

COMBAT & HEALING



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COMBAT & HEALING

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ABOUT THE COVER

Our Two Representatives From Sweden, Tobias Duse and Kennett Sjogren. Both of their schools are growing quickly with some of the most enthusiastic students I have come across. Both will be out here for the July camp.

Allan Williams and some of his advanced students. Allan teaches on the Gold Coast in Queensland and has been studying with Erle Montaigue since 1983.

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Recommended Reading

Australasian Fighting Arts magazine
POB 673 Manly NSW 2095 Australia

Write for subscription rates. Erle Montaigue has his own column in this magazine. Has been running since 1973.

W.T.B.A. NEWS

This year started out with a bang and many changes. The grading scheme has been well accepted with one change (one that Steve Bloom DID suggest in his earlier submission), that of Senior Student Grade. Mark Boys was left off the list in earlier editions, so Mark, here you are on the list as a Senior Instructor, Branch (Normanville South Australia), Mike Babin has an article in this edition relating to the problem that we as instructors face in dealing with disloyal students who think that they know it all! This seems to be an universal problem. How do we know who will remain loyal, and how much we should give to students?

China Trip

I will briefly cover the China trip here as it is now the end of May and I have to get this magazine off to the printers. I have just returned from China where I learnt, as previously stated, the five more qi disruptive forms, or Wudang forms. It was one hell of a trip and I wouldn't advise people to try it the way I did it. I originally had arranged with the China Sports Dept. in China to do this trip, but when I saw the itinerary of nine days sight seeing all over China, I changed my mind and decided to do it myself. So I arranged through the only English speaking student of *Master Liang Shih-kan* to meet them at the Wutang station. I flew to Beijing, took an internal flight to Wuhan and then by train to Wutang. To my amazement, there was actually someone at the station to meet me! *Mr. Fu Wen-shi*, an English speaking (of sorts) student of Mr. Liang. Expecting to be taken to Wudang Mountain, I was surprised when I was taken to a small village just outside of Wutang. There, I was told that the Taiji on Wutang Shan was only for tourists (typical), and that I would train with Master Liang at his house! Well, I knew that there would be some kind of 'test' before I got to train with Master Liang, so I was ready the next morning for this. Up at 5 a.m. I was greeted by the class of only five students who were doing some sort of sparring with each other. The fifth student greeted me and using body language asked me to attack him. So I threw an ineffectual punch at him, not wishing to be bad mannered, and he hammered my arm so hard that an instant lump

rose. I noticed, out of the corner of my eye some smiles, "could they be smirks" I asked myself. OK, I now knew what was on, so when I was asked to attack again, I struck this student on the side of the jaw hard enough to knock him down. That was the first challenge, I had expected three in all. Some words from a distance, I guess from Liang and another student came to me. This time, **He** attacked me. Not wishing to be struck again, I moved to the side and tapped him lightly around GB 24 with my right palm, then did the wrong thing, stopped and turned around to see what the master now had to say. This young chap attacked me from behind, a stinging strike to the back of my neck which caused me to see stars! I was not going to go down, so instinctively swung my right palm around striking him again around GB 24. This time I did not pull the strike and Mr. smart arse went down. My neck is still sore and I have trouble turning my head. Not much of a challenge I suppose, but it was enough for me at my age, and I guess this is where the blown up stories of the old Chinese challenges have come from. Probably it was no more than what I experienced. But then I have always said that we must invest in loss in order to gain something great.

The trip was worth it all however as I was then taken in by Master Liang and taught over the three days the remaining 5 short forms which I filmed myself doing each evening so that I have an exact record of what was taught. I was not allowed to film the others so I kept my camera secreted in my room and only took it out when I was supposed to be sleeping. I made some good friends at Wudang even though I was only there for such a brief time. But that seems to be the way with the Chinese. I still have friends who write to me every Christmas and Chinese New Year from Hong Kong when I was there for a brief period in 1981. I'll have more on what I learnt next issue. I am still correlating what was taught and still researching exactly how these qi disruptive techniques work. I had a few done on me and they are quite amazing. Mr. Liang is about early 80s I should imagine, but is still alert and quite strong for his age. His hands still move like lightning and his qi disruptive methods are devastating with a different method for each major point. These are only ever taught within the con-



Our Oslo Group

text of the nine qi disruptive forms though. The forms that I already knew were basically correct with the addition of two more disruptive methods in forms No. 2 and 4.

European Tour

Earlier this year I visited our schools in London, Wales, Manchester, Oslo and Vasteras in Sweden. It was good to meet up with my old friends again, and I regret having to curtail my overseas tours from now onwards. In fact I had to cancel my USA/Canada tour due for March/April this year. Something happened this time. I almost went blind as a result of being broken from my roots for so long and then having to work as soon as I alighted from the flights. I was told by my Chinese Doctor that I would live no longer than 50 if I kept up this pace, due to my extreme sensitivity to the earth, from my training. By the time I arrived at Sweden, I was almost dead on my feet. I have never experienced this before and wish never to again. When I arrived back home, I could only do qigong each morning and slow form which got me back to my normal healthy self. It took around four weeks before I could say that I was firing again. The reason is that I take my teaching very seriously and wish all of my students to have a better life from what I give. If I could be some kind of businessman and not really care what I taught, just taking the money and running, it would be easier. But because I care about my students, I worry that what I am giving them is what they need, and

this is so draining. Energy is literally drained out of the body when one has to give out to so many students at once. It's wonderful though as all of my students are so caring and eager to learn. But from now onwards, you will just all have to come out here to me if you wish me to keep on putting out the information and researching.

Our London lot were just as earthy as usual and a large class learnt the 'Mother Applications' from the small san-sau. Jim Uglow will be here in July for our 3 week workshop for the end two weeks so I urge you all to try and get out to this as it will be one hell of a gathering. I was picked up after the Sunday class in London by Peter Jones and Lee, who drove me to Wales arriving around 11 p.m. that evening! Carlo Carlino (Joke Killer) came with me after having taken the London workshop, and

also up to Manchester. Carlo is a beautiful Italian man who made many friends in England and learnt some profanities from the Welsh contingent! The workshops in Wales were very well attended with around 40 people showing up in Gorseinon. Many from Tony Court's school came along with Tony and most of Peter and Keith's students turned up. Manching also attended.

Up at 4 a.m. on the Thursday morning driving to Manchester. Bill Barnes met Carlo and I at Birmingham for the rest of the trip. The lads in Manchester wanted to do stick work, so we did the nine preliminary training forms over the three days live in workshop. Many sore arms, legs and bodies later, they actually had the whole thing down, helped along by Miriam Barnes, Norma Leggit and Margaret Jones who looked after the whole group cooking wise. It was a lovely idea to have a live in workshop, freezing mornings and clear days out at a orphanage just outside of Manchester.

Up at 4 am again on the Sunday morning for a flight to Oslo where a very large class was waiting for me. Ken Johnson, Steve Bloom, Anita Johnson, Tormod and gentle giant Tron have done an amazing job of spreading the good word about the WTBA in Scandinavia, so much so that I think that Scandinavia will be the biggest growth area for us. Again in a car with Kennet and Tobias our Swedish reps driving across Norway and Sweden to Vasteras a large city about 70 miles from Stockholm where Kennet Sjogren has his school. Kennet did a great job in organizing the workshop with people



Our Swedish Group

coming from as far off as Udevalla and Stockholm.

People who are normally outright skeptics asked to have 'it' done to



Tina Pia & Marco, Denmark

Original Qi Disruptive Form Taught

For the first time, I have taught the first of the nine Qi disruptive forms or katas. While I was teaching in Oslo, I decided to begin teaching these forms to my friends only. And as my Oslo group are all my friends... I was delighted at the excellence most in the group picked up this short but very complicated form. I have never before taught this or any of these forms to anyone other than my own children. And I will probably not put them onto tape as I only wish to teach them personally. Well, maybe a special tape for specific *TRUSTED* students.

For the first time, I have taught the first of the nine Qi disruptive forms or katas.

We had some brain drain at the end, but it was worth it. The 'testing' was also done to demonstrate the effectiveness of these disruptive methods.

them, and they are always amazed at the outcome when they try to use their muscles straight afterwards. I am happy in not traveling so much or even at all now as I have made sure that my schools and those who represent me overseas are of the very highest standard. And with a solid structure to the organization and sub-organizations, those schools will grow and prosper. I now have students who are of higher standard than any I have ever taught, both in North America and Europe.

Our funds are slowly growing for the Marae and clearing and building should begin this year. Unfortunately, Tim, our treasurer will be shifting house down to the South Coast of NSW in Australia. Tim will set up a school in his new area as his standard has increased greatly this year. I will be giving more and more work in the way of workshops to my advanced students from this year onwards to give them the practice they need to advance themselves.

I look forward to seeing and training with many of my friends in July at our first 3 week Instructor's camp, the first of many I hope.



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Loyalty & Martial Training

by Michael Babin

In the last year or so, I have noticed a disturbing trend in articles written by leading tai chi authorities: Erle Montaigue in Australia; Dan Docherty in England and Dr. Yang Jwing-ming in the United States. The tone and/or substance of their comments makes it obvious that these instructors feel betrayed in some way by former senior students.

Speaking from my own experience, I certified only two senior students as instructors before switching over to Erle's forms and methods a few years ago. One of these had studied with me for five years, pestered me to be certified and, after successfully testing, immediately stopped practicing tai chi, much less beginning to teach it.

As betrayals go, this was relatively mild, he didn't slander me, steal my students or my wife. However, it still hurt to know that the long-term effort I had invested with him was, in a sense, wasted. "How sharper than a serpent's tooth is an ungrateful student" to paraphrase Shakespeare.

Money has a way of corrupting relationships and the loss of a previously close relationship leaves the instructor feeling betrayed and exploited

Over the years, there have been other minor betrayals and, sadly, the root cause of martial disloyalty often seems to be ego and money. Either the senior student feels (usually prematurely) that he or she no longer needs the instructor or decides that there is a good living to be made by exploiting what they have learned or their former relationship with the instructor (especially if the latter is well-known).

Money has a way of corrupting relationships and the loss of a pre-

viously close relationship leaves the instructor feeling betrayed and exploited. We end up thinking of our senior students as being, in some ways, almost like our children. When they act in a way that we don't approve of or in a way that we know is wrong, it hurts in a way that can't be appreciated unless you've had that kind of relationship (or been a parent).

In addition, as in any relationship, it's difficult to really know someone until you've been close to them for sometime. Initially, a student can seem personable, talented and ethical and end up being anything but!

Even one such incident can leave an instructor reluctant to put as much into subsequent teacher/student relationships. When I first started teaching t'ai chi in 1985, I was full of good intentions. None of this old-world elitist reluctance to give "the good oil" to any student who came to class. I would be a shining example of sharing everything I knew with anyone who wanted it, upon demand.

A decade later, my attitudes to teaching have certainly changed. I have acquired a great deal of sympathy for those old-timers who refused to share the essence of their understanding unless they were reasonably sure of the motives and aptitudes of a student.

Now, I'm not saying that the average student of today should kowtow to an instructor, shower him or her with presents and hang around their front door day-and-night until accepted as a student. Such may have been appropriate in another time, another culture, it's not so appropriate today.

It is also true that good students are almost as rare as good instructors; but, at least for the first few years, the student who wishes to learn deeply needs the instructor more than the latter needs students!

Conversely, it is also essential that the instructor not give up on the

teaching process simply because of one or two bad experiences over the years.

What The Student Owes the Instructor

As a beginner, you owe your instructor the respect and courtesy you expect to receive from him or her; combined with patience and effort to learn the skills being offered. You should try his or her approach for at least six months to a year before switching teachers or stopping altogether.

You can rationalize any form of human behavior and disloyalty is no exception.

As a senior student, you owe your instructor that same respect you expressed as a beginner combined with loyalty. This, however, should not be a feudal willingness to suspend your ethics or disbeliefs and "do what you're told, no matter what".

Rather, martial loyalty implies an honest and mutual exchange and the willingness on your part to trust the instructor's motives and skills without losing sight of the fact that he or she is human and will make mistakes.

Good senior students are essential to an instructor, they challenge him or her constructively, ensuring that he or she continues to evolve as a martial artist and stays on track. In the days of the ancient Roman Republic, a successful general would occasionally be allowed the honor of parading at the head of his troops in Rome itself. By tradition, a servant rode behind the general in his chariot, whispering "Remember, you, too, are mortal!"

Just as with martial instructors, this doesn't always work and some be-

come egoists content to surround themselves with students whose only talents lie in flattery and/or hero-worship.

The Chinese, ever pragmatic, were on the right track with the Confucian concept of loyalty which, though extremely strict and hierarchical, had a safety valve — if you successfully revolted against the Emperor than it was obvious that Heaven was on your side and that you deserved to replace the old dynasty with your own!

You can rationalize any form of human behavior and disloyalty is no exception.

In the end, loyalty is a two-way street, both the instructor and the student must contribute to the relationship if it is to survive and help both to evolve as individuals *and* martial artists.

Editor's note:

So, for all you wingers out there who winged that you did not see a Michael Babin article last issue, here he is back again! It was my fault as I had to be overseas and had to get the magazine finished before I left, hence Michael's article being left out as I had not received it from him at that time.

However, we now have five articles from Michael (how did he get to have two children!) who must have been working all day and night to get them to me. Michael Babin is one a W.T.B.A. friend and exceptional martial artist in the true sense. Should you ever get to one of his workshops, it will be well worth the travel and time.

Erle:

New Videos From MTG Publishing:

Dim-Mak A To Z

Volumes 1 to 5 are now ready. 6 should be ready by the time this magazine goes out. And Volume 7 should not be far behind.

New Book:

Dim-Mak's 12 Most Deadly Katas

Published By Paladin Press in the U.S.A. It will be published in May 1995. The cost will be US\$25.00 plus postage. By Erle Montaigne.

Paladin Press already publish authors of the WTBA.

Michael Babin:

T'ai Chi Ch'uan, The Martial Side:

Erle Montaigne:

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Erle Montaigne & Michael Babin:

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The Triplets Of Immortality

By Tormod Ngren (Norway)

Martial arts, like any other human endeavour, is basically built upon souls urge to grow into perfection. Of course, there is the element of survival, health, fighting, the need of self-affirmation through grace and admiration and all that. Whatever the driving force, it really does not matter. in the long run, maybe what's going on is simply the moths helpless, irreversible and predestined flight towards the sun. The beautiful symbolism of this is reflected in man, our worlds most sophisticated creature. . It just so happens that the human moth loves drama and never stops imagining, creating turmoil, making the journey less obvious. He manages to create such a nest of non- necessities, that he loses touch of himself. He starts to doubt himself, his abilities, his immortality and becomes more absorbed in the mire of delusions than the clean, simple journey towards self-recognition. In contrast to the flight of the moth, man survives.

Once born into this world of duality, we lose track of our innate nature and through the sense-organs get caught up in the affairs of the world. The Buddhists say we start to suffer, the Christians talk about inherited sin and so on. Obviously what the religious teachings have in common is a diffuse memory of another state that were us also, in addition to this one. Of course, cloned with the superstition, the emotions and intellectual merry-go-rounds on our planet, the final product they make up our religious doctrines rely on everything else but the simple journey back, the liberation of soul in man, God - realisation or whatever word comes closest to your heart.

How does this relate to a martial artist, whose interest is cultivating chi for fighting and/or healing, who spends hours and hours over, on bagwa, dim mak or whatever? Depending on the level you are working on, I think at one stage it becomes inevitable to disregard the inner pull. Whatever began as a fas-

ination and a juvenile search for the mystery forces, develops, if it is nourished properly, into something else.

What happens in a man when he inwardly feels that his grandest achievement through decades of sparring is the touch of healing? What a cataclysmic waste of time! Wouldn't you say? I want to be a 'fearsome fighter, perspiring testosterone in buckets. Don't give me this crap! Give your enemy a hug! - Is that what comes out of endless hours of training? If healing is what it is all about, why not spend the time at med. school and really do it?

No, my dear friend, you see what can be expected when tuning into the martial arts with your whole self. The raw material is carved and cannot afterwards do anything but shine, because it is its nature. There is no longer a conscious showing off, no performance, no effort or technique attached to this, simply ... being ... here ... now. ... "isness, hereness and nowness." From this comes everything. . The intention was never to fight, but to recognise soul within . .

Once born into this world of duality, we lose track of our innate nature and through the sense-organs get caught up in the affairs of the world.

If I may, I would like to go some more into details on this matter. The instrument we call martial arts is in fact a fantastic tool] to refine or carve raw material into jewels. As probably most people have come to realise on the way, an excellent tool is no guarantee for success. There is still the individual's level of development and intention that determines how far he or she can progress. As said earlier, you may start the path being fascinated and wanting mysterious chi to push your opponent twenty feet away without even touching, you may