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英國詠春功夫會
UK WING CHUN KUNG FU ASSOC

ELBOWS: CLOSE RANGE SAVIOUR?

Are elbow strikes really the fight finishers that most people think?

Here James Sinclair discusses some fundamentals to help in your training.

The use of the elbow skills lies in very simplistic but, none the less, profound theories. Once the hand is grabbed or passed, the use of the elbow becomes the next line of defence. There is a poetic statement that goes along the lines of:

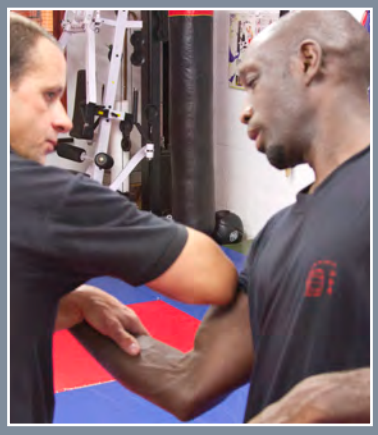
'If the head of the dragon is grabbed,
the tail will whip,
If the tail of the dragon is grabbed
the head will bite'.

Elbow techniques are found in the Cham Kiu and Biu Tze form of Wing Chun Kuen. It should be obvious that they are a useful close range tool, and that it is the hardness of the bone that causes damage to the opponent.

Please be aware that when we mention the elbow, we are not always discussing the elbow strike, but also ability to recover defensively when the hand is passed. Bong Sau is the most obvious example of this recovery, but Moot Sau and Jut also rely on this theory.

The Late Bobby Beach Sifu
Bobby is seen here in flowing action during his third level grading combinations. The elbow skills he used inspired a whole generation of Master Sinclair's students.

CLASSICS



Elbow Strikes

Close range self defence relies on good use of the elbow to maintain range, strike at the opponent and disorientate in conjunction with neck pulls.

In the UKWCKFA we do not encourage the use of striking with the tip of the elbow. This region of the humerus, is not 'humorous' if used. The olecranon process is too easy to 'chip' and too close to the nerve route. However, there are always exceptions, such as very short prods, butts and strikes to muscles where the risk of self injury is reduced. For real power strikes and escapes from grasps the focus should be on the use of the upper forearm.

Elbow techniques encompass strikes to many parts of the body. It is commonplace to strike to the biceps, triceps, pectorals and recognised acupuncture points of the wrist hand and forearm.

One common problem often demonstrated by Wing Chun Kuen teachers is the use of elbow range strikes after punches. This can look very fancy and aggressive. However, if one has struck with the fist, or more importantly missed with the fist, it is unlikely the distance will be correct for the effective use of elbow strikes.

Elbow strikes can certainly be applied from longer range provided that your intent is well timed and you have the footwork and courage to move across the distance required.

From observation and experience elbow strikes definitely have the capacity to finish fights, but usually as a result of damage to bone or cuts and not as commonly through knockout. If you witness MMA you will see fighters take many heavy elbows on the ground, but punches more often cause knockouts.

Please refer to newsletter issue no.3 for details on a fight finished with an elbow strike.

Wing Chun Kuen is a very effective self defence. However, it has evolved along a path that leads one to believe that it is purely for fighting when, in fact, it is a beautiful art too.

What strikes most observers of this art is just how little one can glean from just watching. Demonstrations tend to be fanciful affairs, with highly choreographed sequences designed for pure entertainment rather than giving the public any real idea about how the art is applied.

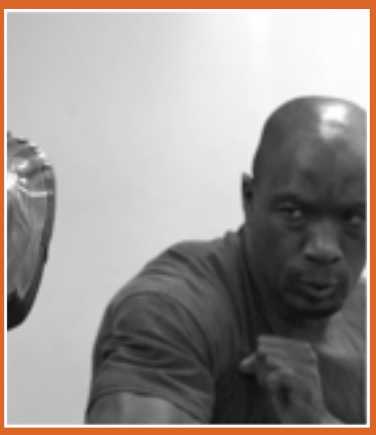
It is said that Wing Chun Kuen has some of its history in the Red Junk Opera Troupe and this could explain why the forms of the art are so very cleverly choreographed, and disguise the intent of the practitioner from unwelcome eyes.

Unlike many other approaches, it is almost impossible to work out the skill and application of Wing Chun Kuen from simply observing the empty hand forms. This is a possible reason why there is such an abundance of differing interpretations within Wing Chun Kuen circles. Although fundamentally the same, many practitioners continue to argue that their own own approach is more authentic, traditional or effective than others, it remains a simple ploy to try and corner the market.

Whilst the UKWCKFA have no problem with a person stating they are the best, it is difficult to justify that this should or could possibly equal that other practitioners are poorly trained, skilled or qualified to make their own stand in the art.

Wing Chun Kuen was a secretive art, selectively passed down through the generations. Whilst it is not possible that all the previous practitioners were incredibly dedicated, hard working, and had huge talent, it does appear that the selective/vetting approach to teaching did result in sufficient skilful practitioners being produced, allowing the art to be refined from generation to generation.

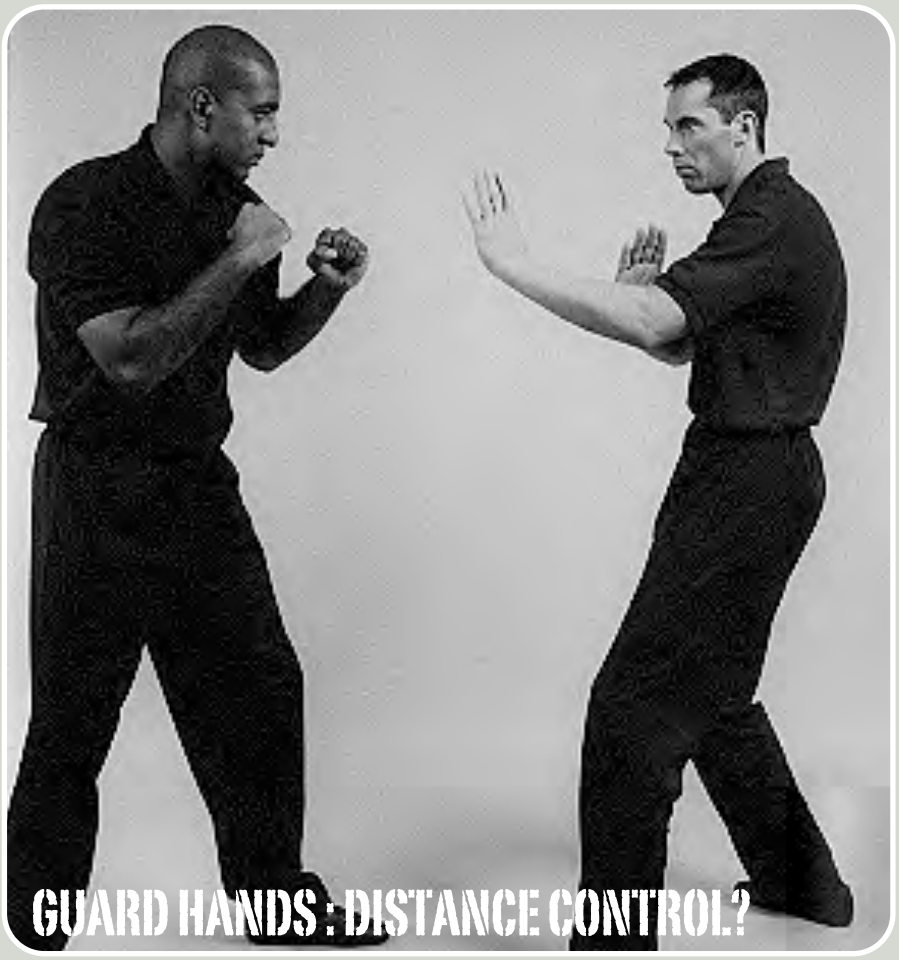
FOCUS



Power Is Never Too Abundant

Sifu Eric Wilson

Use of the Western focus mitt is an invaluable tool in further developing your hand skills in Wing Chun Kuen . With only a few changes they can be used extensively to re-enforce your skill set.



Classical Approach?

Long or short guards.

The choice is purely dictated by your own experience and preference.

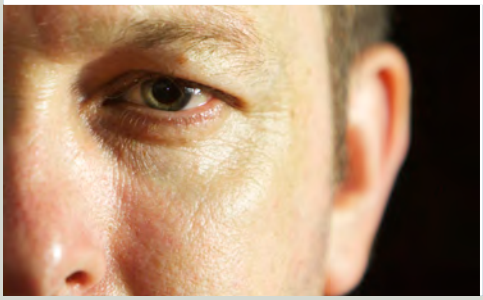
Steve Dhillon shows the inside gate interception punch.

IS THE LONG GUARD, A BRIDGE TOO FAR?

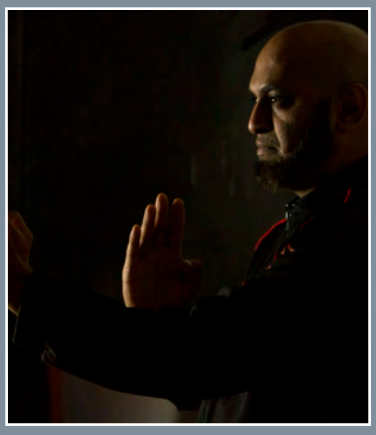
Wing Chun Kuen students are taught to put their guard hands forward of the body. The classical thinking is that this creates a barrier and creates a kind of distance control.

Whilst this can remain effective in a self defence scenario, in modern martial arts and sport based competition this approach has a more limited affect. Placing the guard hands forward is not a problem in and of itself, it is the manner in which one utilises this theory. If the guard remains soft, responsive and active it is less of a problem. A 'stiff' or rigid guard is much less useful against a mobile adaptive opponent, leaving the Wing Chun Kuen practitioner vulnerable in a few potentially serious areas of danger.

As we are based in the UK, the UKWCKFA have to look toward the systems and approaches around us if we are to remain relevant in the modern age of martial arts.

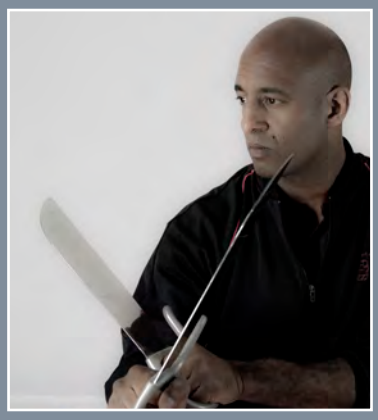
MASTERCLASS SEMINARS	DEC 2013	JAN 2014	FEB 2014	MARCH 2014
	**Wooden Dummy** Real world application of the skills found in the Dummy form. Learn to apply Wing Chun Kuen	**POLE FORM** The shortest but by by no means least profound skill set in Wing Chun Kuen.	**KICKING SKILLS** The 8 Kicks of the art are often misunderstood. Learnt to supercharge your footwork too....	**GRANDMASTER WAN KAM LEUNG** Visiting us from Hong Kong is one of the most respected Masters of Practical Wing Chun.

ART OF WAR



Zubbiar Khan Sifu

John Cossentine Sifu



Mark Phillips Sifu

3 UKWCKFA SIFU's ... SHINE

Wing Chun Kuen is a devastating fighting system, and yet remains a beautiful art.

The common and extensive use of padwork training and heavy bag work in Western sport based martial art, has led to far more mobile practitioners, very adept at distance control and remaining elusive whilst moving in and out of range.

Modern fighter are very good at moving their head off the centre line whilst striking at their opponent. Wrestlers also are very good at moving in, under over-extended arms, and taking a person to the floor with considerable force. Wrestlers and Judoka and are also very happy to place their own hands forward to establish controlling grips on clothing. The meeting of two such approaches leads to some interesting exchanges!

The approach of placing both hands forward of the body is certainly not 'safer' than keeping a close tight guard, like in Boxing for example. 'Covering up' flinching and turning from danger are natural. Placing the guards forward at close range is not! The UWCKFA propose that the hands should be up, but not too far forward of the body.

So where does this leave the Wing Chun Kuen practitioner?

If a Wing Chun Kuen practitioner is not careful he could be left 'rooted' to the ground with his arms 'hanging out in the wind'. This position presents massive opportunities to modern opponents. The most common, and luckily least dangerous, in and of itself, is grasping/holding the Wing Chun Kuen students' arms. Further attempts to push & pull, over or under-hook the arms would almost certainly follow. Within this distance there is a high chance that attempts will be made to take the fight to the floor.

In every Wing Chun School we have witnessed there appears to be a lack of focus on dealing with powerful, skilful cloth grips. As most Wing Chun Kuen practitioners train with bare lower arms there tends to be a lack of awareness as to the difficulties that could arise if an experienced practitioner used clothing to manipulate their opponent.

Using the clothing, particularly the sleeves, can have a deleterious effect, rendering a good proportion of the Wing Chun Kuen arsenal obsolete. The key is to gain experience against such attempts and learn to deal with these situations. It is human instinct to grab and clinch in a fight after the initial flurry of punches. If a Wing Chun practitioner is to remain effective he must deal with this or strip to the waist before fighting!!!!!

WOODEN DUMMY CONSTRUCTION

This core of this article was taken from the internet many years ago. We cannot locate the original article and author. We have rewritten the content as much as possible, but wish to apologise for not being able to credit the original author for their hard work.

Overview

Mook Yan Jong - (pronounced moohk yàhn jong) literally translates from Cantonese into English as "wood man post," but is usually just called a "wooden dummy" in English. The most commonly used dummy consists of a body with two removable upper arms at shoulder level, a lower arm at stomach height, and one leg; all suspended on a framework. This style of dummy was created in Hong Kong, where crowded apartment living no longer allowed the post to be buried in the ground.

Materials

Teak was often used for all parts of the dummy, however, over time solid blocks of this exotic hardwood have become increasingly hard to obtain. Softwoods may be used, but some may not have enough strength to withstand the forces applied to a dummy, or have the proper weight. Another problem with softer wood is over time, as the arms and legs are struck repeatedly, they become compressed and move 'freely'.

Avoid pine as the sap within will leak out leaving a sticky residue and look unsighly.

Ensure the wood is well seasoned - dry all the way through - to avoid cracking. Try to use wood native to your area, as transporting it from a different climate, especially with different humidity, can also cause cracking. For ths reason most modern wooden dummy trunks are created from many parts and are glued to create what is basically a laminate.

It is possible to obtain a dummy made from heavy and dense forms of plastic. If moulded correctly these dummy's will be perfectly practical and not have the weathering problems of real wood.

If your wood dummy does crack, patch it with wood filler or, if possible, soak the trunk in water and allow it to swell, then place bands around the trunk, like on wooden barrells, to help hold it. together.

Plastic pipe comes in the right size for use as a dummy, However, it does not have the same feel as wood in terms of sound and response. A hollow pipe would remain relatively light and you could consider filling the hollow pipe with sawdust for added weight

Body

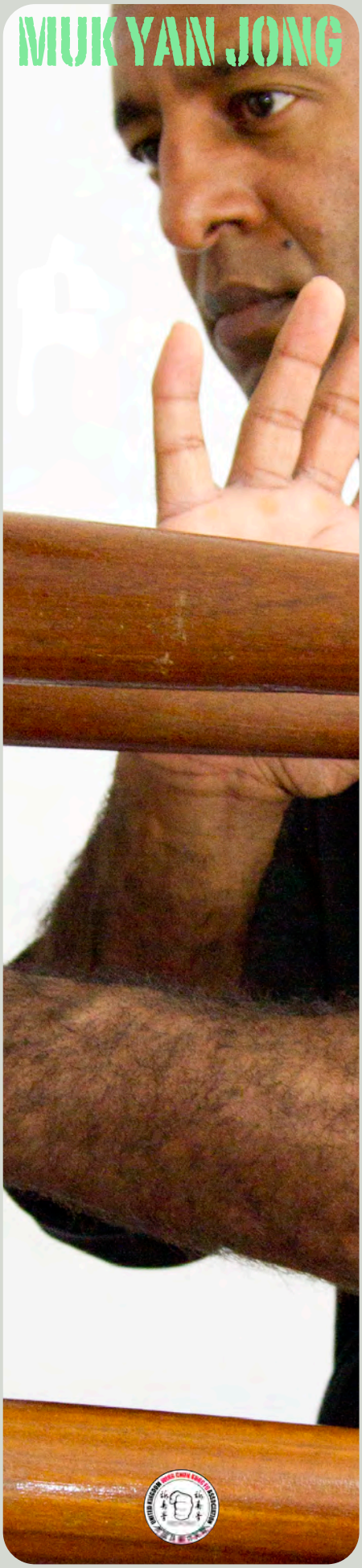
The idea of hardwood is that its weight will correspond to that of a human body.

The body has a round cross section of about nine inches in diameter. Anything smaller may not give the needed weight and will require adjustments in the length of arms and leg. The height of the body is roughly five feet.

VISUALISATION

Taan, Jum & Laap

Although simply a piece of wood. With the correct coaching and dligence, the Wooden Dummy becomes an invaluable piece of training equipment.



Make the cross section as close to a perfect circle as possible. Irregularities in the surface can cause damage to your hand or foot. For the same reason the body should be smooth, to avoid splinters.

One of the hardest parts of dummy construction is cutting the square holes needed for the arms. First drill circular holes, then square them with hand chisels. In order to give both arms room to pass through the dummy, the left arm (facing the dummy) is slightly higher than the right. The holes intersect at their outer edges where they cross in the exact center of the dummy. Another advantage of hardwood is that you are less likely to tear up the center of the dummy as you cut these overlapping holes.

Arms

It is important to have the arms made of hardwood, since they are more likely to break than the body. The arms receive the most stress at the point where they enter the body.

Turn the arms on a lathe, rather than making them by hand, since a smooth even surface is essential.

The two upper arms are identical but the lower arm differs slightly. The visible part of the arms correspond to your forearm length when your palm is vertical. They are divided into two sections:

Visible half of the arm, extending from the dummy, is a tapered cylinder - wider where it leaves the body and tapering smaller towards the tip. The widest part, closest to the dummy, is two and a half inches in diameter. The amount of taper differs, but a loss of about an inch, down to one and a half inches in diameter at the tip, is average. Round off the tip end so there are no sharp edges, every section finishes with Tok Sau!

The inner hidden half of the dummy arm has a square cross section. This prevents the dummy arm spinning on contact. The squared rear section of the two upper arms is off centre. While this offset is more difficult to make, it allows the dummy arms to be adjusted to different angles simply by switching or turning the arms. The distance between the upper arms at their tips is approx. the width of the dummy trunk.

The uppermost arm is nine inches down from the top of the dummy. The lowest arm is eight and a half inches down from the upper arms, extending straight out from the center of the body.

The holes cut in the body for the arms should provide a fairly tight fit, but not too tight or too loose. Your technique on the dummy can be judged by the sound of the arms moving in their holes: a dull thud indicates tension in the arms, caused by holding back power, while a sharp "clack" shows power has been properly passed to the dummy without force being reabsorbed into your own arm.

The arms should extend through the body and out of the back about two inches. Secure the arms in place with a removable pin or wedge inserted into a hole drilled from the top down through the arm, close to the dummy body.

Leg

The leg has two sections: one extending through the dummy and out from the front center of the body to a "knee joint", the other extending down from here towards the floor.

The leg is the least standardized piece of the dummy. The upper part of the leg may come straight out from the dummy, parallel with the floor, or it may extend downwards at an angle towards the front. The lower part of the leg may go straight down, at a right angle to the floor, or it may extend forward at an angle. It is meant to correspond with your own leg, as if you were standing with one bent leg forward, so keep this pattern in mind when making your wooden leg. Use the knee joint as your guide and have it roughly at the same height as your own knee. The leg can be all one piece, or it can be made in two pieces connected at the knee.

The upper section of the leg is twenty-two inches long: one half of which extends through the dummy and out the back, the other half visible out in front. The part passing through the dummy must be smaller than the part visible, so the leg won't slide back up into the dummy body. The lower "hanging"

section is about thirteen inches long. As with the arms, the leg is secured in back with a removable pin or wedge.

The section of the leg extending through the dummy should be made with a square cross-section, to eliminate rotation of the leg in its hole.

The leg leaves the dummy at a point roughly sixteen or seventeen inches up from the base of the body. Because the angle of the leg can vary, the hole may be raised or lowered as needed.

The diameter of the leg is not standardised, and was often made from a hardwood branch with a knot and bend where the knee would be. This makes a functional and decorative leg, but suitable tree limbs can be hard to find. A square cross-section leg with a joint at the knee is much easier to construct, but round all edges so kicking the leg is easier on the feet. Anything less than two by two inches will probably be too weak to stand up to steady use.

Stress points are at the knee and where the leg passes into the dummy.

Use a strong hardwood, since the leg must withstand a great deal of kicking force. You may want to reinforce the leg and, as with the arms, it's a good idea to have a spare leg on hand.

Crosspieces

The dummy is suspended above the floor by two crosspieces or slats, each one inch wide by two inches high.

No matter what wood is used for the rest of the dummy, these crosspieces must be a strong hardwood, since they absorb most of the force given to the dummy. On the other hand they must not be too brittle, or they will crack rather than flex under stress. Stress points are at the spot where the slats pass into the dummy.

The crosspieces should be no less than five feet long, so they are long enough to flex when the dummy moves forward or backward, and long enough to extend a few inches from either end of the framework.

The top crosspiece is six inches down from the top of the dummy, the bottom crosspiece is nine inches up from the bottom of the dummy. At this distance apart they provide support so the dummy does not tip too much forward or backward. If the top crosspiece is too close to the upper dummy arms it will get in the way of the neck-pulling movement.

The crosspieces must be mounted parallel to each other, the top directly over the bottom, otherwise they will bind, and not slide, in the supporting framework. They should also pass directly through the center of the dummy for best balance and to minimize torque on the crosspieces.

Attach some kind of stops near the dummy body so it won't slide on the crosspieces - the body and slats should move together. Put another set of stops on near the end of the crosspieces to keep everything from sliding all the way out of the framework on either side.

Framework

Mount your dummy on two sturdy parallel upright posts (4x8 is a good size) about five feet apart, or on any framework that adequately supports the weight of the dummy while allowing for it's movement.

Attach these supports securely to floor, walls, or ceiling. Set them far enough out from anything behind them to allow for forward and backward movement of the dummy.

There are two kinds of dummy: "live" and able to move in all directions, or "dead" and set into the ground or on an immovable frame. "Life" in the dummy is provided in two ways: by flex in the cross slats when you move the dummy forward or backward, and by these slats sliding in the framework when you move the dummy side to side. This movement only needs to be a few inches in any direction.

Although the dummy should be suspended about six inches above the floor, the actual height of the dummy from the floor depends on your own height: the upper arms point at your shoulders; the lower arm points at your stomach; and your knee is the same height as the dummy's "knee."

You can make the dummy portable by cutting upside-down L-shaped slots in the uprights to hold the crosspieces. You can then lift the dummy in or out of the top of the slot and let it drop into the bottom of the L to keep it in place. These slots also provide a way to adjust the height of the dummy. Cut the bottom of the slots at the lowest height needed for the dummy, then to raise the dummy, insert wooden risers in each slot. This is just one way to support the crosspieces, there are many other possibilities.

Finish

While you can finish the dummy in any way you like, you don't need to use anything on the arms since the natural oils from your hands and arms will eventually seal and color the wood.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

The UKWCKFA wishes you, and all those you care for, a wonderful holiday season. May you enjoy time together and reflect on the memories you have and memories you are building today.

英國詠春功夫會
FIGHTING FIT

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