The Mysterious and Beautiful Woman Who Jumped in Suddenly
09	1996-03-06	The Ultimate Stealth Army... The Dreaded Oniwabanshu!
10	1996-03-13	Aoshi... The Man So Scary as to Seem Almost Beautiful
11	1996-04-24	Farewell, the Ultimate Men! The Clash of Light and Darkness
12	1996-05-01	The Birth of a Junior Samurai! First Disciple, Yahiko's Battle
13	1996-05-08	You Can Do It! Toramaru's Dosukoi Journey
14	1996-05-15	To Save a Small Life! Challenge! Doctor Megumi!
15	1996-05-22	The Operation Starts! The Terrorist Group Jinputai
16	1996-06-05	Take a Pledge! The Hidden Sword Technique, Shiden No Tachi!
17	1996-06-12	Blast to Your Dream. The Adventure of Marimo the Flying Bullet
18	1996-06-19	Run! Yahiko, Bring the Sakabatou Back!
19	1996-06-26	Raijuuta's Desire. Vision of a Forbidden Empire
20	1996-07-10	Shinkoryuu's Revived! Show of Evil, Ultimate Killing Technique!
21	1996-07-17	The Nightmare Falls Apart! Raijuuta's Dream
22	1996-07-31	First Time! Crazy, Insane Steam Engine Train Trip
23	1996-08-14	Betrayed by Sanosuke?! Greetings of Fate
24	1996-08-21	Midnight Fight! Sanosuke vs. Kenshin Again!
25	1996-08-28	Scarlet Pirate!

Tear Up Kenshin and Kaoru

- 26 1996-09-04 An Incarnation of Thunder Storm!
The Mysterious Nobility of the
Female Pirate Shura
- 27 1996-10-16 Ferocious Fighting Island! Scarlet Pirate
- 28 1996-10-30 Prelude to a New Threat.
The Shadow of the Wolf is Drawing Near
- 29 1996-11-06 The Ultimate Fatal Rival!
The Waylay of the Desperate Fangs
- 30 1996-11-13 Evil Monster of Revenge...
Shishio Makoto's Plot!
- 31 1996-11-27 Newer Reaching Feelings...
Kenshin's Departure
- 32 1996-12-04 Changing Tears to Courage!
The Path Chosen by Kamiya Kaoru
- 33 1996-12-11 Time to Be the Strongest Warrior!
Aoshi's New Battle!
- 34 1997-01-08 The Little Thief... Makimachi Misao's
Deceptive Looks!
- 35 1997-01-15 Occupied Village! Shishio's Evil Shadow,
Ever Closer!
- 36 1997-01-22 After the End of the Dynasty.
First Meeting of Kenshin and Shishio
- 37 1997-01-29 Shock!
Sakabatou Broken...
Soujirou "The Heavenly Sword" vs.
Kenshin
- 38 1997-02-05 Sanosuke, The Secret of Patience...
Challenge the Hakai Priest, Anji
- 39 1997-02-12 The Man Who Makes Sakabatou...
Arai Shakku's Masterpiece!
- 40 1997-02-19 Cold Blooded Samurai!
Battle with Juppongatana Chou!
- 41 1997-02-26 A Hidden Technique of Hiten
Mitsurugi Ryuu!
Reunion with Master Hiko Seijuuro!
- 42 1997-03-05 Alliance Agreed! The Day When
Shishio and Aoshi Unite!
- 43 1997-03-12 Between Life and Death!
Succession Technique, Mastered.
Ama Kakeru Ryuu no Hirameki
- 44 1997-03-19 Battle of Indignation, Gathering
His Strongest, Juppongatana!
- **Special #1 aired in-between episodes 44 and 45**
- 45 1997-04-16 Blown Away! The Battleship
Rengoku, Stop Its Sails!
- 46 1997-04-23 Burning Rengoku! Shishio Makoto's Fortune
- 47 1997-04-30 Crush! Futae No Kiwami. Pain of
Sanosuke's Fist!
- 48 1997-05-14 The Focus of His Gaze, Anji's
New Reflection
- 49 1997-05-28 A Wolf Sees the Shingan.

50 1997-06-04 Explosive Zero Gatotsu!
 Time To Keep A Promise.
 Kenshin and Aoshi Battle Once Again!
 51 1997-06-11 Now Is The Time To Awaken...
 True and Perfect Solution
 52 1997-06-18 Miracle In The Making!
 The Battle at Aoiya Continues
 53 1997-06-25 A Giant versus Superman!
 Saving Grace at the Edge of Despair
 54 1997-07-02 Hiten versus Shukuchi. Soujirou,
 God's Gift to Nature
 55 1997-07-09 Tragedy in the Storm. Soujirou's Past
 56 1997-07-16 Fight To The Limit! Shun Ten Satsu
 vs Ama Kakeru Ryuu No Hirameki
 57 1997-08-06 Two Men Betting Their Lives on
 the End of the Dynasty. Shishio
 versus Kenshin, Final Battle!
 58 1997-08-13 Will The Era Inherit Shishio?
 Kenshin's Most Critical Moment!
 59 1997-08-20 Luck Hasn't Run Out Yet! Warrior
 Spirit Revived Again
 60 1997-09-03 The One Who Permits Victory.
 Shishio versus Kenshin, Last Stage!
 61 1997-09-10 Remaining Juppon Gatana.
 Choice of Life!
 62 1997-09-17 Kyoto... Engraved Memory.
 Starting With Fulfilled Feelings
 63 1997-10-14 Legend of The Wishing Fireflies.
 The Girl Who Waits For Her Sword Master
 64 1997-10-28 Prince Yahiko's Born?
 Debut on High Society
 65 1997-11-04 Find Out Missing Treasure!
 Great Treasure Hunting Dog, Notaro
 66 1997-11-11 Happy Kaoru!
 Kenshin's Proposal!
 67 1997-11-18 Shining Legendary Sword!
 Mysterious Swordmaster,
 Amakusa Shougo
 68 1997-11-25 A Medallion of Destiny.
 Sanosuke and Sayo Meet
 69 1997-12-02 The Place of Battle.
 Shimabara!

		Judgement Day of Who is the Chosen
70	1997-12-09	The Impact of the Rai Ryu Sen. Kenshin is Sentenced to the Dark!
71	1997-12-16	Kaiou's Conspiracy. Shougo's Trapped!
72	1998-01-06	The Reminiscent Days... Shougo and Sayo's Painful Past
73	1998-01-13	Evil With a Sneer! Shouzo, Karyu's Damaged in the Explosion
74	1998-01-20	Sanosuke's Tears... Eternal Separation Between Them
75	1998-01-27	Final Holy Battle... Crash Together Two Ama Kakeru Ryu No Hirameki!
76	1998-02-03	The Sea of Departure... Hope Will Surf Over the Sadness
77	1998-02-10	Himura Dojo in Shimonoseki? Another Battousai Appears
78	1998-02-17	The Girl Who Longs For Her Art Student... Love Shock in Hakone Hot Springs
79	1998-02-24	Katsu Kaishu and Kenshin... Fated Survivors From the End of the Edo Dynasty
80	1998-03-03	he Never Ending of Edo Dynasty... Kaishu's Mission of Fate
81	1998-03-10	Ben Aoi's Trap... Ghosts of the Edo Dynasty Haunt Kaishu!
82	1998-04-14	The Decision of Katsu Kaishu. The Truth Beyond the Era
83	1998-04-21	Yutaro Returns. The Ambitions of the Black Knights Hide in the Shadows
84	1998-05-05	Sanada Ninja and the Divine Medicine. Their Leader, Misanagi's Goal
85	1998-05-19	A Puzzling Journey. The Trap of Holy Crossing Has Been Laid!
86	1998-05-26	Dancing Underground. Red Day Fly Cutthroat! Sanada Sasshin
87	1998-06-02	Schneider's Bet. The Collapse of the Black Knights
88	1998-06-09	Two Other Directions.

89	1998-06-16	Yahiko and Yutaro's Eternal Promise To My Angel Misao... Special Delivery from Kyoto
90	1998-06-23	Fusui's Surprise Attack! The Mystery of the Satanic Pentagram
91	1998-07-21	Resist the Fusui's Magical Power. Next Target: the Kamiya Dojo!
92	1998-08-04	Tokyo's Under Martial Law! Strike of the Spiral Weapon, Ryu Myaku
93	1998-08-18	The Enemy Awaits in Senjo Gahara! Searching for the Hisui Crest
94	1998-09-08	The Elegy of the Wind and the Water. Now They Make Desperate Efforts Here!
95		Between Scarlet and Emerald are in the Boom of the Waves

[Manga-related Questions]

IN VOLUME 11, CHAPTER 85, OF VIZ'S RK TRANSLATIONS HIKO TELLS KENSHIN: "AFTER ALL, SHISHIO MUSTN'T BE LEFT AS THE - ONLY- HITEN MITSURUGI STUDENT." WHAT GIVES? DID VIZ MAKE A MISTAKE OR DID THEY GET IT RIGHT AND COUNTLESS FANS GOT IT WRONG?

It is a mistake. Shishio has never been a pupil of Hiko nor does he know anything of Hiten Mitsurugi Ryuu save for "Ryuu Shou Sen" that Kenshin used on Senkaku while he watched.

The line that is being mistranslated is "nandakanda itte Hiten mitsurugi Ryuu no kenkaku toshite Shishio wo houtteoku wa keni ha ikandarou."

I translated this (using the original kana/kanji in front of me) to: "What is it? It is needless to say that as a swordsman of Hiten Mitsurugi Ryuu there is no way that I can ignore Shishio."

I'm still learning Japanese so my translation may be a little rough, but it should still show the difference.

I'm glad that this mistake was brought to my attention. Kenshin fans should be up in arms about this and complain to Viz and ask them to fix the mistake before too many people get the wrong idea. [see website for a more detailed explanation about this error, including the original kana/kanji]

WHO ARE THE PUBLISHERS OF THE MANGA?

Japan	- Shueisha
Canada, the US	- VIZ Media
France, Spain	- Glenat
Mexico	- Editorial Vid
Brazil	- Editora JBC
Argentina	- Ivrea

WHAT IS THE KANZENBAN? IS IT DIFFERENT FROM TANKOUBON??

Manga in Japan almost always starts off running in a magazine (such as Shounen Jump). After awhile the individual chapters are bound together and released in volumes, called tankoubon. Typically when a manga becomes very popular in Japan there will be a new release of the manga, typically known as kanzenban, or "perfect edition." These volumes are usually printed in larger volumes that hold more chapters compared to their tankoubon counterpart.

As for the second part of this question, yes and no. The covers are different and the volumes themselves are larger (meaning they hold more chapters) but the manga itself usually doesn't change (there's rare instances, such as the Dragon Ball kanzenban, where a few minor things will change or be updated). There are going to be 22 volumes of kanzenban as opposed to the original 28 volumes of tankoubon.

WHAT ARE ALL OF THE ISBN #'S FOR THE MANGA?

For this list I'm only going to include the Japanese and American (VIZ) releases.

TANKOUBON RELEASE:

VOL #	JAPAN ISBN	AMERICAN ISBN
01	978-4088714998	1591162203
02	978-4088715001	1591162491
03	978-4088715032	1591162505
04	978-4088715049	1591162513
05	978-4088715056	159116320X
06	978-4088715063	1591163560
07	978-4088715070	1591163579
08	978-4088715087	1591165636
09	978-4088715094	1591166691
10	978-4088715100	1591167035
11	978-4088722818	1591167094
12	978-4088722825	1591167124
13	978-4088722832	1591167132
14	978-4088722849	1591167671
15	978-4088722955	1591168104
16	978-4088722962	1591168546
17	978-4088722979	1591168767
18	978-4088722986	1591169593
19	978-4088725154	1591169275
20	978-4088725512	1421500647
21	978-4088725741	1421500825
22	978-4088726014	1421501961
23	978-4088726267	1421502763
24	978-4088726687	1421503387
25	978-4088726960	1421504073
26	978-4088727325	1421506734
27	978-4088727585	1421506742
28	978-4088727820	1421506750

KANZENBAN RELEASE:

VOL #	JAPAN ISBN
01	978-4088741505
02	978-4088741512
03	978-4088741529
04	978-4088741536
05	978-4088741543
06	978-4088741550
07	978-4088741567
08	978-4088741574
09	978-4088741581
10	978-4088741598
11	978-4088741604
12	978-4088741611
13	978-4088741628
14	978-4088741635
15	978-4088741642
16	978-4088741659
17	978-4088741666
18	978-4088741673
19	978-4088741680
20	978-4088741697
21	978-4088741703
22	978-4088741710

[Character-related Questions]

WHO PROVIDES THE VOICES FOR THE CHARACTERS?

This section is probably going to be a "work in progress" much like the character translation list because of how many there are. But nevertheless, here we go. Note that this list reflects the SERIES, not the OAVs or the movie.

Character Name	Japanese VA	English VA
Himura Kenshin	Suzukaze Mayo	Richard Hayworth
Kamiya Kaoru	Fujitani Miki	Dorothy Melendrez
Myoujin Yahiko	Tominaga Mina	Elyse Floyd
Sagara Sanosuke	Ueda Yuji	Alexis Lang
Takani Megumi	Mika Doi	Jane Alan
Makimachi Misao	Tomo Sakurai	Debra Cunningham
Shinomori Aoshi	Yoshito Yasuhara	Terry Roberts (8-11), Terrence Stone (33+)
Saitou Hajime	Hiroataka Suzuoki	Sparky Thornton
Seijurou Hiko	Shuichi Ikeda	Richard George
Shishio Makoto	Ikeda Masanori	Steven Jay Blum
Usui	Ryuzanji Sho	James Lyon
Soujirou Seta	Noriko Hidaka	Tara Jayne
Saizuchi	Nishikawa Ikuo	George C. Cole
Henry	Takemoto Hideshi	Jake Daniels
Yukuyama Anji	Hara Yasuyoshi	Michael McConnohie
Hannya	Nojima Akio	Abe Lasser
Hyottoko	Iizuka Shozo	John Smallberries
Beshimi	Matsuno Taiki	David Umansky
Udou Jin-e	Ohtsuka Akio	Dave Mallow
Iwanbou	Yashima Norito	Lex Lang
Dr. Gensai	Shioya Yoku	Steve Kramer

HOW OLD ARE THE CHARACTERS IN THE FIRST ARC (THE "TOKYO ARC")?

Strangely, this question is often asked because they hear how old Kenshin is and are wondering about the rest. So here's the list. [Note: all names are listed in the Japanese way--last name then first]

During the 11th year of Meiji (1878), aka when the Tokyo Arc starts:

Himura Kenshin	- 28
Kamiya Kaoru	- 17
Myojin Yahiko	- 10
Sagara Sanosuke	- 19
Takani Megumi	- 22

WHAT DO THE VARIOUS NAMES IN KENSHIN MEAN?

As we all know, Japan is infamous for giving their anime characters names that either reflect their personality or their ambitions. Kenshin is definitely no different. Watsuki-sensei has given all of his characters great names, and here's an incomplete list of the major ones. If you notice that your favorite character is missing, it's probably because I am unable to translate it into anything that makes any sense. This section will probably be updated at a later time.

Himura Kenshin - Heart of Sword from the Red Village (Kenshin alone stands for "Heart of Sword")
 Myoujin Yahiko - Full of Virtue and Skill (surname is 'bright spirit/bright god')
 Takani Megumi - Carrying Blessing
 Saitou Hajime - First Master of the Shield ("Hajime" means beginning or first)
 Yukishiro Tomoe - Hope of the Snow
 Yukishiro Enishi - Luck/Reason of the Snow
 Shishio Makoto - Ambition of Truth that Preaches
 Hyotoko - Fireman (or perhaps "man who uses fire")
 Shinsengumi - New Chosen Group
 Ishin Shishi - Protectors of the New

IS "HIMURA" KENSHIN'S REAL LAST NAME?

Short answer: maybe. Here's why. When Hiko met Kenshin and changed his name from Shinta, he names him "Kenshin" (Heart of Sword). There is NO mention of Himura anywhere (even when Kenshin told Hiko his name). Kenshin mentioned that his parents were farmers. Back in that time era, only nobles and samurai (etc) were allowed to have surnames. Because Kenshin's parents were just farmers he would not have a surname. The question lies in how he obtained one, since he's referred to as "Himura-san" when he was in the Ishin Shishi and after. There's two possibilities. One is that he was given a surname because he was the number one Hitokiri. The other is that by becoming a Hitokiri for the Ishin Shishi he classified as a low-ranking Samurai and thus earned the right to have a surname. Both are just "best guesses."

Others believe that this idea is ridiculous and that Kenshin had a last name even if he wasn't allowed to use it, hence Himura would be his real name from the very start. It is not made clear whether or not this is the case. You can make your own decision.

WHAT'S UP WITH THAT RED KEIKOGI KENSHIN WEARS?

The reasons for Kenshin to wear the red keikogi (the top "gi" type of clothing he wears) has been up for debate for awhile. There's various theories. Red has a traditional meaning of determination (and love) but there's other people who feel that Kenshin wears red to remind himself of all the murders he committed in his youth and to never kill again. I don't recall seeing any official statement about it from Watsuki Nobuhiro though.

WHAT STYLE DOES KENSHIN PRACTICE? IS IT REAL?

Himura Kenshin practices Hiten Mitsurugi Ryuu. Like a lot of techniques and story used in RUROUNI KENSHIN, it is BASED on reality. There are techniques within that style that could have easily been used in Japan, but Hiten Mitsurugi Ryuu is fake.

WHO OR WHAT IS ZANZA?

Zanza is Sanosuke's "gangster" name that he went by after the downfall of the Sekihoutai up until his first defeat with Kenshin.

WHAT IS THAT HUGE SWORD SANO USES? DOES HE EVER USE IT AGAIN?

That sword is called a Zanbatou. Basically it was a weapon designed to take down enemy's horses (hence why they're so big and thick). Because of their weight it's extremely unlikely that anyone would use it as Sano does in the series. And yes, he does use it again but only in the manga (read the Jinchuu Arc to find out when/how/why he uses it again).

WHAT DOES THAT SYMBOL ON SANOSUKE'S JACKET MEAN?

In case you missed the meaning during the series, Sanosuke wears the kanji for "bad" (or "evil" or "wicked" but it's all relatively the same) on his back.

WHY DOESN'T KENSHIN SEE AOSHI WHEN PASSING HIM ON THE STREETS OF KYOTO?

The actual question was this: In Kyoto, Misao races by Aoshi without seeing him, while Yahiko and Kaoru miss seeing Kenshin. Since Misao was behind Kenshin, and Y&K were behind Aoshi, doesn't that mean that Kenshin and Aoshi also had to have passed each other without being aware? How could Kenshin have missed him on the street when he can sense his presence behind a closed door?

There is no definitive answer. My best guess, and what I will believe unless I hear otherwise, is that Kenshin only sensed Aoshi behind closed doors because he had trained with Hiko and awakened some dormant skills within himself. However, I was reminded that Kenshin was able to sense Sano's kenki (fighting spirit) back in episode four, so such a skill wasn't completely dormant. Another guess is that he was just unable to detect him because there were so many people on the street.

WHY DOESN'T KENSHIN FIGHT BACK WHEN SHISHIO HOLDS HIM?

The actual question was this: When Shishio has Kenshin by the throat just before he ignites his glove, is there any rational reason (besides the plot needed him not to) why doesn't Kenshin fight back? Shishio is holding him with his right hand, which in effect blocks his own sword from defending against the sword in Kenshin's left hand. He's left himself wide open. Why does Kenshin just hang there waiting to be killed by Shishio's sword at his throat?

The anime drags that part out a little longer than it does in the manga. In the manga it's almost instantaneous (he grabs Kenshin, Kenshin realizes it's gunpowder then BOOM! He doesn't have time to really react). In the anime he grabs Kenshin, talks, then Kenshin realizes it and then the explosion. It's probably done like that for dramatic effect. I also believe that Kenshin was a bit confused or surprised, I mean..wouldn't you be if he grabbed you through the flames with a sword aimed at your throat in addition to smelling something familiar right under your nose? He didn't have time to react.

WHAT ILLNESS DOES KENSHIN HAVE IN SEISOUHEN?

Note: This question is a spoiler for SeisouHen. If you haven't seen the OAV you might want to skip this question until you have.

They never mention it exactly, but it looks very similar to syphilis. By the looks of the rash on his arms he's currently in the second stage. In the second stage, rashes appear on the hands or soles of the feet within three to six weeks of initial infection. Left untreated it can develop mental illness, blindness, neurological problems, heart disease and death. All of these symptoms (minus heart disease) describe Kenshin's last hours exactly. You can read more about it on Yahoo! health:
<http://health.yahoo.com/health/encyclopedia/001327/0.html>

WHY DOES THAT NINJA IN TSUIOKUHEN EAT SNOW?

In the fourth part of TsuiokuHen a ninja crams snow into his mouth while waiting for his moment to attack Kenshin. This baffles a lot of people but if you think about it logically it isn't that hard to understand. He does it to lower his temperature. Why? Because a warm mouth in a cold environment produces visible breath. The ninja is up against the greatest Hitokiri to ever emerge in Japan and a ninja relies heavily on NOT being seen. He knew that if his breath had been seen he wouldn't stand a chance (as if he did anyway!) so he eats snow to lower his body temp to hide his breath.

WHY DOES KENSHIN DO ALL THE HOUSE WORK? IS KAORU JUST LAZY OR WHAT?

Kenshin does the house work for two reasons (that I can see). First, he wants to help Kaoru out. After all, it's her dojo and he's basically staying for free. He doesn't want to be a freeloader. Second, anyone who has seen old Japanese kung-fu flicks knows that doing housework like that is a great way to keep your muscles in shape. So in other words, he keeps himself in shape by doing that in addition to paying Kaoru back. Great deal if you ask me.

WHICH CHARACTER WAS BASED ON A SPIDER-MAN CHARACTER?

That is Yatsume Mumyouni, who appears in the Jinchuu Arc of the manga only. You can see his arm briefly in the last part of TsuiokuHen if you look carefully, but they don't show him in full unless you read the manga. Just for fun, Jin-E was based on another Marvel character---you guessed it, Gambit.

WHAT ARE THE STYLE NAMES AND WHO USES THEM IN THE SERIES?

This would turn out to be quite a huge list if I were to list them all. Still, I'll try to list the main ones that people want to know. Also note that there is a section later in this FAQ dedicated to the various techniques within each style.

Name: Hiten Mitsurugi Ryuu

Users: Kenshin, Hiko, Amakusa Shougo

Notes: This style relies heavily on speed and most of the techniques within reflect that.

Name: Kodachi Nittou Ryuu

Users: Aoshi (and presumably the man who taught Aoshi)

Notes: This style relies on tricking people. By that I mean, it relies on fooling their senses or tricking them into being hit. Examples of this are Jissen Kenbu (the liquid-type flowing movement that fools the viewer into thinking there's more than one person), and Onmyou Hasshi (the technique of throwing both kodachis but making it appear as if there's only one)

Name: Gatotsu

Users: Saitou

Notes: Just a forward strike with real power. Saitou relies on tricking his opponent into getting close enough to use the "Gatotsu Zeroshiki"

Name: Futae no Kiwami

Users: Sano, Anji

Notes: Anji was the first to invent this technique and thus he's a master of it. He can perform it with any part of his body (scary thought). Sano isn't too bad at it either, and later adapts it to his own needs.

Name: Satsu Jin Ken

Users: Shishio

Notes: Fire! Fire! All of the techniques are based on creating fire, cutting and burning the victim at the same time.

Name: Tenbu no Sai Niyoru Ken

Users: Soujirou

Notes: Soujirou only has two named attacks, Shukuchi (moving at such a speed that he becomes invisible to the naked eye) and Shuntensatsu (combining Battoujutsu with Shukuchi to create an INSTANT KILL technique)

Name: Watoujutsu

Users: Enishi

Notes: This is a more Chinese-related style and the entire purpose of it was to counter and utterly eradicate Hiten Mitsurugi Ryuu.

Name: Kamiya Kasshin Ryu
 Users: Kaoru, Yahiko, Tsukayama Yutarou
 Notes: Kaoru's father created this style. Its focus is not to kill or maim an opponent.

WHAT ARE ALL THE TECHNIQUES OF [THE VARIOUS STYLES IN] RUROUNI KENSHIN?

Check out the last section of this FAQ for the answers you seek.

WHAT ARE THE WEAPONS THE CHARACTERS USED NAMED?

A lot of weapons in Rurouni Kenshin are based on real weapons. Here's a list of what the different characters used.

Himura Kenshin	- Sakabatou (reverse blade)
Sagara Sanosuke	- Zanbatou
Kamiya Kaoru	- Bokken (wooden sword), Shinai (bamboo sword)
Myojin Yahiko	- Shinai (bamboo sword)
Souji Okita	- Kikuichimonji-norimune
Seta Soujirou	- Nagasone Kotetsue, Kikuichimonji-norimune
Saitou Hajime	- Katana
Shinomori Aoshi	- [double] Kodachi
Makimachi Misao	- Kunais
Okina	- Tonfu Batons/Nunchaku-Nenji Kashiwazaki
Hannya	- Iron Claws
Beshimi	- poison darts
Shikijou	- Iron Ball (ball & chain)
Hyottoko	- Flaming breath
Shishio Makoto	- Mugenjin (*brother sword to the Sakabatou)
Uonuma Usui	- Jinbei/Rouchin (spear/turtle shell)
Yukyuzan Anji	- knife (dagger)
Kariwa Henja	- Bombs & Knives
Sawagejou Cho	- Katanas of various types (he's a sword collector)
Honjo Kamatari	- Kusari Gama (Scythe w/ball & chain)
Fuji	- a freakin huge sword
Seijuro Hiko	- Shirasaya/Katana
Iwambo	- Metal claws
Yukishiro Enishi	- Watou

HOW MANY MEN DID KENSHIN KILL IN HIS LIFETIME?

I don't think it's ever said how many men Kenshin has killed total. It was mentioned that he killed a hundred people in just six months, plus we know he killed quite a number of assassins and more after that. We can assume it's a lot.

After he stopped being a Hitokiri, though, he never killed another person.

WHY DOESN'T KENSHIN GET CUT USING RYUU SHOU SEN?

The actual question reads: With Ryuu Shou Sen, the weight of the opponent and the upward force of the sword combine to sever the head right below the jaw. The blade is supported by the hilt and the palm of the left hand, pressed against the back of the blade. This would work perfectly of course, except...with a Sakabatou. Wouldn't Kenshin slice his left hand off? For instance, in the manga, when he performs Ryuu Shou Sen on Senkaku, he's lifting several hundred pounds of weight, and half of this weight must be distributed on his left hand. Assuming that the inner edge of the sakabatou is even *reasonably* sharp [which it is, it's sharp enough to slice a cannon ball in half -ed], his left hand should be sliced right off. So... how does he do it??

So to answer this question... I have only one theory: it look like he holds the blade flat. By this I mean, it's not the sharp or dull edge, it's flat. If that's the case, then he'd be able to use that technique without slicing his hand off or causing serious damage to his opponent.

WHAT WERE WATSUKI'S INSPIRATIONS FOR HIS CHARACTERS?

The first and foremost was the Shinsengumi. Most of the characters are based on actual Shinsengumi members. Other inspirations are: X-men/Marvel characters and Samurai Spirits (known as Samurai Shodown in America).

WHY DID SANO'S FIST BREAK WHEN HE USED THE FUTAE NO KIWAMI ON SHISHIO'S FACE?

Because Watsuki wanted to show off how strong Shishio was, is my answer. burnfist23 of the RKFAQ LJ community adds this: "It's most likely because of the strain he put on his right hand. Sano had used the Futae no Kiwami a lot, especially against Anji. The force behind that attack is tremendous, so using it multiple times can really strain his arm. Plus he can only use his right hand. Used repeatedly like that can cause a lot of damage. As for Shishio, well Anji was able to take a full Futae no Kiwami even without the Kiwami Hazushi and Shishio can pretty much live through anything." In other words, Sano's hand was wounded and Shishio is just as tough as Anji, so it didn't work.

WHOSE TOMB DOES KENSHIN VISIT IN EPISODE 62?

It's Tomoe's tomb. The proof is in the manga. Kenshin and Tomoe's father both visit the tomb. The old man even says that he's going to Kyoto to visit his daughter's tomb (see chapter 225). Later, in chapter 251, we realize that the old man had, indeed, visited the tomb (he placed her hair pins at the grave). Kenshin also says his goodbye to her in this chapter, in front of her grave (along with Kaoru, who thanks her).

I can't recall if they ever showed Tomoe's body being burned. If they didn't, it's possible they moved her body to the grave before he burned the hut. If they did, well, then it's an empty tomb set up just for remembrances. In any case, it is her's.

[Word or Phrase Questions]

ORO? WHAT THE HECK?

Oro is a word that was created as a way for Kenshin to show confusion and surprise. It is similar to the word "ara" which means the same thing. In English it would be translated closely to "huh?" or just a sound of surprise ("eh?" "ah!" that sort of thing).

Kagebu adds the following: Watsuki derived it from a comedian at the time named Shimura Kens (whose name in romanji also seems to have maybe had an influence in Watsuki-sensei's creating Kenshin's name). Shimura Ken's catchphrase was his "oro", but seeing as how I can't find anything about him other than his name, I don't know in what way this catchphrase was used. In any case, he was a relatively well-known comedian.

In addition, it seems the word "oro" means "gold" in several other languages.

WHAT DOES "RUROUNI" MEAN? IT'S NOT IN ANY DICTIONARY!

Once again, this word is the sole creation of Watsuki. Basically he took two words and combined them together: 'ronin' which means 'masterless samurai' and 'ru' which means to 'float or wander.' Put together it basically implies a "wandering swordsman."

WHAT DOES "AKU. SOKU. ZAN." MEAN?

Translated, the phrase "Aku. Soku. Zan." simply means "kill evil instantly" or perhaps "if you see corruption or evil, slay (kill) it instantly." This is the code that Saitou lived by. There is a debate whether Watsuki-sensei invented this himself or if the true Shinsengumi followed this motto in their everyday lives.

ARE THE KANJI FOR 'AKU' DIFFERENT FOR SANO'S JACKET AND SAITOU'S "AKU. SOKU. ZAN." ?

No. They are the same Kanji, only the way they drew it for Saitou's whole "aku. soku. zan." spiel is drawn more loosely/sloppy. It gives it an appearance that it's a different symbol, but if you actually compare them you will see that they are one and the same.

WHAT IS THAT SAYING KENSHIN (AND HIKO) SAY?

You'll hear Kenshin say this in episode 1 (and again in various flashback forms) and Hiko reminds Kenshin of it later in the series. Here it is.

Ken wa kyouki. Kenjutsu wa satsujin-jutsu. Donna kireigotoya odaimoku wo kuchi ni shite mo, sore ga shinjitsu.

Translated, it means: A sword is a weapon for killing. Kenjutsu is the art of killing. Whatever kinds of pretty words or titles you use, that is the only truth.

WHAT DOES "HITOKIRI" MEAN?

Roughly translated it means "assassin." The dub, however, translated it as "manslayer." A literal translation is "people slayer."

WHAT DOES "BATTOUSAI" MEAN?

Battousai is a special nickname given to Kenshin because he was a master of the Battoujutsu (partly because of the Hiten Mitsurugi Ryu style he learned). Broken down, "Battou" means simply "to draw one's sword, especially in the case of battle." "Sai" however is a little trickier to understand. In this case, however, the kanji is used as a nickname or could be translated as "lord" or "master."

WHAT DOES THE WORD "SESSHA" MEAN?

The word Sessha is another way of saying "I" however the way Kenshin uses it is sort of saying "I, who am not worthy." It's a super formal version of the word and lowers yourself in comparison to everyone else. This is one way that Watsuki-sensei helped to show the difference between the Rurouni and Hitokiri. The Hitokiri side of Kenshin would never use that word.

Note that because there really isn't an English equivalent, a lot of companies and fans have translated the word as "this one." While I suppose this is one way of doing it, I don't feel that this is conveying the same meaning and just sounds odd in conversation.

WHAT DOES THE PHRASE "DE GOZARU NA" MEAN?

If you listen to the Japanese version of RUROUNI KENSHIN you will hear Kenshin often say the phrase "de gozaru" at the end of his lines. "Gozaru" is a way to end a sentence and is another way of saying "-da/-desu/-de aru" and means "to be." Translating it into English is a little tricky and makes the sentence sound kind of..well..funky. The dub decided to go with "that it/he/she/they is/are." You'll hear Kenshin say "that it is" a lot during the dub and it sounds out of place (and sometimes annoying). But the original intent of having Kenshin say this at the end of his lines is to help show the difference between Rurouni and the Hitokiri. The Hitokiri side of Kenshin would never use any form of "gozaru."

WHAT IS THAT GIANT SYMBOL (KANJI) THAT IS BURNING TOWARDS THE END OF THE 4TH PART OF TSUIOKUHEN?

The kanji in question is the kanji that means "Dai". Every August in Kyoto, there are several symbols lit on the side of a mountain to send the spirits of the dead back to the afterlife. The first is the Chinese character dai, which means 'great' and symbolizes the universe. This is followed by the characters myo, 'mystic', or 'miracle' and ho, 'doctrine' or 'law'. The ceremony ends with a fire in the shape of a ship (symbolizing the boats bearing the souls of the dead to the shores of the otherworld) and then one in the shape of a torii (a Shinto archway).

WHAT IS WRITTEN ON HOJI'S JAIL CELL IN EP 61?

In the manga he has written the following:

"With no regrets for this world, I go to join Lord Shishio in hell."

I'm going to go ahead and assume that it's the same in both anime and manga.

WHAT ARE THE NINE TYPES OF CUTS IN KENJUTSU THAT HIKO NAMES?

Hiko gives a review to Kenshin about the basic cuts in Kenjutsu. These are it:

Karatake - downward stroke to the head
 Kesagiri - slantwise downward stroke to the left shoulder
 Sakagesa - slantwise downward stroke to the right shoulder
 Hidari Nagi - stroke to the left arm
 Migi Nagi - stroke to the right arm
 Hidari Kiriage - stroke to the left wrist
 Migi Kiriage - stroke to the right wrist
 Sakakaze - upward stroke between the legs
 Tsuiki - stroke that pierces at the shortest range to the chest

[Character-related Info]

THE MAKINGS OF HIMURA KENSHIN

"The original model was supposed to be the Hitokiri Kawakami Gensai, but now they're completely different . . . (oh well.) Kawakami Gensai, one of the four great Hitokiris of the Bakumatsu, could be mistaken for a girl at first glance, but his nature was the complete opposite of his appearance: he was a cold, calculating man said to be the most terrible of the four. He was famous for cutting down Kuma Shouzan in broad daylight with his unique, lightning-fast Furanui style of kenjutsu. Whether he was responsible for other assassinations is still a mystery. After the new era was brought in, his ideas about isolationism conflicted with that of the government's, and he was tried on false charges and executed in the fourth year of the Meiji era (1871). But after looking into it, I think the Hitokiri's inflexibility was not meaningless, but his honor for the comrades he fought and killed with and the enemies he killed. This thought led to the Kenshin character. From others in the Shinsengumi, I also took the selflessness of Okita Soushi of the Shinsengumi, and the mystery of Saitou Hajime.

Other than this, I didn't have any particular design for the character. The hero of my debut story was a tall handsome man with black hair and armor, so I tried to draw the exact opposite and ended up with a girl (laughs). In desperation, I added a cross-shaped scar on his left cheek. However, that scar actually became a key point in the transformation of Battousai to Kenshin (or so it seems)."

Hitokiri Kawakami Gensai Past

Komori Genjiro, he changed his name into Kawakami Gensai(Hitokiri-Gensa). He changed his name further into Takada Genbe.

He was short, his jaw and cheekbone was sharp. He was always calm and he was unyielding. And, he was very gentle.

Though He was born in Komori Family in Kumamoto, he became a foster-child of Kawakami Family, and became a Buddhist priest. (When there was a big earthquake and all people were running away, he extinguished the fire of a brazier, and he was accepted by many people. It was said that it was regrettable that He's a Buddhist. Buddhist priest's position was convenient to study.

Then, a study of the soldier was learned by Miyabe Teizo, and literature and swordsmanship were learned by Todoroki Muhe. He didn't get the permission of his clan though he tried to do overseas inspection to know the circumstance of foreign countries. If a foreign circumstance can't be known, he thought that he should exile a foreigner from Japan, and he recommended the thought of "Sonno-jyoi(Reverence for the Emperor and expulsion of the foreigner)".

Then, he fought to overthrow the shogunate together with "shishi of kinno" which his mind was suitable for. Though he killed many people, a clear record about his assassination does not exist. (The incident that a Sakuma Syouzan was assassinated at midday is famous.) Then, many battles were finished, and He succeeded in overthrowing the shogunate admirably. However, he became bothering existence for new government because his thought wasn't changed after the Restoration.(The government completely changed a policy suddenly.) Then, he was killed by the follower of "Kido Takayoshi" who was gensai's company. At this time, he didn't have the crime which was worth the death penalty.

Who is Himura Kenshin

One hundred and forty years ago, in the whirlpool of Kyoto violence that began with Perry's landing in Japan, there was a warrior called Hitokiri Battousai. This man, who paved the way for the new Meiji era with these bloody battles, disappeared at the conclusion of the bloodshed.

With the passage of time he became a legend, known simply as "the strongest."

Age 28. He has red hair gathered in a ponytail and a scar like a cross on his left cheek which is how people can tell he is the infamous "Hitokiri Battousai" (roughly translates to something like "Assassin who is a master of [the art of] sword drawing"). He got this name during the upheaval before the Meiji Restoration, when his fighting skills were unsurpassed. What his reputation as Battousai doesn't include is his very short height and slightly feminine voice, which often makes his opponents underestimate him. After the start of Meiji in the 1800s, he gave up his assassin ways and became a "rurouni" or wanderer, helping people to atone for all the people he had killed. He carries a "sakabatou" (a sword with the blade reversed so he cannot kill his opponents, only knock them unconscious) because he has vowed to himself never to kill again and uses the sword technique called "Hiten Mitsuryugi Ryuu" ("Strike of the Flying Dragon").

He is often chased by police for carrying a sword, were outlawed during the Meiji. Kenshin has a very gentle and polite nature (referring to himself as "sessha" which roughly means "this clumsy person", and using the polite verb "gozaru" at the end of his sentences) with a strong sense of right and wrong. One of his common sayings is "Oro" a version of "Ara". However, this nature could be a mask for his violent hitokiri nature which seems to resurface whenever he is faced with a tough opponent or other extreme circumstances. In these instances he seems almost superhuman in his fighting ability, almost as if he were a different person, and also reverts to regular casual speech, using "ore" instead of "sessha" is one of the ways Kaoru realized Kenshin was not his normal easygoing self during the fight with Jin-e. I think his struggling to deal with his hitokiri nature makes him the most interesting character of the series which I guess is why I am writing so much about him in this description.

source info sites

http://www.maigo-chan.org/rk1_01.htm,

http://vegetrunks10.tripod.com/dr_gonball-af/id61.html

SOUJI OKITA

Captain of the First Unit of the Shinsengumi)

Nickname-Soushi, Mibu Wolf

Born-1842

Style of Kenjutsu-Tennen Rishin Ryu

Background:

Probably the best-known and popular Shinsengumi figure. Another handsome total knockout, besides being a child prodigy at kenjutsu - he joined Kondou's dojo at 9, and was an accomplished swordsman at 15 or so. Former name Soujirou, (yes, it's true!) the sword he used is the one used by Soujirou in his last battle with Kenshin, the Kikuichi Norimune, length 2'4"2.

Strongest swordsman in the Shinsengumi, he yields a katana, bokken and shinai equally well. Famous for his "3-piece thrust" - 3 thrusts delivered so quickly at the opponent, usually at the neck and the right and left shoulders. Like Saito, this technique was improvised from the one invented by Hijikata.

Tragedy struck, though, for Okita contracted Tuberculosis, an incurable disease in those times, shortly after the formation of the Shinsengumi. He coughed up blood several times, though he would not let the others know. During the Ikeda-ya affair, however, his situation suddenly spiraled down (perhaps because of the cold night and the vicious battle), and fainted after he coughed up a shocking amount of blood. It was then that Kondou and Hijikata knew of his disease, and even by then the doctor had already predicted that he would not live long. Both were distressed over this, for they were like elder brothers to Okita (did I mention that Kondou was 10 years Okita's senior, and Hijikata 9?). However, all 3 agreed that news of Okita's disease should not be widely known, lest it dragged down the members' morale.

After the Boshin war, Okita went into a tuberculosis hospital in Edo. He passed away on 30/5/1868, First year of Meiji, aged 25.

THE MAKINGS OF SHINOMORI AOSHI

"Even when I wrote the paragraph about Beshimi, I was just adding the Oniwabanshoo impromptu to the story, and although I was glad that Aoshi would appear, I was in trouble because I had no idea what he looked. But, as models for the Oniwabanshoo, my beloved Shinsengumi came to mind, and Aoshi naturally grew out of the Shinsengumi's Hijikata Toshizou. But, there are two ways that Hijikata is portrayed in books and novels (if you're a fan of the Shinsengumi I think you'll understand.)

One is the way he is represented in "Burning Sword:" Hijikata with great combat instincts who fought until death (this is the Hijikata I'm a fan of.) But the Hijikata who killed his gentler feelings, who played the role of a demon and cried within his heart, who buried his human weakness, is the Hijikata that Aoshi is based on. How Aoshi, like Hijikata, fought until death we won't give away here, but it won't be long until he reappears.

Other than this model, I didn't have any particular design, but used one from my sketchbook. However as time went on, the image of Hijikata became looser, his bangs got longer, more in the modern style. I tried to go back and fix it, but it would have made you laugh (hey!) so I left it how it was. The coat I took from that popular American comic . . . (Some Believe The Punisher is the origin for the coat.)"

Hijikata Toshizou Past

Ok i had to cut his past by quite a bit if you want the full story check here. <http://www.chthonian.net/Aoshi/hijikata.html>

1835-1869

Vice-Captain of the Shinsengumi

died from a gunshot wound in 1869 at the age of 34

memorial gravestone stands near Itabashi Station in Tokyo, next to that of Kondo Isami, the head of the Shinsengumi

Sword: Izuminokami Kanesada (2'8") (in novels, it's apparently called 'Nosada' which is technically incorrect.)

Hijikata Toshizou started his career at the Shieikan dojo near Edo (Tokyo), learning the Tennen Rishin Ryu (along with Okita Souji) from Kondo Shusuke (Kono Isami's adoptive father?). When they heard in 1863 that masterless samurai (roshi) were being enlisted under Bakufu samurai to fight against the shishi, thirteen of them went to Kyoto, passed their entrance exams ^^ (basically a kenjutsu skills test) and were appointed "Defenders of Kyoto" by Matsudaira Katamori, the Daimyo of Aizu.

" In the beginning, the Shinsengumi was called the Roushigumi, and its leader was Kiyokawa Hachirou. And it was THIS guy who wanted his Roushigumi to become Ishin Shishi. However, a group of 13 people, led by Serizawa Kamo and Kondo Isami disagreed with Kiyokawa and parted ways with him, forming thus the Shinsengumi. " The Shinsengumi that we all think of when we hear the name was formed by those 13 roshi. They gathered initially at the village of Mibu, so the Mibu-roshi became the "Miburo." ^.-

Hijikata was initially one of the vice-captains under three joint captains: Kondo, Serizawa Kamo (the model for Shishio ^^) and Niimi Nishiki. But Serizawa and Niimi basically were abusing their status as protectors of Kyoto and basically tarnishing the reputation of the entire Shinsengumi. (fighting, drinking, whoring, extortion, the works. ; ; ^^) Hijikata investigated and found enough evidence to convict Niimi, and ordered him to commit seppuku. Then Serizawa and his rowdy followers were assassinated by a group of people including Okita, and Kondo became the sole Captain, with Hijikata as his vice-captain.

They held to that strict moral code Saitou keeps harping about in RK from then on. ^^ Hijikata was especially feared as "the demon of the Shinsengumi" because he was so merciless when it came to enforcing the law. (If you were just walking the streets of Kyoto, and you were stopped and couldn't produce sufficient ID...you were DEAD. Instantly.)

Hijikata was also completely merciless when it came to desertion or traitors. Seppuku was the only option given to them. When one of the founding members of the Shinsengumi (and his old friend!!) Yamanami Keisuke tried to escape from the Shinsengumi in 1865, Hijikata ordered Okita to bring him back and then forced Yamanami to commit seppuku. (and it was his old friend, too...)

Okashira Shinomori Aoshi The Character:

Full Name: Aoshi Shinomori

Age: 26

Height: 189 cm

Weight: 72 kg

Date of birth: January 1853

Zodiac sign: Aquarius

Place of birth: Kyoto

Blood Type:

Family: None living. Raised by the Oniwabanshu

Weapon: two kodachi (a short sword), kenpo

Skills -

First Appearance: Episode 8 (anime); Tankoubon 3 (manga)

Traits: Serious and unsmiling but calm and cool under pressure,, Aoshi was proclaimed a genius and a prodigy and was made commander of the Oniwabanshu at age 15. With the end of the Bakumatsu, there was no longer any need for their services, so Aoshi and the remaining Oniwabanshu set out to try their luck in the world, ending up as bodyguards for Takeda Kanryu.

SITES FOR SOURCE INFORMATION

<http://www.geocities.com/jefcat99/Aoshi.html>

http://www.maigo-chan.org/rk4_30.htm

THE MAKINGS OF SAGARA SANOSUKE

"If you're a fan of the Shinsengumi, you guessed it at a glance. The model for Sanosuke is the captain of the tenth unit of the Shinsengumi, Harada Sanosuke. He was known as one of the five most handsome men of the Shinsengumi (although, according to my bible, 'Burning Sword', [a novel by Shiba Ryoutarou] he was sort of fat . . .) and a spear-wielder of great strength. He loved to fight, was present at every battlefield where the destiny of the Shinsengumi was decided, and had a rough, stormy temper. But, perhaps because of his humble origins, he had his softer side. He thought a great deal of his unit and took care of those beneath him. Judging his likes and dislikes, he seems like the older brother type from a boy's magazine. He is said to have died on the battlefield of the Ueno War, but there's even a legend about him, telling how he survived to become a bandit chief. Looking from the eyes of the people of the time, he must have been a very romantic figure. Of course, I liked him too, and put him in RuroKen as Sanosuke.

"I'm extremely happy Sano has become so popular, but recently he's also become the Most Likely Character to Have His Name Misspelled. I've seen all kinds of different kanji for 'Sanosuke.' I even saw 'Sasuke,' and wanted to say, 'Hey, hey, he's not a ninja!' but by now I've kind of given up.

"When I did the design, as you know, I didn't have a certain popular character in mind. Maybe it's because of the hair, but everyone keeps saying so (I love the manga, but . . .) My model for Sano was the main character, Lamp, from 'Arabian Lamp Lamp.' During my assistant days, I was doodling in my sketch book and drew my own Japanese-style Lamp. I changed it around a little, and it became the real Sano. (I got the artist's permission, just in case.)"

Harada Sanosuke's Past

According to Watsuki and the historical novels, he's almost the same as Sagara Sanosuke. Liked to brawl, short-tempered and simply loved a fight. His favourite weapon was the spear. According to Watsuki, before he joined Kondou, Harada was the servant of some bushis, and this lowly status caused him to have a weak side at times. However, he really took care of those under him. (Really manly...) He was also a man who didn't like to fuss, and did things the way he saw it. One interesting point here: the members of the Shinsengumi frequented the brothels (hey they *were* humans with biological needs too! Just that Serizawa was carrying it way too far) but they seldom attached themselves to the girls, to take them as their legal wives. Harada married his girl, however - something surprising considering his personality, for in those days, you had the choice of *not* marrying a girl even if you'd slept with her.

After he broke up with the others following the Shinsengumi defeat in the Bushin War, he joined the Shogitai, the same troop in which Yahiko's late father also took part. Harada died in the Ueno War. According to other sources, however, he survived the war and stowed-away to Manchuria, China, where he became a bandit.

Sagara Sanosuke The Character

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Sanosuke used to follow a group called the Sekihoutai; this was a group of swordsmen who acted as a militia during the battle to westernize Japan. They were used as "a voice of the government.", but held no official rank. The Sekihoutai were setup by the Ishin govt. which Kenshin was a part of. They were executed for spreading false information, "which the Ishin government. told them to spread", promises were made that could not be kept in order to insure that the people didn't lose faith in the Ishin - the Sekihoutai took the blame and were executed. Sanosuke could not forgive the Ishin for what they had done; he became a gangster - building his strength and breaking the laws of a government. that killed his master and framed him as a traitor. He later does battle with Kenshin, placing all of the blame on him. Kenshin finally manages to get him to understand that he has lived a life of destruction and is dishonoring the memory of his former master - taking away hope from innocent people for his revenge. Sanosuke joins the others to protect others and to right the wrong he has done. He still has a rebellious streak in him and holds a grudge against the new government.

He continues to wear the "BAD" symbol on his back to remind him of where he came from - he is stubborn and jumps into things with little thought, but his extraordinary strength and stamina make up for his lack of caution. He sticks to Kenshin like glue and gets really pissed if Kenshin leaves him out of a fight.

THE MAKINGS OF SAITOU HAJIME

"There was no model; Saitou Hajime was a real person. But unlike Sagara Souzou and Yamagata Aritomo, he has a deep influence on the story, so I adapted him quite a bit. I adapted him so much that I received letters in protest from fans of the Shinsengumi. (I've received protest letters before but Saitou's gotten the most so far.) Saitou just seems to get more and more popular, though, so I'm really happy. The character Saitou is still part of the story, so I'll keep quiet about the historical facts and the details about the plot, but I like the way he's drawn as an aloof "dirty hero" who carries out his ideal of "Kill. Evil."

Instantly;" he's never a simple good guy and always antagonistic to Kenshin and the others.

"Other than the above I had no real design. Since he was introduced in the beginning as a bad guy, I gave him a villain's face, but I got protest letters about this too. It seems the fans of the Shinsengumi think of him as a gentle, handsome man, even though there isn't a single photograph left of him, so . . . (There is a portrait, though. It's there, but those who want to think of Saitou as handsome probably shouldn't look at it.) I also got letters saying, "What's Saitou doing selling the Hijikata family's Ishida Sanyaku?!" To put it simply, that was just a joke. And to those who protested that Akamatsu was nothing more than a bad joke, I am very repentant. But getting so many letters about such little things actually makes me very sad. I'm a manga artist and only human. Shinsengumi fans, Can't you read this manga a little more forgivingly . . ."

*The Gatotsu isn't a real technique. Saitou Hajime's special technique was the left-handed one-sword stab, but I changed it around for a boy's magazine to be the Gatotsu. But the Shinsengumi's specialty, the Hiratsuki, is real.

source http://www.maigo-chan.org/rk7_55.htm

Saitou Hajime's Past

Saitou Hajime (Captain of the Shinsengumi 3rd Troop)

Saitou Hajime seems to have struck second fame in Japan following his appearance in RK! There are certainly a lot of info about him on the web. Seems to be a mysterious guy even in real life... Also, everything about him that came out in RK (except Shishio and Kenshin, of course) is real history. I got a shock there!

Right. First of all, his origins seems a bit obscure. One theory is that he's the son of a ronin. Another says he hailed from Edo, son of a Bakufu official, and that he'd come to Kyoto after accidentally killing a person in Edo. Yet another claims that he's a son of the 12th Shogun?! and yet another says that he was a spy of the Aizu han placed in the early Roshitai. Talk about a mystery guy. His name, Hajime (meaning "one" or "start" as in another kanji) was because that he was born on the 1st day of the 1st month, though there are other reports as to his birthday.

He entered the Shinsengumi "sponsored" by the Aizu han, under the name of Yamaguchi Jirou, when he served as one of Hijikata's assistants. His most powerful sword skill is the "Left-hand single thrust" (but *not* Gatotsu, that's Watsuki-san's creation), this skill is even more destructive than Okita's 3-piece thrust!

In fact, Saitou, together with Okita and Nagakura, were hailed as the 3 strongest swordsmen of the Shinsengumi. Saitou assassinated a lot of corrupted Shinsengumi members. Eg, Itou Kashitarou and co., Takeda Kanryuusai and others. And yeah, Aku.Zoku.San was no invention of Watsuki - it was a motto of the whole Shinsengumi!

He was also a great drinker! The creator of one Shinsengumi website stated that "he's a different person when drunk", (I'm not sure whether this refers to "I desire to kill once I'm drunk"). In fact, he finally passed away because of a stomach ulcer, caused by excessive drinking. Unfortunately, I still can't verify that he smokes all the time, or that his favorite food is soba... help, anyone? Saitou's wife, Takagi Tokio, was the daughter of an important Aizu official - in fact, the middle-man was none other than the Daimyo of Aizu himself! They (Saitou and Takagi Tokio) were married in the 6th year of Meiji (1873), and their first son, Tsutomu was born in the 9th year (1876). After the Meiji government was formed, he changed his name and worked as a kendo instructor in a university. In 1877, the 10th year of Meiji, he joined the police troop with permission of carrying a sword to fight in the Seinan War, the one where Saigo Takamori rebelled against the Meiji government in Satsuma. Saitou did this under the name of Fujita Gorou. After which he became a spy

directly responsible to the Police Commissioner, Kawaji Toshiyoshi. (I was really shocked at this one... Watsuki can really interweave fact and fiction!)

Saitou worked as a guard of a museum in Tokyo when he was quite a senior citizen. After his retirement, he seemed to spend a lot of time thinking. Pity I can't understand his grandchild's remarks in the Japanese homepage. Anyway, Saitou passed away on 27/9/1915, 4th year of Taisho, at the ripe old age of 72.

source <http://www.animedat.com/Kenshin/Kenchar.html>

The Character Saitou Hajime or Fujita Gorou

A man of many skills, Saitou Hajime is not someone to take lightly. Originally of the Shinsengumi group, he later became a government agent. He posed as a medicine peddler when searching for Kenshin at the Kamiya Dojo. Going by several names, he calls himself Fujita Gorou. Also known as Mibu's wolf, his reputation as a cunning and merciless man precedes him in most situations.

Hajime was another rival of Kenshin's back when he was an assassin. He is the leader of the 3rd squad of the Shinsengumi. His sword technique is the Gatotsu. He is now a police officer.

Name: Saitou Hajime
 Height: 183cm Weight: 71kg
 Born: 1844
 Birthdate: Sometime in January
 Birthplace: Tokyo
 Zodiac: Capricorn
 Bloodtype: O type
 Equipment: Japanese Sword (Sword of Mumei)
 Current Style: Mizoguchi haittouryuu

source <http://www.maison-otaku.net/~nuriko/saitou.htm>

[Technique List]

This section will try to cover the various techniques that are used within the styles of RUROUNI KENSHIN. Special thanks must be given to KENSHIN-GUMI (<http://www.studiounmei.com/kenshin/>) for helping us out.

HITEN MITSURUGI RYUU

Do Ryuu Sen (Ground Dragon Flash):

Used by raising the sword up, then immediately bringing it towards the earth, striking the blade with immense force against the ground, the force of the strike will cause the ground to explode at the opponent, sending a shower of rocks towards them.

Ryuu Sou Sen (Double Lair Flash):

While performing this technique, Kaoru noted that Kenshin's sakabatou seemed to fly. The Ryuu Sou Sen consists of extremely fast, repeated blows towards an opponent. It's mainly used for those who won't be taken out with simply one hit.

Ryuu Sou Sen Garami:

A different version of the Ruyuu Sou Sen, in which the blows are directed at the neck. the 'Garami' kanji at the end of the skill simply means 'to attack at the head.'

Ryuu Kan Sen (Dragon Wind up Flash):

Utilized when Kenshin is beside the opponent, he then turns, delivering a backhanded swing at the opponent, usually towards their neck. The Ryuu Kan Sen is a move best used as a counter-attack, rather than an initial move.

Ryuu Kan Sen Kogarashi:

The easiest way to describe this technique is that it is a more powerful version of the Ryuu Kan Sen.

Ryuu Kan Sen Tsumuji (Dragon windup flash hair spin):

Another enhanced version of the Ryuu Kan Sen, the tsumuji begins with an extremely fast lunge towards an opponent, then using the force of the body turning to hit them in the neck. The speed from this attack can make landing difficult however.

Ryuu Tsui Sen (Dragon Mallet Flash):

The Ryuu Tsui Sen is the most frequently used technique in the series; it begins by leaping up, then descending towards your opponent, using your weight and force of the landing to hammer the opponent towards the ground.

Ryuu Tsui Sen Zan (Dragon Mallet Flash Cut):

The more lethal version of the Ryuu Tsui Sen, in which the blade is poised directly downward so that while descending, it cuts completely through an adversary.

Ryuu Shou Sen (Rising Dragon Flash):

A rising attack, where Kenshin places his right hand against the bottom of his blade, holding it horizontally above his head, then rises straight up, hitting the sword towards the opponent's neck.

Ryuu Tsui Shou Sen (Dragon Mallet rising flash):

A combination of the Ryuu Tsui Sen and the Ryuu Shou Sen, beginning with Kenshin descending downward with the Ryuu Tsui Sen, then immediately rising back up with the Ryuu Shou Sen for a double hit attack.

Arashi (Storm):

Another technique Kenshin invented on the spot, during a fight. He curls himself into a ball, spinning in a complete circle with his sword extended.

Hi Ryuu Sen (Flying Dragon Flash):

A sprung sword technique, where the user draws the sword out of the saya (sheath) quickly with the left hand, sending the sword flying like an arrow, aiming the hilt at a vital point

Sou Ryuu Sen (Paired Dragon Flash):

Another of Kenshin's battoujutsu techniques. Since the blade of Kenshin's sword is reversed, his speed with any battoujutsu is slower than if he were using a normal katana. The Sou Ryuu Sen is Kenshin's way of improvising for the slower speed of his sakabatou. The technique begins like a normal battoujutsu; drawing the sword with immense speed from the saya. When the sword strike is blocked or evaded, Kenshin uses his saya for a second attack. So the Sou Ryuu Sen is a two sword Battoujutsu.

Sou Ryuu Sen Ikatsuchi (Paired Dragon Thunder Flash):

A different version of the Sou Ryuu Sen taught to Kenshin by Hiko before the succession techniques. Unlike the normal Sou Ryuu Sen, this technique is initiated by attacking with the saya first, instead of the sword. Afterwards, the user would trap the other's sword with the saya, and finish the attack with his own sword.

Kuzu Ryuu Sen (9 headed dragon flash):

"The types of attacks in kenjutsu--first, the Karatake (downward stroke), Kesagiri, the slantwise downward stroke to the shoulder, reverse Kesagiri, right Nagi (belly stroke), left Nagi (reverse belly stroke), right upward cut, left upward cut, and the Sakakaze, upward stroke. Finally, the stroke that pierces at the shortest range to the chest, the Tsuki. In all the schools there is no killing technique that does not aim for one of those nine points. Naturally, the stances of defense were developed to correspond to these same nine points. But If you move with the godlike speed of the Hiten Mitsurugi Ryuu and strike at all nine points at once, there is no possibility of defense." -Hiko Seijuurou

The Kuzu Ryuu Sen is the second most powerful technique of the Hiten Mitsurugi Ryuu, which strikes all 9 vital points at one time. As Hiko stated, there is no way to defend oneself against this technique. This move was only countered against once, by Seta Soujirou, who moved faster than the speed of the Kuzu Ryuu Sen, and landed in a slash on Kenshin's back.

Amakakeru Ryuu no Hirameki (Heaven's Soaring Dragon Flash):

The Amakakeru Ryuu no Hirameki is the most powerful technique of the Hiten Mitsurugi School. Normally, when using battoujutsu, one places the right leg in front of the left leg, however, as noted by Soujirou, at the last moment before the attack, Kenshin put his left leg in front of his right leg before drawing his sword. This technique is most likely the one flawless technique of the Hiten Mitsurugi Ryuu.

If by any chance the initial blow is blocked, the air is displaced by the power and impact of the first, blocked blow, shattering the air around the opponent and drawing the opponent in. The second blow uses the pent up force from the first to accelerate the blow, thus hitting them with a more powerful hit the second time around.

Ryuu Mei Sen

Only used once in the entire series, and only in the manga, the Ryuu Mei Sen is a godspeed noutoujutsu (sword-sheathing techniques; the opposite of a battoujutsu). Whereas all other attacks represent the fangs or claws of a dragon, the Ryuu Mei Sen represents the scream of a dragon. The high-pitched sound of the sheath's reverberations strike the opponent's heightened senses and paralyze them.

MIZOGUCHI HIITOU RYUU

Gatotsu (Mizoguchi Hiitou Ryuu) is the specialty of Saitou Hajime in the Rurouni Kenshin series. Gatotsu wasn't used by the real Saitou Hajime in history, his specialty was a left handed sword thrust, but Watsuki decided to change it around for a boy's manga. But the Hiratsuki strike, the specialty of the Shinsengumi, WAS a real technique. Well, enough on the historical references, now to get into detail about Saitou's fighting style. The Gatotsu stance itself is done by holding the blade by the hilt in the left hand, and poising the right hand above the kisasi (tip) of the blade (Kind of like a pool stick.) Then lead off with the right foot. It's a refined stabbing technique, and has different forms of the technique for different situations, which are as follows:

Gatotsu Ishiki (Gatotsu First Stance): A straight forward attack, the neck, chest, shoulder, and head are the usual targets.

Gatotsu Nishiki (Gatotsu Second Stance): Used from the air to the ground, cutting diagonally from above.

Gatotsu Sanshiki (Gatotsu Third Stance): Anti-air move, used from ground to air, meant to intercept the opponent from above.

Gatotsu Zeroshiki (Gatotsu Zero Stance): Gatotsu done at a point blank range, requiring no running start or visible leg power. Very powerful, managed to split Usui into two different pieces. (In the manga, in the televised series he was only pinned to the wall by it.)

WATOIJUTSU

Watoujutsu literally means 'Ancient Japanese Sword Skill'. It is a Chinese styled kenjutsu used by Enishi in the manga series. It is a style of Kenjutsu which mixes the speed and slashing style of a nihontou, with the flexible movements and strength techniques that are typical of Chinese sword arts. Enishi's weapon in the manga is a mix between a nihontou (Japanese sword) and a Chinese sword. The hilt design is ornate like a Chinese sword, and the blade is longer than a nihontou, but unlike a Chinese sword, it has more curvature. Overall, his blade can be mainly classified as a tachi, the extremely long blade used before the Sengoku era.

Shuugeki Tou Sei: The technique begins with the tachi positioned so that the tip is pointed at the ground. Afterwards the weapon is swung upwards, followed by a powerful kick to the reverse side of the blade. The kick itself serves to greatly amplify the force and speed behind what would be a relatively slow and moderately powered swing. The power of this attack is enough to easily shatter the trunk of a tree, as shown by Enishi in one of the later manga.

Kaishi Tou Sei: A counter technique that begins with Enishi hammering the bottom of his tachi's hilt against the blade of his opponent's sword to stop an oncoming attack, and then pivoting on one foot to send a swift thrust to the chest of his adversary.

Shou Ha Tou Sei: This technique is similar to the Shuugeki Tou Sei in the manner that an extra hit is used to increase the power behind the strike. Enishi starts the technique by bringing the blade over his head while bringing his left hand up, then he smacks his left hand against the blunt edge of the blade, proceeding to bring the blade forward once more in an almost whip-like manner.

Chou Ten Tou Sei: An anti-air technique used as a follow-up in the event that the shou ha tousei misses. The Chou Ten Tou Sei begins with the tachi stuck in the ground, afterwards Enishi uses the bottom of the hilt as a stepping stone, and then leaps to the air while pulling the tachi itself from the ground by the cord attached to the hilt. Enishi then drags his weapon upwards using the cord, while using his other hand against the tsuba (sword guard) of his weapon, forcing the flat of the blade into his opponent's stomach.

Sen Ran Tou Sei: This technique begins with Enishi poised in a crouch, left leg bent inward, right leg extended, and both arms drawn, tachi held upward at a diagonal angle.

The skill itself is initiated by Enishi spinning around repeatedly on his left foot to gain momentum for his attack, afterwards he begins to spin around towards his opponent, blade extended, with a destructive force similar to a tornado.

Shikkuu Tou Sei: An attack used while airborne, the Shikkuu Tou Sei is one of Enishi's simpler techniques. The tachi is held behind Enishi and then swung in a powerful, overhand arc with one hand towards his adversary.

Gou Tsui Tou Sei: This technique begins as a powerful thrust at an opponent's midsection or chest. When the stab connects, the blade is then held vertically while the person remains on it, then swung forward to throw them forcefully from the blade. In the manga, Kenshin stopped himself from being impaled by using his arm to take the brunt of the stab.

Zetsugi: Ko Fuku Zetsu Tousei: Enishi's strongest attack, which begins with him holding his tachi with the hilt facing down, and the blunt end of the blade held parallel to the back of his arm. Afterwards he sinks into a stance similar to that of the Sen Ran Tou Sei, similar to that of a tiger poised and ready for an attack (hence the name). Instead of spinning like the Sen Ran Tou Sei, the attack itself is an extremely swift lunge, upon which Enishi rises and brings his tachi fiercely along his opponent's upper body.

Note: A rough translation for zetsugi is "Ultimate Attack/Unparalleled Attack". In essence, it is equivalent to an 'ougi', being the strongest attack of Enishi's style of kenjutsu.

TENBU NO SAI NIYORU KEN

Shukuchi (Reduced Earth): The Shukuchi is a body technique in which the user springs from their initial speed directly into their top speed within an instant, through immense strength of the legs, penetrating the range of the opponent in an instant. To any ordinary person, it would look like the distance between the two fighters has shrunk. Hence the name, "Reduced Earth." During his fight with Kenshin, Soujirou continually states he's only moving "three steps below Shukuchi" or "two steps below shukuchi." While moving at this speed, the only thing that could be seen was Soujirou's footsteps ripping through the tatami mat. While doing the true Shukuchi, Soujirou simply cannot be seen, even by Kenshin.

Shun Ten Satsu (Instant Heaven Murder): Soujirou's other named technique, named so because the speed behind the attack is so swift that "there isn't an instant even to feel the pain." The Shun Ten Satsu is simply Soujirou combining battoujutsu with the true Shukuchi. The speed behind the Shun Ten Satsu completely equals to that of Kenshin's Amakakeru Ryu no Hirameki. In terms of power however, it is slightly weaker than the Hiten Mitsurugi ougi.

SATSU JIN KEN

Mugenjin: Mugenjin isn't the name of a technique, it's the name of the sword Shishio uses. This blade appears normal when you first look at it, however, on closer inspection, you notice that the edge is jagged with tiny teeth, much like the blade of a saw. This jagged edge is the key to most of Shishio's hiken.

I no hiken - Homura dama: The first of Shishio's hiken, the Homura dama is a constant flame surrounding Shishio's sword. The secret behind this technique comes from all the people Shishio has killed. The oils and fats from human bodies collected on Shishio's blade over time. So by dragging the katana against the ground, or creating the right amount of friction, the spark will generate the flames around his blade.

Ni no hiken - Guren Kaina: The black gloves Shishio wears were soaked in gunpowder. The Guren Kaina also uses the homura dama in the attack. First Shishio gets a hold on the opponent. Afterwards, he scratches the jagged edge of his sword along his glove, igniting the homura dama, and causing the flames to react with the gunpowder, triggering an explosion.

Tsui no hiken - Kaguzuchi: Shishio's final and most powerful technique, which unfortunately, never connected with anyone in the series. The kaguzuchi is initiated by Shishio hitting his saya towards the bottom of Mugenjin's blade, creating a swirl of flames, and eventually, a massive flaming tornado.

SAIKI KANUMA RYU KENJUTSU

Saiki Kanuma Ryu Kenjutsu is a swordfighting style which uses both the sword and sheath in its combat techniques. This style which is used only by Shigure Takimi in the Rurouni Kenshin Movie - Ishinshishi no Requiem, is a quite versatile fighting style in which the practitioner can both defend and attack in an instant or fake out an opponent. When getting in the initial stance, the sheath is led out and tied to the left hand by the sageo (scabbard cord) while the sword is held in the right hand.

One interesting note is that the saya (sheath) is covered with metal instead of being only wood, so that attacks can also be made with the saya.

Kanuma Shougetsu Ken (Hidden Moon's Sword): Used with both sword and saya (sheath. With the saya held in the left hand the user holds the saya out in a Chudan (middle position) as a distraction, while his sword is held down and to the back, concealing the blade from the opponent. From this technique stance, the user can make an attack from below, above, or from either side with his blade. If the attack with the blade is blocked, a counter attack can be made with the saya.

Kanuma Shouyo Ken (Hidden Sun's Sword): Shouyo Ken is a technique that's a double strike in a horizontal circular motion. This attack is executed by striking first with the saya. If the opponent blocks the attack the user then traps the opponents sword and attacks with his own. (This attack is similar to the Soryusen Ikazuchi technique in Hiten Mitsurugi Ryu).

Shouyo Ken #2: The variation of Shouyo Ken is if the opponent evades the first strike with the saya. When this occurs the user would then launch the saya out of his left hand at the opponent, usually aiming for a weak spot or a previous wound. After attacking, the saya is retrieved by pulling back on the cord attached from the users left hand to the saya. This attack inceases the combative range of the user by at since the saya can be launched out further than the length of a sword.

Kanuma Shouen Ken (Hidden Flame's Sword): In this technique the user strikes the ground with saya and scrapes the ground in a circular motion, igniting anything on the ground, i.e. leaves. This causes a wall of flame which confuses the opponent as to where an attack will come from. From this point the user then dashes in with their sword extended out aiming for a stab instead of a cut.

Hiken Soutou Ken (Secret Paired Flying Sword): This technique is basically an anti-air movement in which the user drops the saya and unsheathes the wakizashi (short sword) with the left hand and leaps up to intercept the opponent. Before the opponent comes within range the user crosses the swords in front of their body for either a scissors attack or to catch the opponent's sword in the cross of their two swords.

KODACHI NITOU RYUU

Kodachi Nitou Ryuu (Double Kodachi school) Is the name of the fighting technique used by Shinomori Aoshi. During his first appearance in the RK series, Aoshi used only one kodachi, combined with his kempo skills to fight an opponent. However, during Kenshin's fight against Aoshi, the secret and weaknesses behind Aoshi's technique are unveiled. At close range, an opponent with a longer sword has a blind spot due to the long reach. Aoshi would then trap the sword with his kodachi using the blind spot, and attack with his fists, but whenever Aoshi attacked with his kodachi, the blind spot was naturally eliminated. It is only at the beginning of the Kyoto saga when Aoshi begins to utilize his two kodachi fighting style.

Ososugi de Ugoki: A technique where Aoshi moves around his opponent at varying speeds, making multiple images of himself, and making it even harder for the opponent to distinguish which is the real Aoshi, and which is the fake.

Kaiten Kenbu (Revolving Sword Dance): The technique Aoshi usually uses after disorienting the opponent with the ryusui no ugoki. He closes in on the confused opponent, and spins around three times, giving his opponent three slashes to the chest.

Kaiten Kenbu Rokuren (Six revolving sword dances): The move starts with Aoshi gripping his kodachi backhanded, running forward, then beginning with his right, or left hand and slashing six times continuously.

Goku Juuji (Burning cross): A technique which begins with Aoshi crossing both kodachi at the point, like a pair of scissors, then rushing forward and directing a stab at the arteries in his opponent's neck.

Onmyou Hasshi: A darted sword technique. Both kodachi are thrown straight at the opponent, however, the second kodachi is hidden directly behind the first. So the opponent would only see one kodachi heading for him/her in their line of sight.

Onmyou Kousa: A counter attack move Aoshi used against Okina. He blocked Okina's tonfa with his first kodachi, then pressed his second kodachi against the blade of the first kodachi, forcing Okina's tonfa to break under the pressure of the two blades.

MISC

These are various techniques that are currently not in any category at the moment.

Usui's techniques:

Shin-Gan (Mind's eye): Usui most noted move. It isn't magic of any sort, but an extremely well developed sense of hearing. He can hear all the movements of the human body, the heartbeat which betrays their state of mind, the expansion and contraction of muscles, which allow him to know how they plan to attack.

Pouken pougyoku hyakka ryouan: A technique where Usui attacks with multiple slashes from his spear, and repeated thrusts from the iron base of the spear.

[Thanks & Contact]

Special thanks to everyone who has contributed on this FAQ and made it the way it is today. We ask that if you're going to host this PDF file that you download it and upload it to your own site and credit us for the hard work.

If you need to contact James for any reason his e-mail is Iyouboushi@gmail.com Be sure to put "KENSHIN FAQ" in the subject line to help avoid the e-mail getting erased accidentally.

You can also contact James via IRC:
Server: irc.esper.net
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