

The T.K.D. Flash

A Publication of the Association of Academies of Martial Arts

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On Saturday, October 18, another in the excellent series of M.A.T.A.-sponsored tournaments was held in Sheboygan hosted by the Sheboygan Academy of Martial Arts, Jacqueline Karpinsky, HeadMaster. Participants came from throughout the State. Once again, the M.A.T.A. conducted an excellent day of competition.

The first A.A.M.A. Fall Classic was held in Neenah WI on October 11 at the Neenah-Menasha YMCA. The Tournament was hosted by John Butitta and Fox Valley TaeKwon-Do. Contestants from Wisconsin and Minnesota competed in Individual Patterns, Free Sparring, and Team Patterns. The head-to-head bracketed patterns, team pattern competition, and tournament-wide continuous free sparring made this a "first" in Wisconsin. Among Wisconsin schools attending in force: Grafton, Sheboygan, Fox Valley (Neenah), Green Bay, Middleton. Such teams as "The Sibs," "AntiPattern," and the "TaeKwon Do Do's" gave the crowd stirring performances to remember.

On October 12, 19 and 25 Black Belts seeking to improve or augment their grasp of Patterns studied with Mr. VH in Grafton. Those who did not attend missed the opportunity.

Upcoming Black Belt Workout. Grafton, Saturday November 8, First Dans/Second Dan Candidates 8:00 a.m. to 9:15 a.m., Second Dans/Third Dan Candidates 9:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m., Third Dans/Fourth Dan Candidates 11:00 to 12:00. This is the last in this series prior to January pre-test. Mr. VH will continue to train Black Belts at any gup level testing.

A test was held in Monroe NC on October 13th.

It never seems to end. Now a special parliamentary committee in Seoul has requested Dr. Un Yong Kim resign as WTF head due to his Olympic Committee corruption. (But a different charge of corruption than the kickbacks for the Salt Lake City games, etc.) See the several prior Flash articles on this man, and shake your heads in sorrow for our Art.

The latest Tae Kwon Do Times has a fairly good article on the "Three I.T.F.s." Master Earl Weiss was at one of the meetings attacked by Choi Jung Hwa's attorney for lack of a quorum, and Master Weiss, an attorney in his "day job," differs with his version. I know who I trust.

Students from the Academies will be competing in Hartford CT on November 15.

On November 15 Mr. VH will be in Cadillac, Michigan teaching a seminar at Lone Wolf TaeKwon-Do.

On November 15 the Martial Arts Tournament Association will host its final tournament of the year during the day, and State Finals in the evening. Events will be in Manitowoc.

On October 25 a gup level test was held in West Bend at DuKatz Academy of Martial Arts. Mr. Paul DuKatz presided and a total of seven students tested successfully.

On September 13th, the Academy of Martial Arts Sheboygan held an open house for the public. A number of demonstrations were held including Tae KwonDo, led by Mr Mikkelson and Mr Johnson, traditional weapons led by Mr St Louis, and the Lil Dragons program led by Mr Brunsvold. (Rumor has it the Dragons stole the show). Thanks are in order to the organizers, to attendees from throughout the association, to participants and demonstrators, to Mr. Paul DuKatz for the gift of a WaveMaster, and to Kathy Doebert for her artwork.

On November 1 a gup-level test will be held at the Sheboygan Academy.

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On Sunday November 2 a gup level testing is scheduled at American Martial Arts Center in Middleton.

Reflections on a Newsletter

by F.M. Van Hecke

It is not a small matter to note, but the Flash with the issue following its next (December) issue will enter its sixteenth consecutive year of publication. The early years were little more than letters in any sort of format shared with a limited number of Black Belts around Wisconsin. Eventually, it was perceived that our needs were greater, and the publication was more formally approached, i.e., upgraded to the ennobled status of a regular monthly newsletter.

The Flash now finds itself transmitted via the mails to six states and all Association schools. During its tenure we have seen the demise of no less than four of our member school newsletters and Human Weapon, the I.T.F. quarterly publication. Most publications in the field are published less often, and some of these are heavily dependent on advertising revenues. This has been a great deal of effort, and not without pressure. Yet the Flash has never scaled down, never failed to miss a

publication date.

Even at the current subscription rate, the Flash makes no money. So why do it? The answers are multiple, but here are a few.

The Flash has provided us with a connection to upcoming events. If I wish to visit another school for a test or seminar, I know where I can go.

The Flash provides us with news. We know what happened, when, and to whom. It is an affirmation of the level of activity throughout the Association.

The Flash provides us with publicity. When you desire to publicize an event at your school, all the school owner needs to do is ask and it is published. Even if the publication of news about an upcoming occasion repeats prior efforts, the reader is again reminded of the event.

The Flash also makes a public relations statement: "This school is professional. It has a newsletter, a connection, and its events are noted by others."

The Flash provides us with a record. The editor and others often refer to back issues for information about where we've been to help us plot where we're going.

The Flash is also a

source of pride. Those schools who post it for consumption by their students ratify that they are part of something bigger than just themselves, and that their teachers strive to be more than laws unto themselves. When a school strives to put news of its own special events, student accomplishments, and so on in the newsletter, it makes a statement about that school to its students, as to their importance outside the four walls of their home dojang, and to their parents, that the school and all who study there are important.

The Flash unburdens the lot of the school owner, who does not need to expend the ink and the effort to do a newsletter if there are not enough hours in the day or the circulation would make it unduly burdensome. The number of newsletters that never got to Volume One, No. 2, is a large one.

The Flash is an outlet for those who desire to publish their own articles and their own thoughts. The student who publishes an article (easy enough to do) is, simply, a published author. While this may not seem important to an occasional student at the time, it is important to many parents and students to know that TaeKwon-Do is more than banging around. The fact that one's thoughts have been published is often a source of pride, and it has been known that reference to published

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articles finds its way into the resume' of the job-seeker, the applicant.

The Flash is a source of information and learning. With almost every issue there is an article, a review, something to enhance the knowledge of the reader.

The Flash has bonded us, through reporting new lives brought into the world, new loves and bonds forged among us, and the losses to life on this earth of brothers and sisters in the Art.

The publication has the capacity to elevate us further. As our numbers have grown, the available sources of news and articles has as well. If we are to test 31 Black Belts in January of 2004, it should provide a substantial pool of articles for publication. If we are to be 17 schools, we have that many more events and accomplishments to report.

It is our sincere hope that this publication be exploited by the school owners as a tool, by readers as a resource, by students as a source of learning. Hopefully our persistence has created a foundation, something upon which others can rely in the future to grow their participation in the Art.

So here's to another fifteen years!

The U.S. Marines Close-Quarters Combat Manual: A Review

By F.M. Van Hecke

The U.S. Marines Close-Quarters Combat Manual (Paladin Press, 1996)

is a reprint of substantially those materials furnished Corps trainees for years but in a more conventional "book" format. (I'd like to thank former Marines among my friends for their aid in this review.) Such materials are important for martial artists to absorb because of the professionalism of the Corps in the ultimate martial art of serious military combat.

The book has both positives and negatives coexisting in reciprocity. This is due to the purpose of the work and not because of any flaw in its presentation or even in the systems illustrated. In fact, the presentation is excellent given its likely audience, and therein lies its beauty and its ugliness.

Martial artists training in a formal system such as TaeKwon-Do are presented with, and dedicate themselves to, a great deal of complexity; they are willing to devote years to achieving competence in their Art. Marines, on the other hand, must fight, and fight well, and learn quickly.

The system the soldier

must learn cannot be overly complex, or tailor made to a specific student's proclivities or talents, or spoon-fed to those who are better learning at different paces. The system must be simple, easy to understand and capable by absorption of a group of variegated intelligences.

In the real world of close combat training, many, many repetitions are practiced in a very short time frame. In a formal martial art devoting an entire day, or three consecutive days, to a limited number of drills would be very unusual.

The objectives of close quarters combat are death or serious personal injury to the opponent. Thus there is no Ho Sin Sool or self-defense component wherein one merely seeks to subdue the opponent without permanent injury.

Also, close quarters assumes exactly that: an infighting range, whereas most of the formal striking arts assume commencement of combat in the outfighting range.

The book addresses fundamentals, the so-called LINE program, bayonet use, and "weapons of opportunity."

The fundamentals are target areas (far fewer than those learned by the traditional martial artist), tools (heads for head-butts, fists, feet, elbows,

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etc.), a simple boxer-type stance, and how to move in it. Movement is front foot first going forward, back foot first going backwards. Also addressed are how to break a fall, do a rolling fall, strike with the various tools, how to choke, block, and assume a defensive position if destabilized.

Those of us who are acronym-haters will love to hate LINE because of its utterly pretentious origin, “linear infighting neural-override engagement.” What they’re trying to say is don’t think, do.

Basically, LINE boils down to six “chapters,” starting with wrist locks and choke hold counters, moving on to counters of kicks and punches, then dealing with unarmed knife defense, then knife fighting, enemy “removal” (catching the enemy unawares), and unarmed defense against the bayonet.

The bayonet program is exactly what one would expect: position, slashes, butt strokes, and thrusts. These then are put together in combinations (like patterns). It also deals with the strategies of bayonet fighting in a group or against a group.

Finally, the book deals with weapons of opportunity, such as a shovel, garrote or tree likely to be found or at hand in

exigent circumstances.

The book is simply and clearly illustrated with line drawings. The various sequences are broken down into simple sequential elements without assuming great familiarity of the student with the techniques to be employed.

Sometimes there is an assumption that too much information would be too much for the student to absorb. For example, defense against a rear headlock is greatly simplified in hopes that simplicity will result in a quick instinctive response. However, a critic may say that too much risk is entailed in not being more broadly aware of the potential hazards and the “little things” one can do (and reduce to the instinctive level) to prevent more serious injury while launching the counter attack.

This writer is also uncomfortable with the assumption that a particular maneuver will almost always work. For example, it is no mystery that an attacker with a knife will often adapt quickly to the defender’s first defensive contact by changing body position, attempting to withdraw the knife to take a clean shot, and so on. The sequential techniques shown appear to have more faith in an attacker’s static mindset than the writer would prefer given the relatively high stakes and cost of failure. Control of the knife does not appear to be a

significant objective, and that could be fatal.

The section on offensive use of a knife is very good and gets the reader to thinking. There are more complex methods and systems, however.

“Removal” is best summarized as the method of making a quick and quiet kill of a sentry. These materials are also useful.

It is in the bayonet materials that this book truly excels. One is confident that after drilling repeatedly with these skills they are well internalized and deadly dangerous.

The U.S. Marines Close-Quarters Combat Manual is well written and meets its objectives. It may be of value to martial artists to realize how the military can address the needs of so many so quickly and effectively.

