

英國詠春功夫會

UK WING CHUN KUNG FU ASSOC

Work Hard You You
WILL Be Rewarded



INTERVIEW WITH JAMES SINCLAIR

HERE WE GET SOME OF THE THOUGHTS OF THE UKWCKFA FOUNDER AND CHIEF INSTRUCTOR

Wing Chun is known for its economy of motion. Many of its techniques are used at close range. How important is the range?

Distance control is possibly the most important universal skill in the combat arts. If you can control the distance, and have good timing, you will overcome your opponent regardless of style. This could result in a better practitioner of another art beating a Wing Chun Kuen practitioner. It is not the art at fault, but the skill of the practitioner.

A common misconception is that Wing Chun Kuen is a close range fighting style. However, this is only true in part. It would be fair to say it is not as close range as Wrestling and BJJ. Like all systems it has developed to work optimally at a particular range and has its own niche, but it is not limited or constrained solely to this distance, and would be a very weak style if it were.

The problems of close range are, in the main:

- reduced reaction time



MASTER JAMES SINCLAIR

Founder of the UK Wing Chun Kung Fu Assoc. Began his martial art journey in 1972.

CHI SAU SEQ



DANGER FROM A WRESTER

In this sequence Sifu Ashley Phillips (National Hq) and Sifu Eric Wilson (National Hq) demonstrate how easily Chi Sau could go wrong if you remain ignorant or naive to the danger from grapplers, who also favour the use of 'pummelling' to get even closer to their opponent.

- combatant's grabbing, holding, spoiling and clinching
- being swamped or overpowered.
- reduced opportunity for concussive weight based power strikes
- easily thrown or taken to the ground if inexperienced

How can power be generated at short distances?

The easy answer is to use speed. Something of small mass travelling at speed can cause damage. Helping the student develop the physical/reactive/emotional explosiveness is the teachers' responsibility. It is for teachers to coach their students with the programmes and methods to achieve the goal.

Modern athletes run faster, throw further, jump longer and higher because they do not train as people did in the past. Technology, biomechanics and understanding of training periodisation etc. have all aided this improvement. Martial arts can benefit from this too. Modern Wing Chun Kuen students should be stronger, faster and more skilful than previous generations as all this experience is passed on.

Unfortunately when one observes some school's training approach it is quite sad how outdated they are, and how little students benefit from their training. These schools often brand themselves as 'traditional' or 'authentic' and love the words 'secret', 'hidden', 'mystical' etc. and charge more money too! Maybe bunkum and poppycock should be added.... Wrestling



Inexperience
HURTS!

styles go back millennia but they never use those words.

Wing Chun Kuen has evolved with each generation, when did the 'Art' get everything right and Wing Chun Kuen have no potential for further development? One can love history, but not wish to live in the past. It is natural for our predecessors to have looked back too, but only to move forward.

Wing Chun Kuen accepts that fights start and often continue with close quarter aggressive physicality. Short distance power or 'chun ging' has been of paramount importance since inception. Not only is this a reality based requirement, it also follows the tenet of Economy of Motion. Power is gained through torque, flicks, reduced surface striking area and through the sensible attack of

areas that do not require the concussive power of boxing and sport based training.

Wing Chun Kuen practitioners apply palm strikes, elbows, fingers, grabs and gouges. No parts of the body are off limit. They are, therefore, able to strike the groin, neck, throat, eyes and limbs. Whilst this is common to many martial arts and street fighters, what differs is the methodology in approach to coaching. This is where, one hopes, to create the reactions and experience necessary to use the skills at extreme speed and under pressure. This is why chi sau and other hand drills have developed and continue to evolve.



CHI SAU 2



CUP JARN

1. Sifu Eric Wilson (National Hq) is being pushed and uses Kwan Sau to escape being trapped on the inside gate. 2. He then uses Gwa Choi and 3. Kum Sau to cover the arms of Sifu Gary Cooper (National Hq) and unleashes Cup Jarn.



DISTANCE CONTROL IS POSSIBLY THE MOST IMPORTANT UNIVERSAL SKILL IN THE COMBAT ARTS.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

If you do the same TODAY as you did YESTERDAY, TOMORROW will be no different.

Repetition is important for muscle memory in skill development. However, you want to shock muscles from time to time in exercise.



Would you explain the meaning of relaxation and how to relax in Chi Sau?

The word relaxation is often misconceived and results in some practitioners believing it means one should not use strength. This results in practitioners who are ill prepared for violent physical confrontation. If both practitioners constantly train 'softly' they lose the ability to deal with naked power and violent intent. Like all training there should be balance introduced. There should be soft slower sessions geared around comprehension and skill acquisition and

tough, hard, strong sessions for stress testing. ALL martial artists have a breaking point, the aim is to make sure that your level is higher than your opponents.

Remain Calm In The STORM

Relaxation under stress also means having the mental wherewithal to monitor your state and stay calm. Not using strength and power has nothing to do with relaxation. Remaining reasonably calm in the storm is the aim. The ONLY way to be relaxed under pressure is to experience pressure and learn to deal with it.

AUGUST 2012	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
	<p>Advanced Hand Skills Seminar</p> <p>This seminar covers the material for the 3rd level grading.</p>	<p>Chi Sau 2</p> <p>For those with some experience in Chi Sau, Master Sinclair helps home your skills.</p>	<p>Kicking Seminar</p> <p>This seminar covers the whole range of kicking, knee strikes, sweeps and Chi Gerk.</p>	<p>Wooden Dummy 2</p> <p>Covering the more advanced training on the dummy. For those who attended the first seminar.</p>

LOY YAU, HEI SUNG

Welcome what Comes. Escort what Leaves

If You Push I Pull, If You Pull I Push

When one is under stress, one tenses. Relaxation in Chi Sau is important because if you are overly stressed in Chi Sau you may not respond well and fail to seize opportunities.

If Chi Sau is the link between forms and free fighting, why do so many people stop their development at the Chi Sau stage?

Because people enjoy the 'game' of chi sau and no longer care or feel the need to constantly strive to be better fighters and compare with other athletes. This is fine as most people only wish to learn self-defence against an idiot in the street. With good coaching this is easily achievable in a relatively short period of time in Wing Chun Kuen. A large proportion of boxers, BJJ students and Wrestlers also enjoy their training very much, and will often compete for years in tournaments with rules. They are not thinking of self defence or street fighting they are testing their skills with their peers. Wing Chun students are doing the same through Chi Sau.

In line with other martial arts Wing Chun Kuen has numerous skills and training practices, which go way beyond the remit required of basic self defence. Who would spend years training, head butting, eye gouging, biting, fish hooking? I would argue only

a very disturbed, sad insecure or violent individual....

What is your opinion of Chi Sau competitions?

Training in a class with people you trust and respect can lead to some fantastic displays of skill, control and devastating technique. But it is the trust, faith and club spirit that makes it safe. One cannot allow a chop to the throat or neck when people do not know their opponent, or trust their opponent's physical and emotional control.

However, I do believe it can happen but it must evolve with many like-minded schools that can agree a set of rules and compete very regularly. Most Wing Chun Kuen schools do not wish to set aside time for separate competition training. Boxing, BJJ, Sombo, Judo etc. have all evolved rules over many generations and have become recognised sports worldwide. Wing Chun is new to this mindset and I respect Alan Orr Sifu in particular for his efforts in this area.

How do you coach your students to be street aware and street effective?

Is this question relating to fighting on a Saturday night in a



Listen to your coach and practice with care

club or the street or to mugging, predatory sexual attack, abduction?

Firstly, self defence starts way before physical confrontation. Awareness of your environment, bushes outside ground floor windows, central locking a car when inside, your projected body language and so much more.

Basic Wing Chun Kuen skills are very good for simple self defence situations on the Saturday night. Most people who train in Wing Chun Kuen, with a self defence motivated goal, do not spend their lives in morbid fear that Randy Couture or George St Pierre are going to fight them.

When more than one opponent or weapons are involved, there is grave danger, even for so-called masters. Most people would rather face a UFC fighter in the ring than a drug crazed junkie with a knife or gun in the street. A good old fashioned punch up is one thing, multiple assailants and weapons another....

So at what level do you set the bar for average students. At

THE STREET



SELF DEFENCE

1. A sudden rear attack leaves little or no chance for defence.
2. A weapon is dangerous even in the untrained hand.
3. Face to face, your best chance of a successful outcome.

what age can you no longer cope? If a man with a knife or gun asks for your wallet and you consider resisting, you are effectively valuing your life on the contents of your wallet. If you include your credit card you could be valuing your life on your debt! So, sensibly, most people when confronted will give it up and hope to walk away. That is self defence.

Martial artists so often get caught up in comparing and competing that they lose sight of the fact that a 'street fight' is not such a massive challenge for a well prepared martial artist. Because physical fighting with another prepared athlete is the domain of the relatively young, even the great fighters are forced to retire at quite a young age.... However, in self defence scenarios you have no choice and wish it over in seconds by stealth and surprise. Luckily

your opponent does not know you are trained, does not know your idiosyncrasies, has no chance to watch you on video and analyse a strategy with their team. If you can't get away, it is for you to seize an opportunity and surprise the potential assailant.

There is a common statistic bounded about regarding Self Protection that it is 90% mindset and 10% skill. With that in mind how does Wing Chun cultivate this mindset?

Where is the statistic from? Is it a scientific study or just an opinion? These numbers appear drawn out of space. Like X% of fights end up on the ground.

Self defence is not the domain of Wing Chun Kuen alone. All martial arts intent on honestly helping their students achieve



There are no TARGETS off limits...

an acceptable level of self defence awareness and skill should approach the subject in a very similar manner. If mindset refers to you having no choice but fight back, then I guess everyone will fight. Can you win, who knows? Fear is a major factor and the average person confronted by an emotional retard finds it justifiably terrifying. So mindset or 'having choice taken away' can lead to the same necessary action.

As an example: When teaching ask your students to train harder, faster etc. and visualise they are preparing to defend someone they love. Later ask who they thought of. Generally it will be their children, their mother, not themselves.

This is sad. If they train hard for themselves they can fight back and escape thereby protecting those people they love from the

pain of seeing them hurt or worse. YOU are as important as anyone else. The mindset should be to value yourself and walk away from a fool spoiling for a fight. Given reducing choice, hit first and hard if you can't get away. If you hit half heartedly, you will get a full hearted response!

How hard will a person fight when skill lets them down and experience is limited? Answer.... As hard as they are loved and value their life. Simple as that... So teach them to value themselves, appreciate that others love them and they deserve to live a long healthy life shared with those they love. That is the mindset of survival. A fight is a struggle for continued survival, even if it is running away or surviving by bearing a rape etc.



No fancy techniques in Wing Chun

TOOLS...



KNEES, FEET, FINGERS & FIST

Wing Chun Kung Fu has a vast array of striking tools. We use the legs to Knee Strike, Kick & Sweep. We use the hands to Finger Strike, Palm, Chop, Slap and Punch.

As no target is disallowed, Wing Chun has evolved into a potentially brutal defensive art.

CHI SAU 3



ELBOW CONTROLS POSITION

1. Nick Martin Sifu (National Hq) has the double outside gate. Sifu Ashley Phillips (National Hq) presses forward.
2. Nick uses his Gaan Sau to redirect force.
3. Nick maintains pressure with his Laan Sau.
4. Nick completes with a safety punch to bridge

Do you believe Wing Chun is a skill to add to your personal repertoire of fighting/self defence or a complete system?

As stated earlier, Wing Chun Kuen has always been a work in progress. Many of the Wong Shun Leung students think he had all the answers. But his own students Wan Kam Leung, Gary Lam and David Petersen still strive to find ways to develop their teachers Wing Chun Kuen by better coaching and research. Moving forward is not dismissing the efforts and talents of those before you. It is your testament to what they gave you. Even Wong Shun Leung could only have the answers from the experience of those before him and his own. Whilst not insubstantial there is always room to grow. If his teacher Ip Man had not allowed him to adapt and grow, Wong Shun Leung's Wing Chun Kuen

would not have gained the respect it has thus far. Ip Man was responsible for adapting Wing Chun quite considerably. And his own son Ip Chun has adapted what he had learnt from his father. It is completely natural and to be applauded.

In Mainland China or indeed throughout the world you will see as many Wing Chun Kuen variants as there are schools. Together they have more similarities than differences, so they can continue to use the 'brand name', but they have certainly adapted and changed according to different experiences or lack thereof...!

Wing Chun Kuen does not use ballistic weapons spears, cudgels, shields. We do not have the same quantity/level of throws or kicks as other Arts. Wing Chun Kuen practitioners do not train full contact and are



not in the main superb athletes. Neither does it have ground fighting. It is very effective at what it does but 'complete' is purely subjective and a matter of opinion on intended use and the situations you meet.

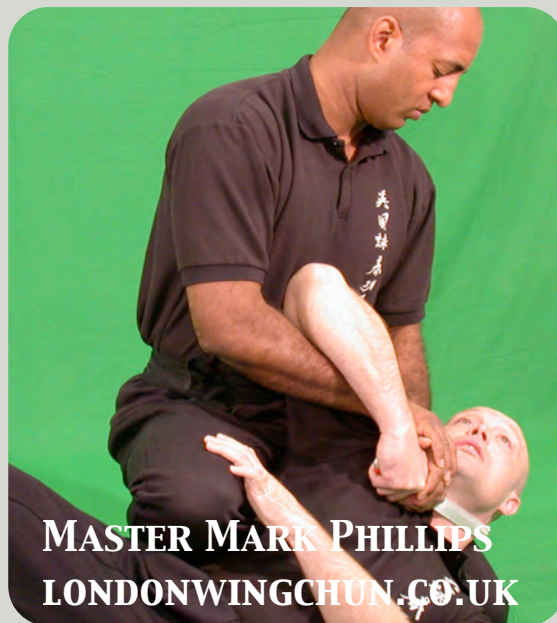
My fellow Wing Chun Kuen teachers argue that women would not wish to fight on the ground in the past, and that martial arts are for the battlefield not sport. If the stories are to be believed, it would appear that Yim Wing Chun was not preparing for a battlefield but for a face to face, one on one, barehanded confrontation with a man who had no idea she had been prepared. This is possibly why Wing Chun Kuen is so good in that niche at taking people by surprise.

However, the argument about a woman developing the style for another woman only has so many washes before it fades. Women will more often need to fight for their life or to prevent sexual assault. Men are more likely to 'fight' over women, for ego or no reason worthy of mention. A lot of times men can walk away but choose not too.

Generations of men have kept the ideals created by the women, but adapted to more male oriented ego fight scenarios.

The challenge fights of the past were for business reputation and ego. Wing Chun Kuen was made famous through accepting challenges against other martial artists of their era and Hong Kong gang fights.

However, martial arts have evolved, particularly sport based training. So can Wing Chun Kuen compete against those that train so well in the controlled arena's of today? I have never heard it mentioned that Dr Leung Jan and anyone since killed their opponent. They must have won by agreement, knockout or submission. Sounds very UFC like!!



If today's Wing Chun Kuen practitioners wish to compete in the modern arena at the highest level, they could not possibly prepare as people trained in the 1960's or before. In the Ip Man 2 movie there was a scene that had Ip Man preparing to battle a world champion boxer by training on the Wooden Dummy. What a loss. It would have been better to observe the character preparing with students, to watch how he trained for the situation for a live opponent. Yes it is just a film with a lot of artistic license. It still, however, portrays outdated ideas that seem to perpetuate a poor impression of Wing Chun Kuen to modern martial artists.

Having said all that, Wing Chun Kuen is a repertoire of mixed up styles and ideas. However, it has truly developed and evolved into a fantastic art that is enjoyable to train in. It is unique in the training methods and accessible to everyone. 'Fighting' is the domain of the young. The pursuit of ever improving 'fighting skill' is a hollow journey on a personal basis. However, a coach should always be looking for ways to improve the results to effort ratio, and aiming to create better students year on year.

You were there in the 1970s when Kung Fu first started to take off in the West. How has Kung Fu changed over the years since then?

I started training way back in 1972 and even now Kung Fu is still a long way behind Karate, Taekwondo and Judo in the public consciousness.

It is clear to see that the Western psyche is quite focused on competition. The sport/tournament aspect has truly kept the public entertained and aware of Karate, Judo and Taekwondo. It is a positive outlet for people. People do not now go round challenging others and causing trouble as they have outlets for their energy.

The generic term kung fu is still largely known from the TV show, touring monks and some films. Wing Chun Kung Fu is less well known. Both Kung Fu and Karate are still largely undifferentiated in the public eye. Not many members of the public could name different styles of karate and kung fu.

Why do you think there are so many variations in what is taught at different Wing Chun schools?

Because of the great diversity in life, and opinions! As stated earlier, beyond a certain point, we can only really understand something from our own experience. Simply reciting what you were taught, and your students doing the same, leaves no room for growth. This has never happened in previous generations, so why expect that to differ now? Wing Chun Kuen 200 years ago was probably a much less developed and useful art.

Wing Chun Kuen's third form is often termed the emergency form. This is geared toward recovering from difficulty created by your own mistake or an opponent's superior skill. Surely this form should be continuing to change to reflect the clinch, takedown, short hook, uppercut and more, so common in modern combat. If the ancestors of Wing Chun Kuen had need to deal with Thai Boxing, BJJ, Greco Roman Wrestling, Savate etc. the art would have changed. There are no secrets, only information you have not been taught yet; luckily that myth has been dispelled. Wing Chun Kuen is often termed 'conceptual' and this certainly allows for adaptation to the environment.

Wing Chun is an open-hand fighting system, why do you think the pole and knife forms have endured, and how do they integrate into the overall Wing Chun system?

Art for art sake is not such a bad thing. As stated previously you do not throw away things from the past, you refine and evolve. Weapons' training harks back to a bygone era and gives the art some heritage. Used thoughtfully, weapons training does advance the hand skills as there are footwork skills in the knives that are particularly useful in hand combat, and



increase the ability to kick effectively. The correct use of the knife and pole develops power that is Wing Chun Kuen specific. Weight training can help, but the weapons hit the skillset requirements more accurately.

You also have a junior class for kids. How do you adapt the training for such a technical and brutal discipline as Wing Chun?

Fighting is brutal, but training does not have to be. One can only teach children limited self defence. An adult could simply

pick a child up and carry them off. A child cannot physically fight an aggressive adult. You would teach such things as anti bullying and stranger danger.

Wing Chun Kuen does require technical skills, good coordination and concentration. Children could easily be overwhelmed if taught in an age inappropriate manner. But children learn by observation and copy the art very well. They can perform all the hand skills drills with ease from as young as six. Adult students are often amazed at how well children can perform Lok Sau, and Chi Sau

the dummy and empty handed forms. They even enjoy Gworr Sau training too. They are, after all, mini adults in the making!

The greatest responsibility when teaching children is to ensure positivity.

The children

attend willingly and listen intently. They take everything onboard. A loose tongue or thoughtless comment will be sown in their receptive mind!

The aim of teaching children is to help them in every aspect, from coordination, self confidence and sense of achievement. The aim is to help the children grow. Children dance and train in gymnastics, why is Wing Chun Kuen considered harder to achieve....?

During your travels to Hong Kong, you have trained some other Kung Fu styles. How have these influenced your own Wing Chun and what you teach to others?

I have not trained other styles in Hong Kong, only met respected masters of other arts. I do not believe that I need to train in other stand up arts as Wing Chun Kuen fulfils my requirements. I have trained a little in ground fighting skills just to know how to increase my chances to get back to my feet should I go down. I am a Wing Chun Kuen enthusiast and teacher and wish to stay true to my first love so to speak. However, I do smile when I hear people state that they feel they could simply use their Wing Chun Kuen on the ground with no experience in that domain. It is a statement made from ignorance and inexperience. The ground game has to be understood to give you a chance to use your Wing Chun Kuen skills. One cannot simply bury one's head in the sand and think everything will be fine. Just as a ground fighter should have a hard time standing with you, they must be respected for their area of expertise.

Wing Chun Kuen has derived from many other arts and developed over quite some time. It has been skilfully grown and cultivated by a lot of different ideas and experiences. With a very small amount of research you can find that it has borrowed heavily from other Southern Chinese martial arts, and is still changing today.

Many masters of other systems take it upon themselves to point out their own arts' presence in Wing Chun Kuen, as if to state that the original arts from which they came must be more pure and authentic and, therefore, more effective. They further argue that as Wing Chun Kuen students do not fully understand the original arts they cannot possibly apply the skills to their potential.

However, one does not throw the baby out with the bathwater. We must not dismiss the fantastic knowledge and efforts of those who walked the path before us. We should honour them by mastering their knowledge and looking to continue their research. Whilst I am the senior



Welcome
to the
UKWCKFA

teacher in the UK Wing Chun Assoc. none of my students 'walk in my shadow', they stand on my shoulders and I proudly support them above me. I would hope they feel some pride in that support.

It often appears that many other styles see Wing Chun Kuen as an upstart to be slapped down. Whilst it is evident that little of Wing Chun Kuen is truly of its own origin, the combination and assimilation with such skilful and intelligent thought processes has paradoxically made it truly unique and original. It could be argued that Wing Chun Kuen has become more than the sum of its parts.

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More to come...

We hope you enjoy this first newsletter in many years. As time is so limited for everybody these days we can only hope to try and release these quarterly at most. We would welcome your questions and photographs. We cannot guarantee to use any photos, but we will do our best.
Regards
UKWCKFA

Take part in the next edition

- Send us your photos
- Send us your questions
- Send us your thoughts

UK Wing Chun Assoc. Founded 1985

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Ip Man Martial Art Athletic Assoc (Hong Kong).
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