

THE ONLINE MAGAZINE DEDICATED TO WING CHUN

# Wing Chun Teahouse

FALL/WINTER 2006

A SHORT BIO OF  
**LOK YIU**  
BY WILHELM BLECH

**WING CHUN CAN BE  
GOOD BUSINESS**  
NOT IN THE GARAGE ANYMORE

**WING CHUN &  
MMA COMPETITION**  
FROM SOMEONE WHO'S BEEN  
THERE AND DONE THAT

**TRAVELING TO TAIWAN  
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A 2006 TRAVELING JOURNAL ENTRY

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#### ABOUT THE TEAHOUSE

We're dedicated to Wing Chun in all its forms, including its many different spellings, lineages and training methods. We rely entirely on submissions from you. Your articles are what allow us to continue to promote Wing Chun in all its forms.

# Publisher's Letter



Welcome to the Fall/Winter Issue of Wing Chun Teahouse online magazine... a publication that promotes Wing Chun as a whole, in all its forms. Whether you spell it Wing Chun, Ving Tsun, WingTsun™, Vinh Xuan, Yong Chun, Ving Tzun, Weng Chun, etc and whatever specific lineage you come from, Wing Chun Teahouse is a publication for you.

As our great art continues to grow as a whole, we can bring the intelligent principles of Wing Chun to more and more people in places never before. Currently, we distribute our magazine to international Wing Chun enthusiasts in eight different countries.

The Wing Chun Teahouse is your stage... your vehicle to tell the world about your unique training methods and experiences. Whether you have a great deal of experience with Wing Chun or not, our community as a whole can benefit from many different points of view. All subjects are open. The only guideline is that you keep politics out of your writings and respect the many different lineages within our art.

We're also looking for fellow Wing Chun practitioners to join our team and donate their time to promoting our great art. If you have experience in publishing, editing, advertising, writing, journalism, public relations, photography or marketing and would like to join our team, please let us know. Together we can continue to share the art of Wing Chun with people all over the world!

Sincerely,

*Adam Williss*

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\*Note: Article submissions should be emailed to [editor@wingchunteahouse.org](mailto:editor@wingchunteahouse.org)

# Glimpses of Lok Yiu

## A Short Biography and Photos

By Wilhelm Blech

Si-Fu Lok Yiu was definitely one of the most respected and outstanding Wing Chun Kung Fu masters on the planet. It was nearly impossible to find somebody with a similar

persistence and dedication to this fascinating and outstanding Martial Art. This is one of the reasons for his legendary accomplishments in the early days of Wing Chun Kung Fu in Hong Kong and that all Wing Chun practitioners will never forget his name.



All began in 1950 in Hong Kong, as Si-Fu Lok Yiu became the second student of Grandmaster Yip Man. He was an early member of the first group of Wing Chun students from the Restaurant Workers Union in Kowloon. His commitment to Yip Man and the art of Wing Chun was so strong that they lived together like father and son. As a result of this, combined with his natural talent as well as his exhaustive daily training, he gained the true spirit and essence of Yip Man's art of Wing Chun Kung Fu. Si-Fu Lok Yiu was one of the few exceptionally outstanding Wing Chun men with the deepest insight and knowledge of our martial art.

In 1961, he opened the 'Lok Yiu Wing Chun Kuen Kwoon' to the public, which was his first Kung Fu school. It was located on Ki Lung Street in Shum Shui Po, Kowloon. Later, he moved his school to the school's current address in Mong Kok, Kowloon.



*Photos from Lok Yiu's Funeral*

Si-Fu Lok Yiu taught and promoted Wing Chun for over 40 years. In that time, he earned an outstanding reputation among Chinese martial artists all over the world. He became well known for his uncompromising dedication and serious approach to Wing Chun.

In August 1992, I became Si-Fu Lok Yiu's first and only European student. Since then, Lok Yiu Wing Chun has been brought to seven (7) countries with more than forty (40) schools throughout Europe. I was fortunate to become a part of the Lok Yiu family in Hong Kong and traveled several times each year to visit him. I was able to give my European students the opportunity to accompany me to visit Si-Fu Lok Yiu and to receive lessons from him and his two sons.

The death of this Wing Chun legend is a great loss for the Wing Chun family and martial arts as a whole. Fortunately, his knowledge and spirit will survive. His two sons, Si-Fu Lok Keng Kong and Si-Fu Lok Keng Sang will continue to teach Wing Chun in Hong Kong in the same way and spirit as their father did. I also will continue to preserve the nucleus of my Si-Fu's martial art. I will continue to offer my students to accompany me on my travels to Hong Kong to train Wing Chun at its roots with my two Si-Hing's and Si-Mo.

I feel that all these efforts will help to carry on the legacy and dignity of Lok Yiu Wing Chun for generations to come.

~

Wilhelm Blech (also known by his Chinese name Wei-Lam) is the founder of the European Lok Yiu Wing Chun International Martial Art Association. For more info or to contact the author, please visit [www.elywcimaa.com](http://www.elywcimaa.com).



# WING CHUN

NOT IN THE GARAGE ANYMORE

BY ARMANDO SAINZ

"IS IT POSSIBLE  
TO RUN A  
VERY  
SUCCESSFUL  
WING CHUN  
SCHOOL THAT  
NOT ONLY  
MAKES THE  
OWNER  
REALLY GOOD  
MONEY;  
BUT ALSO  
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ABOVE  
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HIGHLY  
SKILLED  
FIGHTERS?"

I am very excited about this new publication, Wing Chun Teahouse. I can tell that Wing Chun Teahouse and its associates think larger than others in regards to the generally accepted method of conveying Wing Chun knowledge, essence, fellowship and even business. I applaud anyone who is willing to do more than the average bear- especially with Wing Chun.

Perhaps we should take a good look at how martial arts are taught today and the different mentalities involved. Maybe we should question not our methods of Wing Chun, but our motivations for teaching this great fighting system. There are several questions that come to mind when I think about how excellent Wing Chun is as a fighting system and yet here in the United States, we are few in number. If we were to compare to Tae Kwon Do schools we are last place. They have really nice schools that are not only beautiful to look at, but also safe to train in. Why is that? I know what you are thinking already. Tae Kwon Do schools are nothing more than McDojo's that only exist to make the owner of the school rich. Don't worry, I think that is true in many cases but not all. There are several reputable schools out there that have the complete package; great martial arts and a great business for the owner. I believe the McDojo's are the extreme and we should not throw out the baby with the bath water.

What if Wing Chun were to become as popular as Tae Kwon Do in without "selling out"? Is it possible to run a very successful Wing Chun school that



not only makes the owner really good money; but also produces above average, highly skilled fighters? Hasn't our mentality been.. 'you can't teach Wing Chun in a beautiful school with 50, 75, 100 or 200 students without somehow sacrificing quality.'? We all know famous masters who still teach out of a garage with only 6 or 8 students with this way

of thinking. Of course they have to keep a day job to survive and there's nothing wrong with that. I believe many of us suffer from a mentality that has either been passed on to us, or we just assumed that this is the way it's done because after all, Master Dun Ol Way does it that way.

"I USED TO THINK THAT IF MY WING CHUN WAS REALLY GOOD THAT PEOPLE WOULD BUST MY DOOR DOWN TO LEARN."

I used to think that if my Wing Chun was really good, I mean if I practiced so that no one in my city could come close to my skill, that people would bust my door down to learn from me. I wanted to at least achieve what my Sifu did in his school. In fact I secretly wanted to surpass him in the number of students he had. He didn't hold back. He taught me with utmost care. Surely many people would just show up. I could not have been more mistaken. I was actually surprised that I didn't have large numbers even though I saw other Wing Chun masters working out of ugly and sometimes dangerous looking buildings with only a hand full of students. No they didn't come. In fact if it were not for the few "hard core fighter types" that darkened my door I would not have any students at all. I found out I was really good at running people off. Of course I would justify it by saying that they were not worthy any way. Not worthy to learn from a master like me who possessed this level of skill. Why this skill was only for the few who I could pass it on to. I could pass on my Wing Chun to my worthy students and the rest could go take a hike. Yea!!! Now I'm poor!

My friends, I discovered that I had the Wing Chun Poverty Mentality. I don't quite know where it came from. Maybe it came from our Chinese fathers who operated out of the backs of restaurants and in homes. I don't know and I don't care any more. I made a decision that totally changed my school and made it not only an awesome place to learn hard core Wing Chun, but also a growing business with a high number of students.



I decided that I would have a new attitude and a new mentality about teaching. The first thing was to get rid of that old "poverty mentality" I didn't teach some mish mosh kung fu. I taught the best martial art in the world; a martial art worthy of kings and anyone in need of self defense. I began to develop the "luxury mentality". After all Wing Chun is the Cadillac of martial arts. It has all the buttons and gadgets anyone needs in a martial art. But wait a minute, I bet you're thinking that I have some kind of big head or something. No. The opposite is true. I decided that I would become a servant of sorts. That's right. I would serve my students and help



them achieve their martial arts goals. How did they hear about me? Well, an ingenious idea I found. I advertise on the internet with a very nice, well thought out website. No, advertising is not selling out! It's getting the word out that you have something good you want to show others. It's how we let people know about us and of course word of mouth is always good.

So now my mentality is this... I provide a beautiful, very Feng Shui kind of school for my students. I mean we have a real store-bought, CUSTOM-built Muk Jong. The walls and doors are painted Asian style and the floor is finished and flat. The dressing room and bathroom actually work and they are clean and sanitary. I have a desk, beautiful Asian decor on the walls and lovely furniture. We have a systematic approach to getting people in the door, interviewing them to find out their goals and sign them up in a very professional way. Most importantly we have a billing company that keeps track of tuition for me.



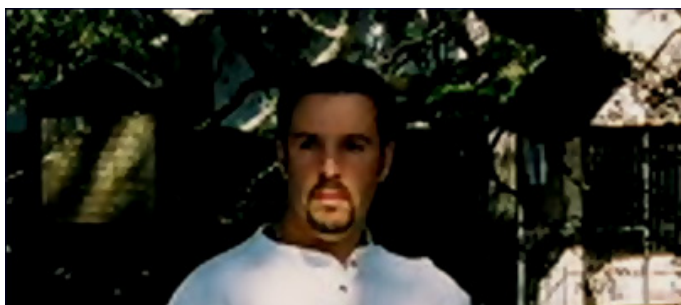
My approach to teaching is not to find the worthy, but to help all my students. I have found that this way I have their utmost respect and loyalty. Not only that, they want to stick around and learn more. And the highly sought-after, worthy student? I have them too and they get special training because of their commitment to high level quality. I even have inner-core students who I thought would never make it but stuck it out and now have become very proficient, excellent fighters. What if I would have run them off early on?

Imagine large Wing Chun schools in the United States that are the most beautiful places to train and contain the best martial artists in the world. I suggest we do away with the old poverty mentality ways if they keep us in garages, poor and unknown. That old mentality that says Wing Chun and good business can never mix. I say it can be done because we do it every day. If I'm not mistaken, our school is one of the nicest and largest Wing Chun schools in the South East and the Wing Chun is high level, intact and undiluted. My Sifu and Si-Gung are pleased with our success and they quietly keep an eye on our success with familial pride. Now we have students who are happy to do it the "New Improved old way" if you will. And their skill level is excellent.

I'd like to see Wing Chun teachers believe that it's a possible to have the best of both worlds and no longer think they're wrong for wanting a nice school with nice things in it. If Wing Chun is



the Cadillac of martial arts, lets begin to put on that mentality. Let's begin to recognize who we are in the world. We are the best. If there was something better we'd do it, right? Well there is. It's the more balanced approach to running a Wing Chun school. Let's believe we can get out of the garage and act like we have something really good and well-balanced to offer people interested in self-defense.



Sifu Armando Sainz  
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Since 1998, Centerline Academy of Martial Arts has been providing instruction for adults and adolescents in Wing Chun Kung Fu in the Jacksonville, Florida and Beaches area.

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# WING CHUN & MMA COMPETITION

FROM SOMEONE WHO'S BEEN THERE & DONE THAT

BY SCOTT BAKER

In the Summer Issue of the Wing Chun Teahouse, I read an article which I found interesting albeit misguided in some of its assertions and conclusions. The article addressed several issues that confront the modern Wing Chun practitioner. The most pressing of these issues being how Wing Chun has fared and would fair against the modern MMA competition fighters? It became apparent that the author had strong opinions about this, as do many of us in the Wing Chun family. Unfortunately many of those opinions are misinformed, having never been forged within the fires of the international competitive experience.

I keep a rather low profile as a member of the Wing Chun community. However, once in a while someone will contact me out of the blue and ask me about what I practice and teach. Some even ask me about my competition days, specifically when I was invited to compete in the Ultimate Fighting Championship II. One such example was the note emailed to my web site a few months ago; I think it asks for much of what those in the Wing Chun world are seeking when it comes to understanding how Wing Chun would hold up against MMA competitors? As stated in last issue's article:

*"Who in the traditional martial arts community is ready to take on Matt Hughes? Or Tito Ortiz? Or Randy Couture, or any of those guys? Sorry, but if I had to bet, my money's going on the MMA guy. While I do not personally attempt training for the ring, they have allowed their system to modernize and have adopted training methods that work for what they do."*



Scott Baker (left) vs. Jason Delucia – UFC 2

The author of the article puts his money on the "other guy," not the Wing Chun artist. He also clearly indicates he has a lack of experience in MMA full contact fighting. On the other hand I do not lack that experience, and my opinion differs significantly on this matter. So let's set the record straight regarding Wing Chun and MMA competitions!

Wing Chun is NOT a sport martial art. It is NOT designed to work in the competition sport arena. It is a combat art designed for real self-defense situations. There are obviously some commonalities between sport fighting and real self-defense fighting, but there are also some significant differences. It is those differences that many seem to overlook, or trivialize to their detriment. It is through understanding these differences that we in the Wing Chun community can come to grips with how Wing Chun has and will fair against top MMA competition fighters like Hughes, Ortiz, or Couture.

The three key differences between MMA competition fighting and real self-defense fighting are; 1) the mental game of sport fighting, 2) the level of physical conditioning required, and 3) the politics of sport fighting. To elucidate the first two of these differences, allow me to share my response to the email inquiry below regarding my experience in the UFC:

<b>To: Scott Baker</b>	Hello,
<b>From: Robbie</b>	Having read Scott Baker's book, I'm wondering if he is the same Scott Baker who competed in the second UFC using Wing Chun? If so, I'm just wondering if he had any comments on the match and theories on why it ended in a loss. I practice Wing Chun often and am a bit off-put as to why it has a very poor effect in MMA events perhaps because of no-throat-strike rules? If you could take the time to reply it would be very much appreciated.
	Thank you,
	Robbie

**To: Scott Baker**

**From: Robbie**

Hello Robbie,

Yes, I'm the same Scott Baker who competed in the UFC II. As far as comments on the match, that would depend on what you want to know? It was a great experience. However, I would do several things differently. But then hindsight is 20/20.

I don't have any theories on why I lost the match, I know why I lost, it was quite simple really. I had been training with an old master who was very experience in full contact no rules combat, his name was David Nuuhiwa (uncle David), who sadly died a few months ago. He was going to run my corner during the fight, however the day before the match he was called away to Hawaii and was not able to attend, that left his student to run the corner and he had no experience in competition fighting, especially none in working with a fighter to fine tune the mental edge needed to compete.

Hence I went in the ring very relaxed (too relaxed really) and with no aggressive mentality. My kickboxing days were very successful because my coach was very good at getting me into the necessary half pissed off, mean intentioned, ass kicking frame of mind before each fight, hence I KOed most of my opponents in the first round. My natural disposition is very different to this, so I needed to work into a nasty frame of mind before competing. That is exactly what I needed in the UFC, and would have received if Uncle David would have been there, but instead my corner guys focused on getting me relaxed and calm, which was the opposite frame of mind to what I needed to do battle.

During the fight I felt like I was sparring with a friend, I passed over many opportunities to strike him because I didn't want to injure him, just wanted to have him submit. During the match I remember thinking that this was not the right way to think, but I couldn't shake the feeling and was focused on submitting him without injuring him; I didn't fight my fight. Also my corner wanted me to wear the gi top with Uncle David's logo on it for the first fight so everyone would see I was training with him, that was a mistake as the damn thing got so hot under the TV lights, it filled up with sweat, and felt like a lead coat. I should not have agreed to fight in the gi top. But my corner thought it would throw Gracie off a bit given he was my next fight as he would think I was a grappler and would relax. That is also why I grappled my first fight, to deceive Gracie into thinking I would play a ground game with him, when in reality I was not going to go or stay on the ground at all with Gracie. Hence, I spend the whole fight on the ground with my first opponent to set up the strategy for the second Sport or competition fighting, even NHB, is very different to street fighting, this is something people will never understand or appreciate unless they have been there and done it. Wing Chun is probably the best real street fighting art there is. It is not a sport or competition art, which is an important distinction. Competition fighting requires significant physical preparation, it is 80% or more dependant upon physical conditioning. Real street fighting is not. Competition fighting requires a disciplined mental strategy for preparing the fighter leading up to the match, especially on fight day. Street fighting has a very different mental challenge, street fights occur with very little or no warning. Competition fights are always planned and you know exactly where and when. Dealing with the mental side of that is a specific ability that required a competent corner team. Gracie's are very good at this side of competition fighting.

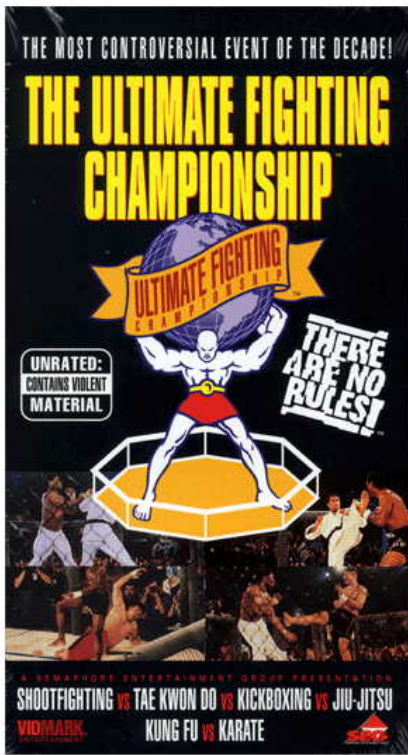
When I competed in the UFC there really were NO RULES. They warned us against biting and eye gouging, saying they would fine anyone for doing it, but they would not stop them. Now UFC is full of all sorts of rules. So the Competition itself did not matter to me, I was ready, I had a great corner set up, but it fell through, the consequence is history. I was asked to return by the promoters several times but did not have the led time to do the physical conditioning I knew was required to be able to compete, so I declined the offers. Jason my opponent told me after the fight that he saw me training somehow and knew he could not match my stand up skills, so he wanted to take it to the ground, unbeknownst to me he had been training with the Gracie's for several years. I escaped from all his holds and locks repeatedly using Wing Chun, until finally he got me locked into a leg chock and grabbed hold of my right gi sleeve, now soaking with sweat, he was able to stop me from unlocking the chock hold, as I had done the first time he put it on me, by using the gi sleeve as a handcuff to trap my wrist. So I tapped out, until then it was a very even ground exchange, even though I did not study ground fighting. Hope that helps put things into perspective.

Regards,

Scott.



So here we see that both the mental sport fighting component and the physical conditioning component are essential to competing at the international MMA level. Having reliable and skilled trainers for your corner is absolutely essential, and all the good competitors have this. Having access and the time and commitment to build the right type of physical conditioning is also essential. When I was training, I could not find a single sparing partner who would let me go full contact with them. So I compromised and would insist they go full out on me, and I would hold back and go ½ power with them, many would not even agree to that. It is very hard



to get to the correct conditioning state without real hard-core training, but I felt I had done what was necessary to be ready in this way. Wing Chun does have all the tool and skills to deal with the skills shown throughout the UFC, Pride etc. I have seen nothing in any of those matches that I did not think Wing Chun could handle. The physical size and strength of some of the competitors gives them a significant edge, and that in itself would be a challenge, but not insurmountable. There are some physically big and strong Wing Chun people around also. Grappling and groundwork has been around longer than Wing Chun. Wing Chun has skills in it to overcome that style of fighting, we do not need to add counter grappling; we just need to unlock what's there. But the real key to competing in MMA with Wing Chun is to train with experienced competition level trainers (most likely not your Wing Chun sifu!), gain some experience with the mental and political game through some full contact matches that are lower profile, and find some quality sparing partners for conditioning; partners that throw anything and everything at you, from any number of fighting styles, and then commit yourself to compete.

A good Wing Chun fighter is NOT the same thing as a successful competition fighter. They share some common skills; however, they also have some very different requirements. Wing Chun's success throughout history has NOT been manifest in the modern notion of Martial Arts competitions. Wing Chun forged it's reputation in the area of street fighting, spontaneous challenge fights, which are more akin to self defense combat than to the modern MMA competitions of

today.

In the same Teahouse issue, Chu Shong Tin gave an interview where he expressed his opinion about some of the difference in Wing Chun practitioners in today's world. He expressed his observations in the following way:

*"some people will close themselves behind the door, and do research work. Then there are the people out there selling it, pushing it. The people pushing it don't have to have much ability..."*

I have seen this also, and must add that those selling it should not consider entering MMA competitions, as they do not have the common skills needed for what it takes to succeed in competition fighting at the international MMA level. Those who are "researchers closed behind the door" are the fighters who will do well in MMA competition IF they add to their Wing Chun skills, the abilities outlined above; a competent corner team with a full understanding of the mental and political game, and the grueling conditioning training necessary to compete at a world class level. My experience in UFC II was invaluable, as was my full contact kickboxing days. I learned much about myself and my art, and as one who is as Chu Shong Tin states "a researcher" closed behind the door, I prefer to keep a low profile. Morihei Ueshiba once said: "Failure is the key to success; each mistake teaches us something." Well I learned some very hard lessons from my loss in the UFC. Some of which I have shared above. Hence, I feel uniquely qualified to comment on Wing Chun and the MMA competition game of today. Yes I competed, yes I failed, and yes I know exactly why. It had nothing at all to do with my Wing Chun skill or the arts capabilities, of that I am absolutely certain. My suggestion to those who have not walked the walk; do not deride those who have tested themselves in the fires of world class competition, rather learn from us, and understand there is much more required to compete at world class MMA levels than simply being skilled in a quality self defense art like Wing Chun.



Scott Baker Ph.D. heads up the Authentic Wing Chun Kung Fu group with locations are Utah, Maine, San Antonio, Texas, and Germany.

More information can be found by visiting his website at <http://www.wingchungkungfu.com>

# TRAVELING TO TAIWAN AND HONG KONG

BY MARC DEBUS



In August 2006, Marc Debus, Frank Kuhnecke, Andreas Zerndt and Clarissa Muz-ammil from the German LO Man Kam Wing Chun Association travelled to Taipei. The reason therefore was a training session in Sifu LO Man Kam's house. Lately, it's been very hot in the Republic of China and as a consequence the training was strenuous. Most of the time, a lesson lasted about four hours a day. Sometimes, Sifu LO Man Kam gave extra training lessons in the afternoon for his German school leaders.



A visit to the Taiwan Police headquarters was an extraordinary aspect of our stay. We had a chance to see the training of the police S.W.A.T. classes which are instructed by Sifu LO Man Kam. He's been training the Police for the Taiwanese government for approximately 20 years. On the day we went a delegation from Japan presented Kendo and Jiu Jitsu skills.



In our free time we visited many historical places in Taipei, Tan Shui and Chiu Fen. A special modern attraction was the 101 tower in Taipei city, the current highest building in the world. The historic places, especially the temples, are rather colourful and decorated with a lot of figures giving an impression of Chinese culture and tradition.



After two weeks we flew to Hong Kong. Sifu LO Man Kam contacted some of his former classmates from Sigung Yip Man's school to meet us in Hong Kong. We met Sifu Samuel Lau, Sifu Yip Ching, Sifu Chan Wai Hung and another Yip Man student on Kowloon. We spoke about Wing Chun, practiced it together and had a nice afternoon. Furthermore, we found out that the differences in practising Wing Chun between these Sifus are negligible. It was obvious that they all learned from the same master. In comparison with Sifu Wang Kiu, who is a good friend of our Sifu LO Man Kam, we came very early to this convenience. In the last years he also showed us his forms and his way of practising Wing Chun.

In conclusion one can say that the longtime Yip Man students have more in common as they differ in their interpretations of this art. The last two days of our stay we just enjoyed the city.



## Chu Sau Lei Wing Chun Iron Wolves Fight Team - by Alan Orr

My path within Wing Chun seems to be one that is forever growing. Every day I feel a need to thank my teacher, Robert Chu, for his insightful method of Wing Chun, as without it I would have lacked the strong direction I have today - not a place I would like to be at all! The Chu Sau Lei System of Wing Chun is, to my mind, the future of Wing Chun training. I say that for a number of reasons and we shall explore them here.

Over the last couple of years I have undertaken an experiment, which is still on-going, but, nonetheless it's a good time to look at its progress so far. As you know, I have been training in Wing Chun for nearly twenty years now and within that time I have trained and checked out everything that is Wing Chun. I have also read every book avidly and watched every video on Wing Chun with a keen interest and so, I have some insight into this art! Even then, it wasn't until six years ago when I first started training with my now teacher, Robert Chu, that I started to understand the art which is Wing Chun.

Up until that point, I realized that the key elements to make it a complete method of combat were missing! That's why many people start with what they think is one of the best methods of self-defense and in the end become disillusioned. However, the Body Structure methods in the Chu Sau Lei Wing Chun system corrected all of these problems for me; which would be enough to keep most people happy. As I started teaching Chu Sau Lei Wing Chun my guys and I started to get excited, for like me they had what they had always wanted, functional Wing Chun!

It wasn't long before a few of them started to think (as I did) that most people in MMA (mixed martial arts) competitions couldn't strike in a way that gave them genuine power without losing base, necessary to avoid being countered with the takedown. The Body Structure method on the whole solves this problem or at least makes it much harder for your opponent to shoot the takedown with confidence. Let's just say firstly it was time to put our money where our mouths were and so we started our fight team. I must point out that only 10% of my guys fight in the team, but the way we train is identical throughout the school. Everyone trains hard in a safe, functional and robustly alive way; without that you are not growing or really learning. If you have the Body Structure method you have a path to follow from which you can see your destination - that's what gives the student true confidence.

### **The Reason for the Experiment**

*'First intention, then enlightenment' Buddhist maxim*

It seems that everybody involved in Wing Chun will tell you that it is a street art and therefore it's hard to use within a framework of competition rules and so on. Interestingly they will quickly tell you that they have had lots of street fights, used the system for real and therefore it's a proven combat art. Now, as a statement, that's certainly not untrue at all; I have had many times when I have had to put my skill to use and I know a few Wing Chun guys outside of our system that can use it on the street very well. But (and this is a large but!) most of the people saying these things have either not had real fights at all, or had what was a push and shove with the 'hold me back' routine. A few may have even hit a guy who was drunk who would have been beaten by his own shadow. Unfortunately there are more than a few teachers out there teaching street fighting skills without ever having been in a street fight or without even having sparred before!

The result of this has been to cause Wing Chun to lose a lot of respect within the martial arts community. When you say you practice Wing Chun to a boxer, Thai boxer or grappler they give you that look. The look of 'Oh, okay Wing Chun, didn't Bruce Lee start with that?' It's a nice way of saying 'whatever'. The main reason for this reaction is that a lot of Wing Chun is now becoming no more than a contrived approach to self-defense. Violence is just that... violent! You have to have the skill to deal with the chaos of a fight, the rush of adrenalin, the impact of force against your person. It's not an easy day. Practicing Chi Sao and a few drills will not help you in this world. If you have the skills of Chi Sao and have been training in the more realistic sparring environment, then you are walking the correct line.

I believe Wing Chun to be a great art for self-defense, if you have the correct structure and training methods. But, I feel it's time for Wing Chun styles to start pressure testing the basics rather than simply follow the 'Sifu says' line. Of course, not everybody would want to do that and I did say only 10% of my guys want to take it that far, however, in doing so my whole group have become better from the feedback the guys that have brought back with them from competition.

So, bearing this in mind, I wanted to help raise the bar within the art I love and not have to explain why our Wing Chun is not the same as what they have seen before. My main idea is this, if you have a functional system you should be able to hold your own within a competitive environment. That means that your skill should be functionally effective even when limiting your range of application and adopting the necessary control required by competition rules. It's not just about winning, it's about being able to play in the first place!

### **No Holds Barred**

NHB fighting is a lot harder than it looks! Amateur NHB, in terms of stopping your opponent taking you down, is harder in some



ways than Pro NHB fighting for the simple reason that it is easier to shoot for the takedown as all striking must be below the neck, and without head striking you can get closer to your opponent. So, to my mind, it is a great testing ground for your stand up structure. If you can stop the takedown and control you opponent within this environment then you have a functional structure. Of course, striking the head would mean that you can test your stopping skills in a fuller way, but they can strike back as well! So, the start point for us was with Amateur NHB, which is what we have been doing so far. Our team has had over fifty fights, mostly Amateur NHB and also some Full Contact Kick boxing. The next step for some of the guys will be Pro NHB and we will continue with the Amateur NHB competitions also.

### **The Iron Wolves Fight Team**

My student, Neil Broadbent, became the Lightweight Amateur NHB Champion with seven fights and seven wins. Many of his fights lasted no more than 30 seconds; such is Neil's striking power. He even TKO'd an opponent with body strikes! After what is only a year of training with our system, he was able to develop the punching power from our structure methods which was way too much for his opponents to handle! Neil is now working on a Pro career. In his first Pro fight he injured his knee and has had to spend a few months recovery time. Since then, he has had one return fight at Pride and Glory Drop Zone 4 and won with a first round tap out in 34 seconds (see below photos). The fight started fast with Neil punching his opponent with a flow of head shots. His opponent didn't like that at all and tried to shoot for the takedown. Neil took head and arm control and whiped his opponent over and they landed with Neil half mounted position. His opponent tried to restand and drive forward and Neil put him into put a neck crank / guillotine which finished the fight.

Aaron Baum, Middleweight runner up, also terrorized his group with his robust stand up fighting body structure and powerful Chu Sau Lei Wing Chun striking skills. He was top of his table and favorite to win his weight class. In the finals he walked through his first two fights and in the final gave his opponent a good hard fight. When it all looked like he had it in the bag he slowed down at the line and got caught in an arm bar with only four seconds to go; a good lesson for us all which is what it's all about. Of course, Aaron would liked to have not made the mistake, but he will be the first to say it made him even better in his next fight. He has just won his last fight in the ring at the Pride and Glory Drop Zone 2 show in Catterick. He won with TKO strikes to the body, which again is not often seen in amateur NHB, but such is the striking power unleashed by the Chu Sau Lei System. Aaron has two Semi Pro NHB fights lined up this year, one in Newcastle at Valhalla and the other in Catterick at the next Pride and Glory event.

Alex Wright, my student in Newcastle, also put his Chu Sau Lei Wing Chun skills on the line at the Pride and Glory Drop Zone 2 show in Catterick. After backing his opponent up with his Chinese boxing skills, he then showed his great control of body structure by kneeing opponent over thirty times while pinning him with our stand up Chin Na skills. The fight looked one sided as his opponent had no way to escape the structural control Alex put on him. He won the fight in the first round as his opponent then gave him his back. The choke was a free gift for all the knee strikes he gave him. I say that light-heartedly, but that's what has happened in a lot of the fights my guys have had; due to the striking power opponents will start to lose the will to fight on and give an opportunity for submission as an exit strategy. Alex is looking to fight Semi Pro and Pro this year.

I also decided this year to fight, not that it really interests me to do at this point in my martial arts path. But, I thought it would be good for my guys to see me fight under pressure and it would a good for the team. I won the fight, which went as I had planned.





Even though I won with an arm bar it was my striking skill and Body Structure that allowed me to control the fight. My opponent could not match or deal with the power and control of my strikes. This is the skill of our system that we wanted to test under pressure. I do have good grappling skills, which were needed a few points in the fight and having good grappling skill should not be overlooked for NHB fighting, of course. The guys did learn a lot from it as we have with all the fights. We have four others guys fighting plus another half dozen or so in training to fight next year, so we will continue to test our system and have fun with it. With now more than fifty fights as a team the Chu Sau Lei Wing Chun System has been well and truly battle tested!

Chu Sau Lei Wing Chun Chinese Boxing Wing Chun is a Chinese Boxing art therefore punching and kicking should be key strengths, but often when you look at Wing Chun practitioners, they have no boxing skills. What you mostly see is a fast chain punch and, in training, a turning punch. (I say in training because that's the only place it's seen, as it's hard to use it in real fighting if you can't control the opponent with your Chinese boxing skills.

So let's look at some of the skills needed to become a real Chinese boxer! Chu Sau Lei Wing Chun Chinese Boxing Methods - These are just a few of our hand boxing skills within the Chu Sau Lei Wing Chun System, but note we also have many palm methods and, of course, kicking methods as well. I will cover sticking legs and kicking skills at another time.

### **Basic Chinese Hand Boxing skills**

Jik Chung Chuie (Straight Punch), Lien Wan Kuen (Chain Punches), Biu Chuie (Dart Punch), Charp Chuie (Piercing Punch), Chou Chuie (Spring Punch), Bien Chuie (Whipping Punch), Chung Chuie (Thrusting Punch) to list a just a few!

### **Attributes**

Besides having the body structure elements, these are some of the attributes one must develop to have sound Chinese boxing skills

*Kwa (Hips), Fai (Quickness), Faat Ging (Release of Force), Si Gan (Timing), Jun (Accuracy), Lou (Flow), Chu Sau Lei NHB Wing Chun*

Interestingly this has become predominantly the intention with which we train our system. The Chu Sau Lei System of Wing Chun, by its nature, is a very alive way of performing Wing Chun. All fighting arts are no holds barred in a way, all we do is bring that to mind when training, not forgetting that on the street your opponent is not working with you but against you. You have to be conditioned to adjust to the changes within the moment and overcome any situation.

### **Body Structure 'The Key'**

Without body structure, I personally feel that a Wing Chun fighter will have a lot of problems against a good or even only an okay grappler. Others may disagree, that's fine, but that is why we started to test our ideas rather than just voice them. Body structure is now a term a lot of people are using when talking about positioning of their application and so on, but that is not all we are talking about when referring to body structure. What we're talking about is positioning of the body alignment, the correct use of vector lines, the understanding of the kinetic links in the body, the transferring of forces on and within the body and so forth. This is a much deeper area of Wing Chun that is totally misunderstood generally, but without it Wing Chun doesn't have a viable power source.

### **Training/Conditioning**

Some time ago, I started the Warrior Fighting Fitness programs. I saw that a lot of martial arts practitioners weren't physically training in the right way to be conditioned for their martial arts practice. Conditioning is 101 for all martial arts. Some will say, 'well I just train for general health and the art' but how can being out of condition be good for your health? Being in good condition also allows you to train the higher level of your art.

### **Chu Sau Lei Wing Chun Chin Na - Stand Up Grappling and Control**

This is a very important part of the Chu Sau Lei Wing Chun System. Chin Na within Wing Chun is often not seen or is very poorly performed. The reason is that without Body Structure it is hard to control your opponent, therefore some branches of Wing Chun say that it's not part of Wing Chun. That's the easy way to get out of the fact that they don't understand this area of training. In most stand up fights a person will try to hold onto you when they've been hit, therefore you must know how to control them at this point otherwise it may become a free-for-all grapple, which is what you want to avoid. Also if they are trying to take you down or throw you, you will need the skills to neutralise this attack. It's all very well to say you would just strike them but it's not always going to work out that way. Moreover, you may not want to simply punch someone until they fall down as the situation may not call for that level of response. You may just need to stop them and then control them. This in fact takes a lot more skill than just hitting!

### **Ground Grappling training for NHB - / Wrestling and BJJ**

It must be said, if you are going to compete in NHB then you must have a ground game; even more so in amateur events. Without striking the head it's easier for your opponent to shoot in on you for the takedown. As part of the Shark Tank, we have some of the

best grappling instruction around from Sensei Eddy Millis. He has trained fighters for K1, UFC, Shooto, King of the Cage and... well every event you can think of. Sensei Millis is a great all round grappling teacher and coach. He is a black belt in BJJ and has very strong wrestling skills in every area. We also have Pete Irving who is a great BJJ fighter as part of our coaching team for the Iron Wolves. He's been a perfect training partner for me. Also we have been working with the excellent Carlson Gracie black belt Leo Nagao from Brazil, he has been pushing our ground game up and up. This is an important part of our training. I have as great a respect for the art as I do Wing Chun. I continue to train and develop my grappling skills with the same passion I have put into my Wing Chun. I have over my years of grappling developed a deep interest in Catch Wrestling which has also benefited our grappling style. In a fight if you do get taken down you will not be getting back up without good grappling skills. So, I do train our fight team in grappling, but it is our striking system that has given us something different to our opponents.

### **The Maxims of the Experiment**

- *To test our Principles and Concepts of the Chu Sau Lei Wing Chun System.*
- *To have our Fight Team compete and test our Body*
- *Structure Methods of the Chu Sau Lei Wing Chun system under the pressure of various types of competition.*
- *To test our methods of striking power in real time competitions against other types of striking methods and grappling arts by entering NHB events.*
- *To also improve our Grappling arts to the level of our Wing Chun system.*
- *To learn and give feedback to the school and to have fun, win or lose.*
- *To create an arena for pressure testing within the Wing Chun systems by means of a Wing Chun tournament.*

### **Key points learned from fighting in Competitions**

- You must have good body structure to be able to stand your ground.
- You must know how to strike with power without giving away your base.
- You must be conditioned or you will run out of gas.
- You must have a good grappling knowledge if you wish to compete in NHB / MMA
- You must have fighting spirit to overcome the stress of fighting in a competition.
- You must train how you would if you were to be in a fight.

### **The future of Wing Chun**

In order to keep the art of Wing Chun alive and well we must keep it growing. Pressure testing is a form of suffering as it is hard on the body and mind but necessary if we are to look towards truth; we must have no one to blame but ourselves.

*'Purity is something that cannot be attained except by piling effort upon effort' Hagakure*

The Buddhist way of understanding ones suffering is firstly investigate it. This becomes the path to awakening, which breaks the delusion that often can be holding back the path of development. It is taught in Buddhism that you must have the right understanding to have the right aspiration, therefore giving us the intelligence for reflection and contemplation. Let's open our minds to the art that is within us.

Training Tip: Let's remember that Wing Chun is a progressive art forged by Wing Chun fighters like Hawkings Cheung and Wong Shun Leung. So, keep out of the comfort zone and start making life a bit harder for yourself but more vital!

You need to have some healthy pressure in your training in order to keep your edge and stay true to your art. Otherwise, it's easy to drift off in the wrong direction and become unrealistic in your training methods and application. I'm not saying everyone should fight in NHB competitions, but Wing Chun does need a forum for friendly and healthy development. Of course I have a few ideas on this which you can read in my next article!

**Alan Orr is a disciple of Robert Chu and the European representative of the Chu Sau Lei Wing Chun system. He is also the UK representative for Guro Mark Wiley in the Filipino martial arts and Sensei Eddy Millis of Shark Tank in NHB/Grappling. Alan also teaches Tui Na Chinese Bodywork.**

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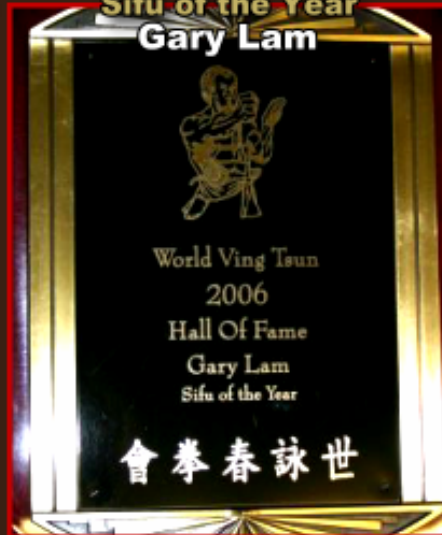
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