

Filipino Martial Arts



Digest

Special Edition
2007



International Eskrima Serrada Association

Publisher

Steven K. Dowd

Contributing Writers

Beki Light

Bob Manalo

Sharbel-Andrew Pelayo

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The FMA Digest is published quarterly. Each issue features practitioners of martial arts and other internal arts of the Philippines. Other features include historical, theoretical and technical articles; reflections, Filipino martial arts, healing arts and other related subjects.

The ideas and opinions expressed in this digest are those of the authors or instructors being interviewed and are not necessarily the views of the publisher or editor.

We solicit comments and/or suggestions. Articles are also welcome.

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From the Publishers Desk

Kumusta

The International Eskrima Serrada Association is known for preserving the training methods and philosophy of Grandmaster Angel Cabales art of Serrada. Pangulong Guro Sultan “Shaykh” Uddin has no interest in being the heir to the art. His number one goal is to preserve the art of Serrada.

Professor-Punong Guro James Hundon of the Universal Martial Arts Academy where the Official Headquarters of the IESA is well versed in various martial arts. However he has found a strong desire in joining up with Guro Sultan “Shaykh” Uddin to also promote the art of Serrada. I had the pleasure to meet Professor-Punong Guro Hundon and he is very friendly and has a personality that brings friendship easily.

Master Kenneth Pitts is the founder of Kenneth Pitts’ Martial Arts Academy in Oakland, which is also the location of Universal Martial Arts Academy and the IESA headquarters. Attracted to grappling and stick arts, he has found a strong desire in Serrada to study more in depth its philosophies and disciplines.

It is also very good to see that the IESA has female practitioners and they, like their counterparts are dedicated to the art and are comfortable in the training.

Though a small issue the FMAdigest has to thank Beki Light very much for the information and contributions to make this issue possible, she was the driving force in gathering information and the FMAdigest believes an asset to the IESA in the public relations area.

So it is hoped that you the reader will enjoy this Special Edition.

Maraming Salamat Po

IESA International Eskrima Serrada Association

The International Eskrima Serrada Association (IESA) is a groundbreaking organization that was created in 1989 by Pangulong Guro Sultan “Shaykh” Uddin. IESA was the first and only organization to be started with the blessings of Grandmaster Angel Cabales, founder of the art of Serrada. Other Serrada organizations were started only after Grandmaster Angel Cabales had passed away.

IESA is known for preserving the training methods and philosophy of Grandmaster Angel Cabales’ art of Serrada. When you attend an IESA class or seminar, you will notice the painstaking attention to correct form and technique.

Pangulong Guro Sultan “Shaykh” Uddin was a protégé of the late Grandmaster Angel Cabales. He



Grandmaster Angel Cabales was the first African American to become a master in this system doing so before the age of 21-and is recognized as one of the fastest stick and blade fighters in the world. Pangulong Guro Uddin traveled to the Philippines to seek out the Grandmasters of Eskrima and learn from them. This pioneering trip opened the way for others to visit the Grandmasters and write books on the history of Eskrima and Filipino martial arts. The Supreme Council of



Punong Guro Rainier Abad, Punong Guro Sharbel-Andrew Pelayo, Guro Herb Lara, Professor-Punong Guro James Hundon, Pangulong Guro Sultan “Shaykh” Uddin, Guro Teo Zabala, Guro Ed Jimenez
Grandmasters in the Philippines has officially recognized his skills.



Punong Guro Sharbel-Andrew and Guro Herb



Guro Ed and Punong Guro Rainier



Guro Teo and Guro Ed

Interview with Founder of IESA Pangulong Guro Sultan “Shaykh” Uddin



Pangulong Guro Sultan “Shaykh” Uddin
with Professor-Punong Guro James Hundon

academy. Grandmaster Angel Cabales never went to other people’s houses to train. That would be disrespectful to have someone of that stature to your house like that to train. There are people claiming that is what happened but that is not true. That is being disrespectful to your elders to claim that. If you were telling the truth you would have the paperwork to back it up. My diploma from Grandmaster Angel Cabales is number 7. Grandmaster Angel Cabales never left his house for anything related to his art without somebody with him. He never drove by himself he would always have somebody with him. I was always with him, everywhere he went. He wanted everything he did to be witnessed. People making false claims about him need to be very careful about what they are saying.

FMAdigest: *What would you say Grandmaster Cabales’ philosophy was?*

Pangulong Guro Uddin: To keep it real and be true to the art, he didn’t believe in tournaments. He believed in keeping it practical without a lot of flowery stuff.

FMAdigest: *What do you consider to be some of the main differences between Serrada and other forms of Eskrima?*

Pangulong Guro Uddin: Most people are motivated financially instead of preserving the art and contributing to the art. I believe every generation should bring something to the art to develop it to another level both physically and spiritually. What can you contribute to the art that will keep it alive-not just dropping names of Grandmasters? If you can’t do the art, then how can you train somebody?

FMAdigest: *How do you think Grandmaster Angel Cabales was able to develop the art of Serrada?*

FMAdigest: *How did you begin training with Grandmaster Angel Cabales?*

Pangulong Guro Uddin: I began training with him from the moment I was introduced to him. I have trained in the art from then until now, non-stop for over 25 years. A lot of people had families and went off to do that and come back and train later. But training became my life. I devoted my time to learn, made it my priority. I utilized the time I had and the time he had.

FMAdigest: *What was training like with Grandmaster Cabales?*

Pangulong Guro Uddin: He was very thorough, and either you got it or you didn’t. You either went to his house or to the

Pangulong Guro Uddin: Out of necessity, for survival, it was a tool that helped him in life. It helped him overcome adversity. It's done the same for me. I apply principles from Serrada for my life, for business and in the entertainment industry.

FMAdigest: *Describe the formation of IESA and some of its goals.*

Pangulong Guro Uddin: I created IESA to keep the art the way Grandmaster Angel Cabales wanted it. My number one goal was to preserve the art. It was based on the type of organization that Grandmaster Angel Cabales wanted to see to keep the art intact. Also it was to show people how to expand the art, to take it to another level. IESA is a tool to help people find out who they are and where they can go. It gives people the basics, the fundamentals so they can develop things to a higher level. The art is a living, breathing art. The art will teach you.

I also want to make it clear that many people have come through IESA over the years, but the five Punong Guros that I have are the only ones that have ever become Punong Guros in this organization, and they are the only ones I have ever sanctioned.

FMAdigest: *What is the significance of the new IESA Headquarters at Universal Martial Arts Academy?*

Pangulong Guro Uddin: It is a place people can go to find out about the art and see it. It is an open door. I have always had open doors, and I have always backed up what I have said. People can go to the headquarters and see for themselves and see if that is what they want. People can go there to learn about the history of the art.

FMAdigest: *Is there anything you would like to say about how some people are debating who is the so called true inheritor of the system of Serrada?*

Pangulong Guro Uddin: I don't care about that it makes no difference to me. What I do was and still is between me and the late Grandmaster Angel Cabales. He's the only one I practiced with and learned from. I'm not an heir and don't want to be because I know what I have between me and my teacher. I only recognize one person in this art and that is the person who I learned from. I have no animosity towards anybody, but I say don't just talk about it-show me! Actions speak louder than words. It's nothing personal, but you have to be able to back it up in the ring. I am in contact with so many people in the Philippines, in Jolo, in Malaysia and the U.S. who can back up everything they say. We can all deal with each other as warriors because we get along, we understand each other. We don't have to talk all over the internet about what we do. A lot of people nobody knows are hiding behind their computers, their blogs and chat rooms talking all this nonsense and never trained a day in their life. They spend all their time on the computer but don't want to step up, but that is the only way they can get real knowledge. If you can't back it up, shut up! Are you in it to learn the truth or just to talk?

I am interested in people who are conscious and who are trying to pass the art down to somebody who will do something with it. If you are there to uplift I respect you, but if you are there for politics and to play games I'll have no part of it.

I do what I do and I train very hard. I travel all over the world to test my art. Everybody wants to stay home and be comfortable, but don't be mad at me because I'm doing what I'm doing. I like to fight and I like to test it. I have to be with people who are real at what they do. If you are afraid to die for what you believe then play tennis or

basketball. I've been in life or death situations, even to this day. How you train is how you fight. Many people have talked the talk but few actually walk it.

I acknowledge people by what they do, not what they say. I have open doors and I have all styles of arts coming through. You can tell who somebody is by who they walk with-not by what they say on some internet blog. I don't mind if you try to discredit me-but do it to my face. My history is out there for people to see-on video, and in black and white. It's there if people want to know. I have videos of Grandmaster Angel Cabales and myself. You can see for yourself. You can see and feel his movements and my movements. You can see the fighting, and the healing and the spiritual aspects of the art.

But I am not trying to put my face all over the place. I am past that stage. I am about the truth of the art itself.



Grand Opening Headquarters International Eskrima Serrada Association

March 25, 2007

As of March 25, 2007, the official headquarters of the International Eskrima Serrada Association (IESA) is at the Universal Martial Arts Academy (UMAA) in Oakland, CA. The IESA headquarters grand opening event was held on April 28th at Pitts' Martial Arts Academy (www.kpmaa.com) on Lakeshore Ave in Oakland.

The IESA headquarters at UMAA will give a new platform for the development of Eskrima Serrada in line with the teachings of Grandmaster Angel Cabales. The close affiliation of UMAA and IESA also represents a very important development in the world of martial arts. The combination of knowledge and experience between both schools will lead to exciting new developments and projects. Both schools also share a commitment to the true history of the African origin of all martial arts.

IESA was founded in 1989 by Pangulong Guro Sultan "Shaykh" Uddin with the blessings of his teacher, the late Grandmaster Angel Cabales-founder of the art of Eskrima Serrada. IESA directly represents the legacy of Grandmaster Angel Cabales. IESA teaches the art of Eskrima Serrada true to the way Grandmaster Angel Cabales taught it where students master one strike counter at a time until they are proficient enough to practice drills which lead into sparring. IESA emphasizes the correct form of the techniques as taught by Grandmaster Angel Cabales.

Pangulong Guro Uddin was the protégé of the late Grandmaster Angel Cabales and is one of the fastest stick and blade fighters in the world. He has studied Eskrima and Silat extensively throughout the Philippines and Malaysia. Pangulong Guro Uddin is also a master in Kifaru Jitsu under Dr. Stanford McNeal, as well as an accomplished Capoeirista.

UMAA was founded by Professor-Punong Guro James Hundon, a veteran martial artist with more than 35 years experience in the arts. UMAA teaches Ju-Trap-Boxing

(Professor Hundon's art that is a blend of the many styles he has mastered, combined with his years of fighting experience) and Eskrima Serrada. UMAA emphasizes realistic street survival techniques as well as drills for muscle memory and real-life application if needed by the student.

Professor-Punong Guro Hundon has competed, taught and studied internationally. He was instrumental in establishing Small Circle Jujitsu, founded by his teacher Great Grandmaster Wally Jay, as a well known martial art by successfully using it in numerous competitions. Professor-Punong-Guro's other teachers include many greats such as the late Dr. Moses Powell, Grandmaster Robert Crosson, Soke "Lil" John Davis, Professor Don Jacob, Soke James McQueen, and now Pangulong Guro Sultan "Shaykh" Uddin. Professor-Punong Guro Hundon holds 7th Degree Black Belts in both Small Circle Jujitsu and Kyohuejitsumae Jujitsu, as well as Black Belts in Chinese Kenpo, Kodokan Jujitsu and Sugar Ryu Jujitsu.

The grand opening celebration began with a ceremonial introduction by Punong Guro Bob Manalo Jr. of IESA. Students of both schools lined up while Punong Guro Manalo spoke about the significance of this event, and a little about the history of Eskrima Serrada.

Demonstrations of Eskrima Serrada were then performed by IESA guros. Guros Teo Zabala and Ed Jimenez showed the basic counters to the twelve strikes of Serrada, and then the lock and block drill which uses one long stick one short stick or knife. This was followed by demonstrations of the counter for counter drill by Punong Guros Bob Manalo Jr., Sharbel-Andrew Pelayo; and Guros Ed Jimenez and Teo Zabala. Next, Pangulong Guro Sultan Uddin demonstrated counter for counter with Punong Guro Sharbel-Andrew Pelayo, flawlessly taking the drill to the ground without stopping the flow. Pangulong Guro Uddin then lined up several IESA guros and demonstrated counter for counter with them one at a time. Pangulong Guro Uddin then showed advanced application of counters to the twelve strikes with Professor-Punong Guro James Hundon.

Next up, UMAA students demonstrated basic Serrada counters to strikes and Small Circle Jujitsu counters to punches and grabs. Professor-Punong Guro James Hundon did a demonstration of the UMAA style of fluid striking, locking, takedown techniques and rollout's.

Kaiso Shawn Cephus, visiting from Los Angeles, California was then invited from the audience to the mat to share some of his locking and takedown techniques.

After the demonstrations were over, participants and



L-R: Kaiso Shawn Cephus, Professor-Punong Guro James Hundon, Pangulong Guro Sultan "Shaykh" Uddin, and DJ Kayumanggi Kaloy of KPFA Radio.

spectators mingled on the mat, discussing and practicing techniques and exchanging knowledge. Food was provided in the next room which was where everybody ended up eventually-eating, relaxing and talking.

The Grand Opening of the IESA headquarters was not only an important event in martial arts it was a good time had by all.



My Time with Pangulong Guro Sultan “Shaykh” Uddin An Interview with Professor-Punong Guro James Hundon of UMAA/IESA

FMA Digest: *Professor-Punong Guro, please speak a little about your background in the martial arts:*

Professor Hundon: Well I’ve been in the arts for over 30 years. I started out boxing in the 60’s at Newman’s Gym in the Tenderloin, in San Francisco. There were a lot of great fighters training in that gym. Jack Dempsey, Jimmy Lester, Joe Louis, Sugar Ray Robinson, Sugar Ray Leonard, Mohammad Ali and Jim Jeffries all came out of there or passed through there. In the 70’s I started training in Chinese Kenpo under Ray Hernandez, who gave me my first Black Belt. During that same period I met and began studying under Sifu Felix Macias and Newt Kamakani. Both had been students of Jimmy and Bruce Lee during the Oakland Dojo days. Around 1976 I started training in Capoeira. I got my Black Belt in Kodokan Jujitsu under Great Grandmaster Wally Jay while he was still developing his theories of Small Circle Jujitsu at the Home



Professor-Punong Guro James Hundon and Pangulong Guro Sultan “Shaykh” Uddin

Dojo in Alameda. I went on to get a 7th degree in Small Circle Jujitsu. I moved to New York in the late 80's and studied with Soke "Lil" John Davis, Soke James McQueen, Grandmaster Robert Crosson and the late, great Dr. Moses Powell. I got my Black Belt in Sugar Ryu Jujitsu under Grandmaster Robert Crosson and 7th degree Black Belt in Kyohuejitsumae Jujitsu under Soke James McQueen. I competed successfully on the east coast, then came back to the Bay Area in the 90's and started teaching and developing the science of Ju-Trap-Boxing (JTB).

FMA Digest: *What is Ju-Trap-Boxing?*

Professor Hundon: It is my personal blend of the different styles I have trained in, based on my fighting experience of what works and what doesn't. Its concept is that movement is universal. If you take whatever art you do to its higher levels, eventually the movements become universal between all the arts. In JTB we use lots of drills to develop muscle memory, timing, and the ability to flow from one technique to the other. JTB is a very street-oriented art.

You were with Great Grandmaster Wally Jay in Small Circle Jujitsu before it was widely known. You helped it grow into a well respected art. Would you comment on this?

I was the first one to fight with Small Circle Jujitsu. Back in the 70's Jujitsu was not well known in this country-especially Small Circle Jujitsu. Great Grandmaster Wally Jay and I put on demonstrations all over the Bay Area. That's how people first started hearing about it. Then we went to the Canadian National Exhibition in 1980 and I competed very successfully. That's when we started getting more invitations to travel and demonstrate Small Circle. I started competing internationally and got a lot of attention for it. This really helped to establish Small Circle Jujitsu, to get it widely recognized.

FMA Digest: *How did you become interested in Filipino martial arts?*

Professor Hundon: I got my first real exposure to Filipino martial arts in the late 70's when I first met Remy Presas. He was my first Arnis teacher, but it was on and off because he was traveling a lot. I got interested in Serrada later on when I was in NY and people were talking about Grandmaster Angel Cabales and his art of Serrada. People kept telling me Serrada would fit perfectly with my approach to fighting, which is true. Serrada is exactly what I was looking for. It has a direct, no-nonsense approach and is very up front and personal, which is what I love. It is the Wing Chun of sticks.

Toney Somera and Master Khalid Khan were also both positive influences in my development in the Filipino martial arts.

FMA Digest: *When did you and Pangulong Guro Sultan first meet?*

Professor Hundon: We knew each other from the 70's when we would sometimes play Capoeira together in Oakland. Later when I was in New York, I started hearing about how he was training with Grandmaster Angel Cabales. That is the same time I was getting interested in the art of Serrada. I made a couple of trips to the Bay Area to look for him but we just kept missing each other. I didn't run into him again for a long time.

FMA Digest: Describe how you and Pangulong Guro Sultan reunited, and what influenced your decision to train under him.

Professor Hundon: Pangulong Guro Sultan heard that I had been training in Serrada, so when he gave a seminar in Berkeley he invited me to it. When we met again after all those years, and when I saw what he was doing in terms of the art, I realized that this was the Serrada teacher I had been looking for. There was no question in my mind about it. Pangulong Guro Sultan is a master teacher, a teacher of teachers.

FMAdigest: *What distinguishes Pangulong Guro Sultan from other Serrada practitioners?*

Professor Hundon: Well first of all, Pangulong Guro Sultan was one of Grandmaster Angel Cabales' protégés. He was the one who assisted in teaching some of the masters who are teaching today. Grandmaster Angel Cabales gave his personal blessings when Pangulong Guro Sultan formed the International Eskrima Serrada Association (IESA) in 1989. This is all documented. IESA is the most direct link to Grandmaster Angel Cabales' legacy because the system has not been changed. I feel Pangulong Guro Sultan has the deepest knowledge of the art of Serrada of anybody on the planet. His understanding of the foundational movements of Serrada is incredible.

Another thing is that Pangulong Guro Sultan knows the true history, the lost history of Eskrima. He learned all this through his dealings with many masters in the Philippines as well as from his own teacher. He doesn't just perform the movements; he understands the meanings behind the movements. He has a passion and commitment to the truth of this art that I think is deeper than any other.

FMAdigest: *Have you seen Pangulong Guro Sultan's personal video library?*

Professor Hundon: Yes I have. Pangulong Guro Sultan has videos of every demonstration that Grandmaster Angel Cabales did, as well as audio tapes. Every demonstration has been documented. I have seen all this with my own eyes and asked questions about what I saw. The footage he has is truly amazing.

Also, to all the people claiming to have been at Grandmaster Angel Cabales' demonstrations, the videos clearly show who was there and who wasn't. The people who were at all the demonstrations were: Pangulong Guro Sultan Uddin, Frank Rillamas, Carlito Bonjoc, Gabriel Asuncion, Darren Tibon, Jerry Preciado, Wade Williams, David Maw, Ron Saturno, Khalid Khan, Anthony Davis and Jeff Finder. It is very clearly documented.

FMAdigest: *Pangulong Guro Sultan has mastered many arts, just as you have. Would you say his style is a combination of these different arts? Does he put his own twist on Serrada?*

Professor Hundon: Pangulong Guro Sultan is a master at what he does. He learned the craft from Grandmaster Angel Cabales better than anybody. I would say he has taken Serrada to a higher level because of his talent, his experience and his understanding of many aspects of different arts. But Pangulong Guro Sultan is a stickler for keeping the art of Serrada true to its original form. He is a perfectionist when it comes to the details. He teaches it the same way Grandmaster Angel Cabales taught it-teaching the counters one by one until the student becomes proficient. At the same time he can mix it up. He might show some moves from Gayong Silat to demonstrate the use of angles or timing in Serrada. Or he will flow from Serrada to Silat or Serrada to Kifaru-Jitsu. But he always

comes back to the trueness of the original form of the art. One of his favorite expressions is “Be true to the art and the art will be true to you.” That says a lot about him right there.

FMAdigest: *Your school, the Universal Martial Arts Academy (UMAA) became the official headquarters of the International Eskrima Serrada Association (IESA) in March. Could you speak about the significance of this?*

Professor Hundon: Well first of all, to be asked by Pangulong Guro Sultan to have UMAA be the headquarters of IESA is both a privilege and an honor. He could have made the headquarters anywhere but he chose us. The fact that he considers UMAA capable of representing all of IESA means so much to me.



Professor Punong Guro Hundon showing an abaniko strike to the head on Damon Simmons

The relationship between UMAA and IESA has many sides to it. There is the combined experience of Pangulong Guro Sultan and myself, both of us having been pioneers in our respective arts. There is a lot of positive, creative energy here which will lead to more and more projects. There is the exchange of knowledge between us that will lead to a higher development of our arts. I remember how Remy Presas’ Modern Arnis was changed by his interaction with Great Grandmaster Wally Jay. It got more refined, and his locks became much smoother. Small Circle Jujitsu really improved Modern Arnis. Serrada is a complete fighting art with a no nonsense approach, but I believe that if you combine it with Small Circle Jujitsu, the sky is the limit. And with Pangulong Guro Sultan’s deep knowledge of Gayong Silat, Kifaru-Jitsu and Capoeira-between our two schools there is a wealth of knowledge and experience. Our arts will definitely grow.

Then there is the aspect of alliance building and networking. I think the working relationship of our two schools can have a big impact. We are working together in such a positive way, without egos getting in the way. That is not very common in the martial arts world. I believe that we can set a great example of community building.

FMAdigest: *Where can people go to find an IESA teacher or school to learn Serrada?*

Professor Hundon: There are currently several teachers in the Bay Area, CA. We are working on an IESA Affiliate program, where schools and teachers can become a part of our network. Affiliated schools would be able to teach the IESA Serrada curriculum and host seminars where Pangulong Guro Sultan, myself or other IESA guros would travel to the school and teach periodically.



www.umaacademy.com

What Serrada Means to Me

By Punong Guro Bob Manalo

Like some Pilipinos' who were either born here in the States or who immigrated at a very young age, I never really had a deep understanding of my Pilipino roots and like some, I took to the Hawaiian/Polynesian culture.

Some immigrant Pilipino parents feel that it's more important that their children learn how to speak English, get a college degree and find lucrative employment considering they are in America. On the contrary, since America is the multi-cultural "melting pot", it is even more important for everyone to know and understand their unique cultural roots.

My cousin suggested that we seek out Pilipino martial arts because, after all, we weren't Hawaiian. He might have been born in Hawai'i, but our ancestral roots were in the Philippines. He searched and found the Villabrille-Largusa lineage of Eskrima. I found the art of Eskrima Serrada as taught by Pangulong Guro Sultan "Shaykh" Uddin and his organization, the International Eskrima Serrada Association (IESA). I began my training with Pangulong Guro Uddin in 1996.



Punong Guro Sharbel-Andrew Pelayo, Pangulong Guro Sultan "Shaykh" Uddin, Professor-Punong Guro James Hundon and Punong Guro Bob Manalo.

At first, I thought it would be good to learn about our indigenous art and our martial heritage. I'd learn how to defend myself, and I'd also be able to find resources I never had back in college that would lead me to back to my homeland. What I found in IESA was even more than that.

To me, not only does the art put you in touch with Pilipino culture- it also gives you a means of

defending yourself, your friends and family; develops you as a person; nurtures your talents in life; and helps you to achieve your goals. The art helps you to focus, to persevere, to grow and maintain self-discipline. The art builds character and integrity. The art is a living entity that grows through practice and promotion.

I've also learned that there are universal concepts among all martial arts, sharing a common thread in movement and technique. Methodologies may differ, but the end-result, if you truly apply yourself to the art, is the same.

It is one thing for a teacher just to teach the art and leave it at that. But for a teacher to be able to elevate his students' quality of life and help them to reach their full potential...that is a sign of a true Master. Pangulong Guro Sultan has done that for me, helping me develop not only as a martial artist, but also in my personal and professional life.

Growing Up in IESA

By Punong Guro Sharbel-Andrew Pelayo

Some would use the words lucky, blessed or even spoiled, to describe my particular situation pertaining to the martial arts. I would say to use any of those words would be a complete understatement. However, I do consider myself to be extremely fortunate to have grown-up and trained in such a unique and dynamic organization as IESA.

Ever since I was young I had a fascination with martial arts, especially Eskrima. My father kept a rattan baston (or stick) in his closet and when I asked him what it was for he told me it was for an art called Eskrima. He always told me he would teach me when I was old enough but he passed away before he could show me anything beyond rudimentary strikes. After that I always told myself that I would learn this art.

One day a close friend of mine told me about a martial arts Master who was teaching Eskrima. He said, “yeah bro, there’s this black guy teaching the sticks over on San Jose Ave and he’s bad. He’s battle tested his skills around the world...” When he said that, I told him, “a black man teaching Pilipino Martial Arts? Now this I have to see...”

I was still in high school when I first stepped into the dojo on San Jose Avenue in San Francisco back in the summer of 1995. The windows of the small studio were foggy from all the sweat and the place was packed from wall to wall with people practicing. It was then that I caught my first glimpse of my future teacher, roaming around through his sea of students. He was passing one pair of guys working when he started to correct their technique. He had gotten one of the guys into a leg scissors as he was demonstrating the reason why the technique was done the way it was. When I saw how smooth Master Uddin did that, I knew he was the real deal and that this is where I needed to be.

That was twelve years ago and I’ve seen many people come and go during that time. In fact, I myself had to step away on a couple of occasions to deal with different issues. After the two times I stepped away, when I would return and respectfully ask Master Uddin’s permission to come back and train, he would always welcome me back as if I had never left. I trained hard with a couple of the advanced Guros who cleaned up my technique. Finally, in 2000, I achieved the rank of Guro. Then, in 2001, after more intense training, I earned the rank of Advanced Guro and started training directly under



Punong Guro Sharbel-Andrew Pelayo
training with Guro Herb Lara.

Master Uddin. After that I never looked back. Now I'm one of only five Punong Guros in the whole organization.

For the last four years I've been training privately with Master Uddin, seeing him at least two to three days a week. In this time I have seen and learned so much. I've been able to meet living legends in the martial arts. I've seen the video footage documenting his time in the Philippines with the old Grandmasters. I've heard the interviews he taped with legends like "Tatang" Illustrisimo and "Tatay" Mena, and how they always called their art Eskrima or Arnis and *not* Kali. He's shown me the videos of all the old demonstrations and workshops with the late Grandmaster Angel Cabales. I got to see all the people who were always there and more importantly I know who was *never* there.

As the years go by I'm learning more and more who my teacher is and appreciating the organization he's built. IESA has a reputation for intense training and an unbending integrity in the art. Even though I never had the good fortune of meeting the late Grandmaster or his teacher the late Felisisimo Dizon, I know anytime I see Master Uddin move I'm also watching the old Grandmasters move.

Perspectives of the Women of IESA

Females in Serrada

Esther Munoz:

Seeing as I have only been training for a little over a year, and this is my first martial arts experience, at times it can be quite overwhelming. There is so much to learn and comprehend. I love it because it always gives me a challenge and something to look forward to.

I have great teacher that teaches me about the art and life all at the same time. The art and situations in life go hand in hand. Since I have started training I have improved not only in the art, but also in life. I have been blessed to step into the world of martial arts with Master Sultan Uddin at the head of it. His teachings are fascinating because of all he knows.

Being a female in the organization is a blessing. I have many teachers and there are only a few of us females in this organization. What I enjoy the most is that the males do not treat me very different than my peers; they teach me what they know at a level that I can comprehend. It is a blessing to be involved with this organization, being male or female, it is a true honor.



Esther Munoz and Pangulong Guro Sultan "Shaykh" Uddin

Angela Williams:



Angela Williams of UMAA

I was drawn to martial arts training by a desire to feel more confident, more aware and to get in shape physically. All women should study some sort of martial arts training. There are so many styles available to study; one is bound to find the right fit.

I like Serrada because it's important to learn weapons training. I didn't always believe this. I figured I shouldn't have to learn how to use a stick or knife because I don't carry weapons and don't mean anyone any harm. What I didn't consider is that an attacker might decide to use a weapon on me. I have since learned that to defend against someone carrying a

weapon it helps to know how to use that weapon yourself.

My advice to other women is keep training, don't give up. Don't be intimidated if you are the only woman in a class. Remember that you have the upper hand in that class. Because women are smaller and lack the upper body strength of the average man, we learn to utilize our hips, fulcrums, levers and use our opponent's weight against him.

Some men in your dojo will miss this fact and continue to muscle their way through techniques in class. You will focus on the correct way to do a technique because your physical limitations require you to. Some men, for various reasons, don't like to practice techniques on women. However, enlightened men will seek out female students to practice with once they realize it's more difficult to apply a hadaka-jime choke to a slim neck than a fat one.

Beki Light:

It is such a privilege to be able to learn Serrada in IESA. Pangulong Guro Sultan Uddin teaches the art true to the way Grandmaster Angel Cabales taught it. We are learning the authentic art as well as the history. I feel very lucky to be a part of this.

Serrada is great because it is like stick boxing. The weapons are extensions of your hands (of course everything can also be applied as empty hand techniques). Serrada is a very subtle, close-fighting art. There are always new levels of technique to discover. Serrada fits in beautifully with the Ju-Trap-Boxing I am learning from Professor-Punong Guro Hundon (at Universal Martial Arts Academy). Training in one art always seems to help me with the other.



Professor-Punong Guro Hundon, Beki Light and Angela Williams

I believe everybody should have the option to train in martial arts, but especially women and girls. It is important for us because most of us do not understand our own strength. We have been mentally programmed to think of ourselves as weak and it is just not true. We deserved the right to know our own strength and to use it. Most of us don't know this but females have been strong fighters throughout history. Women developed martial arts too. It is our history and we need to reclaim it.

Some women will become hard core fighters no matter what, but the majority of women need more encouragement than guys. It helps if they can see other women who train and fight. Most women don't know their own true potential and that is why I think it is very important that strong female fighters get more visibility.

Martial arts' training is about learning and growing as a way of life- you don't get to a certain level and then you just know everything. Training helps you to grow in all areas of life-mental, physical and spiritual. It is also a lot of fun. I think everybody should train in some form of martial art.

Interview with Master Kenneth Pitts of Pitts' Academy



Professor-Punong Guro Hundon, Chief Maestro
Brandon Jordan (Mandala Mandirigma Kali), and
Master Kenneth Pitts

Contra Mestre Kenneth Pitts is the founder of Kenneth Pitts' Martial Arts Academy in Oakland, which is also the location of Universal Martial Arts Academy and the IESA headquarters. The academy is located on Lakeshore Avenue in downtown Oakland, right next to Lake Merritt. Pitts' Academy offers several styles of martial arts under one roof. The dojo is always busy with students and families coming in and out for various classes. The school also sponsors family oriented events such as Capoeira Batizados, seminars, barbecues, and sleepovers for the kids.

FMAdigest: *Please tell us a little about your background in the martial arts.*

Master Pitts: My uncle Eddie Machen was a boxer. He fought Cassius Clay, Joe Frazier and Sonny Liston-but he wouldn't let me get into the ring because he said boxing was such a meat market. I used to spar with my neighbor who was a Korean martial artist from the time I was 6 or 7 years old. I started studying martial arts in Jr. High, but didn't get serious until high school. In college I was captain of the Judo team from 1975-79. I also worked at the Young Adult Project run by Master Julius Baker. I ended up taking over that program, and later moved to the Montclair Recreation Center. I also worked for 15 years in juvenile probation-teaching staff how to restrain kids without hitting them. I

fought in a lot of competitions-sometimes full contact. We used to train hard for 8 hours a day, and go to tournaments every weekend.

I have Black Belts in Kung Fu, Kajukenpo and Kusema Vijiti from Sifu Bill Owens; Taekwondo from Grandmaster Byong Yu; and Judo from Debbie Nelson-a student of Willie Cahill. I am a Contra Mestre in Capoeira and am going for my Mestre belt next April under Mestre Batata of Capoeira Besouro in Los Angeles. My stick fighting experience is mostly in Modern Arnis, from Remy Presas; Doce Pares from Reginald Burford; and from Guro Max Pallen. I also studied with Great Grand Master Wally Jay when he taught at the College of Alameda.

In 1993 I opened Pitts' Academy, and I'm still here.

FMAdigest: *What martial arts styles are taught at Pitts' Academy?*

Master Pitts: We have Taekwondo, Kajukenpo, Kickboxing, Capoeira, Kusema Vijiti, and of course Professor Hundon's Ju-Trap-Boxing and Eskrima Serrada.

FMAdigest: *Describe the philosophy of Pitts' Academy.*

Master Pitts: Our motto is "the family that kicks together sticks together." Martial arts are for the whole family. We have lots of classes geared towards families and people of all ages.

This school is a hub to study many martial arts. I believe students should get a well rounded curriculum. You should have skills in all areas. Everybody should have some defenses against different types of fighters. For example, grapplers should be able to kick, and kickers should be able to grapple. We offer classes in the 5 basic ranges of fighting: kicking, boxing, trapping, standing grappling and ground fighting. We offer disciplines here that teach in those five ranges. I have been criticized in the past for studying different types of arts, but I believe it has made me able to see things more in depth like the complexity, angles, speed, power, flexibility, reaction time, and sensitivities of fighters. I have young students who are growing up becoming proficient in several styles just imagine what they will be like in 10 years from now!

It can be difficult to keep many people's interest in the arts while raising the bar and demanding more technically of your students. I try to maintain a balance between teaching techniques across the board that everybody can do, and having a core group of students who do those harder techniques, like jump spinning hook kicks and more difficult throws.

FMAdigest: *Describe your working relationship with Professor-Punong Guro Hundon.*

Master Pitts: I trust his judgment and integrity. I believe that is reciprocal between him and me. We have known each other for a long time. We met back in the 70's, training in Capoeira with Johnny Moore in Oakland at Lake Merritt. We are family.

FMAdigest: *What are your thoughts about UMAA becoming the headquarters of the International Eskrima Serrada Association?*

Master Pitts: I think this will be a center for studying all these arts in one place. When I came up I had to drive all over the Bay Area and beyond just to get information on different styles. When I opened this school I wanted to have all the disciplines here.

I have always been attracted to grappling and stick arts, and have wanted to study more in depth in these disciplines. With my teaching schedule it makes it hard to go to other classes, but I get the opportunity to attend the seminars and sharpen my skills. I've wanted to learn Serrada for years.

I am in awe of all martial arts and wish I had even more of a mix here.



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Report from the Eskrima-Serrada and Small Circle Jujitsu Seminar

A historic Serrada-Small Circle Jujitsu Seminar took place at Professor Desana Stone's beautiful new Stone Ryu Dojo in Brooklyn, NY on April 10, 2007. The seminar was taught by Professor-Punong Guro James Hundon of Universal Martial Arts Academy and the International Eskrima Serrada Association. This was a very important event because this was the first time the two arts of Eskrima Serrada and Small Circle Jujitsu have been taught together or shown in combination.

This event also reunited master teachers and important martial arts figures after many years. Professor-Punong Guro James Hundon, Professor Desana Stone, and Professor Byron Hurlock all trained together in the 80's and 90's under the late great Dr. Moses Powell and Grandmaster Robert Crosson. There were many stories to tell and much reminiscing! A highlight of the evening was when Dr. Moses Powell's wife, Mrs. Gina Powell, showed up for the event. Professor Bill Mcloud also came to support the seminar. The energy was high and positive, and people really enjoyed themselves.

Professor-Punong Guro Hundon opened it up by teaching the basics of Serrada strikes one, two and three, with one counter for each strike. Students practiced the strikes and counters for about 30 minutes each before moving to the next. Professor-Punong Guro Hundon and his assistants moved among the participants to help them learn the techniques as they practiced them. After teaching several counters, Professor-Punong Guro Hundon pulled it all together by demonstrating



Professor Ron Howard, Professor Byron Hurlock, Professor/Punong Guro James Hundon, Gina Powell, and Professor Desana Stone.

a counter-for-counter drill in real-time. This drill was a box pattern built off of basic counters that leads to open weapons sparring. After doing the counter-for-counter, he showed applications of disarms, locks and throws that combined Serrada techniques with Small Circle Jujitsu. The participants were mainly Stone Ryu Jujitsu students, so the jujitsu techniques shown were highly appreciated. The combination of the two styles is highly effective and everybody was very excited about what was shown. Professor-Punong Guro Hundon has a unique style of using creative combinations of techniques with a precision and flow backed up by years of fighting experience and real life application.

We look forward to many more seminars such as this, on both coasts.



International Eskrima Serrada Association
Locations and Contact Information

For general IESA info you can also call: (888) 221-5462 Ext. 2

Master Sultan/IESA:

www.sultanuddin.com

www.myspace.com/tribe_iesa

UMAA/IESA Headquarters:

www.umacademy.com

www.myspace.com/umacademy

Pitts' Martial Arts Academy:

www.kpmaa.com

Punong Guro Bob Manalo, JR

www.myspace.com/bob_manalo

Punong Guro Sharbel-Andrew Pelayo teaches at:

East West Wing Chun Academy in Oakland

www.wingchun-sf.com/sf-main.asp

Professor Desana Stone

Jujitsu International Stone Ryu

www.jiujitsuinternational.com



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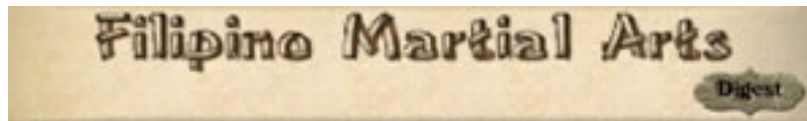
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