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INTRODUCTION

This training regimen is based on various focuses of physical fitness, internal strength, meditation, forms, drills and exercises. Origins range from: propriety traditional sets, general domain traditional internal sets, a general styles set, free form internal calisthenics (Chi Kung, Nei Gong and Wei Gong), Shaolin Buddhist meditation, fighting coaches, healers and old folk's drills.

The methods and techniques come from a number of schools of Internal Martial Arts; that are compatible with each other. None of these varied schools have ever physically warred directly with each other. This book does not contain any internal methods that I have learned that I know are from schools with historic military conflicts, or fundamental philosophical discrepancies. This avoids a chop-suey approach of using methods independent of their tenets, lacking a cohesive and qualitative growth.

There is no faster way to build up the body overall, than chopping or splitting wood since the entire body gets into the swing of things. Axing tones and strengthens the muscles, ligaments, and connective tissues with fluid whipped motions; that are well anchored, focused and coordinated. Axers are a jaded, hardy and tough lot; that are well rounded.

Axe Hand is usually referred to as the element metal, and is the primary set that Hsing-i's San ti static stance is used for Chi Kung (Qi Gong), similar to the Standing Pole (Embrace the Moon) exercise is used for Tai Chi and Bei Shaolin (Northern). Hsing-I uses the second row of knuckles, as a wedge.

In the past, only those who had reached the level of Abbots were taught Hsing-i.

This book makes no attempt to contain all of the theories, history and segregated school dogmas of Hsing-i. The reader should see what helps them in their practice, and in their understanding and use it based upon their own results. This is not the official dogma of any particular teacher or school, but a collection of practical aids to training. Those with different back grounds will experience different results.

This commonality gives credit to traditional and other training methods. In the monastic and spiritual perspective, this teaches what is in common, and does not emphasize the differences. Because it does not have the attachments of form and specific uses, it becomes timeless and transcendent.

Internal Martial Arts can be moving meditation. One can use this as a mirror to see oneself. For some, Internal Martial Arts are only for healing and show so they appear choreographing forms as a ballerina. They are pretty to watch but fail in a fight. Following others in a spoon-fed manner can be the actions of a parrot.

This book is not for those who want to be told **what** to think, but rather **how** to think using other consciousnesses. Training methods can tune sensitivities and perceptions for a new personal knowledge and power. This is not for memorizing official school lines but rather it is for those who want to have a deeper understanding based on their own feeling and insight gained by training. One does not have to believe in something if they can see it or feel it. The merits of a theory alone are used, not who said them, or what school they belong to.

This is for independent free thinkers who can benefit from training themselves, with what they have learned. A teacher shows something new, but is not required to hold your hand while you practice it.

The emphasis is on developing internal energies, rather than the forms. What is more important, is not the differences but what is in common with many internal practices. A karateka can have many forms but still use the same basic energy of tensing the muscles on impact and relying on momentum. Some kung fu trainers are no different.

This book is a tool not a bible, use what works. Everything has been used with positive results, by my self and my students.

Physics can explain light as a particle, and it can explain it as a wave. So is light one or the other? That is not the main concern. Be able to see something **through** any theory not **by** a theory. There is understanding in both models, and there is more to understanding than models.

When one totally accepts any theory, they have stopped thinking on their own, and are only memorizing what to think, rather than thinking themselves. This is not to say everyone has to reinvent the wheel on their own, but not to stop at the last invention

It is usually easier to flow Chi (Qi) through healthy muscle tissue, so weight training is used; not to build muscle bulk, but to tone the tissue. This type of training is not classical weight training in that the push is started in the Lower Dan Tien and moves to the arm or leg muscle. Normally, for most people, the only emphasis is in the contraction of only the immediate muscle between the joint that is moving.

Strenuous exercise is complimented with the stretches so as to minimize the effects of over pumping and stiff rigid muscles.

This integrates full body movement and energies so the body can respond flowingly and evenly to transmit combined power of all the parts involved.

Internal energy can be developed in many methods. For preliminary internal toning of the abdominal area and internal organ area of the body, one may use hundreds of pushups, sit-ups and meditation; to bring the Qi flow to a high enough level to proceed to higher levels of Qi Gong, Internal Iron Shirt and Internal Iron Palm. Others methods attain a strong internal energy flow through months doing Grand or Small Circulation Qi Gong or Iron Shirt Qi Gong Massage and beating.

Using the techniques in this book will strengthen internal energy so it is fit for combat, and use in everyday life. Qi will be used and felt like any other tool. This also lays the foundation for Iron Shirt, Cotton Belly, Golden Bell and Internal Iron Palm.

I have demonstrated Cotton Belly to many karate schools, weight lifters and boxers in California and Alaska, and no one can hurt my abdominal area with any combination of blows or kicks.

Internal Striking has been demonstrated by me likewise, by having a soft material such as a four inch thick phone book placed over a volunteer, who will feel the strike through the material. No one has asked for more force.

Before studying martial arts, as a young man, Grandmaster Joe Greenstein once was shot between the eyes with a .38 - .40 caliber revolver by a man jealous of his wife. He walked out of the hospital the same day. Joe became very interested in the powers of the mind, since he survived this shot at the 'third eye' used in Buddhist meditation.

Martial meditation can bring the body's internal energy to a high level, so a basic background in meditation is presented along with specific martial consciousness concepts.

Internal energy physics, analogies and metaphors present a wide range of viewpoints to familiarize one to Qi (Chi) in the beginning chapter Physics of Internals. This provides a multimedia exposure to those beginning studies in internal energy.

SHAOLIN SCHOOL LINEAGE

When the Ching soldier burned the Shaolin Temple in the 1700s, School Lineage from The Burning of Honan Shaolin Temple 1732 AD by Ching soldiers, thirteen monks escaped, with five traveling south and eight traveling north. Monk Chi Yuan went to Shantung province:

Monk Chi Yuan, Feng Shao Ch'en, Hsu Wei San, Yim Po, Yim Chi Wen, Kuo Yu Chang, Yim Shan Wu, Wong Jack Man

HSING-I SCHOOL LINEAGE

- **Ji Long Feng**
- **Cao Ji Wu**
- **Dai Ling Bang**
- **Li Nen Ran**
- **Kuo Yun Shen & Li Kui Yuan**
 - **Sun Lu Tang**
 - **Kuo Yu Chang**
 - **Yim Shan Wu**
 - **Wong Jack Man**

There are three basic branches of Hsing-i: Honan, Hupei and Shanxi. Sun Lu Tang learned Hupei (Hubei) branch then added his theories and modified the sets so it is like a sub-branch of Hupei. The elements are fundamentally the same.

Kuo Yu Chang (Gu Ruzhang)

Kuo Yu Chang's kung fu was at a very high level. Because his iron palm was so good, he was nicknamed "Iron Palm Kuo Yu Chang". His hands were soft as cotton which was not unusual. When he used his hands, it smashed rocks into many pieces and could bend raw iron. Many Kwangchou people have seen him take ten tiles, one on top of another, strike the first tile, and the tiles between the top and the bottom tiles broke into pieces, but both the top and bottom tiles remained intact.

First Demonstration of Kuo Yu Chang in 1925, Kuo Yu Chang's iron palm abilities were witnessed by a certain Hwang Hsien Sheng. To summarize the story, a Russian circus had posted an open challenge to anyone who would dare take three kicks from one of their horses. Anyone who survived would receive \$1000 in gold, a huge sum of money at that time. Kuo Yu Chang accepted the challenge under one condition; instead of money, Kuo asked to strike the horse with one slap of his palm. The Russian owners of the circus accepted his conditions. In front of a huge crowd, the horse raised his hind leg and kicked Kuo in the chest. The crowd was silent in disbelief. Kuo then gathered his strength and when the horse kicked Kuo a second time, the crowd roared. When the horse kicked Kuo a third time, the crowd gave Kuo a huge ovation. Kuo then rested for more than half an hour. When he returned, he struck the horse in the rear, and the horse fell dead. Again, the crowd cheered at this incredible feat.

The famed Eagle Claw master, Lau Fat Meng, witnessed the postmortem on the horse. He observed that there was no external wound on the horse but that inside there was a large bruise on the horse's back and some of the horse's internal organs had been badly damaged.

In 1931, a strong man from Russia came to Kwangchou at west Mellon Garden (now near the People's Southern Road Kwangchou's Daily News Neighborhood), to exhibit strength feats. Anyone that could withstand a kick from the horse, would receive \$200.00. The strong man observed that Kuo Yu Chang appeared to be an uncommon man and worried.

He demanded Kuo Yu Chang have an examination by a medical doctor to insure that he was a normal human. He got near the horse and using his palm lightly slapped it on the back. Immediately the horse stopped moving. On the second day, the horse did not eat and died. The doctor autopsied the horse and found severe internal injuries. The Russian quietly packed and left. This event of the 1930's is still much talked about among the old Kwangchou people today.

GRANDMASTER JOSEPH GREENSTEIN
(The Mighty Atom)
Wide Circle Kung Fu
Iron Palm, Iron Shirt (Golden Bell & Cotton Belly)

Greenstein became one of the 20th century's leading strongmen, standing only 5'4" and weighing 140 pounds. Demonstrations of strength included:

Using his hands to drive 20 penny nails through a 2 1/2 inch board;
supporting a 14-man band on his chest while lying on a bed of nails;
using his braided hair, pulling 32 tons of trucks coupled together;
breaking three chains by chest expansion;
bending 1/2 inch steel bars;
biting through a tempered railroad spike, using only his teeth.

During World War II, the "Mighty Atom" volunteered to help to recruit men for New York City's diminishing police force. He toured the city for two years giving demonstrations of jujitsu, judo, etc., to interest men in joining the civilian Police Force. He was highly commended by the Mayor and other officials of New York City.

Back in 1936, when six giant longshoremen became disorderly and tried to interfere with one of his associates who was lecturing. "The Atom," after a dramatic fight, put all six men in the hospital. Many of the New York papers carried a front page story entitled "Little Giant Knocks Out Six" The story read, "He weighs but 148 pounds, and is only 5'4 1/2" tall. No wonder writers have termed The Mighty Atom as "The World's Biggest Little Man."

He used Asian techniques of concentration, Jewish mystical writings, and a natural vegetarian diet.

Resisting the pull of a plane with his hair at the Buffalo Airport and was recorded in the Buffalo Evening Times on September 29, 1928.

He was featured several times in Ripley's Believe It Or Not and in the 1976 Guinness Book of World Records. In 1977, in his eighties, he received a standing ovation at his Martial Arts Show in Madison Square Gardens.

GRANDMASTER WONG JACK MAN

(Wong Chia Man)

By Robert Louie

‘Wong Chia Man was born in Tai Shan (Toyshan), Kwangtung Province, China in 1941. He started learning Northern Shaolin Chuan in Central Park Canton, China, at the age of 8 years old from Yim Shan Wu who was Kuo Yu Chang’s top disciple. In 1957, Wong Chia Man continued his lessons with Great Grandmaster Yim in Hong Kong. His talents were recognized by his Sifu and was one of the few selected to learn Northern Shaolin Lo Han from Great Grandmaster Ma Ching Fung, who learned from Kuo Yu Chang and Sun Yu Fung, King of Sabers. After years of learning both styles simultaneously, he received another letter of introduction (as the first letter of introduction was from Great Grandmaster Yim to Great Grandmaster Ma) from Great Grandmaster Ma to Great Grandmaster Yip Yee Ting of Mi Tsung Lo Han Chuan. After fifteen years of day and night study, Wong Sifu was highly trained and was the first person to complete the program studies in the Northern Shaolin Arts since World War II.

In the early 1960’s Wong Sifu came to the United States of America in hopes of opening America’s first Jing Mo Association. During the early years in America, he was practicing in the G & U Association where he would demonstrate his skills that he learned in the old country. As one elderly witness in the association states, “I witness Wong Sifu break a two inch wooden board against the grain with one light slap of his open palm. This demonstration illustrated how incredible his intrinsic energy really is.” After practicing a number of years at G & U Association, Wong Sifu opened the first Jing Mo Association in San Francisco in 1964.

Wong Sifu's curriculum was a combination blend of the Standard Jing Mo School sets, Northern Shaolin, Northern Shaolin Lo Han, Northern Shaolin Lui Ho for the external styles and Sun's Hsing I, and Yang's Tai Chi and Li's Wu tang Swords for the internal styles. In 1969, his school became the largest martial arts school with students numbering in the hundreds in the San Francisco Bay Area.'

Some former students of Wong Jack Man:

Grandmaster Paul Eng

Wing Lam

Robert Louie, Rick L. Wing, Arthur Chin, and Herb Leung

Brent Hamby

Joseph Crandal

Al Dacascos

Peter Ralston

Jing Mo

Long ago, Jing Mo was started in Shanghai, China in March 1909, and the credit is given to the My Jong master and Chinese hero Fawk Yuen Gap (Ho Yuan Chia in Mandarin), who unfortunately passed away soon after in October 1909 from an illness. Many schools using the Jing Mo name have proliferated across the entire world, some connected with the main organization in Shanghai, others not.

Note that the name 'Jing Mo' is the Cantonese rendering, and it might also be spelled 'Ching Mo'. If people were to give the school a mandarin name, then they might called it 'Jing Wu', or 'Ching Wu'. The spelling in the English language does not seem to be totally consistent, so we mention this just to dispel confusion.

Other renderings of the words 'Tai Yook Woey' in English might be gymnastic association, sports club, physical culture association, and the like.

The Jing Mo Athletic Association was first brought to San Francisco in the early 1960's by Grandmaster Wong Jack Man. The school was also called 'The Chinese Physical Culture Association'. Grandmaster Wong is widely known among martial artists all over the world.

MARTIAL BACKGROUND

1971-75 studied the Wide Circle of Kung Fu School in New York City and Berkeley, California. This is a primarily Northern Shaolin based style also studied Cotton Belly, Golden Bell (Iron Shirt) and Internal Iron Palm, under Grandmaster Joseph Greenstein, headquartered in New York.

From 1971-74 Mo Duk Kwan Tae Kwon Do, under Master Kenny Yuen of Oakland California (former partner of Byong Yu).

1973-4 Hapkido with Master Minh, University of California Berkeley, California.

1971-74; Aikido with Jeff Wilbur, Ho Chi Minh Gymnasium, Berkeley.

1974-79, Nippon Kenko Juko Association of Grandmaster Okano, learning Shotokan from Mr. Tanaka, and Lou Correa, and Goju under Masa, Koko and Hiro; 1976 Aido Samurai Sword under Master Samurai Takahashi; Samurai Dojo, Oakland, California.

1974-76 studied Yang style Tai Chi and Ba Gua at the Chinese Cultural Center on University Avenue, in Berkeley.

1982-85 Ba Gua and Hsing-i under Mr. ST Ying, "The Old Man" at the Chinese Baptist Church in Berkeley.

From 1980-87 in the San Francisco/ Bay Area of California, under Grandmaster Wong Jack Man of San Francisco Jing Mo; studying Hsing-i, Praying Mantis, Tai Chi, Lui Ho, Lohan, push hands and Northern Shaolin.

Sifu Greg Hayes has taught Martial Arts at the Yoga Den in Juneau (now Rainforest Yoga), from 1991-1998; Juneau Public School's Community Schools, from 1991-2005; the Free University of Berkeley, California, from 1970-1972 and has been giving private lessons in Juneau, since 1995.

OBJECTIVE MARTIAL TESTS

How do you know that the forms and drills you are practicing, are martially effective?

Breaking; Internal or External?

Even an external breaking punch can damage. One trained in this will have breaking material fracture like a stone hitting glass, circular fractal symmetry.

Externally generated hard strikes are not preferred, although they have a valid limited use:

- great for crippling wrists and elbow in arm strikes;
- knocking out high kicks with ankle and knee attacks and
- for shattering noses.

One classic test for external breaking quickness, is for a partner to lightly hold a 2 inch breaking board at the top suspended by the index finger and the thumb, then you break it. If you are just strong or fast, the board will move and not break.

Many in martial arts; equate soft with non-breaking methods; and some say that to break one must be external. Although this is not false; it is oversimplified, since internally hard training methods are not taught in the West commercially. This superficial understanding only signifies popular trends.

Some good targets for external breaks, are body areas that shatter easily, and damage is severe, even when it destroys a small surface area. Such targets are the nose, joints, temple and ear areas. The test for a focused external break is for it to radiate evenly from the center of the impact, much like a rock hitting a glass plate.

An **objective** test to see if your breaks are using internal power; is to break boards or tiles, and examine the cleavage of the break.

and at the same time the weight of your body rooting through your feet 3-6 feet into the earth. Your energy below the ground; is the base of the pyramid, the head the point.

When you exhale, relax the anus area (Gu Dao or Huyin Point); as you inhale, lift up the anus area.

OUT & IN

Start in the horse stance, Standing Pole position described prior.



As you inhale, start to widen the gap between your knees from your feet pushing outward toward the outside of the feet; rising slightly.

Cradle your hips forward and upward

Increase the gap between the hands while expanding the abdominal area by the Lower Dan Tien, augmented by a slight expansion of the gap between the elbows and the rib cage. Back of the hand near the wrist, leads fingers and rest of the hand; as in Monkey, Crane and Praying Mantis.



As you exhale; start to sink your root, while your feet's arches move inward and downward, driving the knees inward.

Cradle your hips backward and downward



The contracting the abdominal area through the Lower Dan Tien; will urge the elbows to move slightly outward from the rib cage, which shortens the gap between the hands. Heel of the hand leads the rest of the hand inward. This returns you to the Standing Pole position.



- 1) The rear right leg draws the Lower Dan Tien back and downward, the Lower Dan Tien draws the arms and hands back with it, the arm length shortening with the backwards draw. Right leg has all of the weight, and is full. Left leg has no weight on it and is empty. This completes the back and down movements.
- 2) Next there will be a push forward and upward.
- 6) Start the pushing up, by straightening the knee. You push forward by pushing from the right rear foot's ridge side, angling the foot forward, then the right knee forward; which moves the Lower Dan Tien forward. The Lower Dan Tien pushes the arm set forward as your arms are extended forward to their full length.



- 3) As the body is raised by the rear leg; 1/3 of the weight is shifted forward to the front foot, as the left front foot's toes comes down, flattening the foot.

BUDDHIST MARTIAL CONCEPTS

A martial manifestation of the Middle Way, could be when one practices a move/block, not to concentrate on it being a block or an attack.

For example, when one is walking in the snow, the depth that one's step sinks, is not predictable:

Walking in the Snow

- a) the step could stay on top of hard packed snow, or ice,
- b) one could sink to snow depth, or
- c) the step could sink to knee depth or greater.

One should not attach themselves to expecting one depth, or even that the ankle position or bending; will be the same. The angle of the foot after the fall, relative to the supporting plane, could be pointing:

- a) uphill/ lifted up
- b) level/ prone or
- c) downhill/ tilted down.

One should not attach themselves to how to hold the foot, since one's point of contact might optimally be:

- a) the heel for leaning backwards to prevent forward slide,
- b) the flat of the foot for less sinking or
- c) the ball of the foot for sinking deeply into the snow.

Since the step is dynamic, it is better not to concentrate on form, or a pre-set way of walking. Every step is different. One should not just see with their mind or eyes, but with their feet, and center. The move becomes part of the seeing, not just a result of it!

One should use their arms, in a similar manner, not committing to form, or distance.

A other example; is running in the dark, on a dirt trail, or on the forest floor. If you were to watch and calculate each individual step, the speed would never be greater than a walk.

Letting your foot feel the surface of the ground, and adjusting accordingly, is to run, without a pre-set form.

If one were to think of position, it is ideal to position one's energy and move at half the distance since:

- a) blocking at full distance commits one to the move;
- b) blocking without full extension gives room for:
 - c) changing direction,
 - d) stopping the move,
 - e) responding to another move, or
 - f) changing to offense.

A Buddhist meditative concept of practice, would be to not concentrate on the practical application of the move to offense or defense, but to become one with the flow and energy. The move being more than it's use to the practitioner.

A posture that focuses on one's own energy flow, and the feeling of another's Chi through one's center or hand contact, would be more universal and whole. Contrast this to responding, via cause and effect to another's move, which is based on reactions, and have specific limited paths. Better to be there before the move, seeing the Yi and Chi.

In a fighting situation, movements should not be committed to, but should be dynamic and perceptive. Sometimes non-movement is the better than the response. Feints are useless on this level. For the attacker, a feint is not truly dynamic, since it should have the capability to become a full powered blow, depending on the state of the opponent.

When gazing at a candle, there are other angles to be seen, than from the position of the viewer. There are also many things that are missed by the eyes limited of what is around the burning part of the wick, the most obvious being the heat above the flame, and the onion effect of the areas around the center of the flame. Similarly, there is more to the candle, than how we use the candle, or how it directly influences us. Modern physics is starting to see the geomagnetic properties of the flame as well.

There is more to the moon than what we see. The classic example is the Dark Side of the Moon, that we never see, yet is part of the whole moon.

Perhaps the energy around life, is similar to the halo around a candle, some would say this is the aura.

There is more to the whole than the sum of the parts.

Doing Push Hands slowly, non-competitively, and blindfolded: will help sensitize one to these energies, as well as meditation and Chi Sao drills.

JET LI

Jet Li, has an article in the November 2004, issue of Inside Kung Fu, Straight From The Heart, (pages 48, 49 & 72), will shed a light.

"IKF: What brought you to Buddhism?

JL: Buddhism has helped me to find the answers for myself. With Buddhism you look inside yourself for the answer.

...

Martial arts have external and internal training or physical training or mind training. Physical training can help your circulation, or you can meditate or do tai chi and to improve your whole body.

...

There is no philosophy: it is not until you study Buddhism that you will know there is no philosophy, nothing. Because when you believe something you will then find someone will defend themselves against your beliefs. Once you have a point, then another will have their point and the conflict begins. It is better to have no point. That is what we try to do as Buddhists, have no point.

...

Buddhism tells you about the universe and many other things and then you choose which way to go. "

EARTH

Marital application can include:

- i) using the upper first farthest extended hand as an outward to inward ridge hand strike then using the rear hand as an inside to outside block-strike.
- ii) keep the upper first hand in a continuous palm down **circle** with the other second lower hand in the same timed orbit in the opposite direction.



The related form of Horse; uses this with the front hand instead of the rear.

FIVE ELEMENT TRAINING

Start learning the forms first, with the synchronization of the forward step, as shown above.

Learn the Hsing-i Five Element Spear for whole body movement, timing of the forward and rearward step; for blow propagation and moving the whole body forward.

Next, learn the Hsing-i Element Fists with the added rearward step timed with blow delivery and positional advancing.

FIVE ELEMENT FISTS

Good for martial drills, when responding to a strike. All elements can block with one hand as they strike with the other.

Blocking hand should be sensitive to opponent's strength, momentum, and root. The blocking energy should be the same, whether it pulls you to the opponent, or the opponent toward you. Power of your force is shaped relative to opponent's center of Qi and its relationship to his root and striking target area.

ANIMALS

MONKEY

One of the best for closing the gap, and using longer distances, that are shielded with a continuous flurry of arm movements. Monkey step is used by other Shaolin systems such as Praying Mantis and Drunken Styles.

The far front hand lowers; inhaling while gathering energy from the ground, and then springs up to carry the next move of the far front foot stepping forward. This step forward pulls the Lower Dan Tien; which in turn pushes out the opposite hands forward-striking palm, exhaling, that carries the rear foot and body with it.

Keep a Slinky type or bungee-chord connection between the arms, Lower Dan Tien, legs and the ground.

DRAGON

One can get the longest distance covered with Dragon.

Left hand goes upward in drilling fist, inhaling while bringing with it the right rear leg. The right rear leg is lifted and as it rises it brings the right rising fist. The two fists are aligned vertically and are combined and timed with the rear leg movement in an upward swing; that is carried horizontally by the momentum, at that point like traveling along clothesline pulley.

Both rear and front hands can form a single Hsing-i Water, on the rise, during the leg tuck, but before the kick.

Exhale as you descend: extending the palm downward and/or outward.

After the Double Water Fists, rear tucked leg, kicks out from the Lower Dan Tien; changing the vertical propulsion to horizontal. This propels you along the 'clothes line'.

Time now to spread the force, in an undulated J Dragons falling splitting palm, drawn out and extended by the rear palm downward hand's move . Both hands are moving away from the body's center and away from each other; along the horizontal waist plane.

Dragon undulates with step, with the rising and falling Martial Power of Water and Metal. This does not imply any theory about element theory, or acupuncture, only the physics of the blow.

Different practice distances:

- 1) Short. The rear leg steps heel first with toe toward the outside, close hand changes to palm down and drops toward the Lower Dan Tien, throwing toward the front hand, which is striking palm downward.
- 2) Medium. The rear leg heel-kicks the opponent's knee.
- 3) Long. The rear leg kick carries the body as the hands rise; almost as if they are catching a clothes line pulley in the air, riding it (your leg catapulted energy as it moves like whip through your body).

MARSHMALLOW GUT (COTTON BELLY)

WANG SHU-CHIN

A student of the famed Chang Chao-tung on the mainland, Wang's Hsing-i and Pa-kua were orthodox, and machined to perfection. With his bulk, hands the size of small rosebushes, and his surprising speed, the goal of Hsing-i-to occupy the enemies territory-was adroitly done. The internal system stresses the cultivation of chi, deep breathing, and a drastically different approach to the mechanical aspects of fighting ... like Shao-lin it has many advocates who can withstand with impunity a foot or fist to the midriff. Wang not only has this skill, but can actually use his vast stomach against one's fist on impact so as to produce a broken wrist. Throughout Asia he has been tested , and no one comes close to hurting him. Leading Japanese karate masters have bowed to him after failing on his punch.

But this alone cannot make a fighter. Frank "Cannonball" Richards, the carnival performer, and various other "marshmallow gut" types in the United States have the capability to take a stomach attack. Indeed, Harry Houdini died as a result of his inability with this feat. After ineffectually Wang's belly once, I asked if he could take a solar plexus strike. "Try it," he said. I did-several times, with no effect. But beyond this special skill Wang could do something beyond the ability of all the fighters I saw. He could take any kick to the lower extremities(excluding, of course the groin). I kicked him repeatedly on his knee, calf, and ankle until my feet ached, all with no effect.

" How do you do it?" I asked.

His answer: "Chi."

Such skills do not connote anything more than defensive ability. Coupled in Wang, these skills left an attacker only two targets, the head and groin, both very mobile and difficult to hit. But one still might properly ask, could he fight?

He could and did. He has spent much of his time in recent years in Japan and has fought several high-ranking karate men. No one has come close to defeating this seventy-year-old warrior. In the process he has come to a supreme depreciation of karate. He feels that the original forms borrowed

from China have been distorted and that the nonsensical high kicks and vigorous body hardening avail nothing when confronted with real technique.

And technique he has. He uses Hsing-i fist with a corkscrew twist from one inch out with more effect than most men get from a full-stance strike. John Bluming, Dutch amateur judo champion and Mas Oyama's prize foreign karateka, even though he had hurt his wrist on Wang's stomach, disparaged him to me once when I was visiting Tokyo. "What else can he do?" asked John. I took John to Wang and asked that he be shown the corkscrew, but to keep it gentle. Wang put his relaxed fingers on Bluming's stomach, curled them into a fist and screwed. Bluming bent over in agony and has since been a believer.

Chinese Boxing, Masters and Methods, by Robert W. Smith, pages 72-74, published by North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, CA, 1974, 1990

CANNONBALL RICHARDS

Footage of Cannonball Richards showed the enormous man take a cannonball right in his mighty abdominals, only staggering back a foot or two, followed by a piece called "Edge" in which STREB performers whammed themselves frontally against a wall of Plexiglas placed between them and the audience

From: Seattle Union Record