

# Philippine Martial Arts

Digest

Mini Issue



## 2nd Arizona FMA Gathering

*"The Gathering of Locals"*

October 19, 2008

Papago Park  
Phoenix, Arizona



**Michael Giron**

*Original Giron Eskrima*

**June Gotico**

*Original Giron Eskrima*

*Bahala Na Multi-Style*

**Sam Buot**

*Balintawak*

**Jeff Latorre**

*Direct Torres Eskrima*

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## From the Publishers Desk

### Kumusta

The 1st gathering was a cooperation between Michael Butz, Pietro Vitelli, Scott Abbott and John Jacobo joining together in promulgating the Filipino martial arts in Arizona. With their gatherings they first brought together local Filipino martial artists such as Pietro Vitielli of Bahala Na Arnis, John Jacobo of Kali Ilustrisimo, and Mike Butz of Serrada. Finding that there was interest, the 2nd gathering Michael Butz and Ted Rabino Sr. brought Filipino martial art practitioners from outside Arizona such as Michael Giron of Original Giron Eskrima, June Gotico of Original Giron Eskrima/Bahala Na Multi-Style, Jeff Latorre of Direct Torres Eskrima and a local resident Sam Buot of Balintawak to expand the knowledge of local practitioners.

Michael and Ted plan on having the gatherings twice a year, planning the third gathering (tentatively) for March 29, 2009.

Always on the lookout for Filipino martial art practitioners from outside of Arizona who might possibly be passing through at the time of the gatherings they openly welcome the knowledge that could be gained.

So by chance you are passing through Phoenix, Arizona and there is a gathering join in, if you are a instructor in the Filipino martial arts contact either Michael Butz and Ted Rabino Sr. and I am sure they would be happy to have you share your skills and knowledge with the local practitioners.

You can find more information at: [www.az-fma.com](http://www.az-fma.com) and [www.ftma-az.com](http://www.ftma-az.com)  
**Maraming Salamat Po**



## **Filipino Martial Arts in Arizona**

Mike Butz of the Kada Anan Eskrima Group started the 1st Arizona FMA Gathering which was titled "The Gathering of Locals" held on April 27th, 2008.

Since then there has been another gathering which was on the 19th of October 2008. It is planned that there will be a gathering at least twice a year. This is bringing unity to the Filipino martial arts in Arizona, and bringing some of the best of the Filipino martial arts to Arizona to share their knowledge and skills.

### **Arizona Filipino Martial Arts (FMA)**

"The Gathering of Locals"

Training and BBQ

April 27, 2008

By Ted Rabino Sr.

On April 27th, 2008 we had the pleasure of working out with valley Filipino martial arts practitioners from, various out skirt rural areas in Phoenix, Arizona. The gathering was a, brainstorm of Mike Butz (Kada Anan FMA group) please excuse of non-political values of not listing all organizational ties of the names that are brought up in the story or titles of instructors who taught.

The gathering was at Papago Park just north of the Phoenix Zoo, where there was a nice cement slab to work out on. Mike listed the gathering as a friendship meeting, just to get introduced to valley Filipino martial arts players and the blends of Pilipino styles. The instructors were Mr. John Jacobo, Mr. Pietro Vitelli, Mr. Mike Butz, and Mr. Scott Abbott. Other guest and in the area were respectfully Mr. Sam Buot, and Mr. Gilbert Cordoncillo. The arts taught were Kali Ilustrisimo, Defondo, Serrada, and Decuerdas - each instructor had basic introductions of training, such as their method of numbering systems of striking, blocks, and evasion tactics.

First up to instruct was Pietro Vitielli teaching his methods of warm-ups and the 12 strike patterns associated to the Defondo (To plant) style, I (Ted Rabino Sr.) assisted Pietro in demonstrating the various Defondo techniques. There was a great amount of basic methods all to be taught in one hour. Next was John Jacobo he taught tactics of Kali Ilustrisimo and the angling using male/female footwork patterns and the striking patterns using the Redondo (circular) continuous flow. We had a half time break allowing players to interact and network with each other expressing similarities and exchanging phone numbers and locations of their schools.



Pietro Vitielli - Bahala Na Arnis



John Jacobo - Kali Ilustrisimo

During this time folks warmed up there Adobo, Pancit, salads, and various potluck dishes - it was great! Some of the players had sticks, training tools to sale.

Everyone during this time was enjoying the exchanges of techniques and history. Next on the training schedule was Scott Abbott teaching the Serrada method of Sinawali (weaving patterns). It was different due to unlike most styles using the heaven six strikes - matching right hand (feeder), right hand (receiver). He was teaching the mirror method of Sinawali, left hand (feeder), right hand (receiver) - 5 count strikes. It was very interesting; each instructor had roughly one-hour to teach their training methods to players they had never met before. Not knowing each players experience, but each player helped along other students to assist in there minor obstacles. The team work and camaraderie made this easy for instructors to talk of their methods and reasoning, all of the training was based on blade.

The last player was Mike Butz, he taught empty hand (Cadena de Mano), and Decuerdas blade applications. Joey (Salinas, CA. player) assisted by demonstrating Serrada continuous striking, and footwork. This was the last of the training which ended with a group appreciation cheer, and each schools etiquette ways of bowing displaying their respect, and ended with a group picture.

During the closing, everyone was remarking how great the training was.



Mike Butz - Serrada





## **2nd Arizona FMA Friendship Gathering**

October 19th, 2008

Papago Park , Phoenix , AZ

By Michael Butz

### **Guest instructors for the event:**

- Michael Giron - Original Giron Eskrima
- June Gotico - Original Giron Eskrima/Bahala Na Multi-Style
- Sam Buot - Balintawak
- Jeff Latorre - Direct Torres Eskrima

The premise of the event is that each instructor gets about an hour to show whatever he or she wishes, giving the participants an opportunity to experience other styles of the Filipino martial arts, a chance to see how “they do it”.



Michael Giron (left)

Michael Giron and June Gotico, accompanied by Terry Joven and Gene Inis, opened the event together, combining their allotted teaching time. They taught two largo mano defenses, one from the inside, one from the outside, against each of the Cinco Tiros strikes and some drills that focused on proper angling, range control and target acquisition.



Lunch break included a potluck barbeque consisting of a myriad of items. Everyone brought a little bit of something. The food varied from fried chicken and pizza to adobo and pancit...and, of course, rice.

Sam Buot continued the training after lunch, accompanied by Craig Smith. Sam began by offering some insight into the history and training philosophy of Balintawak. They taught some of the basic



Sam Buot (left) with Craig Smith

AZ FMA Friendship Gathering is tentatively scheduled for March 29, 2009, location, times and instructor lineup to be determined soon. Two early instructors who have agreed to the event include Steven Dowd of Arnis Balite and Jon Ward of Inayan Eskrima.

**For more information contact Mike Butz at: MichaelB@ftma-az.com.**

Hope to see everyone there again, and plan for a day of true Filipino Martial Arts experience!

For more information visit: [www.az-fma.com](http://www.az-fma.com) or [www.ftma-az.com](http://www.ftma-az.com)



Gene Inis (left), June Gotico (center) and Terry Joven movements of the style, some counter-for-counter groupings and ended their segment with a few disarms.

Jeff Latorre closed the event, accompanied by Stephen Frerichs. Jeff focused on the basics of body positioning and angles. He taught how to get off line against an attacker, allowing for a strong counter attack. He also showed how to use footwork to keep that advantageous position.



Jeff Latorre (left) with Steve Frerichs

T  
he Third

## 2nd Generation of Filipino Martial Artists

by Ted Rabino Sr.

Through several talks and scheduling, and almost last minute cancelling due to work engagements I was able to get a few of the players from Stockton, Ca to Phoenix, Az. It was a great time hearing stories and talking about the growth of one of today's growing Federations here in America. Master Michael Giron (Original Giron Escrima), and Master Dexter Labonog (Bahala Na Multi-Style) both of Stockton, California and Chief Instructor June Gotico (Original Giron Escrima/Bahala Na Multi-Style) have the current responsibilities of carrying on their shoulders the lessons taught to them by Grand Master Leo Giron (Larga Mano), and Master Dentoy Revillar (Serrada/Larga Mano/Decuerdas).



L-R: Maestro June Gotico, Master Mike Giron, Gene Inis, Terry Joven and Ted Rabino  
At Phoenix, Arizona's Papago Park / Phoenix Zoo

trip but will be instructing our next Filipino martial arts clinic if scheduling works out here in Phoenix, Arizona.

In this article I'll include a Bio on each of the instructors as listed in their website at ([bahalanamulti-style.com](http://bahalanamulti-style.com)). The biographies and miscellaneous pictures were borrowed from their website per their authorization.

The first biography is on Master Dexter Labonog, a very technical individual and complex innovator in many ways.

**Master Dexter Labonog** - was born and raised in Stockton California, a son of Philippine Visayan immigrants.

Philippine martial arts experience - 1978 Trained directly under Grandmaster Leo Giron over 20 years. The most senior student and instructor of the Stockton Bahala Na Escrima Club, no other student, instructor or individual has had more direct one on one training, attendance or experience with Grandmaster Leo Giron. 1982 Guro Dexter also trained extensively under Master Dentoy Revillar for ten years in the blended system of Serrada,

Arizona Filipino Martial Arts hosted four instructors from these organizations, who not only taught the technical aspect of the arts but theory. And one thing above the rest, was they taught players (Filipino martial arts practitioners) to believe in these techniques. The four instructors were Master Michael Giron, Maestro June Gotico, Guro Terry Joven and Guro Gene Inis - each one followed the standards of the style taught and each had their own quality of expertise. Master Dexter Labonog was not on this planned





Larga Mano and Decuerdas also called SLD.

A certified and authorized instructor, Guro Dexter actively teaches the original curriculum learned directly from Grandmaster Giron. Guro Dexter was also given discretionary authority to teach the concepts and basics of the SLD system in Sacramento from Master Dentoy Revillar.

Guro Dexter has participated successfully in many of the various styles of tournaments and was Grand Champion in a few. He strongly advocates support for Eskrima tournament competition because of valuable lessons a student will learn. He says, "You can still go home after a tournament and lick your wounds and think about the lessons learned, but you may not be as lucky in a real life situation". Guro Dexter has helped produce many successful tournament fighters for the Bahala Na Eskrima clubs and continues to participate as a resource in tournament promotions such as the Solo Baston (single stick) tournament of Hawaii.

Guro Dexter primarily favors bladed Philippine weapons over sticks or blunt edge weapons and Espada Y Daga or sword and dagger are his favorite training exercise. His teaching curriculum follows traditional concepts and principles learned primarily from Grandmaster Giron and Master Revillar. He considers himself a lifetime student, a coach and an instructor.

**Master Michael Giron** - is the Son of the Legendary Escrimador Grandmaster Leo Giron.



He started his training in the mid 1970's and later was granted his instructors certificate and title of Guro in 1981 from Bahala Na Filipino Arnis Eskrima.

He has also been granted the title of Master / 5th Dan by the International Philippine martial arts Federation, (IPMAF) authorized by Grand Master Ernesto Presas.

He resigned from the Bahala Na Martial Arts Association as Grand Advisor in 2007 and decided to go at it alone. Since

his resignation Master Michael Giron has originated and is President/Founder of the Original Giron Eskrima Federation.

This organization was created to maintain the purity of his father's teachings as it was taught to him in what he calls the "Original Way". He continues to support the Bahala Na Multi-Style Eskrima Organization and all other organizations under the OGE Federation.

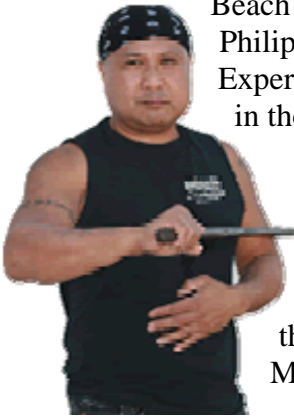
In a future issue of FMAdigest, I am currently in the works on writing a more thorough article on Stockton, Ca local Master Mike Giron. Next is succession of bio's Maestro June Gotico is listed as a maestro/chief instructor of both clubs.

**Maestro June Gotico** - was a member of Grandmaster Leo Giron's Bahala Na Club #1.



He earned his graduate certificate in 1991 and was granted the title of instructor by Grandmaster Giron in 1993. June is an original member of the Bahala Na fight team under Maestro Dexter Labonog. He is a feared full contact fighter with numerous stick-fighting Grand Championships under his belt. June was named Chief Instructor of the Bahala Na Multi-Style School in Stockton by Maestro Dexter Labonog and Guro Mike Giron in October of 2007. As well as heading the Stockton school, June currently continues to train under Maestro Labonog in the SLD and TEA systems of Escrima/Arnis. June is known as one of the top instructors of the Bahala Na/Original Giron System of Escrima.

**Guro Terry Joven** - was born in Santa Maria, California. Grew up in Oceano/Pismo Beach and Stockton, California. Guro Terry is a third generation son of Philippine Visayan and Tagalog immigrants. Philippine Martial Arts Experience: 1992 Trained directly under Grand Master Vincent Cabaes in the Cabaes Serrada Style.



1994 Started training in the Original Giron System under various instructors and graduates, but owes his competence and expertise to Grand Master Leo Giron, Master Dexter Labonog, Maestro June Gotico and the rest of the 1st Generation Graduates that "Train For the Truth" and emphasize the theory of the big #1 "*Pressure Makes Diamonds*" 1996 Trained directly under Master Arthur Gonzales in the Tenio

Decuerdas Style. Guro Terry is a certified and authorized instructor of Bahala Na Multi-Style Escrima under Maestro June Gotico. Teaching the Original Giron Style curriculum off of the 1978 worksheet, the Revillar-SLD System and Combat "*Come What May*" core system. Guro Terry is based in Stockton, California.

Guro Terry has trained and participated successfully in many types of martial arts systems and tournaments. Both empty hands as well as weapon styles, he knows that applying your technique in a non-cooperative environment will only increase your effectiveness, having had his training put to test while working as a bouncer for a local establishment. He has confirmed the effectiveness of the weapons based training methods of the Bahala Na Multi-Style Eskrima in real life threatening situations against multiple combatants.

*"It is better to sweat in peace, so you don't bleed in war"*

**Leovigildo "Leo" Miguel Giron**

*"Are you ready? Are you sure you're ready....I guess you weren't ready"*

**June Gotico**

**Guro Gene Inis** - started his Escrima training in 1995 as part of Grandmaster Leo Giron's original Bahala Na Club #1. He sat down with Grandmaster Leo Giron, was interviewed and accepted as a student. It was after that day that Gene fell in love with the art of Escrima.



He was given his graduate certificate from Grandmaster Giron in 1997. The graduation ceremony was both physically and mentally the hardest thing he has ever done. Gene is a feared full contact tournament fighter and a member of the original Bahala Na fight team under Maestro Dexter Labonog. He is known for his legendary power and his unique ability to fight equally well with both hands. By participating in these tournaments he has learned to go

home, lick his wounds and learn from the mistakes made in the ring.

Gene was certified as an instructor of the Original Giron Escrima system by Maestro Labonog and Guro Mike Giron in October of 2007. He is currently one of the lead instructors for the Bahala Na Multi-Style school in Stockton, California. He believes that in order for a system of Escrima to evolve, the system's root and foundation should not be forgotten. Gene's goal is to pass the art down to the next generation. Keeping it pure as it was taught to him.

*"Don't go around opening your mouth, for one day someone may shove your stick down it."*

**Grandmaster Leo Giron**

*"Hit them first and hit them hard!"*

**Guro Glenn Abrescy**

**Ted Rabino Sr.** - was born and raised in Phoenix, Arizona a son of a native of the Philippine Islands Santa Catalina, Ilocos Sur. originally trained in Arnis under (former Filipino law enforcement) brothers Lonnie and Leto Acosta from Tarlac, P.I. In the early years as a migrant worker I trained with these brothers from campo to campo learning there arts. Until



they stopped teaching at the migrant worker camps, so the only other accessible martial art that was taught was Karate and Judo. Until meeting Master Michael Giron at an affiliation



**L-R: Ted Rabino and Gene Inis**

training camp, I was a part of the Bahala Na martial arts training group here in Phoenix, Az. At that time I was training with another affiliate Pietro Vitielli until I became fully committed to the Bahala Na Multi-Style and Original Giron Escrima. Meeting with Master Michael Giron and Maestro June Gotico, they met with Master Dexter Labonog and conversed my request of teaching this art in the Arizona region. I was granted the responsibility of teaching there classical methods of Filipino martial arts in the State which gave me a great honor of representing these modern day Filipino Bladed Warriors.

The Filipino culture is truly applied in the teachings, when one practices they can truly understand how these techniques worked in the jungles in the early years and during World War 2.



Bahala Na Multi-Style Stockton, California instructors

Visit this website for the Bahala Na Multi-Style or Original Giron Escrima School near you, or send an email for clinics or demonstrations.

**Contacts:** [bahalanamulti-style.com/sideMenu/classLocation.htm](http://bahalanamulti-style.com/sideMenu/classLocation.htm)



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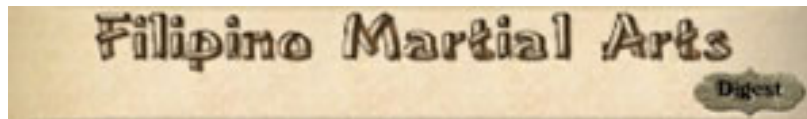


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