



YMAA News is a quarterly publication. Back issues are available for free download at www.ymaa.com



FOREWORD

By Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming

Dear Friends and Readers

My two dreams continue into the new year. As I mentioned back in December, one of them is to preserve the ancient Chinese martial arts in its current state of value and quality. The other is to establish a Qigong research center called 'The Qigong Public Research Foundation'. Both foundations will function as non-profit organizations.

As construction of the YMAA California Retreat Center moves forward, it still requires many contributors to make this dream a reality.

There are many Ancient Qigong Documents that have to be translated into English. All are very important since they relate to health, longevity, and spiritual cultivation. Most of these documents were concealed in Buddhist and Daoist monasteries and can be used as important human experiences in fighting sickness and aging. Additionally, these documents have pointed the way for future human spiritual cultivation.

A certain imbalance continues to exist between the development of material science and spiritual science. We cannot deny that humans have reached a state of almost luxurious material enjoyment that they had never experienced before. However, this has also caused human materialistic desire to become more spiritually demanding.

The struggle to avoid future human self-destruction also continues. We see it every day on television or read about it in local newspapers. Everyone must do their part to improve our spiritual cultivation. To do this we must first borrow experiences from the past. That's why the translation of these ancient documents has become the most urgent and crucial projects at this foundation.

The center plans to invite experienced Chinese Qigong researchers and practitioners to translate these ancient documents into modern Chinese language. In addition, they will interpret these documents based on their own Qigong experience(s).

Finally, these documents will be compiled and analyzed from a modern scientific point of view and then published and made available to the public for further discussion and research.

I quoted a figure in my last column that will help in the completion of this project. To those who have already contributed to this cause, I sincerely appreciate your support both spiritually and financially.

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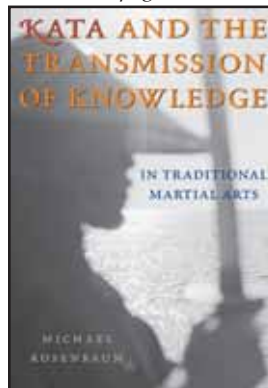
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Book Review

Kata and The Transmission of Knowledge

by Michael Rosenbaum

\$16.95 198 pages ISBN 1-59439-026-6



I just finished reading Michael Rosenbaum's latest book, *Kata and the Transmission of Knowledge* (in Traditional Martial Arts). It's the first book that I've ever read that provided a thorough and complete breakdown of kata, why it is performed and how it relates to various (martial arts) fighting techniques.

Once again, Rosenbaum has proved himself to be extremely knowledgeable of not just one or two martial arts, but many. He explains in detail how practically every weapon used by martial artists fits into their kata and the historical background associated with each one of these weapons.

Usually the first thing most people do when they step into a martial arts studio for the first time is glance at the variety of weapons neatly arranged in storage racks on the floor or hanging from the walls. Some they can name, many others they cannot. Conversely, there were many that I wish I knew how to use like the *sai*, the tai chi double-edged sword or the broadsword, but only had limited knowledge about except for what I read in books or saw in the movies. Along comes Rosenbaum to fill in the blanks and he does it in an astute and chronological manner.

His introductory page asks the question: **What's Kata Got to Do With Anything?**

That's an interesting question because many martial artists have kicked Kata to the curb. So eager are they to learn either a new technique or a new form they seldom think about Kata and its importance in the world of martial arts.

With guidance and assistance from Ed Francisco and Richard Lawson, Rosenbaum has put together what I consider to be a martial arts classic.

Rosenbaum writes about "the process that gives birth to a system." He doesn't just write about one system, he takes us back in time to the actual birth of martial arts. And he answers many age-old questions such as: Do you have to have a weapon in your hand(s) to be an effective martial artist? And where and when did martial arts originate?

Read this book and you will find all of the answers to these questions and more.

DAN HOOD

TAIJI SOLO FORM

The Benefits of Group versus Individual

BY JOHN LOUPOS, B.S.

As you might infer from the following quotation, there is no hard and fast consensus as to the relative merits of group practice versus solo practice. When you practice Taiji on your own, you are the primary variable in the experience, there being no one else to take into consideration. Of course, considerations, such as the conditions under which you practice (terrain, lighting, weather, your most recent meal, time of day, etc.); will have some effect on any given practice session, as can your own personal subjective aspects. But, if it's just you and your Taiji, the potential for unanticipated influences from outside sources is about nil.

'Normally, Taiji practice is a solo affair, hemmed in by the frenetic pace of daily life. Though Taiji is an individual journey, companionship along the road is to be treasured.'

-Dr. Jay Dunbar

You are alone with yourself. It's a beautiful, brisk morning as you stroll across your lawn, or the park, or the quiet confines of whatever personal sanctum you have available. As you stand in quiet preparation, prior to embarking on one more in an untold number of repetitions of your Taiji form, you feel yourself rooting to the earth. Your body automatically enacts a multitude of adjustments, and your respiration softens and slows as the parasympathetic branch of your autonomic nervous system prevails, relaxing you down to a deeper level. With the first moves of your form you feel any residual kinks in your body announcing their release and melting away. Soon your mind and spirit follow as internal energy (*qi*) starts to tingle through your body's energy pathways. In the whole universe, there is only you in your oneness with all, and the timelessness of the moment you are in.

Solo practice offers the opportunity to move at your own pace and with attention to your own agenda. If you have a notion to linger over this move or that for extra practice, that's your prerogative.

On the other hand, group practice offers the prospect of mingled energies whether distractive or harmonious. When you practice your Taiji with others, their presence can not affect your experience. In fact, there are a number of reasons why practicing Taiji in a neighborly way can yield benefits above and beyond what you might expect from solo training.

Whenever two or more people practice Taiji together, the "energy" changes. As one member of a group, you may feel an aura of anticipation, a heightened sensitivity to the parameters of your physical space in proximity to those around you, or a peripheral awareness of timing your moves to others. Exactly how your energy changes may also depend on the specific group context. Practicing in your regular class, alongside familiar fellow students with your teacher at the helm will likely feel different from practicing with acquaintances at the park or with unknown peers at a

tournament Taiji get together. Regardless of the context, group practice offers you an opportunity to learn how to engage the energy of your Taiji with the energy of others who are on a similar path.

As a teacher, I have more than the usual opportunity, incentive, and responsibility to pay attention to the dynamics of group practice. Experience has taught me that any shift in energy can be used as an opportunity to learn something new and to increase one's perceptive abilities. For example, a feeling of enhanced sensitivity and refined perception are necessary precursors to synchronized timing. Synchronized timing implies your ability to match your moves exactly to the moves of others around you. Naturally, the whole issue of synchronized timing is moot if you are practicing alone. But when practicing alongside others, each person shares equally in the responsibility for keeping the group moving in unison. (Note: in actual practice and depending on the size of the group, if the novices or beginners are involved more experienced students might be expected to shoulder a greater share of this responsibility to keep their practice within the ability range of the less experienced classmates.)

Synchronized timing may seem merely an aesthetic quality to casual observers, but it can take on added significance in any context in which you engage directly with others, whether in "verbal" negotiation, push hands practice, or outright combat/self defense. Reflect for a moment on whether you have ever engaged in a conversation or a negotiation, perhaps one that was a bit volatile, where there was a possibility of escalating conflict. Even in a relatively benign situation, short of out-and-out combat, the timing and nuances of your remarks, not to mention your body language, can influence how events play out. Poorly crafted or ill-timed verbal communication can inflame a situation, vice de-escalating it.

The sensitivity that you develop toward others, often unconsciously, as one consequence of group practice can help you avoid misreads and respond more effectively in resolving conflict before it gets out of control. Group practice is clearly more conducive to the acquisition of enhanced sensitivity and refined perception, for the purposes of interaction with others, than is solo practice.

From a martial perspective, the issue of timing, or synchronizing your moves to the moves of others, is especially important. Taiji as a martial art necessarily entails interactions with others, whether for a prearranged push hands practice or during actual combat or self-defense.

Nowadays, Taiji is often pursued as a personal development or fitness activity with rare thought given to its fighting application. People who study Taiji are often motivated to do so by reasons that are quite different from those who study harder or more external martial arts styles. Taiji can be an effective fighting system for those who train with some regard for its martial aspects.



TAI CHI IN THE PARK

Come on Out to Western Mass for a Day of Tai Chi and Hanging Out in the Hills

From a martial perspective, it is very important to know where your opponent is at all times and to be able to sense instantly if your opponent closes his distance on you. This “knowing” can stem from visually observing your opponent, or it can stem from “sensing” his or her proximity. Practicing with others, and developing an awareness of where they are at all times even in the absence of a direct visual line of contact, requires a certain peripheral awareness. This is most readily developed by practicing on a regular basis in close proximity to others. Of course, merely being able to sense an opponent’s approach is useless if you lack the skills to respond accordingly, but that skill level requires preparation of a different sort.

Along these same lines, it can be instructive for any group to vary its practice speed. Learning how to keep your body properly adjusted while moving at variable speeds is essential from a martial perspective because, in a real situation, you may not be able to control the speed with which another person uses against you. Rather, you must be able to match your speed to that of your opponent. Varying the speed at which your group practices forces you to learn how to adapt to what could be a rapidly changing situation.

Another skill that group form practice teaches, even if inadvertently, is how to sense and maintain a fixed distance from those around you. Though you may have never thought of this skill as such, when you practice with others, for example in a crowded classroom, the likelihood is that you naturally become aware if someone encroaches on your space. At such times, you may automatically adjust the length or width of your step or stance, or perhaps the pace of your movements, to allow for a more manageable distance between yourself and those sharing your practice space. Taken to a more highly developed level, the same skill allows you to control and maintain a safe distance between yourself and someone who is posing a genuine threat.

Aside from the manner in which group practice prepares you for engaging with others in push hands or combat, there is simply the sheer joy of sharing your time and space with other people who are also committed to exploring the magic Taiji has to offer. When you practice and train Taiji, you are creating the potential to grow and evolve as a person. Such personal growth may not happen by quantum leaps, but every practice session will leave its mark in some way. Practicing en mass allows you and your fellow students the opportunity to learn from each other’s mistakes and to share in each other’s progress. Because there are few road maps outlining whatever route your personal Taiji journey will take, group practice can offer solace in times of uncertainty and, in the words of Dr. Jay, “companionship along the way.”

JOHN LOUPOS is the author of *Inside Tai Chi and Exploring Tai Chi* and his latest book *Tai Chi Connections*. He lives in Cohasset, Mass. Reprinted with permission from Volume 13 Number 4 of the *Journal of Asian Martial Arts*.



When: Sunday June 12th from noon to whenever
Where: Look Park, Northampton, Mass. (www.look-park.org)

Who is invited: All YMAA members and their families and anyone else (in hope to combine this gathering with some folks who practice out here, so bring anyone)

What are we going to do: Tai Chi/Push Hands/Fighting Set/Sword, etc. Nothing organized, just do your own thing.

What will my family do: Look Park is awesome for kids. It has three playgrounds, ball fields, a great sprinkler park (bring bathing suits) a river, a lake, a zoo, a train, mini golf and bumper boats. It’s really a cool place.

What to bring: Food for a barbecue and head into Northampton.

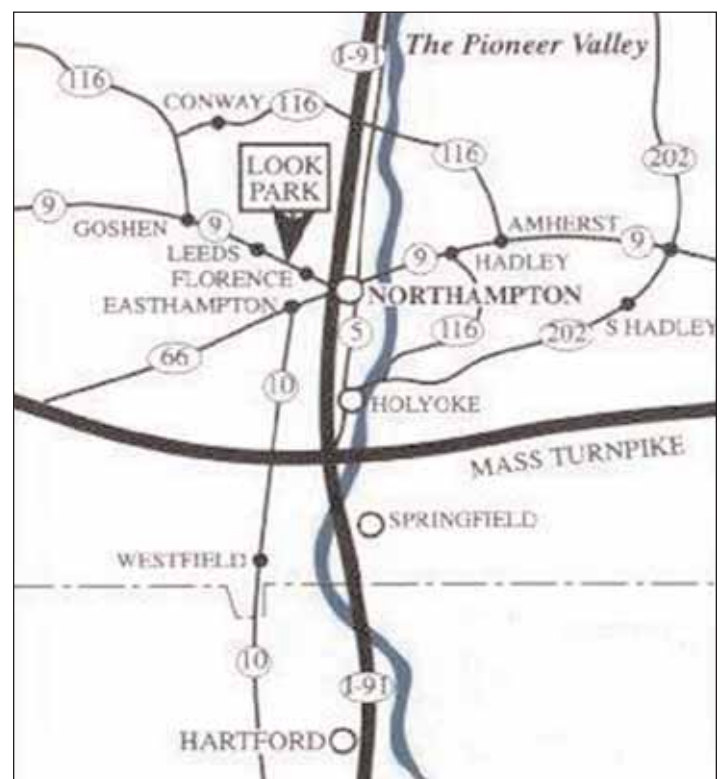
Sounds great, but how much will it cost: The park charges a \$4 admission fee per vehicle. Depending on how many people come, we might need about another \$5 per participant to cover the costs of the shelter.

What if it Rains: Come anyway, that’s why we got the shelter.

Now what: Contact Dan Salive or Jeff Rosen jfrosen@aol.com if you are interested so we can get a head count. We need 10 committed people by April 15, 2005 to make the commitment to the shelter.

Northampton is about an hour and 45 minutes from Jamaica Plain: You get off Exit 19 and Just go straight for a few miles until the road ends at Look Park (go to the left).

Jeff Rosen & Dan Salive



YMAA AROUND THE WORLD

SNOW BALLS



Imagine a room full of people standing in a circle each one holding a ball between their hands. They are slowly rocking their weight forward and back circling the ball in front of them. They're holding large wooden spheres, woven wicker balls, bright colored plastic toy balls, or no ball at all, just an imaginary ball of qi cupped in their palms. All are focused on creating a smooth orbit with the object they are holding. They are relaxed and enjoying themselves while creating a circular pattern with their bodies. Their breathing is circular and even to match their motions. Where are you?

Probably at a Taiji Ball Workshop, similar to the one held at YMAA Wisconsin Jan. 30, 2005. However, Mother Nature wanted us to make snow balls instead, so she blanketed the area with the fiercest snow storm of the season. Of the 25 registrants, only five showed up. We plan to perform Taiji Ball again on World Taiji & Qigong Day April 30. Hopefully Mother Nature will bless us with a good day.

By Angela Laughingheart, director
YMAA Taijiquan of Wisconsin

SIGHTINGS

Jeff Rosen, Phil Goldman and Afaa Weaver dropped in to YMAA Headquarters in Jamaica Plain, Mass., recently to say Hi. Goldman attended the Chin Na seminar last February, Rosen attended a Push Hands class in March and Weaver a writer's gathering at the University of Massachusetts in Boston. Weaver is the Alumnae Professor of English at Simmons College in Boston.

TASTE TEST

A recently published article by the University of California says studies have found that Chinese entrees are consistently huge—often a pound and a half each or more, enough for four “sensible” portions. That may make the food a good buy, but a caloric land mine if you eat one whole dish yourself. Focus more on the vegetables and rice (preferably brown). If you're in a group, order at least one dish of steamed (not fried) or sautéed vegetables for sharing. If you're alone, order one plain vegetarian dish and another with meat or fish; combine part or both with rice, and save the rest for other meals.



MILESTONE

The YMAA Publication Center recently concluded its 21st year of publishing and is now preparing for many great years ahead. David Ripianzi, publisher, says he sees exciting new opportunities in the way that knowledge is exchanged between writer/publisher and reader/viewer: the practicality of the DVD for preserving and transmitting knowledge, is one that YMAA Publication Center will continue to develop over the coming years.



EAR FULL

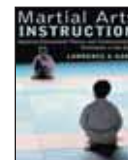
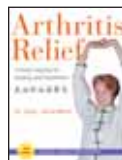


Summer may be just a few months away however; it might be a good idea to know what to do to protect your ears when you go swimming. Swimmer's ear is a painful, itchy condition caused by water trapped in the ear. One

good way to combat this problem is to try special ear plugs such as Doc's Proplugs, which are comfortable, come in different sizes for accurate fitting, and are vented to allow for better hearing and balance. To order call 831-425-5920.

BOOKENDS

Here are some books and DVDs that have gained in popularity over the past few months and are a definite “must read/view” for martial artists. *Arthritis Relief*, (3rd edition) by **Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming**. *Sunrise Tai Chi*, by **Ramel Rones**. *Martial Arts Instruction*, by **Lawrence A. Kane** and *Tai Chi Connections* by **John Loupos**. And if you haven't seen the 2005 *Tai Chi Inspirations Calendar*, you may want to include that on your order list. It's a definite collector's item.



SPECIAL TOPICS

MIND OVER MATTER

By Dan Hood

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. YMAA Taiji Instructor Ramel Rones conducted a very informative two-day workshop at Leslie College recently. The first day focused on the theory of mind/body approach for cancer and provided some very beneficial health information. The second day gave those who attended an opportunity to experience Rones' modified mind body approach for cancer. Called *Techniques, Methods and Principles from the Eastern Arts for Cancer Care*, it focused on how patients afflicted with cancer routinely experience physical as well as emotional symptoms such as mood changes, chronic pain, and fatigue.



Published studies suggest that exercise improves mood, pain and fatigue in healthy people and may help newly diagnosed cancer patients cope with their illness. Yet there is no published research data evaluating any large studies of gentle exercise as a treatment for any cancer (advanced or recurrent cancer). Rones introduced his smaller 12-week metastatic breast cancer study that he designed and implemented last year at the Dana Farber Cancer Research Center in Boston. He hopes that this study will lead to an even bigger study in the future as well as a class scheduled to begin May 18, 2005 on the principles of the different Eastern Arts that have contributed and have led Rones to a modified mind/body approach for cancer.

"When negative thoughts occur that distract the mind

from being "relaxed" it may lead to a negative hormone reaction which defeats the goal of healing thus relieving both physical and mental tension this is the key to starting a positive hormone chain reaction. A person learning to quiet the mind from negative thoughts will have a better chance to activate his/her healing mind from within. This will allow a person to concentrate deeper on the healing at hand, no matter what the illness is," he said.

Participants also learned to recognize which principles and what methods from which of the different Eastern Arts are the most "efficient" for cancer patients, especially when time is of the essence. Rones identified part of the mind/body protocol for cancer used in his study at the Dana Farber Cancer Institute.

"After teaching the mind not to focus on external things, a person can use (their mind) as a healing mechanism. They can do this by creating changes deep within the skeletal system, internal organs and various other parts of the body. Soon, circulation improves and a certain awakening occurs within the worrier. That activates the miracle of healing from within," he said, using a series of demonstrations to prove his point.

One of those demonstrations involved sitting on the edge of a chair, closing both eyes and meditating or first challenging the mind to reach a (restful) place where no troubling thoughts are allowed to enter. "This," said Rones "is what Herb Benson calls the relaxation response while maintaining correct alignment." (Integration of Mind, Body Prescriptions). (Herbert Benson, M.D., is the founding president of the *Mind/Body Medical Institute and the Mind/Body Medical Institute*, Associate Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School.)

Anyone who has been a student of Rones would immediately recognize one of the exercises he uses in his Taiji classes. For example, he called one exercise "Iron on the Wall" that required the participant to face the wall, and look for the motion within the stillness

"You breathe deep, drop your shoulders while lengthening through the spine and focus on different energy centers, so you may look quiet and still on the outside but you are not," he said.

According to Rones, there are numerous beneficial aspects to this exercise such as opening the joints, reducing stress in the neck and shoulders while stretching the lumbar and the thoracic spine cavity allowing more air into the lungs. "Focus is maintained and the mind is between awake and asleep which the Chinese call "the meditative mind."

He added that some people relax very easily, while others do not. "Sometimes they will be distracted by a monkey, (the emotional mind), who will enter their sub-conscious mind and start chattering. Feed him a banana (take a deep breath), or focus on different visualizations and that will quiet him down."

Rones agreed that it is a challenge to shut out any kind of distraction. "Usually a person is successful in doing this in a relatively quiet environment. However, if one can control the mind, they can also be successful even when there is noise around them."



The technique works quite well when a person goes deep into their sub-conscious mind shutting out even the smallest of sounds. Most people find this difficult to do. Therefore, a calm setting is usually recommended.

Once a person is in a relaxed state of mind (but still fully aware of where they are and what they are doing), Ronés offered suggestions specifically geared to the goal of the therapy.

"I may suggest that a person with leukemia start with low impact exercises (tai chi/qigong) which has wave-like motions designed to stimulate muscles and help to increase bone density." Self-massage such as tapping and brushing are thought by Ronés to help improve the function of both the digestive and lymphatic systems. He described the action of tapping or brushing the area around the lymph systems. He described the action beginning from the fingers and toes on the inner limbs from outward in. This is recommended for increasing the efficiency of the lymphatic system but can be used by all cancer patients.

Patients with a more serious form of cancer can visualize themselves traveling inside their body directly to the root(s) of the disease and using the mind to dissolve the tumor or deprive the cancer of (protein) nourishment. Their unconscious mind can then transmit these thoughts and images throughout their mind and body, setting the healing process in motion," he said, adding that he recognizes that in order to achieve higher success, individuals that tap into the other parts such as nutrition, support groups and acupuncture will do better.

More information about Ramel Ronés' mind/body approach to healing is available on his *Sunrise Tai Chi* DVD and can be purchased at YMAA Publication Center, 4354 Washington St., Roslindale, Mass., 02131, by visiting the website: www.ymaa.com, or by e-mail: YMAA@aol.com, or fax: 617-323-7417. You can also contact him directly at his web site, www.ramelrones.com

FEEDBACK

Dr. Kenneth S. Ditzian, director of Exerciseworks of Boston, found Ramel Ronés, modified mind body approach of the eastern arts (Chi Kung, Tai Chi, Yoga and Various Meditations Forum) very useful, both professionally and personally.

Professionally, I clinically work with cancer patients and orthopedic injured patients who need relaxation and stretching methods for pain management as well as restoring range of motion.

Regarding their psychological problems, the mental stimulation techniques that Ramel teaches really activates the brain and body connections.

Personally, I am a chronic lymphocytic leukemia patient in complete remission. During and after my cancer care I have applied many mind/body complimentary approaches to activate my immune system and stimulate my healing process. Methods such as Ramel's helped me reduce uncomfortable physical symptoms and cope with anxiety, depression and sadness. Now I am interested in learning more of his mind/body exercises so I can incorporate them with mine to better serve my patients and keep myself in complete remission.

Most of his Qigong mind/body exercises are new to me. I understand his concepts and believe his work is important for activating the mind/bodies natural healing process for relief and normalization of physiological processes.

I have already applied his mind/body exercises with my Exerciseworks of Boston patients. I expect to see improved results. I work one-to-one with them at fitness centers and at their homes. I teach them the breathing methods, stretches, strengthening, and cardio methods. I will integrate Qigong and also refer them to Ramel when applicable. I also plan to follow-up for more Qigong knowledge.

I've been learning about eastern medicine since the early 70's, when I started my own practice. I had one of the first acupuncturists and yoga ashrams in my clinic in Belmont, Mass. I have taken some Tai Chi courses and also sword techniques from a Korean Master at the Korean Buddhist Temple in Brighton.

Now I am interested in learning more about Qigong for my personal and professional use.



YMAA Qualified Active Instructors: 3/15/2004

MASTER: Shaolin/Taijiquan
Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming

INSTRUCTORS:**Shaolin**

Jeffery Bolt (Houston, TX)
George Dominguez (Boston, MA)

Taijiquan

Jeffery Bolt (Houston, TX)
Jeffrey Pratt (Boston, MA)
Jeffrey Rosen (Boston, MA)
Roger Whidden (Marshfield, MA)
Vadas Mihaly (Hungary)

Shaolin ASST. INSTRUCTORS

Adam Dzieciatko (Gdansk, Poland)
Adam Wypart (Katowice, Poland)
Alex Kiesel (Andover, MA)
Bartlomiej Grad (Krakow, Poland)
Christopher Fazio (Andover, MA)
Celso Barja (Portugal)
Corlius Birkill (South Africa)
James O'Leary (Boston, MA)
James Yang (Boston, MA)
Jaroslav Koza (Gdynia, Poland)
John Gilbert Jones (Seattle, WA)
Karol Lubecki (Gdynia, Poland)
Kazimierz Szyrowski (Poland)
Krzysztof Marcinek (Gdansk, Poland)
Maciej Ciesielski (Gdynia, Poland)
Makula Zsolt (Hungary)
Marek Sadowski (Gdynia, Poland)
Mark Seidel (Scranton, PA)
Mariusz Sroczynski
Mike Orlandella (Boston, MA)
Mike Vasicek
Narcyz Latecki (Acton, MA)
Pawel Antonowicz (Gdansk, Poland)
Pedro Rodrigues (Portugal)
Piotr Czerepek (Gdansk, Poland)
Rafal Kulbalka (Gdansk, Poland)
Rafal Szulkowski (Sopot, Poland)
Ramel Rones (Boston, MA)
Ravi Dixit (Boston, MA)
Robert Was (Krakow, Poland)
Simon Pang (Boston, MA)
Tai D. Ngo (Boston, MA)
Targos Mariusz (Wroclaw, Poland)
Tomir Kaczmarek (Poland)
Victor Casqueiro (Portugal)
Zbigniew Panasewicz (Krakow Poland)

Taijiquan

Adam Wypart (Poland)
Alex Kiesel (Andover, MA)
Barbara Wypart (Poland)
Carol Shearer-Best (Boston, MA)
Charles Yotte (Paris, France)
Chris Hartgrove (Boston MA)
Corlius Birkill (South Africa)
Dennis Wilmont (Boston, MA)
Florence Leonard (Paris, France)
Gerard Ashe (Boston, MA)
Harold Dupuis (Paris, France)
James Noble (Boston, MA)
James O'Leary (Boston, MA)
Jaroslav Koza (Poland)
Jean-Louis Laneres (Paris, France)
John Redmond (Derry, NH)
Joseph Best Jr. (Boston, MA)
Kazimierz Szyrowski (Gdansk, Poland)
Kovesdi Andras (Hungary)
Ludovico Romeo (Napoli, Italy)
Marek Sadowski
Mariusz Sroczynski (Warsaw, Poland)
Mark Falco (Andover, MA)
Mark Rits (Boston, MA)
Nicole Laneres (Paris, France)
Pascal Plee (Paris, France)
Paul Blake III (Andover, MA)
Paul Mahoney (Boston, MA)
Pedro Rodrigues (Portugal)
Pedro Graca (Portugal)
Phil Goldman (Boston, MA)
Piotr Ziembra (Poland)
Ramel Rones (Boston, MA)
Robert Was (Krakow, Poland)
Sarkozi Ildiko (Budapest, Hungary)
Victor Casqueiro (Portugal)
Victor Marques (Charenton, France)

Chin Na

Aaron Damas
Charles Yotte
Corlius Birkill
David W. Grantham
David Camara
Douglas Johnstone
Glenn Burleson
Jim Noble

Joseph Caulfield
Mark Rits
Mike Vasicek
Mike Johnstone, Nick Woolley,
Pascal Plee, Paul Green,
Stephen Frankel and Victor Marques

COACH INSTRUCTORS:

Pascal Plee (Paris, France)
Pascal Mongellaz (Martinique)
Milan Vigil (Memphis, TN)
Parviz Sassanian (Holland)
Erik Elsemans (Belgium)
Carol Stephenson (Dublin, Ireland)
Lewis Paleias (Hollywood, FL)
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EDITORIAL

Have you been to one of Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming's seminars recently?

I have and I found the experience rather painful...not mentally painful...but physically painful.

I attended my first Chin Na seminar, (level 1-5) last January. I have to admit that it was quite a learning experience. Actually, I enjoyed it in that I got to meet quite a few people from various YMAA schools both here in the U.S. and abroad.

This three day seminar was well attended. More than 100 people participated and felt the same pain that I did. But I just took a deep breath and remembered what I used to tell myself when I was a gym rat; "No pain, no gain."

All of the Chin Na instructors were extremely helpful and never lost their patience with those who were a little slower to catch on than others. In all honesty, I was one of the slower ones, but that's OK because I knew there'd be plenty of time to practice afterwards. I also decided to review Dr. Yang's latest VHS Taiji Chin Na in Depth (Course 1) which I have found very helpful.

Lots of credit has to be given to Corlius Birkill, Jim Noble and all of the other capable instructors for pointing out the importance of using the correct body and hand movements to seize and control an opponent. One has to

be on the receiving end to know how it feels to have enough and all of the other capable instructors for pointing out the importance of using the correct body and hand movements to



seize and control an opponent. One has to be on the receiving end to know how it feels to have enough pressure applied to your wrist to make you cry like a baby. That of course is a metaphor. I didn't see anyone cry, but I did hear my own voice rise several decibels above what it normally is when a Small Wrap Hand was applied with a minimum amount of pressure. I could only imagine what it would feel like if the pressure was increased two-fold.

Birkill, YMAA South Africa director, has a very soft and gentle way of teaching. His face belies his Chin Na capabilities. He is very good at the art, so good in fact that he not only taught the entire level one course, but demonstrated the effectiveness of each hold when applied properly.

DAN HOOD

Editor's Corner

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Despite the hot weather, Dr. Yang's South African seminar was a huge success. YMAA students from all over the world attended and were treated to a rigorous and almost non-stop workshop covering much of YMAA's curriculum. However, thanks to Corlius Birkill, it was not all work and no play. Birkill hosted many events including a tour of an animal game reserve that featured a few thrills. Anyone who's not used to seeing 500 pound lions roaming free certainly would be surprised to see one looking them squarely in the eye. I might add however that a game warden or two kept a close eye on any lion who happened to get a little too frisky. Plus the lions are fenced off from spectators.

Attention Authors

YMAA Publication Center continues to seek manuscripts on Martial Arts and Qigong. If you've got a book in you, let us know.

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