

The T.K.D. Flash

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The United States TaeKwon-Do Federation held its National Tournament in Waunakee, WI on July 20th and 21st.

Competitors from across the United States competed in Free Sparring, Patterns Competition, Power Breaking, and Technical Breaking. Additional events included the promotion, by Grand Master Charles E. Sereff, of Master Luis Reyes to Eighth Dan, a breaking demonstration, and a picnic celebrating the completion of a successful event on Sunday, July 22 in Middleton WI. The tournament is held every two years. The Tournament Promoter, Mr. Kevin McDaniel of Madison, WI, noted that this was the first time U.S.T.F. had held a national event of this magnitude in Wisconsin. The Tournament Director F.M. Van Hecke, was assisted by Dr. Rick Bauman and Mrs. Mary Lubner.

On September 30 at **Big Dog TaeKwon-Do** in Grand Rapids Mr. Kevin McDaniel will conduct a referee seminar. For details, contact Dr. Steve

Osborn, sosborntkd@hotmail.com.

Put aside **October 13** on your calendars for the annual **A.A.M.A. Fall Classic** in Neenah WI, hosted by **Dr. John Butitta**. This is always an excellent tournament.



The Masters assembled for the kick-off to U.S.T.F. Nationals at Waunakee High School.

The U.S.T.F. Regional Black Belt Test for 2007 will take place in Green Bay, Wisconsin, on November 3. Instructors who are interested contact Mr. Van Hecke, fmvh@execpc.com or 414-852-9229. Students who are interested, contact your instructors. We have the great fortune to announce the likely presence of **Grand Master Charles E. Sereff** and **Master Renee Sereff**.

Mr. **Braxton Miller** and the **School of Traditional TaeKwon-Do** will host a Black Belt test on September 15.

On September 22 a **USTF Referee Seminar** will be taught at Middleton WI by Mr. Kevin McDaniel. Complete applications must be "in hand" by September 7. For details you may contact Mr. Van Hecke at fmvh@execpc.com.

On September 5 Master Earl Weiss will conduct a gup level test at Desplains IL for National TaeKwon-Do.

On **October 6** the place to be will be Crystal Lake Illinois at the School of Classical TaeKwon-Do, where Mr. Braxton Miller will host a **Ho Sin Sool Seminar**. Teaching will be U.S.T.F. Certified Ho Sin Sool Instructor **Master Earl Weiss**. For details, contact Mr. Braxton Miller, 847-526-4250.

There will be a Class B USTF Instructor Course in Denver, Colorado on Nov. 10th & 11th,



Is or is not Lily Chang excited about that gold medal?

A Class C USTF Instructors Course will be taught in Denver Feb. 9th & 10th, 2008.

Mr. **Tom Cope**, Missouri will be hosting USTF Class C Instructors Course February 2nd & 3rd 2008. with Grand Master **Mike Winegar**.

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The Cadillac Taekwon-Do demonstration team was Cadillac-Rotary International's program on August 28. The team members performed step-sparring routines, various fundamental techniques, pattern Won-Hyo, and executed board breaking. **Val Dodds** shared her experiences of working with children while **Chad Boolman** talked about his journey in Taekwon-Do and being crowned National Champion in black belt sparring.

On Sunday September 9 Dr. **Steve Osborn** will facilitate a referee training session at Big Dog Taekwon-Do in Grand Rapids, MI. This training, under the supervision of a certified Class A referee, will count toward meeting the requirements to becoming a Class B and A referee.

Technical Corner Round Two Continued (part three)

The question was posed: "What is the significance of closed Ready Stance A, B, C, or D for any of the patterns?" (Or for that matter any number of other ready stances?)

A simple question that could take a volume to explore or answer in depth. On the surface, one could answer that the pattern system was created by General Choi, so the significance was as he states, no more, and no less.

However, as set out in his 1965 Book, General Choi

acknowledges that the system is rooted in other systems, notably the Shorin and Shorei Ryus of Okinawa, as well as others. One must then note that "Shorin" was the Okinawan pronunciation or derivation of Shaolin, a well known Chinese system.

While General Choi is the founder of the system, he makes no claim to having invented the techniques. In fact, he compares the invention or discovery of martial arts techniques to the invention of the wheel or the discovery of fire saying that no person or country can claim to be solely responsible for the discovery or invention.



Master Luis Reyes is promoted to Eighth Dan amidst the combined congratulations of Grand Master C.E. Sereff and about 200 other people.

Unfortunately, unlike modern times where General Choi was able to leave us definitive parameters for the performance and utilization of techniques, earlier systems were generally couched in secrecy and little was written down. To my knowledge, no other system founder provided anything remotely close to General Choi's works when it came to detailing the application of postures and motions contained in their

system.

So, while it is clear that General Choi attributed only symbolic meaning to some postures, in other systems they may have been something more. One method for determining whether it was something more is "Reverse engineering". This is a process where you look at positions and motions and see how they may fit into a Martial context. Some authors such as Rick Clark have wrote volumes exploring this. While he uses the title "Real Applications" for marketing purposes, he admits several times (unlike some others who purport to have ancient secret knowledge) that he really has no idea what the original intent was, only that the application makes sense.

Those attending courses with General Choi may recall the process he suggested if someone claimed an application for a move was something different than set out in his text. If the suggested application could be shown to have reasonable efficacy, then he said it was a good application.

So, now we can embark upon our own journey of discovery with regard to whether the positions may have some practical (as opposed to only a symbolic) purpose. I suggest that a two prong approach be used:

1. The motion or position be viewed in isolation (along with any movement that allows you to reach the position.)

2. The motion or position be viewed in relation to motions that follow it (or in

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the case of Ul-Ji perhaps motions that precede it as well.) This second prong may be somewhat more difficult without exploring predecessor systems to determine if this same position may have been followed or preceded by different motions in those systems. Toward this end, an exploration of other systems may provide further insight.



Mei-li Lin powders pine with her turning kick. Wow, those flyweights can hit!

We can most likely agree that pattern motions, (for reasons that could fill another article or perhaps even a text) are often exaggerated and stylized. So, for the sake of determining possible applications, the relevant motions may need to be morphed. The degree to which

they are morphed can be hotly debated. At some point the degree of change may alter the motion to an extent where it really has no resemblance to the technique being analyzed. This has been one of my sore spots when reviewing some of these “Real Application” books.

So, for Close Ready Stance A, a simple application would be to envision someone in front of you trying to choke you. Moving forcefully to this position can serve to effectively deflect or break their hold. While too difficult to detail here, Won-Hyo moves 1-3 can easily be morphed to continue an effective grappling application as a follow up to the choke defense.

Similar to Close ready stance A is the “Heaven Hand” ready posture. For certain techniques the relation between the open and closed hand version states; “The open hand facilitates a grab”. So, a heaven hand application can be similar to what I have suggested above, using a grab which can add some spice to the application of Kwang Gae move #2.

Close ready stance B as used in Choon Gun, and followed by move #1, the reverse knife hand block, can be morphed to defend against a straight grab to the right wrist striking the outside of the defenders left arm to accomplish a release. Toi Gye could have a similar application. However, can you see how the application may change with the following move being a closed hand rather than an open hand?

Close ready stance C as

used in Hwa Rang has 2 open hands. Could one be grabbing and pulling while the Palm Pushing Block becomes an “Open Fist” strike?

Close ready stance D in Eui-Am may simply be a convenient starting position for both arms as they need to move inward for move #1.

Perhaps another reason for different positions is simply to provide alternate methods of motion. Look at that other stuff we do with the non blocking / striking hand aside from always bringing it to our hip.

Please note that I do not intend the foregoing ideas to be exhaustive or definitive. They should simply serve as a catalyst for further exploration. (This by the way is another idea I have about the benefits of NOT always providing exact reasons for doing something.)

Quite frankly I made all this stuff up. They are no more than a somewhat educated guesses. I make no claim to knowing any “Real application”.

Finally maybe all this is tilting at windmills.

“Before I learned the art, a punch was just a punch, and a kick, just a kick. After I learned the art, a punch was no longer a punch, a kick, no longer a kick. Now that I understand the art, a punch is just a punch and a kick is just a kick.”-- Bruce Lee

Respectfully submitted,
Earl Weiss

[Ed. Note: Your humble editor is proud to call Master Weiss teacher.]

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Stressing the Organism

By F.M. Van Hecke

I was interested the other day in assessing the tournament experience of my students, so I began to take a harder look at the “kinds” of people they were, the types of experience they had comparatively, and the best means to get some of them involved in tournament competition.

What sparked my curiosity was the fact that those tournaments available are often attended by the same competitors, year in and year out, and yet others who might benefit seem to find something else to do on those Saturdays. Every single Saturday.

Now I’m not a guy who has any animosity toward “family things” that can get in the way on a given Saturday. Those who know me well also know that I value family more than, yes, TaeKwon-Do. But the Black Belt candidate who has never competed? Has there been, in his years of training, a “family thing” coincidentally occurring in conjunction with every single tournament? I seriously doubt it.

I am also in sympathy with the student whose religious holiday prevents attendance. But realistically there is a low probability that this could apply to every tournament date, and, indeed, some of our best competitors are Hindu, Muslim and Jewish students who don’t necessarily share observance days with the dominant Christian calendar.

I would be more understanding if there were huge expenses involved in attending a tournament. Certainly the little girl who flew in from Alaska with her dad for Nationals in July made a substantial financial sacrifice (or at

least Dad did). But U.S.T.F. tournaments in this Region have consistently de-emphasized the “six foot trophy” thing and cost in the fifty-or-fewer-dollars range.

So who are the students who don’t attend? Predominantly, they are children and often they are the students less comfortable with physical contact. Not to be a chauvinist, but sometimes boys are more comfortable “roughhousing” than girls. Also, some boys have an aversion to testing themselves physically; somehow, you get the feeling that these kids are more prone to using the remote control and approaching sports as a spectator rather than as a “doer.”

These students often have great potential in the Art. You don’t have to be a great athlete to work hard to improve. But part of self-improvement arises in “stressing the organism,” performing under (sometimes uncomfortable) pressure. When you learn to accomplish a free throw in the face of a hostile, yelling crowd, your free throws just get better in all pressure situations.

How do we get these students to attend events that we know are good for them?

First, it makes sense to make some reasonable minimum of tournaments a requirement for promotion. It doesn’t have to be every one, and of course it’s unfair to apply new rules retroactively, but how can you get to Black Belt if you’re totally untested in that medium? It makes sense to require some competition and say so.

Secondly, make sure you build enthusiasm in your student body for the event. Make getting rides easy with a sign-up board. Practice tournament skills in class to prepare and make people more comfortable with what to expect.

Thirdly, find a way to make first-time competitors comfortable.

Once they are there they’ll realize freesparring with others than the kindly Black Belt instructor is not really likely to get them hurt.

You can get them there for the first time by forming team patterns teams. Team patterns let students do things in a group, and they’re pretty “cool.” And nobody, after practicing with a group, wants to let his or her team down. Have team patterns and patterns competition in class.

Finally, reward your students for competing. Throw an ice-cream social to honor competitors. Note their accomplishments on the bulletin board. Take a group picture when there and post that. If Johnny went and he’s smiling, can’t I go and earn the same grin?

Bottom line: we know our students benefit, but it’s up to us to lead them there.



Miss Jordan Watson at Nationals.