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Close Quarter Combat

MAGAZINE

**June / July 2001
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About the Cover: Jerry VanCook demonstrates one of many grabs and stabs using a knife.



Give or Take, More or Less

By Publisher W. Hock Hochheim

As a kid in the late '50's and '60's I remember seeing comic book ads advertising Charles Atlas booklets that would prevent you—Mister Skinny Bolink—from having Hercules-sized men kick sand in your face on the beach. The fact that you took some of the granules in the eye, seemed to disgust your fickle girlfriend. She draped her pretty self around the grinning musclemen in the final frame of this pictorial while you sat aghast. The ads introduced me, and numerous kids like me, to the concept that size does count! ...and Charles Atlas was there to help.

On the next page of the classifieds was the drawing of a mysterious fist. Learn the blows of this thing called...Karate. "How do you pronounce that?" my friends and I pondered at school? Car rates? Car rats – What is this – Learn secret weak spots! Less than a dollar and a stamp and they would rush you a powerful pamphlet of folded, stapled

papers, all poorly mimeographed from WHO KNOWS WHERE – A secret cave in Asia? We had no Karate Kids or Power Rangers back then. No Kung Fu because Cain wasn't wandering the earth yet. David Carridine was still a kid reading these same ads. Lucky the Shadow was clouding men's minds in the Far East. We did know that. The Shadow didn't have to fight these musclemen. He clouded their minds!

Only our imagination of heroes and storylines in the comics conjured up the sources. We learned that a Charles Atlas bench press was just not enough to defeat these damn, girl-stealing, sand-kickers! There were mysterious foreign men, probably wearing—you know—robes or something, using big swollen fists to hit weak spots on

the body that would topple Hercules himself! Size didn't matter. Mystic Skinny Bolinks can defeat behemoths, especially when you have the bastardized knuckles of a Himalayan swami!

But all this mystic talk can still cloud men's minds to the truth. Size does count! In the martial sciences, size, weight and strength are usually compared to that of an opponent's. Sport boxing, wrestling, kick boxing, even no-holds-barred fighting competitions have weight divisions.

Innocently enough, most reality CQC tactics are designed for the average man fighting the average man. This is a vital concept rarely if ever explained to practitioners. What is the definition of the average Year 2001 man? Statistics vary, but most fall around the range of 6 foot tall and about 180 lbs.

How can you judge all this? I like to use a plus or minus ratio grading. Tactics that are taught in good systems have a good chance of working at the 10 to 15 percent plus or minus ratio. If both combatants are about the same, give or take this 10 to 15 percent, most smart tactics have a good chance of working. Once you make this evaluation, then work to compensate. Really short? Train to be faster and stronger than the average. Really weak? Build goal-specific strength better than the average, and so on. And no matter the size difference, learn to cheat and fight foul and dirty. Pee Wee Herman will never beat Hulk Hogan in a fair fight, and Pee Wee needs to compensate with strategies and tricks, and equalizing weaponry like impact tools, knives and even guns.

A knife is a great equalizer, but it is not God's gift to equalization. The bigger the edged weapon, like a samurai sword, a kukri or a Bowie, the less kickboxing-like and jujitsu-like skills you need to survive. The smaller the knife, like a tactical folder,

the more striking, kicking and grappling skills you will need to win.

This plus or minus, 10 to 15 percent size ratio is a good way to evaluate the practicality of systems.

It is a logical start-

ing point on a scientific scale to teach tactics. It is also an easy way to explain methods in problem-solving the body size and weapon questions in the chess game and arms race of life. It seems The Shadow has done a lot of research, and he tells us there is a lot of evil in the hearts of men. ☛

But all this mystic
talk can still cloud men's
minds to the truth.
Size does count!



Land-Mail Message:

Did you hear that Bob Kasper said in *Tactical Knife* magazine he plans to give up on the saber grip and go over to the reverse grip? —D.S./ North Carolina

Reply:

In the last few weeks I heard more confusing interpretations about Bob Kasper's "Street Smart's" article in TK, May 2001 column on the saber grip. People on knife forums, chat lines and in my seminars say the wildest things about it like "you should only use the reverse grip," and "your thumb should never, ever be atop the knife." Reading Bob's well-written column (with pictures) I simply cannot see the confusion, but a lot of the misinterpretation is hearsay from people who never saw the column. Also, people have differing definitions about the saber grip.

To many, myself included, the saber grip is simply when the blade extends out from the top of your hand like a sword, no matter where the thumb goes. There are all kinds of sword handles and sword grips that require the thumb to be in differing positions. The reverse grip is when the blade extends out from the bottom of your hand. There are differing types inside both categories. Where the thumb goes or doesn't go can become sub-categories. Some experts consider the saber grip as with the thumb atop the handle. When Kasper says he has eliminated the saber grip from his curriculum, he defines it with this high thumb position. Of course, he still will use the sharp-end-out-of-the-top-of-the-hand grip.

I find the mandatory high thumb to be uncomfortable for me under most circumstances. My hand is big, my thumb is long, and the handle of almost every knife with guards does not accommodate me, thus interfering with my grip strength. My thumb position wanders from knife to knife. Some old-timer military experts even put the flat of their thumb tip on the side of the blade, atop where you'll find most knife maker insignias. They still get some excellent slicing done even with the knife somewhat sideways in their hand. If you watch veteran knife practitioners, their thumbs shift as needed, and the edge of their weapon also

rotates inside their hands to hit different targets.

Slashing power is important. When you cut a tough steak or Christmas turkey, you will often reflexively brace your thumb atop the knife to generate more slicing power. Put the edge of a dull, metal training knife against the chest of a training partner. Push him back with the blade. The first time, don't use the high thumb. It is difficult to project power through to the tip and move the man back. The second time, push him with the braced high thumb atop the knife. With the thumb assist atop the knife you will push your partner's torso back further! This equates to slicing and penetration power. The thumb helps. Also, when you use the knife to block an incoming knife or stick attack you may need the thumb brace to help support the block.

There are people out there that will still lose their knife while holding it in a complete vice-like, thumbs-down, hand wrap too! Their solution? Go to the gym! Do some weight lifting that involves forearm strength. Get a rubber ball, and exercise your hand squeeze. Slash and stab wooden posts for goal-specific strength.

Batters in baseball, tennis players and many other athletes change their grips in split-second, mid performance, and I too believe in the freedom of the wandering thumb. Saber grip, reverse grip, thumbs up, thumbs down, and all their sub-categories? There is no one perfect knife grip. There is only the best one for the moment, your knife, your strength and your hand size. Grips, like fighting stances, transition through combat.

Land-Mail Message:

Read your knife disarm article, and it seemed quite plausible. Loved those photos of you bashing the armed man with a chair, and then getting the knife. Yet, I hear so many say knife disarms are a fantasy and are impossible...

— H.G./L.A., CA

Reply:

I believe you have a chance at a disarm if you can diminish the enemy first. And all my disarm instruction is based upon this premise. Without making a 15 minute



speech on enemy diminishment before showing each and every disarm, let's just say the success of the disarm may look impossible and unrealistic, but that doesn't mean it's impossible.

It's difficult for say—a savvy Army Ranger or street cop—to open a martial arts magazine and see a guy dressed in a Filipino vest doing some thumb grab and knife strip disarm. *What?* they proclaim! *The opponent has no grip on the handle? A real fighter would have a tight grip on that handle.* Citizens deduce the same flaws. This is a common mistake in many FMA (Filipino Martial Arts.) They often have no combat edge. They just drill and teach techniques isolated from the anger and chaos of real combat. The strip disarm may work, if you bash the bad guy real good before you execute it. FMA fails to explain this. Many martial artists don't possess sufficient experience to grasp this concept.

I withdrew my *Concepts in Knife Disarming* video from the market two years ago. I felt if I didn't run a constant disclaimer scrolling across the screen that read in red flashing letters—"don't try this disarm without first breaking the attacker's nose," viewers would consider the actions impossible and feel like they had wasted their time. I now teach knife disarming buried in a connecting string of action that happens to include knife takeaways. Inside this collection of actions, disarms do not look like fantasies, and students are more willing to embrace these survival skills. 🍀

Send your email questions to
HockHoch@aol.com or land-mail to
Close Quarter Combat Mag, P.O.
Box 5372, Ft. Oglethorpe, GA 30742.
As Fox's Bill O'Reilly would say,
"keep your comments pithy."



The Kukri

Traditional Weapon of the Gurkha

By Major JGH Corrigan

Some time in the distant past, about 4000 years ago, a group of people in Central Asia, where Mongolia and Siberia now are, began to move away from their homeland. This migration did not take place all at once, but went on for hundreds of years. No one knows why these people left the steppes where they had lived and herded since time immemorial. It may have been due to there being more people than the land could support, it may have been due to war, or to famine, or pestilence, or perhaps simple curiosity. They were of Mongolian stock, short, stocky, with high cheekbones and the epithantic eyelid fold, a natural mutation to cope with the bitterly cold winds of their homeland. Some of them moved north, across the land bridge of the Bering Strait and into North America. The original Americans pushed south, for what is now Canada was still largely covered with ice and snow, as the last ice age retreated, and they would evolve into the Incas, Aztecs, Olpecs and Mayans of south and Central America.

Later, as the people we know as the Athabascans, some would return and settle the Canadian plains. More would come across and become the Inuit. Others moved from Mongolia southwards, into Tibet and northern China. Later a further group would also come south, but, finding Tibet already settled, they moved on into what is now Nepal. This latter group started coming into Nepal around 1500 BC, and as northern India was already populated, there they stayed. Originally they settled down in the valleys of Nepal, but as malaria began to take its toll they moved higher up, into the foothills of the Himalayas where the mosquitoes could not reach. Although all originally spoke the same language, or dialects of it, as they settled down in groups, often cut off from each other, language drift began.

In the 8th Century AD a scholar visiting Buddha's birth place in Lumbini, west Nepal, described the country as being 'populated

by wild tribes, all speaking their own languages and fearsome to behold'.

For centuries nothing very much happened in Nepal. The tribes lived a subsistence existence, occasionally fought amongst themselves, and had little contact with the outside world except for some limited trading with Tibet and northern India. Alexander the Great, Tamerlane and Babur all passed them by. There was nothing in Nepal that anyone wanted, and the mountainous terrain and the ferocity of the tribes made invasion not worth the effort.

Then, in the 13th Century, began the Moghul invasions of India. These people, (Moghul is a derivation of Mongol) were distantly related to the inhabitants of Nepal but had been converted to Islam. Coming into India as traders and mercenary soldiers, from what is now Afghanistan, the Moghuls eventually stayed, and set about consolidating their hold on the country and converting the inhabitants to Islam. Some, notably the aristocratic Aryan Rajputs, resisted.

Eventually, defeated by superior numbers, some of the Rajput princelings fled north, into Nepal. Being educated and with modern weapons, technology, and gold, they swiftly established themselves as the rulers of the Mongolian tribes, and with them they brought the Hindu religion and what is now the Nepali language.

Nepal was still far from being a country, and by the beginning of the 18th Century there were no fewer than 46 separate independent states, some only a few square miles in extent, all ruled over by a rajah, a rana, a king or a prince. In 1742 one Prithy Narayan Shah ascended to the throne of Gorkha, a hill state in west Nepal. The Shahs were originally Rajputs who had come into Nepal sometime in the 15th Century and had been kings of Gorkha ever since. Prithy Narayan was a man with a vision; and his vision was to unite the disparate tribes and statelets into one nation. This had been tried before, but in the past a local conqueror would execute



Major Gordon Corrigan was a regular officer of the British Brigade of Gurkhas until retiring in 1998.

brought them to attention of the British, now rulers of most of India, and led to the Anglo Nepal war of 1814 to 1816.

Now the British met, for the first time, the fearsome kukri. It was described as a heavy curved knife, deadly in close combat where its wielder would duck under the levelled British muskets and slash upward. Up to now the British had welcomed an enemy



Rifleman, 10th Gurkha Rifles, Burma, WW II

charge, for those that survived the disciplined volley fire came to grief on 17 inches of good Sheffield steel. The Gurkhas would avoid open battle where they could; they had some firearms, but were largely armed with bows and arrows, spears and the kukri. Leaping out of long grass or from woods and down cliffs, once the Gurkha was in amongst British troops the end was certain. So, of course, was the war.

The British were the world's foremost technological military power, they had artillery and cavalry and they had inexhaustible funds. The war ended in a stalemate, but the Gurkhas were the first to sue for peace, thinking (wrongly) that the British had found a pass leading to the Gurkha capital of Kathmandu. It had been a strange war. Neither side would run; both sides treated prisoners honourably, and looting was controlled. The relationship between the two sides became almost one of affection, and after the battle of Kalunga, near Dehra Dun, in 1814, when the Gurkhas refused to surrender, charged the British lines armed only with their kukris, and were killed almost to the last man by artillery and musket fire, the British erected a memorial to 'Our Brave Enemies'. After the war the British decided that these warriors would be better fighting for them than against them. The Gurkhas considered the British to be 'almost as good as us,' and it was mutually agreed that Gurkhas could be recruited into British raised regiments, a relationship that continues to this day.

The origins of the kukri are obscure. It is probable – nobody knows for certain – that it came into Nepal with the Rajputs. The Arabs certainly had edged weapons with a reverse curve – where the blade curves away from the holder rather than towards him – and these may be derived from the medieval falchion. The Moghuls had adapted Arab scimitars and brought

them into India, where the Rajputs copied them and adapted them yet again. There is no evidence of the existence of anything resembling the modern kukri amongst early Indian weaponry, but there are surviving examples of swords that might have led to the kukri. The Rajputs may have brought these into Nepal where the tribes modified them to suit their own way of life.

The kukri is a broad-bladed, leaf-shaped knife with a single edged 11-inch blade that curves away from the holder rather than towards him, as would a conventional knife. The blade is heavy, affixed to a bone handle and feels unbalanced to the European. It weighs one

the defeated leaders, enslave the people and take their land and their women.

After a few years the oppressed would rise again and drive the conquerors out. Prithy Naryan had a different plan. He wanted to unite the tribes into one people, all having an equal status under himself as the king. He raised an army of Gurung and Magar tribesmen from his own state of Gorkha – hence the name Gurkhas - commanded by Aryan officers, and began to make war on his neighbours. He was remarkably successful. He conquered; then he invited the defeated to join him in his crusade for unification. Most did, and although Prithy Naryan died in 1775 his sons continued his efforts and by the late 18th Century Nepal was united under the Shah monarchy. Expansion continued, as it had to.

The Gurkhas, as all Nepal's who fought for the Shahs were now known, had a standing regular army. This was an unusual institution in that part of the world at that time, where the accepted way of making war was by calling up a levy, campaigning from after the harvest until the next planting was due. A standing army had to be paid, and the only way to raise revenue to pay it was by a land tax. As more land was conquered, the army got bigger and more land had to be obtained to pay it. The Gurkhas moved west into Sikkim, east into Garwhal and then north into Tibet. For a time the Chinese in Tibet were in retreat, but in the long term the Gurkhas could never hope to compete with China's vast population and resources, and they were driven back to the Himalayas.

Now the Gurkhas looked south, to the rich lands of northern India where a man only had to throw a seed on the ground to see it spring up, where the cattle were plentiful and the women fat and festooned with gold. The Gurkha armies moved, and inevitably this





Men of the 7th Gurkha Rifles having kukris sharpened before deployment to the Falklands War, 1982.

and a half pounds and the blade is just over an inch wide at its narrowest part and one and three quarters at its broadest. The scabbard is leather and in the rear are two smaller knives, one for skinning animals and one for use as a sharpener.

Near the bottom of the blade is a small curved indentation. It is said that this represents the Sanskrit letter 'Om,' the first letter of the alphabet and with religious significance to Hindus. As most Gurkhas are Buddhist and animist rather than Hindu, it is much more likely that the notch is there for the very practical purpose of preventing an opponent's sword from sliding down the blade of the kukri and cutting off the Gurkha's knuckles. It also makes blood drip off the kukri before it runs down the handle, which would make the weapon slippery and hard to use. Most Gurkhas carry a kukri at home, and there is a standard issue version for the Army.

The kukri is an all-purpose tool, used for chopping wood, digging holes, butchering meat, opening tins and as a weapon of war. It has no mystical or religious significance and, contrary to the cherished belief of the rest of the world, once a Gurkha draws his kukri it is not necessary to draw blood – (if necessary his own blood) – before returning it to its sheath. It is, however, a most effective weapon in skilled hands. Employed in a combination of a

chop and a slice, one blow of a kukri will sever arms and remove heads. Contrary to press reports from the Western Front in the Great War, where there were six Gurkha battalions from September 1914 until they were redeployed to Mesopotamia in late 1915, Gurkhas do not and never have thrown their kukris. The weapon is quite unsuited as a throwing knife.

Every soldier of the British Brigade of Gurkhas today is issued two kukris. One is highly burnished and its scabbard polished until it gleams, and is worn on parade. The other is the working kukri, worn in combat uniform and used as a weapon of war. Unlike the rest of the British infantry, Gurkha units do not carry bayonets; they prefer the kukri. There is no training manual for the kukri, it is not needed as every Gurkha becomes accustomed to using a kukri at his father's knee.

Gurkha battalions have around 800 Gurkhas and 12 British officers. These officers also carry kukris, but by custom they may not do so until they have passed the language examination in Nepali. While the modern Gurkha soldier is taught English so that he can communicate with the rest of the army and with NATO and UN allies, everything within the regiment is conducted in Nepali, which the British officer is required to speak fluently.

The usual method of using the kukri to kill a man is to aim for the join of the neck and shoulder and to swing it in a curved motion. Just as the blade strikes the target the kukri is pulled towards the user, thus imparting a slicing action that, combined with the force of the blow, will remove the head. Strength has little to do with it: the skill of the wielder is what matters. Most Europeans find this difficult. Our hands are too large, and we have not been using a kukri since the age of five.



Gurkhas prefer the kukri to the bayonet.

There is much myth surrounding the Gurkha and his kukri, most of it untrue. One tale, told repeatedly when old soldiers get together, concerns the Italian campaign in World War II when two Gurkha brigades took part in the Anglo American drive up the peninsula. A German paratrooper met a Gurkha during the fighting for Cassino. The Gurkha slashed with his kukri. 'Ha', said the German, 'you missed.' 'Shake your head,' replied the Gurkha.

While the foregoing is a good story but nonsense, the Gurkha kukri was very much feared by the Germans. Small Gurkha patrols would go out at night and creep behind enemy lines. As there were British, Polish, Free French and Moroccan soldiers all fighting under British command, and as positions were often very close together, it was important to be quite sure that the post infiltrated was actually that of the enemy. All troops equipped by the British laced their boots crosswise. The Germans laced theirs diagonally.

The Gurkhas would feel for the boots of the slumbering men, and if they were laced diagonally they would silently slit the throats of the sleepers with their kukris. Gurkhas are humorous people, and sometimes they would remove all the heads except one, leaving the lucky one to sleep on, until he awoke in the morning to find all his comrades dead. The occasional eccentric Allied soldier who preferred to lace his boots in the German fashion soon decided to conform to British regulations.

During the Malayan Emergency of 1948 – 1960, sometimes called 'Britain's Vietnam,' it was important that killed Communist leaders could be identified by the police anti-terrorist branch. Gurkhas were told to bring back the heads of those they killed. This was no problem, heads were swiftly removed with the kukri; but heads are heavy and were a nuisance to carry for what might be a further several weeks on patrol. The Gurkhas suggested that hands would be easier to carry and could be identified by fingerprints. Unfortunately many of the terrorists had never been in custody and their fingerprints were not on file. Then it was suggested that if the Press got hold of what was happening the British army would be accused of mutilating the dead, so finally cameras were issued and a photograph brought back instead.

In 1981 the military junta in Argentina, as a ploy to divert attention from internal problems onto an external foe, seized the Falkland Islands, a British colony since the Napoleonic Wars. A British task force was sent by sea to take the Falklands back, and included in the force was one Gurkha battalion. As they were better able to cope

with the bitterly cold weather than many of the British troops, and as they were accustomed to moving about in the dark, Gurkha patrols were used to sow fear and confusion into the Argentines by operating behind their lines, ambushing and taking out officers and signallers. The Argentine army warned its soldiers that Gurkhas were savages, who killed their own wounded, took no prisoners and lived by eating the enemy dead!

All this was utter rubbish – the Gurkha is basically a gentle soul until roused, and he has always treated prisoners well – but the Argentine army was a victim of its own propaganda, and every time a formal attack was put in on an Argentine position by the Gurkha battalion, the Argentine conscripts did not wait to find out the truth, but ran away. It was bitterly disappointing for the Gurkhas, for when they made their final charge with kukris drawn there was no one left to meet them, and no medals to be won, but if your reputation does your work for you then it saves casualties.

Army kukris were traditionally made in Nepal, hammered out by local tradesmen using what steel they could find – in more recent times from beaten car springs. On Indian independence in 1947, when the British Brigade of Gurkhas transferred from the (British) Indian Army to the British Army proper, it was considered by those who administer the army that a British army weapon could not be manufactured in such a haphazard way. Tenders from all over England were called for, and detailed specifications for a kukri were laid down. The contract to supply kukris was won by Garrards, better known as the crown jewellers.

The product was impressive; made of stainless steel, beautiful to look at and very smart on parade. The problem was that the Gurkhas didn't like it. It was too heavy, it did not balance in the Gurkha hand and it could not be made sharp enough to shave with. The Gurkhas accepted what was issued, put the pride of London's kukris away in their lockers, and took to carrying the Malay gollock, a short machete, instead. The army gave in gracefully. The new kukris were withdrawn and contracts let to the bazaars of Nepal, from where kukris



On patrol in Belize 1998. Note kukri worn on left hip.

still come, at a cost to Her Majesty of less than US \$4 each.

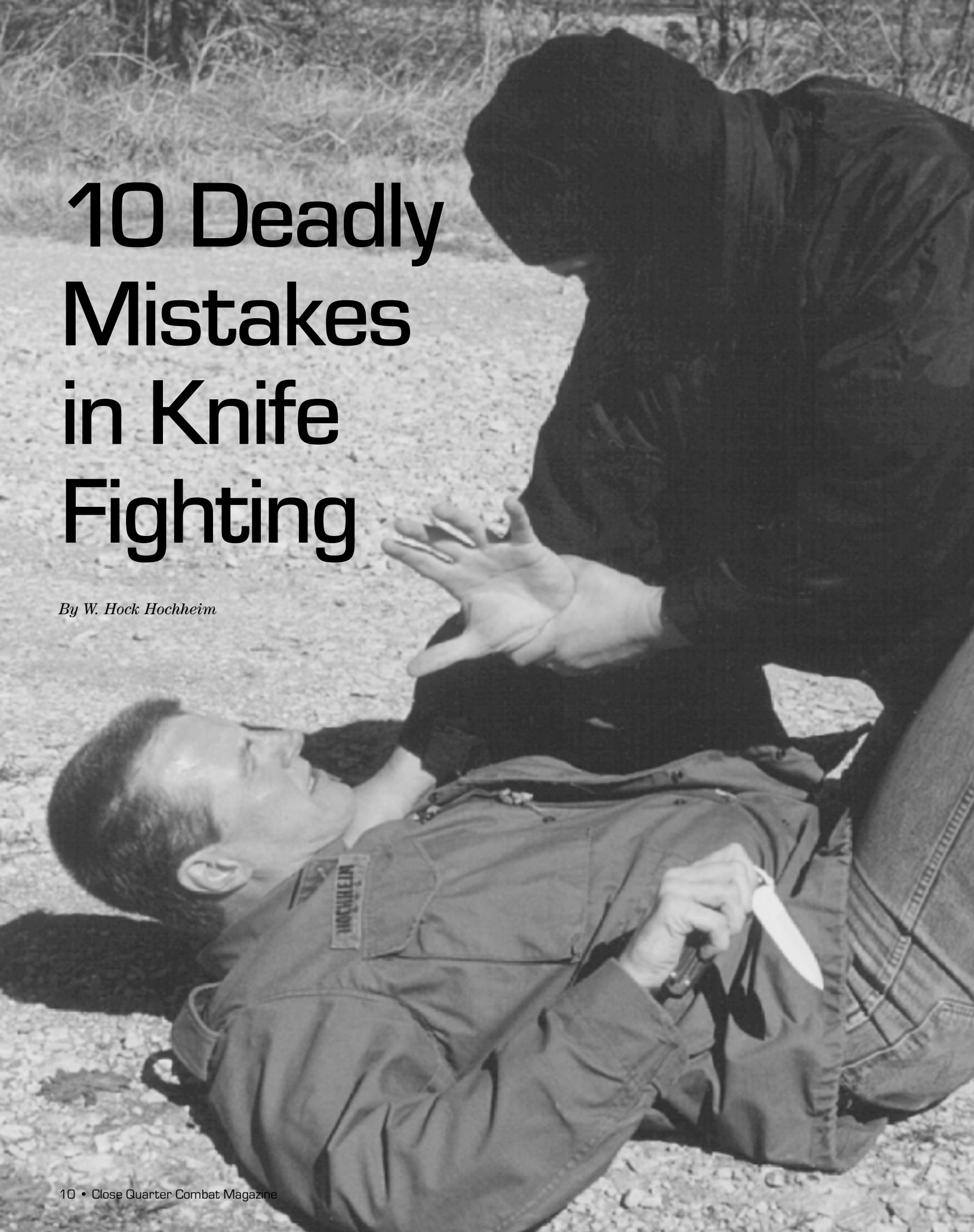
There are lots of kukris advertised in magazines and on sale at military fairs. Most are not genuine army kukris, but made for the tourist trade. A real kukri will have a bone, rather than a wooden, handle, with brass mountings, and it will feel right. If the blade is longer than 12 inches or shorter than nine, it is not the genuine article. Unless it is a kukri issued up to the end of the Second War it will not have a War Office arrow etched into the blade: many fakes do.

The kukri is a general all-purpose tool used by all Gurkhas, in the army or out of it. It requires years of practice to use it effectively, which is probably why other nations have not taken it up. In skilled Gurkha hands, however, it is one of the most effective weapons for close quarter fighting ever developed, and wherever the march of military technology takes us, the kukri will still be there, unchanged in appearance, in mode of manufacture and in use, for killing quietly, suddenly and cleanly. ☸

Major Gordon Corrigan MBE was commissioned from Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in 1962 and was regular officer of the British Brigade of Gurkhas until retiring in 1998. He is the author of *Sepoys in the Trenches, the Indian Corps on the Western Front 1914-1915*, Spellmount Publishers, Staplehurst, UK, 1999 and *Wellington – a Military Life*, Hambledon and London, UK, 2001. He is currently writing a reassessment of WW I to be published by Cassell & Co in London and New York in late 2002.

10 Deadly Mistakes in Knife Fighting

By W. Hock Hochheim



Who teaches knife fighting these days? Some soldiers. Some cops. Some Black Belts. Even some ex-cons. Some training just comes from the tough side of town or from observing the nightlife in presumed tough neighborhoods. There are many types of self-proclaimed knife experts and instructors. Each may have a specific skill or idea to offer, but many lack an important overall knowledge. Most martial artists have not experienced the gritty street life of a cop. Many soldiers with combat time, and cops with experience have no understanding of the mechanics of fighting as a martial artist might. Nor do they know the great skill developing drills that some martial artists practice to increase savvy, strength and speed. Like ex-cons that only have a killer instinct, some soldiers only have the warrior mindset and lack technique. Each must learn what the other knows in a holistic approach to capture the whole science of knife fighting.

In the last three decades I have served first as a military policeman and investigator for the Army in the US and South Korea, than as a police officer and a detective in a Texas police department. I have responded to and/or investigated hundreds of murders, attempted murders, rapes, robberies and assaults involving a knife. I've seen many deaths and dismemberment, stitches and close calls. I ran some of these criminals down and wrestled knives and other edged weapons from them. These weapons ranged from straight razors to switch blades, and one even an ax. I've collected confessions, stood by autopsies and processed evidence. I've received instruction and help from scores of seasoned city, county, state and federal detectives and from medical examiners and top forensic experts from around the country.

Since before and during this time, I have been a martial artist, attaining black belts in Filipino, Japanese and Hawaiian martial arts. I have rather obsessively conducted extensive research into all the areas of fear, fighting, combat and military psychology to produce my books and this magazine. I reviewed the military manuals and training programs of the major armed forces of the world, and researched hundreds of oral histories on crime and military edged-weapon combat. As a result, I offer you this list of deadly sins, myths, misunderstandings, and mistakes about knife fighting I have seen passed on by well-meaning military, civilians, police and martial artists. These tips may save your life or that of your cadet, your rookie, your student or your brother in combat.

Mistake 1: Always Fighting the Knife Attacker

"If I teach you these things, you can beat any knife attacker. In fact if he has the knife, he is the one at a disadvantage!"

Whether it's in war fighting or a crime in progress, it takes an unfortunate series of events and bad karma to culminate in you facing the tip of a hostile's knife. If you are trained in this foolish, invulnerable mindset, one that I have seen in some police, military and martial art presentations, your muscle memory might have you stand your ground and fight with a false sense of confidence and bravado.

Some incomplete training can even handicap you! Some instruction will ignorantly wean you away from grabbing something in your environment to fight with first, even when weapons might abound around you. Your empty rifle or shotgun can become a club, a nearby chair a shield. These first-response options must be drilled into your muscle memory.

Weigh out the circumstances! Can you win? Can you survive? Is escape an option? If at all feasible, become the guerilla warrior and escape! Even a chimpanzee with a knife could kill you in a few seconds, least of all an enemy soldier, a desperate criminal or an angry neighbor.

Mistake 2: Believing in the Perfect Knife Fighting Stance

"Always stand like this, with your feet far apart as though you were on railroad tracks."

"Here, spread your legs wide and bend deeply at one knee. Bend down! More! Lower! This is a knife stance from deep in the jungles of Indonesia!"

"Always stand like this, with your knife hand to the rear."

"Heel one inch off the ground. Elbow this way. Chin this way. Knee must be this way."

A fighting stance is all about balance in motion. Mobility. Any cross-legged, low-bending, or too wide-legged stances that in ANY way inhibits your ability to instantly walk, or run forward or backward, or side-to-side, can be a grave mistake. The further your legs are apart, or the lower you twist and turn at the knees, the more you cross your legs, the less mobility you have. There



Tom Barnhart demonstrates a wide-legged stance that dangerously hampers your mobility.



Barnhart demonstrates a cross-legged and/or exotic stance, which inhibits mobility.



What possible good is this exotic stance in the chaos of life or death combat?



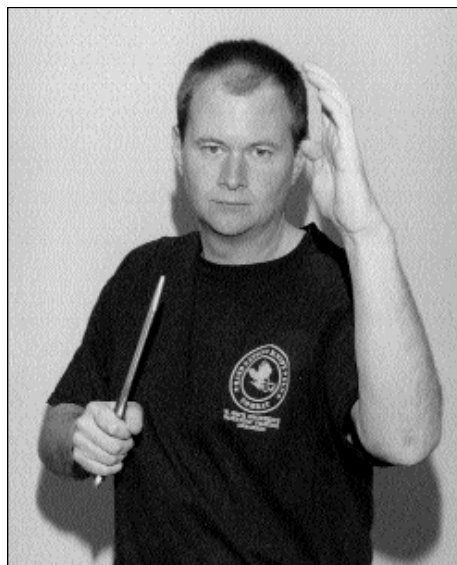
Hock teaching knife combat mobility to students in Australia, with Melbourne Police Criminal Profiler Phillip Walker.

is no one perfect fighting stance. Think balance in motion. Think combat mobility.

In all my years, I have come to the conclusion that teaching strictly enforced fighting stances are highly over-rated. I stand not alone in this idea. In the first instant of combat, we must move, and all that painstaking positioning is askew. Instead, the message should be that a good fighting stance or position is really nothing more than a few basic concepts...

Often, military trainers over-emphasize and over teach the knife-to-the-rear, or knife-back-stance as if it is a golden rule. Some argue that the reared knife can be guarded or protected by the free hand up front. But with your free hand up front in such a position, the trained or untrained enemy will have an opportunity to hack and cut away on your lead forearm, causing varying levels of pain, blood loss, shock and general performance diminishment. It is shocking and stunning to see your pinky hacked off or half-hanging from the knuckle. Plus, holding the knife-to-the-rear takes that much longer for you to reach out and strike the target. You don't see Olympic fencers dueling with their swords in this rear hand position. Reality dueling practice experts have long given up on the stance. They didn't nickname it the sacrifice hand for nothing.

The Biddle System, created by Marine Colonel Anthony Drexel Biddle, and embraced by the United States Marines before, during and for quite sometime after World War II, insisted upon a knife-to-the-front and edge-out fighting stance. Biddle, a jujitsu expert and a sword and fencing master, taught that the empty hand was the grab hand ready to enter the fight.



Tom Pierce demonstrates a knife to the rear stance/position.

How did so many modern military wind up with the knife-to-the-rear stance? Did the Marines have a totally independent course of study from Army? I have asked several respected military training experts, such as the retired US Army Colonel Rex Applegate back in 1996, about this knife-to-the-rear-stance. The Colonel was the trainer of thousands of special troops and had himself been photographed in that knife back position. He told me that position in the photos was his, "just before I'm moving in to stab him stance." Then he lectured me about putting emphasis on any formal fighting stance. "You karate guys worry too much about stances!" he said. He was indeed preaching to the choir.

It is easy to see how naive knife

instructors would interpret still photographs of Applegate in an action sequence, or a picture of a prep attack, as being some kind of official knife-fighting stance. Other Army trainers have excused the subject by simply saying, "It is easier to teach large groups of men the rear stance." That is no excuse. Whatever the reason, the knife-to-the-rear stance has become quite popular in western militaries and those they influence.

But, even a deeper examination of the few military manuals from around the world that still generally espouse the rear-handed-knife stance, oddly enough follow up with the opposite stance approach when diagramming their combat scenarios. In these diagrams, many of the soldiers are posed with their knife hand forward!

When you train entire groups to hold their knives, or weapons to the rear, then both parties automatically face off in that manner, and both innocently cancel out each other's advantage. I see this when I teach certain karate and military groups around the country. Everyone trained in this manner automatically assumes the knife-back position. It can take only one smart participant to stand knife forward and then start hacking away on the lead, weaponless, guard arm before trainees begin to see the knife-front advantage. Imagine this if you can a whole group of western-trained soldiers squaring off against Gurkha troops. All of the Army men pose knife-to-the-rear. All of the Gurkhas stand with knife-to-the-front, holding the advantage. Many western limbs will hit the floor!

In the action and chaos of combat, what is up front and what is in the rear becomes quickly blurred, and that is the truly important message with which to prepare our fighters. The knife fighting duels, that dramatic, fencing face-off, may or may



The old Marine Biddle Stance. Knife up front. Edge out. Hand up and ready to strike, grab or protect.



Knife fighting also involves close quarter grappling and ground combat situations.

not be a part of any knife fight. But, since it can happen, dueling and some related stance—or perhaps a better term position—techniques must be learned. There is a whole chapter with text and photos in Volume 1 of my *Knife Fighting Encyclopedia* on the subject of stances. I only address the topic here in regard to what is commonly described as military knife fighting stances.

Mistake 3: Teaching Knife Fighting Primarily as a Fencing Art

“We just do some knife sparring, after all, that’s reality knife fighting.”

“Oh well, we don’t do any takedowns with knives. Ahh-never thought about it actually.”

“If you learn to keep your range, keep your distance, you can fence with your opponent. That’s all you need.”

How many modern gunfights look like the old Marshal Matt Dillon in Dodge City showdown? Two men face-off on a street at 50 paces. No cover. No concealment. They politely wait and draw. How many? None. Real gun and knife fights are usually chaotic. The sneakiest cheater usually wins. How many knife fights do you think start, continue and end in this face-off type of showdown? In this same way, soldiers in combat and street fighters usually do not draw knives and duel it out like Robin Hood and the Sheriff of Nottingham did in the movies.

The modern-day knife vs. knife duel scenario is often spoiled by one of the fighters using a common sense strategy like spitting or throwing a rock or a stick. Many times on the battlefield or in the street, the blade versus blade face-off causes a greater distancing, and then no fight at all—with both participants unwilling to close in to the horrors. Street fighters can back off, posture, curse, threaten and then go home. But when lives are at stake, such as in a military mission, the fight often must go on.

Most modern knife training courses spend a disproportionate amount of time training in a range least likely to happen. Longer sword fencing techniques don’t always relate to the shorter blade of a knife, certainly that of a folder, and reality knife fighting also involves close quarter grappling and

ground combat situations. Military and criminal history shows us that the most common knife attacks are powerful lunges, slashes and stabs, usually accompanied by angry and desperate mad rushes. The dueling part can be over in a second with such a rushing charge and a tangle of hands, a fall, etc. Grappling! Many knife fights start and finish in the grappling range, the weapons pulled in close-quarters and wrestled into action. Many start and end on the ground. Sometimes the knives are drawn during a ground fight. Sometimes knives are drawn in a close-quarter clinch or clutch, and the participants manage to push each other off, finding themselves in the dueling situation, so these showdowns can certainly happen. Sometimes I wish that duelers could practice with small electric cattle prods. Only then would they begin to respect the knives they are sparring with.

A knife fighter should study in all ranges of combat. Martial artists are often very frustrated to discover that blade training goes well beyond stabbing, slashing and performing boxing ring footwork. They need to also practice what might be more commonly referred to as jujitsu with a knife.

Fact is that real world, knife fighting, or any fighting for that matter always involves terrain and conditions. Anyone who teaches and depends solely on boxer’s footwork to keep his or her distance, has never been in combat inside a living room or kitchen of a residence, a parking lot, or a small tunnel in Vietnam or Korea, or any rugged terrain on any real-world site. Boxing ring or fencing footwork alone doesn’t prepare you for the rugged, real-world geography of combat.

Mistake 4: Over-Emphasizing Knife Flow Drills

“Pass the attack, then stay glued to the arm with your forearm. When the knife fighter attacks back from there, pass it again. Pass. Pass...”

“Wow! This flow drill has 25 steps. It must be great.”



Just a dodge against a stab, and you can find the enemy breathing down your neck.



The Cancer Grip promulgated by some naïve Filipino practitioners.

He attacks. You pass. Attack. Pass. Attack. Pass. When does it end? There are many Asian flow drills that subconsciously deify the unhealthy practice of prioritizing such things as passing the knife. As a result, I see practitioners working in more combative scenarios, mindlessly passing the blade and/or double-tapping the enemy's forearm with the back of their hands, a result of one-too-many dancing flow drills. The training partner, conditioned by these very drills, fails to respond like a real person. This deadly cycle continues.

If you are lucky enough to make such contact with the weapon-bearing limb of the enemy, then your reflex should be to GRAB it. There are thousands of knife attack survivors, both military and civilian, who instinctively grabbed onto the limb of an attacker and fought it out. The most successful technique I have seen in empty hand vs. knife fighting survival? Grabbing (not passing) the weapon-bearing limb, and fight from that point onward. Learn to pass for times only when you cannot grab.

Flow drills of any type are a skill-developing experience to fine-tune certain isolated aspects of a fight. Many times they can be a prescription to sensitivity, speed and coordination problems. They have an important place in training, but they are by nature geared to create a long-term, looping encounter that keeps bringing you back to Point A, just to keep the flow going. In a real-life application, you may only get to use about a two or three second segment of the drill.

There are many deadly tales on the power of repetition and muscle memory in training, and one that involves police handgun disarming practice carries a powerful lesson. You disarm the gun in class, and then hand it back to your training partner. You disarm again. Hand it over again, and so on and so on. You guessed it, a police officer disarmed a gun from a criminal and handed it right back to the criminal, who took quick aim and shot the cop dead. The same or similar has happened elsewhere. There are many popular Filipino flow drills on knife disarming that do the same hand-off in the middle of a flow. Inside the movement the partners pass

the knife to each other while practicing the disarm. I cringe every single time I see someone practice it! The martial arts are full of instructors who teach these complicated flow drills. To many practitioners, the more complicated the better. This is dangerous because there is a point of diminishing return.

In football vernacular, there's a practice drill they call running tires. Rubber tires are spread out on a field, and a player must race through the holes of the tires on tiptoes as quickly as possible. It is easy to trip and fall. This drill builds leg muscles, agility, speed and precision footwork. The question is how many tires accomplish a maximum effect on football performance? Running 100 tires? Running 200? 750? If you determine that running 100 tires takes you to your performance goal, then all other tires are extraneous and a waste of time. There are so many other skills to practice in football and that extra-tire-time would be better utilized on other skill development. Running too many tires brings you past a point of diminishing returns. Suddenly your practice makes you a tire-running expert instead a football-playing expert! You need more game time and less tire time. You need more problem-solving time on the field.

This is where prioritizing combat scenario training is superior. The same thing can happen to you if you work knife flow drills too much and de-emphasize knife combat scenarios. Take care not to become a complicated drill expert at the deadly expense of not learning how to fight.

Conversely, in standard military and police training, the combat scenario is the ONLY approach for which they seem to allow time. That's like always playing the football game and never once practicing any drills or skills. The skill-developing aspects of martial art drills, ones that could really support the scenarios, are totally ignored. Both are needed, but winning the football game should be prioritized over running tires in the same way that combat scenarios training should be prioritized over flow drills. Flow drills support the combat scenario. Military and police training officers would be wise to incorporate flow drills, but keep them simple, and don't over do it.

After all, what is this really all about, if it is not about winning in combat? To the martial artist seeking reality, winning the combat scenario should be your goal. Don't let the pretty flow of a drill infect your combat muscle memory, and consume your training time with things like passing and double tapping, when quick fire grabbing and blasting is needed to save your life. Don't burn and char your muscle memory beyond that point of diminishing return. A lot less flow drill and a little more quick kill practice will go a long way in combat.

Mistake 5: Believing in One Real Deal Killer Knife Grip

"If you see someone holding a knife this way, in this reverse/ice pick grip, watch out, this guy really knows what he's doing!"

There is no one perfect knife grip, only the perfect grip for the instant. Sometimes the saber grip is appropriate, and then other times the reverse. In fact, advanced knife fighters practice changing their grips in motion for this reason.

Mistake 6: *Fighting Thumbs Up-The Cancer Grip*

"Practice your slashing with these angles, with this grip."

"Just be like me. Move like me."

Recently, a grip nick-named the Filipino grip has gained popularity in martial arts circles. The grip is when the thumb and the ball of the thumb ride upon and touch the back or top of the knife. This is also called the saber grip. This grip helps extend the wrist and knife forward in the same way a sword is positioned for stabbing. In historical fact, this basic, common sense grip has been around since man put a knife in his hand. The Filipino culture owns no monopoly on such a knife grip. History shows us the grip is centuries old. Hieroglyphics of Egyptian soldiers demonstrate it.

In the last two decades, there have been a few very famous Filipino martial artists who tour the country teaching, who have developed the nickname for the grip, and who are very graceful and pretty. Athletic emulation is a proven training method, and it is easy to see why students desire to emulate them. But a virus has emerged from this grip and replicated from emulating-the cancer grip,—a bastardized version of the Filipino grip—an infectious and dangerous way to hold the knife. I think these specialists do not even know they are doing it!

The cancer grip is when you hold a knife saber-style (blade forward) and significantly raise your thumb completely up off the back strap or heel. The thumb and the ball of thumb constitute a good 60 percent of the grip on the knife. Without that key support, the most minor impact will dislodge the knife from your hand in combat.

I have seen these grips exercised by masters in front of groups. Ex-Navy SEALs are seen mindlessly using it in knife videos! Others spread the germ, in magazine photos, and even on the covers of other popular knife fighting books. NONE are using it with reality contact, because the knife cannot stab or slash. You will disarm yourself.



The terminal cancer grip. It's even worse! Some martial artists hold their knife with both their thumb up and a straight pinky!

There is one use for this, to hook a wrist with your knife hand. It is weak and very temporary hold, but this one rare usage is the only common-sense excuse for seeing people hold a knife this way. This solo application is no excuse for the widespread practice. People are innocently slashing and stabbing their knives from time-to-time with this cancer grip. Somehow this grip has become a fairly routine prima donna grip for way too much knife practice. Don't let a prissy, dangling knife grip be your epitaph. Beware the cancer grip!

Mistake 7: *Re-prioritize Kicking*

"When he holds the knife before you, kick it out of his hand with a big, round crescent kick."

Kicking and knife fighting is often a misunderstood relationship. Kick/punch systems that encourage their students to kick knives out of hands as a primary strategy, and offer no others, ask way too much. A simple movement of his knife hand, and your incoming leg is cut.

But I have learned not to count kicking out as a secondary or tertiary strategy. As a judge of several knife vs. knife fighting Killshot tournaments, more than once I have been surprised to see a knife kicked clean out of the opponent's hand during the most fierce, serious battles between pairs of highly-talented practitioners. But, your attention please on this! These successful kicks are usually low front kicks, and sometimes even accidentally catch the enemy's weapon bearing limb.

Kicking the body is another vital mission in a knife fight. If you are empty handed versus a knife attacker and you can securely catch the weapon-bearing limb, kicking the knees and ankles of the attacker is a fine strategy to insert in combat. Don't discount kicking! A panther or a tiger is not a creature hunting and fighting with a single claw. His sheer magnificence, his overall strength, speed, weight and teeth make him a mighty killer. When you stand before an opponent in a knife fight, you do not have just one claw with which to fight. Your entire body is a weapon on the edge of a ravaging explosion. You must train to hand strike, elbow, knee, bite AND KICK the enemy when safe from his blade. Survive. Win. Like the panther, you bring more to the fight than a single claw.

Mistake 8: *Forgetting the Tenacity of the Human Spirit*

"After you execute this stab to the back of his neck, it's over! Push his body away. It's over! No more knife fight! You don't need to know anything else. It's over."

EMT and Emergency Room techs frequently have people walk into the emergency room and ask for treatment after being stabbed in the manner this naïve instructor describes. In the movies we see the enemy soldier, or the bad guy curl up and die from a quick knife stab, but actually, people don't die that quickly and may fight on long and hard for their lives, even beyond the loss of consciousness. As a Vietnam-era combat vet once told me, "Hock, I stabbed them, seven,

eight times, and most were still fighting me! They were in effect, dead, and their bodies did not know it yet."

Studies made on people stabbed by surprise reveal the common response, "I thought he punched me." The victims were able to move and in some cases fight and win against their assailants before they even knew they were stabbed.

Naive and ignorant instructors with no real world experience get cocky and cavalier about the success of their knife techniques, misinforming their students about how quickly their victims will melt into shocked, quivering jelly after the first small cut or stab. They may well miss that major target by a fraction in the chaos. What then? They often fail to teach important follow-up, safety measures after their one super stab or slash fails.

We all know about the chicken whose head is chopped off and how the body still runs around the yard. Military and police snipers are taught that even with a center mass, high caliber rifle shot, the brain may still send commands to the limbs for some two minutes afterward. Limbs will still twitch and move. Never expect the opponent to drop into shock when you nick or cut him with your knife. Never expect him to die and become lifeless with any stab or slash. Anticipate, over-fight and over-kill. It ain't over until it's over, over and over! I mean OVER!

Mistake 9:

Believing that Blocks and Disarms Don't Really Work Against Knives

"Blocking, or trying to disarm a knife is suicide. It can't be done."

"Yea, sure. Go ahead and block me, and I'll just cut your block!"

In martial, police and military training, you are taught to block and disarm knives. Then a group of experts roll through the scene, whack open a hanging side of beef for shock value, and declare that all blocks and attempts at disarms really never work in knife attacks. Any attempts at such, and your body will end up like the meat on their hook.

As a result of this message of futility, many do not even show their students how to block or disarm, or any other countering tactics at all. This leaves you with the negative subliminal message that if you are attacked by a knife, all you can do is turn the bony sides of your forearms out to take the slashes...and get ready to die! You are doomed! Never once is there the suggestion of survival, not a mention of picking up a chair or anything else with which to fight back. It's a good thing that thousands of men and woman who have survived knife attacks missed that message!

Sometimes successful disarming and blocking is supported by what I call The Diminished Fighter Theory where the attacker begins to lose his ability to fight in degrees, for a variety of reasons like an impact to the head or a lack of endurance. Blocking and disarming techniques that wouldn't work before against an adrenalized beast, can suddenly be successful against a weakened and diminished person just a few seconds later.

There is a time and place for almost all techniques. Train to counter the common attacks and blocks. Then, to be thorough, work through the less

predictable. While most do not know or practice offensive and defensive fighting, I have investigated many cases where totally untrained people have blocked and/or disarmed knives from attackers. Yes, many were cut to some extent when it was all over, but they were alive. Their attackers did not know the counters to common blocks, or were not fast enough to counter them. The nay Sayers need only read a newspaper once in a while to see the fantasy of disarms come true.

Block with your knife. Block with a chair, a stick or a lamp. Destroy! Block with your empty limbs, and then try to seize that weapon-bearing limb. Fight on from there. Or, escape if you can. Go down gambling. You may never have to go!

In summary? The next time a martial artist challenges you by saying "You can't disarm me. I will hold a magic marker in my hand and you try. After a minute we'll see how many times I have marked up your arms." Agree. Then bounce a telephone off his face with the fury of a fastball. Then take his magic marker while he is laying on his back, babbling and stunned. That's how you disarm a knife.

Mistake 10:

Failing to See the Gravity of Knife Fighting

When you fight with a knife, you are maiming and killing. Killing! Killing at a point in time when all events, all karma has orchestrated such a bizarre set of circumstances that you must stab and slash human skin, implode and explode the smelly, red, wet, internal organs of another person. If you train with a knife and you don't truly grasp this vile and disgusting reality, you will forever be some immature pretender, playing pass and tag with a rubber toy. Knife fighting is a very serious, ugly business. ☸



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Medieval Knife Fighting

By Pete Kautz

During the Middle Ages, roughly the 14th-15th Centuries, the warriors of Europe developed a powerful style of combat that proved equally victorious on the battlefield in times of war, on the street for suppressing riots, and in personal defense. These men were called upon to defend the realm, fought personal and judicial duels to the death, as well as taking part in organized melees, or tournaments. Though the tournaments may have appeared civil, and were fought with wooden or blunted swords and referees, they often ended up with over-emotional and protective crossbow men becoming involved in the fray, trying to prevent their knight from being beaten, captured, and ransomed back later by another knight! Forget the chivalrous notions you may have had about the lives these men lead – they were raiding killers, or they were dead, plain and simple. As the wars raged across Europe, fighting techniques were tempered in the forge of battle, and the swordsmen of each country perfected the art, which they would pass on to the next generation of allies.

In the first half of the 14th Century most daggers followed the shape of the sword and long hilts or crescent-shaped pommels. About 1325 three distinct forms of military daggers began to develop, the ballock knife, the ear dagger, and the rondel dagger. These daggers and knives were used purely by both infantry and cavalry and by knights whose sword was broken or lost in combat. These smaller, less expensive edged weapons began to appear more in civilian carry as tools for working and hunting and unavoidably used in crimes.

These techniques of killing, known to men who had fought and



Drawing by Albrecht Durer circa early 1500's

**"There is no man at arms who can use
courtesy or kindness to face his enemy."
– Fiore dei Liberi, 1410**

survived many battles and challenges, became part of an oral military tradition, passed on from one warrior to another. Then, starting in the late 1300's, books that taught fighting techniques were made in small numbers, each one carefully reproduced by hand. Some of these books contained only a few dozen illustrated techniques, but others, such as the works by Fiore dei Liberi and Hans Talhoffer, catalog literally hundreds of individual techniques and counters. By the 1400's these manuscripts were produced in an

ever-increasing number, with several authors writing multiple books in their lifetime. This continued throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance, with books written in many countries, though the vast majority came from Germany and Italy. The 1400's saw the height of Medieval close combat, and this was the

golden era of the *Fechtbuch* or fight-book.

Though during the Renaissance, roughly 16th-17th Century, things would change with the invention of printing and the rise of

teachers who accepted civilians as students, during the Middle Ages these books were kept among professional warriors, and the real killing techniques and counters were guarded secrets. In his 1410 book *Flos Duelatorum* (Flower of Battle) the Italian master Fiore dei Liberi states that these techniques should be kept secret, "For the experts in swordsmanship who help the men at arms during wars, riots, and duels" and should never become known to the common people "who are created by God without a wit like cows that are born only to carry heavy loads." Fiore would never show his techniques in public, except as he used them in battle, and he taught all his students behind closed doors, swearing them to secrecy about what they learned. He wrote his book only as an old man, long after he had need of his skills, and in the service of "the most Illustrious Messer Niccolo Marquess of Ferrara, Modena, Parma, and Reggio," who would use this book to train all his knights.

On a technical level, one of the first key elements you find in reading the medieval books is that they contain a large amount of unarmed combat material. A Medieval Knight, or Man-at-Arms, would be expected to know unarmed combat and dagger fighting in addition to the sword and spear skills we associate with them today. In the surviving combat manuals, most contain long sections on unarmed striking and grappling, unarmed defense against the dagger, and dagger

fighting. Unarmed techniques against the sword, and dagger against sword are also shown. The manuals show systematic joint locks, breaks, throws, disarms, counters, ground grappling, strikes, clinches, holds and more. The unarmed system is also fully integrated into the sword and spear work, with the majority of the techniques shown involving some degree of close work.

You will see identical techniques (par-

ticularly throws and arm locks) done with all the different weapon forms, showing the integrated nature of this system. The Medieval knight truly understood how to make the connection between the essential techniques in combat, regardless of weapon. Primarily this was a weapon-based style, that using standing grappling and a full compliment of basic powerful striking tactics. In this respect, it is much like military combatives today, using eye gouges, chin jabs, knee strikes and low kicks. Ground fighting was used mainly to hold a man down while you drew your own blade and stabbed him, or held him to be pinned by a few spearmen from your unit.

Only when showing the techniques used in judicial combat or dueling, where no one was going to interfere with the fight, do you see grappling holds as we

think of them now, being applied. Just like the ones used when standing, you find chokes, arm and neck breaks, gouging, fish hooking, and a host of other gutter fighting tactics that we love, being applied on the ground. The armor was used to grind into the foe and tire him, and often we see men picking up weapons that have been dropped, or drawing a dagger, while grappling. The duels were grand public spectacles,

with elaborate preparations for the combatants involving prayer, ritual bathing, and so on. They would walk onto the field from their pavilions proudly, in front of the assembled crowd, but then once they stepped



Several examples of medieval knives.



into the list, there could be no one there but the two of them, the marshal, and God. Many images we have of period ground work show it under these settings, in a traditional octagon ring – just like a Medieval UFC.

In addition to the use of various other weapons, such as the mace or axe, the medieval warrior had to learn to use the armor he wore as a weapon. Fighting in real armor is quite different than fighting without, and the Germans coined the phrases *Blossfechten* and *Harnisfechten* to describe fighting in regular clothing and fighting in armor, respectively. The plate and chain armor of the time could render many slicing and stabbing blows useless, enabling the wearer to close in and fight with their longsword in a shortened bayonet grip referred to as *halbschwert*, or half-sword techniques, designed to deliver maximum power thrusts at the gaps in the opponent's armor. Additionally, the armor would be used to grind into the opponent while on the ground, and the pointed knees and elbows could deliver horrible pressure to an unarmored foe, in addition to delivering lethal strikes. Even the knight's shoes came to points designed for kicking. These were called *sabatons* by the French, and would be used when on horseback to kick people in the face who got too close to you.

Fighting from horseback, which the Germans called *Ritterfechten*, was another important skill the knight had to perfect. The long spear, or lance, was used from horseback, along with the mace and sword. Fiore dei Liberi, among others, also shows many ways to apply grappling techniques to unseat another rider when in close, side by side. Fighting from astride an armored war-



The famous
Knights Templar
carried a straight
two-sided sword, with
secondary weapons of
a lance and Turkish
spiked mace. In addition
each Templar wore
three knives, a long
dagger worn to the
left of his belt, a small
pocket knife and a
very short knife with a
long blade.

*(l d'armes, l de pain tailler
and l canivet)*

horse, the knight was as an imposing force on the battlefield, particularly when in large units. At around 2000 pounds each, and traveling at up to 35 miles an hour in a charge, the mounted knight must have inspired true terror in anyone facing them on foot.

This completely Euro/Western unarmed combat art is far older than comparable Asian styles such as JuJitsu, Chin-Na, Aikido, or Hapkido. Most styles of martial arts advertised in the Yellow Pages and taught today, are less than 100 years old and may or may not have any relation to life and death combat. Many practiced today are taught as citizen-building, child educating, health or meditation systems. With the Medieval fight-books, we are discussing traditions and specific techniques that are over 500 years old, and designed to kill. Many will talk of Samurai Heritage or the Shaolin Spirit by way of making their art sound very ancient and marketable. But, where is the true history? Is there an actual link on a technical level, or is it merely inspired by some older art and the actual techniques of battle are not the same? With the Western historical combat arts we have the verifiable link by way of the Master's written works on the their forest and hill-side battlefields and their cobblestone streets. ☼

Pete Kautz has trained in the martial arts for over 20 years and is the director of Alliance Martial Arts. He teaches Medieval Close Combat, 1800's American Heritage Arts, and Modern Combatives in Ithaca, New York, and around the world at seminars.



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Every infantryman in the Soviet Army carries with him a small spade. When he is given the order to halt he immediately lies flat and starts to dig a hole in the ground beside him. In three minutes he will have dug a little trench 15 centimeters deep, in which he can lie stretched out flat, so that bullets can whistle harmlessly over his head. The earth he has dug out forms a breastwork in front and at the side to act as an additional cover. If a tank drives over such a trench the soldier has a 50 percent chance that it will do him no harm. At any moment the soldier may be ordered to advance again and, shouting at the top of his voice, will rush ahead. If he is not ordered to advance, he digs in deeper and deeper.

At first his trench can be used for firing in the lying position. Later it becomes a trench from which to fire in the kneeling position, and later still, when it is 110 centimeters deep, it can be used for firing in the standing position. The earth that has been dug out protects the soldier from bullets and fragments. He makes an embrasure in this breastwork into which he positions the barrel of his gun. In the absence of any further commands he continues to work on his trench. He camouflages it. He starts to dig a trench to connect with his comrades to the left of him. He always digs from right to left, and in a few hours the unit has a trench linking all the

Spades and Men

By Victor Suvorov

riflemen's trenches together. The unit's trenches are linked with the trenches of other units.

Dugouts are built and communication trenches are added at the rear. The trenches are made deeper, covered over, camouflaged and reinforced. Then, suddenly, the order to advance comes again. The soldier emerges, shouting and swearing as loudly as he can.

The infantryman uses the same

spade for digging graves for his fallen comrades. If he doesn't have an axe to hand he uses the spade to chop his bread when it is frozen hard as granite. He uses it as a paddle as he floats across wide rivers on a telegraph pole under enemy fire. And when he gets the order to halt, he again builds his impregnable fortress around himself. He knows how to dig the earth efficiently. He builds his fortress exactly as it should be. The spade is not just an instrument for digging: it can also be used for measuring. It is 50 centimeters long. Two spade lengths are a meter. The blade is 15 centimeters wide and 18 centimeters long. With these measurements in mind, the soldier can measure anything he wishes.

The infantry spade does not have a folding handle, and this is a very important feature. It has to be a single monolithic object. All three of its edges are as sharp as a knife. It is painted with a green matt paint so as not to reflect the strong sunlight. The spade is not only a tool and a measure. It is also a guarantee of the steadfastness

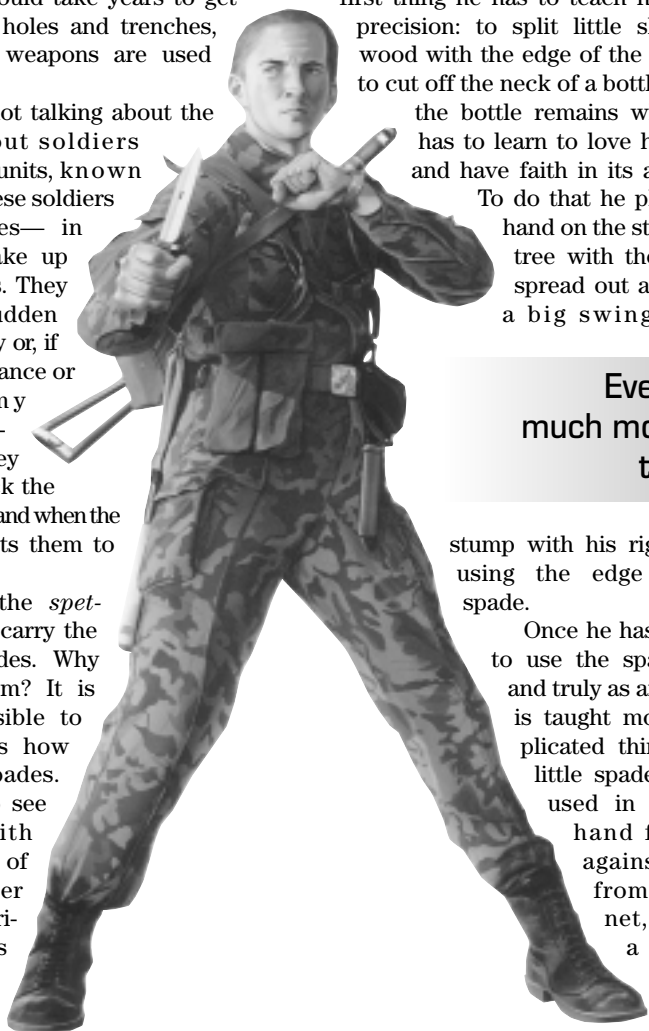
of the infantry in the most difficult situations. If the infantry have a few hours to dig themselves in, it could take years to get them out of their holes and trenches, whatever modern weapons are used against them.

Here we are not talking about the infantry but about soldiers belonging to other units, known as *spetsnaz*. These soldiers never dig trenches—in fact they never take up defensive positions. They either launch a sudden attack on an enemy or, if they meet with resistance or superior enemy forces, they disappear as quickly as they appeared and attack the enemy again where, and when the enemy least expects them to appear.

Surprisingly, the *spetsnaz* soldiers also carry the little infantry spades. Why do they need them? It is practically impossible to describe in words how they use their spades. You really have to see what they do with them. In the hands of a *spetsnaz* soldier the spade is a terrible noiseless weapon and every member of *spet-*

snaz gets much more training in the use of his spade than does the infantryman. The first thing he has to teach himself is precision: to split little slivers of wood with the edge of the spade or to cut off the neck of a bottle so that the bottle remains whole. He has to learn to love his spade and have faith in its accuracy. To do that he places his hand on the stump of a tree with the fingers spread out and takes a big swing at the

A soldier armed with nothing but the spade is shut in a room without windows along with a mad dog, which makes for an interesting contest. Finally a soldier is taught to throw the spade as accurately as he would use a sword or a battle-axe. It is a wonderful weapon for throwing, a single, well-balanced object, whose 32-centimeter handle acts as a lever for throwing. As it spins in flight it gives the spade accuracy and thrust. It becomes a terrifying weapon. If it lands in a tree, it is not so easy to pull out again. It is far more serious if it hits someone's skull, although *spetsnaz*



Every member of *spetsnaz* gets much more training in the use of his spade than does the infantryman.

stump with his right hand using the edge of the spade.

Once he has learned to use the spade well and truly as an axe, he is taught more complicated things. The little spade can be used in hand-to-hand fighting against blows from a bayonet, a knife, a fist or another spade.

members usually do not aim at the enemy's face but at his back. He will rarely see the blade coming, before it lands in the back of his neck or between his shoulder blades, smashing the bones.

The *spetsnaz* soldier loves his spade. He has more faith in its reliability and accuracy than he has in his Kalashnikov automatic. An interesting psychological detail has been observed in the kind of hand-to-hand confrontations that are the stock in trade of *spetsnaz*. If a soldier fires at an enemy armed with an automatic, the enemy also shoots at him. But if he doesn't fire at the enemy and throws a spade at him instead, the enemy simply drops his gun and jumps to one side. ☺

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Counters to Knife Quick Draws

By W. Hock Hochheim

As a young man my police instructors warned me about...the hands. Empty hands can be a tip-off to impending danger. How they point, chop the air, roll in and out of fists can predicate an attack. As if empty-handed attacks weren't enough, these same hands bury deep into pockets, belt lines, armpits, ankles and pull out various weapons of destruction. As police officers, we have the fear of the criminal quick draw drummed into our psyche, and not just quick draws from the body of the assailant, but from anywhere he could reach and snatch a weapon with those hands.

The environments in which I had to keep track of the hands were inside cars, motel rooms, streets, houses, apartments, fields, so many different rural and urban places over 23 years, surrounded by drama, confusion, and most times low light and darkness, I can't even begin to name them all. Somewhere in all that cacophony of sound, emotion and motion, they still expected us to zero in on...the hands.

But enforcement and correctional officers are not the only ones who need to worry about the hands and hidden weapons of strangers. Martial artists and citizens also need to observe the hands of those suspicious around them in their everyday lives. Soldiers cornering and herding prisoners of war need to watch the hands. The list goes on and on.

All these groups spend little or no training time focusing on these problems. We must look to the police sciences as the veteran source of experience and intell in this endeavor. Then we look to martial strategies to take action. Watch the hands. The hands reach for weapons. It is the hands that will kill you.

The first step in countering knife quick draws is to...see them coming! We cannot walk around through our everyday lives in a state of combat readiness. Such would eventually burn your nervous system and brain to a cinder. One must study the odds of where and when most attacks occur, and then prepare accordingly. When entering those dangerous zones in our lives, we must become more alert. Once alerted, this aware state allows you to bring your combat metabolism into a battle ready posture.

The Basic Knife Quick Draws Carry Sites

Learn the common, primary carry sites of the knife. Quick draw carry sites are pockets, belt line, armpit, small of the back, upper back, chest/necklaces holsters, forearm rigs, lunge and reach, the

**“Watch his hands!
It’s the hands that will kill you!”**



The Gunslinger Quick Draw: A knife pull from the hip



The Detective Cross-Draw: A knife pull from across the body

- The Gunslinger Quick Draw
- The Napoleon Quick Draw
- The Detective Cross Draw
- The Gypsy Quick Draw
- The Cobbler Quick Draw
- The Lunge and Reach Quick Draw
- The Hybrid Quick Draws

Practice these quick draws yourself, and observe a training partner do them multiple times. Identify the common quick draw hand, arm and body movements to get to these primary and secondary sites. Obviously to grab the knife, the hand is involved. To position the hand, the arm is involved. The torso may well also move to facilitate the arm. And lastly, the legs may bend at the knees to facilitate the quick draw.

Three Phases of The Quick Draw

Identifying the three phases of a quick draw, early-phase, mid-phase and late-phase, help you scientifically study this process and then design steps to defeat it.

Phase 1) The early phase is when the weapon is actually about to be extracted or is in the process of being extracted, say about the first 20 percent of the quick draw.

Phase 2) Mid-phase is when the weapon is out and in the first 20 to 60 percent or so of going into action.

Phase 3) Late phase is the last 60 percent of the pull. The knife pull can result two ways:



The Gypsy Quick Draw: A knife pull from a backpack or kit



The Cobbler Quick Draw: A knife pull from an ankle carry



The Napoleon Quick Draw: A knife pull from a neck knife carry



physical reach proximity, bags, purses, camera cases, carry items, belt-like wallets, and fanny packs. Secondary or back-up carry sites usually do not facilitate quick draws and require some digging to pull the weapon.

Quick Draw Movements

I am going to list nicknames for easily identifiable quick draws, and I hope they will leave a lasting impression on you. This is the first scientific step in studying them and learning their counters.



Hybrid Quick Drawers: Like this one from a forearm rig



- a weapon presentation threat
- a slashing or stabbing attack

Counters to Quick Draws

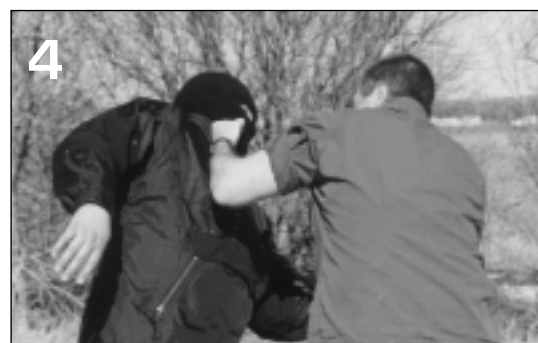
Once you have identified the carry sites and the movement to reach them, martial science can provide some solutions. Here are but a few examples.

1) Early Phase Counter: Gunslinger Quick Draw Counters

Smash the hand while he opens his combat folder. When someone is trying to open their folder, they do not obtain a normal and powerful grip on their knife. Their fingers are trying to access the opening mechanism. A powerful hand smash can jar the knife out of the opponent's hand and/or knock the partially open blade back into the handle.

2) Mid Phase Counter: The Arm Bar Hammerlock or Rear Arm Bar

The Gunslinger Draw offers you The Triangle. There is a list of grappling techniques you may use to take maximum advantage of this arm positioning. A very successful and thorough technique is the Rear Arm Bar or Arm Bar Hammerlock, which is depicted next. Follow up as needed. ☸





Invalidate the Gunslinger Triangle ▶

Here is a powerful invasion and interrupts a quick draw and wraps up the enemy in a containment choke.



◀ **3) Early Phase Counter: Counter the Napoleon Quick Draw**

Here is just one counter tactic. Follow up after this.

Identify the triggers, the carry sites, the movements to the carry sites, and apply martial sciences to counter them in early, mid and late phases. ☸

CCQMag took this excerpt from Hock's upcoming book, Volume 3 of the *Knife Fighting Encyclopedia Do or Die! Unarmed versus the Knife* due out in early May 2001.

The Squad Room,
a place for
briefings, training,
coffee, war stories,
station-house
gossip, and
ass-chewings...

Police Blotter

Drugs on the Fly

Two men using a crossbow to shoot drugs over a prison wall were arrested by police and charged with narcotics trafficking, Thessaloniki, Greece police reported in April.



Out of Funds

Okmulgee, Oklahoma Sheriff's Department is out of vehicle maintenance funds. Officers are paying for car parts out of their own pockets. Several of the 11 units have over 200,000 miles on them. Five have broken down and need complete overhauls. Sheriff Ernest Arochia plans to appeal to county business groups for donations.

Artful Dodgers

Federal cops are alarmed over a rash of visits by Israeli "art vendors" to their homes and offices. Targeted: agents working for customs, the DEA, and the IRS in Miami, St. Louis, Lexington, KY., and Little Rock. One theory is that Israelis tried to the ecstasy drug trade are doing recon on federal agents. "It's kinda scary," says one official, "but selling art is not a crime."

Tie Clip Saves Policeman's Life

A police officer can thank a metal tie clip he wore for saving him from a knife attack by a crazed woman. According to Oakland, NJ authorities, Capt. Robert Haemerle is experienced a narrow escape.

Witnesses say, Mary Neglia, 43, lunged at the Captain from her bedroom doorway when Haemerle responded to a police call that said a crazy woman was screaming profanity at people from her residence. As Haemerle made his way through the house to investigate, Neglia surprised him when she sprang at him from the doorway to her bedroom armed with a knife.

She attempted to stab Haemerle, but his metal and porcelain tie clip prevented the knife from penetrating his uniform and skin.

Officers took Neglia into custody and charged her with aggravated assault. Haemerle escaped with a few hand lacerations. He intends to continue wearing his tie clip while on duty.

Mexican Corruption

Mexico's illicit drug industry is so pervasive sources say corruption runs throughout all branches of law enforcement organizations. Undercover investigators must frequently arrest police officers for collaborating with smugglers. As recently as 1996 Mexico's newly appointed drug czar reportedly took money on a regular basis from drug cartel members. Enforcement officials report to CQCMAG that new strategic alliances are rapidly forming to counter president Fox's campaigns against drug crime.


At the federal super maximum security penitentiary in Florence, Colorado, Unabomber Ted Kaczynski sat alone in a private cell 23-hours a day waiting for his execution. For one hour a day, security allowed him to exercise in a private yard. They delivered his meals thru a slot in a cell door. He saw virtually no one except an occasional guard. Two decades ago there were only a few of the most feared criminals who experienced this level of isolation. Today 42 states have super maximum facilities with more under construction.

Police Quotes

"Results indicate people who have trained to shoot from upright stances tend to end up in a crouch like everyone else when faced with a spontaneous life threatening attack. So why not be realistic and train from this position in the first place?"

—Don Gold

South African Combatives Instructor





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The Training Room

Law Enforcement Knife Training

By Mike Gillette

In recent years a significant shift in attitude concerning law enforcement knife defense training has taken place. Officers had typically underestimated the threat potential of a bladed weapon in the hands of a determined attacker. Street cops who were not trained to recognize the blade's true lethality often ended up in the hospital or the morgue. Assault statistics and field research have fueled the movement that led to a serious exploration of defensive tactics designed to defeat a knife-wielding attacker.

This tactical exploration of knife attacks has led to a greater understanding of the knife's capabilities by the law

enforcement training community. In turn, this has led to some very recent discussion on the merits of the knife as a defensive tool for law enforcement personnel.

To consider the knife in this manner, we need to evaluate it within the context of the other weapons carried by law enforcement personnel. A street officer's issued equipment encompasses the full spectrum of lethality. Verbal skills, unarmed tactics, handcuffs, chemical sprays, impact weapons or firearms are deployed in response to a variety of circumstances based upon the threat actions of a suspect. We would refer to these issued equipment items as primary weapons. The majority of

situations on the street are solved via an officer's communications skills. The remainder of these contacts are typically controlled through the use of the officer's other primary weapons.

There are those times when an assault is so sudden or circumstances so extraordinary that an officer cannot respond in their customary manner. It is during these times that an officer must improvise using the tools at hand to save their own life or someone else's. When considered as an emergency tool to aid in gun retention techniques or to escape deadly chokes, the folding knife is a versatile addition to an officer's equipment belt. ☛



Carry

Where you carry your knife is an important consideration. Many officers go on duty with their folders placed in their trouser pocket on their gun side. Knives carried in this fashion with the clip visible on the outside can make a tempting target for a possible knife disarm initiated from behind the officer. Another problem for this carry option is its relationship to retention of the holstered firearm. During an attempted disarm, the officer will primarily secure the gun in its holster using the hand on the gun side of the body. With that hand committed to holding the gun in place, the opposite hand is unable to reach across the body to retrieve the knife from under the holster during such a dynamic encounter.

Carrying the knife on the opposite side of the body makes it much easier to access during a gun grab attempt. Because the knife is a secondary tool, it also leaves the gun hand free to access and deploy primary weapons.

The knife may be carried on the equipment belt ...

[photo1] or in a uniform shirt pocket. [photo2] Variables such as knife type, clothing, or other equipment or agency policy will all play a part in determining an appropriate carry site.



Weapon Retention

The officer uses his gun hand to secure the weapon while he accesses the folding knife from the opposite side of his equipment belt.



With the gun secured in the holster, the officer begins to open the blade while bringing it towards the assailant's hand.



The officer then uses the sharpened edge of the blade to cut the assailant's hand to affect a release.

Rear Choke

In this scenario the officer is choked from behind.



7



Here the officer accesses his folding knife from his uniform shirt pocket.

8



Here the officer accesses his folding knife from his uniform shirt pocket as he is choked from behind.

Mike Gillette is Chief of Police for a city in Iowa. His experience spans more than 10 years in law enforcement with an extensive military operations background. Gillette worked various assignments as a Tactical Team Commander, Range-master, Patrol Supervisor and Field Training Officer. As a Use-of-Force Trainer, he has taught officers and agents across the country. In the military he served in the 82nd Airborne and the 194th Long Range Surveillance Det. (Airborne). (515) 795-2149.





Battlefield Diary

Winter War

By Alfred Bastacho

Editor's Note: This issue's military episode comes from Alfred Bastacho's book *Winter War*, from Wineheart Press, a collection of recollections from World War II.

We were securing the hillside. Bodies, our guys, their guys, were everywhere. They lay twisted like they had no skeletons. Georgie and I, and the other guys were spread out checking the bodies. Turning the Nazi's over. Looking for weapons. Turning our guys over. Marking them for pickup with red strips of cloth on sticks. Georgie and I always poked the Nazis with our knives, you know to see if they were alive. I had my rifle over my shoulder. Sticking and turning bodies. Body after body.

I guess I was daydreaming. I stuck a Nazi body, and the guy jumped right up and swung a knife at me. His knife was hidden under his chest. He was playing dead. He cut the sleeve of my jacket. I jumped back and fell on my back. He scared the living shit out of me, now he was trying to kill me.

He swung the knife at my legs, and I kicked at him. He mostly struck my boots, but he got my leg on the shin. I didn't feel it though. I stumbled and crawled back, kicking. My rifle slid right off my shoulder and, before I knew I was losing it, I was crawling back so fast, I crawled right back out of the sling. And he knew it too. He went for my rifle. I realized I still had my knife in my hands. I got up and, knife-first, I jumped on him. My knife got him good on his arm as he reached for my rifle, and we tumbled over. We were on our sides. He had my arm with the knife. I had his arm with the knife. I tell you I saw the face of a ghost there looking at me. He was so

white. Big, big eyes. I started kicking him, but he had a big jacket on, and I don't know if any caught him. Our legs pushed us apart. Trying to get up, he hit me in the side of the head with the knife and on the helmet with another hit.

I saw Georgie behind him, trying to get his bayonet on his rifle. I shouted, "Shoot him!" to him. "Shoot him!" But Georgie threw his rifle down and jumped right on the kraut bastard. Right on his back and stabbed into his shoulder and neck with the bayonet in his hand. They rolled over, and I jumped on them both. The Nazi got up on one knee, holding Georgie with one hand and pushing me out. But we stabbed him. We stabbed him and stabbed him. Each stab you could tell he was getting weaker and weaker. He fell on his back.

We fell on him stabbing. It was like we were punching him, but we had these knives in our hands. When we rolled off, he was dead. We just lay there in the snow. "Why didn't you shoot him?" I asked Georgie. Georgie said that he was afraid to shoot because I was too close. And he couldn't get his bayonet fixed on, so he just held it in his hand. ✱



The Nazi got up on one knee, holding Georgie with one hand and pushing me out. But we stabbed him. We stabbed him and stabbed him.





Army Reopens Controversial School in Georgia

A US Army School of the Americas in Fort Benning, GA will reopen under a new name this year. Now called the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, the institution reportedly trains dictators and would be assassins.

Prior to its closing, the school trained soldiers and officers from Latin American countries in warfare and the fighting of insurgencies. Its alumni include former dictator Manuel Noriega of Panama and Salvadoran death squad organizer Roberto D'Aubuisson.

Some say the school encourages violence, but school officials say it only teaches soldiers how to fight. The Department of Defense instead of the Army will oversee the school.

De Leon claims the institute plans to teach democratic values. Critics say only the name of the school has changed.

Sword History in the Military

Fencing falls under the title of martial arts and the weapons descend from battlefield arms. Historically:

- American and European ground troops stopped carrying swords into battle once the bayonet came into wide use in the 1700s.
- American land and naval officers carried swords throughout the 19th century.
- Sailors were armed with boarding cutlasses when the need arose, but that need faded along with sail power in the 19th century.
- In 1876 Gen. George Custer ordered the 7th Cavalry troopers to leave their sabers

Scuttlebutt

"Get the inside scuttle on the military, from the decks of ships, the posts and bases from around the world."

at base before they rode to their deaths at Little Big Horn.

- The cavalry's use of the sword became a memory once vehicles replaced horses. Today, all use of the blade is ceremonial, and no member of the armed forces receives combat training with the weapon.



Sailors were armed with boarding cutlasses when the need arose, but that need faded along with sail power in the 19th century.

- Enlisted grades on constant ceremonial duty are issued sabers; those less frequently called on get their swords from depots.
- On ceremonial occasions, most officers must scramble to borrow an appropriate blade from academy and other special-program graduates or from others whose frequent ceremonial duty has made it more practical to own one.
- Only the Marine Corps requires all commissioned and noncommissioned officers to own their own blades.
- The military sword's most frequent unofficial use today is to cut wedding cake.

—Bernie McGovern

One Man's Trash

They may save the barbershop and chair at Fort Chaffee, AR, where reportedly Pvt. Elvis Presley sat to get his famous locks trimmed.

However Tom Napier, an architect and researcher at the US Army Construction Engineering Research Lab in Champaign, may have unearthed an even more valuable artifact from the singer's time at Fort Chaffee. Napier may have the King's throne – a wooden latrine seat found in the old barracks where Presley stayed. Nobody knows for sure if he actually sat on the seat.

Napier wants to preserve numerous other things from military installations as well.

He and colleague Steve Cosper, an environmental engineer, want to recycle World War II—and 1950s-era buildings from Fort Chaffee and Fort Hood, Texas, instead of tearing them down and hauling them to landfills.

Cosper says the material from the buildings, particularly the lumber, may be sold and reused. Doors and windows and surplus plumbing and electrical equipment also may be reusable, while concrete can be crushed and used as road material.

While not everything can be recycled, Napier says it might save the Army money in demolition and landfill costs. They may actually earn money from selling the material and save trees in the bargain. ♣



Buffalo Nickels

The Buffalo Nickels Official Tax Form, Or...It is Taxing to Do Taxes

I took a break from doing my taxes last Saturday to run my little grandson around. I picked the cute little fucker up at my son's house, and off we paraded for our day. The kid is thrilled to see me because all he does with his big "Grandy" buddy is eat junk, drink cherry sodas and probably score a toy or two. Quite a difference from when I raised my son. He was a cantankerous little, back-talking shit. Everything with him was, "No!" "No!" I use to just beat him. I nick-



The Tax Troll

named him Dr. No. He is not cantankerous anymore, especially when I pick his youngster up because that free time is probably the only chance he has all week to bang his old lady in peace. Oh he is all "yes, yes," now, but I still call him Dr. No. The bum became a medical doctor, probably because I beat him five days a week to do his homework. I don't know who beat him through medical college.

But anyway, first I had to stop and get some gas for my guzzler. Now gas is high unless you live in the Middle East. If your name is Mahabeeb then gas is like piss to you. But gas in New England, USA is high, and then there is the gas tax. I guess because I did my IRS chore that morning, I was a little, shall we say...over sensitive...to the subject of taxes?

We drove over the Bay Bridge, a bridge that was built 53 years ago, and I had to pay the dollar toll. Ain't it paid for yet? The bridge looks like shit, and I'll bet all the toll pays for is that mindless fuck to sit there and collect money. He should just take my money, stick it right in his pocket and say,

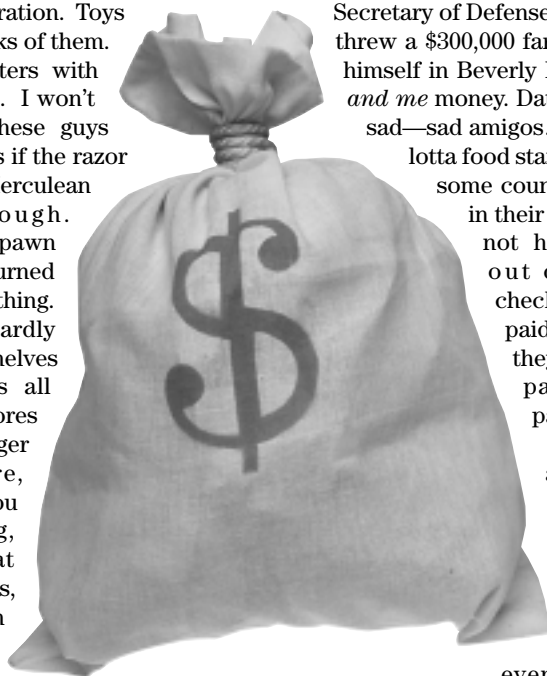
"Why sure my little heir!" and off we go to the shopping mall and to the toy department of a major operation. Toys scare me. Just the looks of them. They have toy monsters with open sores and scales. I won't even touch them. These guys have weapons too—as if the razor fins all over their Herculean bodies aren't enough. There's a guy named Spawn whose flesh is all burned up from Hell or something. I don't recognize hardly anything on the toy shelves anymore. The boxes all look Japanese. The stores can't sell a Roy Roger six-shooter anymore, but they can supply you with blood-sucking, purple vampires that carry rocket machetes, and the Devil's spawn from hell itself.

Junior wants a

"Fuck you." It must pay for him, and the two guys who look like Laurel and Hardy who paint the bridge non-stop. Each year, Laurel gets skinnier, Hardy gets fatter and the cheap paint wears out by the time they get to the far end of the bridge. Each year the toll goes up. Life goes on, and I pay too much for it all. Fuck me, thank you very much.

MacDonalds first. Tax on da burger. Tax on da fries. Tax on ma coffee.

"Grandy! Grandy!" Can we go to da toy store? The little genius one asks.



my pants while you're at it, I thought, you got everything else.

Back over the bridge and another crisp dollar bill to the troll, I got to thinking about how I had to pay a bundle of tax when I bought the car. My drivers license is taxed. My registration is taxed.

"Bye Grandy. I *luv* you." The brilliant one shouts over his shoulder as he slams my car door too hard. He runs to Dr. NO and wifey who stand arm in arm on the porch, both in sloppy clothes and swimming in afterglow. I know what the fuck they did.

I stopped by the Dart Club and had a shot of booze. Tax on the booze. The club paid tax on the glasses when they bought them. I looked at the bottles behind the bar. They are papered with all kinds of tax labels. Revenuers come through you see and estimate each drink from each bottle to get just the right tax. Watched a little college hoop on the taxed cable TV. News talk at the bar was that Clinton former Secretary of Defense William Cohen threw a \$300,000 farewell party for himself in Beverly Hills all on *you and me* money. Dat dere made me

sad—sad amigos...cause that's a lotta food stamps. Fuckers! In some countries if you are in their military you do not have tax taken out of your paycheck. Our guys get paid shit, and then they get taxed to pay for Cohen's parties.

Got home and posted myself back at the desk in front of a pile of tax forms and bills. I noticed

even the garbage

man charges taxes. With each toilet flush, I pay tax on the water. My telephone has taxes on it. The long distance service has tax on it. I guess I could burn my trash, piss in the yard and use smoke signals for commo. Everything in my house? I paid some kind of tax on it.

Next year on my tax form I want a check off donation section that says:



"Buffalo Nickels is a retired US Army special forces operator who does occasional consultant work and wishes to remain anonymous so he may put in his five cents worth on life, liberty and the pursuit of whatever he sees fit."

bicycle! I have to say no. I got into enough trouble letting him drive my truck one afternoon last month. No locomotion devices! We bought a few key pieces to add to the man-child's collection, various weapons of destruction. At the register, they extracted even more tax. *Why don't you just take*

Continued on page 36

Knife Combat in Korea

By Tracy Rogers

He was an Army Airborne paratrooper in WW II and the Korean War. His name was Joe Maggio from Brooklyn, New York and he was my dad's business partner in Florida where I lived as a kid. Dad said Joe was a war hero who served as a commando and saw a lot of action in Korea. As soon as I heard this, I knew I wanted to be a commando and pushed Joe to tell me war stories. This is one of them.

One time Joe's unit was caught between the enemy and advancing friendly forces. The American troops were in the mountains at high elevation and bitter cold. The battle lines had become confused in the terrain and from the back-and-forth sporadic firefights. Joe's group finally figured out they had wandered behind enemy lines. They moved quickly to avoid detection. The small unit couldn't afford to shoot it out because the enemy greatly outnumbered them, so instead they chose to sneak away.

Several factors worked against the US troops escape—the proximity to enemy forces, time, climate, elevation and the basic problems of combat in the cold with heavy winter clothing. For Joe's American patrol to withdraw without alerting the enemy or risking friendly fire meant silent killing and invisible escape. Plain and simple, Joe said that meant knife work.

The climate and elevation were the worst conspirators against their plans to use their knives. The extreme cold already caused a soldier's breath to become a signal plume of steam at sunrise and visible from several feet away. A wounded man's body heat escaping from a wound or spilled blood was the same or worse, as it was a steady rising cloud rather than a small wisp. Joe said you could see the steam by moonlight at times.

There was also the problem of heavy winter clothing that could lessen the effectiveness of an attack with a knife. But once through the enemy uniform, the elevation could also cause a loud pop with the typical

bayonet attack to the chest. The high altitude caused the lungs to make a distinctive popping or hissing sound when released from a stab wound.

The American's plan was to take out the enemy troops encountered on what was thought to be the safest route off the mountain. The plan depended on stealth, and the skill of the soldiers armed only with knives. Avoiding enemy camps, the North Koreans they maneuvered to encounter were either patrolling or standing guard at various points. They were each attacked by at least

two Americans at the same time to improve the chances of a silent attack. After an enemy was eliminated, his body was placed wound-side down to reduce any telltale steam clouds. The plan worked. Joe lived to tell the tale.

All the factors involved necessitated the use of knives rather than guns in combat, and it wasn't hundreds or thousands of years ago, it was in the good old '50. I was only 10 or 11 when Joe told his story, but I'll always remember it, and my vision of Korean moonlight glinting off US knives. ☛





World Watch

Indonesian Watch

An angry mass of native Dayak fighters killed 118 migrants as police attempted to escort them to Borneo, Indonesia. Thousands of refugees on the Indonesian part of Borneo Island are scrambling to leave by ship as the violence continues. Currently, Malaysia shares the territory with Indonesia. After 10 days of violence the death toll reached 428. Dayak fighters beheaded their victims and cut their hearts out according to ancient warfare tradition. The Dayaks oppose the government resettlement program that brought more than 100,000 Madurese to Borneo from their island of Madura. The programs were intended to reduce overcrowding in parts of the Indonesian archipelago of 17,000 islands.

"They took about a hundred Muslim and Croat civilians. I watched as five of the Red Berets executed them all. Some were shot; others they knifed or bludgeoned with rifle butts as they screamed for mercy."

—A Former Red Beret

Colombia Watch

Thirty-five fighters were killed over one weekend in heavy clashes in northern Colombia between guerrillas and right-wing paramilitary troops in Bogota.

Villagers report 20 paramilitaries and 15 guerrillas were killed fighting in a northern Cordoba providence, says Col. Jairo Ovalle of the army's 11th Brigade based in the region.

Troops tried to enter the area to verify the account of clashes between the rightist

United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia, or AUC, and the leftist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, the country's strongest guerrilla group.

Nepal Watch

Maoist rebels attacked police stations in two remote mountain villages in Midwest and central Nepal near Katmandu killing at least 35 policemen. Three rebels died in the attacks.



The rebels surrounded the police station at Rukumkot, a village in Rukum district about 250 miles west of the capital, Katmandu, shortly after midnight, hurling crude bombs and firing shots at officers as they fled to cover.

The five-hour attack left 28 police dead and several injured.

Balkan's Again

A group calling itself the National Liberation Army recently appeared in the Balkans utilizing guerilla tactics. The group consists of some 800 to 2,000 members, a disheveled, ragtag army made up of local volunteers. The partially clad members wear military uniforms, some fight in sneakers and tracksuits. The lightly armed group has a scattering of acquired weaponry like old military and hunting rifles, improvised bombs and some hunting and kitchen knives. Macedonia's Police/Army are equipped with modern equipment and supported by conventional Soviet armor and artillery. Insiders tell **CQCMag** the NLA leadership may be members of the old Kosovo Liberation Army. Their apparent mission to destabilize Macedonia's mix of Slavic and Albanian populations.

Russian Watch

Raw recruits to Russia's armed forces display a frightening array of medical complaints. Yevgenia Borisova examines the personal stories hidden in statistics.

The city's future draftees are chronically ill — and getting sicker each year.

Figures show only a small fraction of draft-age males — who should be the fittest sector of society — are well enough to serve.

Those are the findings of Victor Chetverikov, chief adolescent-medicine specialist in the city, and Igor Vorontsov, head of the cardiology department of St. Petersburg's Pediatric Academy. Only 4 percent of the city's teenagers were given a clean bill of health this year.

Of the 15-year-olds surveyed, there were 2,162 chronic illnesses per each 10,000 teens—some had several complaints, according to Dr Chetverikov. Last year, in another survey, more than 80 percent of all teenage males (14-18) were found to suffer from chronic illnesses. Among each 10,000 teenagers, 1,581 chronic diseases were reported. Only 6.1 percent of the 18-year-olds were deemed physically fit for army service.



CQCMAG stands watch where conflicts may begin and explains why we must train to prepare for them.

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World Watch

Continued from page 35



— Reprinted with permission AP

Thousands of refugees on the Indonesian part of Borneo Island are scrambling to leave by ship as the violence continues.

The results are all part of a dangerous upswing in illness that started perhaps five years ago, says Dr Chetverikov. In 1985, for instance, only 19.8 percent of teenagers needed medical attention, and 208 chronic diseases were discovered per 1,000 subjects. More than 80 percent of the group was classified as healthy.

Dangerous habits contributed to the decline, the doctors found. More than 42 percent of teens now smoke regularly, and almost 14 percent are alcoholics. About 270 out of 100,000 are drug addicts.

Poor nutrition, bad living conditions and stress take their toll on the younger generation, said Dr Chetverikov. "Practically irreversible damage is happening to the Russian gene pool," he warned. "It is the degradation of an entire generation, what is going on nowadays."

Rear Admiral Vyacheslav Shcherbakov, former head of the city's military recruitment commission, was similarly bleak: "Once our country has forgotten about the young generation, we do not have a future."

"Though the situation was desperate now," he said, "in a few years it will be even worse." ☛



"There are 23 people here. None of us can get to the surface. I am writing blindly."

—Lt Dmitri Kolesnikov Russian Kursk Sub Officer

Buffalo Nickels

Continued from page 33

I WILL DONATE TO:

- ___ The military
- ___ Janitors in government buildings
- ___ Roads and bridges
- ___ Government salaries
- ___ Emergency weather money
- ___ Medicare/Medicaid (hey, I'm an old fucker and I need it)
- ___ Social Security (hey, I'm an old fucker and I need it too)

AND THEN CHECK OFFS LIKE....

- ___ Crosses in urine in art museums
- ___ Clinton's New York City office
- ___ Birth control in India (that's their problem)
- ___ All kinds of free shit to people
- ___ Anything Barbara Streisand and Whoopi Goldberg want
- ___ Other expensive shit that rich liberals want, but want us to pay for

You get the idea. We should not be at the wrong end of a whip snapped by the government. Right now, they force us to pay for their plans. It should be the other way around. We give them what we can afford and THEY MAKE DO WITH IT. Like the whipped horse, the whole thing is ass-backwards.

The Government Accounting Office says 40 to 60 percent of our tax dollars are lost or wasted. Forty to 60 percent! And still they want more. More! Death and taxes. Yep, yep, yep; it's a damn bad day when you do your taxes on bill paying day, you know. Fuck me very much.

Bye, bye! ☛

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Dive Knives with Dive Sheath and
Leg Straps • Produced for Two
Foreign Governments • 12-3/4" OAL
• 7-3/4" x 1-3/8" Spearpoint Blade
• 1 Edge Serrated
• 1 Edge 65% Sharpened

Disassembles into 3 Pieces:

- Polymer Handle
- Titanium Pommel
- Titanium Blade with Hidden Tang



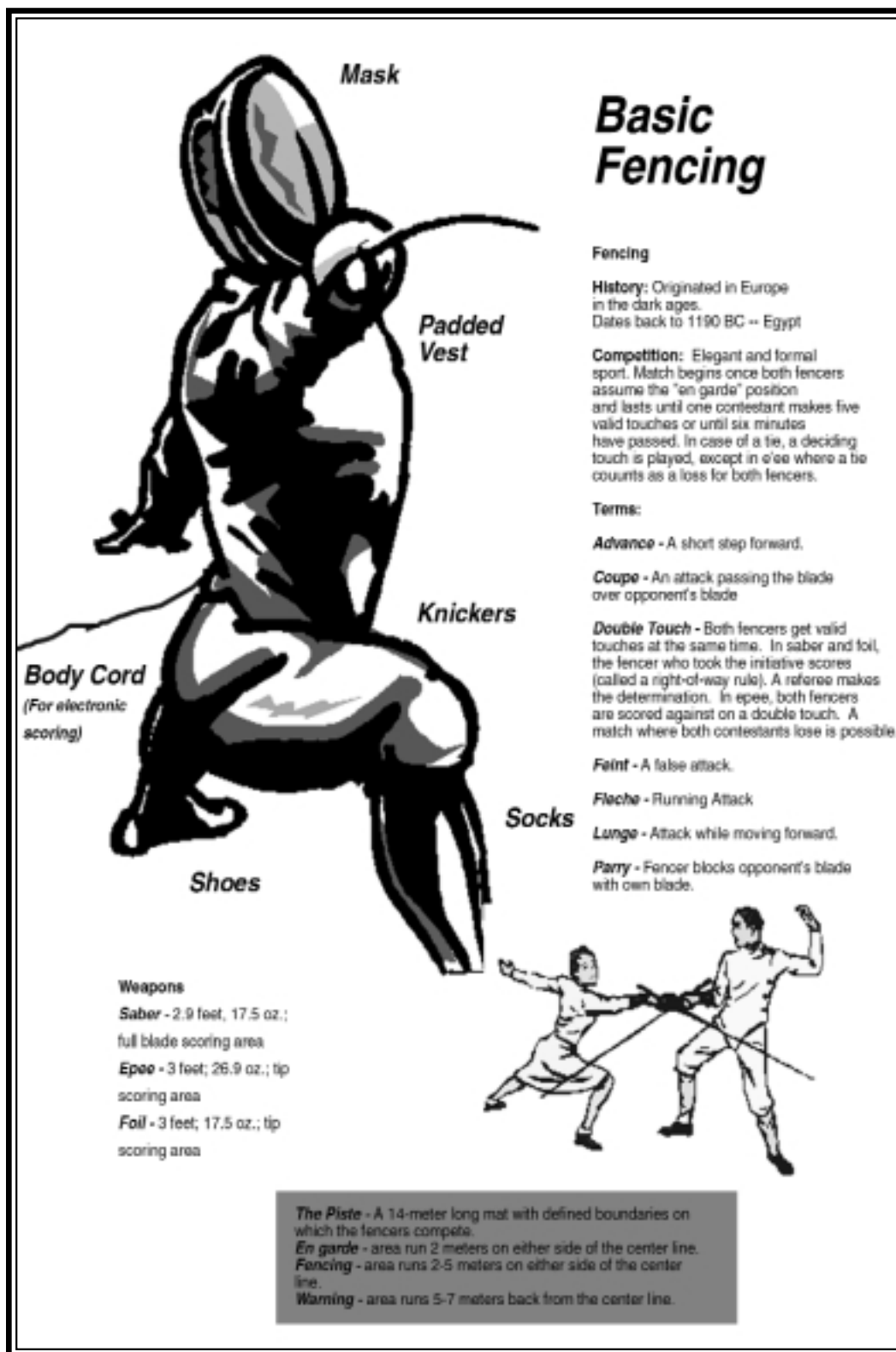
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BackCut

Fencing Summary

By Dwight McLemore



The number of Americans who fence exceeds one million. More than 10,000 compete in tournaments annually. The reason fencing enjoys such popularity lies in the fact that the timeless movements are as practical now as they were in the Dark Ages.

Dwight McLemore holds a Masters of Education degree, and is a retired combat arms officer in the US Army with extensive knowl-



edge in combat operations. He has been awarded several commendations to include the Meritorious Service Medal. With over 16 years in the martial arts, self-defense and gymnastics, McLemore holds a 1st Degree Black Belt in the Japanese sword fighting Art of Kendo, is certified in Chinese Kung Fu and is an Expert Instructor in the S.F.C. He currently works as a consultant with the Army's TRADOC at Fort Monroe, VA and owns and operates the School of Two Swords, teaching all forms of combat. Humbly calling himself an "ardent" student of history and edged weapons, he may be contacted at (757) 868-5051. www.twoswords.com.

The Bouncer

Blood, Rust and Residue Knives and Night Clubs

By Joseph Reyes

Working in the business of Night Club Security for over 10 years, I have seen a lot. When I work in New York City, I always wear body armor. One night I worked the door at a major nightclub in the Big Apple. All patrons must walk through a metal detector, and then security waves a hand-held metal detector that looks like a wand over them. Then we frisk them. This club holds about 3,000 people, and on any given Friday night we employ 60 to 70 bouncers. The club stays open until 5 a.m. It's always a long night.

During one night, we confiscated 67 edged weapons at the door. Among the 67, we found knives,

box cutters, scissors, screwdrivers, straightedge barber razors and just about anything you can cut or stick someone with. It is pretty scary if you think about it. You go out to have a good time, or in my case go to work, and potential death surrounds you.

When you plan a night out, it's important to consider what you wear, and I'm not talking about your vanity here, I'm talking self-defense. If you had to defend yourself, would your clothing work for you or against you?

Thin, loose, or ill-fitting clothing can seriously work against you in a confrontation. Since I work in the

protection business on a daily basis, I take appropriate steps to dress in a manner that's both comfortable and as safe as I can manage. At work, I wear my vest, a black turtleneck shirt, heavy black jeans and a good pair of stompers. The turtleneck is thick and helps protect my neck. The vest adds a great layer of safety against a knife attack, not a madman power stab necessarily, but it increases survival odds. A nice pair of tight fitting black leather gloves doesn't hurt either. If you have to snatch a knife, the gloves add a welcome layer of protection.

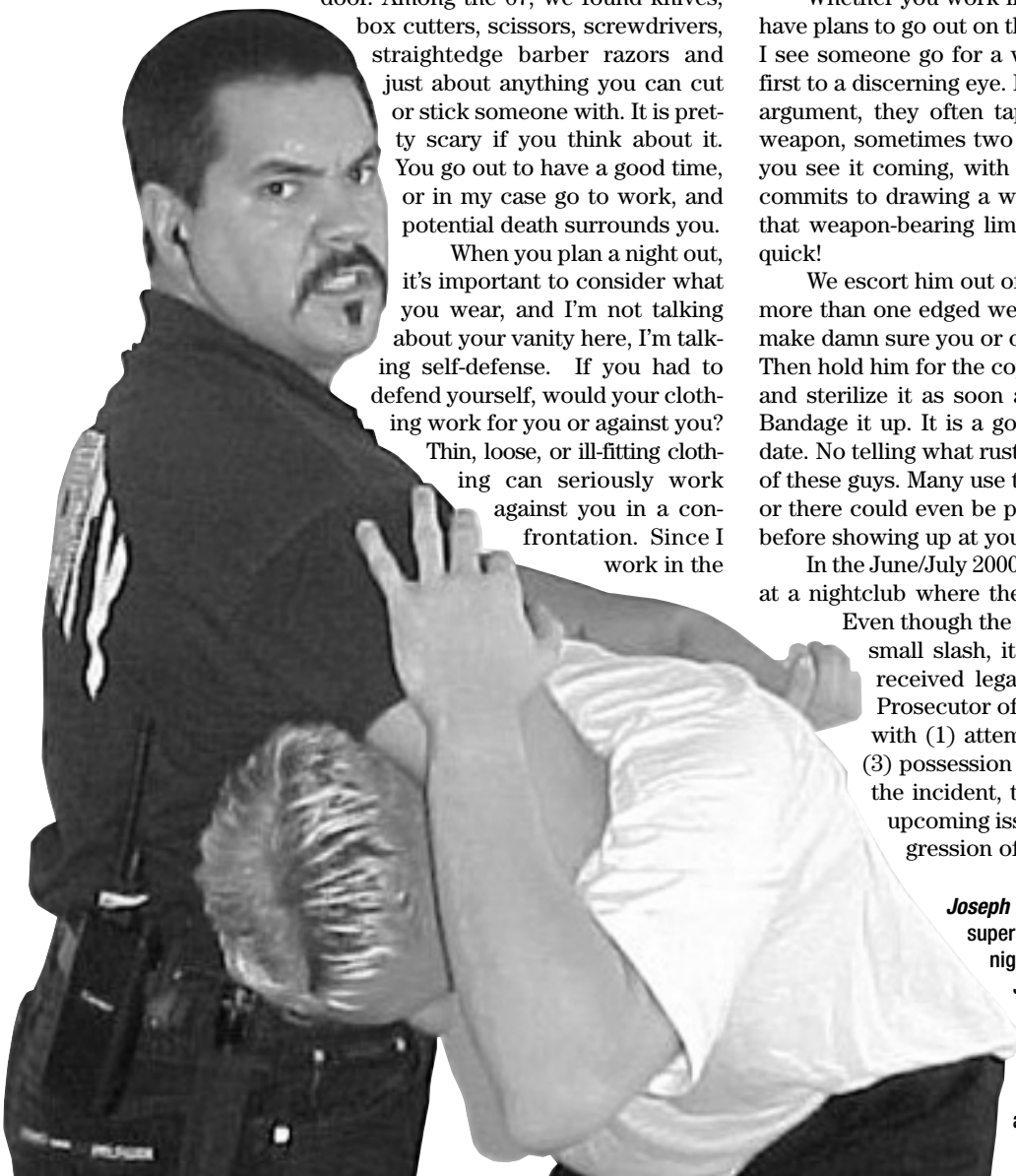
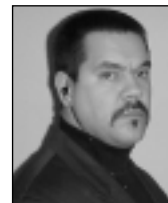
Whether you work in the protection business like I do, or just have plans to go out on the town for the evening, be vigilant. When I see someone go for a weapon, they usually telegraph their plan first to a discerning eye. If you watch a person engaged in a heated argument, they often tap or touch the area where they carry a weapon, sometimes two or three times before they draw. Usually you see it coming, with only seconds to react. Once the person commits to drawing a weapon, whatever it is, you have to go for that weapon-bearing limb and take him down, and take him out quick!

We escort him out of the club as fast we can. Some *nuts* carry more than one edged weapon; so if you have someone restrained, make damn sure you or one of your guys searches him completely. Then hold him for the cops. If you get the slightest cut, wash it out and sterilize it as soon as possible. Slap some germ killer on it. Bandage it up. It is a good idea to keep your tetanus shot up-to-date. No telling what rust and residue resides on the blade of some of these guys. Many use their knives to clean their nails, scale fish, or there could even be powdered drugs they cut up and blew just before showing up at your door.

In the June/July 2000 issue of *CQC Mag* I described a stabbing at a nightclub where the victim almost died due to a knife stab.

Even though the wound looked small on the surface, like a small slash, it ran life threatening deep. This March, I received legal papers from the Office of the County Prosecutor of Bergen County. The stabber was charged with (1) attempted murder (2) aggravated assault, and (3) possession of a deadly weapon. Because I witnessed the incident, they've called me to testify at the trial. In upcoming issues, I'll keep you informed about the progression of this case through the legal system. ☛

Joseph Reyes, Jr. serves as a bodyguard and security supervisor for one of the largest nightclubs in northern New Jersey. A 10-year-veteran bouncer and a veteran martial artist, Reyes is an Advanced Instructor in the SFC System. You may contact him at (973) 694-4348.



Street Fighter's Training Notebook

The Jersey Devil Sleeve Pull

By Rick Sikora



1) An edged weapon-armed attacker surprises Rick.



2) Rick interrupts a stabbing motion with a vice grip and pulls.

Too much martial practice goes on with tank tops and t-shirts, and little if any is done with real world clothing like jackets, sweaters and other winter wear. This is a mistake.

For one example, we know we have to try and control the arm of the knife attacker if possible and smart systems do work on this attachment. But wearing what? If you grab the sleeve of a jacket, you may not get control of the arm. The arm may still move another eight inches or so inside the sleeve.

In the other extreme sometimes a pull on a very baggy sleeve can force the arm way up the clothing and completely cover the hand and knife, even binding up the arm at the elbow. I am a Jersey Devil's hockey fan and have seen this happen many times in their on ice battles!

Practice techniques against the clothing you think opponents may wear! ☺

Rick Sikora is a certified SFC instructor, a Thai Boxing coach, street ground-fighting expert and trainer of several champions. Reach him at (201) 998-0994 in northern New Jersey.



3) Instead of pulling the opponent down and off balance, the jacket travels down the arm and up over the hand, not all the disrupting effect Rick hopes to achieve.



The VanCook View

The Top 10 List

By Jerry VanCook



Everybody has some kind of Top 10 list these days. How do I know? My e-mail is flooded with them, day in and day out. David Letterman's Top 10 has been one of the highlights of his show for years, and Hock Hochheim wrote an article entitled "The 10 Deadly Mistakes of Knife-Fighting". So, I said to myself, "*VanCook, old boy, you need your own Top 10 list.*" So here it is.

1 Read a lot of magazine articles with titles like ".45 Versus 9mm: Which is Better?" Now, don't get me wrong here. I once had to shoot a guy six times in the chest and once in the head with a 9mm in order to get him to stop shooting at me. But that was in the days before reliably-expanding 9 mm ammunition, and none of

JERRY VANCOOK'S
Top 10 Ways to Waste Your Time
 (and insure you get your ass kicked someday)
 when pursuing the study of
Close Quarters Combat

my rounds expanded. The truth is that shot placement always has been, and always will be, far more important than the bullet you throw at the bad guy. Take the time you'd spend finding out which caliber and bullet shape has a 1 percent advantage over another, and get to be a better shot with what you have.

2 In the same light, waste more time reading articles like "Karate versus Judo," "Boxing Versus Silat," and "Aikido Versus Street Fighting." The truth is, systems don't fight each other, people fight each other. It all depends on how well you do



what you do, no matter what it is that you do do. I wrote that last sentence that way on purpose, because do-do is exactly what all those articles are based on. No system has all the answers, and some don't appear to me to have any answers at all. The pragmatic student of modern self-defense recognizes this, and incorporates anything and everything he can (which works) into his personal bag of tricks.

3 Make rank your primary goal. Let me tell you something about martial arts rankings—they've become meaningless over the years, if they weren't always meaningless. What are they based on? How many katas you know? How pretty you can dance? How many boards you can break? Being able to spout back a lot of supposedly esoteric philosophical nonsense you heard your teacher say? Or do you get a higher rank because you were able to go a certain number of rounds in an artificially controlled environment with X number of students? Please explain to me, exactly, what any of that has to do with whether or not you'll stay alive on the street or battlefield. The answer is absolutely nothing. I have known beginning white belts who were holy terrors and high-level black belts who couldn't fight their way out of a rice-paper bag. *Your rank is however good you are*, and it cannot be measured in belts and certificates. Want to know the only thing I've found rank really good for? Sticking into the About the Author section of my books and magazine articles to impress potential readers who don't know any better.

4 Spend all your time practicing the aspects of CQC at which you are already proficient—you'll get to FEEL GOOD while you waste your time. Are you already a terrific gunfighter?

Then you'd actually be wiser to grab a knife or stick and learn what to do with them, too. Already know how to hold your own with the non-projectile weapons? Then start practicing your unarmed defense because you aren't ALWAYS going to have a gun or knife or stick or even an improvised weapon nearby. In my opinion, there are only two times when you should work on what you've already perfected: 1) When you're down in the dumps and need an ego boost, and 2) When some really good-looking woman is watching you. The rest of the time, you'd be smarter to work on your deficiencies.

5 Carry 16 guns, three-dozen knives, and 10 impact weapons around all the time. Now, if you combined all the advice you get from the gurus of the combat writing world, and tried to follow it, that's about what you'd be doing. Think about it. One guys emphasizes the fact that you should have a backup weapon because your primary weapon can malfunction, be lost, dropped, or knocked from your hands. Then the next know it all comes along and reminds you that you need something for your weak hand because your strong side might get incapacitated. With me so far? Okay, what about a backup for that weak hand, too? And don't forget that you'll need something you can get to when sitting rather than standing, and when you go to the ground, that will put you in a whole different position where you can't easily reach either the standing-or-sitting-right-or-left-hand-primary-or-backup weapons. So you better add a primary and backup, strong and weak hand, on-the-floor system, too. Do you see where I'm going here? Yes, I believe in different levels of defense, and yes, I believe in carrying backups. But be reason-

able. You simply cannot cover all the bases in self-defense. Or life in general.



6 Put a lot of stock in that old adage (mindlessly parroted by some defense instructors because their own mindless defense instructor parroted it to them long ago), "Always carry the same weapon, in the same place, every day." This is one of those ideas that really sounds good on paper but falls apart in reality. I mean, do you wear the same kind of clothes everyday? Even if you're in uniform, you don't wear it around off duty do you? (If you do, don't even bother reading the rest of this, or any of my other

columns—you aren't the kind of person who will ever relate to anything I will ever write.) Make the weapon/s fit your dress, practice drawing them from what you are wearing a few times, and go on about your life, for the love of Mike.

7 Watch a lot of videos— from your favorite E-Z Boy recliner. Now, there are a lot of great self-defense videos on the market today. (Some really bad ones, too, but I'm talking about the good ones here.) But there is not one video I have seen yet which will teach you anything worthwhile if you just watch it. There is a danger in this, and it's probably more dangerous to the advanced student than the beginner because the beginner at least gets confused enough to usually set down his beer, get out of the chair, and try the technique he's watching. Advanced students sometimes watch a video and think, "Yeah, that's almost like what I do in Hokey-Pokey Number 16. I can alter it a little, and add it to what I know, and . . . yep, got it." Well, Bull-Hokey-Pokey. It doesn't work that way. Videos are great—but you should watch them on your feet, and in motion.

8 View your instructor/s as gODs. Yes, I capitalized the O and the D in order to further de-emphasize the small g. Let me tell you something about your instructor, no matter who he is, or how good you think he is. He's human. He's got as many faults and problems as you do, if not more. He may present himself in the form of guru when he's teaching you, but he has to sit on the john just like you. When he thinks no one is watching, he picks his nose. And he does not have any *Secret to Life*. Some instructors really get off on their miserably small little cult followings made up of mindless sheep. Others work hard not to create such a cult-like following, but some of the sheep seem to insist on it. Take what you can from your instructors, pay them, thank them, and treat them with the same respect you should show for anyone who teaches you anything. But do not, for a moment, think they are bigger than life. They are not.

9 Wondering if at least some of the things you see on "*Walker: Texas Ranger*," and in Steven Seagal and Jean-Claude van Damme movies couldn't be used in actual combat. No, they can't. None of them. Not even that one you're thinking about right now! I was dumb enough to try a complex technique in a real life situation one time and almost got killed. While Norris, Seagal, and Van Damme are all accomplished fighters, they are also actors. Hollywood is Hollywood, reality it reality, and never the twain shall meet. Chuck, Steve, and Jean-Claude all know this. You should, too.

10 Attend a lot of bad seminars. Just as there are good and bad videos, there are good and bad seminars. It seems that everyone and his dog these days considers himself an authority on close quarters combat and is out there drumming up business. Frankly, there are fewer than a dozen instructors in the United States to whom I would give a penny in order to attend one of their seminars. No, I am not going to try to list the ones I recommend here because I'd be certain to forget someone who deserved to be on the list and never hear the end of it. In addition, I would hurt some feelings by not putting certain individuals I know (some of whom I actually like) on the list. Find out about the instructors before you write the check. When you end up at a bad

seminar, you not only waste your time, but also your money as well.

So there—my very own TOP 10 WAYS TO WASTE YOUR TIME. Whoa, son! Was I on a roll this time, or what? ☘

A well known author of more than 40 books, **Jerry VanCook** also is an instructor in Okinawan karate. He has studied Aikido, Thai Boxing, Kung Fu, Kali, and is a Rokudan (6th Degree Black Belt) in Bei-Koku Aibujutsu. In 1998 he was inducted into the World Head of Family Sokeship International Martial Arts Hall of Fame, and received their "Writer of the Year" award. His titles include *Real World Self-Defense* and *Going Undercover*. VanCook spent 14 years in law enforcement with the Garfield County Oklahoma Sheriff's Department, a federally funded undercover task force, and the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation.

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Saving the Back

By Frank T. Vertosick, Jr., MD



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Can anything prevent disc deterioration? My patients often ask what lifestyle adjustments they can make to delay the onset of a new disc problem or prevent the recurrence of a prior one. There are three adjustments they can make, but none of them is easy.

First and foremost: Lose weight. If a car's shock absorbers are bad, don't use it to haul pianos. Carrying 200 lbs. on a skeleton meant to carry 150 will accelerate disc degeneration.

Second, get into excellent physical shape and, in particular, strengthen the abdominal muscles. To understand how a strong abdomen takes stress off the discs, consider an old grade school science experiment: Start with a few hundred sheets of ordinary typing paper. Roll and tape them into tubes, then tape all of the tubes together into a honeycomb pattern and place a piece of plywood on top of the honeycomb. Four or five people can now stand on the plywood platform, effectively standing on the rolled edges of flimsy paper sheets without the paper collapsing. This experiment demonstrates how even a weak material can become very strong when rolled into tubes. That's why a long wrapping paper tube is so much stiffer than the cardboard from which it's made. A muscular torso is like the cardboard tube: strong and rigid, and capable of supporting the body even without a spine (this is no exaggeration—cadavers of muscular men will sit upright even after the spine has been removed). A torso devoid of tone, on the other hand, must depend solely upon the rigid structures of the spine for its support.

The third and final lifestyle adjustment that can aid an aching spine is the cessation of smoking. Cigarette smoking accelerates the aging of all of our connective tissues. Anyone who doubts this need only compare the faces of adult smokers to those of non-smokers. Heavy smokers show relatively greater loss of skin elasticity and increased wrinkling. In short, they look older than nonsmokers of equal chronological age. The same accelerated aging affects the discs of smokers as well. This isn't speculative; studies confirm that smokers have more problems with disc disease and respond less well to disc surgery.

Lose weight, exercise, and don't smoke. That's the best we can do. The rest is genetics. And, of course, luck. ☘

Editor's Note: The above excerpt was taken from *Why We Hurt* by Frank T. Vertosick, Jr., MD. Vertosick is a neurosurgeon and author of *When the Air Hits Your Brain*, a memoir of his surgical training. A former president of the Pennsylvania Neurological Society and a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons, he lives in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. You may purchase the book at your local bookstore.




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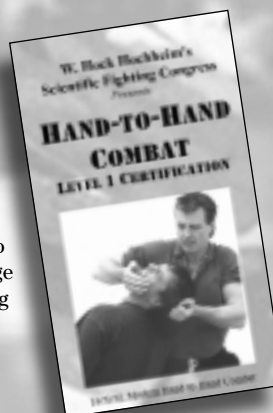
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State of the Union

"THE BUSINESS AND NEWS OF SFC MEMBERSHIP"

By Jane Eden



FROM NEWSLETTER TO NEWS RACK

This is our first anniversary issue! To celebrate, we have dedicated the entire publication to the study of knife and counter-knife combatives, with a host of lifetime experts on the subject. Not only does Hock cover 10 deadly mistakes, but we also are proud to have retired British Army Major Corrigan, formally a training wing commander for the Gurkhas, write on the kukri. Major Corrigan will now write a regular feature each issue with a new "Ask Major Corrigan" column. Please direct your questions for the Major to LauricPres@aol.com.

Every other month we reach thousands of the enlightened in 26 countries through newsstands, subscriptions and direct-to-home printer downloads. The feedback we've received from all areas of the globe proves without a doubt that people everywhere share a common bond. Most want to know how to protect themselves and their loved ones when threatened.

We started out wanting to give the members of our Scientific Fighting Congress organization something special—a magazine that focused on teaching, one that provided careful how-to steps and enough pictures so almost anyone could learn the self-defense techniques described. We decided to cover the issues few have the courage to cover, and to teach techniques most don't have the courage or the knowledge to teach.

In an age when being politically correct means keeping our military, police and our citizens ignorant of critical life saving techniques, we've decided to swim against the tide. We think you *should* have more to rely on than esoteric philosophies and pretty dance steps when someone threatens you.

Most of the techniques we teach aren't pretty—some are down right graphic. Why did we decide to teach these things, you might ask?

Despite the fact that crime statistics in the US are down, there are still bad people out there. Whether they are across the globe, or across the street really doesn't matter in the big picture. Looking the other way and pretending these people don't exist, or thinking violence can't happen to you or someone you love doesn't keep you safe. As long as you have something that someone might want, you are at risk.

MEMBER NEWS

Glenn Zwiers has opened his new school/storefront in metro Melbourne-The CQC Centre. It will specialize in SFC subjects as well as function as headquarters for Glenn's World Emporium mail order and retail location.

Police Chief **Mike Gillette** can be found as ramrod of our new webpage talk forum called "The Training Room" on our www.HocksCQC.com. This will be the SFC's official one forum for SFC members and viewers to talk shop and contact each other on hand, stick, knife and gun training tactics and strategies.

Chief Gillette's new Tactical Response Systems, 2 tape video series may be purchased by contacting him directly at (515) 372-0228, or by purchasing the set online with your credit card at our webpage shop site, www.HocksCQC.com.

CQCMag readers might remember our news coverage on James Arness belated reception of a Purple Heart medal. Our readership has helped encourage the WW II war hero and TV's Gunsmoke star James Arness to write an autobiography. Burt Reynolds (who played a Dodge City blacksmith decades ago on the show) has signed on to write the preface.

THANKS

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our members and subscribers for their support over the last few years. We want to congratulate you all for your training accomplishments. We are excited about this partnership we've forged, and look forward to playing a part in whatever future training plans you might have. Our mission is to educate anyone interested in self-defense techniques to help save lives during dangerous situations. Not everyone can carry a weapon. Not everyone wants to carry one. But everyone can carry knowledge about how to react when threatened. Knowledge and muscle memory are your best

We wanted to give the members of our Scientific Fighting Congress organization something special—a magazine that focused on teaching, one that provided careful how-to steps and enough pictures so almost anyone could learn the self-defense techniques described.

friends in a life-threatening situation.

Someday the techniques we teach may no longer be necessary. Someday, people may all get along peacefully, through logic, negotiation and mutual caring. Unfortunately, someday is not today. Until that time, we look forward to helping you train so you may protect yourself and the ones you love if the unthinkable actually happens. ☸



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June 9, 10 • San Antonio, TX
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Camp. Contact Host Curtis
Abernathy at (210) 699-3686.

June 16 • North Little Rock, AR
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