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AUSTRALASIAN MARTIAL ARTS MAGAZINE

Publisher
Silvio Morelli

General Manager
Mark Castagnini

Managing Editor
Ben Stone

Editorial Director
Ben Stone
ben@blitzmag.com.au

Editorial Assistants
Daniel Hedger, Jarrah Loh

Art Director
Javie D'Souza

Graphic Designers
Adibowo Rusli, Lysha Moniz, Issan Ramma
Adam Summers, James Steer, Zeenia Lakhani

Advertising Enquiries
Nicholas Maranville
National Advertising Manager
Ph: (03) 9574 8999
Fax: (03) 9574 8899
Email: nicholas@blitzmag.com.au

Contributors
Mike Clarke, Matt Jones
Graham Kuerschner, Clint Morris, Chris Postupalski, John B Will

Photographers
Charlie Suriano, John O'Neill, Alegra Ally

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— by Charlie Suriano

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Ph: (03) 9574 9211

WE ARE CONTACTABLE

By phone: (03) 9574 8999

By fax: (03) 9574 8899

PO Box 4075,

Mulgrave, 3170

Email: customerservice@blitzmag.com.au

Web: www.blitzmag.net

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editorial with Silvio Morelli



Keep the Good Times Rollin'

On the 40th anniversary of Soke Bob Jones' Zen Do Kai freestyle martial arts organisation, we've dedicated several articles to pay tribute to this pioneering instructor, who was arguably the first Mixed Martial Artist this country has ever seen.

I've always had a bit of a soft spot for Bob Jones — and not only because it was in his system that I got my introduction to karate 34 years ago, earning my Zen Do Kai Black-belt under Bob's close friend and then right-hand man Richard Norton. Put simply, Bob is one of a kind, a fearless pioneer who remains a beacon of passion within the martial arts. It could easily be argued that he has also been the most influential figure ever to walk the Australian martial arts landscape.

And walk it he has. There's good reason Bob has graced the cover of *Blitz* half a dozen times in its 24-year history: because he's always had something to say, and no matter how outlandish his ideas may have seemed to some at the time, many times over he has been vindicated as his predictions proved true and countless others followed his lead.

Driven by his mantra 'The best of everything in progression', Bob has been discovering, blending and borrowing martial arts concepts since he began his martial arts journey in the 1960s. If Bob was ever on the bandwagon, he was the one at the front with the reigns in his hands. He brought kickboxing over from the USA and made it big, then did the same with Muay Thai, first from Holland, then Thailand. He was the first to introduce shootboxing, long before other stand-up martial artists could even see modern MMA on the horizon. And as soon as Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu made its presence felt, Bob and his boys were all over it, integrating it into the Bob Jones Martial Arts system.

Just as Bob and Zen Do Kai have introduced these combat sports and modern combative concepts to the wider Australian martial arts scene, he has also re-introduced some traditional martial arts to his own freestyle organisation. For example, in the last decade

Bob's aikido training has had the biggest influence on Zen Do Kai, and now the organisation is also rediscovering its Goju-ryu karate roots via Okinawa.

Bob Jones may no longer have the biggest organisation (though he once did, and it still spreads across Australia and New Zealand, and in recent years, into several other continents), but his methods and teaching have had a lasting impact on the martial arts scene, and many people within it.

This was no more evident than at Zen Do Kai's recent 40th anniversary ball, where several highly respected masters joined the ZDK faithful in celebrating Bob's achievements. Among them were Wing Chun master Barry Pang, Kyokushin pioneer Shihan Eddie Emin, and even Jones' first instructor, taekwondo master Jack Rozinszky.

It was a great thrill to be among the 900-plus people invited to the event, and to pay tribute to those at the root of my own martial arts journey while catching up with old training partners and instructors I hadn't seen for decades. Among them were highly regarded ZDK instructors Billy Manne, Dave Berry, Steve Nedelkos, Mick Hanify and my original sensei Richard Norton, as well as kickboxing greats Dave Hedgcock and George Zacharia, with whom I used to train in the city dojo.

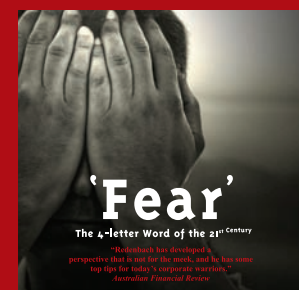
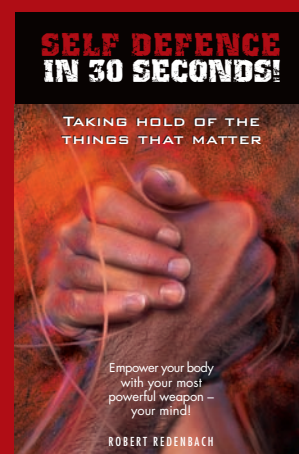
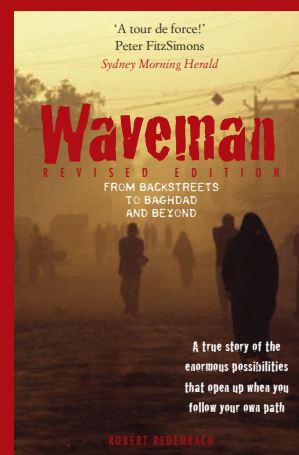
The turnout was testament not only to the impact Bob Jones has had on his own people and the broader martial arts community, but also the loyalty he has engendered in those whose lives he's touched.

Bob, we at *Blitz* wish you well in your 40th anniversary year, and for all the years to come.

Read & Learn

"Really impressive, Redenbach has a rare clarity and great message."

Geoff Thompson —
Martial Artist,
BAFTA winning writer



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AIKIDO YOSHINKAI TURNS FIVE

Aikido Yoshinkai NSW (AYNSW) marked the opening of their new full-time dojo in the inner Sydney suburb of Marrickville and celebrated its fifth anniversary with an aikido *embu* (demonstration) held on 4 September.

Instructors and students demonstrated a wide range of basic-to-advanced techniques before AYNWS chief instructor Darren Friend Sensei, 5th Dan, finished off the *embu* by giving an explanation of fundamental aikido concepts and demonstrating on several students. In closing the event, special guest Ms Yoshie Aihara, Consul for Information and Culture of the Japanese Consulate in Sydney, remarked that she had attended many

martial arts demonstrations in Japan and was most impressed with the dynamic display she had witnessed at the Sydney Aikido Yoshinkai dojo.

On reaching the milestones, Friend Sensei said, "Our aim is to create closer ties within the local community. We want to teach aikido the way we were taught, and remain loyal to the traditions and etiquette of the art. Aikido is about focus, and we want to help people find some of that in their lives today."

AYNSW members practise the Yoshinkan style of aikido, the Japanese martial art that exploits an attacker's oncoming power to apply techniques through balance-breaking, throws, locks and pins. Friend Sensei and his wife, Peggy Woo Sensei, 4th

Dan, opened AYNWS in Sydney after having spent many years teaching at the Yoshinkan *honbu* (headquarters) in Tokyo, where the art is also taught to the Tokyo Riot Police.

"We started off in a 42-mat dojo in Alexandria and recently moved to a bigger, 119-mat dojo in Marrickville," said Friend. "With the help and support of dojo members, we were able to move and set up the dojo within a matter of weeks, and that was not an easy feat!"

Friend Sensei acknowledged the dedication of AYNWS

members, some of who come to train regularly from across Sydney and as far away as Canberra, Newcastle and Wollongong.



Friend Sensei in action at the demo

Aussie UFC fighter up for award

Australian UFC fighter George Sotiropoulos was recently nominated by UK magazine *Fighters Only* for their 'International Fighter of the Year' trophy. Undeclared in six straight fights with the USA's biggest Mixed Martial Arts organisation, UFC, the Geelong-born BJJ Black-belt boasts an overall MMA record of 13-2-0. He recently defeated stars Kurt Pellegrino and Joe Stevenson, who he dominated at UFC 110 at Sydney's Acer Arena last February.

Should he win his next fight, it's likely Sotiropoulos will get a shot at the UFC Lightweight title currently held by Frankie Edgar, who took it from long-time champion and MMA legend BJ Penn earlier this year.

If you'd like to cast your vote for Sotiropoulos, visit www.onlineawards.co.uk/fightersonly/ and click on 'nominate'.



Sotiropoulos graced the cover of *Inside MMA* in March

Grandmaster's demo day cancelled

The retirement karate demonstration of Kanbu Kai Karate-do founder Hanshi Shokan Takeda Sun, as reported in the last issue of *Blitz*, has been cancelled due to an injury sustained by Takeda.

The demonstration, to mark the retirement from teaching of the 80-year-old 10th Dan grandmaster of Shito-ryu karate, was scheduled for Saturday 13 November. He has had to reschedule the event until possibly later in 2011 after a repetitive strain injury to his elbow left him unable to perform the *tameshiwari* demonstration he had planned, which involves breaking bottles with his hands.

"Given it took almost a year to recover 10 years ago, at 80 years old he is understandably not confident he will be able to demonstrate in November," said senior Kanbu Kai instructor Shihan Simon Duckett.

[Keep an eye on *Blitz* next year for news of the rescheduled demo – Ed.]





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Shaolin sojourn to London

Sydney-based instructor of Shaolin Monk Kung Fu, Master Shifu Brett Russell, recently visited England's *Shaolin Wu Seng Hou Bei Dui* (Shaolin Temple Warrior Monks Preparation Team).

Russell was invited to attend the event by the Chinese head of the school, Shaolin Grandmaster Shi De Yang, and its chief instructor Shi Xing Fu (English name Olly Renon). The school opened in Plymouth, a southern coastal town four hours' drive from London.

"I flew to London to have a meeting with Shifu Olly (Shi Xing Fu) about setting up a cultural exchange with

his school and mine, Shaolin Monk Martial Arts Centres. It was also a chance to meet another Westerner that had trained, like myself, in Shaolin Temple martial arts," Russell told *Blitz*.

"Grandmaster Shi De Yang and my *shifu* [teacher], Grandmaster Shi De Fon, both trained at the Shaolin Temple under the same teacher, Great Master Shi Su Xi. They are 'training brothers'."

The two Shaolin teachers met to discuss ways of making Shaolin Temple kung fu training accessible to everyone, while not diluting



Russell (R) & Renon discuss Iron Fist training

the traditional ways. Russell also passed on his knowledge of Iron Fist training, or *Jin Gong*, to Shi Xing Fu, who invited him back to conduct a seminar on the method in 2011.

The Australian instructor was originally invited to attend the school's opening in July, but due to the enormous task of building the largest Shaolin Temple school in Europe, the opening was delayed. It was rescheduled to open in September as this issue of *Blitz* went to press.

KETTLEBELL CHALLENGE ON OFFER IN SYDNEY

Russian Kettlebell Challenge Master instructor Dave Whitley will run a course on the essentials of 'HardStyle' kettlebell lifting in Sydney on 13 November.

Whitley, certified under world-renowned kettlebell guru Pavel Tsatsouline, promises participants "a deep understanding of the true benefits of kettlebell training". The course will cover the three foundational kettlebell exercises (the swing, get-up and goblet-squat) and how to teach them correctly, as well as kettlebell training safety procedures, the fundamentals of biomechanics to ensure perfect form and prevent injury, the key HardStyle skills and principles of strength, and methods for troubleshooting common problems with technique.

Participants will also be provided with the HKC template for designing an unlimited number of kettlebell workouts.

For more information, visit www.dragondooraustralia.com

Okinawan karate grandmaster to tour NSW



Okinawan Grandmaster Kiichi Nakamoto will give a series of seminars in Australia for the very first time in November.

Grandmaster Nakamoto is a 10th Degree Hanshi of Ryukyu Kobujutsu (traditional weaponry combat), a 10th Degree Hanshi of Goju-ryu karate, and was one of the the last formal students of Chojun Miyagi, the founder of Goju-ryu karate.

He will teach traditional Okinawan karate at Pollet's Martial Arts Centre in Orange, NSW on 8 November, at their Bathurst branch on 11 November, and Pollet's Dubbo dojo on 12 November. Nakamoto will also give a special four-hour seminar on traditional Okinawan weaponry in Bathurst on 20 November.

Those interested in having Grandmaster Nakamoto visit their school can phone Pollets on 02 6334 2286 or email enquiries@pollets.com.au. For more info, go to www.pollets.com.au.

Grapplers grab BJJ medals in Brazil

Australia's Carlson Gracie Jiu-Jitsu team represented their country in Brazil recently at the Rio International Open, which drew a significant number of competitors from around the globe.

Carlson Gracie's Aussie team proved small but mighty, with Renee Vellios winning gold in the hard-fought Pesado (Heavyweight) division and bronze in the Open (Absolute) weight class, while Dustin Brown lost a very close fight by advantage in the semi-final to take home bronze in his weight class.

Vellios is proving to be one of Australia's top female grapplers, having been one of only two women selected to compete at the World Professional BJJ Championships in Abu Dhabi earlier this year.

Upon returning to Australia, proud instructor Ben Hall awarded both students their hard earned Purple-belts.



Vellios at the ADCC Pro BJJ World Champs

VICTORY FOR VICS AT KARATE NATIONALS

Over 450 competitors from across Australia took to the mats recently for the 49th running of the Australian Karate Federation (AKF) 2010 WesTrac National Karate Championships, hosted by the NSW Karate Federation at the Whitlam Leisure Centre in Liverpool.

All States and Territories were represented; at stake were the prestige of a national title and a coveted spot in the AKF National Team that will set out for the World Karate Federation World Championships in Belgrade in October.

There was action right from the start of the three-day event when the hotly contested Junior Kata divisions got underway. Displaying spirit and commitment beyond their years, competitors (some as young as six years old) showed a standard that was a solid endorsement for the future of sport karate.



A junior kata competitor shows fearsome focus

The Men's Open Kumite was dominated by Victoria, with Leon Romary in excellent form over his state team-mates who filled the minor placings. Jane Podborodnikova took gold in the Women's Open Kumite, defeating fellow NSW teammate and silver-medalist Seira Yahiro.

In other standout events, the Men's Kata final was an intense Sunday-morning battle that saw

Victorian James Guiliano take gold from NSW's Michael Hanna.

The Team Kumite was, as always, a crowd-pleasing highlight on the final day of competition. The Women's division saw the gold go to the NSW team of Seira Yahiro, Olivia Hale and Jane Podborodnikova, with Victoria taking silver and WA and Queensland taking bronze. Victoria secured gold in the Men's division, an event NSW has won for eight consecutive years. Victoria's victory relegated NSW to silver, with SA and WA taking home bronze.

In the end it was Victoria who once again took the overall state title, dominating the junior divisions and producing sound performances in the seniors.

"The monumental task of organising such a successful event was a tribute to the hard work of the NSWKF organising committee. The executive was delighted with the quality of volunteers and referees in attendance," said AKF reporter James Carrett.

Queensland is in line to host the 50th AKF National Championships in 2011.



A spectacular kick in the men's sparring

Aussie judokas warm up for Worlds



Shepherd in action at the last Olympics

The Australian national judo team recently competed in two events in Miami, Florida, as part of their preparation for the World Championships held in Tokyo on 9–13 September (as this issue of *Blitz* went to press).

First up was a World

Cup competition, which is a world-ranking tournament sponsored by the International Judo Federation. The competition attracted a world-class field from over 40 countries, with many national teams using the event to tune up their athletes. Entries from Pan-American countries dominated the event, but there were also many strong European athletes on the field.

The Aussie team had a good tournament, although they could only manage a single bronze medal, won by Sydney's Janelle Shepherd in the women's Over-78kg category. Several other team members fought strongly to just miss out on medals — most notably our top male athlete, Mark Anthony of Melbourne, who narrowly lost his 90kg bronze-medal fight to an American judoka.

The team's next outing was the USA Open, where the team had a strong result, taking several medals. Most impressive was Tasmanian powerhouse Priscus Fogagnolo (who is also an MMA fighter), who took gold in the Open category, beating Jake Andrewartha in an all-Australian final. Andrewartha had earlier taken bronze in the Over-100kg category.

"The team will take confidence from their performances in Miami as they head for the major event of the year in Tokyo," said Judo Federation of Australia Inc. spokesman Phil McDermott.

From Miami the team flew straight to the sport's homeland, Japan, for some hard training before the World Championships, which will be a major pointer to the London Olympic Games.

Blauer close-combat coming Down Under

Renowned US reality-based self-defence instructor Tony Blauer will run an instructor-certification course in his in SPEAR System in Canberra on 8–12 November.

The course will cover the human startle/flinch response that underpins the SPEAR method, counter-ambush and close-quarter combat tactics, use of-force applications and a trainer development program to assist law-enforcement and security professionals in adding extreme close-quarter tactics to their agencies' use of-force training models.

On his website, Blauer describes his SPEAR system as "a modern close-quarter combatives and personal defence program based on science, psychology and human biomechanics. It is not a martial art, nor does it replace other martial systems... Because SPEAR system tactics are built upon hard-wired reflexes, the system enhances the defender's ability to weather, deflect or intercept a sudden, close-quarter ambush."



Tony Blauer



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news & events

Women weigh in at sumo championships

A sold-out crowd witnessed the biggest day of sumo wrestling in Australia in nearly 20 years at the Australian Sumo Championships on the Gold Coast on 18 July.

With over 40 competitors and 82 bouts, the event broke several records, including for the first time a greater number of women *sumotori* than men. It also drew extra media attention and competition due to the attendance of the 64th Yokozuna and first non-Japanese Grand Champion Akebono Taro as a judge, and the entrance of Australia's Strongest Man, Derek 'Thunder' Boyer, in the heavyweight division.

The competition, which was

officially opened by the Consular General of Japan, Makoto Hinei, was a qualifier for the Australian team to the World Combat Games and the World Sumo Championships later this year.

In the women's divisions, seniors Clare Szanto and Clare Lutton were again dominant, and standout Renne Robinson used her favoured *shitate-nage* (underarm throw) to take both the Junior title and third place in the Senior Women's Open-weight event.

The men's divisions saw several surprises, including Australian Junior Champion Daywu Hahn contesting the Senior Lightweight title,



Sam Manu, Akebono (seated) & Martin Gray (Bronze, Middleweight).

losing to Luke Bulger. In the Middleweight category, judoka Chris Swalwell defeated New Zealander Ben Thorpe and in the Heavyweight division, the strength and power of Derek Boyer was too much for former champion Drew Weeks. In the open contest, Heavyweight newcomer Peter Townsend defeated the veteran middleweight John Trail.

Aussie takes karate test in Okinawa

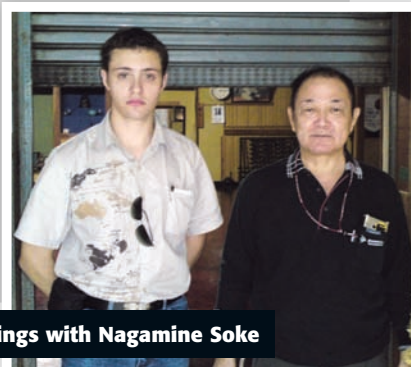
The head instructor of Canberra's Kodokan Matsubayashi-ryu (Shorin-ryu) Karate Dojo, Reece Cummings, recently visited Okinawa to train and grade under Takayoshi Nagamine Soke, the 10th Dan head of Matsubayashi-Ryu, at his headquarters in Naha City.

Sensei Cummings, who has been training in the style for over 10 years and runs a dojo in Canberra, ACT, undertook rigorous one-on-one training with Master Nagamine, averaging two daily sessions of two-to-three hours each, and lived for the most part in the dojo's guest room. It was Cummings' second trip to Okinawa — the small island 550km south of mainland Japan, known as the 'birthplace of karate' — since he first met Nagamine Soke in Australia in 2005.

After 10 days of refining technique and kata, Nagamine Soke told Cummings that he would test for 3rd Dan (*Sandan*). The test would consist of performing a variety of kata in front of all the Okinawan Matsubayashi-ryu dojo heads in Okinawa, including 9th Dan Hanshis Yoshitaka Taira Hanshi and Toshimitu Arakaki, as well as some of the island's most senior Goju-ryu karateka.

"This trip was made to develop not only technical proficiency in karate, but to develop a deeper philosophical and cultural understanding behind Shorin-ryu karate-do as a way of life. It was an amazing experience to be able to travel to Okinawa and train with genuine karate masters," said Cummings.

He also paid tribute to John Carlyle, his Australian sensei and chief instructor of the Matsubayashi-ryu Karate Association of Australia: "It is because of the support of my teacher and his dedication to preserving and developing true Matsubayashi-ryu karate-do in Australia that this experience was even possible," said Cummings.



Cummings with Nagamine Soke



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SAMBO WANTS YOU!

The Australian Sambo Federation is calling anyone interested in helping to develop an Australian competition circuit in both *borba* (wrestling) sambo and combat sambo. Borba sambo is the older style of the sport, like a hybrid between judo and freestyle wrestling, while combat sambo is like an amateur version of MMA with gi jackets. Both sports have international competition circuits in which Australian fighters are invited to compete.

Australian Sambo Federation secretary Gavin Dickson has put a call out to grapplers of all disciplines to come and compete. "We are not asking you to abandon your system of martial art or wrestling in favour of Sambo, but rather think of it as an opportunity

to enhance the training of the athletes involved," he said. "Not only will new skills be developed, but they will have a chance to compete on the world scale that may not be open to them otherwise."

The Australian Sambo Federation, which has affiliations with FIAS, the International Sambo Federation in Russia, is currently working on getting members to the Sambo World Championships in Tashkent, Uzbekistan in November. This requires the staging of an Australian championship, which must involve more than three regional centres or state bodies, and then a continental championship against a New Zealand team, to then select a team to compete at the World Championship.

To get involved, contact Gavin Dickson via email at coreeda@optusnet.com.au

AUSSIES GET A SLICE OF KOREA

The largest ever Australian team tested their skills in the Korean 'Way of the Sword' at the fifth biennial World Haidong Gumdo Championships in Yong Pyong, South Korea on 25–27 July.

The Aussie team of 72 members was also the largest international team represented at the event. The group included over 50 competitors from across South-east Queensland, NSW and Canberra.

The Australians had a successful run, winning four bronze medals and two silver, with every Aussie placing very well in the preliminary rounds. The Australian team was also named 'Best Association' — the first time it has been awarded to a non-Korean association in the history of the event.

"I am very pleased with the effort of all our team, and am happy to see Haidong Gumdo in Australia is world-class," said Australian headmaster and president of Haidong Gumdo Australia, Master Oh Jung Il.

The Australian clubs are now preparing for the 2010 Australian Haidong Gumdo Championships, at which 150 competitors are expected.

Haidong Gumdo (literally translated as 'East Sea Sword Way') has rapidly gained popularity in recent years in Australia and around the world. "Our martial art is now practised in more than 52 countries by more than 1.3 million practitioners from all

kinds of backgrounds and of all kinds of ability," said National Technical Director and Australian Team Manager Master Stuart Campbell, who runs a Gold Coast dojang. "It is a traditional style of martial art, focusing on strength — that is, strength of body, strength of mind, strength of character. Using the body's natural breathing patterns, it is a dynamic and graceful martial art, combining traditional values with modern training methods."



Aussie master Sherri Parks cuts through the competition



18 years and going strong



Victorian NAS competitor Nick Spanu has been learning Go-Kan-Ryu karate for more than 18 years. His training

consists of gym sessions five days a week and karate training three nights a week, which also incorporates Mixed Martial Arts.

"I just think the NAS competition is a great place to meet fellow competitors," says Spanu. "There is such a variety of different styles and there is always a high level of competitors who are all talented and very competitive, which creates a fantastic, spirited environment."

Spanu says there have been many memorable moments in his NAS career, but says the

highlight came in 2001 at the NAS National Championships when he competed in the Victorian Black-belt team.

"I was very honoured to be selected alongside martial artists who I have the utmost respect for, such as Des Murphy, Malcolm Ayles and Leon Romary – all brilliant martial artists in their own styles," Spanu recalls. "I learnt so many different techniques and combinations from them and I still use them in competition today."

Spanu says his future goals in NAS are simply to continue to train hard and compete in kata and kumite on a regular basis, but his ultimate goal is to one day be the oldest person to take out the Champion of Champions title.

FIERCE BATTLE FOR TITLES BERTH

Twenty-nine martial arts schools turned up for an action-packed day of competition at the fourth round of NAS in Queensland, all hoping to qualify for the State Championships.

By 8am the men's Open Black-belt division was in full swing, with some fiery encounters. In the finals, Laurence Smith (Hoshindo Karate) came up against Mark Stone (Seishin Zen Ryoku). Both guys started the match cautiously, hoping to find an opening, but Smith looked in control, scoring with effective strikes while Stone was looking to counter but could not find his range. With a few seconds left, Smith came in with a barrage of punches and scored the winning point to take out the match.

In the Female Black-belt Point-sparring finals, Sherry Bower maintained her dominance, defeating KenshinKan International Karate's Pania Williams-Casey. Victory in the Continuous Sparring went to KenshinKan fighter Rebecca Rogers, who defeated runner-up Alex Mills from Go-Kan-Ryu Karate.

Wushu gold



Wushu fighter Ardel Moore has been involved in NAS since 1998.

The 32-year-old hails from Sunnyband in Queensland and has been training since he was 19. Moore first started training in karate in 1997 and eventually moved into wushu after a couple of years, also training in capoeira.

Moore says the main reason he competes at NAS is to test his skills against other styles of martial arts. "For me, NAS is a chance to measure your skill level against another style. I often ask myself questions like, 'Is my wushu good enough to go against karate or

taekwondo?' etc. But I also love just being around with competitive friends – it takes my skills to the next level."

Moore actually won the Australian Champion title at the National All Styles in 2001, which was held on the Gold Coast in Queensland. "I couldn't wipe the smile off my face for nearly 36 hours!" he says. "But every time I enter the tournament, I always give my very best performance and it is always memorable."

The Queenslander says he looks up to Jackie Chan and Jet Li more than any other martial artists, given their extraordinary skills in wushu. He is also very excited by the prospect of seeing his son and daughter one day competing in NAS.





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Blade blunt

This is how far down Wesley Snipes has sunk: he's now making a movie with Joey Lawrence, the drip from '90s sitcom *Blossom*. The once-acclaimed actor, who has worked with everyone from Sylvester Stallone to Sean Connery and Richard Gere, will star opposite former teen-dream Lawrence in a rather unappealing-sounding flick called *Havana Heat*. The plot of the film has something to do with a murder on Guantanamo Bay. Michael Dudikoff, of *American Ninja* fame, is also said to have a role in



IRON FIST TO SMASH SCREENS

Marvel Comics' martial arts master Iron Fist is coming to the big screen. Richard Wilkes of *xxx* fame has been tipped to write the screenplay of the film, the story of 'a martial artist who fights evil with his consummate fighting skill backed with the ability to strike with a punch of superhuman force.' Ray Park was once linked to the main role.

Aussie on board *Never Back Down* sequel

Michael Jai White will direct *Never Back Down 2*, the sequel to the 2008 flick about a rebellious teen who is lured into a fight club. White, a martial artist who has starred in such films as *Undisputed 2* and *Blood and Bone*, wrote the soon-to-be-classic *Black Dynamite*. The sequel, shooting in Louisiana, tells of four friends who sign up for an illegal underground fight tournament.

Never Back Down 2's cast includes Aussie Shotokan karateka and former *Australian Idol* contestant Dean Geyer, as well as fighters Scott Epstein, Eddie Bravo and Todd Duffee. White, who says he wants the film to be more of a "Dark Knight feel and less Melrose Place", will also play the main MMA instructor.

Dacascos prepares for beating

Drive duo Mark Dacascos and director Steve Wang will reunite on an untitled 3D movie. Dacascos says, "[It] should be interesting. Last time I worked with Steve I would come off the set with cuts, scratches, tons of bruises, and I even went to the hospital once. So I've been just getting my body prepared for the beating I'm going to take."



Dacascos in the *Crow* sequel



ANOTHER ASS-KICKING

A sequel to the terrific superhero satire *Kick-Ass* is on the way. Mark Millar, author of the graphic novel on which the 2010 film is based, says, "The estimate is [*Kick-Ass*] will do 100-to-150 million [dollars] on DVD, based on the American sales... so it'll end up making a quarter of a billion on a \$28-million investment. So it should be okay. So the sequel's greenlit; we can go ahead and do the follow up now, you know. The first made so much compared to what it cost it would be crazy not to." The sequel's rumoured title? *Kick-Ass 2: Balls to the Wall!*

Van Damme teaming with Stallone?

Jean-Claude Van Damme will likely be in *The Expendables 2*. With the Sylvester Stallone-directed/written/starring film an out-and-out blockbuster, the studio is hot to get going on a sequel. Sly is said to be chasing Van Damme, who actually passed on a role in the first *Expendables*, feeling there wasn't enough of a character there for him; Van Damme since regrets his decision. Also being chased are Chuck Norris (also rumoured to have passed first-time around) and Vernon Wells (*Commando*) for roles in the follow-up. Stallone says he's hoping to get Bruce Willis back to play the shady CIA agent 'Church'. In the sequel, Sly says, Church would be revealed as a "super villain".



Stallone & co. in *The Expendables*



Adkins in *Undisputed 2*

ADKINS DIET OF SUCCESS

Scott Adkins, the talented martial artist from such films as *Undisputed 2* and *X-Men Origins: Wolverine*, will star opposite Jean-Claude Van Damme in the actioner *Weapon*. Adkins is playing the role once offered to Steven Seagal. The pair play two assassins considered to be the best in the world. Adkins is a sharpshooter, while Van Damme will be a knife expert, and together they will end up on the same team. Vinnie Jones is in talks to play the lead villain.

Q&A: Charity Hurts

Andrew Thatcher, an aspiring actor/director/fight-choreographer from Sydney, has been studying martial arts his entire life. Sick of seeing shoddy martial arts movies produced locally, the youngster decided to make his own. The result is *Charity Hurts*, which Thatcher says is "the most action-packed independent B-film to date."

Firstly, can you tell me a bit about your training?

I have studied various styles including karate, taekwondo, kickboxing, boxing, kenpo and Jeet Kune Do, and sampled some Wing Chun, aikido and hapkido.

When and how did you decide you'd make a movie?

As an aspiring actor, I have tried to make connections with other aspiring filmmakers and get involved with other exciting projects. A few years ago I saw an independent martial arts film being made in NSW and I contacted one of the people online, asking to be involved, and their response was something along the lines of "No, we already have a white person". This really insulted me and made me determined to show them and everyone else what I am capable of in terms of acting, fighting and choreography.

I personally think Australia hasn't had an entertaining martial arts feature-length film

to date. There have been some independent attempts but they usually take themselves too seriously or miss the mark in terms of overall appeal.

How did you finance it?

I tried to get local council support to help finance some of the location hiring costs but didn't end up getting any help from them, so I decided to finance the film myself. Most of the locations I used were ones I could get for free (or sneak into) but there were two that I had to pay for, and they ended up costing a fair bit. Hopefully, now that the film is done, it will show what I am capable of with a limited budget and I may be able to get some investors interested in future projects.

So, no stuntmen?

There are no trained stuntmen, nor was there any padding or safety equipment. I tried to work the choreography around everyone's training and ability.

Saying that, any injuries?

There were no major injuries, though there were some close calls. One scene involved me avoiding the flames being shot at me from a fire-breather; the flames went straight at the camera — and the camera operator! There is also a scene where I go flying back from a side-kick and crash into a staircase; I didn't want to take the

impact with my back, as the stairs would smash into my spine, so I angled my upper body so my arm would help pad the impact... Obviously that didn't really help much, but the footage looks great and that's what matters.

How's the response been?

Great! Everyone seems to enjoy the story, the action and the cheesy special effects. There is already a bit of urging for me to do a sequel but I will wait and see how the response continues and how much exposure this film gets, etc.

Where can we see it?

I'm going to approach various distributors of independent films to see if they would be



interested... If all else fails they can simply get the film for \$10 by contacting me at andrew_thatcher_2@hotmail.com. Also check out the website www.charityhurts.wetpaint.com for the trailer and news updates about the film.



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Zi Ran Qigong Level One: Tendon & Meridian Cleansing Method is a training DVD from renowned Melbourne-based kung fu master Liu De Ming. Master Liu, who has 40 years of experience in Chinese martial arts, is an accomplished teacher of several internal and external methods including the rare Zi Ran Men and Shaolin Liu He systems, as well as qigong and tai chi.

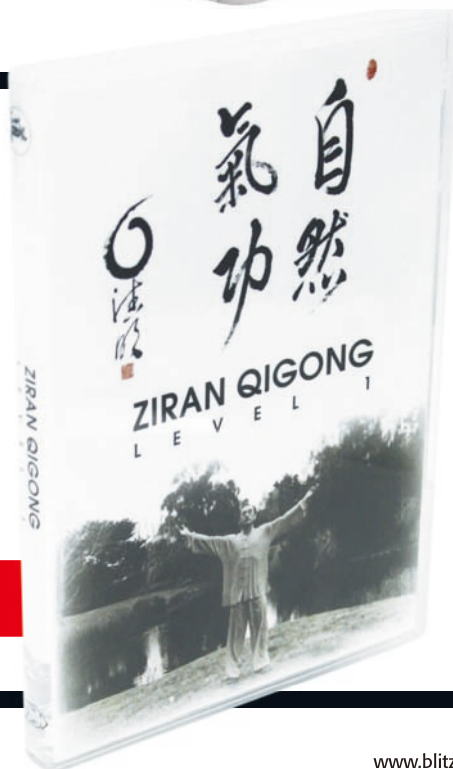
Ziran qigong is a holistic exercise system based in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) theory, designed to keep the body and mind connected and relaxed, to improve day-to-day

functioning and dealing with stress.

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For membership to the AKKA, inquiries can be made to Hanshi Taylor regardless of your location.





Model Karateka

Jessica Bratich might be best known to the general public as the WAG of Aussie international cricketer Mitchell Johnson, but the Australian Karate Federation National Champion has long been a successful athlete in her own right. With 15 national titles, 18 Australian Open titles and 17 international medals to her name, the 2nd Dan will surely give opponents some trouble at the World Karate Federation World Championships this month. Here, the model and daughter of Perth karate master Branco Bratich talks about her preparation and her career.



Jessica on the attack at the recent AKF Nationals

How has your preparation gone for the upcoming World Karate Championships and what has your daily training regimen been like?

My preparation for Worlds has been a challenging road over the last year. My current training regimen involves five karate sessions per week along with going to the gym, running and also Bikram yoga.

How do you break down your five karate sessions – are they focused purely on competition at this stage, or just general classes doing whatever drills your sensei prescribes?

The karate sessions I do are specific to kumite. They include technical, tactical and speed drills. My dad and myself create these drills specific to what I need to work on at that point in time. I do also like to include one basic session every week or two, just to help maintain my technique. I think basics are very important for good kumite.

Does being engaged to an Aussie cricketer present any challenges in your own quest to be a champion?

The challenge is trying to balance my life. It can be

difficult when our schedules cross over. This year, quite often when he has been home I am away for karate, and when I do choose to go away with him it can be difficult to get the karate training I need.

You gave up karate for a while after your move to be with Mitchell in Queensland – how long did that last, and what drew you back to it?

I spent two years in Queensland and as soon as I moved back to Perth I began teaching and training again. I only stopped because I was unable to train with my father. My love of karate and the love of my club, Yoseikan-Ryu, go hand-in-hand and I didn't want to do karate if it wasn't at my club of 21 years. So it was really inevitable for me to get straight back into it once I moved home.

Is there much pressure to stay involved and to compete, given that your dad is also your sensei?

There is zero pressure from my dad, karate has always been and will always be my choice. He has been completely supportive in whatever I have done in life, and karate has been no different.

What do you see as your biggest challenge at

MASTER WING CHUN

The Keys To Ip Man's Kung Fu

By Grandmaster Samuel Kwok

DVD



SIU LIM TAO (LITTLE IDEA)

Siu Lim Tao (Wing Chun's first hand-form) teaches the correct hand and arm positions for attack and defence. Development and use of energy are the focus of *Siu Lim Tao* training. Grandmaster Kwok teaches the correct method of performing the form as done by Ip Man, and gives you the keys to training the foundation of Wing Chun, as well as training methods and the application of each technique.

DVD



CHUM KIU (SEEKING THE BRIDGE)

Chum Kiu, Wing Chun's second form, teaches the dynamic application of the techniques learned in *Siu Lim Tao*. *Chum Kiu* teaches you how to close the gap and use both hands to defend and attack simultaneously. *Chum Kiu* teaches stepping and footwork, and also Wing Chun's specialised kicking method and the generation of power by using the entire body in stance-turning (*yi-ma*). In this DVD, Grandmaster Kwok also demonstrates and explains in detail Wing Chun's devastating short-range power.

DVD



BIU GEE (THRUSTING-FINGERS)

Biu Gee 'thrusting-fingers' form (the last hand form taught in the Ip Man Wing Chun system) is key to learning to focus energy into a strike and also develops devastating striking power by combining focused strikes with the rotational energy of correct stance-turning (*yi-ma*). It also trains the hands to regain the centre if the centreline is lost or unguarded. The *Biu-Gee* form teaches two unique methods of footwork, the use of 'two-direction energy' and how to control the opponent and effectively use continuous strikes.

VOL. 4 - CHI-SAO

All *chi-sao* drills and trapping theories are investigated with explosive applications from Grandmaster Kwok. Learn the basic hand techniques, single-hand and double-hand drills, plus footwork, correct body-structure alignment, body-turning and more. Through *chi-sao* training you will develop contact-reflexes, close-quarter co-ordination and focus, plus greater mobility, balance, timing and accuracy. You'll also learn how to create openings in which to attack and counter.

VOL. 5 - WOODEN DUMMY

The Wing Chun wooden dummy is used to correct technique and structure as well as increase power, speed, accuracy and conditioning. Learn Ip Man's wooden dummy form with this step-by-step guide. All the original sections are demonstrated clearly in different camera angles. Includes commentary and description of most common mistakes, plus combat applications on a partner.



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Atop the podium
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the upcoming WKF World Championships, and for the Aussie team in general? Who will be the ones to beat?

While there are plenty of talented athletes across the globe, particularly from Europe, I have never really focused on who someone is or what they have done, because I think the biggest challenge you can ever have when competing is yourself. Believing in yourself is what can make or break you.

Why would you recommend karate to people, and women especially? What has it done for you?

Karate is great for people of all ages. It helps develop balance, co-ordination, discipline and, most importantly, confidence. It has been very satisfying to be able to see this, especially among the students I get to teach.

What levels do you teach, and how often?

I teach six classes a week, varying from beginners' to advanced, and also kumite-specific.

What's been your toughest challenge and biggest achievement in karate so far?

My biggest achievement was winning bronze at the 2006 World Championships in Finland. My toughest challenge has been getting back into karate after having two years off after moving to Brisbane. After making a comeback I tore the muscle in my hip and had surgery. After the surgery I had about four months off doing recovery before getting back into karate. It has been quite a challenge trying to get myself where I would like to be physically. **BLITZ**

Mitchell Johnson holds the pads for his girl



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Freestyle Phenomenon

Bob Jones & Zen Do Kai, 40 years on

Zen Do Kai founder Bob Jones has always pushed the boundaries of the Australian martial arts scene, and now after 40 years he's taken his eclectic system overseas. An enduring and charismatic figure, Jones essentially invented the freestyle approach to self-defence Down Under, and built what was once the country's largest martial arts organisation, and is still among the most popular. Since founding Zen Do Kai Karate in 1970, his open policy on cross-training has seen ZDK develop into Bob Jones Martial Arts, under which umbrella Muay Thai, BJJ, Filipino weaponry systems, aikido and even Russian Systema are taught. In recent years Jones has been living in Portugal, investigating his Celtic heritage and working on a project to bring elements of that ancient culture and its combat arts back to life. Ever the renegade and still full of zeal and passion for martial arts, 'The Chief' recently gave *Blitz* this insight into recent and future chapters in the story of Australia's most innovative martial arts organisation.

INTERVIEW BY BEN STONE

Bob, you've said you're excited about the future of BJMA and its global expansion. What plans are you particularly enthusiastic about?

As people read this article, my European head office for all new expansion interests is being established in northern Spain, close to the border of southern France. I am excited that after all this time I have almost made it to southern France, which has been my dream for a long time. Anyone who reads this article, if you are ever travelling around

Western Europe you are more than welcome to call in and train in this interesting mix of an exciting modern/ancient martial arts style – although skills with horse riding and archery would be an advantage! The phone number there for enquiries is 0011 34 669 263 528 – my PA will answer you, complete with French accent, "BJC Celtimania Project – how may I help you?"

What particular combat system or other development has most influenced your personal direction and that of Zen Do Kai in recent years?

To me, recent (past) years are not as important as the present and immediate future of my martial arts journey. In Spain I am currently in serious negotiations with Kassai Lajos, Europe's most famous horseman-archer, for us to do something together that will have a definite explosive effect on the world of martial arts. In Portugal and Spain we have been working with famous matadors [bullfighters] and my brand of MMA-Freestyle is about to become very well known throughout Spain, Portugal and France. That's all I can say at this

time, except everything I will be doing throughout Europe is based on the ancient history and mythology of the 'CELTS' – this acronym, and my mission statement, being 'Connecting Europe's Lost Tribal Societies'.

In the Zen Do Kai/BJMA organisation, you encourage all the experienced, long-time instructors to go out and find new methods and martial arts to bring back to the fold. Many chief instructors are afraid to do this, lest it send people on paths that lead away from their original organisation rather

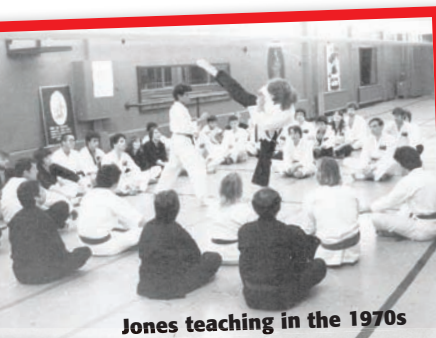
than back to it. Has this ever been an issue for you?

There is a very old proverb of the warrior class: 'If you really love something, set it free. If it comes back, it's yours... If it doesn't, hunt it down and kill it!' The 'kill' here is an attempt at humour; I believe every martial artist has the right to select their 'own' path within 'our' journey. Over the 40-to-45-year history of ZDK/BJMA, I have only lost a couple (perhaps a few) of my Black-belts, but all the knowledge brought back by my 'family' has been immeasurable.

As the first freestyle group in a 'traditional' martial arts scene, Zen Do Kai had its share of detractors and had to fight hard for its reputation. Has the perception of ZDK among other martial arts groups and the community in general changed since 1970?

We paved the way by setting good and classic examples. Forty years on, we have not only survived, we are now growing worldwide, exponentially. Over the years many have emulated our ideas and that has had a huge impact on today's public perception of what a modern (freestyle) martial artist really is. At the time of writing this article, we have released a DVD featuring interviews of all of my first-generation instructors, titled *Zen Do Kai: History and Tradition*. It answers every detail of this question, as told by my 1970s Black-belts (all of them were BJC bouncers).





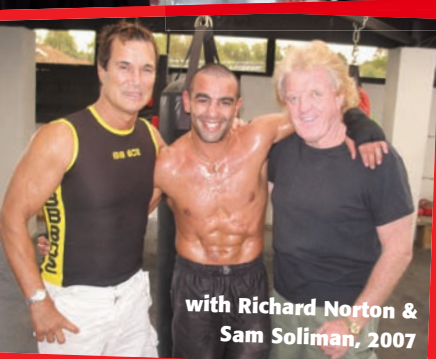
Jones teaching in the 1970s



Flying high in the 1990s



With aikido instructors Peter Lindsay (L) & Mal McRae



with Richard Norton & Sam Soliman, 2007



Jones' current inspiration, Kassai Lajos

What is your proudest achievement as chief instructor of Zen Do Kai and head of the Bob Jones Corporation?

It should be understood that the BJC also translates as the Bob Jones Cadre — the amazing management teams of Black-belts that truly assist me with everything I plan to achieve... Each one of them is my proudest achievement and as a group they are the machine that drives every aspect of my BJMA forward. At the time of writing we have released a DVD of our 40th Annual BJC Ball, the largest martial arts function of its type ever staged in this country — an achievement I'm most proud of after 40 years.

Who has most inspired you in your training and direction of Zen Do Kai and the BJC over the years?

There are nine fabulous martial artists I must pay tribute to in truly answering this great question. And sharing this power with *Blitz* readers could well be a life-changing experience for many of you 'attitudinal' martial artists. I suggest you Google each of them for more intriguing information on why each one of them had such impact on Bob Jones in the beginning, the present and into the future.

The three Black-belts that inspired me to begin training as a White-belt were, firstly, Fred Vella — I saw him on every form of media demolish a whole house in 24 hours with his bare hands and feet; he was wearing a white karate gi and Black-belt. Then there was Joe Meizner — I saw him on every form of media single-handedly evict more than 100 squatters from a whole block of single-fronted tenement houses in suburban

Sydney; he was wearing a white karate gi and Black-belt. Thirdly, and most impressive of all, was an American philosopher, actor, artist, author and very exceptional martial artist, Mr Donn Draeger. I saw him doing a demonstration with the samurai sword or *katana* at a Melbourne sports store. Donn Draeger entered the stage to eerie Japanese flute and violin strings, then the tape burst into the sound effect of a violent storm, with an erratic light show. He actually flowed with the blade, having the effect of thunder and lightning swirling around his body. He was bare-topped, wearing a black *hakama* and I remember thinking, 'When I am this man's age, that's who I want to be!' He signed his book for me on that fateful day with, "To Bob Jones, a newfound friend." Then he added a quotation I have used on all of my Black-belts' certificates ever since, for more than 40 years: "Bob, when you see a worthy person, endeavour to emulate him... When you see an unworthy person, take a deep look at your inner self."

Two years of constant searching after this experience, on the 3rd of March 1965, I would meet and commence my training with the first of the three Black-belts that would unknowingly inspire the birth of ZDK/BJMA. This was with the inspirational Jack Rozinszki, who taught me his special mindset of positive/power training. Secondly, Tino Ceberano with his grace and pace of a jungle cat, taught me perfection of technique and its application. Thirdly, Mr Sal Ebanes with his infallible spirit, taught me how to convert my passion into a bliss worthy of pursuit for a lifetime and beyond!

Beyond these very special martial men, the three Black-belts that have instigated 'everything' I currently do and will continue to do in the future were, firstly (for

10 years from the beginning of this millennium) aikido master David Brown, who helped me develop the concept of EPC (Enter, Pass and Control), and his Grandmaster Morihei Ueshiba (aikido founder, 10th Degree, born 1883, passed away 1969) for his amazing rediscovery of a very old martial principle. Then thirdly, my personal choice being Grandmaster Mr Juan Belmonte (Tara Mileata, 10th Degree, born 1892, passed away 1962) for rediscovering perhaps the oldest martial principle of all, using precisely the same technique as Ueshiba's principle, with only one minor difference: Professor Belmonte made practical use of this principle in a life-or-death situation many hundreds of times against 700-kilo bulls, while living a celebrated warriors' life, recognised as the most famous matador of all time — a testament that the EPC principal does work.

Your whole life has been ZDK/BJMA, so are your family also heavily involved?

There is no difference; ZDK/BJMA is my family, every member of my organisation is my family. We refer to ourselves as brothers and sisters by choice rather than perhaps by chance. The only bloodline family I have is my special sister Faye and daughter Tracey Lee and her three kids — and I love that special daughter of mine more than I love my own life!

How do you hope Zen Do Kai/BJMA will be perceived after another 40 years' time?

In 40 years from now, BJMA will be perceived as the internationally accredited martial art that made a significant difference on the infamous global stage-play of human survival.

For more information on Bob Jones' Martial Arts in Europe, visit www.celtimaniaproject.com, or www.dragonriders.org **BLITZ**

Bob Jones' Career in Quotes



1990

"The hours and hours of training we did under the Japanese system, where you stood in a square, flat-footed posture, had its place. It was a very good physical and mental conditioner, if you could stand the boredom, in that sense. In my opinion, I feel it's totally impractical. I don't think my years in taekwondo and Goju were wasted, but I think they could have been put to much better use."

2001

"I'd been through 20 years of extreme violence. My whole life was violence and it was getting worse and worse: people were getting killed, dying from drugs or going to prison. I even got married because I thought it would get me out, but the marriage didn't work. After I split up, I found Jack Rozinszky and he introduced me to my crossroads. That was the night in 1965 that I said, 'This is the new life for me'. He knew I was coming with a bunch of my bouncers, so he clamped five bricks with five big steel clamps to a long bench seat. Between the two classes he smashed these five bricks with every part of his body: his elbows, his knees, the heel of his foot and his palm heel. And we went, 'God damn, if we could fight like that, we would be unbeatable!' So we joined up that night. Jack introduced us to honour and valour and everything else that goes with martial arts. As I became a better fighter, I used violence less and less... He sparked within me the concept that if you can conceive and believe, you will achieve."

1990

"The original split from the Goju system in 1970 was purely to develop a system for my 200 bouncers... These guys had been driving me crazy for four years, to teach them how to fight. So we started self-defence type classes for the bouncers, and Zen Do Kai was initially designed to develop bouncers and a practical approach to fighting."

"Every rock tour that I've ever done, every act has had some interest in my martial arts... The most dedicated, I think, was Mick Jagger: 'Come on guys, I know it's 4.30am but I want my lesson now!' Of all the rock stars I've taught, the most natural fighter was Jimmy Barnes."

"When a student comes to me, he wants to learn self-defence as quickly as possible – that's what he's paying me money for and I feel that it shouldn't take three, five or 10 years... It should be done like any other commercial business – developing that person's self-defence skills as quickly as possible."

2007

"The bull is almost on me and I can hear David Brown preaching that number-one rule of our EPC lesson-one training: wait! Wait until the weapon almost, or preferably just touches before you move. At home during these early morning sessions with David Brown and many of my advanced Black-belts, the weapons would be either their fists, feet, elbows or knees, or occasionally knives or sticks, but today it's an 18-months-old bull, almost half grown at 250-to-270 kilos. David had made his point – I'd absorbed 99 per cent of the attack; the horns of the bull were right there on my muleta [the matador's red cape]..."



1990



1994



1996



2001



2001



2007

Zen Do Kai's

On 21 August 2010, over 400 people gathered at Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre (MSAC) for the State Grading, followed by a ball to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of Zen Do Kai and Bob Jones Martial Arts. Many had travelled from Western Australia, South Australia, Queensland, New South Wales, ACT and Tasmania. There was also a large group who had travelled from New Zealand to participate in ZDK's big day.

After the official bow-in, more than 100 practitioners ranked 4th Dan and above performed the Black-belt kata *Seiunchin*. Then the remaining students and instructors, ranked from Brown-belt to 3rd Dan, joined in and the kata was done again by over 200 martial artists.

Over the course of the day, three people graded to 5th Dan and six tested for 4th Dan (a weaponry grading), including world weapons champion Ziad Zacharia, who performed with his usual dynamism and accuracy. Another six went for full 3rd Dan, showing their understanding of 1st, 2nd and 3rd Dan katas by way of facing three-directional attacks.

The 2nd Dan grading drew the biggest number with 24 people, whose two-hour test included two katas and 20 three-minute rounds, consisting of six rounds of sparring, 13 rounds of hitting pads and a final round of stand-up grappling with knees.

While the 2nd Dans pounded the pads, BJMA also showed another branch of its multi-art tree with a full-contact eskrima stick-fighting demonstration overseen by Marc Toussaint.

Students also packed the floor to undergo *Shodan* (1st Dan) and *Shodan-ho* (Probationary Black-belt) gradings.

"It was just great being involved and taking part in organising the gathering of our students from around the globe to honour Soke Bob in the organisation's 40th year," said

organiser and 2nd Dan grading co-ordinator Shihan Peter Keogh. "Although it may have taken a few years from my life, it was worth it!"

That evening, more than 900 people gathered to celebrate Zen Do Kai and Soke Bob Jones at the 40th Anniversary Ball, held at Peninsula in the Docklands.

The opening entertainment led everyone on a journey through the various cultural influences of the style: traditional Japanese Taiko drummers were followed by an Aboriginal man playing the didgeridoo, then a lone Celtic piper entered the room, representing Jones' Celtic ancestry. Zen Do Kai members from New Zealand finished the performance with a traditional song and *haka*.

Master of ceremonies Kyoshi Justin Boylan, ZDK's WA state head, then welcomed kickboxing legend Dave Hedgcock to begin the speeches. A long-time friend and security industry colleague of Jones, Hedgcock spoke about the transformation of the style from freestyle karate into kickboxing then Muay Thai.

Another close friend, martial arts movie actor Richard Norton, followed with a speech reminiscing about Zen Do Kai's early years and the transformation into movies, and bodyguarding and training many high-profile rock stars alongside Bob Jones.

Kyoshi Billy Manne also spoke about the early years and the relationship that he and Soke Jones have developed over their long history together.

Kyoshi Steve Nedelkos

then gave a speech about the development in the 1990s of BJMA into a professional, structured corporation, and of the future of the organisation. Kyoshi Bryson Keenan finished up by explaining to the audience the style's links to Okinawan Goju-ryu and the recent re-introduction of these roots to Zen Do Kai. Soke Bob Jones then finally addressed the crowd and received a heartfelt standing ovation.

Special guests on the night included Jones' first instructor, taekwondo 9th Dan Jack Rozinszky, Wing Chun master Barry Pang, Kyokushin pioneer Shihan Eddie Emin, Aussie cricketer and ZDK student Justin Langer, and a large contingency of the first-generation Zen Do Kai Black-belts.

Proceeds from the event were given to the Royal Children's Hospital, and the

many leftover crates of wine were donated to child-abuse prevention charity Childwise, to auction for their cause.

"The night was a fitting tribute to Soke Bob Jones and Zen Do Kai," said Keogh. "This was made possible by sponsors Graham McDonnell and Phil Britten [ZDK instructors from the WA Institute of Martial Arts] Rex Watson of Rex Watson Wines, Dave Hedgcock's Pro-ject Security Group, and [ZDK instructor] John Forsyth of Intercept Group." **BLITZ**



Big 4-0



1



2



3



4



5



7



8



9



1. L-R: Legends Jack Rozinszley, Bob Jones, Barry Pang & Eddie Emin 2. The grading day bow-in 3. Pete Keogh & wife Luan 4. Jones gives his speech 5. ZDK's old guard shape up 6. Kickboxing pioneers Paul Fyfield & George Zacharia 7. Kata en masse 8. Kyoshi Steve Nedelkos 9. Weaponry gradings 10. *Blitz* CEO Silvio Morélli & Bob Jones 11. Ziad Zacharia in action 12. Dave Hedgcock's toast delights the crowd 13. Black-belt hopefuls spar

12



The Men the Chief

On this 40th anniversary of Bob Jones' Zen Do Kai organisation, we talked to a group of his trusted lieutenants, all long-standing instructors, about their personal martial arts journeys and their thoughts on what's behind ZDK's longevity and success.

In part one of this series, we get the lowdown from two senior ZDK men from Australia's east and west coasts: Victoria's Kyoshi Billy Manne, 8th Dan, multi-system Black-belt, ZDK's highest ranked teacher and owner of full-time training centre Energym; and WA's Kyoshi Justin Boylan, 7th Dan, veteran of over 20 years in security and bodyguarding, Muay Thai trainer and co-owner of Total Martial Arts Centre.

INTERVIEWS BY BEN STONE

STUDIO IMAGES BY CHARLIE SURIANO

Manne and Boylan on their beginnings with Bob Jones...

Billy Manne: The day I walked into the Elizabeth St dojo in 1970 and first saw Bob Jones, Bob's intensity, drive and passion was the turning point for me. The image of Bob that was implanted in my mind that day has forever more defined me as a martial artist.

Justin Boylan: I'd never done martial arts before, but had competed in swimming and surf life-saving events at state and national levels. Then my second-oldest brother joined the army and was posted to

South Australia. He had been training in Zen Do Kai in South Australia for several years and while on annual leave in Perth, Western Australia, he took me to a training session at the local Bob Jones Martial Arts club. I joined up the next day.

On personal growth...

Manne: People have always commented on my tough training style and sometimes those who have not met me before have the wrong impression of me. I still believe in purity and integrity in my training and teaching, but that hardness doesn't have to translate

Kyoshi Justin Boylan

Behind

Lessons in life & martial arts with Zen Do Kai's senior instructors

to an overtly tough image.

I love having fun and telling jokes. I find it very effective as a teacher to be able to put a new, maybe shy student at ease by joking. I am probably more approachable as I have become older, but that is a result of working on some of my personal weaknesses and becoming a stronger individual. I have always found that those who try to portray the hard image are often covering up weaknesses. I live a hard, basic lifestyle: no alcohol, no junk food, virtually vegetarian and a lot of training.

Boylan: Failing at a coloured-belt grading was the best thing that ever happened to me. It taught me the value of proper preparation and, more importantly, to focus on the skills and techniques of the martial arts, rather than the rank or colour of the belt.

On turning points in the history of Zen Do Kai...

Manne: Our style has constantly evolved. That is the great strength of the style: to want to continue to improve and become stronger. Of course that strength emanates from Bob, who has always been cutting-edge. It was Bob and his desire to constantly improve the style that laid the foundations for ZDK in the first instance.

From its inception, ZDK has been evolving — that was Bob's point all along. And that's something I have always adhered to, and always will.

Boylan: A short time after I joined, the Zen Do Kai system began to change to incorporate more freestyle techniques. In addition, Japanese terminology was replaced with English, making it easier to learn and understand instructions in classes. One of the early formative changes was the introduction of kickboxing, which then evolved into Muay Thai. I started training and competing in amateur wrestling in 1989. A couple of years later when Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and Mixed Martial Arts fighting hit the martial arts world, Zen Do Kai training evolved further to include these new techniques as well.

These changes have kept me interested and provided new challenges to develop and improve skill levels. Weapons training has also been an important part of our martial style and there are a number of Zen Do Kai students now skilled in the use of various weapons and weaponry systems.

On the tough reputation of ZDK men, both on the mat and in the security industry...



Kyoshi Billy Manne

Boylan bodyguarding Al Gore



Boylan with Dave Hedgcock in Bob Jones' home gym



Boylan protecting Rubin 'Hurricane' Carter



Manne: The reason we were tough was because it was real. You must remember that I had come to Australia after a stint in Johannesburg [South Africa]. At that time, Jo'burg was one of the bloodiest and most violent places on earth. I had seen a lot of street violence. I also had

dabbled in martial arts but no one was teaching things that were real. That was, until I walked into a dojo in Elizabeth St, Melbourne, in 1970. I was blown away by the aura and energy of the instructor; that of course was Bob Jones. Everything he taught, every move was real. It worked. I knew I had come home. I was in awe of Bob and those training with him: Dave Berry, Paul Fleming, Vince Rando, Peter Law, Dave Carpenter, Nicky Pappas, Steve Colangelo, Tum Joe and Richard Norton were all there that day, and they were frightening in their abilities.

While in training for 2nd Dan, my training was extreme by most people's standards but you need to remember the standard that had been set by those who had gone before me, such as Dave Berry and Paul Fleming.

We worked at the nightclubs in those days and I would train before work and straight after the clubs shut at about two in the morning. I would go back to the dojo and train for two hours and then have a kip and train for a few more hours.

Part of my training included long runs carrying a backpack full of sand. In South Melbourne there were two Housing Commission towers of 30 floors each. One stairwell went clockwise and the other went anti-clockwise. I would run up the first tower to the roof and then do katas, then I would run up the other tower and do katas. The view was amazing and I would feel like I could touch heaven (must have been all

those endorphins)! I would then run back the couple of kilometres to the dojo in the city, all while carrying my backpack of sand.

Boylan: Before opening his martial arts schools, Bob Jones ran a security company and many existing security operators began to train under him, keen to learn the practical and effective techniques he promoted. Many of his students were then employed in Bob Jones' security firm. This happened successfully in every Australian state, so that as the years went by, more security operators chose to train in BJMA systems.

In relation to competitive fighting, Bob Jones was the first to introduce kickboxing and Muay Thai into Australia, so many of the first competitors in these sports were from BJMA. Again, this happened in every Australian state, producing numerous champions. The sports now have an ever-increasing mainstream following and the number of BJMA competitors has remained high.

For any student, being involved in either security work or competitive fighting will always change how you apply your martial arts training. You need to evaluate your performance and change your training to get the best possible results, and this forms an essential part of the freestyle philosophy of BJMA. I did 20 years of door work, ran a security training company for 12 years and owned a nightclub for six years. The one thing I

have learned from this is that perception and awareness are more important than any martial art technique or skill. The most skilled language is also important to help you perceive non-verbal clues that can indicate that an assault may be attempted against you.

On proudest achievements...

Manne: My proudest achievements as an instructor are limitless: from my receiving my Black-belt, black gi, Bushido Cross [worn round the neck of the ZDK hardcore], followed by all my degrees in rank in so many different styles... Then a hundred times that satisfaction by passing all of these experiences on to all of my thousands of students since the early '70s. Above all is the pride and satisfaction at being Probationary 8th Degree at this time in my career [currently the highest rank in Zen Do Kai]. Sometimes I just pinch myself to check I'm not simply dreaming everything that surrounds me!

Boylan: It is great to compete and also train fighters to win trophies and belts. I've been lucky to have had some great fighters develop at my school and to compete successfully in several different types of competition, from kickboxing to Muay Thai, submission grappling to Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and Mixed Martial Arts. However, the proudest achievement has been the many thousands of dollars that we have raised to help a number of Perth charities. If you are healthy enough to do martial arts, it is a great blessing. To help those





Manne & his mane in the 1970s



Jones & Manne with their aikido instructor Mal McRae (centre, right) & Peter Lindsay



Manne in action (R), 1970s

less fortunate than yourself is a meaningful way to express your gratitude for your good fortune.

On the changes Zen Do Kai has undergone...

Manne: From its beginnings as an elitist organisation, it has evolved today as an all-encompassing martial art, for the whole family of any nationality, religion, colour or creed — BJMA/ZDK is for everyone.

Boylan: The conduct and professionalism of the school owners has consistently improved. The knowledge base of instructors is much broader and therefore the learning curve of the students is faster. The training venues have a lot more equipment and operate more hours per week. Due to media exposure, the martial arts are now more available to people from all walks of life and instructors have better skills to develop programs that can suit a wide variety of people.

The system has constantly evolved over the years, as have the teaching and grading syllabuses. In Western Australia, I encourage club instructors to train their students in their own way. We then come together regularly to grade students on a set of common testing requirements. If a particular instructor is having additional successes or failures, we can review their methods and adopt or discard them as required.

On martial arts and business...

Manne: In some ways I was lucky but all I wanted to do was

be a full-time martial artist and I sank everything into the dojo. Martial arts has changed from a business perspective and there is much better understanding of how to run a martial arts school as a business.

One of Bob's concepts was, as we evolved as martial artists and progressed through the Dans, we would learn that business is a battlefield. As such, the logic is that we become better martial artists and better business operators, concurrently. In my case, this is true: now I see why *The Art of War* is used as a text in the Harvard Business School!

I am certainly not the only one in ZDK who has evolved as a businessman — the guys in the west [WA] do an amazing job. One of the outcomes of this accumulation of knowledge is that the up-and-coming schools in BJMA have a support system to use.

On inspiration...

Manne: My most important lesson from the martial arts has been that no matter how good you think you are, there is always someone out there you can learn from.

Boylan: The person who had the greatest influence on me was my original instructor, Rod Stroud. In addition, Rod frequently conducted training camps and flew in the best BJMA instructors from around Australia. I was fortunate to be able to train with, and be inspired by, these men. Of course, Bob Jones was a regular feature at the training camps and

his freestyle philosophy has been, and remains, the cornerstone of my approach to martial arts.

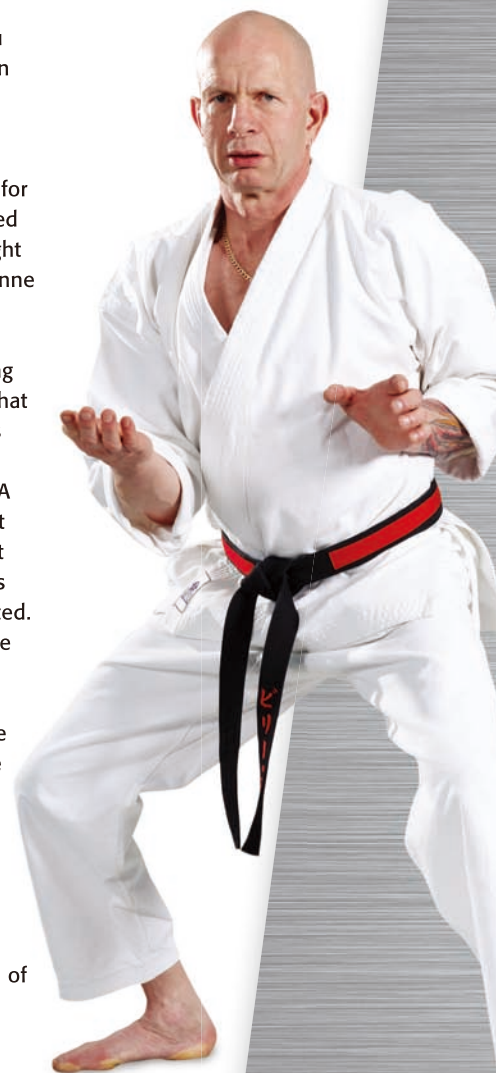
On lessons learned...

Boylan: Recovery from training sessions is just as important as the physical exercise and correct nutrition. A lot of great martial artists would be in better physical shape now if they had given their bodies time to recover from strenuous exercise and injury. Martial arts is great fun, so it's important to do everything you can to ensure that you can train for as long as possible.

On Zen Do Kai's future...

Manne: My vision is simple: for almost 40 years I've supported the vision of our founder. Right now, Bob Jones and Billy Manne have never done it better. What is this thing that bonds us together with such undying passion? Expansion — and what is exciting about tomorrow is our world expansion plan.

The vision I have for BJMA is to embrace Bob's vision. It must never be forgotten that all of ZDK and BJMA belongs to Bob. That is where it started. Bob has always looked at the bigger picture. It also must always be remembered that there has never been a more enduring or influential figure in Australian martial arts than Bob Jones — and there never will be. The way I run my school reflects Bob's drive and desire to make martial arts accessible to everyone and a positive part of everyone's lifestyle.





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Entry

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All competitors must register and weigh in between 12pm till 10pm on Friday 10th December at the Mercure Hotel, Paramatta. Interstate competitors may purchase tickets for weekend martial arts extravaganza at registration.

PLEASE NOTE:
No registration will be permitted on Saturday



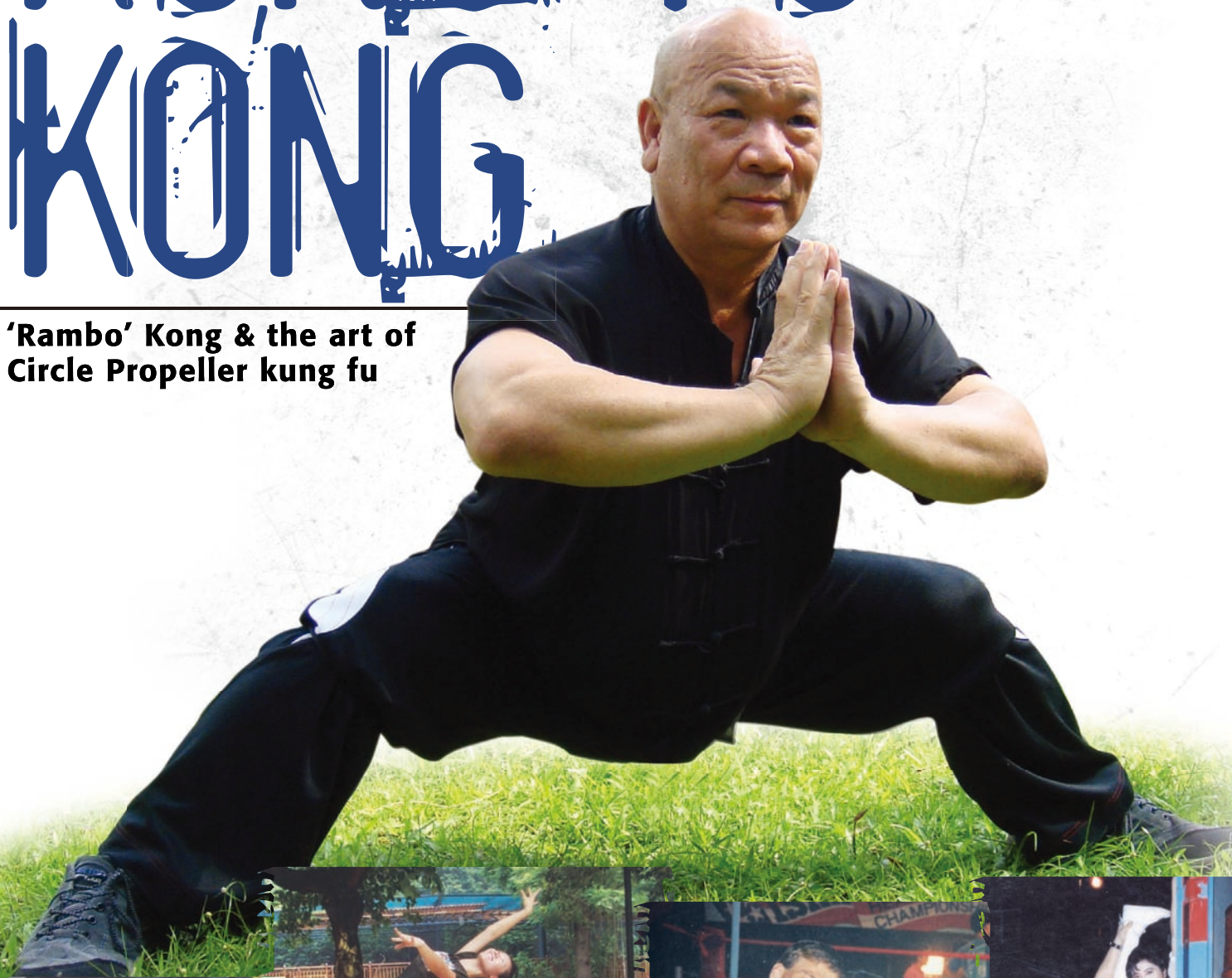
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KUNG FU KONG

**'Rambo' Kong & the art of
Circle Propeller kung fu**



'Rambo' Kong Kwok Keung is well known to lovers of martial arts movies, having performed as a stuntman and actor in the golden years of kung fu cinema. A former student of Simon Yuen or 'Sam Seed', father of legendary fight choreographer Yuen Woo-ping, Kong has been involved with martial arts and movie making on various levels for the majority of his life. He has even been a personal trainer and sports therapist to various action performers including Taiwanese actress Cynthia Khan, wushu maestro Jeff Falcon and Jean-Claude Van Damme, with whom he worked on the classics *Bloodsport* and *Kickboxer*. However, the Hong Kong-based master is now making a name for himself as the originator of Circle Propeller kung fu, a distillation of more than 50 years of experience in Northern and Southern styles of Chinese martial arts and tai chi chuan. Here, writer and film producer Mike Leeder takes a look at the life and martial method of an unsung hero of Chinese martial arts and action cinema.

I was introduced to Kong shortly after my arrival in Hong Kong in 1990, when American wushu maestro Jeff Falcon of *Outlaw Brothers* and *Six String Samurai* fame invited me to meet his 'kung fu brother', the wonderfully named 'Rambo' Kong. He warmly welcomed me when we met, and proceeded to advise me on martial arts, life, movies and many other subjects that should not be discussed. A friendship was formed that night and 20 years on, I still have the highest respect for the man and his martial arts skill. In fact, he's one of the few people I've met named Rambo who can really carry off the name.

Kong was born in Vietnam to Chinese parents but returned to China with his mother and other

siblings before his first birthday. His father continued to live in Vietnam, which might explain why Kong felt it necessary to take up Chinese martial arts at an early age, to protect himself and his family. "No, I wanted to fight people! That's why I started learning martial arts", Kong corrects me, laughing.

His early training was in Choy Li Fut and Hung Gar (Tiger-Crane) kung fu, which explains his impressive conditioning and foundation skills. He then began dabbling with gymnastics and working on kicking just because he enjoyed it. Shortly after his 10th birthday, when the political situation in China wasn't at its most stable, Kong, like many others, made the dangerous journey to Hong Kong as a

refugee. "I swam to Hong Kong with a group of other people. It took about 10 hours but we were very lucky, as we arrived just before a typhoon came. Some of the other people who were following us weren't so lucky."

Kong started working shortly after his arrival (child

labour laws were unenforced) but continued to train in martial arts and gymnastics, and attended evening classes to give himself an education.

Kong's introduction to movies came with roles as a background player and stuntman in the old black-and-white Wong Fei-hung movies starring Kwan Tak-hing and Shek Kin. "A friend of mine was working in movies as a stuntman, and asked me if I wanted to work on some films. I was very foolish then; I didn't really understand the difference between real martial arts and movie martial arts... I just thought fighting was fighting, so on my first films I wouldn't hold back if I was blocking a kick or a punch, or when I was throwing one. I was very bad for the actors and directors doing this, so they would tell me off," he recalls.

Kong not only continued to study a variety of martial arts styles and gymnastics, but also immersed himself in a study of dance to improve his flexibility and control, graduating with honours from the London Academy of Dance. But probably his most famous teacher was someone he met through the movies, an older man with a mercurial glint in his eyes, who

was working as an actor and choreographer in the movies, and using many of his family members in his stunt team. That teacher was the legendary Simon Yuen (Yuen Siu-tien), father of Yuen Woo-ping and best known for his memorable roles as Jackie Chan's teacher in the classic *Snake in the Eagle's Shadow* and *Drunken Master*.

But while he had the desire to learn under Master Yuen from the first time they met, Kong first had to prove himself. "I wanted to be Yuen Siu-tien's student, but he wouldn't take me as one at first! He didn't think I was serious enough about it," Kong recalls. "But I knew that when they weren't making movies, he would take the Yuen family, Yuen Woo-ping, Yuen Yat-chor and the other brothers and sister to Kowloon Tsai Park, and they would train in gymnastics and martial arts at the park from about 10 in the morning until lunchtime. So I went there and the first few days he ignored me, but I kept coming back and after a few days he accepted me as a student.

"I was very happy; he taught me a lot, not only about gymnastics, martial arts and movie making, but also about life. I really consider him as a father figure, and Woo-ping and his other children as my brothers and sisters. He would help get me work, and was very straightforward about the way we'd split the money so both sides were happy. He was working



1. With *Dragon* star Jason Scott-Lee
2. Teaching the next generation
3. With Van Damme on the *Bloodsport* set
4. Training Cynthia Khan
- 5: Kong training with a three-sectional staff

on so many projects playing the Master and he passed away quite suddenly. I was very upset. He was a true master in every sense of the word – I was very lucky to be his student.”

Kong would work with another legend of martial arts cinema, the great Bolo Yeung from *Enter The Dragon* and *Bloodsport*, on two lesser-known projects: *Writing Kung Fu*, which was directed by Bolo himself, shot in Thailand and starred John Cheung (*Snake in the Monkey's Shadow*) and Kong as one of two blind brothers who sought revenge on Bolo for his past misdeeds; and the great *The Fists*, *The Kicks* and *The Evils*. The latter film starred Bruce Leung from *Kung Fu Hustle*, Bolo as his nemesis and Kong as the mischievous master who helps Bruce bring his skills up to scratch. “It’s funny, I had

actually worked with Bruce Leung before, and I used to double for him for gymnastics

and some scenes where he had to stretch. On *Fists*, I play the old master. I often played the older characters, I never played the young hero!” says Kong, laughing.

Now while Bolo Yeung is well known for his menacing presence and physique, how would Kong rate his co-star’s martial arts skills? “Bolo is a very good martial artist,” he reveals. “Lots of people think he’s just a bodybuilder, and learnt a bit of action for the movies. They don’t realise he has always been a very serious tai chi student and his skill level is very good. He used to be in high demand as a bodyguard for a lot of people back then, because of his skill.”

As one of the *10 Magnificent Killers*, Kong had a small but fun role as a seemingly deranged, drunk monk who turns up to challenge the film’s heroes. It’s a small scene but gave Kong a chance to show off his impressive flexibility and gymnastics.

Kong also played a monk in Chen Chi-hwa’s *36 Crazy Fists*, starring Tony Leung Siu-hung and Lau Chia-yung, a small part

CIRCLE PROPELLER IN BRIEF

- Circle Propeller is concerned with angles of attack and defence, not specific techniques.
- **Any part of the body that is in connection with your opponent is your control point. The ‘circle propeller’ hand rotation is only a starting reference point used in training.**
- As training progresses, the whole body is used to control/sense the opponent, rather than just the hands.
- **Any hand or arm movement originates from the legs, waist, and then spine.**
- As per Chinese medicinal theory, one’s *dan tien* [located at the lower abdomen/waist area] is the centre of power. Thus the smaller and more subtle the waist movement, the more internally powerful it is.
- **The pressure should be light or heavy, not soft or hard. Light and heavy is alive, soft and hard is dead.**
- In training, a relaxed, loose yet explosive energy is developed and practised, resulting in natural and instinctive body movements.
- **Circle Propeller can be practised in slow motion to work on fine technique, or quickly to develop reflexes and co-ordination.**
- Circle Propeller is also known as the Zero/One Method. ‘Zero’ is defence. ‘One’ is attack. ‘One’ could be a boxing or karate punch, a kung fu palm-strike, etc.
- **Circle Propeller includes 13 combinations containing striking, locking and throwing – these drills provide ways of responding to different energies.**
- The combinations draw from tai chi and the kung fu styles Kong has studied, but each one is like the first few pieces of a jigsaw puzzle; the individual chooses which pieces follow, and these could come from any style.

of which was choreographed by Jackie Chan. Kong had previously been asked to double Jackie Chan for a sequence cut from

Drunken Master as well. “I only doubled him for a scene where they wanted to show his character doing a lot of very extreme stretching; it wasn’t something dangerous.

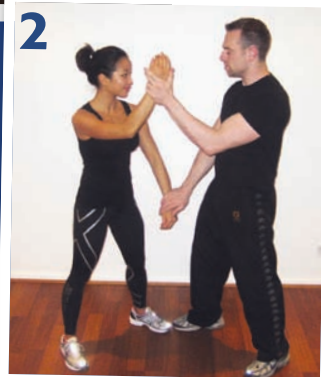
It’s just I had the flexibility they wanted. And the scene ended up being cut from the film in the end anyway. A lot of people don’t like to be doubled, but sometimes it’s just easier or more practical. There are so many things Jackie Chan can do that I can’t: he can be a director, a leading man, a producer... Me doubling for him doesn’t detract from that, does it?”

Kong would also work at the famous Shaw Brothers studio on various projects, most notably *Boxer From The Temple* and *Monkey Kung Fu*. “On *Boxer From the Temple*, I got to play the hero’s master again! I was a head monk, and I take the hero into the temple at the beginning of the film and he learns kung fu, but he’s very mischievous. The

THE CIRCLE PROPELLER DRILL



1 Jet and Daniel Whyte begin the 'circle propeller': natural stance, hands cupping, inside rotation.



2 Inside circles continue with light and even pressure, the connection never broken.



3 The circles continue with the movement coming from the legs and waist, energy flowing through the spine.



4 Daniel senses an opening and attempts an elbow, which is instinctively deflected by Jet.



5 Daniel opens Jet up with a small outward rotation, and prepares a knife-hand strike.



6 Jet reacts by maintaining the connection and applying a downward pressure to jam Daniel's attack.



7 Sensing the opening, Jet attacks with an uppercut.



8 Returning to the rotation, the pair continue the next flow of movements.

main actor was a guy named Wu Yuan-chun." His other Shaw Brothers effort was *Monkey Kung Fu*, starring and choreographed by Ching Siu-tong. "In this movie I think I was doing the stunts for everyone, and I played a couple of roles including the master and one of the bad guys," Kong says jovially. "It was a very low-budget Shaw Brothers production!"

While Kong performed as both an actor and a stuntman, he admits to not having any interest in being a choreographer himself. "I like movie martial arts, and I like real kung fu! If you ask me to perform real martial arts or movie martial arts, I can do it, but I can't make up martial arts action. I don't know why, but it feels strange to me to be trying to use techniques that wouldn't really work," Kong says.

In the mid 1980s, Kong also became closely associated with a young martial arts actor from the West. "I had pretty much stepped back from the film industry as a performer for a few reasons. I felt I had more to offer as a teacher and sports therapist; I did a lot of sports massage and therapy," he explains. "There was an American film in Hong Kong, and they called me to come in and massage and offer therapy for the leading actor, who was really working hard on the film... [He was] also working on the choreography and training a lot of the actors. The movie was *Bloodsport* and he was a very nice guy called Jean-Claude Van Damme. He was very friendly and we seemed to hit it off, and we became quite close on the film. I ended up as his personal masseuse and therapist for the

movie, and we kept in touch after the film was finished."

Kong reveals that, as a result, there was very nearly a different actor playing the role of Master Xian in *Kickboxer* a few years later. "Yes, Jean-Claude had told me he wanted me to play that role, and he kept telling me to get into shape for it. So I lost some weight for the project and was quite excited about the thought of playing that role."

In the end, *Kickboxer's* producers chose Dennis Chan for the role, but Kong wasn't fussed. "He played that character much better than I could have done; his acting and the personality he gave Xian was excellent." Kong would still work behind the scenes on the movie as a massage therapist for Jean-Claude, Dennis Alexio and some of the other key cast

members. "I have a lot of respect for Jean-Claude. We lost contact in the last few years but he was like a brother to me back then; he helped me in many ways and I wish him my very best regards."

In 1992, Kong was called upon by fight choreographer John Cheung to join his action team for Rob Cohen's *Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story*. Kong gave a memorable acting and action performance as Ah Ho, a crazy kung fu chef who makes the mistake of challenging Bruce Lee (Jason Scott Lee) over their mutual interest in a pretty girl. The sequence was set in the US, but while the interior kitchen scene was shot in Los Angeles, the exteriors were shot in Hong Kong, with Kong and long-time Jackie Chan stunt-teamers Anthony Carpio, Chan Tat-kwong and

Johnny Cheung battling Lee in and above an alleyway. While Lee wins, of course, Kong does get to show some very slick moves including a very nice jumping scissor-kick takedown.

"It was good to work with John and his team again on the film. Jason Scott Lee tried very hard with his acting and action — he wasn't really a martial artist but he tried his best," Kong recalls with a smile. "There is one sequence when he is meant to kick me in the shoulder and — BANG! — he smacked me straight in the nose. It hurt and was bleeding, and everybody on the crew wanted me to go to the hospital and see if it was broken, but I knew it was okay. Jason was very apologetic, but it was just an accident."

Despite strong positive response to his appearance in *Dragon*, Kong felt he had more to offer off camera. "I like making movies, but I also like to be a trainer and a sports therapist. I got to work with a lot of people in the industry off-screen, working with them on their skill sets, treating their injuries and much more," he says.

Kong has continued to provide massage therapy and training, while also developing his own blended martial arts style, which he calls 'Circle Propeller' kung fu. His system draws from his lifetime's involvement with various martial arts styles.

Also called the 'Zero/One Method', his close-range style of martial arts emphasises sensitivity and tactile awareness, and the control of one's opponent. It is the subject of a documentary-cum-training DVD on Kong and his life in martial arts and movies, directed by Australian actor, filmmaker and Kong student Daniel Whyte.

Whyte, previously a student of Jeet Kune Do under Adelaide's Guro Nino Pilla, still vividly recalls his first encounter with Kong in 2002, when the Aussie was in Hong Kong working on the film *Ultraviolet*.

"My first encounter with him was in a park, where he was teaching a small group of his students. I was very intrigued by their movements, as it didn't resemble any form of martial arts that I had seen before," Whyte recalls. "He was very friendly and open with his information, and I joined the group for regular training. The first thing that struck me was how tense my body was from years of martial arts. As the weeks went by, I could feel my whole body relaxing and loosening up in a way I had never felt before."

Whyte also found the training unique in its informality, and the huge amount of fun being had by all of Kong's students. "Kong's philosophy



Kong in *The Blood Bond*

and insights into his style were incredibly deep and interesting," he says. "His method was energy and sensitivity-based, and included all the elements of striking, throwing, locking and grappling (standing)."

Since Sifu Kong accepted Whyte as his private student, the Australian has divided his time between Melbourne and Hong Kong to train with him, and is now Kong's chosen representative Down Under.

Kong, meanwhile, has experienced a resurgence in his screen career as he works on building up Circle Propeller kung fu. In 2008, he was asked to play an Asian gang boss (facing off against yours truly at a high-stakes poker game) in the music video for Gregory Moore's *Blind Generation*. Kong also made an appearance in the directorial debut of *Terminator* actor Michael Biehn, *The Blood Bond*, which was shot in China in 2009. In this action-thriller, Kong plays a small but memorable role as a gun-runner who helps Michael Biehn and Phoenix Chou, the film's female lead, battle the baddies.

Kong's appearance in the video garnered some very good responses and, who knows, perhaps he'll now have the career resurgence he deserves.

WATCH KONG

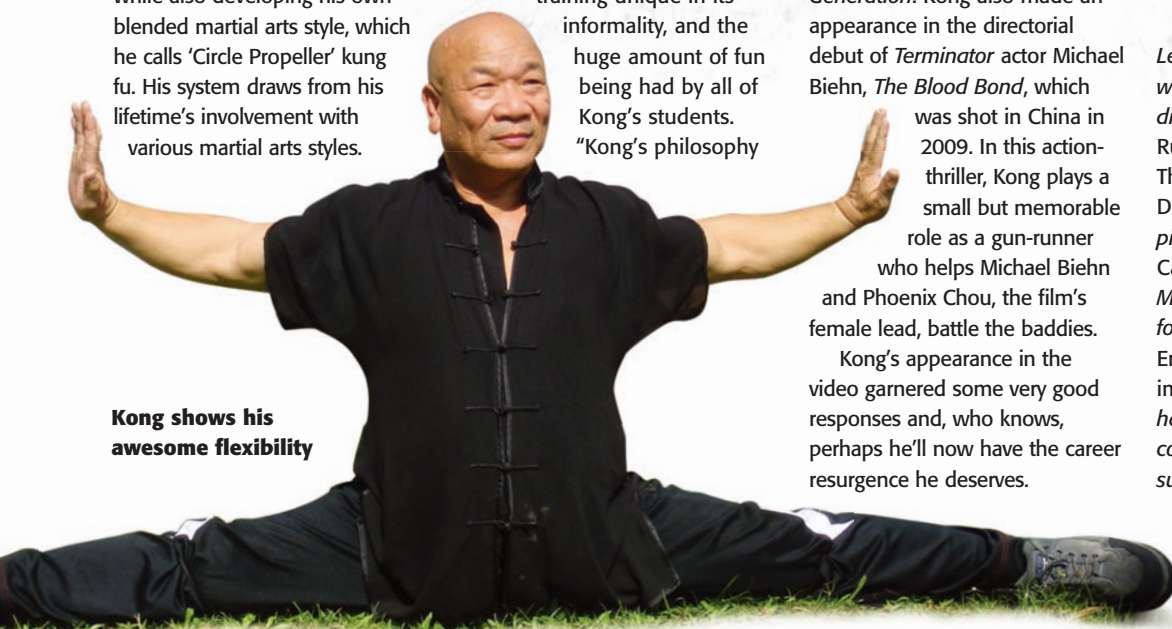
Rambo Kong's filmography includes:

- *Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story*
- *10 Magnificent Killers*
- *36 Crazy Fists*
- *The Boxer from the Temple*
- *The Fists, The Kicks & The Evils*
- *Writing Kung Fu*
- *Monkey Kung Fu*
- *Blind Generation*
- *The Blood Bond*

Kong himself is not too fussed either way. For now, he's more than happy to continue with his kung fu training, and exchanging knowledge and skills with those he encounters. Hopefully those people realise just how lucky they are.

*About the author: Mike Leeder is a Hong Kong-based writer, producer and casting director whose credits include Rush Hour 3, Jet Li's Fearless, The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor, Yuen Woo-ping's True Legend and David Carradine: A Martial Arts Journey. Mike is the Far Eastern Editor for Impact: The Global Action Entertainment Magazine (www.impactmoviemagazine.co.uk) and has provided DVD interviews and commentaries for DVD extras for such companies as Hong Kong Legends and Dragon Dynasty. He can be found online at www.alivenotdead.com/mikeleeder **BLITZ***

Kong shows his awesome flexibility





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Styles!

Are they Killing Martial Arts?

Tell another martial artist that you practise karate or kung fu and it's likely that they will immediately then ask you, 'what style?' From this it would seem that the notion of style is felt to be important — yet this raises many questions: How did all these different styles and systems come into existence? Are they really that important? Should the existing styles be preserved? Or should we be looking to create new styles? Here, renowned English Shotokan karate instructor and kata-application aficionado Iain Abernethy explains why too much emphasis on style amounts to a delayed death-touch to the martial arts.

STORY BY IAIN ABERNETHY
STUDIO IMAGES BY CHARLIE SURIANO



The most widely practised style of karate today is almost certainly Shotokan karate. As I'm sure most of those reading this will know, it was Gichin Funakoshi who is attributed as being the founder of this style of karate. So what did Funakoshi himself have to say about the style he founded?

Towards the end of his life, Gichin Funakoshi wrote the following in his book *Karate-Do: My Way of Life*: "One serious problem, in my opinion, which besets present day karate-do is the prevalence of divergent schools. I believe this will have a deleterious effect on the future development of the art... There is no place in contemporary karate-do for different schools... Indeed, I have heard myself and my colleagues referred to as the Shotokan school, but I strongly object to this attempt at classification." Funakoshi goes on to say that he believes all karate is one and that it is this approach that will best serve the future of karate. So it seems that Funakoshi was not a fan of the idea of schools or styles and, if he were around today, he would probably be unhappy at being labelled as the founder of the Shotokan style. Funakoshi's objection to styles seems primarily based on his concern that styles would be divisive and would see karate separate into various factions.

Other masters were more comfortable with the idea of styles, but Funakoshi was in no way alone in his worry that styles could be detrimental to karate as a whole. Kenwa Mabuni, the founder of Shito-ryu, is also on record saying that he felt all karate was one and what people considered to be styles were simply variations in the expression of karate's common principles. So we know that the idea of styles

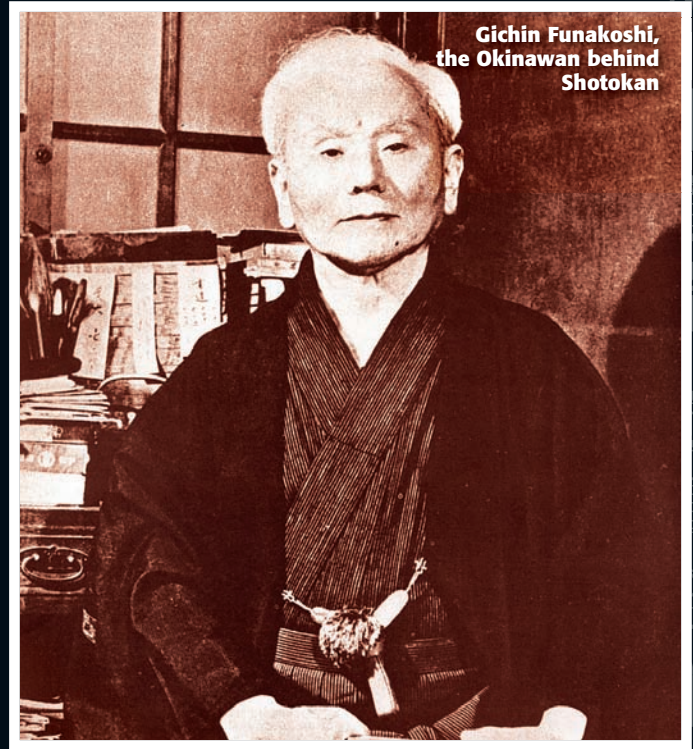
was not universally endorsed and that two of modern karate's founders felt that that karate as a whole should be valued more than its many individual incarnations. But where did these "various expressions" or styles originate from?

It's commonly accepted that Shotokan, Shito-ryu, Wado-ryu and Goju-ryu are the four styles that are most widely practised across the globe, so let's look at the formation of each of these styles.

Shotokan: Gichin Funakoshi studied under Anko Azato, Anko Itosu and, to a lesser degree, Bushi Matsumura. It was Funakoshi's personal synthesis and expression of what he learnt from these teachers that formed the nucleus of what is now called Shotokan (although, as we have seen, Funakoshi himself did not like that term). Funakoshi borrowed several ideas from judo (i.e. the uniform, grading system, etc). Shotokan was further developed by Gichin Funakoshi's son, Gigo Funakoshi.

Shito-ryu: Kenwa Mabuni studied under both Anko Itosu and Kanryo Higaonna. Mabuni synthesised the methods of both men into what became known as Shito-ryu. Indeed, the name reflects this synthesis as 'Shito' is derived from the first *kanji* (Japanese written characters] used in writing 'Itosu' and 'Higaonna'. When I interviewed Haruyoshi Yamada, 9th Dan — who studied under Chojiro Tani, who was in turn a student of Kenwa Mabuni — in 2006 he told me that Kenwa Mabuni also practised Shin-den Fudo-ryu jujutsu and taught this style of jujutsu to Chojiro Tani. However, it would seem that Mabuni kept this aspect of his personal martial practice separate from his karate style.

Wado-ryu: Before taking up karate, Hironori Otsuka originally studied Shindo-Yoshin-ryu jujutsu



Gichin Funakoshi,
the Okinawan behind
Shotokan

under Tasusaburo Nakayama. Later, he studied karate under Gichin Funakoshi, Kenwa Mabuni and Choki Motobu. Otsuka's Wado is a fusion of his jujutsu and the various interpretations of karate as taught to him by his various teachers.

Goju-ryu: Chojun Miyagi studied Naha-Te karate under Kanryo Higashionna. Miyagi, like his teacher, made several trips to China to learn more to further develop his martial arts knowledge. Miyagi himself did not name his system until one of his senior students, Jinan Shinzato, was asked to do so following a demonstration he gave in Tokyo in 1930. Shinzato is said to have struggled to accurately name the style he practised and it's said that he reluctantly settled on 'Naha-te', but felt this did not accurately reflect what Miyagi was now teaching. He returned to Okinawa and explained his predicament to Miyagi, who decided that Goju-ryu (Hard-Soft school) would be a good title for

what they now practised.

What should be noted straight away is that Funakoshi, Mabuni, Otsuka and Miyagi did not preserve karate as it was passed on to them. They fused various expressions of karate together and also incorporated technical and cultural influences from Chinese systems, jujutsu and even judo. These new styles were not 'pure' or passed on in an unchanging way across the centuries; they were a mongrel mix of what the founders considered the best aspects of all their influences. The past masters mixed things together, left things out, and created things that were their own. This was far from being a free-for-all though. The development of these 'new traditions' was done according to the process of *shuhari*.

Shuhari is the process through which martial arts are said to evolve. Each syllable represents a specific kanji character and the process of shuhari is best explained by looking at the meanings of each

和道松流

系東柔剛

individual character.

Shu (守): The meaning of this character is 'to defend' or 'to obey'. In martial arts, this stage would be the learning of the fundamentals of our chosen style. The student does not yet have enough knowledge or experience to be able to effectively deviate from the fundamentals and hence it is important that they strictly adhere to them. Essentially this stage is 'learning by copying'.

Ha (破): The meaning of *ha* is 'to diverge' or to 'break away'. A martial artist who has reached this stage will be working toward their own personal expression of the fundamentals introduced in the preceding stage. They will be working out what they feel is most effective and making corresponding changes to their training and teaching.

Essentially, this stage is 'learning by experimenting'.

Ri (離): The final character means 'to leave' or 'to go away'. At this point the martial artist has moved away from the earlier stages of their martial art and, although what they now do can still trace its origins to their early training, it is now uniquely theirs. It has 'left' what they originally did and may now need its own name to adequately define it. Essentially, this stage is 'learning by creating'.

The martial artist who has reached the *ri* stage will encourage their students to copy their teachings (*shu*) and the whole process begins again.

If you look at the history of the four main karate styles discussed earlier, you can see

the *shuhari* process at work. The masters who formulated the modern styles started by faithfully copying the teachings of their own masters. At a certain point, the masters developed

their own expressions of these teachings; and this included the fusing together of various separate methods — i.e. different martial arts styles and alternative expressions of karate. Finally, what the masters were doing had moved so far from the original teachings that their method became something essentially new. This is the point where a new label is needed and, as soon as that label is given, a new 'style' is born.

As I said earlier, this developing of new styles was not a free-for-all and these new styles were not born of political infighting, financial interest or ego. They came into existence as genuinely new expressions of previous existing systems. So where does this leave us, and how does the idea of styles and *shuhari* apply to us today?

As I see it, one of the biggest problems now facing karate, and martial arts generally, is the abandoning of the *shuhari* ideal. I would suggest that in the majority of cases, *shuhari* has been replaced with *shu-shu-shu*. The existing styles are frequently regarded as sacrosanct, with any minor change being viewed as a form of heresy. This is not good for karate, it is not in keeping with what the past masters themselves did, and it is not in line with traditional practices.

One of the main reasons for *shu-shu-shu* becoming so prevalent is the modern disconnection between problem and solution. The past masters originally sought what they considered to be the best solution to the problem of violence. A problem arose when martial artists stopped measuring against efficiency in combat and started introducing artificial criteria such as 'style purity'. Whether something was 'good' or not was no longer measured against its efficiency in combat, but instead 'good'



Shito-ryu founder
Kenwa Mabuni

COURTESY OF BUGEISHA

was always measured against how close any given motion was to a rigid 'style criteria'. The element of *ha* or divergence was actively discouraged, even if that divergence would increase combative efficiency. *Shu* — the ability to strictly copy a teacher's movements — was all that the grading system rewarded and thus became all that people trained for.

This problem can perhaps be seen most clearly when discussing kata. The original purpose of kata was to record and communicate combative techniques and concepts. Kata could be viewed as a set of instructions or a syllabus that would guide a practitioner's study and practice. Kata is the map to guide the student through the landscape of conflict. The trouble has been that people stopped trying to navigate their way through conflict and started endlessly copying maps instead! It mattered little if people could utilise the map to negotiate the terrain, so long as they were able to accurately copy out the map.

The actual expression of the combative principles within kata became an irrelevance. The goal changed. It was now all about faithful copying and keeping the kata 'pure'. Those who navigated the territory and, as a result of their experience, suggested updating the map, were condemned as heretics. The map was no longer something functional, but a work of art to



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be copied and admired, but not understood or used.

In all fields it is very important that we faithfully and accurately understand the teachings and findings of the previous generation. This information is invaluable as it removes the need for each generation to start from scratch. If we always had to start from the beginning,

each generation would have to rediscover fire and reinvent the wheel, and hence humanity would make no progress.

In the field of physics, school children throughout the world learn Sir Isaac Newton's laws of motion. There is no need to rediscover these laws, as the work has already been done. Some students may go on to study physics at a high level and eventually work at the cutting edge of the field. They aim to come up with better theories to explain the physical universe. In doing so, they are seeking what Newton himself sought. They are honouring him by building on his research.

They would not honour him if they abandoned the search he was key part of and instead sought to preserve the 'infallible equations' of 'Newton-ryu'.

In the martial arts, styles can become a barrier to progress if they are viewed as something that must always be preserved and can never be deviated from. This preservation prevents the process of shuhari, diverts us from the quest that the masters themselves were on, can prevent improvements in combative efficiency, and will ultimately lead to the stagnation and death of

the style. Styles are not sacrosanct and it is important that we allow martial arts to live and to evolve.

The styles that have been handed down to us are invaluable. They form the basis of what we do and we should be incredibly grateful to the founders of these methods for ensuring we don't have to start from the beginning. We should faithfully copy their teachings so we gain a good understanding of their own discoveries. However, there will



eventually come a point where we should also copy the example set by the founders of these styles and introduce our own expression of the core concepts. Eventually we may even do what they did and go on to formulate and teach our own personal expression of our chosen martial art.

Using style purity to stifle growth is not traditional and is bad for the martial arts as a whole. We can see evidence of this in the loss of combative efficiency that form-over-function karate has produced. We should return to seeing styles as being the foundation study that eventually frees us to express our martial art in our own way. We should be constantly striving to better understand the problem of violence and improve on the solutions offered by previous generations. If we

can make such an improvement it is because of the superb job the past masters did in preparing us to do just that. We are in no way suggesting we are better than them when we suggest improvements; rather, we are acknowledging their genius!

To use what I think is a very apt quotation from English author John of Salisbury (1159), "We are like dwarfs on the shoulders of giants, so that we can see more than they, and things at a greater distance, not by virtue of any sharpness of sight on our part, or any physical distinction, but because we are carried high and raised up by their giant size." We do the past masters a great disservice if we allow ourselves to be lifted up by them only to close our eyes! Martial arts should evolve and styles are at their most valuable when they facilitate effective evolution by passing on what the previous generation discovered so we can use it as our base. Sadly, the prevailing view of styles today, far from effectively facilitating evolution, actually prevents that evolution and encourages stagnation.

I agree with Mabuni and Funakoshi when they said that all karate was one. That doesn't mean that all expressions of karate should be exactly the same or unchanging. Instead it means that all the various expressions are simply branches of the same tree. When a tree grows it produces new branches. These new branches are good for the health of the whole tree. Like a tree, karate will be at its most healthy when allowed to grow.

*Iain Abernethy's website www.iainabernethy.com is a popular resource for the practically minded traditional martial artist and offers monthly podcasts, a popular message board, free e-book downloads and a free newsletter. **BLITZ***





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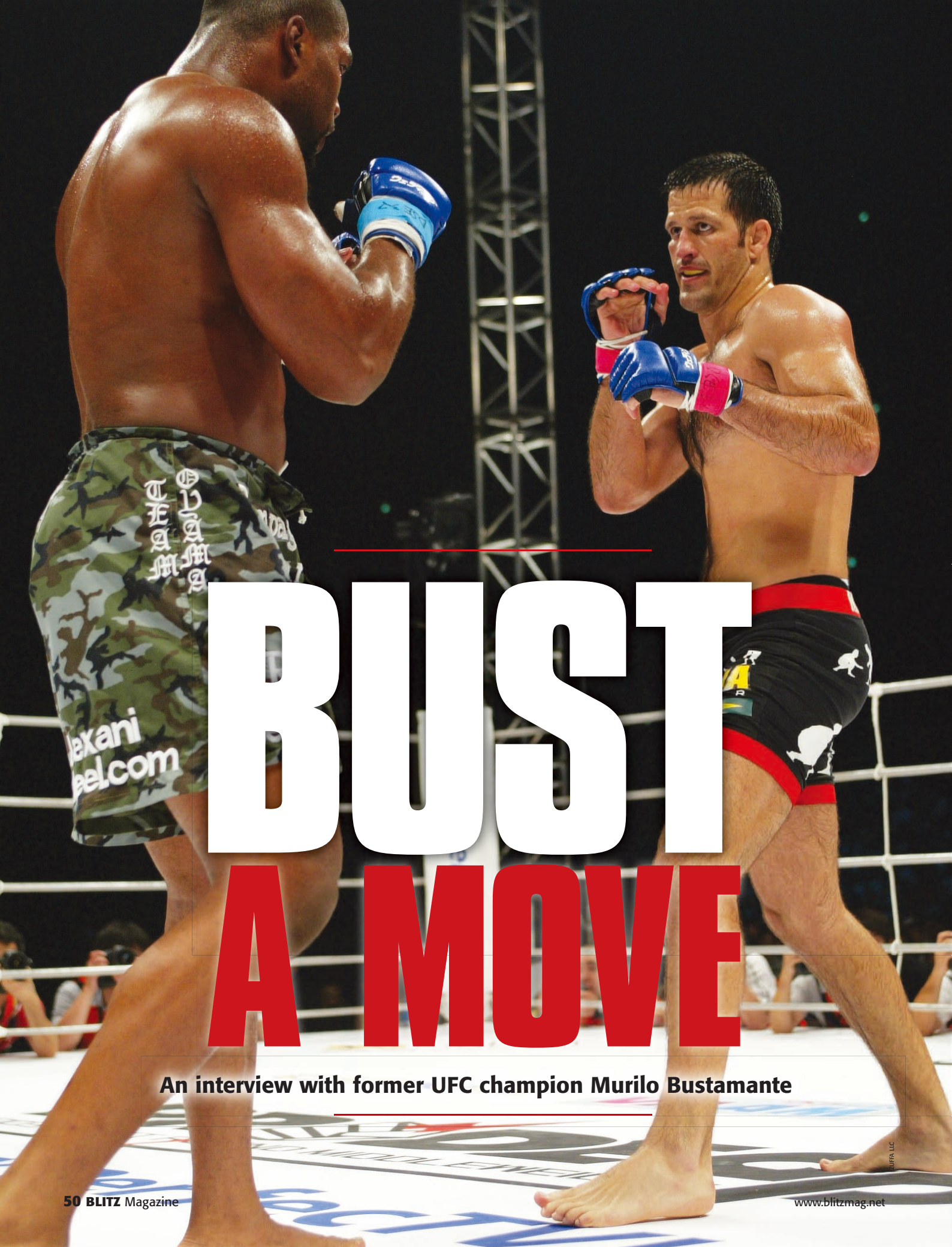
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BUST A MOVE

An interview with former UFC champion Murilo Bustamante

Brazilian BJJ champion Murilo Bustamante not only has a storied Mixed Martial Arts career with a UFC title and wins over some of the sport's biggest names, but he also started one of the world's most lauded MMA teams, Brazilian Top Team (BTT). Although the veteran of UFC and Japan's Pride FC suffered a debilitating illness and a loss in his recent fight on Australian shores at July's Impact FC in Sydney, he took time out to talk to *Blitz* before heading home to Rio de Janeiro.

INTERVIEW BY LUKE BESTON

Murilo, can you tell us about your introduction to the martial arts?

I was born and raised in a family with five siblings. My two older brothers, we have a difference of eight and nine years between us and they used to take me to the Carlson Gracie Academy to watch the training. I was running around on the mats and bothering people and it didn't take too long for me to start to train. I think I had so much fun bothering people that when I started to train I already wanted to be there all the time.

The world of Jiu-Jitsu has changed quite a lot during the decades you have trained. Can you compare today's tournament Jiu-Jitsu to the era when you were competing?

I started to compete when I was 14 or 15 years old, and all the most important tournaments were in my state, Rio de Janeiro. We didn't have national or world championships at the time so all the best fighters were in our state tournament. Those state tournaments were like the world tournaments now, all the best fighters were living in Rio. They were small tournaments, but with a lot of good fighters. The difference today is that BJJ is much more organised and spread around the world so we have good fighters all over. I think the fighters are creating new positions and renewing things all over the world so the development of Jiu-Jitsu is going faster and faster and hopefully one day the sport will be in the Olympic games.

You are a Black-belt from Master Carlson when his

academy was known as 'The Champion Factory'. What made the team so great?

When I was a Blue-belt, the Carlson team used to win the tournaments for Blue-belt for every weight class. They called us the 'golden generation' of the Carlson Academy. Carlson was a great coach and he was a very competitive person, and he trained the students to become good competitors. We trained hard, it was the environment in the academy. Carlson was very good at teaching the basics of Jiu-Jitsu, he didn't care too much

about fancy things; he liked 'rice and beans' techniques, things that really worked. I especially found that when I started to compete in Mixed Martial Arts, because Carlson's Jiu-Jitsu was so good that I could apply it in *vale-tudo* (no rules). That's how I developed my game, testing it in Mixed Martial Arts... Carlson has this style, and put this style in Jiu-Jitsu tournaments. It was really simple and really efficient.

You are one of the founders of the powerhouse Brazilian Top Team (BTT) which became a champion factory in its own

right. What do you think made BTT so successful?

Carlson taught me a lot and in BTT I had a chance to develop my own way of how to teach, but of course my background was with the Carlson Academy and I follow his style. Even if I created my own style and way of doing things, I follow his way, caring about the basics of the fighters and creating a good base of the pyramid. That is how I believe the game has to work because if a fighter tries to do fancy things and does not have the basics, he will have a lot of gaps in his game. In BTT we

Submission Grappling Technique ≡



Bustamante is beginning to pass his opponent's guard under the legs...



...by stacking his weight on the opponent...



...and forcing him to roll to his knees to defend the pass.



Bustamante locks a Gable-grip behind his opponent's head...



...and pulls him in to force his opponent back onto his side...



...then locks on the arm-triangle, sprawling to drop his hips to finish the choke.

take care to learn the basics. We started to study other martial arts too and put everything together and try to make complete fighters; fighters who could fight everywhere with good stand-up, good takedowns and of course a good game on the ground, since the background of BTT is Jiu-Jitsu.

You are also a dedicated student of boxing under Professor Claudio Coelho at the legendary Nobre Arte Academy. Can you tell us about training there, the other students, and Prof. Claudio?

I started training boxing when I was around 18 years old. I was competing in Jiu-Jitsu but hurt my knee and I couldn't train Jiu-Jitsu. My friends and my brothers used to train with Claudio and I used to go there to exercise and work out... but I didn't train too much, it was more for fun, and when my knee recovered I forgot boxing. When I had my first fight against *Luta Livre* [an old Brazilian school of grappling-based, limited-rules fighting], I knew I needed to train boxing and I knew the right person to help me was Claudio. I started to train real boxing with hard sparring and since then I've kept competing in Jiu-Jitsu but kept training in boxing. When I quit Jiu-Jitsu tournaments around 2000, I started to train boxing more often. Claudio became a really close personal friend and is someone that I love; he is not only a coach but a person that is part of my life.

Your vale-tudo debut was captured on the *Gracies in Action* documentary. Can you talk about this event, which was one of the most important in the history of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu?

Actually, I never thought that I would become a professional fighter, I am a graduate of economics and I was teaching Jiu-Jitsu to help pay for my university. At the time of this challenge I was one of the best Black-belts at the Carlson Gracie academy

BUSTAMANTE IN BRIEF

Fight record: 14 wins, 8 losses, 1 draw

Titles: UFC Middleweight Champion

Notable wins: Matt Lindland, Jerry Bohlander, Ikuhisa Minowa, Ryuta Sakurai

Notable losses: Chuck Liddell, Dan Henderson, Quinton 'Rampage' Jackson

Height: 186cm

Weight: 84kg

Birth date: 30/7/1966

Home city: Arpoador, Rio de Janeiro

— I wasn't the most senior of Carlson's students, but the most senior who was still competing. I felt the obligation to represent and defend my martial art when it was challenged by *Luta Livre*; it was something to give back to my art. Jiu-Jitsu is my religion so I put myself at the front and did it for love. We only made a little money, but the important thing was the challenge between the two disciplines.

You fight in the UFC against Chuck Liddell and finished with one of the most controversial decisions in history, with the win being awarded to Chuck. What were your thoughts on that result?

I had a contract with the UFC before this fight, when I fought in the UFC Japan, and I was supposed to fight two more times in UFC Japan, but the company that had the license broke up. I wasn't fighting for the last year, so I was just training Jiu-Jitsu and they called me to fight Chuck, who was doing really well coming off knockouts against Guy Mezger and Kevin Randleman, and the guy was in shape. I thought it was my time and I always loved to meet the best fighters I could, and I never refused a challenge, so I signed the contract and did

Bustamante battles Quinton Jackson in Pride FC



my best. A lot of people think I won the fight — it was a really good fight, one of the best memories I have in the octagon, Chuck is such a great fighter. After the fight it was an interesting case, Dana White and Joe Silva came to my locker room and apologised about the result, that they couldn't interfere with the commission's decision. After that they offered me a rematch with Chuck, or a chance to fight for the belt at middleweight. I chose the belt, my plan was to fight in middleweight and then return to light-heavyweight, but I left the company before I had a chance to do that.

So you fought Dave Menne for the UFC title. What did it mean to become world champion, and what happened in the fight?

It was the first time I cut

weight to fight. When I fought Chuck Liddell I already weighed 92kg, or 202 pounds, while other guys were coming down from 220 pounds so it was a big difference to fight. I didn't have the skill cutting weight, coming from Jiu-Jitsu, but I cut weight and felt really good. Also it was the first time I went into the fight with no injuries. My training was perfect, I was totally in shape and I was coming off a hard fight with Chuck Liddell so my mind and heart were strong. Everything worked, I was fast, my boxing skills were good and I was confident. He didn't know if I was going to box or try to take him down, and I connected with a big punch and knocked him out. It was one of the most important things in my career because I was looking for so long to be in the UFC and fight for the belt. In



1997 I had fought one of the best middleweights in UFC at the time, Jerry Bohlander [now 11-4-0], in Brazil and since then I had been looking to fight the best guys, to test my skills and my Jiu-Jitsu. So, when I won the middleweight tittle, I was in the place I wanted and had the belt I wanted. It was very emotional for me, and one of the most important moments in my career.

Your next fight was for the middleweight title against Olympic wrestler from Team Quest Matt Lindland (now 22-7-0). There was another controversy in this fight when it appeared that Matt tapped to your arm-bar, but then continued to fight...

During training I got an infection in my finger and almost had to cancel the fight, which was the first defence of my title, but

fortunately I fixed the infection and I fought. I was a little bit insecure about how I could fight with the infection, after the fight I needed to cauterise my finger, I lost time in my training because I couldn't punch, I couldn't grab. I was in shape but I couldn't train how I would like so I was not sure how the fight would go. Fortunately I took him down and went to the half-guard, he made a move and we arrived in a position that I love, the arm-bar. He was caught, I have no question about that, he was submitted already. Big John [McCarthy, the referee] touched me and I released his arm and I thought the fight was finished, but Matt Lindland said he didn't tap and Big John got a little confused and instead he restarted the fight. This was the hardest time for me in the ring or Octagon... my mind was spinning

BJJ Technique: Lapel-choke ≡



Bustamante's opponent is standing over him, holding both legs and attempting to pass...



...so Bustamante breaks the opponent's left-hand grip...



...and escapes his hips as he pulls on his opponent's collar.



With no base, Bustamante's opponent falls forward to the mat...



...and Bustamante sits up and turns into his opponent, putting his chest against the back...



...then swings his leg over and puts in the second 'hook' (a foot inside the thigh)...



...and rolls his opponent over to finish him with a lapel-choke.

and I think if they'd opened the door of the Octagon, I would have just left. I was really disappointed and lost my focus, but kept fighting and finished the round. During the interval I looked for Dana White, who was watching the fight, and opened my arms and said "F***, man!" He said he couldn't do anything. I tried to recover, my corner was trying to calm me down and make me focus and keep fighting... and thanks to God I won the fight, because it would have been really unfair if I'd lost. I still tease Big John about that — he's not only a good person, but the best referee I've seen in the Octagon.

How has the world of MMA has changed over your long career?

I can split the history of MMA into two eras. First was when any fighter represented a discipline. The guys could come from judo or [Brazilian] Jiu-Jitsu or karate; it was a test among disciplines, and it proved that BJJ is the best discipline for Mixed Martial Arts — nobody had a question about that. Then all fighters started to train Jiu-Jitsu, and the Jiu-Jitsu fighters started to train boxing and Muay Thai and wrestling. It was the second era, and my team in

Brazil, Brazilian Top Team, was one of the first that started cross-training. We started training with a good wrestling coach, and Muay Thai, boxing and everything, trying to make a 'super fighter' that has the capacity to fight anywhere. Then Mixed Martial Arts became a sport and now all the fighters try to become complete. All the kids today can fight anywhere [including] stand-up, a lot of fighters are Black-belts in BJJ, a lot of fighters have professional boxing coaches. When it became a sport with money involved, the level of all fighters became really high.

You're now training the next generation of champions, including Rusimar Palharaes, who is making big waves in the UFC. Can you talk about Rusimar as a student and fighter?

Rusimar arrived in my academy in 2005 and I was training to fight in the Pride Middleweight Grand Prix. It was funny because he came from his city and came to join my team and he was waiting one week to talk to me on the bench. I was training, I didn't know who he was and he didn't talk to me because he was too shy, and I didn't give attention to anyone because I was so focused on my

preparation. I hurt myself one day and the next day I didn't train, and when I arrived at the academy this guy, who was there every day watching our training, looked at me like a hungry dog. I asked him "Can I help you?" and he said "Yes please, sir, I came from my city..." and I could see he was a simple and humble farm guy... "I have a dream to become a fighter, I want to become part of your team."

What I used to do was send people to the BJJ classes and then if they had skills, I would put them in to train with the professionals. I don't accept people to train straight with the professionals. I could see that the guy was so sad, so disappointed. I didn't know he was sleeping on the street because he didn't have money to return home. He was staying in Rio, he could choose to pay for his bus ticket, or eat. He chose to eat and be around the academy, so the whole week he was sleeping on the street waiting for the opportunity to talk to me, and I didn't know because the guy didn't talk. The day that I hurt myself, he had prayed that if he couldn't talk to me the next day, or if he couldn't join the team he would return home and forget about Mixed Martial Arts. If it was an accident or destiny I don't know, but I talked to him the next day. When I could see he was so disappointed, I asked him did he have his shorts, and he did and he went and got changed so fast. I tested him and could see that he had good skills already. He was a strong boy, but didn't have a lot of stamina, but a lot of skills. I accepted him to train straight with the professionals and he was so happy. We started to sponsor him, pay for his food and house and help him. Now the guy has good leg-lock skills and is my best student already. One day he will be world champion. I don't know how long it will take — he's already giving guys a hard time

Defending against Nakamura



but he's going to give more of a hard time in the future because he's getting better and better. He has a lot of things to develop, but he's a worker and has a brilliant future ahead.

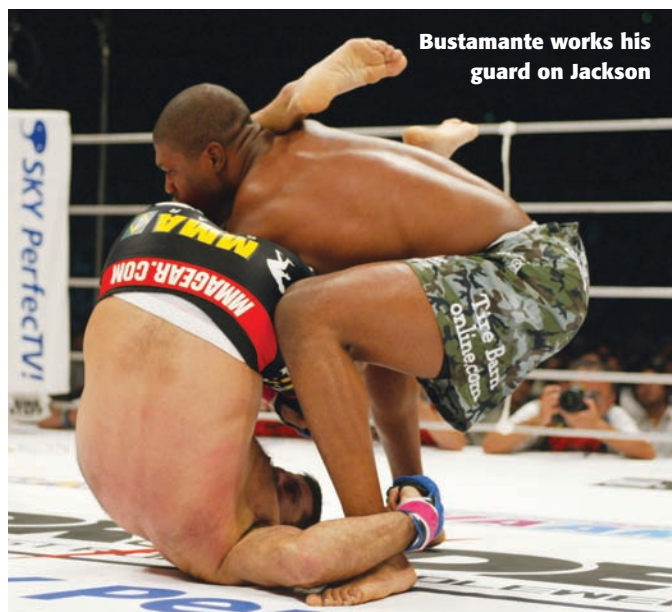
What are your own plans for the future?

Return to my country and take care of the labyrinthitis that affected me in my last fight [at Impact FC], which made me quit the fight. I still have some dizziness when I lay or stand up and I have to take care of that. After that I will look to step into the ring again. Before that I have to train Rusimar to fight Nate Marquardt [the fight took place at UFC Fight Night 22 on 15 September — Ed].

Do you have any message for your Aussie fans?

I just want to say thanks for the support. I'm disappointed I couldn't finish the fight in Impact FC; the labyrinthitis made me too dizzy then I couldn't keep my balance when Big John put us back on our feet. It seemed [like] I was badly drunk and in this situation I couldn't keep fighting. Nothing to do, just recover and train hard for the next one.

For me it doesn't matter if I win or lose, I always do my best to make the best show for the fans. I'm gonna return to the ring and do my thing again. I didn't fight for the last two-and-a-half years and I was curious about how I would perform. I saw that I had a good performance in the first round, I was winning the fight, and I think I still have skills to show, so I'm gonna keep fighting for a little while. **BLITZ**



Bustamante works his guard on Jackson



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TOM LEVAR

Sensei Tom Levar started training in Kyokushin karate as an 11-year-old under Shihan Nic Cujic in 1978, when his father saw him being picked on outside school.

"We went to the local YMCA looking for boxing, but they only had karate. Dad signed me up on the spot and I haven't looked back since," says Sensei Levar, who is now 4th Dan and runs his own dojo on Sydney's Northern Beaches at Manly.

A veteran of over 40 full-contact tournaments and 100 fights, Levar counts among his achievements two world tournaments and 10 years as the Kyokushin national coach. Now representing Australian students as a Branch Chief, Levar is also on the board of the WKO International Referee's Committee.

Levar has also fought in kickboxing and MMA. "It's never good enough to stay in your comfort zone with anything, let alone your martial art," he says. "Train yourself, then test yourself. This process can be followed by every student every day."

Since 1987, Sensei Levar has travelled to Japan frequently for training and recommends that every martial arts enthusiast attend a Kyokushin World Tournament. "The spectacle of a packed arena and two days of bare-knuckle, knockdown karate is the experience of a lifetime," he says. "To have fought in such an event is an honour that is difficult to top."

DEFENCE AGAINST A LOW ROUND-KICK & STRAIGHT PUNCH: KYOKUSHIN KARATE



1
The attacker (R) moves into range to kick at Levar's front knee using his front foot.



2
As the kick comes, Levar raises his leg, removing the target, and counters with a push-kick...



3
...then deflects the follow-up right-cross with his left hand as he pushes forward with a punch.



4
(Close-up, from the opposite side: Note, there's no draw-back of Levar's blocking or striking hand. Both are working at the same time.)



5
(This angle shows that it's the attacker's own momentum that makes Levar's deflection effective.)



6
Now that Sensei Levar has the outside position on his opponent, opportunities open up for attacks...



7
...such as a driving knee-strike to the opponent's face.



8
After his opponent has been dropped, Levar keeps his focus on the enemy until he's sure it is safe.



GARY SIMMONS

Gary Simmons is a 5th Degree Master Instructor with the World Taekwondo Federation (WTF) and founder of Shire Martial Arts, which he describes as "a progressive and traditional martial arts school", in Sydney's south.

For many years Master Simmons has also been contributing instructional and feature articles for Blitz Publications.

The self-defence technique sequence shown here is part of the general syllabus at Shire Martial Arts. "One of the aims of this defensive combination is to utilise very simple or basic techniques, which intermediate students can readily use to defend against a bigger and heavier assailant," says Simmons. He believes that Muay Thai-style leg-checks are a simple and effective way to nullify low kicks and are useful for any striking art such as taekwondo.

"Our students from Blue-belt onwards practise this combination. I designed it to help develop correct distance or relative positioning in relation to an assailant, because it incorporates a knee-strike, a punch and a kick, each of which require different distances to be used effectively. This combination helps students to become aware of and to use the three combative zones: close-quarters, the hand zone and the kicking zone."

DEFENCE AGAINST A LOW ROUND-KICK & STRAIGHT PUNCH: WTF TAEKWONDO



1
As the attacker throws a low kick with his front leg, Master Simmons lifts his front leg to check it with his upper shin...



2
...then checks the assailant's follow-up punch with an elbow-block...



3
...and almost simultaneously counter-attacks with a right-cross to the attacker's jaw.



4
This creates an opening for Simmons to grab the attacker's head...



5
...and deliver a rear-leg knee to the attacker's face.



6
Simmons then steps his right foot back to create more space...



7
...to finish off with a powerful front snap-kick to the attacker's face.



8
Master Simmons immediately brings his kicking leg back and slides back in guarding stance to assess his options



KERRIE MEE

Shihan Kerrie Mee, 6th Dan in Kenkokan karate-do, began training in taekwondo in 1987. In 1992 she commenced training in Kenkokan with Hanshi Pat McKean (now 10th Dan). She received her 1st Dan Black-belt in 1997 and began teaching part-time at the hombu dojo in Gold Coast, Queensland, that same year.

Shihan Mee is now the chief instructor of Kenkokan Karate-do on the Gold Coast and has been teaching full-time since 2001. In 2009, she was graded to 6th Degree Black-belt by Soke Terunari Shiokawa, 10th Dan, in Japan.

Since 1992, Mee has competed in numerous tournaments, both *koshiki* (contact with safety gear) and non-contact. She has won five national titles in *koshiki kumite* and one in *kata*, and remains unbeaten in *koshiki kumite* at club, interclub, state and national levels. Since retiring from competition in 2002, Mee has been in refereeing and officiating tournaments, and coaching the students.

In 2006 she was awarded Most Outstanding Martial Artist by Shihan Gary Alexander, 10th Dan, of Combat Isshinryu, USA, and in 2008 she was inducted into the Australasian Martial Arts Hall of Fame and the World Karate Union Hall of Fame for her contributions to the martial arts.

Shihan Mee is also ranked 1st Dan in *Seishinkan iaido* and 1st Dan in *tanjo* under Soke Shiokawa and is proficient with the weapons of *arnis*, *tanjo*, *bo* (her weapon of choice), *boken* and others.

DEFENCE AGAINST A LOW ROUND-KICK & STRAIGHT PUNCH: KENKOKAN KARATE-DO



Shihan Kerrie Mee is confronted by an attacker (Shihan Paul Dodorico).



As the attacker steps in to deliver a left low roundhouse-kick, Shihan Mee steps back...



...and checks the attacker's kick with her right leg.



The attacker follows with a straight punch, which Mee slips to the left, trapping the arm in her guard...



...and grabbing her adversary's wrist while applying downward pressure above his elbow (a reverse downward arm-bar).



Shihan Mee maintains the arm-bar while dropping her weight and taking her attacker to the ground...



...then uses her knee to restrain the attacker and executes a downward elbow to his upper vertebrae...



...before moving away from him in a fighting guard, ready to deliver a downward heel-kick if necessary.



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Lift, Slam, Strike

Any martial artist can use this drill to develop functional fitness and ground-fighting skills.

THE EXPERT

Ed Bavelock runs the MMA program and fight team at Kimekai Karate in Melbourne's bayside suburbs, and has produced a Victorian MMA Champion from his ranks. A former US kickboxing champion trained by Dave Hedgcock, Bavelock is also ranked 3rd Dan in Kimekai karate, 2nd Dan in Goju-ryu, and is an accredited

coach with Wrestling USA. In recent years he has made several trips to his homeland to train with some of the top coaches in MMA, including Muay Thai specialist Mark DeLagrotte and former WEC champion Miguel Torres.

THE DRILL

This drill will develop functional fitness for any kind of fighting — all you need is a heavy bag

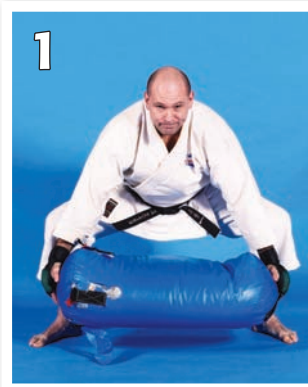
of appropriate weight and an electronic timer to time your rounds. The drill combines traditional martial arts striking techniques with some modern MMA ground-fighting methods, in an old-school strength and conditioning workout.

To begin, lay your heavy bag in front of you, in line with your body. From a wide horse-stance or sumo-squat stance (to reduce

stress on the knee joints), use a simple clean lift to get the bag to your chest, using your leg muscles, not your back (which should remain straight).

Next, jerk/press the bag overhead, then slam it back down to land perpendicular to your body. Sumo-squat down to grab the bag again, pointing your feet out at 45-degree angles to access the inner quads that support

THE DRILL: LIFT, SLAM, STRIKE



Clean the bag to your chest, lifting with leg power...



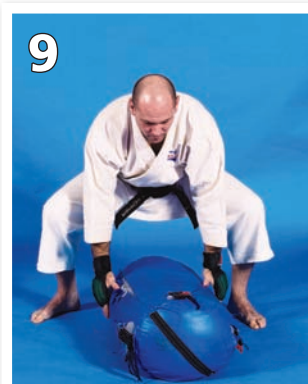
...careful to use correct form and posture in horse-stance.



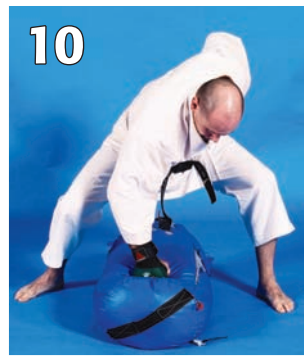
Press the bag up in stance with shoulder extension...



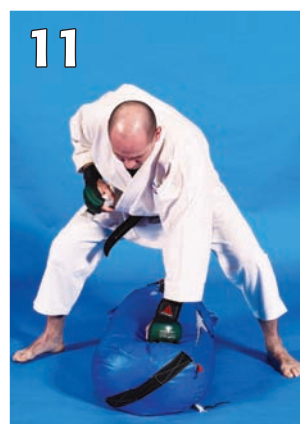
...then slam it down perpendicular to your body position.



Drop the bag again and squat into striking position...



...and punch with your strongest side, dropping your bodyweight into it...



...then repeat the strike with your other hand.



Post with your other hand on the bag and take knee-ride position to strike again (from the side of the leg not kneeling)...

the knee in movement, then lift the bag to your left or right shoulder in one motion. Ensure your posture remains strong and lift with your legs. Drop the bag and repeat the lift to the other shoulder, then drop it again and immediately squat into a striking position over the bag for some 'ground-and-pound'.

Begin striking with your strongest hand, dropping your bodyweight into it for full penetrating power. Repeat with your other hand then post (prop or support your weight) on the bag to take a knee-on-belly position (also known as a knee-ride) and strike from the side opposite your kneeling leg.

Mix up your strikes in a combination suited to your style of martial arts and your aim (e.g.

for MMA it would be punches only, but for street defence you may include palm-strikes, etc.) In the photo here (13) I'm using a hammer-fist aimed at the ears.

Your focus should be on transitioning from one strike to another seamlessly, then to another position as you post on the bag with your fist to take the majority of your weight, then jump quickly to the other side of the bag with both feet. Take knee-ride position again and execute more strike combinations, then stand and repeat the drill from the first lift.

Do the drill for two or three minutes with a one-minute break in between. It can also be used as part of a circuit, interspersed with other drills. It's up to you if you wear bag gloves, MMA gloves

or have bare fists — application is the key to training outcomes.

THE RESULT

Done with intensity in timed rounds as prescribed, this drill will seriously tax your lung capacity and anaerobic system, giving you the fitness required for combat, whether that be rounds of competition or defending oneself on the street. It does so using movements and martial arts techniques that are directly applicable to a fight, meaning it has great functional 'crossover' in developing fighting skills and fitness simultaneously.

As mentioned, the skills and attributes this drill develops are applicable in a wide range of contexts, from cage to street. The standing ground-and-pound

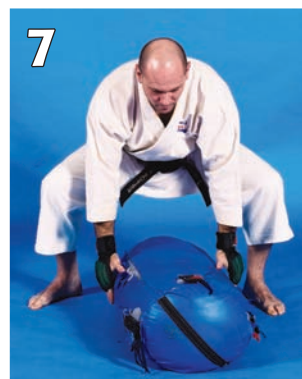
striking aspect of the sequence offers a great opportunity for traditional martial artists to practise their strikes in a different but realistic position and context. This drill is fun in that it allows for creativity in combinations: you can use punches with different fist positions (i.e. straight and circular hits), hammer-fists, open-hand strikes and elbows. It also focuses on lifting (directly applicable for throws and takedowns), which when done properly will strengthen the structurally integral group of muscles that connect the skeleton down the back of the body, known as the 'posterior chain'. The lifts, dumps and position changes will also develop your overall explosiveness. **BLITZ**



5
Squat and grab the bag again, with feet at a 45-degree angle...



6
...and in one motion lift the bag with leg power to your left or right shoulder.



7
Squat down in stance as you dump the bag...



8
...then lift it again in one motion to the other shoulder.



13
...mixing up your strikes in a combination suited to your style of martial arts.



14
After a combination of hand strikes...



15
Post on the bag with a fist and jump quickly to the other side of the bag to take knee-ride position...



16
...and repeat strikes from the other side of bag, then stand and repeat from the first lift.



Grappling with Injury

Strength and conditioning coach Andrew Read discusses his work with BJJ champion Robert Drysdale to help him fix an injury common to BJJ exponents.

Earlier this year I had the good fortune to be asked to work with Robert Drysdale — six-time world champion, 2007 Absolute division winner at the Abu Dhabi Submission Wrestling titles, and winner of more than 90 BJJ titles.

Training is not particularly complicated; smart training is a matter of finding your weakest link and making it stronger. That way, when you get to competition, your weakness is no longer such a liability and you can allow your strengths to shine. As the saying goes, 'Train your weakness, compete with your strength'.

However, usually what happens is that an athlete rises through the ranks, shows some promise and at some point winds up with a training program that looks like it was designed for a professional strength athlete. The only

problem is that, in Robert's case, he's not a strength athlete, he's a Jiu-Jitsu athlete.

There is also this to consider: his training has obviously been very successful, as he's had enormous success in the grappling world, so it would be foolish of me to mess with that. However, like most combat athletes, at 28 years of age his body is already starting to show signs of wear and tear.

The first step in determining which program an athlete like Robert needs is to perform a Functional Movement Screen (FMS). The FMS was designed by world-renowned sports therapist Gray Cook and is now being used by military, NFL teams etc. In Australia, the only FMS practitioners are Russian Kettlebell Certified (RKC) instructors under Pavel Tsatsouline's famous system. The integration of kettlebells into

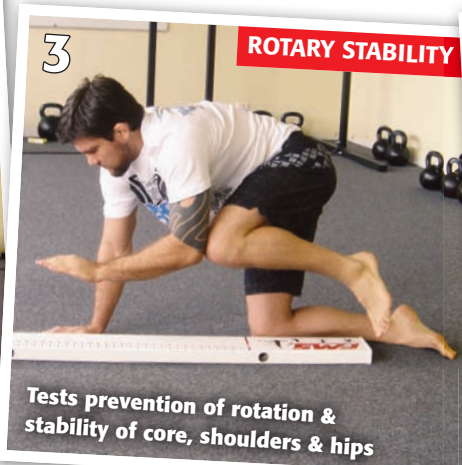
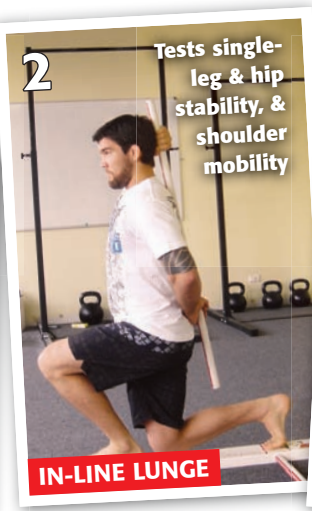
FMS works very well for combat athletes, combining strength, conditioning and remedial drills into single sessions.

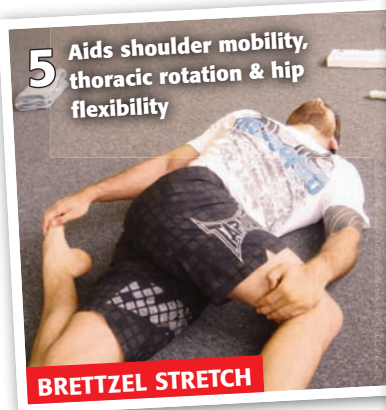
The FMS consists of seven exercises, each part of a gross athletic movement, such as squatting, or component parts of movement, such as straight-line core stability. The problem with most 'workout programs' is that they don't take into account an individual's movement ability, they just seek to get you sweaty. You can be strong, but not very mobile. Or you could be very flexible, but weak as a kitten. The FMS will pinpoint your biggest weaknesses and allow them to be trained out. However, one of the benefits is that it tests both left and right sides for strength and mobility symmetry.

Why is that so important? Imagine the body as a series of rubber bands knotted together. Now imagine that the left side of your body consists of skinny

little rubber bands, the right side of thick, dense bands. When you pull on both ends of the bands, the linked unit won't stretch uniformly. Instead, the skinny little bands will stretch dramatically, possibly overly, and the result will probably be a broken band. In the context of the body, this means a torn muscle or joint injury.

While flexibility and mobility are essential attributes to have, it's just important to have matching strength on left and right sides. For example, just because someone performs a lot of throws to one side doesn't mean that their strength should be markedly different from left to right. While there will always be a discrepancy in sporting skill between dominant and non-dominant sides, your strength and mobility should be roughly the same on each side. With the FMS scoring left and right sides independently, it becomes quite easy to distinguish





5 Aids shoulder mobility, thoracic rotation & hip flexibility

BRETTZEL STRETCH



6

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7

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Helps with shoulder stability, lat activation, anti-rotation, hip stability & mobility

large differences and treat them accordingly.

I've worked with several very talented BJJ practitioners with multiple Black-belts, as well as two world champions, and I've started to observe many common problems. One of the most common is tightness of the hip flexors. Given how much time we spend seated, it's no surprise that most people suffer from tight hip flexors and correspondingly inactive glutes. In BJJ it's common to draw people in towards you, using your feet to hook behind their legs or arms. This almost acts like a super-charged version of sitting and makes the hips even tighter than in most people. In fact, Robert told me he often suffered from hip pain, to the point where he couldn't even walk around for more than a couple of hours at a time without it affecting him.

With Robert's strength and conditioning program so obviously effective, we set out to alleviate some of the hip problems he had developed over the years. Regaining function in the hips is vital. Without strong and mobile hips, the rest of the body falters. The hips are our centre of gravity, and the end link in the transfer of power

from the ground to the upper limbs. If they don't function properly then it has a flow-on effect in the rest of the body: the upper back won't work properly, the shoulders and neck will suffer, and at some point there will be lower back pain as the lumbar region tries to create extra movement to make up for the lack of function at the hip. Robert actually had left shoulder pain that corresponded with his right hip pain.

So, the first corrective exercise undertaken was to use a stretch used in the RKC system to 'pry' the hips open and encourage thoracic rotation, to redevelop proper upper-back function for healthy shoulders. With Robert spending so much time not only in a seated position but in a seated position actively pulling with his hip flexors, he was very tight and needed to regain as much range as possible.

In addition, this overuse of the hip flexors often causes the body to stop using the abdominals properly to stabilise the spine. Because static stretching also deactivates muscles somewhat, once we had opened up Robert's hips it was time to teach his abdominals to do their job properly again. This was

accomplished with a series of lightly loaded leg-raises using a band fixed behind him. The action of pulling slightly towards the feet activates the abdominals just enough, so that while the trunk and hip angle is changing, the abdominals are working properly.

Once we had drilled these corrective exercises, it was time to put it all into practice with Robert performing a 'get-up'. I use this exercise extensively with grapplers because it contains movements related to many elements of their sport: from sweeps to Kimuras, to sit-outs and reversals, to single-leg takedowns. It can also be used for strength training, mobility, assessment and even therapy.

We then moved on to some other drills to train correct hip firing, using exercises such as single-leg deadlifts. These exercises were performed with a stick to correct form, or loaded with a kettlebell. A kettlebell is taller than a dumbbell, so it can be used more easily for this exercise, allowing form to stay perfect throughout, without the rounding of the back that is common when lifting a dumbbell off the floor. The single-leg deadlift teaches the body to hinge properly through the hips, to activate the

abdominals, to flex the trunk and to maintain posture at various trunk angles. As well as the core strength benefits that come from single-leg work, such as prevention of rotation, it also develops cross-body stabilisation, ankle stability and the ability to 'pack' the shoulders.

After each movement exercise we returned to the get-up. Using it in this way, I was able to check Robert's movement on each side independently, like during the screen, and monitor his improvement. The use of all these drills proved that we were heading in the right direction and as his movement improved, so too did his hip pain.

The result? Over the sessions we had, his pain decreased, his movement skill increased and we were able to use less corrective drills daily and focus more on core strength.

Andrew Read is the head of Dragon Door Australia and is certified by Pavel Tsatsouline in his kettlebell system and CK FMS. As a strength and conditioning coach, Read has worked with champion BJJ players, Olympic judoka and stand-up fighters. He can be contacted at andrewread@dragondooraustralia.com **BLITZ**

man on a mission

As a young karateka back in 1992, Derek English had a lot on his mind. Due to his instructor's emphasis on fighting, the New Zealand native began to question some of the techniques, power generation and mechanics of the karate he was learning. In particular, he saw what he believed to be many ineffective combat applications (*bunkai*) of kata technique. These questions led him to seek answers on the island of karate's birth, Okinawa, and he ended up staying for 12 years. Mike Clarke recently caught up with English to discuss his quest and discover what he learned about karate and kobudo — the art of wielding ancient Okinawan weaponry like the *sai*, *bo* and *tonfa*.

STORY BY MIKE CLARKE

Born in Palmerston North, New Zealand, 42-year-old Derek English grew up in Hamilton in the Central North Island. His life in martial arts began in 1985 at the University of Waikato Karate Club in his home town, where his instructor, Terry Hill, taught Goju-ryu karate, then under the auspices of the IOGKF.

It was after he attained the rank of 2nd Dan Black-belt in 1992 that English followed his instructor's advice and left the Land of the Long White Cloud, setting out to seek the answers to his karate conundrums in Okinawa. No-one, not even he, imagined he'd be gone for 12 years.

Along the way, the Kiwi karate man met and trained with Okinawan masters Uehara and Miyahira Senseis, and in doing so discovered that he'd actually been on the right path with his conceptualisation of kata and its combative principles. He also became deeply involved in learning kobudo.

Since returning home to New Zealand from Okinawa in 2004, and as the highest ranked representative of the Ryukyu Kobudo Hozon Shinkokai in the Australasian region,

English Sensei has been busy establishing traditional kobudo throughout his homeland. He's also busy setting the foundations for his own dojo, where he plans to pass on not only kobudo but also the karate of his teacher and mentor, Ko Uehara Sensei. For now, in addition to his teaching responsibilities at the SanBuKai dojo, he spends a lot of time travelling to other dojos throughout New Zealand to teach either, or both, karate and kobudo. The introduction of kobudo in particular has allowed him to move between academies and associations as an independent 'non-karate' figure, and bypass the isolationist politics that many karate schools employ.

But neither karate nor kobudo provide English with a living — for that, he follows the Okinawan way of providing for himself independently of his students. These days he installs air conditioning and heating systems, deliberately moving away from a career in teaching and into a trade to develop his strength and gain an appreciation for physical labour. Keeping his body physically active is something he believes is very important.

He also believes it's important not to turn karate into a means of making a living, as to his way of thinking, that changes your martial art from being your passion and way of life, into being just a job like any other.

In this interview, he discusses these and other aspects of his philosophy and training...

Derek, many people dream of visiting Japan or Okinawa to train, but you went and stayed for 12 years. Was it your intention to stay for so long?

I had a lot ticking over in my mind about karate and its technique. In particular, I questioned the effectiveness of what I saw as ineffectual kata bunkai; much of which seemed just 'flash and fizzle' or simply impractical and undoable.

Ultimately, my teacher, Terry Hill, advised me to go to Okinawa to have my questions answered, as this was the birthplace of karate. So, once the opportunity to work and train in Okinawa presented itself via the Japanese English Teaching (JET) Programme in 1992, Terry arranged for a letter of introduction and off I went.

The teaching position was for three years, but I took

m

Derek English: Tracking down kata's truth in Okinawa

readily to the people and the culture; particularly with regards to karate and the *sanshin*, a local three-stringed, banjo-like instrument. This endeared me to Education Office officials, who then asked me to stay on past my three-year term on a private contract.

While it was not my intention to stay so long in Okinawa, there was always more to learn, and every year as I delved deeper and deeper into the concepts and principles of martial arts, my understanding and enjoyment of it increased. My martial arts journey, which also included Matsubayashi and Matsumoto Shorin-ryu, Uechi-ryu, Yamani-ryu, *naginata* [halberd], tai chi, and Chinese wushu, was so extraordinarily spectacular that I simply lost track of time.

Can you talk us through your early days in Okinawa — how you lived and trained, and how you coped with adjusting to a foreign culture?

I spent my days teaching English and learning about the people and their culture. I learnt my Japanese at the country schools at which I taught, where the people were very friendly and helped me adapt to my new way of life comfortably. I was too

busy living the dream to think about how to cope; there was always so much going on.

Weekdays after school I would take the 30-to-40-minute bus ride into Naha (the Okinawan capital)

to train at the Uehara karate dojo, staying there until it was time to return to the town of Kochinda on the last bus of the evening. On Saturday mornings, I would learn the *sanshin*, the 'sound of Okinawa', at a nearby *sanshin*-maker's shop, and then travel to Uehara Sensei's dojo in the evening to train before the late-night training session with Miyahira Tamotsu Sensei and his Chinese wushu students. All up, I guess I trained about four hours a day, six days a week, for my first three years there.

Eventually I moved to Naha to be closer to the Uehara dojo so I could maintain my training schedule, which lessened slightly once I married and then again upon the birth of my daughter. Later, I moved across the river to



Tomigusuku, but this in no way lessened my training. I immersed myself in training at the Uehara dojo so my mind and body were thoroughly occupied. It was like I'd been starved for so long, or perhaps having eaten such bland fare for so long, that I ravenously devoured the teachings of Uehara Sensei, ultimately becoming his *deshi* [student/disciple] and accepting him as my mentor. It wasn't always easy though, as we didn't always see eye-to-eye. But like the prodigal son, I always returned to the dojo a few days later, realising that he was right and that I still had a long way to go.

What was the training like?

Fortunately I encountered Uehara Sensei at a time when he was re-evaluating his karate, and to a lesser extent his kobudo, so he was very open to questions and critique, which usually would not be the norm in an Okinawan or Japanese dojo environment. This worked for me as I thrived on the analysis, critique and the pooling of knowledge and ideas. The primary influences on my karate and kobudo were Uehara Ko Kancho, his second, Gushiken Denmei Shihan, and Tamotsu Miyahira Sensei of the Tian Xing Jian Chinese Wushu Association.

As I progressed with my training, I was eventually given the responsibility of liaison for visiting foreign karateka and assisting Uehara Sensei with their training. I also demonstrated karate and kobudo for visiting Okinawan Instructors — Miyagi Anichi, for example — and other close friends of Uehara Sensei.

In my time in Okinawa I met and trained with other martial artists who shared their techniques and ideas with me. I experienced the strength of Matsubayashi Shorin-Ryu's *Naihanchin* kata and bunkai, the speed and dynamic techniques



At Naha's Matsuri Street Festival, 1994

of Matsumoto Shorin-ryu and Yamani-ryu, and the raw, unabashed power of Uechi-ryu. Often I would also be the sober driver for senior karateka and their friends from other styles (often the heads of them), who would talk then demonstrate karate technique on each other. I just kept quiet and took it all in.

I spent a year taking part in the public tai chi practice at Yogi Park in Naha to gain an appreciation of their internal techniques, balance, and breathing. I also began naginata with my Yamani-ryu friend Martin Nobida because we wanted to do kumite with weapons and what we were doing just by ourselves was dangerous and caused us a lot of injury. Miyagi Takako Sensei was our instructor and I stayed with naginata through to *Shodan* [1st Dan Black-belt] level. All this extra training was usually on weekends, although training wushu with Miyahira Tamotsu Sensei at his dojo was at the cost of a normal training

"I questioned the effectiveness of kata bunkai; much of which seemed just 'flash and fizz' or simply impractical and undoable." – Sensei English

night at Uehara's dojo. Eventually, however, my journey into the mechanics and technique of martial arts, and in particular power generation, brought me back to Uehara dojo, and I immersed myself back into unravelling the mysteries of Goju-ryu. I supplemented this by continuing my Chinese wushu practice via the weekly Uehara dojo Kenkyu Kai (Research Group) sessions held late on Saturday nights.

How did you become a student of Uehara Ko Sensei?

Arriving at the IOGKF *honbu* [headquarters] dojo in Makishi, Naha, Aragaki Shuichi Sensei informed me that Higaonna Morio Sensei was not in Okinawa

and would not be for some time. I noted at the time that Aragaki Sensei performed *Saifa* kata not with a left reverse-punch towards the end of the kata, but with a *shotei-uchi* [palm-heel strike]. It was my first insight into the fact that not all Goju-ryu was practised the same and that not all Goju-ryu was IOGKF.

It was later that day, when visiting my instructor Terry Hill's Chinese wushu friends Miyahira Tamotsu Sensei and Song Li Sensei, that I explained my predicament. They offered to help and called Uehara Sensei seeking his advice. He arranged for me to come to his dojo and meet with Higaonna Sensei's long-time friend and colleague, Kamimura

Takeshi Shihan, who was acting as liaison for Higaonna Sensei while he was in the US. I met with Kamimura Sensei at the Uehara dojo, which was where he himself trained, and my training session with him left me hobbling around after several performances of *jo-chu-ge* [high-middle-low attack] and *Seiyunchin* kata. His power also frightened me. The next time I met with him at the Uehara dojo, he introduced to me Uehara Ko Sensei, who I later found out lived in the apartment below the dojo itself.

I was a NZ champion, I was also a Nidan, and I had an ego to match. After soundly defeating two of his students in some dojo sparring, Uehara Sensei then demonstrated the various karate training tools for me; *makiwara* [striking board], *chiishi* [stone weights], *nigiri-gami* [gripping jars], *tan* [barbell], *ishi-sashi* [stone locks], *kongoken* [large iron ring], as well as many he had developed himself specifically for strengthening karate technique. To my shock and embarrassment, I could not replicate anything he did with the equipment. I dropped almost everything and bled all over his *makiwara*, having failed to move it even an inch, where he had moved it three inches easily. This 70-year-old man, who could tell who was in the dojo simply by listening to the way they climbed the stairs to the dojo above, had delivered a huge blow to my ego, and I reeled in the 'how' and 'why' of it all. He simply smiled and nodded at each of my attempts before sitting down at the side of the dojo to observe me while I continued my session with Kamimura Shihan. Later, Uehara Sensei told me that as there was no one to train me at the Higaonna dojo at present, I was welcome to train at his dojo in the meantime.

How did your early training with Uehara go?

I returned the next day with a white belt and began a month's worth of *junbi-undo* (preparation exercises) and *kihon* (basics). I trained with Kamimura Shihan when he was available and by myself when he was not, observing and mimicking the senior students when they trained. Everyone trained at odd hours because of their work schedules and so often I was the only one at the dojo. Fortunately, Uehara Sensei couldn't help himself and my appalling technique eventually forced him to take action to correct it, and thus began my instruction. I guess it offended him to watch such a poor display of karate, but I was determined to get better! As I watched, practised and absorbed, Uehara Sensei would move on to each of the pieces of *kigu tanren* training equipment (*hojo-undo* tools). Each had different levels of technique to be understood and mastered, before being interlinked via *Sanchin* kata.

For example, *nigiri-game* initially emphasised the *tanden* (the body's core), the lower body, footwork, breathing, then later arm work, while *chiishi* initially worked to strengthen the bones, muscles and sinew of the arms and back, breathing, the *tanden*, and a low base and centre of gravity. *Sanchin* would coordinate the power generation and mechanics that both pieces of training equipment developed. Later, *nigiri-game* would develop *muchiimi* (sticking hand), while *chiishi* developed blocking and movement, then later, *kanstesu-waza* (locking and controlling techniques).

Weights would get progressively lighter. Uehara Sensei taught that heavy weights were for beginning karateka so as to forge a powerful frame and base for techniques — *go*. Later, techniques needed to be polished and made to be

EKU BUNKAI

1



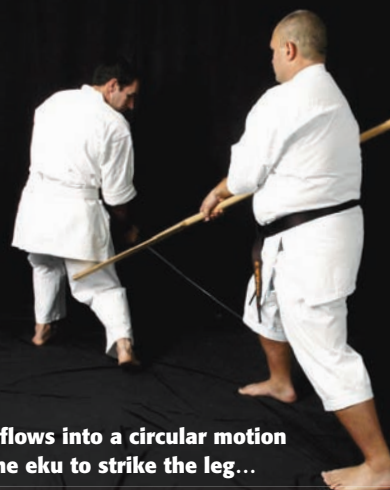
English raises his *eku* (oar), ready.

2



He angles off, deflecting the katana...

3



...and flows into a circular motion with the *eku* to strike the leg...

4



...then strikes down onto the swordsman's head.

fluid (*ju*) and thus the use of lighter weights was necessary for correct execution. Later still, once attaining *Yudansha* level (Black-belt), the weights would be put aside as one would then constantly work the techniques in context with a training partner. I spent a great deal of time working solely with *kigu tanren* (tools), *tonfa* [baton] and *bo* [staff] kata as the foundation for later instruction in the Goju-ryu of the Uehara karate dojo.

At that time, Uehara Sensei was the founder and chairman of the Okinawa Goju-Ryu Hozon Kai (preservation society) as well as a director for the Ryukyu Kobudo Hozon Shinko Kai (preservation/promotion society). Later, through his research into Goju-ryu and its

Chinese connection via Miyahira Tamotsu Sensei and the Uehara dojo research group, Uehara Sensei would establish the Okinawa Shorei Bujutsu Kyokai (Okinawan Chinese Martial Arts Association), encompassing the Goju-ryu Jikishinkan, which represented a fundamentally clear and purposeful approach to the practice of Goju-ryu karate.

I understand Uehara Sensei only taught you kobudo at first in order to prepare you for karate, and to rid you of the bad habits, as he saw them, in the karate you had already learnt. Can you explain a little more about this?

My karate was very stiff, tense, static and 'hard', as I believe most mainstream Goju-ryu continues to be. My strength

needed not to be locked in my shoulders and chest, but to come up through my feet and legs and into the trunk of my waist. I needed to develop a more fluid and flowing power base, akin to the ebb and flow of the tide. Alongside strengthening my body and technique with the various *kigu tanren*, I was taught *tonfa* kata, and later *bo* kata, so as to become softer and more flexible through my waist and legs. At first, I was to make all my movements large and expansive, and gradually make them smaller over time.

Impact drills were emphasised so as to understand the relationship between distance and balance, and to understand where the power originated from. Kata was to be done slow so as to realise where the movements originated from and how they flowed on from each other. With *bo*, I was given only a metal bar to use. It quickly became heavy, so I would need to use my body and its natural momentum to move it through each of its techniques, as opposed to just using my arms and chest – much like how a farmer is able to till the earth all day by efficiently generating power and movement through the use of his entire body, and feeling how force and energy ebbs and flows through the tool.

Because of the initial language barrier, a lot of my early training was observing how Uehara Sensei's muscles moved and by having him demonstrate the technique on me until I understood how and why it worked. I usually went home very sore. I drew lots of pictures and took copious notes, writing all over my copy of Higaonna Morio Sensei's *Goju-Ryu Karate-Do Vol 1* book – the pictures were useful but I drew all over them as well, as the process helped reinforce what I was seeing and doing. From Uehara Sensei

I learnt to analyse technique, where its power came from and the purpose for which it was intended to be used. This led on to decoding kata bunkai [combat applications] and a more complete understanding of the mechanics behind karate technique.

Where did Uehara Sensei learn his karate and kobudo?

Uehara Sensei began Kobayashi Shorin-ryu in 1952. Being dissatisfied, he turned to Goju-ryu in 1954 and trained at Miyagi Chojun Sensei's Garden dojo. In 1956 he began training at the Jundokan under the eye of Miyazato Eiichi and would ultimately go on to become a senior instructor there. Uehara Sensei eventually left the Jundokan to establish his own organisation, the Okinawa Goju-Ryu Hozon Kai (Preservation Society) and the Uehara Karate dojo. Later, following his collaboration within the Uehara dojo research group with Chinese wushu instructors Miyahira Tamotsu Sensei and Song Li Sensei, he would establish the Okinawa Shorei Bujutsu Kyokai – Goju-Ryu Jikishinkan.

Uehara Sensei was briefly taught kobudo by Taira Shinken Sensei after World War II during the occupation of Okinawa by America following the Japanese surrender. In 1977, he formerly began Ryukyu kobudo under the instruction of Akamine Eisuke Sensei, second president of the Ryukyu Kobudo Hozon Shinko Kai, ultimately receiving his teaching licence prior to Akamine Sensei's death. In 1979 he was granted permission to operate a branch dojo for the Ryukyu Kobudo Hozon Shinko Kai. Uehara Sensei currently teaches kobujutsu concurrently with Goju-ryu karate; it's not at all unusual within Okinawan martial arts organisations to teach both karate and kobudo. **BLITZ**



English with his sensei, Ko Uehara



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USE YOUR HEAD!

**MENTAL SELF-
DEFENCE TO
PROTECT MIND
AND BODY**

STORY BY RICHARD DIMITRI | IMAGES BY CLIVE GIRDHAM



Senshido founder Richard Dimitri has long been travelling across his home country of Canada and the greater globe teaching his much-renowned method of reality-based self-defence. In his travels, Dimitri has learned that when it comes to protecting your mind and body, it's not all about fending off offenders or developing a hair-trigger radar for reprobates and troublemakers. Here, he reveals the dangers of adrenaline when danger is nowhere to be found.

After being involved in the martial arts and self-defence industry for over 20 years, I've come across all kinds of practitioners, students and teachers the world over. I've met some incredible people through this industry and am blessed in many ways with the friends I've made. But in teaching the theories and skills of personal protection that make up the Senshido syllabus, I've found it fascinating to witness the influence of culture, beliefs, careers and environment on people's approach to self-protection and the degree to which they do or don't train.

Personal beliefs in regards to self-protection and its necessity or otherwise have always struck me as the most fascinating. People vary between mindsets of extreme paranoia and complete apathy and denial, and everything in between as a reason for training in or studying self-defence, or not.

I make a distinction between training and studying because although many do both, I've found that there are equally as many who only do the research or studying without putting in any physical training, or vice-versa, and in doing so may be actually achieving very little in terms of assuring their personal safety. All theory and no action, or the other way around, leaves too much room for error and leaves you open to the 'deer-in-headlights' syndrome — not what you would want to be in when facing a real, live threat.

Since actual factors such as environment, lifestyle and

job can vary, and the ranges of need regarding self-defence training depend on circumstances predicated by such factors, let's focus on the two extreme ends of the belief spectrum here — apathy and paranoia — neither of which is healthy. There are beliefs that range from always being 'prepared' or living in 'code red' (on high alert), to 'never worry, be happy, violence only comes to those who attract it'.

Let's examine the first approach. What does it mean to always be prepared? For some, it means always carrying a weapon no matter where they go, keeping a weapon handy in every room of the house, always being aware of improvised weapons and watching the hands of everyone around them, training to strike preemptively at the first or any sign of aggression, etc. This is a very safe way of living, sure — but it's not a healthy one. Adopting this sort of thought process, unless your job or lifestyle dictates it by circumstance and choice, could lead to many physical and mental health problems in the long run.

The constant activation of the adrenal stress glands through the emotions of fear and stress creates a physiological imbalance in the body, disrupting nearly every system within it. It can raise blood pressure, suppress the immune system, increase the risk of heart attack and stroke, contribute to infertility and speed up the aging process through the increase of 'free radicals', which can lead to various cancers. Over the long term, stress-induced thoughts



While you should be prepared, it's unhealthy to believe there's danger around every corner

can even 'rewire' the brain, leaving you more vulnerable and susceptible to general feelings of anxiety and depression.

Regardless of what degree of stress or fear causes one to live as described above — as no one lives that way unless they really fear an assault or attack on some level — the body doesn't distinguish between physical and psychological threats. Add to that the daily stresses of a busy schedule, an argument with a spouse, a traffic jam when you're late, or a mountain of bills, and your body, on a physiological level, reacts just as strongly as if you were facing a life-or-death situation.

If you have a lot of responsibilities and worries and you add to that the daily mental chore of always being on high-alert to protect yourself from a possible assault, your emergency stress response may be on most of the time, rather than simply being triggered when the need arises. The more your body's stress system is activated, the easier it becomes to activate it and the harder it becomes to

shut it off.

Also, regularly training in a way that activates the adrenal-stress condition, causing the over-activation of the fight-or-flight branch of the nervous system can be detrimental to you if, on the flipside, you don't also spend enough time activating the calm, restful and meditative state of body and mind. While this kind of adrenal-stress training is necessary in order to inoculate against the effects of adrenaline that make people freeze with fear rather than act in a self-defence situation, it must be part of a balanced approach.

Both branches of the nervous system need equal stimulation if a healthy, strong and balanced body and mind are to be cultivated and maintained. That way, if it ever does come down to fight-or-flight, your nervous system will be able to perform at its peak, and thus your chances of survival will be the highest they can be. It's important to learn how to be aware of your own physiological responses to stressful thoughts. The most dangerous thing about stress-

induced emotions is how easily they can creep up on you. You get used to them and they begin to feel familiar, even normal. Yet, they take a heavy toll, but one that is often not recognised until it's already too late to avoid the resulting health issues.

Here are some of the most common symptoms of daily stresses that we actually add to through constant 'code red' thinking –

On a cognitive level:

- Memory problems
- Inability to concentrate
- Poor judgment

- Seeing only the darker side of life
- Anxious or racing thoughts
- Constant subconscious worrying

On an emotional level:

- Moodiness
- Irritability or short temper
- Agitation, inability to relax
- General feelings of being overwhelmed
- Sense of loneliness and isolation
- Sense of being misunderstood
- General sense of depression or unhappiness

On a behavioural level:

- Poor eating habits
- Sleeping too much and/or too little
- Isolating yourself from others
- Procrastination or neglecting responsibilities
- Regularly using alcohol, cigarettes, or drugs specifically to relax
- Nervous habits (e.g. nail biting, pacing)

On a physical level:

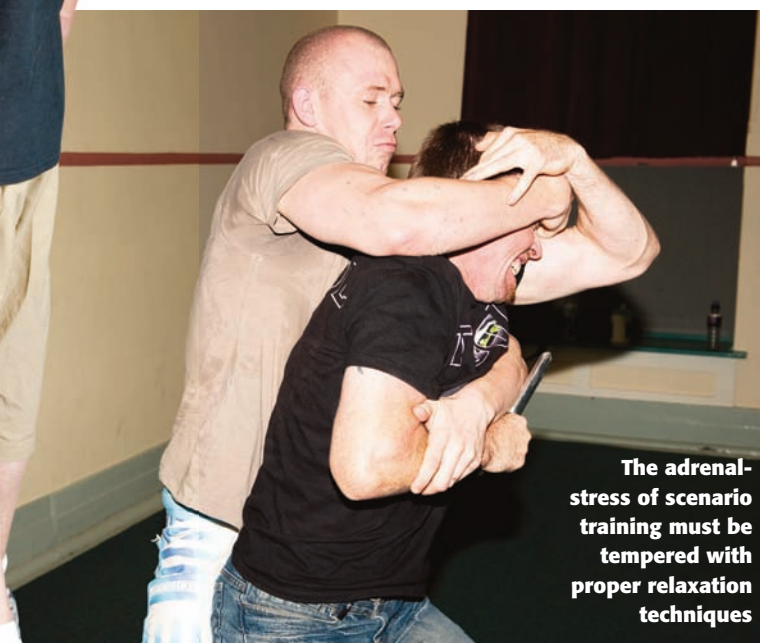
- Regular aches and pains
- Frequent diarrhoea or constipation
- Frequent nausea and/or dizziness
- Frequent chest pain, rapid heartbeat or mild loss of breath
- Loss of sex drive
- Frequent colds and illness.

Keep in mind that these symptoms can also be caused by other psychological and medical problems or can even be the side effects of various pharmaceuticals. If you're experiencing any of these warning signs of stress, it's important to see a reputed health practitioner, but it

may also be a good idea to re-evaluate your beliefs and perceptions and ensure they are suited to your daily reality. Maintaining negative thought patterns or thinking in a way that inadvertently but regularly activates the stress glands, does indeed lead to less-than-desirable results within. This is, of course, completely at odds with our very objectives when training in self-defence, which are to protect the body from serious injury or death, and steel the mind against the negative emotional effects that can result from being assaulted (known as post-traumatic stress disorder).

I can hear some other people now: 'We're not paranoid, we're prepared!' I used to say the same thing, but then, I had the right to. I lived a certain kind of lifestyle through bodyguarding, etc. that did indeed attract much violence. But for the average civilian, this sort of thinking is, at best, overkill and, at worst, detrimental to one's health.

The opposite approach isn't optimal either, of course. While it is healthier to live without fear or concern, to live in a state of complete apathy or denial,



The adrenal-stress of scenario training must be tempered with proper relaxation techniques



Fight-or-flight: where chance favours the prepared mind

believing that 'nothing will ever happen to me' will be more detrimental than living in a state of paranoia if trouble ever comes your way. Yet, even some martial artists think this way. Some never even entertain the real possibilities of violence because they 'know karate' and believe that the empowered feeling they get while punching the air up and down the dojo somehow translates to an ability to ward off thugs with a threatening stance and a loud *kiai*!

Cemeteries, sexual assault centres and hospitals the world over are filled with people who said 'that will never happen to me'. Therefore, it's necessary to take a balanced approach to self-defence, based intelligently on your individual or familial lifestyle and locale. This goes for every human being out there — as the saying goes, 'chance favours the prepared mind'.

Put it this way, the training alone will do nothing but benefit your life in every possible area — providing it includes some form of athletics and physical release, beyond beating a bunch of padded assailants

in a replication of a violent scenario. As long as you are training with a solid and reputable trainer and you balance a peaceful and restful state of mind with the added stress of adrenal-inoculation training and the accumulated daily stresses of life. A well-balanced training regimen combined with a healthy and logical state of mind and good dietary habits actually reduces the effects of daily stresses, rather than compound them, as happens if you adopt a mindset of paranoia. It's good to be prepared, but not if by doing so you are damaging your psyche and your body, the very things you set out to protect. While the James Bond approach to living will surely lower the probability of an attacker jumping you at the local movie rental shop or shopping mall, it won't matter if you're likely to suffer a heart attack and hit the pavement all on your own.

Unfortunately, most people ignore their emotional health until there is a significant problem. However, it is as critical to put the same time and energy into your emotional wellbeing as you

do your physical health or self-defence skills. The more you work at it, the stronger your mental and emotional health will be. Those who possess a balanced emotional state usually deal with adversity with greater ease and resiliency, remaining focused, flexible and positive in hard times.

Since we cannot entirely eliminate stress from our lives, we must ensure we don't unnecessarily add to it through the very belief systems and behaviours we've taken on to protect us. We can and should control how much it affects us. While this may seem odd coming from someone who has spent much of his life training people to gouge, knee, headbutt and apply all the other brutal specifics of self-protection against real violence, it's important to understand there is much more to self-defence than this.

Relaxation techniques as found in tai chi and qi gong, yoga, meditation, various forms of art, and deep-breathing exercises can activate the body's relaxation response and state of restfulness. Done regularly, these activities lead to a significant reduction in our everyday stress levels, as well as a boost in energy levels and feelings of happiness and wellbeing. They also increase our ability to stay calm and collected under pressure — an important factor in any self-defence situation, particularly the pre-fight stage, when defusing the confrontation is the aim.

I've learned the hard way that self-defence isn't just about protecting ourselves from the bad guy; more often than not, it's about protecting ourselves from ourselves. **BLITZ**



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Return of the Hulk

After an extended lay-off, Western Australia's own Soa 'The Hulk' Palelei is back in the game and looking to fight his way back to the UFC.

You recently took on Brad Morris at Impact FC in Sydney. How was that fight?

I was so excited to be getting back in the cage — it is what I love doing — but I was very sick. I woke up the morning of the fight and I couldn't breathe. I remember sitting on the edge of the bed and thinking, 'What the hell am I going to do?' I couldn't believe it; this was meant to be my comeback and I wanted everything perfect. I had to clear my mind of all the negatives that can lose you a fight before you even get in the cage — I have been there before. My manager is great for this; we came up with a new game plan and it was to relax in the fight, breathe deeply, have fun and end it in the first — but not too fast, as I wanted to show everyone that this is Hulk Version 2. It happened exactly the way we planned it. I'm glad I came away with the win, it was so much fun to be in the cage again, I enjoy it so much and I cannot wait until the next fight.

You actually beat Brad Morris in your first ever pro MMA fight. What was it like fighting him again after all these years?

Yeah, it was okay. Obviously, that was eight years ago and over the years Brad would've improved his skills and so have



The Hulk slams a knee into Brad Morris

JOHN O'NEILL

I. It was good we fought again so I could see where I am now and how much I have improved. I respect Brad as a fighter and as a person. He's a really nice guy. He's a tough guy to fight because he always brings his A-game, as you saw, and Brad's fought

twice in the UFC so he's not a push-over. It's given me immense confidence at the very start of my journey and that means a lot to any fighter coming back after a long break. A rematch was always on the cards, as a lot of people have wanted to see

it. I knew this as I know a lot of people would like to see me fight Eddie Sanchez again.

You were originally set to take on Bob Sapp; you must have been disappointed when it didn't come together?

Yeah, I trained to fight Bob

Sapp but that's the fight game; things changed and I put weight on for nothing [laughs]. I knew Bob's gas wouldn't have been good and maybe he'd last two minutes. But as for Brad, he will come at you for the whole three 5-minute rounds, so you better be ready for a war. I would love to still fight Bob, so my manager is trying to make this happen, but hopefully in Japan where he is seen as being bigger than the grand champion sumos.

You already fought for PRIDE back in 2004. What was that experience like? How was it fighting in Japan?

Fighting in front of over 50,000 people was an awesome feeling. I cannot really explain... let alone actually fighting on the fight card I was on — absolute privilege. Wanderlei Silva, Quinton 'Rampage' Jackson, Dan Henderson, Mirko 'Cro Cop', Josh Barnett, Mark Hunt and Heath Herring were just some on that card. I would love to get back there; it's a great place, with great people, with a great culture and a passionate love for MMA.

You took a break from fighting for a couple of years after that match, which was your first loss. What was the reason behind that?

The government wouldn't let me out of the country [Laughs]. I had a few private issues I had to attend to, so I took a break, but I kept training as always — I live for this. It was my first loss and anyone that watched the fight could see I should have won, I hit him so many times his face was a mess but I made one silly mistake with five seconds to go in the fight.

You came back in 2007 and after fighting in King of the Cage in Perth, you took on Eddie Sanchez at UFC 79. How did that fight come about?

A lot of things went wrong in the preparation for the fight. I had to fly back to Perth from Team Quest training camp because my son was in hospital in critical condition. I had to drop 10kg in five days, 30kg in the six weeks before that. I felt sick, I felt weak, my mind was elsewhere and that's life. It's a time in my life I would like to forget but learn from.

Do you think you took that fight too soon?

No, if the preparation went right I would have won. I know I could have beaten him. I am so much better than that and would like to have that fight again to show myself and everyone that. Things leading up to that fight just didn't fit and that's life — you win some and you lose some. It's a fight I would rather forget; it was like a nightmare in between rounds, I didn't know where I was, everything was blank and it was like I forgot all my training. It was a dream come true but also a nightmare come true for me. I was very disappointed, gutted in fact. Now you will see a different fighter — more experienced, more rounded, my stand-up is world-class, my ground-game is world-class and I am a BJJ Black-belt now. I know I can mix it with the best of them. I'm hungrier than ever before and I train like there is no tomorrow. The Hulk is back and he's here to stay this time. UFC will be my dream come true.

Do I take it that means you would like a rematch against Eddie Sanchez, possibly at the next UFC Sydney?

Yes, I would like nothing more than that. It would be like déjà vu, but I will prepare correctly this time and I think all Australian MMA fans would like to see this as well, but in the end, it's not

my call. I will fight anyone Dana White wants me to, but it would be the logical promotion for a UFC event in Australia with me on it and Dana normally gives the fans what they want, so maybe the Australian fans need to help me make my dreams come true by letting him know. If not, I am sure Kelly from Xtreme MMA might organise it for my first defence when I win his heavyweight title from Daniel Cormier in November at Xtreme MMA 3.

Traditionally, we don't have a very strong heavyweight MMA scene in Australia, so is it hard for you to find quality opponents here?

Yeah, but we have some good up-and-coming heavyweights and some heavyweights that have made the transition from kickboxing to MMA. Guys like Mark Hunt, Peter Graham, Brad Morris, Jim York and Lucas Brown. The world shouldn't underestimate our Aussie MMA fighters. Everyone knows about MMA

now in Australia and it will start to become mainstream — you just have to mention UFC and people's eyes light up. I remember eight years ago when I was fighting, no one had ever heard of MMA or the UFC, so it's good seeing the sport develop throughout the years.

All of your fights have ended fairly fast; you've never had to go to the decision. Is that something that you are aware of or train for?

Depending on the fight, I train for either three 5-minute rounds or five 5-minute rounds and if it ends quick that's a bonus, but I've been pretty lucky. When I prepare for three rounds I usually do five. For the Xtreme show in November I am training for eight 5-minute rounds in sparring or MMA. The biggest part of my training is Southern Cross Fit. The guys from Southern Cross Fit have given me another life. I guess it's the best thing I've ever done in conditioning, especially for MMA. I have never focused on my



fight life with Soa Palelei

conditioning or fitness, now it is a huge focus for me.

Where do you train in Perth and who are your training partners at present?

I do my conditioning at Southern Cross Fit, as I said, and work out a lot at different places, different gyms from BJJ and stand-up sparring, to wrestling. I travel a lot, but I also have a group of guys as well, and for this fight against Daniel Cormier I've been doing a lot of work with the Iranian wrestlers in WA. They are big, strong and very experienced guys, and some are ex-Olympians. I have found the best training needs to come from the experts in each field — you cannot get this from one place.

Can you tell us about your current training routine?

I do not like to over-train like I used to, but to fit everything in as a complete, rounded MMA fighter, you need to cover a lot of disciplines. I head to Southern Cross Fit six times a week with one day off. I hit pads twice a week, I do stand-up sparring two times a week, I do Muay Thai one time per week, I do MMA sparring two times a week in a cage, BJJ two times a week, and Olympic wrestling two times per week. But a lot of the workouts depend on how I'm feeling. I listen to my body now; I don't train like I used to — seven-to-eight hours a day — that's just crazy! Think of your body as a car — there's wear and tear, you need to listen to your body and some days if you need to rest, then rest. You need to look after your body, and diet is important as well. I've cleaned up my diet a lot. Now, I train everything with intensity, short and sharp, unless I'm drilling techniques and then I go home and rest.

You trained with Team



The Hulk hunts for the submission on Morris

JOHN O'NEILL

Quest for a while in the US, how was that?

Yeah it was awesome living with [former Team Quest trainer] Ryan Parsons and a house full of top MMA fighters. It was a good camp because Dan Henderson was preparing for Rampage at the time and he had a lot of top MMA fighters coming through and helping out. At some points we had 25 guys on the mat at one time and every day I would crawl into bed and think, 'Shit, what have I done?' [Laughs].

Danny Green recently called out Brock Lesnar, which many thought was laughable. So you took it upon yourself to call out Danny Green. Would you like to pursue that seriously?

Yeah, absolutely. We have a guy named Troy Barbagalo, who runs a lot of boxing events in Perth for charity — he said he would put his full support behind a charity match for cerebral palsy between Danny Green and myself, but Danny has been running scared. When reporters ask him about it he will not comment, guess I proved who the real green machine is... the Hulk!

How did you originally get involved in fighting and martial arts?

I've been training for 13 years in BJJ, wrestling, MMA, boxing and kickboxing and I've finally got my Black-belt in BJJ. When you are training so many disciplines this can take time, as you cannot focus on just one of them. I started wrestling and then BJJ, then went on to compete in the MMA scene.

What is it that you love about fighting — why do you do it?

I love the competitive nature. You're always learning new things with this sport and I've been doing it for so long it's now second nature to me and everyone is doing it. It's good as there is more competition now and better competition, so we all get to a higher standard. I remember seven years ago we had to wait for the next instructional video cassette to come out and we would watch it and learn from it. Nowadays you can just hop onto YouTube and everything is on there.

What do you think about the Australian MMA scene and its future?

Very promising. Look at when UFC 110 came to Sydney — it was sold out within 40 minutes I think. They're coming again early next year and it's great to see how fast MMA has grown in the world and also in Australia. You have so many new shows coming on in Australia that the promoters have to raise the standard of their shows, like the fighters have to get better. Look at Xtreme MMA: it's only their third show but the quality of fighters on their next event is awesome.

As you said before, you are set to fight Daniel Cormier at Xtreme MMA in November for the World X MMA Heavyweight title — looking forward to it?

Yes, I can't wait. He looks tough and I never under-estimate my opponent but I see a few holes in his game. He's a two-time Olympic wrestler, Olympic Team Captain and undefeated in his MMA career — and that's to be respected. I've got enough wrestling background to keep it on my feet and if it does go to the ground, I have a good submission game. So it will be a tough fight that I'm truly looking forward to and extremely excited about. **BLITZ**



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Lima loses comeback decision, Mortimer makes it 3 in a row

Daniel Lima's comeback proved unsuccessful as he was edged out by Japanese opponent Seiji Otsuka at the Chandler Arena on 27 August's Nitro MMA show.

Lima's early intentions were to clinch as he rushed Otsuka into the cage, where the fighters locked up with Otsuka's back

against the fence. The fighters remained in this position for the majority of the round as they made their way anti-clockwise around the cage, with Lima utilising dirty boxing while Otsuka landed solid knees.

With a minute remaining, Otsuka tripped Lima to the ground and landed on top in half-guard. With not much happening on the ground, referee Peter Hickmott stood the fighters up and chose to wipe the cut near Lima's ear, before wiping down Otsuka as well. As he was handing the towel back to Otsuka's corner, the two fighters had already started fighting without the referee knowing, although the referee separated them before a strike was thrown.

Lima attempted a leg-kick in the second round but Otsuka caught it and secured a takedown. Inside guard, Lima attempted an arm-bar but quickly gave it up. Otsuka looked to progress to side-control, however Lima took the opportunity to scramble to his feet. Lima flurried with wild punches that found their mark, however Otsuka also countered with solid straight punches and hooks of his own.

With a minute remaining, Lima threw Otsuka to the canvas but Otsuka scrambled to end up on top. Lima attempted a leg-lock from the bottom, but Otsuka escaped and finished the round inside Lima's guard.

Lima's punches started to find their mark as the last round began, particularly with nice uppercuts and a solid jab. Lima got a takedown from a kick, but

Otsuka proved hard to keep down and got back to his feet not long after going to the mat. Lima continued to pepper Otsuka with his jab and finished the round with another takedown.

The judges scored it a controversial split-points decision to Otsuka.

Otsuka's fellow countryman Daisuke Nakamura was also victorious when he submitted Jai Bradney with an arm-bar.

Nakamura got the early takedown after catching Bradney's kick and from half-guard Nakamura briefly looked for a Kimura before attempting to move into side-control. With Nakamura off balance, Bradney took the opportunity to explode and immediately began throwing bombs, with Nakamura narrowly evading a Bradney head-kick.

Sensing a turn in the tide, Bradney stalked Nakamura and dropped him with a punch before unloading with punches as he stood over his Japanese foe. Nakamura, an arm-bar submission specialist, locked up the arm-bar but Bradney powered out of it, only to get stuck in a second arm-bar shortly after, which forced Bradney to tap at 3:40, round one.

Next, Michael Mortimer continued his strong year with an impressive submission victory over Edwin Arana. Mortimer started the fight with punches as he came forward and clinched against the cage. He then swivelled to Arana's back and was able to pick him up and slam him to the ground. Mortimer then

locked in his hooks and started looking for the rear-naked choke. Arana stood up to make it harder for Mortimer to secure it, but persistence paid off and Arana tapped at the 1:38 mark of the first round, giving the Integrated Martial Arts fighter his third win in a row.

Five Rings Dojo member Joe Muir took on undefeated Masoud Abdollahpouri, but unfortunately their fight ended in controversial circumstances.

Muir quickly got the fight to the ground, but Abdollahpouri did well getting guard back before scrambling back to his feet. Muir then came in and landed a big left-hook that sent his opponent's mouthguard flying across the cage and also dropped him to his knees. Referee Peter Hickmott immediately chose to end the fight as the still-conscious Abdollahpouri grabbed Muir's



Otsuka drops a bomb on Lima

LEE MCCORMICK



Mortimer on Arana's back

LEE MCCORMICK



Bradney pressures Nakamura

LEE MCCORMICK

leg. Abdollahpouri didn't argue the stoppage, but his corner made it clear that they were not happy with it. The end came at 1:16.

Both Nate Thomson and Ryan Yanz landed heavy shots on their feet in the opening seconds of their fight, before Thomson managed to secure a big slam. Thomson secured the mount and trapped one of Yanz's arms before unloading with a few solid shots, but Yanz managed to escape back to his feet and score with a few leg-kicks and a straight right. Thomson tripped Yanz to the canvas before securing his back and pounding away to get the victory at 3:45

into the fight, when Yanz went out cold. Yanz woke up shortly after and was able to walk out under his own might.

Former amateur boxer Paul Abdul-Rahman scored an impressive debut MMA victory over veteran MMA fighter Carl Toomey. Rahman dropped Toomey early with a right-hook then, looking to finish, rushed in and eventually secured mount. While attempting to pound away, Rahman instinctively grabbed the cage and the referee was forced to halt the fight to warn him. The fight restarted standing and Rahman connected more with solid shots, but Toomey showed a great chin. However, he had

no answer to the quicker and younger fighter and at 1:29 in round two the fight was stopped as Rahman rained down punches from mount.

Earlier in the night, 17-year-old up-and-comer T. Abraham took just a minute to upset Gokhan Turkylmaz. Abraham took his opponent down where he was able to secure the guillotine for the submission win.

In the first fight of the night, Julez 'The Jackal' reversed a takedown throw by Scott Celere to get the rear-naked choke submission at 1:42 of the first round.

— Chris Postupalski from fightnewsaustralia.com

Lima lands a left



LEE MCCORMICK

American takes our title at Xtreme MMA 2

American Strikeforce fighter and the new *Ultimate Fighter* 12 wrestling coach for Team Koscheck, came to Australia on 31 July to take on local Lucas Browne in Sydney for the XMMA heavyweight belt. Both went in with a perfect win record and 'Big Daddy'

Browne looked confident in the cage, looking to knock down the wrestler early. However, Cormier took the Aussie down and controlled the fight with his wrestling skills, landing some big shots. Once he gained mount, he really unloaded and opened a big cut on Lucas' head, forcing the referee to stop the fight at

4:35 of the first round. With the victory, Cormier moves to 5–0 as a professional MMA fighter. He made his debut against Gary Frazier last September and won by second-round TKO. He returned against John Devine in March and knocked him out in the first round. Cormier will take on Soa 'The Hulk' Palelei when Australia tries to get the belt back at Xtreme MMA 3 in November.

Sydney native and Australian K-1 legend Peter Graham took on former K-1 USA Champion Carter 'The Beast' Williams. The two had never met in the ring, so they made it a stand-up fight with MMA gloves and a cage. Both fighters showed some great striking skills, but Graham showed heavy hands, taking the win via ground-and-pound at 4:10 of the first round.

New Zealand fighter Aaron Boyes stepped up on very short notice to fight former Strikeforce Light-heavyweight Champion Bobby Southworth. The fight did not stay standing for very

York chokes Leniu



ALGERIA ALTY



Cormier in control at Xtreme MMA 2

ALGERIA ALTY



Graham pounds on Williams

ALEGRA ALTY

long and while Boyes tried hard to sprawl and get back to his feet, Southworth was too good. Eventually the fight was stopped when the referee decided Boyes was unable to defend himself from the ground-and-pound, and called the fight off at 1:56 in the first round.

Api Hemira from 5 Rings

Kings of Kombat

Shamrock Promotions held Melbourne's massive Kings of Kombat kickboxing card on 29 August, featuring a couple of MMA fights including a battle of the big boys between the always busy Lucas 'Big Daddy' Browne and Sam Brown. Lucas took the fight via KO in the second round. Tui Wright beat More Mehau via TKO in the first round of their bout, and Fred Tagaolo also pounded Keiran Smith for a first-round finish.

on the Gold Coast took on American fighter Marvin Eastman in a close fight, with both fighters showing some good stand-up. UFC veteran Eastman took the fight in the third round via TKO from ground-and-pound at 2:27.

Big Jim Yorke made quick work of Felise Leniu, and submitted him via rear-naked choke at 1:27 in the first.

In other fights: Shabe Kafo defeated Glen Smith via submission (guillotine) in round two; Chris Johnson defeated Corey Nelson via rear-naked choke in round one; Rick Messerschmidt defeated Adam Carroll via TKO in round one; Nick Ariel defeated Mario Yokoyama via decision; James Vanikolo defeated Dylan Andrews via rear-naked choke in round two; David Solomovic defeated Ryan Carr-Ketu via decision; Sam Brown defeated Rony Sefo via decision; and Ivan Andres Gallindo defeated Steve Oliver via TKO in round one.

Look out for the next Xtreme MMA show on 5 November.



Eastman rattles Hemira with a big right hand

ALEGRA ALTY

Aussies represent in chicago

Fighters from Melbourne clubs Kimekai Karate and Hangar 4 tasted victory in the US recently at an international fight event on Chicago's Southside.

Ash 'The Executioner' Powell started the action at 145 lbs (66kg) completely dominating his opponent Anthony Goodwin of Illinois, who has a record of 18-3 and three title belts in three separate organisations. Goodwin is an experienced wrestler but Powell shut down his takedown attempts and an

early arm-bar and controlled the action on the ground with strong BJJ and superior G&P. Powell's unanimous-decision win made coach Carl Drapper and the rest of the team proud, while his wife Heidi got a sore throat as the lone Aussie in the crowd.

Next up was Joey 'Lucky Lucian' Hooke, who stood and traded with a tough and experienced Alex White (8-0) from Missouri. They had a war for the first round and the second round started hot, but Hooke got caught in a scramble

and guillotine-choke on the fence, which White finished.

Jeremy 'BroTown' Wharerau could not have done anything more convincing to show what the boys from Down Under can do, by taking on BJJ man Shawn 'Big Heart' Jackson. Wharerau came out firing and landed two hard straight rights that stunned the big grappler, then pounced to snare a schoolyard rear-naked choke with no hooks in, but which was deep and tight enough to finish in 26 seconds. **BLITZ**

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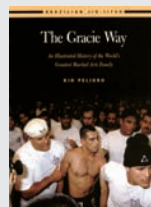
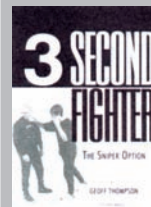
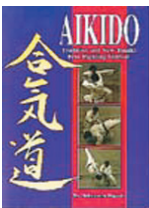
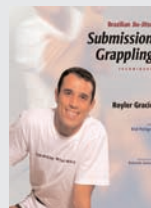
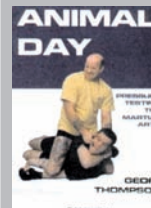
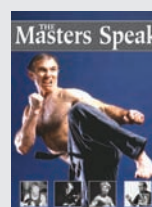
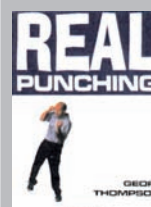
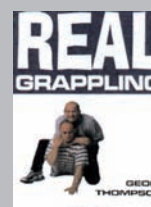
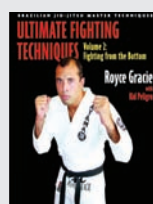
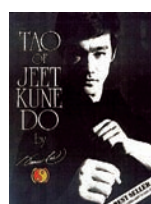
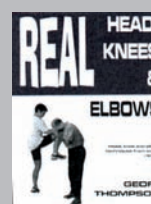
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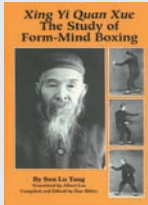
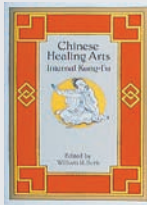
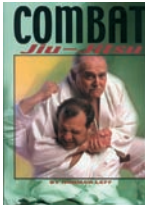
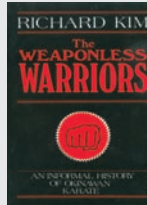
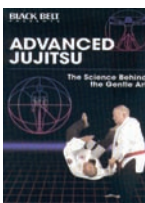
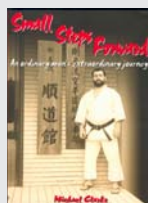
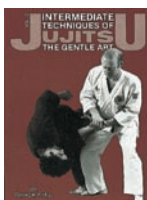
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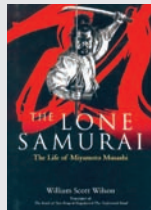
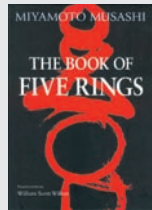
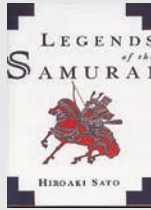
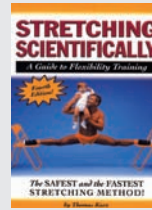
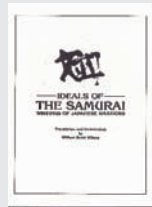
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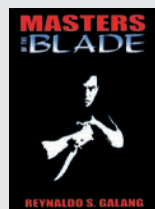
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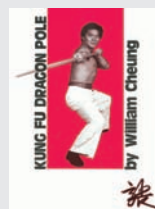
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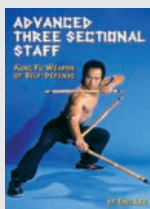
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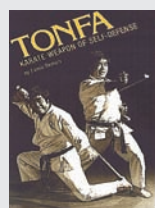
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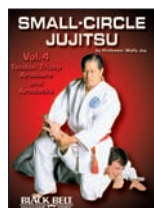
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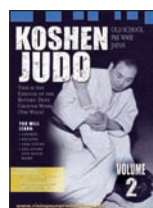
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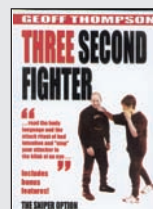


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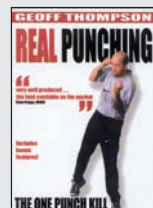
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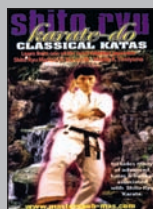
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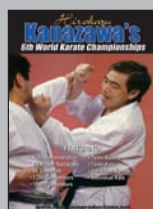
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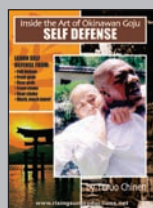
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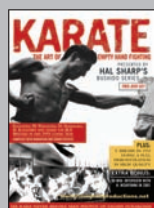
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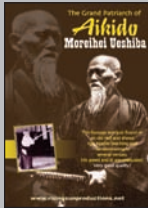
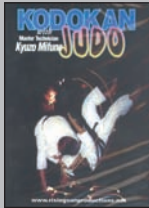
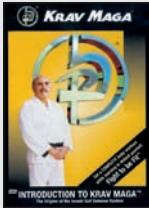
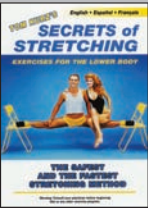
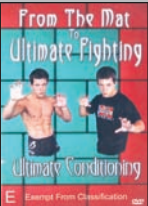
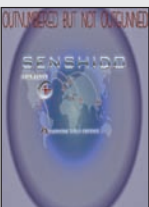
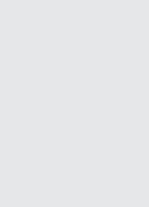
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**MARTIAL
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Hip to the Game

The question: "I've been training in wushu for one-and-a-half years and am really enjoying it. However, as a 33-year-old recent starter in martial arts, I'm finding my lack of hip flexibility to be a major challenge for a number of essential kicking and sweeping moves. It's annoying as younger students seem not to find this such an issue. What exercises would assist to improve my side-kicking range and flexibility?"

THE EXPERT

Adam Stanecki is a fitness coach and joint-owner of CrossFit Victoria. He holds numerous certifications including CrossFit Level 2, AWF Level 1 and ASCA Level 1. Stanecki focuses his training on general physical preparedness and injury prevention and has trained MMA fighters, Defence Force personnel and the general public to elite levels. He can be contacted by email at adam@crossfitvictoria.com.

THE ANSWER

Generally speaking, flexibility and mobility decrease as we age. It's merely a symptom of our bodies getting older, and our joints less pliable and less accommodating of larger ranges of movement. It's important to understand that, given your age, you are more likely to be less flexible and mobile than your younger

counterparts. Do not let this concern you. It is not important how you compare to others. Consider only how you can improve your current situation.

A dedicated mobility program should result in greater range of movement, and therefore will help you execute the kicks and sweeps that you currently find troubling. It's highly recommended that you have your posture and biomechanics assessed by a professional before you undertake any mobility routine. This will ensure that the routine

suits your individual requirements. Please consider this before attempting any of the movements detailed below.

The hips will not be the only joint that will require your attention. Consider also the pelvis, lumbar and thoracic spine, knees and ankles. Think of your body as a whole even when considering improvements in specific areas.

The first area to attend to is the pelvis. Do you have a neutral pelvic position or is your pelvis tilted forward (very common) or back (not so common)? If

(adduction and abduction). Think of star-jumps (or jumping-jacks): moving the legs away from each other is abduction, back toward each other is adduction. The most common imbalance here is tight adductors and weak abductors. Again, we need to stretch the tight muscles and strengthen the weak muscles.

The theory of forced couples can be applied to all joints. Imbalances will present where one side of the equation is stronger than the other (e.g. the adductor/abductor example above). In all cases, we should aim for a neutral (read: natural) position where the forced couples are in balance.

Moving to the other areas of the body, as indicated earlier we can deduce that imbalances around the knee can cause knee pain and dysfunction. Likewise, imbalances of the upper back muscles and chest muscles will likely cause reduced range of movement, poor posture and probably back pain, and so forth.

In order to improve your mobility, attend to muscles acting on each joint in question. Also consider joints further up and down the chain. Aim to find balance at each joint, stretch and strengthen as required. Remember that mobility training is an ongoing concern and that improvements may take some time, but are well worth the effort. **BLITZ**

your pelvis is not neutral, this indicates an imbalance in the muscles around the area. More often than not, the hip flexors are tight and the posterior chain (glutes and hamstrings) are relatively weak. This pulls the pelvis out of correct alignment. Assuming an anterior pelvic tilt (tilted forward), the standard treatment is stretching the hip flexors and strengthening the posterior chain (with deadlifts, for example).

A secondary area to consider is the hips, specifically the lateral movement of the femur at the hip



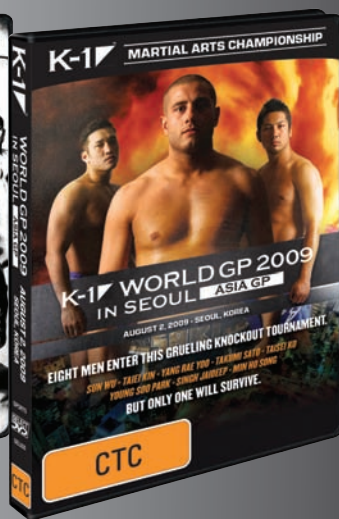
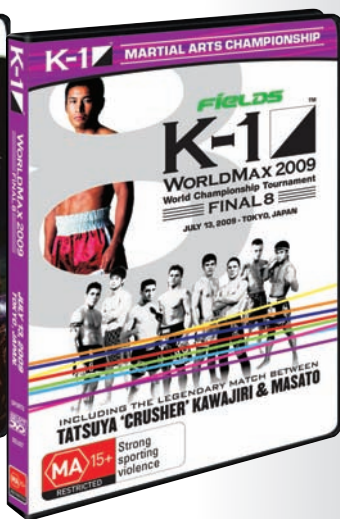
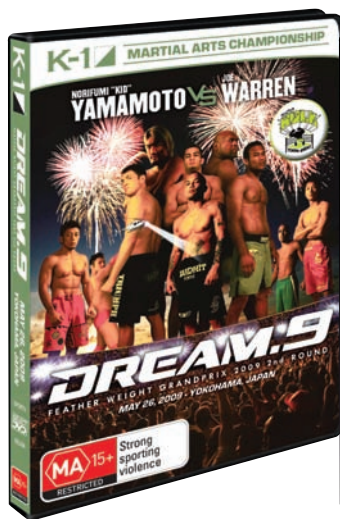
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Dressed to Kill

On the street, how you dress does matter.

I'd like to propose a ridiculous theory — tongue in cheek, of course. Crime statistics show us that crimes of violence against the person involving multiple assailants are a young person's crime. The common age is between 15

and 21 years, although multiple-opponent attacks these days are being committed by people much younger.

While out at lunch the other day, I turned a corner in the crowded city street and found myself behind two young males, two steps ahead of me. The one on the left had the young person's swagger but it was the way he was dressed that immediately caught my eye. He had part of the young person's 'uniform' on: his jeans were two sizes too large and so they hung around below his waist, somehow defying gravity and not falling down.

On reflection, it's a statement about me that, of all the people on that busy city street, my attention was focused on this guy. My strong — but controlled — urge was to take a large step forward, do what gravity was wanting to do and pull his pants down his legs and give him a large shove in his back so he would fall flat on his face. It was that urge that struck me as it was strong and seemed to come from nowhere, and for no reason. This guy had done nothing wrong except dress like an idiot (how judgmental I can be!) — well, dress inappropriately to fight, anyway.

And then from some other dimension I channelled my new theory on multiple-opponent attacks. I realised in a flash of divine inspiration that multiple-opponent attacks are a young person's crime because they don't dress to fight.

Let me enlighten you. Close your eyes and hold the image of

a typical young male's 'uniform': baseball cap pulled down at the wrong angle, which obstructs the vision; heads usually shaved but those with long hair just asking for it to be grabbed and pulled; the wearing of sunglasses even when not required — just a hassle for maintaining clear vision; chains around the neck and/or hoodies — great for strangleholds; hoodies or jackets a size or two too big — impedes upper body mobility and makes it easy to 'rag' these guys (pull clothing over their head and take them to the ground). Oh, and the body piercings, especially facial, are just asking to be wacked or pulled.

Then there are the pants or jeans two sizes too big. Little imagination is required to understand what a low crotch line does for leg mobility — and having your pants down around your legs is not a plus in a street fight. Sneakers generally a size too big and laces not done up can easily come off in a fight.

There you have it: young people commit multiple-person assaults because that's the only way they can fight dressed like that. You can see it, can't you? They jump into the fray, swing a few punches or whatever and then they have to jump out to adjust their wardrobe — and that requires someone else to jump in to take their place while the adjustments take place. See the logic? Somehow I don't think my brilliant theory will be given much credence. But it does deserve some attention for other reasons.

When my young friend appeared in front of me with his gravity-defying pants I was actually thinking about this next article but had a completely different subject in mind. But this, by pure chance, got my attention and does deserve a little comment.

All ridiculous theories aside, my real point is that any 'real' defensive tactics systems attuned to present-day needs would train students to take advantage of anything in the environment to turn a situation to their advantage. Now, granted you can't bank on the dress habits of all attackers being as I described. But a system should train a student to switch their perception to opportunities in the environment. It's the difference between what you 'see' and what you 'perceive' (a subject of an article of mine some time back).

I note that there are relative few systems that take that approach and while there are some that use the clothing (I should say 'uniform') of the opponent, they do so in a very limited way. I wonder whether most modern systems betray their traditional martial arts heritage by ignoring such things as a person's clothing. That would make them as out-of-date as last year's fashions.

Graham Kuerschner is a 45-year veteran of the martial arts and can be contacted through his website at www.sdtactics.com.au **BLITZ**



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Renshi Ben Sawers
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It's important that instructors share their full life experiences with their students, not just the physical aspects of martial arts.

None of us can truly know what lies around the corner. Whether we accept it or not, life is, and always will be, an exploratory journey. As is the case with all exploration, if the unfolding trek doesn't kill us, it will almost certainly provide us with instruction. If we want to learn things that others do not know, we need to be willing to do the things that other people do not do. Life will continue to unfold in a myriad of ways and the process of that unfolding is sometimes a product of design but, more often than not, it is the manifestation of our reaction to circumstance. This is neither a good nor a bad thing — it just is. Sometimes we get to paddle, sometimes we are caught in the current, and our ability to adapt to the circumstance in many ways dictates how our lives turn out.

It is my contention that some martial arts instructors better prepare students for life 'off the mat' than others. Whether we promote a modern mixed martial arts training regimen or a more traditional one, I believe that many people walk in the door seeking more than just the physical skill sets that are usually on offer. Of course, there is a percentage of people who come to martial arts training clearly wanting only combat/self-defence skills, but realistically, the larger proportion of martial arts novices come for a host of other reasons.



This is not an arm-lock — it's a metaphor for life!

Most people that walk in the door looking for martial arts instruction are not quite sure what they want, only that they want 'change'. Perhaps they are looking to become fitter and healthier, perhaps they are looking to make new friends, perhaps they think that in learning how to better protect themselves or be a better fighter, they will feel more confident. People have many reasons for taking up the practice of martial arts, but many want something about their lives to change. For most people, change for the better is what they need.

As a professional martial arts teacher, one part of the standard that I hold myself to allows and qualifies me to help people improve their lives. For myself, this is qualification I must continually work at. I find myself, at various times, playing the role of psychologist, marriage counsellor, financial advisor, personal trainer, life-coach and a host of other service-oriented roles. When people walk into a martial arts school wanting to effect changes in their lives, they are often asking for far more than yet another way to throw a kick

or break an arm — but how many martial arts instructors are truly equipped to help people make these changes?

For my own part, I have lived an interesting and varied life. I am well-travelled, in both civilised and remote parts of the world. I have paid off my own home and have bought other properties besides. I have dabbled in the share-market. I have failed at one marriage (25 years ago) and have cultivated a beautiful and joyful marriage of some 20 years since. I have raised children. I have launched



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a magazine (this one, 24 years ago), written books, authored DVDs, designed curricula, contracted for the military, Federal Police and many other organisations, and I have educated myself through this whole process.

I have failed often and learned much, but the common thread that ran through the whole adventure was the process of developing my coaching/teaching skills as a martial artist. Each and every area of my life, along with the 25,000-plus classes I have taken, has contributed to my personal development as a teacher.

of greater value in return.

The only way we martial arts teachers can truly honour the contract with our students is by offering something that can truly change their lives for the better. I urge every instructor — that is open to listening — to ask themselves if they are doing all they can to become better teachers, better educators and better advisors to their students.

For my own part, every essential life-skill that I have has been gleaned from my understanding of my martial arts practice. To put it accurately, my life and my martial arts practice are so interwoven that

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Because I take my responsibilities very seriously, I continually work to better my skills in every way I can, so that I can affect other peoples lives for the better. At every opportunity, I read, I learn and I apprentice myself to those who know more.

I take my job very seriously because I understand that in taking up martial arts training, people are giving me the most precious thing they have — their time. Time is in limited supply and each of us has an unknown amount of it left to spend. When someone walks into my school, they are trading some of their precious time for whatever I might say or do that can, hopefully, cause a positive effect in their lives. They aren't just handing me a few dollars for an ice-cream, they are investing their time in the hope of gaining something

it is impossible to determine where one part ends and the other begins — and that is as it should be. The martial arts life is such a unique vocation that the opportunity for true personal development is both apparent and accessible.

I urge every martial artist to look deeply within their art and to track their understanding of it — to learn the deeper lessons and pass on that wisdom to others. Taking what we learn from our practice out into the broader aspects of our lives is the greatest accomplishment a martial artist can achieve.

John Will is head of BJJ Australia and teaches Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, shootfighting and self-defence solutions around the world. Check out his regular blog at www.bjj-australia.blogspot.com **BLITZ**

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