

Nga Kaponga

Tree ferns are mighty, elegant, unique and grow to tower over others in the forest.

Their leaves grow reaching out continuously from unfurling koru patterns as they develop and mature.

They are found in a family in the forest but often stand alone in their own space.

Find any similarities to yourselves there?

Our links to our name and our Haka

We are a national team, therefore we too wear and value the fern symbolism worn by so many other national teams who have a unique NZ identity, recognised across the globe.

Our name and our Haka was bestowed upon us from our links to the NZ military and our new connections with that Ngati Tumatauenga marae in Waiouru.

There we were taught our Haka and told that as a team we will always belong to that marae.

Our art began in Korea and spread across the world. One of the first places it spread to was Malaysia. There, we had NZ military personnel serving, including our own Grand Master Davidson I believe!

They learned Taekwon-Do from the pioneers themselves and bought it back to NZ. These first practitioners carried the roots of our Taekwon-Do in NZ so we have strong links to the NZ military, just as General Choi had taught Taekwon-Do to his military divisions.

We now carry that history into a far less violent battle at world champs, but we do so with our knowledge of our history and our lineage behind us.

Our Haka as described by the writer, Brent Pene – NZ Army.

“Nga Kaponga” is a “haka Taparahi” (performed without weapons) written exclusively for the NZ Taekwon-Do team.

The Haka begins with the command “Tuohu” (to bow your head) recognising all those past and present that have assisted with your journey. It then moves onto acknowledging the start of the day, for an individual/ group this is the starting point to prepare mentally, physically and spiritually. Tawhirimatea (the Maori god of the winds) is depicted here also for his presence and the sustenance he provides allowing the senses to awaken and become alert.

The writer continues to promote unity, in this case the group is likened to the sacred silver tree fern, bound together to represent their families and homelands of New Zealand.

The battle belt you wear is empowered by the following Atua Maori (Maori gods) when in the realm of competition, Tumatauenga (Maori god of War), provides you the poer and no fear attitude when in battle; Maui, (Polynesian Demi god) the great Polynesian hero and trickster of Polynesian mythology, allowing you to use your wit and character in battle, and finally, Rongo (Maori god of Peace), provides the realm for you to recover to bring balance back to your mental, physical and spiritual state. Finally the essence and importance of the family constructs and culture.

The final phase of the haka returns to the collective group “Nga Kaponga” drawn from above and below. It uses the term “Te Kura Takahi Puni” which means “war party or a form of attack in warfare where the fighting men attack in a compact force”. In this case the writer uses this analogy based on the history of General Choi Hong Hi who used Taekwon-Do as a means to prepare his Army.

“Te Kura Takahi Puni” Yes we are ready!

Nga kaponga**Kaea (Leader)**

Touhu	Let us bow our heads
Hi ake te ataakura	The dawn arises
E nga hau a Tawhirimatea	The breath of Tawhiri awakens
E Hika ma,	My comrades
Kia whakaoho	Let us awaken
Kia Tu	Let us stand
Kia mataara	Let us be alert
Tena takahia!	Let us stamp in unison
Anei ra...Hi!	Here in unison
Anei ra...Ha!	Here in unity

Katoa (All)

Anei ra matou	Here we are
Tuituia mai nga kaponga	Bound together by the Sacred Ferns
No Aotearoa	From New Zealand
la ha ha	Alas!
Ko taku tatua waitohu	My battle belt signifies
Ko te mana a Tu	The power of Tumatauenga
Ko te mana a Maui	The wit of Maui
Ko te mana a Rongo	The peaceful balance of Rongo
Ko te mana a te whanau e	The pride of my family
la ha ha	Alas!

Kaea (Leader)

Ko nga kaponga	Sacred Ferns
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Katoa (All)

Kaponga ki runga	Sacred Ferns from above
Kaponga ki raro	Sacred Ferns from below
Kaponga I te kura takahe puni	Sacred Ferns, we are ready!
la ha ha	Alas
Ana, ana, to kai e hi!	

Ki raro.

