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Blade Boxing

The Cutting Edge Approach to Pugilism



Blade Boxing: The Cutting Edge Approach to Pugilism



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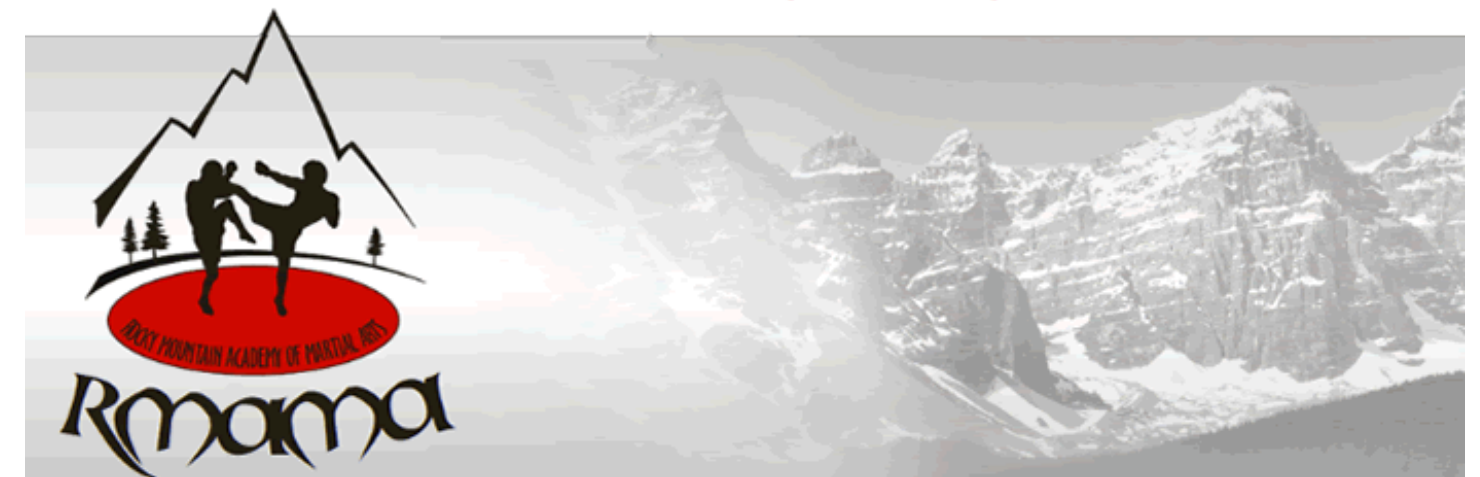
The FMA Informative is very happy to bring you another view of Guro Joel Huncar in his teachings. If you may remember Guro Huncar first issue with the FMA Informative was Issue No 47 - Is your Martial Art Reality Based, in which he explained and hopes the reader would understand after he explained and demonstrated the complicated world of self-defense and reality based fighting. Then in FMA Informative issue No 65 - Muay Thai and Balintawak "My Personal Blend," Guro Huncar discussed his personal blend of Balintawak Eskrima and Muay Thai.

Now, Guro Huncar in this issue as owner of a martial arts training facility that teaches multiple disciplines he is very fortunate to be able to glove up and spar with fighters from multiple disciplines. Guro Huncar regularly gets to spar with Muay Thai fighters, Arnisadors, MMA fighters and the occasional boxer. As a fighter his base is much stronger in the Filipino arts and this definitely affects the way he fist fights.

Filipino fighting is based on the blade regardless of whether you are fighting armed or unarmed the blade is the heart of Filipino fighting. This blade based focus translates to more focus on parrying, trapping and limb controlling.

Guro Huncar states: "There are many more important reasons to train in a martial art system than self-protection. However if that is your interest, than take what is being offered with a grain of salt and a lot of skepticism because in my over twenty years of training in martial arts I have had to work hard to separate the wheat from the chaff. I have met some snake oil salesmen who have said their art was all you need for all your martial arts ails and I have met a lot of honorable men who were honest about the benefits of what they taught. The one lesson I have learned from the MMA explosion is that there is no one perfect art; it is up to each martial artist to find the right art for his needs and goals, however if you are looking for arts that will help you train for self-protection I hope this article will help you find what you need."

Guro Huncar hopes you enjoy this issue and feel free to contact him with any questions or comments.



Blade Boxing: *The Cutting Edge Approach to Pugilism*

As an owner of a martial arts training facility that teaches multiple disciplines I am very fortunate to be able to glove up and spar with fighters from multiple disciplines. I regularly get to spar with Muay Thai fighters, Arnisadors, MMA fighters and the occasional boxer. As a fighter my base is much stronger in the Filipino arts and this definitely affects the way I fist fight. Filipino fighting is based on the blade regardless of whether you are fighting armed or unarmed the blade is the heart of Filipino fighting.

This blade based focus translates to more focus on parrying, trapping and limb controlling. In sport fighting this can be good, but it can also open you up to being baited into parrying and getting hit when your hand is busy trying to chase your opponent's limbs. Savvy pugilists will see if you have the habit of extending your hands to parry and use this habit against you by faking punches which may get you to extend your hand enough for them to land a punch to your head. For sport fighting this may get a little frustrating but if you are training for self-protection I am going to make sure you understand why your parrying skills are very important and should not be sacrificed to become a better at sparring.

Western boxing has fist fighting down to a sports science. It is beautiful. Boxers are super fit, and highly skilled at both offence and defence. In their environment they are king and while many MMA fighters deride boxing for being too specialized: I doubt there is one top MMA fighter who does not have a boxing coach on his training team. Western boxing is the undisputed champion of fist fighting. Even on the street more than one decent ama-



Typical sport fighting defences - Slip and Duck

teur boxer has punched out a would-be attacker or even punched his way through a crowd of attackers.

For fist fighting and sport fighting the ability to slip a punch is incredibly valuable. A good boxer will make punches barely

miss him. He will be grazed by his opponent's gloves while his punches land flush. Punches will pass over his head while he ducks under and digs into his opponents belly with a shovel hook or an uppercut. Or he might shell up and cover with his elbows and forearms



What happens when you duck a knife? The attacker changes direction quickly and slashes you or can stab you.

while his opponent delivers a vicious onslaught of blows and then answer with punches of his own. These are beautiful defences for the ring or cage and in a street fist fight they are great defences to know, however in the world of edged weapons these types of defences lead to bleeding, maiming, and in the worst case scenario death.

This is a simple equation, a slip that would graze you across the ear means your ear might be cut off if you are dealing with a knife wielding attacker. And even if you manage to evade a knife stab or slash altogether, remember the blade cuts equally deep as it is retracted. Not only this but a knife attacker can quickly change the direction of the blade in mid attack so even if you duck under the blade the knife fighter just has to change the direction of his attack and he can slice you open.



More dangers of sport fighting tactics for knife defence. Slipping has the same result.

A punch needs to be brought back to the guard to be dangerous, a hand holding a knife is dangerous in all directions, forward back, up, down, left or right. A knife does not require

power to be dangerous, a quick snap can cut to the bone, and a quick jab with it can stab into organs and blood vessels. When you look at how many punches a boxer takes in an average round and picture what it would be like if each one of these punches left a wound in the boxer that hung open and poured blood. Not to mention the underlying damage to nerves, muscles, tendons, blood vessels and organs. Remember even missed punches would often score cuts if a knife was in the hand of an opponent.

Defences such as shelling up; where the fists of the boxer are held against the head and he defends punches with his forearms and elbows are basically useless against a blade. This is a great defence against punches but do this against a knife fighter and you will end up with your forearms sliced to ribbons or pinned to your

skull by a hard knife stab. This is not a good defence if you want to keep yourself in one piece in a knife assault. It might possibly save you from a slash to the throat but it has very little value when it comes to surviving a knife attack.

If you have to fight someone armed with a knife keep in mind that if you are empty handed you are at a great disadvantage and you are fighting a battle you are likely going to be injured, possibly maimed or killed. So if there is any possible way to escape, that should be your first option.

However escape is not always possible and in that case you need to use good tactics if you want to survive a knife assault. That is why the focus in Filipino pugilism is limb parrying and

control. While your goal is to defeat the person wielding the knife, to get there you need to control the weapon long enough to stop the attacker. If you don't have control over the weapon you will be taking cuts and stabs which I don't have to tell you is very bad.

So if you manage to get control of the weapon arm you have a few options; strike/attack, unbalance or disarm. If you are going to strike or attack, you need to make sure that your attack will be ruthless and damaging. You can't simply punch your opponent in the face; you need to try to destroy your enemy because your attacker is using deadly force on you. Tearing your opponent's eye out, crushing his throat, breaking bones and joint dislocation are reasonable actions if you are fighting a person armed with a knife.

Unbalancing is often a better tactic because often it will give you times to escape an attacker and if you down a bad guy hard he may take some time to get up. Unbalancing includes throwing an attacker down a flight of stairs, into oncoming traffic, spiking his head into a brick wall, curb or pavement. Unbalancing for self-protection should be very cruel and devastating and should use your environment to aid your goal which is safe escape. Your attacker's safety is none of your concern if he is using deadly force. Your safety is your main concern, not the bad guys.

Disarming is a tactic that often looks great in theory, but is hard to put into practice in reality. Disarming an attacker who is holding on to his weapon with all his might is far from easy. Disarms can't be planned they have the opportunity to disarm must present



Control, off balance and counter attack... get on the knife arm.

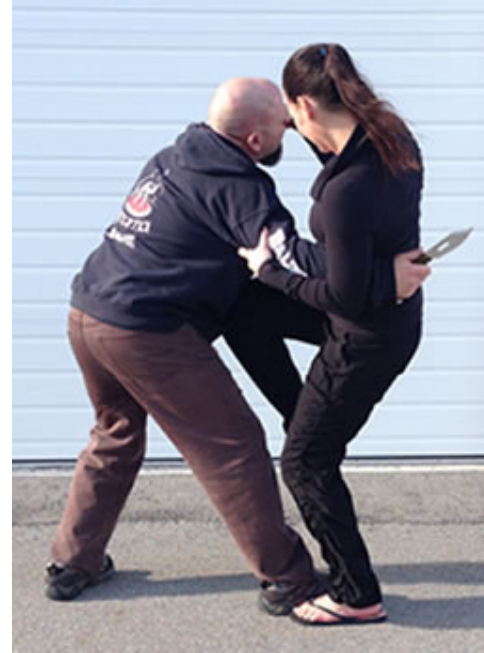
itself in the conflict, then if you have good disarming skill and are able to take advantage of the situation you may surprise your attacker and strip his weapon from him. However disarms rarely work without some kind of distraction as well.

This is why once you have

control of your opponent's weapon arm you will probably use a combination of the possible counter options. Perhaps you will strike his face to get your attacker distracted and perhaps off balance and then you see the opportunity to sweep him off of his feet. Then when he crashes to the pavement you quickly stomp on whatever body part is handy and manage to strip the knife from him.

The point is your counter has to be fluid and intuitive with the situation. If you are trained you will do what you are trained to do. If you are trained to sport fight, you will sport fight against your opponent and while you may get lucky and land that knockout punch or do that amazing single leg take down you may also end up having your tendons and blood vessels cut in your arm as you throw punches or even if you do get an amazing take down if you don't have control of the weapon hand and end up on top of your attacker you will be receiving cuts and stabs, maybe lots of them. I have heard of more than one MMA fighter who paid the ultimate price for believing that his sport fighting skills made him capable of handling an assailant armed with a knife. Even if you are well versed in knife defence and tactics there is a good chance you will be killed or maimed if you have to defend against a knife, if your only experience is sport fighting you have even less of a chance.

Having said that there is something that every Arnisador should take from sport fighting and apply to his or her training; contact sparring. If you don't put yourself under live pressure in the gym you will limit your ability to



Controlling the knife arm and counter attacking.

use your skills in real time. Sport fighting, especially training for full contact fighting, has the best training for functionalizing skills in real time.

However it is not just the contact sparring that makes full contact fighters so functional; it is also the pad training. Focus mitts, Thai pads, kick shields, heavy bags and leg kick shields should also be part of your training regime if you want to be a good fighter in the

ring or on the street. You will always hold back when you spar out of respect for your training partner, so target training allows you to hit full speed and full power. I believe this training should be done more than sparring because if you train to always hold back you will hold back under pressure, but if you train to go all out on the pads you will be able to go all out when you need to. Also you can focus on specific skills and moves that you may never get to focus on in the chaos of sparring.

There is one more thing full contact fighters have that many martial artists overlook; incredible fitness. Sport fighters do not only focus on fighting skills, they also focus on strength and fitness training. Most amateur MMA fighters, boxers and Muay Thai fighters have an absolutely elite level of fitness, while this does have some very obvious benefits when it comes to dealing with violence and survival, there is a benefit that is often overlooked by many martial artists and self-defence experts. The incredible will it takes to get into this kind of elite shape. What this translates to is an ability to keep working beyond pain, to keep working when the body is completely depleted of oxygen and to work past the mind

telling you to give up. In the world of surviving edged weapons this may be exactly what you need when you are half bled out and still need to fight. Will power and fitness are important assets when it comes to surviving against terrible odds and the fitness training that full contact fighters do can really develop these abilities.

When you are sparring mix it up. Figure out ways to safely spar against fighters armed with sticks and knives while you are unarmed. One of my favourite games I play with my best sparring partners is the knife game. We have one knife and go at each other about 50% and fight until we gain the knife and then the roles get reversed. The fight goes on once the knife changes hands. We use a full array of empty hand strikes, joint locks, sweeps and grappling. It looks ugly when we train this way and we are often "stabbed and cut" by the practice knife, but we train to keep going because we don't want to create a mindset of giving up when we are cut. Remember you will fight exactly how you train so train to keep on fighting no matter what.

We also get as dirty as we can safely when we do this training. Keep safety in mind always when you are training but you

need to find ways to safely train moves that are horrible and nasty. For example we will pressure the eye brow with the thumb to safely practice eye gouging. Slap your training partner's cup or grab his or her inseam to train groin attacks. Have a sporting attitude towards your training partners and keep them safe when you are training but train to be a functional dirty fighter. (There is no such thing as a true dirty fighter, training to fight "dirty" simply means you are a realist)

As a "blade boxer" it is great to train with sport fighter and adapt much of what they do to your own training. Keep your focus on controlling your opponent's limbs when you defend. Remember if gain control of the arm that is holding the weapon it is easier to deal with the attacker. Do not become too frustrated when you spar with sport fighters and they don't understand why you focus so much on blocking and parrying. Keep in mind what you are training for and stay true to that; however you can only do that if you truly understand why you we train the way we do in Filipino based boxing and kick boxing. I hope this article will help some of you out with that understanding.

School Submission

The schools listed teach Filipino martial arts, either as the main curriculum or an added curriculum.

If you have a school that teaches Filipino martial arts, or you are an instructor that teaches, but does not have a school, list the school or style so individuals who wish to experience, learn and gain knowledge have the opportunity.

Be Professional; keep your contact information current. - [Click Here](#)



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We reserve the right to use any photo(s) as cover material or additional compensation. We also reserve the right to edit material and to crop photographs.

We reserve the right to use articles or parts of articles that are given and approved from time to time as needed to promote the Filipino martial arts and the Culture of the Philippines.

Physical manuscripts should be typed in black, double spaced, and set to 1-1/2 margins (right and left).

Emailed manuscripts should be typed in Ariel or Times Roman, on programs such as Notepad, Wordpad, Microsoft Word, Word Perfect and can be sent as an attachment. Photo(s) can be sent as a .jpg, .gif, .bmp, or .tiff - to submit material for either the FMA Informative Newspaper or an Issue [Click Here](#)

We welcome your article, ideas and suggestions, and look forward to working with you in the future.