

MARTIAL ARTS OF 'THE MATRIX RELOADED'

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World's Leading Magazine of Self-Defense

W. HOCK HOCHHEIM

12 TIPS FOR DEFEATING ANY ATTACKER

ON

**BEWARE!
MARTIAL ARTS SCAMS**

SPECIAL WOMEN'S ISSUE

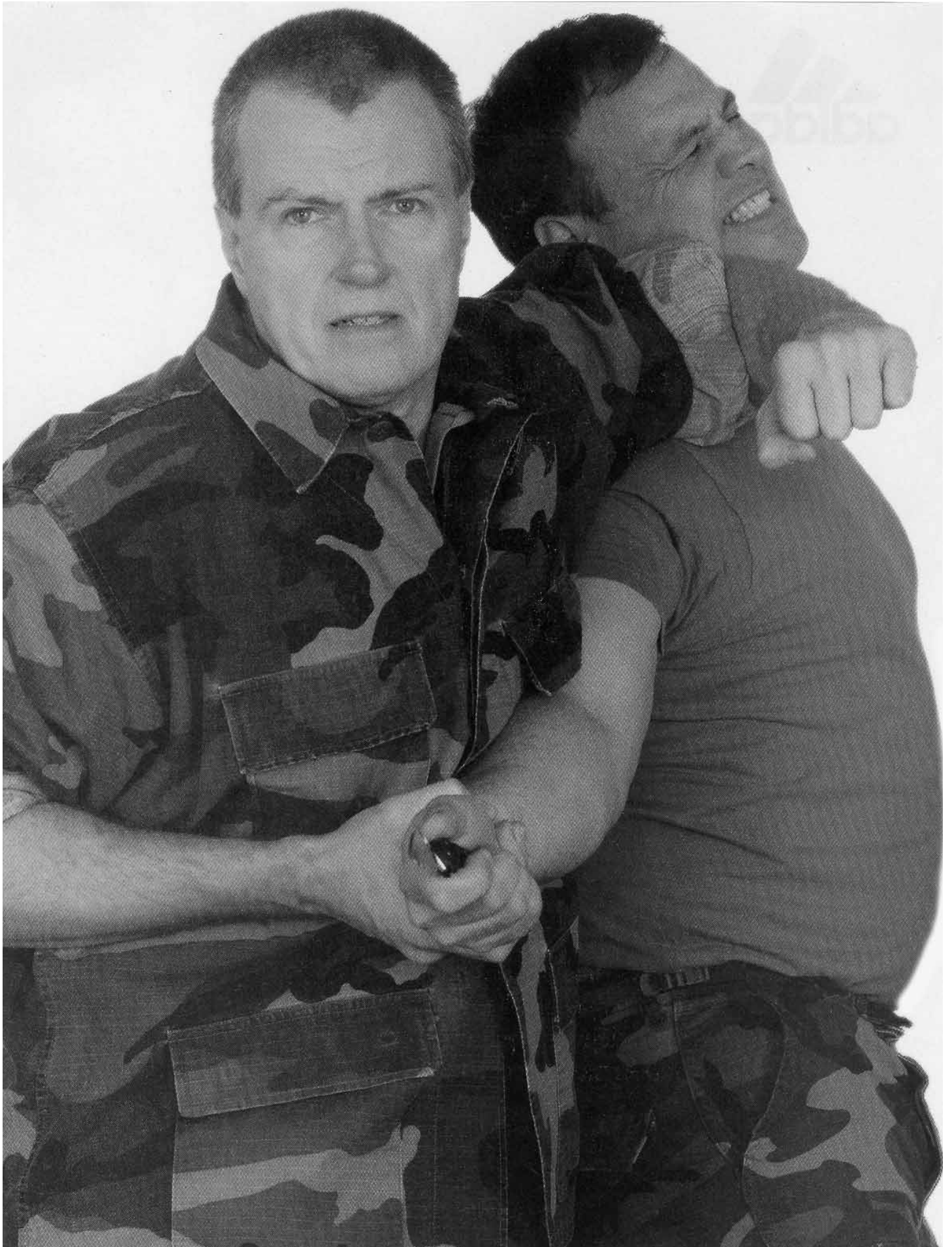
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BY W. HOCK HOCHHEIM

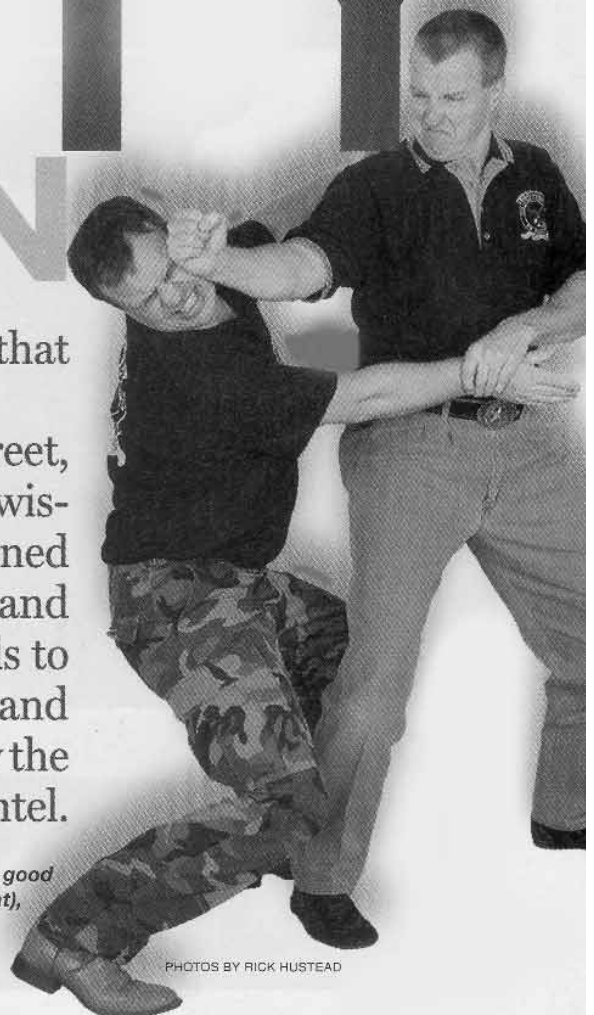
COMBAT COMMANDMENTS FROM THE SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS

DIRTY DOZEN

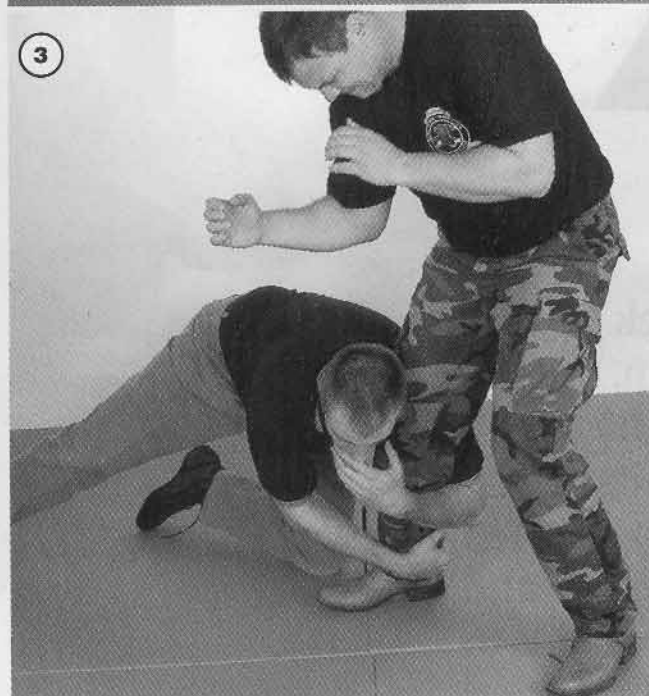
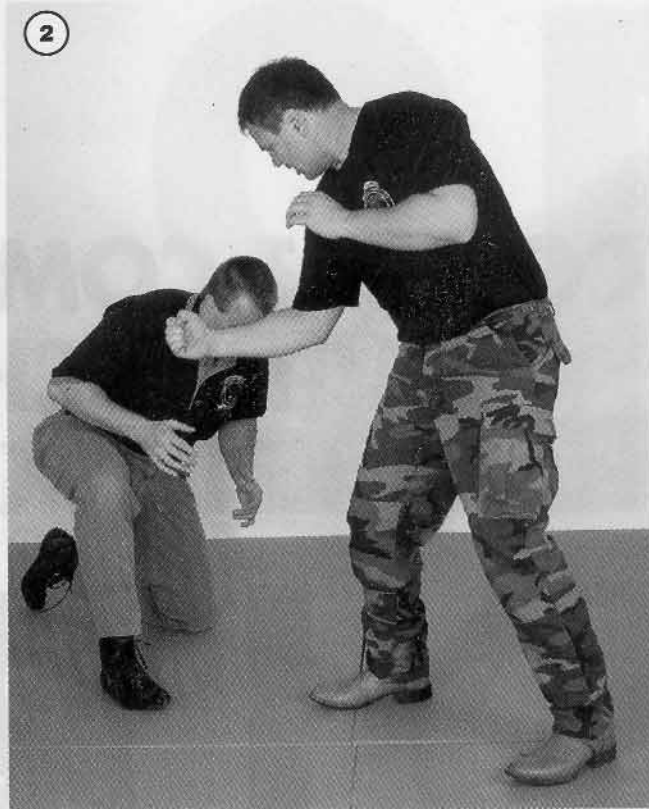
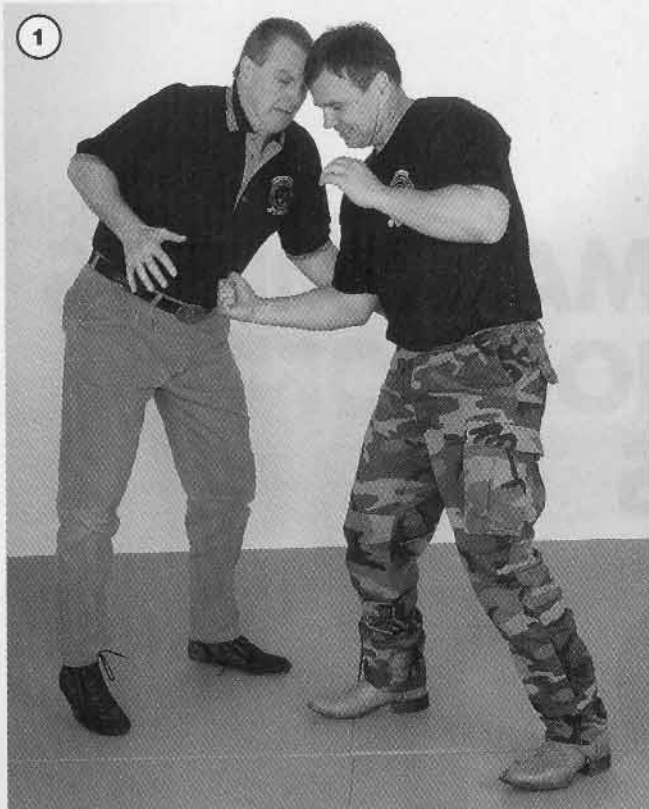
Attention! Stand up straight! Suck in that gut! Good. Now we're ready to begin.

If you want to save your butt on the street, you'd better pay attention to the 12 bits of wisdom I'm about to reveal. After having earned black belts in the Philippine, Japanese and Hawaiian martial arts and put those skills to the test during 30-plus years of military and police work, I've been deemed qualified by the editors of *Black Belt* to pass on this vital intel. So listen up!

Simple techniques are generally a good idea, says W. Hock Hochheim (right), but you should not oversimplify your approach to self-defense.



PHOTOS BY RICK HUSTEAD



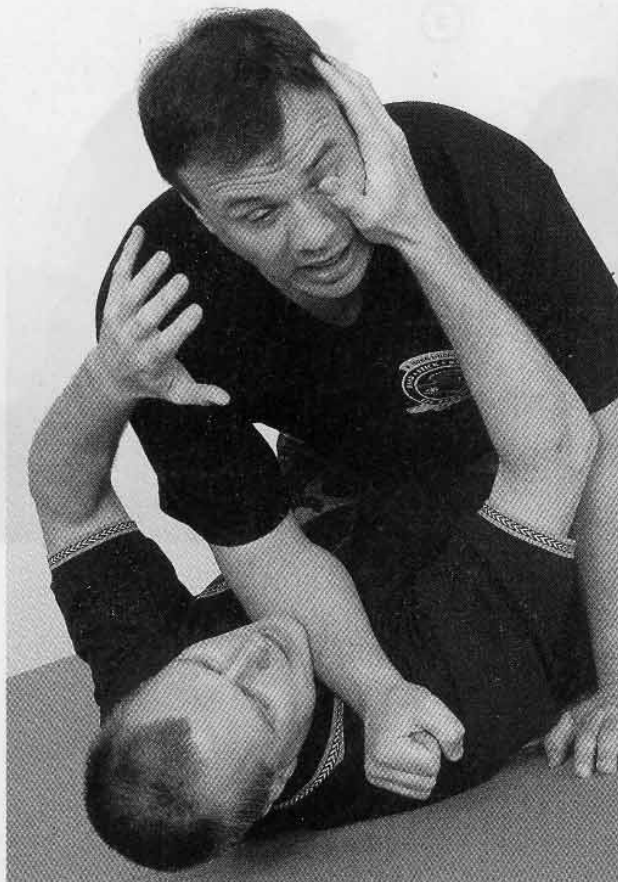
1 DON'T BE STUPID

Remember the KISS method? You know, Keep It Simple, Stupid. Now forget it. I have always hated that trite, thoughtless phrase because the word “stupid” is part of it. It implies that your teacher wants to remain stupid and wants you to be stupid. Now that’s stupid! Einstein once said, “Keep it simple ... but not too simple.” That sounds smarter, doesn’t it? And you’re going to need your smarts to comprehend and implement the rest of the Commandments.

2 LEARN THE ESSENCE OF COMBAT

The martial arts come in flavored packages. Strip them to the core and you’ll find many of the same techniques and strategies. Watch a fight that involves an Indonesian *silat* expert, a Japanese *jujutsu* master and a French *savate* fighter, and even though they will be dressed differently and might enter into close quarters differently, when it comes time to throw down, their physical steps will be similar. Those similarities are the universal tactics that constitute the essence of combat.

Being proficient at self-defense means being able to thrive in chaos. Here, W. Hock Hochheim’s plan is interrupted by a gut punch (1), so he recovers (2) and topples his opponent with a single-leg takedown (3-4).



A finger in the eye—whether intentional or accidental—can ruin anyone's day. The wise martial artist tries to avoid ground-fighting techniques that leave him vulnerable to such attacks.

3 BEWARE OF SPORT LEAKAGE

Every martial art has blessings and curses, but if your main concern is learning realistic self-defense, know that some sporting styles offer more curses than blessings. For instance, boxing teaches excellent hand skills and footwork. However, it involves too much glove use and fails to address grappling. In a street fight, executing a boxing punch without a glove can leave you with a broken hand—as can performing a boxing block.

Another example is provided by judo. Although the Japanese art conveys a number of effective grappling skills, it also emphasizes slapping the mat when you fall or get thrown. On the concrete sidewalk of an American city or the rocky ground of an Afghan battlefield, that can leave you prone and momentarily helpless at the feet of your enemy. Or it can bestow upon you a nice little gift: a shattered hand and forearm.

4 AIM FOR THE FORBIDDEN TARGETS

You graduate from the college of self-defense with a major in eyes, neck, groin and top-of-the-foot attacks, and a minor in finger wrenches, bends and breaks. That became crystal clear to me the day I escaped from a ground choke outside a bar in South Korea by breaking my assailant's pinky.

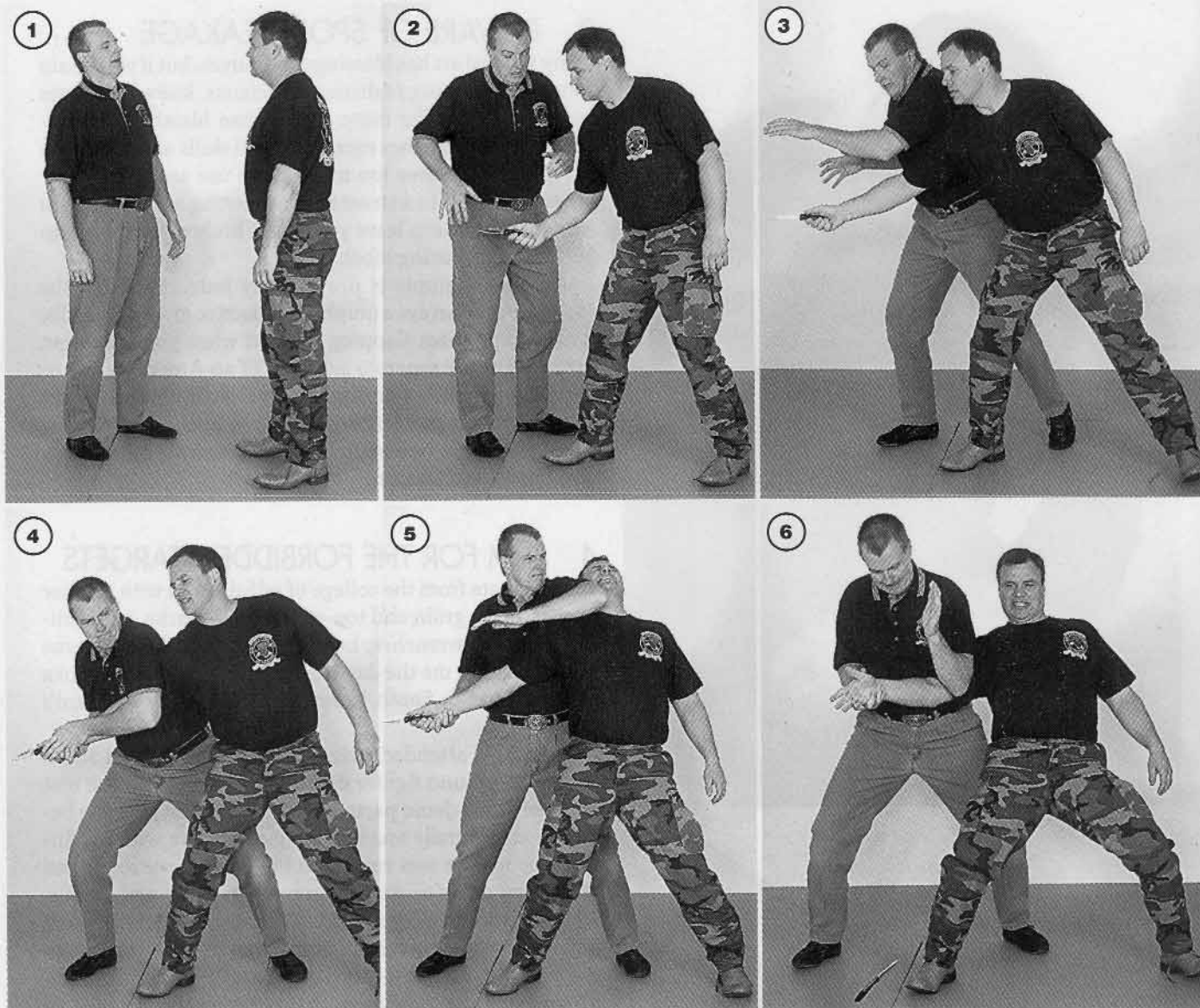
Recently I attended a class at which a high-level South American ground fighter called a volunteer onto the mat to serve as his demo partner. In the very first roll, the beginner accidentally touched the master's eye with his finger. The master was rushed to the emergency room and had to bow out of teaching engagements for several months while he wore an eye patch. His 16 years of experience were defeated by a single eye jab from a rookie. It's testimony to the effectiveness of eye attacks—and why you should avoid ground-fighting techniques that can easily be defeated by a jab to the orb. (Unfortunately, that erases more than half of most curriculums.)

5 LEARN THE DIMINISHED-FIGHTER THEORY

I can't hit a baseball thrown at 100 miles an hour, but I can hit one moving at 50. If I can somehow make the pitcher burn his energy reserves until he is reduced to 50 mph throws, I might be able to whack a home run.

It's the same with fighting. Many of the tactics that naive instructors proclaim to be impossible actually have a chance of working if the enemy is tired or stunned. An arm holding a knife *can* be grabbed. A knife *can* be taken away. Don't think so? Let your training partner bounce a lamp off your head first, and you'll see just how easily he can remove a blade from your grip.

When I was a cop, I disarmed a knifer after I threw him down and broke several of his ribs. That's when I realized



If you look at the statistics, you'll see that knife duels seldom happen. Therefore, your training time with a blade should focus on knife defense. To illustrate a practical sequence, W. Hock Hochheim (left) faces opponent Randy Roberson, who is armed with a training knife (1). Hochheim moves out of the path of the weapon (2), then traps the arm (3-4). He follows with an elbow smash to the face (5) and a second elbow to the knife arm, which causes the opponent to drop his knife (6).

that knife disarms are not fantasy techniques. They are used successfully every day all over the world—and usually by untrained people. Naysayers like to scare you with a Conan-the-Barbarian attack accompanied by a terse challenge like, “Try to catch this!” Meanwhile, you should be looking around for a lamp.

Not every opponent is Bruce Lee on three cups of coffee. I arrested more than 1,500 people during my law-enforcement career; most were uncoordinated, untrained, out-of-shape or under the influence of alcohol or drugs—or all of the above. If you train, the odds are in your favor. Never underestimate an opponent, but don't let the fear factor psyche you out, either.

6 TRAIN ACCORDING TO THE STATS

A major problem in martial arts classes is lopsided priorities. Too much training is devoted to events that are unlikely to occur. Knife fighters duel too much, *karateka* exchange kicks and punches too much, and grapplers wrestle too much. Few students of self-defense spend enough time studying the psychology of violence.

Endeavor to learn what's most likely to happen and train for that first. Then work backward along the continuum of probability.

Practice drills—but not too much. Do one or two for every tactic you learn, but don't become a drill expert. In-

stead, become a fighting expert. Learn to distinguish between the two. I know too many people who can perform thousands of pretty drills yet would crumble when faced with the rabid charge of a wild man.

7 DON'T BE AFRAID TO BE UGLY

Speaking of pretty moves ... people often struggle to look graceful and execute beautiful techniques. In reality, if you look good while fighting, it should be by accident. Your techniques should look scary, shocking and ugly. People should wince when they see you in action; they should not say, "Oh, you're so smooth!"

partment of Justice reported that when defenders with a gun or knife stood boldly in front of a criminal, the bad guy stopped his approach 65 percent of the time. A serious fighting stance may serve the same pre-emptive function.

The second thing stances are good for is to act as a starting point for partner practice. But as soon as the ram begins, the stance disappears. You must be immediately able to function with a weapon, against a weapon, on your feet, on your knees, in a chair and on the ground. It's not only about being competent in the four ranges; it's about being competent in any environment and capable of flowing from one to another.

The Skinny on Targets

The best targets for inducing pain and effecting knockouts are the eye area (sometimes called the sinus triangle formed by the two eyes and the nose), the neck (including the throat, windpipe and carotid arteries), the groin, the tops of the feet and the ankles. At least one, but frequently two or three, of those targets is always available for you to exploit in close-quarters combat.

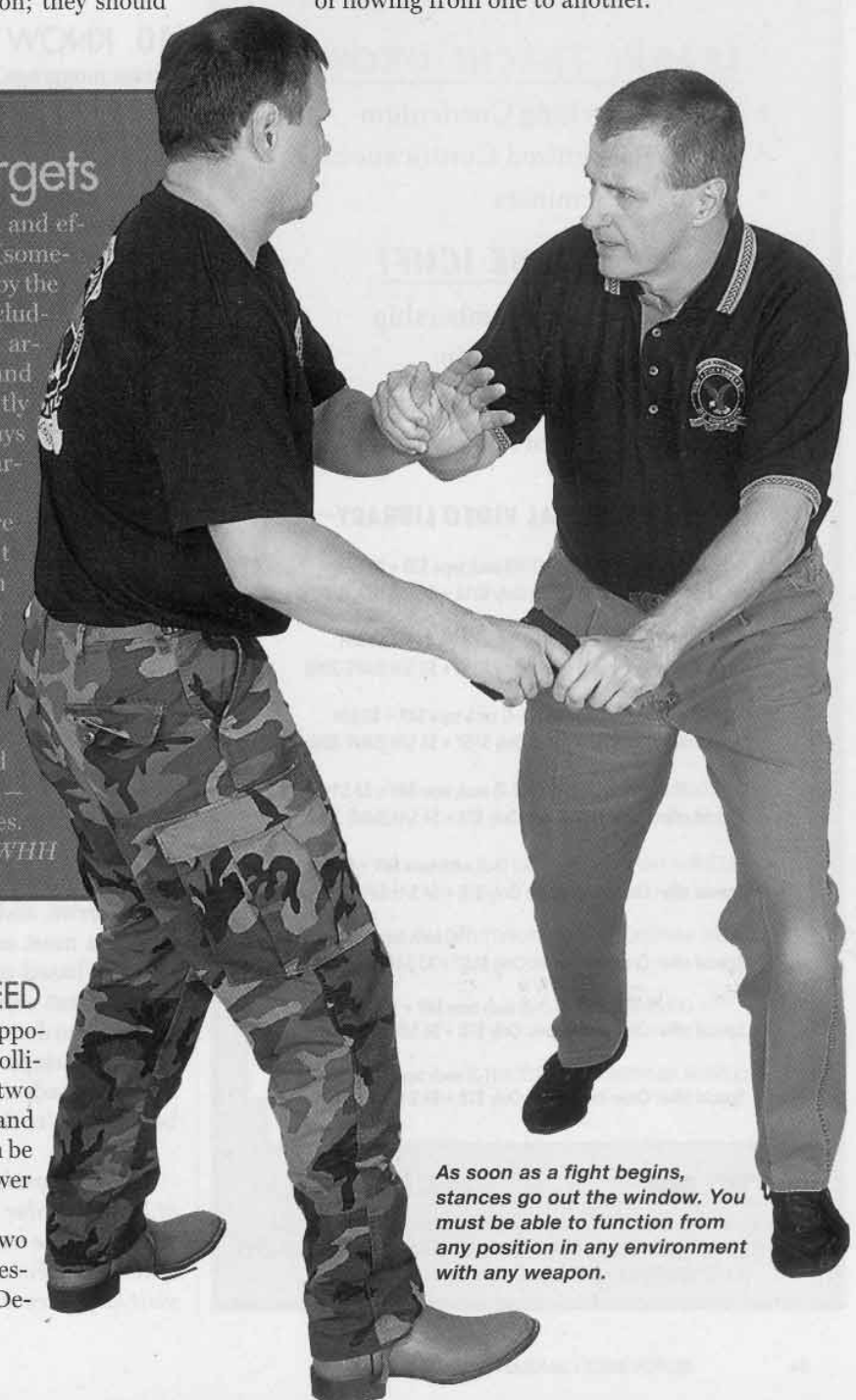
There's much talk about pressure points as targets. If you choose to orient your training to them, get opinions from doctors and not just martial artists. I'm talking about real medical doctors who have completed a course of study at a university, not grads from Dr. Chang's School of Medieval Herbs and Sorcery. Too many martial artists get hypnotized into feeling—and then believing in—questionable pressure-point techniques.

—WHI

8 RECOGNIZE THAT FIGHTS OCCUR AT RAMMING SPEED

In a fight, either you're ramming your opponent or he's ramming you. If there is no collision, there's no fight. There are just two people shuffling around, making faces and talking smack. While ramming, there can be no fixed fighting stances; there is only power and balance in motion.

Fighting stances are good for only two things. One is to establish command presence to intimidate an enemy. The U.S. De-



As soon as a fight begins, stances go out the window. You must be able to function from any position in any environment with any weapon.

9 BE ABLE TO THRIVE IN CHAOS

Whether you're a soldier serving 8,000 miles from home, a cop walking a beat in a seedy part of town or a civilian taking a stroll in the park, if you're attacked, it's you against the criminal. Things quickly degenerate into chaos, eye-to-eye and animal-to-animal.

Mike Tyson once said, "Everybody has a plan; then they get punched in the mouth." Your plan must include the inevitability of chaos. Train for it. Learn to thrive in it. It's crazy out there, but fortune favors the prepared.

10 KNOW THAT SIZE MATTERS

Street muggings, home invasions and back-alley ambushes do not have weight categories. Sporting events do. That's why most of the tactics you learn in a martial arts class work best against an opponent who is about the same size, weight and strength as you—give or take 15 percent. If you are 20 percent below the level of your adversary, you must become 20 percent faster and stronger to even the odds. Now get to the gym! If you don't have time to pump iron, memorize the 11th Combat Commandment.

11 CHEAT

In the Army, we had a saying: If you're in a fair fight, you didn't prepare well enough. Be the first to cheat, the last to cheat and don't forget to cheat in the middle. The last thing you should fight with is your hands. Use every weapon, chair, lamp, ashtray, rifle stock and rock you can get your paws on.

The word "cheat" has negative connotations in our society, but there's nothing negative about the survival of you and yours when a criminal attacks. Do whatever it takes to win; your only caveat should be the final Commandment.

12 DON'T BECOME A KILLING MACHINE

You may find yourself tangling with criminals or terrorists. Sometimes you'll need to neutralize them until the police arrive, and sometimes you'll be forced to kill. Either way, you must act on moral, ethical and legal principles that are based on the totality of the circumstances. You cannot treat every panhandler or drunk as a Nazi commando who demands to be smitten in four easy World War II combat steps. Nor can you treat every killer as a lost soul who needs to be rehabilitated. Use discretion. Remember that you're the good guy and act like one. ✖

About the author: W. Hock Hochheim is a Black Belt Hall of Fame member and a Ft. Worth, Texas-based instructor who tours the world teaching hand, stick, knife and gun combatives. For more information, call (817) 581-4021 or visit <http://www.HocksCQC.com>.

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