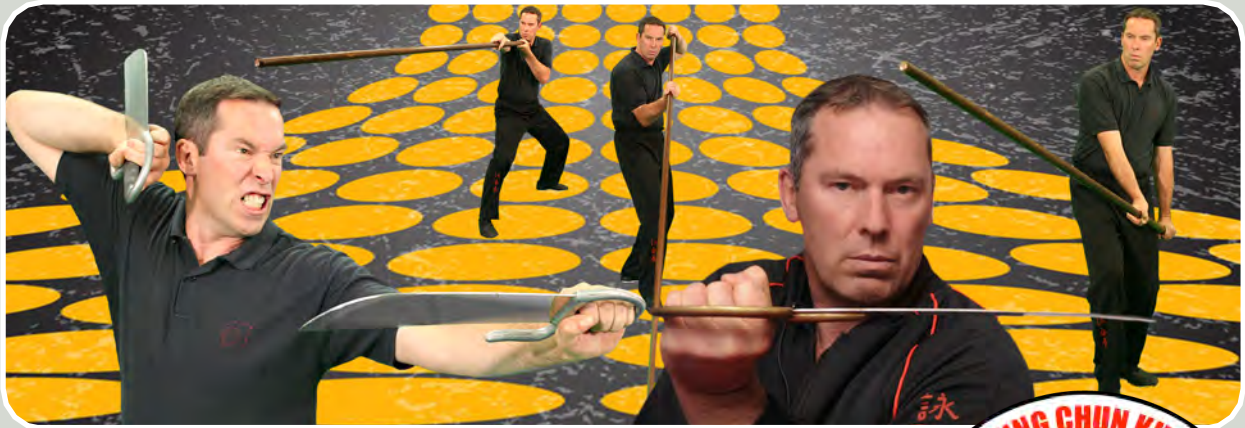


英國詠春功夫會

UK WING CHUN KUNG FU ASSOC



WEAPONS: BATTLEFIELD TOOLS

Wing Chun Kuen has the Long Pole and Short Swords?

Here James Sinclair discusses the Pole to help in your training.

The subject of our latest newsletter was suggested by Ashley Phillips, Gary Cooper and Eric Wilson. These three Sifu's have combined experience of approaching 100 years in Wing Chun!

Wing Chun Kuen is probably the most famous of all Kung Fu styles, due in part to its most famous son, Bruce Lee and the numerous Ip Man Movies, which have, surprisingly, crossed over into mainstream movie popularity.

Originating in Southern China Wing Chun Kuen has a deserved reputation for effective close range fighting skills.

Most martial artists are familiar with the empty hand reputaation of

the art, but few are aware of the formidable weapons skills that have been developed and 'stolen in part' from other arts.

Most of the traditional 'old school' martial arts have many types of weapons from swords, poles, spears, cudgles, to hammers, tridents whips and more. As they existed long before modern ballistic weapons they were founded and developed through battlefield confrontation and in response to the Chinese Emperors requiring a solidly trained contingent of bodyguards.

Students often ask why the Martial Art can be so secretive. It is quite simple. If an opponent knew



James Sinclair
Founder and Chief Instructor since 1985.

PUSH UPS



James Sinclair

Pole training is a fantastic way to work the qualities required for Wing Chun excellence.

In the residential 'Summer Camps' James used to teach the Pole form to large groups of fascinated students.

your strengths and weaknesses they could create a plan of action to nullify your approach and defeat you.

As human beings can be rather unpredictable, it took Masters a long time to trust their students enough to share their art completely. So much so that blood oaths were often demanded, with the threat of forfeiting your life if you betrayed your school or Sifu.

As Wing Chun Kuen is a relatively new style it appears to have less focus on the weapons than its predecessors.

It is said that Wing Chun originated from a Nun (Ng Miu) who had trained at the Siu Lam Monastery. The nun would most certainly have been exposed to extensive weapon training at the monastery.

The modern approach to Wing Chun only has the short swords and the long pole. It may well have had more at one time, but with the refinements, and stripping away over the generations, some aspects may have been deemed unnecessary and removed. Also as society and technology changed some weapons would certainly have been seen as obsolete.

However, it is interesting that the short sword and pole are two aspects of training that survived. These two weapons genuinely help a Wing Chun student in empty hand fighting. Their use develops strength and power, and builds tactical awareness. The stances and footwork are superb in dealing with larger more powerful opponents.



Playing The Flute.

THE LONG POLE

Pole training is very common in all forms of 'traditional' fighting from all over the world. The staff or cudgel were common in Medieval times and any person watching a Robin Hood movie will see the Pole or Staff used extensively.

Pole training was common as they were readily available. The most common length being approx. 5-6ft as poles of this length were used to transport pails of water from wells.

However, the Wing Chun pole is approx. eight feet in length, but can vary up to around 9ft or even 10ft.

There is a saying that give an indication of the respect afforded to those people who could handle the Long Pole.

*'A foot longer,
A foot stronger'*

This simple statement relates to the potential to keep someone at bay or to beat a person who has a pole a shade shorter, much like the importance of a western boxers reach in the 'tale of the tape'. There obviously comes a point where the weight/length of the weapon become too extreme, but tales still abound of heroes who could wield tremendously long wooden poles. These stories become more a myth and legend than historical fact.

As stated the Pole is one of the oldest forms of weapon ever used. However, it is basically a refined stick.



Courage Is
Facing Your Fears
Stupidity Is
Fearing Nothing

TIP



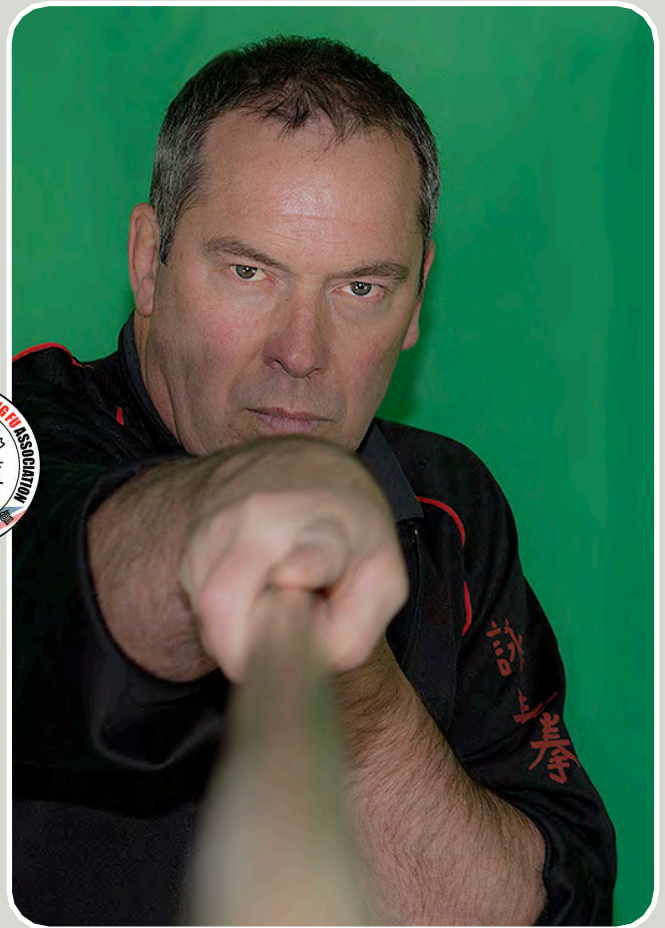
Pole Training

The Luk Dim Boon Kwan consists of only a few techniques.

Accuracy, Distance Judgment and Angle are the keys to correct application.

At the National HQ we use bright yellow tennis balls as targets.





The Door To Success is Marked PUSH...

Enter The Dragon!

The Wing Chun long pole is frequently referred to as the Dragon Pole. As a friend of James Sinclair's is a Dragon stylist he states that he can see that there are a lot of similarities, however, he insists that Wing Chun only has a watered down version and is lacking the full understanding of the weapon!

Buddhist Nun Pole Fighting

It is difficult to imagine that a Buddhist nun introduced the use of a heavy pole into the art of Wing Chun. This is even more unrealistic

when one considers the story that her aim was to teach another woman (Yim Wing Chun) how to defend herself from the unwanted advances of a man, and that her goal was pass on something that relied on small fast and efficient techniques and did not require great strength or power.

**IF YOU THINK
YOU CAN OR THINK
YOU CAN'T,
EITHER WAY YOU
ARE RIGHT**

A Load Of Old Junk!

Another story that possibly has more historical credence is that the Wing Chun pole came about as a result of people who lived and worked on river boats as part of the Red Junk Opera.

MASTERCLASS SEMINARS

all at the Essex Hq from 1-4pm (£50)

JUNE 2015

SIU NIM TAO

JULY

CHI SAU

AUGUST

GWORR SAU

SEPTEMBER

WOODEN DUMMY



SUN 28th
The first form is the most important skill set in Wing Chun. There is so much hidden within....

SUN 19th
For all those who wish to move their Wing Chun skills forward. Open to all

SUN 16th
Wing Chun sparring is the speciality of Master James Sinclair. Develop greater ability.

SUN 20th
Wooden Dummy Form & Application.

Finish 2014 on a high with this great seminar.

It is noted in Wing Chun history and folklore that Wong Wah Bo, and Leung Yee Tei, worked in the Red Junk Opera Troupe. The Red Junk Opera travelled the river systems of Southern China and their river craft would have been partly manoeuvred by the use of long poles. It could be assumed that these poles were experimented with and added to the system.

Another story was that Leung Yee Tai learnt the Pole from another martial artist and introduced it to the Wing Chun training. Maybe it was a Dragon stylist who taught him!

Efficiency

The Wing Chun Pole is approx. 8ft long but it is tapered to make it more efficient in delivering power and to reduce weight.

Made of hard wood, the Wing Chun Pole remains a heavy tool to wield. The tapering of the pole ranges from 1 1/2" inches diameter at the base to 3/4" at the tip. The Wing Chun pole somewhat resembles an oversized pool cue, this design allows the heavy base to be manipulated in the principle of a weighted car park barrier.

With such length there will be limited need for movement, indeed the 6 1/2 refers to the amount of techniques in the Pole Form. The tip is used to devastating effect and, with accuracy and focus, it is a formidable weapon.

It is not practical to use the shaft of the pole to strike as it allows the opponent to see the movement more easily, judge its distance and to counter strike. This means that the Wing Chun pole relies on the very tip or point of the pole.

This is why you will observe the frequent use of Biu Kwan, which is to thrust or dart with the pole, thus offering very little of the pole to be seen by the opponent. This technique is colloquially termed playing the flute.

The pole is used to intercept as much as possible, much in the way a fencer works on angles. For this reason the movement is kept to a minimum and the principle of 'Economy of Motion' is adhered to. The pole is a very simple weapon to use. If you can keep a cool head you will soon realise that you have approx. 16 foot of space between you and your opponent and that equates to longer time to react. It is, therefore, much easier to counter-attack, and is a great defensive tool. If you do choose to be offensive then you must harry and push your opponent by threatening gestures that lead to drawing an opening.

The pole is always dangerous and there is a saying that goes...



'Kwan Mo Leung Heung
The Pole Does Not Make
Two Sounds'



You both benefit when you train WITH each other

This means that you intercept to counter directly. You will, out of necessity, need to block your opponents pole from time to time. This is not best practice, as economy of motion dictates efficiency must be adhered to at all times. The aim to to beat your opponent with one direct strike.

The use of the pole is also closely related the hand techniques and theories of the empty handed art. The names are crossovers, and the lead shoulder becomes the new centre line as one cannot face square on to an opponent with a weapon without putting your life at serious risk.

The techniques of the pole training fall into two categories, there are the descriptive name and the conceptual names. Here we give the names most commonly used, but do not be surprised if you come across different names for the same techniques. This is common practice in all of Wing Chun Kuen forms.

Saat Kwan

This is the opening technique in which the pole is brought down with power in a vertical direction parallel to the ground. This is often used to attack the opponents hands. This is also sometimes call Kum Kwan by some schools. Similar to Fook it is used to cover or suppress the opponents weapon.

Biu Kwan

This is the darting or thrusting of the pole to strike forward. This is sometimes called Loong Ceung or Dragon Spear. It is common for Chinese martial arts to have poetic names that tend to mystify otherwise simple techniques. Ip Man was well known for dispensing with these poetic names and awarding more practical descriptive names. Maybe this was down to the Western influenced education he experienced in Hong Kong or just his preference to make the art more simple.

Tiu Kwan

This is the upward flicking movement used to attack the hand or block, sometimes used to the groin. If the Tiu Kwan is allowed to raise further it is used to recover the centre line from from low to high.

Taan Kwan

The Taan Kwan is used to disperse an incursion to your outside and keep them out. Usually followed up with a simple strike back to centre once the opponents pole is dispersed.

Fook Kwan

This technique is almost the same as Taan Kwan bit to the inside gate. However, the wrist rolls in the opposite direction causing a slight downward movement with spin. A quick relaxation from here and another Fook Kwan can be used as an attack the opponent. Yes two sound will be made, but your opponent won't be in a position to count.!

Laan Kwan

Laan or to Bar an opponent is very common in empty hand training. the Laan in the pole form is used to bar and with good footwork smash the opponent.

Dang Kwan

Dang is to hammer. This is seen throughout the form as a short, powerful downward strike. This can be used to smash the opponents pole or to attack the hands or feet of an opponent

If one trains with due diligence it is possible to make all of the blocking movements into striking moves, but only with good footwork.

The Saat Kwan is sometimes used to drop the pole to the floor. This is often referred to as the half movement. It is used to indicate that if your pole is grabbed and held, you let it go and use your hands to engage with your opponent.



The Stances

In weapons training the stances change to accommodate the power and to create safety against the opponents weapon. The very short Kwan Ma (pole stance) sometime referred to as half hanging stance, prevents an opponent from easily striking the inside legs and particularly reduces risk to the inner leg and femoral artery. The stance is low as this allows the practitioner the ability to cover his whole body with much smaller movements.



and a 5 foot spear made of bamboo can be manoeuvred very deftly and can be extended to arms length whilst only holding with one arm. Suddenly the reach is enormous and, with what is effectively a knife at the end of a pole, becomes very dangerous.

Strength Benefits

The pole develops tremendous forearm and wrist strength. As such it benefits the punching power and most basic hand techniques. If one can use the power explosively the benefit to general short distance power in empty hand combat is maximised. In the photo on page 3, Master Sinclair is teaching at his annual Summer Camp and you can clearly see the pole bending on the down stroke. Master Sinclair will often break a pole with the use of correct power with the lighter poles.

The Grip

The grip of the pole is relatively narrow and kept within the shoulder width. This is to prevent the opponent from striking the hands. The grip also allows for better reach on all of the striking techniques. There comes a point where the grip could become so narrow that one could simply not handle the pole efficiently and once again Wing Chun relies on the middle ground of common sense. This is why physical conditioning is so important. As students become tired they instinctively widen the grip and thus become more at risk.

The grip is always of prime importance in weapons training. If an opponent can dislodge your grip you become immediately vulnerable to attack, you will end up facing an opponent who is 'tooled up' whilst you have lost your 'equaliser'. This could also be psychologically weakening too.

Like all aspects of Wing Chun Kuen (except the knives) the pole is simplicity personified. There are no fancy techniques involving twirling or grip changing. The real skill lies in the use of power. The pole is used with explosive short power and shocks the target, whether that be any part of the opponents body or their weapon.

The Spear Fights Back

Although the Wing Chun Pole is long, it is not always as beneficial as one may imagine at keeping an opponent at bay. In the Chinese Martial Arts, spear training is very highly developed

Chi Kwan

Wing Chun utilises training ideas from the hand skills. within Wing Chun Pole training. Involved are a number of drills that are used to build control in the use of the pole. The exercises are termed 'Sticky Pole' and will be described in another issue.

PRIVATE LESSONS

There are only a few areas of training that clearly benefit from private tuition. The Forms, Dummy and Weapons are the areas that most students would gain from a one on one study.

Master Sinclair is available for Private Lessons in these particular areas only. Two lessons is all you will need to understand the Pole, one for the essential basics and form, and another for drills.

NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS

Nick Martin Sifu has opened a new class in Luton in Bedfordshire at Farley Hill Community Centre on Thursday evening from 8pm. call 07830 136501

Master Abid Mahmood has opened a new class in Leicester. Details at MidlandsWingChun.com



We have a new school in Nova Scotia Canada and welcome Sifu Mark Withers back to the UKWCKFA



UK WING CHUN ASSOCIATION SHORTS



The UKWCKFA has produced some cool training shorts for those of you who like to stretch, kick and look good while training too.

The shorts will be available in two colours, and from feedback it is hard to know which will be the more popular.

We are still early in the manufacture stage and pricing is not yet confirmed, but rest assured the quality will be great and the price will be as reasonable as we can make it.

We also have some great rashguards/compression tops too. The tops contain a high level of lycra

and will allow sweat to wick away from the body.

Our new site is almost complete and we hope to have it up and running very soon.

YOUR STORY

We welcome your comments and would like to hear from you. If you would like to add your own contribution, ask a question or make a suggestion we will give due consideration.

We look forward to hearing from you.



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