



As identified by Joseph R. Svinth, December 23, 1998:

*Eight of Okinawa's leading karate men.*

*Back row, left to right:*

*SHIROMA, Shinpan; MAESHIRO, Choryo; CHIBANA, Chosin; and NAKASONE, Genwa.*

*Front row, left to right:*

*KYAN, Chotoku; YABU, Kentsu; HANSHIRO, Chomo; and MIYAGI, Chojun.*

*A frequently reproduced photo — it commemorated a major meeting hosted by an Okinawan newspaper in October 1936 — its first known publication was in Karate-do Taikan in 1938.*

*HANASHIRO, by the way, is the man credited with creating the modern kanji and meaning ("empty hands") for the word "karate". Its original characters read "Chinese hands", an obvious reference to Southern Shaolin boxing, but after karate was introduced into the Japanese-run Okinawan public schools circa 1905, the allusion to China was no longer politically correct. Not everyone like the idea, but with the Thought Police about, most went along with it, and the October 1936 meeting in Naha was designed to officially implement the change. MIYAGI, meanwhile, was the founder of the Goju-ryu system, and was arguably the most respected Okinawan karate master of his day. Like Grandpa Kentsu, he also taught karate in Hawaii for a few months before the war. A future Hawaiian Territorial heavyweight wrestling champion named Jack ("Oki") Shikina was among his students, and as a result I wouldn't be a bit surprised if that isn't where rassling's "karate chop" got its birth.*