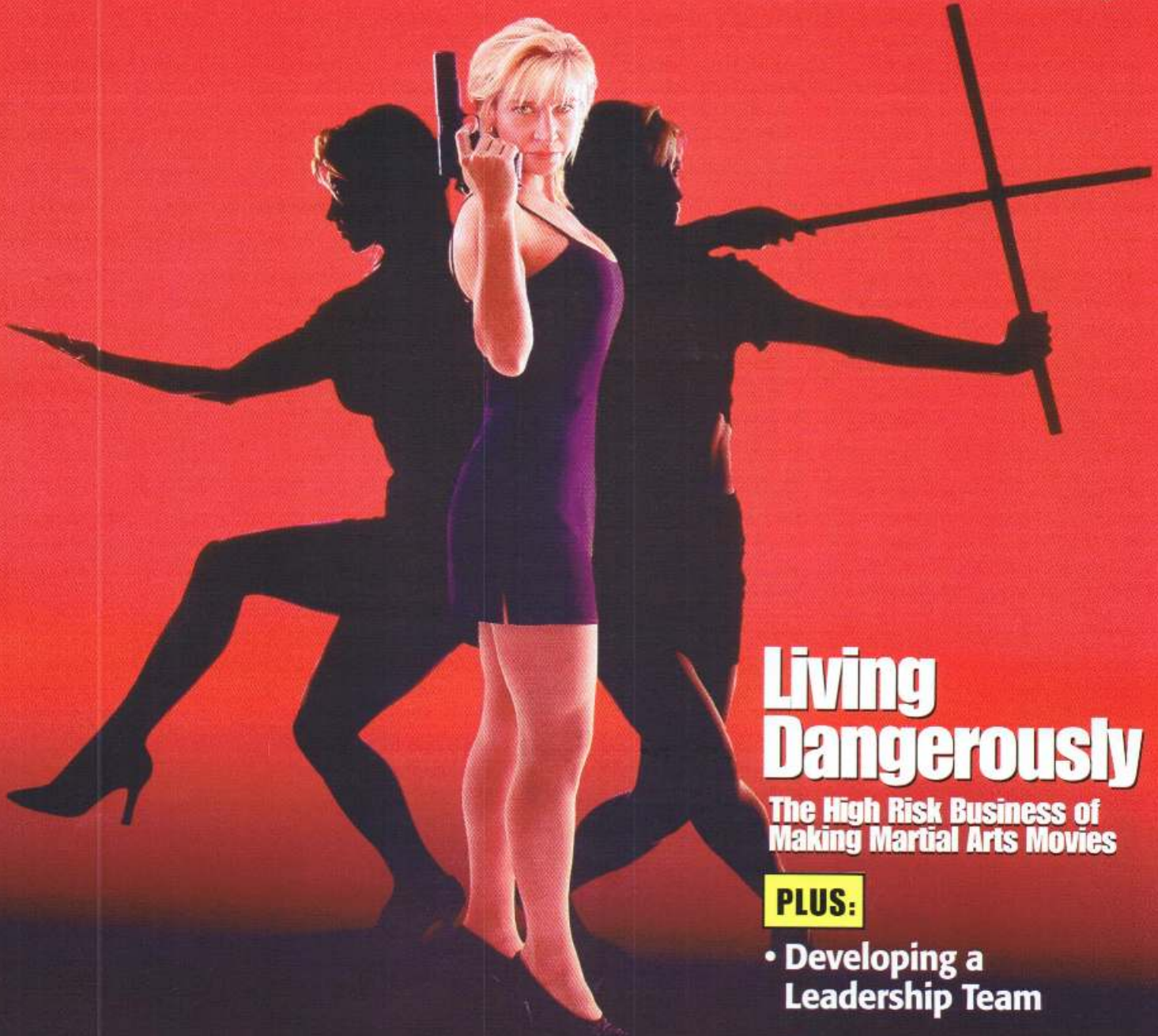
How Billy Blanks Grossed $35,000 In One Day! • New Tax On Violent TV

Martial Arts PROFESSIONAL

October 1996

The Trade Journal For The Martial Arts Industry



Living Dangerously

The High Risk Business of Making Martial Arts Movies

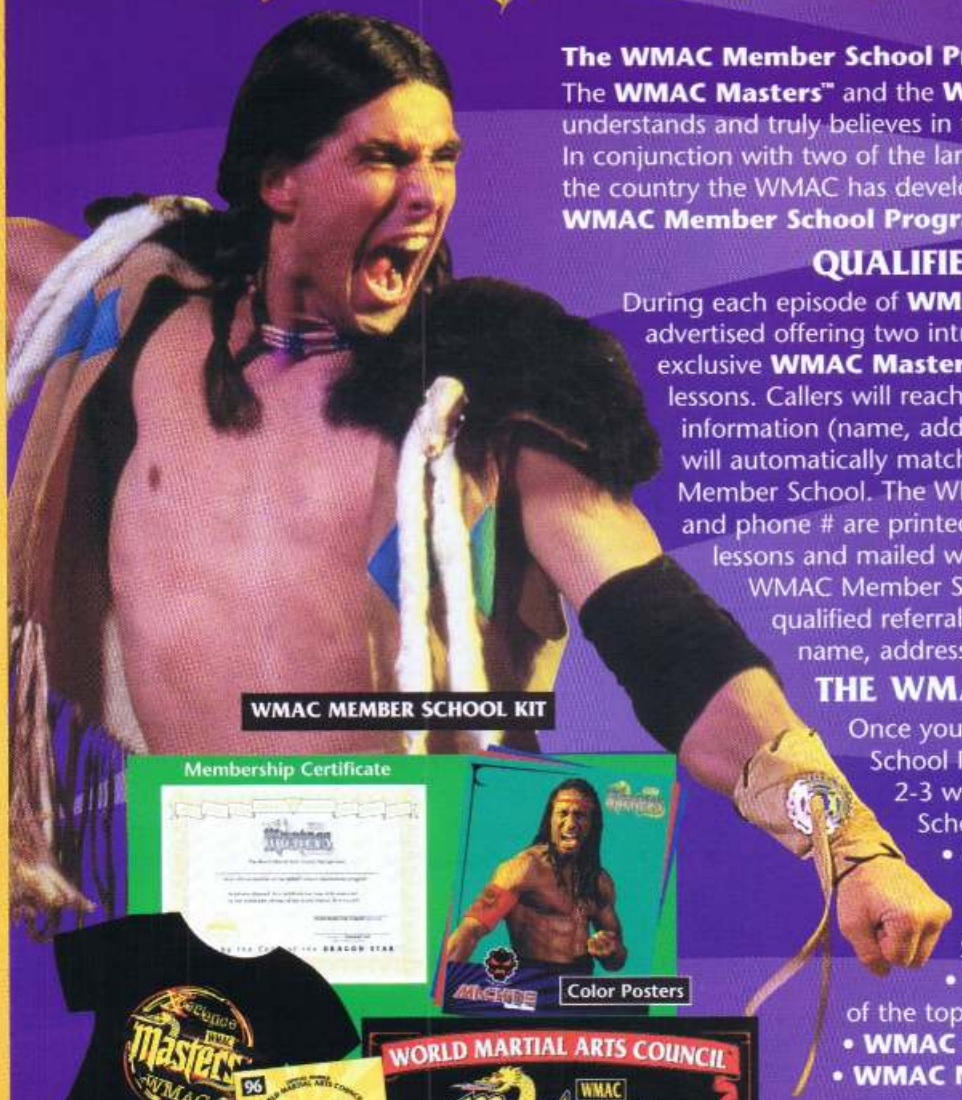
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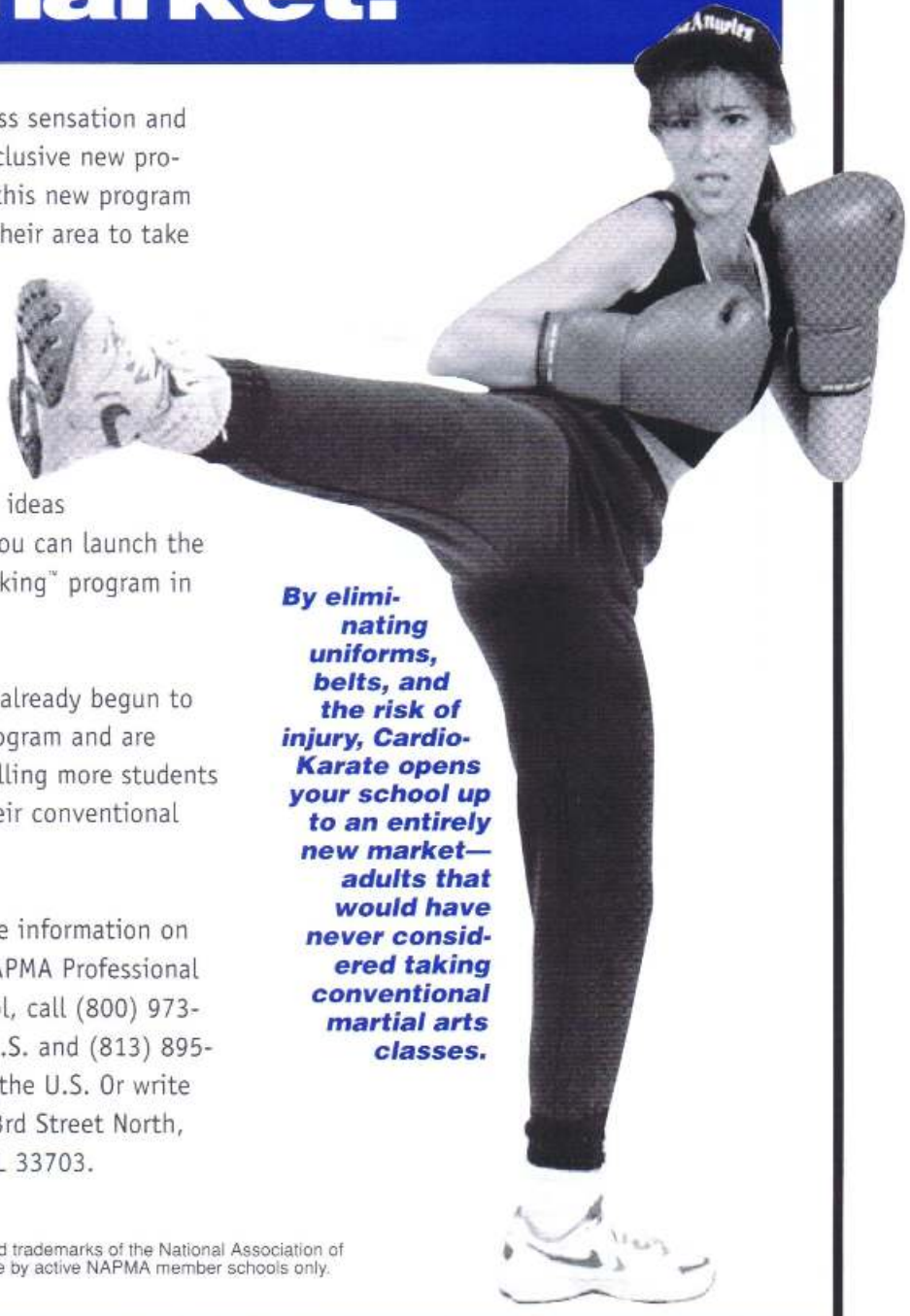
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AS I SEE IT

letter from the editor



The Nerve Of Some Of These Landlords

When I started my training at age 14 in 1974, I knew instantly that I wanted to be a martial arts instructor. I remember seeing my instructor, Hank Farrah, in that first class wearing a gi with USA labeled across the back. I had youthful visions of him fighting in death matches against other countries. After all, every karate blow was a death blow, right?

I just thought he was the coolest guy I'd ever seen. He and the school's owner, Walt Bone, had a reputation of running one of the best schools in the south. We took great pride in our instructors and laughed at the other schools (this was, excusably, the 1970s).

Our favorite target of disdain were those big commercial schools. They had so many students that they had to be in it just for the money. Our school would never sell out.

Five years later, as a young black belt and new instructor, I got a panicked phone call. There was a For Rent sign in our school's window. It seems the rent was six months overdue and the great school that would never sell out was closed down!

A year later, when we reopened elsewhere, the school always seemed to struggle. I was "released" due to a lack of funds in 1981 and started teaching at a recreation center.

Because I had a good following, many people encouraged me to open a school. They told me how much money I could make. But, I wasn't going to sell out like those big schools.

About the same time, I became the training partner of Joe Lewis. In late 1985, I had a conversation with him (one of many) that I'll never forget. He explained to me that it was time to give my students a home. It was time to get them out of the gym and into a school they could take pride in. He reminded me of the pride that I felt when I was a student. He was very familiar with my "chain of command" and respected it greatly.

Joe touched the values that I held dear. Not money, but pride. I immediately went to work on building a school.

I planned to create good fighters and sharp kata technicians. We were going to be tough and ready — and we were. Yet, at the same time, I had to sign a lease and pay deposits. When we needed supplies for our buildout, everyone turned to me for a check.

I was quickly realizing that I was actually going to have to (gasp) focus on how to make money in order to keep the doors open.

I was confronted with a powerful dose of reality. When you accept money for your classes and pay bills, you are a commercial school. The school I was raised in was a commercial school. We just refused to acknowledge it. Even after getting evicted, we didn't catch on. We blamed the money-hungry landlord. How dare he want his rent? We operated as though the basic laws of commerce didn't apply to us.

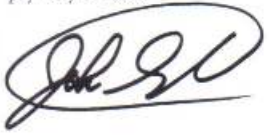
If you accept tuition and pay bills, you are a commercial school, whether you like it or not. There's nothing wrong with that. That's the way our country is structured. Commercial doesn't mean you have to sell out or become a paper tiger. Commercial simply means that you accept money for your services. You pay bills in order to provide a school students can be proud of. You keep a portion so you can live a life in dignity and retire comfortably one day.

For years I thought that schools that operated, "professionally" were just out for the money. It wasn't until I opened my school that I realized that I had to insure the future of the school by expanding our services to include families, children and people who were not interested in fighting in the World Championships.

In fact, when you accept that you are a commercial school, you start to think of your school in a different, more empowered way. You start to recognize opportunities and circumstances that have always been around, but you couldn't see them too well with your head buried in the sand.

Commit to creating a school that works in harmony with the community, operates on strong, integrity-based values and provides great service. Follow the example of the most prestigious private academic school in your city. They collect tuition, they market and they produce great students. They insure their long-term existence by providing a great product — an educated student. Just like you.

It's my sincere hope that you, too, accept and embrace that we all operate commercial schools. When you do, you may find soon that you are helping three times as many students as you are now. However, if you don't, you may end up with a For Rent sign in your window to jolt you into the reality that the rules of commerce apply to you too.



JOHN GRADEN
Editor-in-Chief

Vol. 1, No. 6

Martial Arts PROFESSIONAL

Martial Arts Professional
is published and
distributed monthly by:
Powerline Publishing, Inc.
1705 National Blvd.
Midwest City, OK 73110

Editorial offices:
Graden Media Group
3950 3rd Street North
Suites C & D
St. Petersburg, FL 33703

Telephone (800) 973-6734
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About the Cover
Cynthia Rothrock is one of many martial arts champions who are attempting to kick their way to star status.

The publisher and editors will not be responsible for unsolicited material. Manuscripts and photographs must be accompanied by a SASE.

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martial arts business news, people, and places

US MARTIAL ARTISTS NAB ONLY ONE OLYMPIC MEDAL

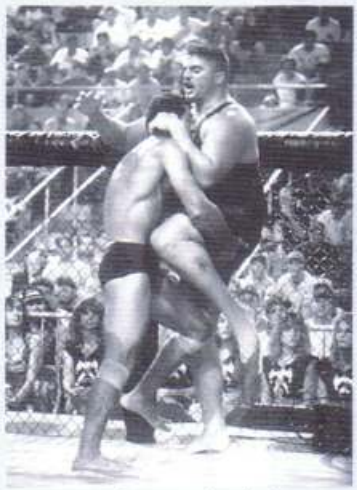
ATLANTA, GA — Jim Pedro of Lawrence, Massachusetts, America's best hope for a gold medal in Olympic judo competition, ended up winning a bronze here in the lightweight (71 kg) division. Japan's Kenzo Nakamura won the gold medal and South Korea's Kwak Dae-sung took the silver. France's Christophe Gagliano also won a bronze.

Pedro's win makes him the only American martial arts medalist of the entire 1996 Olympics. Taekwondo, a two-time demonstration sport which will become an official Olympic sport in 2000 in Sydney, Australia, was not a part of the 1996 Games. Judo is still a traditionally Asian-dominated sport.

Approximately 400 judo competitors from 60 countries vied for medals in seven weight classes. The Atlanta Olympics marked the first time women were eligible for medals. In fact, Merissa Pedulla of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (women's 1141/2 pounds) and Celita Schultz of Hillsdale, New Jersey (women's 134 pounds) were the only other top U.S. medal hopefuls in judo. Neither woman succeeded.

Pedro won a bronze at the 1995 World Championships, where Kwak was a silver medalist. Pedro had defeated the Korean in other past competitions. ■

MISSOURI TO TAX VIOLENT PAY-PER-VIEW TV



Missouri residents will have to pay more to watch pay-per-view (PPV) events involving boxing, sparring, wrestling, kick-boxing, full-contact karate or ultimate fighting sports.

In July, Missouri Governor Mel Carnahan signed a law which imposed a five-percent gross receipts tax on all of these events except for ultimate fighting. For ultimate fighting contests broadcast in Missouri, the law requires a 25-percent gross receipts tax.

The new taxes are aimed at all video providers of these events, including satellite, cable and closed-circuit TV. Ultimately, these providers will undoubtedly pass their increased costs from the taxes on to the consumers.

"This is not a broad-based telecommunications tax," said David Withrow, director of government affairs for the Satellite Broadcasting and Communications Association (SBCA). "It's more social commentary than taxes. The Missouri Legislature just doesn't want the violent sports on TV."

Withrow said he has not heard of any other states considering a similar violent sports event PPV tax. ■

SURGEON GENERAL'S REPORT OFFERS NEW VIEW OF MODERATE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

WASHINGTON, DC — Regular moderate physical activity offers substantial benefits in health and well-being for the vast majority of Americans who are not physically active, according to the first-ever Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health released last month. The report also concludes that regular moderate physical activity can substantially reduce the risk of developing or dying from heart disease, diabetes, colon cancer, and high blood pressure.

"This report is a passport to good health," said Vice President Al Gore. "In the 1950s, we emphasized the health benefits of team sports. In the 1970s, we focused on intensive aerobic exercise. Now, in the 1990s, a compilation of scientific research offers an historic new perspective on the importance of regular moderate physical activity for virtually all Americans."

"The good news is, you don't have to train like an Olympic athlete to enjoy the benefits of a healthy lifestyle," Secretary Shalala said. "Walking, bicycling, or even gardening for at least 30 minutes per day most days of the week is good for your health and good for your future."

The report defines moderate physical activity as physical activity that uses 150 calories of energy per day, or 1,000 calories per week. Examples of moderate physical activity include walking briskly for 30 minutes, swimming laps for 20 minutes and washing and waxing a car for 45-60 minutes.

In addition to reducing the risk of developing chronic illnesses, the report notes that regular participation in physical activity appears to reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety, improve mood, and enhance ability to perform daily tasks throughout life.

To obtain copies of the Executive Summary, At-a-Glance, and an order form for the full report, call CDC's Nutrition and Physical Activity Information Line (toll free) — 1-888-CDC-4NRG. The above material and press kit components also may be obtained via the Internet at: http://www.cdc.gov. ■

INDUSTRY UPDATE

martial arts business news, people, and places

SUPERCOP CLINCHES JACKIE CHAN'S U.S. STARDOM



HOLLYWOOD, CA — Jackie Chan proved his newly-christened superstardom in the North American domestic film market when his most recent release, *Supercop,* broke established rules to become his second consecutive moneymaker here.

Supercop placed 5th in its opening weekend (July 26-28) with $5.5 million playing against the summer's stiffest big-budget action films. This is a superb performance given that *Supercop* was released in only about 1,000 theaters. The big A-list movies of the summer season *Supercop* competed against played in as many as 2,500+ theaters.

This means Jackie's grosses per theater surpassed some of the major releases out at the same time. And it beat out *Kingpin* released the same weekend.

What further boosts Chan's achievement is the fact that *Supercop* is a "reissued" film. It was actually first released in 1992 in Asia, and was made specifically for an Asian audience. The only creative cosmetics applied to the reissued version was an English-language dubbing of the original Cantonese dialogue.

Supercop, originally entitled "*Police Story III: Supercop,*' is the third installment in Jackie Chan's series of police thrillers. This one boasts an all-stops-out finale with a motorcycle catapulting onto a train and people dangling from car, train and helicopter.

At press time, *Supercop* had grossed almost $14 million and was still playing in theaters. Chan was in the U.S. for a quick promo blitz — including a cover story in *GQ magazine* — to support *Supercop's* release.

Chan's *Rumble in the Bronx,* released last February, had grossed $32 million domestically and was playing on pay-per-view at press time.

Two more of Jackie's earlier films will reportedly be released in the near future. The buzz around town is that Chan's hilarious *Drunken Master II* is next. ■

FORMER RUSSIAN JUDO CHAMP SHOT DEAD IN BRAWL

MOSCOW, RUSSIA — Former Russian judo champion Andrei Misyagin was shot dead by a policeman recently after a brawl between tourists at a holiday camp near the Urals Mountains, a judo federation spokesman told a Reuters' reporter.

The shooting occurred after police intervened in the fight about 100 km (60 miles) from Misyagin's home city of Chelyabinsk, the spokesman told Reuters.

Itar-Tass news agency reported that one of the tourists had tried to grab a gun from a policeman, who then wounded Misyagin in the arm before shooting him in the head.

Misyagin was Russian judo champion in 1993. ■

MARTIAL ARTS HELPING THE HOMELESS

QUEBEC, CANADA — Nguyen Dang Tuan and fellow University of Quebec nursing student Nguyen Xuan Chi Nga have chosen an innovative, graduating-year project in community health here. According to a story in *The Windsor Star,* the enterprising students decided to teach self-defense and relaxation classes to the homeless and poor people who gather and sometimes sleep at a shelter for the homeless.

Classes started after Tuan and Chi Nga spent several months getting to know residents at the shelter. Explains Tuan, "We wanted to do community health where it is really needed. This program gives people self-confidence and self-control as well as fitness."

Clement De Lamarre, who has been a staff member at the shelter for eight years, says this is the first time self-defense classes have been offered to those at the shelter, and it will take a few weeks to see if they will continue to participate.

Along with the classes, Chi Nga and Tuan slip in health, hygiene and nutrition tips and provide immediate nursing help if needed.

De Lamarre is thrilled. Not only has the taekwondo class allowed participants to shout and kick out their frustrations, but they are now talking to each other and finding common interests, something most find difficult. ■

interview by john graden

FIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

An Interview with Producer/Director Paul Maslak



Maslak discusses a fine point with his script supervisor.

This is the first interview ever to focus on the business aspects of the martial arts movie genre. Most martial arts school owners pay little attention to these films because of an understandable contradiction in purpose. Instructors strive to teach realistic applications of the martial arts, whereas movies strive to entertain audiences with imaginative but unrealistic martial arts techniques.

Nevertheless, the impact of martial arts movies cannot be denied. Millions of people from all walks of life, and particularly children, have poured into martial arts schools because of these pictures. Furthermore, the genre in and of itself has proved to be lucrative.

From 1971, when "Billy Jack" became a surprise runaway hit, martial arts films — combined with films starring martial artists — have grossed an estimated $2 billion dollars at the box-office alone. A few — like *The Karate Kid I* and *II, Under Siege, Street Fighter* and *Mortal Kombat,* among others — became blockbusters, meaning they grossed over $100 million each by the time they completed their worldwide theatrical run. And that figure does not take into account all the various ancillary revenues that made each picture even more profitable, stemming from lucrative markets such as pay-per-view, video rentals, cable-TV broadcast, and so on.

So we thought it was time to give you a new look at the genre. And we selected a prime Hollywood martial arts filmmaker, Paul Maslak, as our interviewee. Maslak has a long and distinguished career in the martial arts field as a writer/author, kickboxing

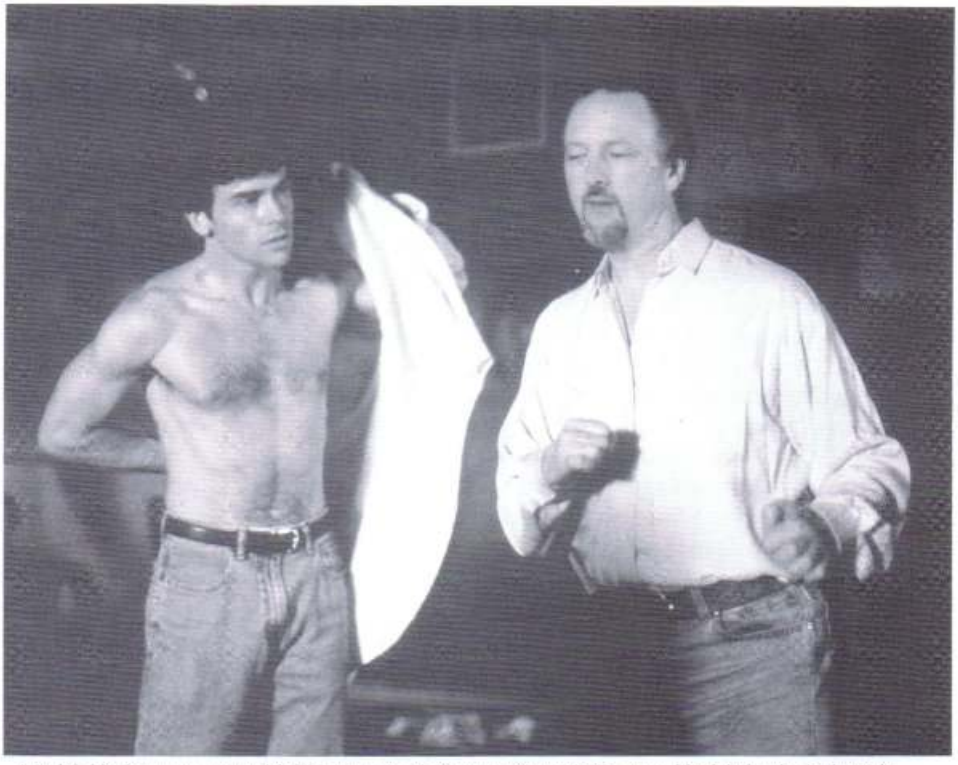
ratings pioneer, talent manager, and a filmmaker. Given his credentials, he has seen, analyzed and been a part of many major aspects of the industry, in both a creative and business capacity.

Maslak first rose to national prominence in 1979-80 as the editor of *Inside Kung Fu*, a leading international consumer magazine, and as author of *Strategy in Unarmed Combat*.

At the time, *IKF's* expert correspondent for movie matters was Neva Friedenn, who had founded Unifilm International Company to import and theatrically distribute martial arts films. So when Friedenn's Hong Kong producer friends needed charismatic American martial artists to fill both lead and supporting roles for *No Retreat, No Surrender*, Maslak and Friedenn teamed up as the casting directors. The pair presided over the now-legendary 1984 auditions that gave both Jean-Claude Van Damme and Kurt McKinney — and later Cynthia Rothrock and Ernie Reyes, Jr. — their first film roles.

With start-to-finish experience in multiple phases of moviemaking, Maslak exercised his creative skills by co-writing the stories for *Black Belt, Out For Blood, Red Sun Rising* and an upcoming as-yet-untitled Cynthia Rothrock vehicle. Maslak also served as associate producer on both *Bloodfist IV* and *V* and as co-producer on *Ring of Fire II* and *Out For Blood*. Additionally, for three years (1991-93) he was the personal manager for long-time friend and world kickboxing champ Don "The Dragon" Wilson.

In mid-1993, Maslak and Friedenn formed their own production company, Maslak/Friedenn Films, to produce their first martial arts action drama, *Red Sun Rising*. The film debuted in the U.S. in September 1994 as an HBO World Premiere Movie, where it received an unprecedented A.C. Nielsen primetime pay-cable rating of 10.3 with a 15 share — 4th for that week — and remains HBO's highest-rated action premiere to date. *Red Sun Rising* subsequently won two Drive-In Academy Awards, called "Hubbies," including one for "Best Kung-Fu Flick."



Maslak blocks out a scene with "Sworn to Justice" costar Kurt McKinney, a black belt who is the only man to have defeated Jean-Claude Van Damme on screen, in 1985's "No Retreat, No Surrender."

Now a film director as well as a producer, Paul Maslak has just completed Maslak/Friedenn Films' latest picture, *Sworn to Justice*, a neo-noir actioner with martial arts starring Cynthia Rothrock, Tony Lo Bianco, Kurt McKinney, Brad Dourif, Mako and Walter Koenig.

What you are about to read in this two-part interview is perhaps the most articulate, insightful overview of the genre to appear in a martial arts magazine to date. We give Paul two thumbs up — way up — and think you will too.

The Money Flow/Revenue Stream

MARTIAL ARTS PROFESSIONAL: *Most martial arts films don't seem to make it into the local theaters, yet these films are shot all the time. How do you make money on these pictures without a theatrical release?*

PAUL MASLAK: Sometimes you don't! The film business is a high-stakes game and not for the financially squeamish. Some people compare filmmaking to oil-well drilling: You might sink your capital into three or four lackluster performers before you hit the one that makes so much money that you don't mind the losers. At any rate, that's the conventional wisdom.

Most professional filmmakers actually have a more stable approach to the business than that. Roger Corman's Concorde/New Horizons Pictures or Republic Pictures, for example, might work a deal with, say, Showtime, which will cover most of their expenses. Then any foreign sales will give them a profit. Other companies cater to foreign buyers exclusively and don't really care what happens domestically.

Our present strategy for any MASLAK/Friedenn film is, boldly, to produce a breakthrough picture for the budget every time. That means a picture that can command a good sale to domestic cable and video buyers, and potentially even receive a theatrical release, as well as good sales to foreign buyers. In other words, MASLAK/Friedenn favors quality over volume.

MA PRO: *Excluding the major Van Damme and Seagal films, what is the average budget for a martial arts movie? This would include pictures starring Don "The Dragon" Wilson, Cynthia Rothrock, Gary*

continued on page 20

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

feedback from our readers

Kata/Retention Commentary

Dear Sirs:

I felt a great motivation to respond in writing to the *Martial Arts Professional* July 1996 "As I See It" by the editor. I will respond from the standpoint of being a 27 year practitioner of karate, a school owner, and a fervent advocate of traditional kata.

I recognize the appreciation the editor proclaimed for kata and the written classics of Gichin Funakoshi. I also acknowledge the premise of the article, which seems to imply, or at least challenges the validity of kata practice relative to student retention.

The very interesting scenario the editor offers about the three choices for students to do kata, shadow box, or hit the bag were offered. All three choices are excellent for training. However, it is implied that kata is the last choice, kinda like a child choosing candy over spinach. However, the mature, knowledgeable, health conscious adult will choose the spinach, and out of love, will encourage the child to make the same healthy choice regardless of "retaining" the child's favorable opinion.

Yeah, it may seem to be more fun to shadow box, hit the bag, spar and not do kata. You will probably retain more students in such a setting. Business is business.

In my opinion, kata represents the ethic and core of karate regardless of student retention concerns. It is a stylistic signature which helps preserve a great martial heritage. Perhaps, karate and kata are available to everyone, but are not for anyone. Perhaps there is more risk to the student to be initially embarrassed, or "looking stupid" while wearing a gi in a dojo. Touchy feely egos do get bruised in a traditional dojos from time to time. Valid dojos are microcosms of life, and are available to everyone, but surely not for anyone!

But why not kata as a systemized, attractive, aerobic exercise? Kata uses the entire body, all muscle groups. For those of us who practice kata hard and fast with great precision-what a workout!

We "know" there are more rewards to come if we make kata the priority as practitioners, teachers, and karate school owners, and more importantly our students regardless of how many students we retain, or how much money we make.

Call me old fashioned, but to me kata is more important than making bucks or having 100 watered-down students not doing kata, instead of 10 kata practicing students.

Your answer: In many cases, kata may very well hurt student retention.

RICH WILLARD
Shoto Shorin Kai Dojo
Guthrie, Oklahoma

From A Student

(Editor's note: After our recent "Laws of Graduated Demands" article on teaching sparring over time (MA Pro, August 1996) we thought you would enjoy this letter which is reprinted from the martial arts folder on America Online. Though it was not directed to MA Pro, it was in a public forum and clearly contains a perspective relevant to school owners.)

I used to love to go to karate class, now it is like going to the dentist! The focus of the class has shifted from learning and practicing kata, self defense techniques, and getting a chance to go at it with the focus pads, to constant sparring.

As a yellow/orange belt, perhaps this is an expected shift and I just wasn't aware of the program. I truly enjoy learning new katas and techniques and practicing my basic skills, but when it comes to putting on the gear and slugging it out, I'd rather have a root canal. As you might have guessed, I am not very good at it either, which is painful and embarrassing—but I have given sparring my best shot for 5 months with no light at the end of the tunnel. Perhaps it is time to change direction?

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Great Magazine!

Guys:

Just wanted to say great job with Century and *Martial Arts Professional* magazine. It's great and of great use in building my dojo. I'm looking forward to hearing John Graden speak in Oklahoma City this month at the Three R's seminar. Keep up the good work.

TWILA J. COX
Head Instructor
Universal Martial Arts Club
Ambassador University
Big Sandy, Tx

Kudos for MA Pro

Dear Mr. Graden:

As an actor/martial artist with five N.Y. based locations, I want you to know that I have been reading *Martial Arts Professional* since it was introduced. Let me just say, it is both beautifully put together and informative.

MARCOS A. MIRANDA
Kaidoku-Ryu Ninjitso System
Brooklyn, N.Y

Thanks!

Dear Mr. Graden:

Thank you so much for having taken the time to share with our school a few issues of *Martial Arts Professional.* I am truly enjoying it. I appreciate the positive image you are accomplishing for the martial arts community and I wish and hope that schools will follow your lead.

Keep up the good work and thank you again.

BARBARA NEUMANN
Florida Keichu Do
Seminole, FL

Send Letters to the Editor to 3950 3rd St. N., St. Petersburg, FL 33703 or email us at: NAPMA@aol.com Fax: (813) 895-1235

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October 1996

4-6	CA	Official Okinawian Immigrant 100th Anniversary Karate Kubudo Tournament, Sacramento, Contact: Shilia Nishiuchi, 4424 Finwick Way, North Highlands, CA 95660 916-334-0451 FAX: 916-349-8905
5	TX	Dairyland Karate Championships, Quitman, Contact: Donald Lawson, Route 4 Box 46745, Winnsboro, TX 75494 903-866-3027
5	PA	Asia Tang Soo Do 4th Annual Championship, Belle Vernon High School Gym, Contact: Kwan Ho Chon, 1115 Fayette Ave, Belle Vernon, PA 15012
5	OH	Ohio State PKC Semi-Finals, Poland Middle School, Contact: David Buker, 8368 Morningside, Poland, OH 44514 330-757-3004
5	MI	Joe Lewis Seminar, Grand Rapids Presidents Inn, Contact: Terry Gay, 424 North Park, Grand Rapids, MI 49505 616-364-5111
5	TX	Cen-Do Kai Benefit Karate Tournament, Fonde Recreation Center, Contact: Robert Gifford, 110 Sabine, Houston, TX 713-980-3030
5	OR	AKANA 3rd Annual North West Regional Championships, Contact: Jeff Richardson, PO Box 383, Talent, OR 97540 541-779-0334 Email: akana@mind.net
5	VA	Fall Classic Open Championships, Hamption University, Contact: Montez or Natalie Dennis, 7 Langille Court, Hampton, VA 23663 804-722-5702 or 804-838-4664
5	NV	White Dragon Kenpo Karate Seminar, Contact: Al Farnsworth, 3025 East Desert Inn Road, Las Vegas, NV 89121 702-733-7788 or 702-223-3432
5	OR	Blue Mountain Martial Arts Championships, Contact: Pendleton School of Karate, 375 Northeast Highway 11, Pendleton, OR 97801 541-276-1030
5	MD	Combat Hapkido, Waldorf, Contact: Keith Elkins, 2084 Crain Highway, Waldorf, MD 20601 301-932-8087
5	IA	1996 Midwest Open Karate Championships, Hempstead High School, Contact: David Schmitt, 805 Century Drive, Century Plaza, Dubuque, IA 52002 319-588-4298
5	IN	8th Indiana State Tournament, Lebanon High School, Contact: Mike Kincaid, 111 North Meridian, Lebanon, IN 46052 317-482-6992
5-6	UK	5TH International Aiki Seminar, United Kingdom, Contact: Kirby Watson, 11, Jubilee Close, Haslingden, Lancashire, United Kingdom BB4 4RN, Phone: 01706 219747(UK)
5-6	LA	U.S. Open, New Orleans, Contact: US. Open, PO Box 81567, Mobile, AL 36689 334-343-6023 or 334-415-5186 FAX: 334-460-7252
5-6	Can	Dragon Challenge '96', Edmonton, Contact: Jey Arul, 403-468-1402
6	BER	Skippy Peanut Butter Kick, Hamilton, Bermuda, Contact: Kristina Ingham, 57 King Street, Hamilton, HM JX Bermuda 441-292-2157 E Mail: kingham@ibl.bm
6	MO	USAKIA-WITF World Championships, Union, Contact: Dan Chadd, PO Box 484, Sullivan, MO 63080 573-927-5370
6	NY	Tournament of Tournaments, Port Jefferson, Long Island, Contact: F. Galante, 302 Hollock Avenue, Port Jefferson, NY 11776 516-474-0714
6	MN	Northern Stars Karate Championships, Contact: David Younglove, 5600 Shingle Creek Parkway, Brooklyn Center, MN 55430 Email: karateskydiver@postoffice.worldnet.att.net
6	NY	East Coast Martial Arts Trade Show, Contact: Ronnie Smith, Stony Brook University, Stony Brook, NY 212-944-2647 Email: MartArts@aol.com
11	NY	Vee Arnis Seminar, Long Island, Contact: Frank Galante, 302 Hallock Road, Port Jefferson, NY 11776 516-474-0714
12	TX	Fall Texas Four Seasons Karate Championships, Victoria Community Center, Victoria, Contact: Ralph Jaschke, 3208 Sam Houston, Victoria, TX 77904 512-575-2467
12	FL	Martial Arts Mania V, Contact: Jack Hogan, 4270 Starratt Road, Jacksonville, FL 32226 904-757-1490 hogan@jaxnet.com
12	IN	Larry Hartsell/Jun Fan Concepts, Contact: Hartwich Academy 2137 South 4th Street, Lafayette, IN 47905 317-477-7096
12-13	CA	The Gathering, Contact: Bruce Junchnik, 9346 Greenback Lane, Orangevale, CA 95662 916-988-6586
12-13	TN	Richard Bustillo Jeet Kune Do Seminar, Blalock's IMA, Chattanooga, Contact: Chet Bialock, 1157 Tamarack Trail, Chattanooga, TN 37412 423-867-2885
18-19	MN	Solid Impact Karate Third Annual Gospel Martial Arts Union Midwest Martial Arts Clinic, Contact: Scott Hoffer, 512 Laurel Avenue, Suite 6, St. Paul, MN 44102-2020 612-224-6994 Email: scott.hoffer@solid.org
18-20	SC	International Martial Arts Symposium, Adams Mark Hotel, Contact: Riosely Abele, 604 Meeting Street, West Columbia, SC 29169 803-794-3908
18-19	TX	The Lone Star Nationals, Channeiview High School Gym, Contact: Lee Mitchell 713-328-6962
19	SC	13 Annual Lancaster Open Karate Championships, South Middle School Gym, Lancaster, Contact: Nathaniel and James White, 803-286-5155 or 803-475-4267
19	OH	World Congress of Martial Arts World Championship and Team USA, Contact: H. L. Mayle, 3371 County Road Five, Delta, OH 43515
19	KY	10th Annual Eagle Classic Karate Championship, Rowan County Middle School Gym, Contact: Virgil Davis, PO Box 157, Moorehead, KY 40351 606-784-9278
20	PA	Nenow's Dynasty, Contact: Scott Snyder, 468 Delaware Avenue, Palmerton, PA 18071 610-826-4400 Email: 73062.172@compuserve.com
20	Can	Shoot Wrestling Seminar, Ontario, Contact: Ron Beer, 25 Glenmore Drive, Whitby, Ontario L1N 9J3 Canada 905-294-6044
20	VA	Battle of Hampton Road, Woodside High School, Contact: C. D. Williamson, 2040 Coliseum Drive, Hampton, VA 23666, 804-827-5425
25	FL	International Destin Open Darate Championships, Destin Community Center, Contact: H. Warren, PO Box 277, Mary Ester, FL 904-864-5352
25	FL	N.B.F.A. Master's Seminar, Mary Esther, Contact: H. Warren, PO Box 277, Mary Esther, FL 32569 904-864-5352
26	FL	International Desitin Open Karate Championships, Mary Esther, Contact: H. Warren, PO Box 277, Mary Esther, FL 32569 904-864-5352
26	WV	6th Annual Moo Duk Kwan Karate Academy Championships, Dunbar Jr. High School Dunbar, Contact: Billy Washington, PO Box 52, Dunbar, WV 25064 304-768-8988
26	MA	Kids Karate Champions, Sliver Lake Jr. High School, Contact: Kenny Sprejue, 596 Washington Street, Whitman, MA 02382 617-447-3999
26	WI	1996 MTA Tae Kwon Do Nationals, Beloit College, Contact: Star Studios, 305 Oak Grove South, Beloit, WI 61080 815-389-4418
26	NJ	Francis Fong Jeet Kune Do Seminar Wing Chun, Piscataway, Contact: Jean Chin, International Martial Arts, 278 Greenbrook Road, North Plainfield, NJ 07060 908-903-0172
27	MD	GAMA Open Tournament, Contact: Timothy Gilbert, 25317 Clearwater Drive, Damascus, MD 20872 301-253-4765 Email: Tgilbert@mail.hg.faa.gov
27	ME	Huard's Skirmish 96 Grappling Tournament, Winslow High School, Contact: Mike Huard, Route 4, Box 320, Winslow, ME 04901-9435 207-873-0407
27	VT	New England Team USA Qualifier, Contact: Richard Lenchus, PO Box 234, Benson, VT 05731 802-537-4929

To submit your martial art event send your name, address, and telephone number along with the name of your event, the date of your event, and the location of your event to: Martial Art Events, PowerLine Publishing, Inc., 1705 National Blvd., Midwest City, OK 73110

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commentary

In Your Corner

By Gary Hestilow

Maximize the "I want to buy" in your students!

Your students want to buy products. How you structure your program and teach your classes will make a huge difference in how much they buy. Here are proven ways to maximize product sales and profit.

1. Provide each student with a list of the equipment needed for training at their belt level.

To fully participate and develop their skills, each student needs their own equipment. Identify the equipment needed to achieve new skills through classroom practice and homework. Provide each student with a list of these items.

2. Sell "almost new" equipment.

Enhance your school's image by using new equipment in class. New equipment promotes a feeling of safety and comfort for students when training. Keep new equipment in the classroom by selling "almost new" equipment to your students. Training equipment that has been used briefly in the classroom can be sold at a discount. The student gets a good deal and the school makes a profit. The program provides resources to purchase new training equipment for the school and adds dollars to your product sales.

3. Use products in class.

"Sell" training equipment in the classroom. Your best opportunity to promote training equipment sales is through use in the classroom. Students will purchase the same training equipment they use in class for practice at home.

4. Assign homework.

You tell your students to practice at home. They cannot practice classroom drills at home without the same equipment used in the classroom. If you assign specific homework, and your students have the equipment at home, their skills will greatly improve and your product sales will increase. Homework promotes additional equipment sales.

5. Teach special classes and seminars.

Break the routine with something special. A special class or seminar adds excitement to the regular class schedule. A special session can use products that are not part of the required equipment list. Seminars and classes can be directed at non-students such as parents or friends. Think of these examples:

- **Coach's seminar**

Invite the parents for a special session on how to work with their child on the homework. The parents should learn to assist with the homework training drills. This includes holding targets as well as watching for basic mistakes.

- **Stretching seminar**

Devote a special time to focus on stretching. Offer a special price on equipment used in the session. The equipment is delivered to participants and used during the class.

- **Self defense class**

Pick some product like the key chain that is designed as a self defense weapon. Invite students, their friends, moms, and other guests. Participants purchase a self defense key chain for use in the class.

- **Present guest instructor seminars**

Invite a guest instructor to teach a seminar featuring a weapon not taught in the regular curriculum. Purchase of the weapon is required for participation in the seminar.

6. Use visual merchandising.

Use a visual display to create interest in products. Promote seasonal items and market to specific users with products like Kid Kick merchandise, apparel, and novelty items. Select products that appeal to students as well as parents and others who watch class. Place your display in a prominent location and change merchandise regularly to keep the display fresh. Tie the display to seasonal promotions and classroom activities. Try new products.



7. Use selling aids like catalogs and posters.

You can't sell what you don't show. Catalogs and posters will expose students to a wider variety of marital art products than you keep in stock. Make sure the catalog is designed as a selling tool for you. The catalog should identify your school as the place to buy. The supply company should not include their phone number or address.

8. Provide specific items to give recognition for accomplishment.

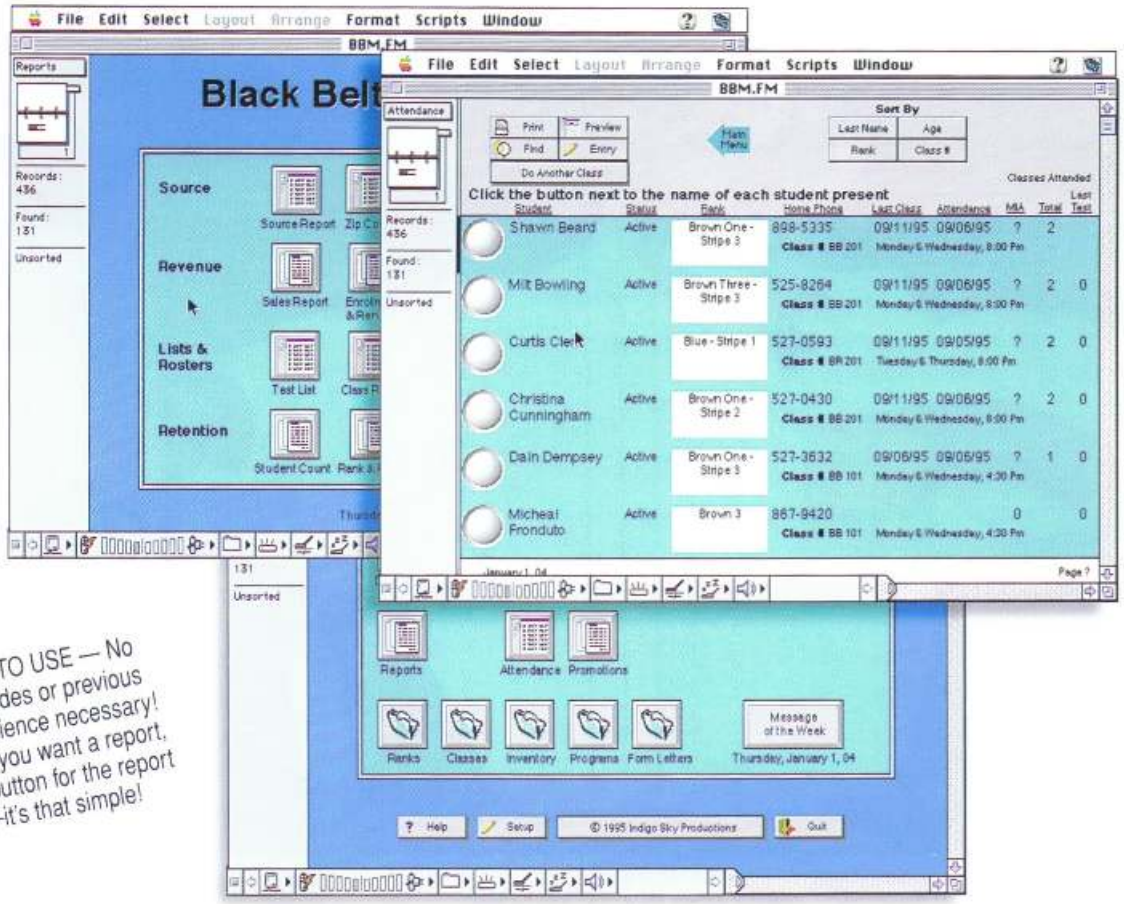
As students progress in skill, a new belt color is awarded for recognition. Tie advancements in skills to privileges and activities that involve products.

- Make the advanced uniform a different color from the beginners.
- Have a Demo Team uniform. Intermediate students may try out for Demo Team. Students who participate in three demonstrations qualify to wear the demo team uniform.
- Students may participate in approved competitions with permission from the instructor. Students who participate in three competitions qualify to wear the competition uniform.

Using these tips is easy. You are already doing many of the basic steps. Take it to the next level and get the full benefit from your retailing potential.

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Our software (for Windows™ or Macintosh®) will help you keep your students by giving you all the information you need to improve retention; get instant marketing feedback to help you enroll more students, and provide you with a total financial picture of your school to help you make more money, all at the click of a button.



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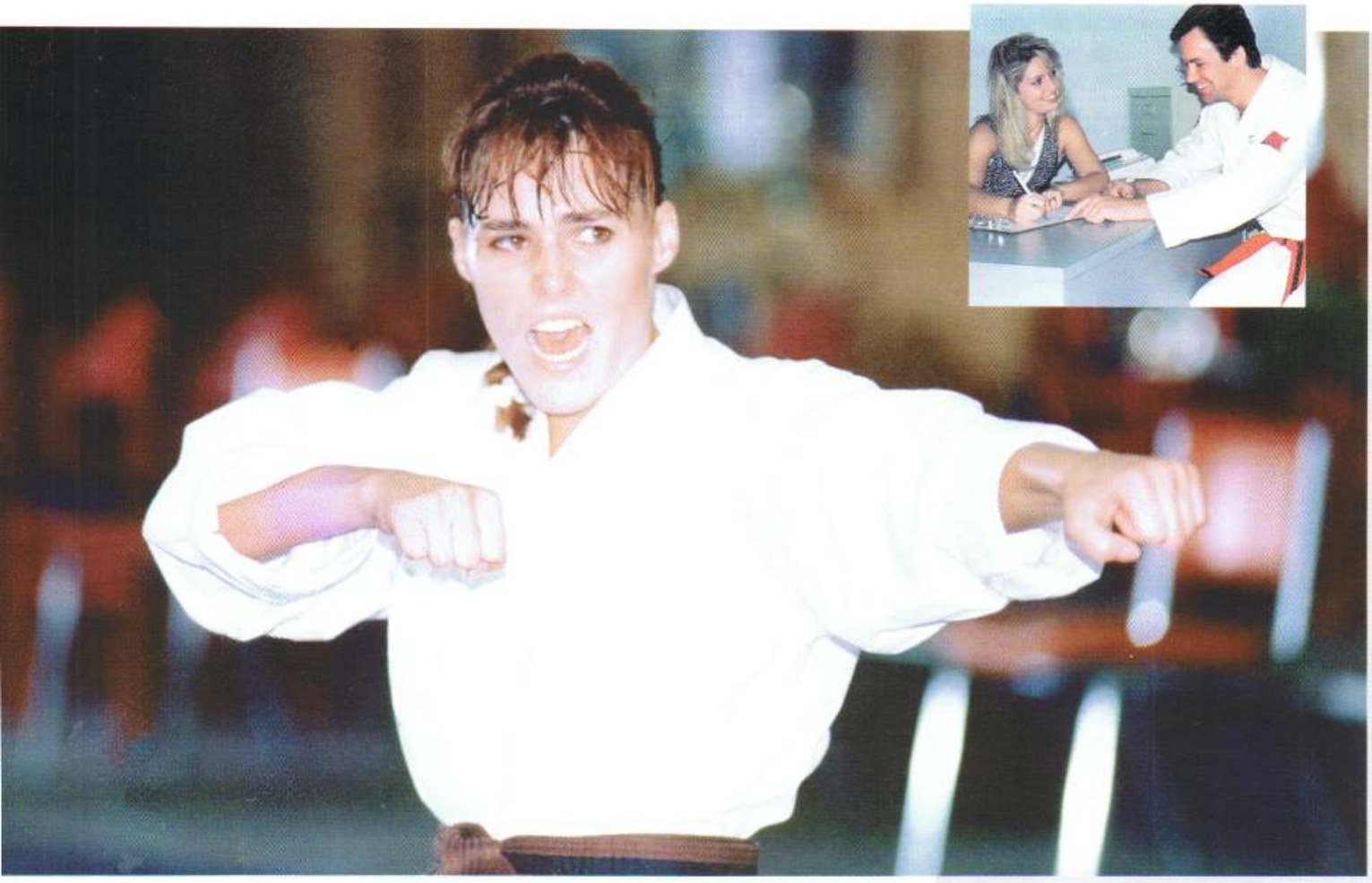
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Join The Nation's Fastest Growing Professional Martial Arts Association



As martial artists, most of us didn't decide to get into the martial arts business because we thought it was a quick way to get rich.

We chose this life because we love to teach and we love to train. However, the reality is that a Martial Arts School is a business, and you can't make it in this highly competitive business without growing revenues, without new students, and without constantly marketing and prospecting to make your school grow.



We understand that school owners want to focus their time and attention on the students, not on marketing. That's why the National Association of Professional Martial Artists (NAPMA) was formed.

NAPMA has put together a powerful team of marketing professionals to give school owners affordable access to proven, quality marketing and advertising materials that would normally be out of reach for most small to medium sized businesses.

The response has been absolutely phenomenal! Why? Because each month NAPMA provides you and your school with the professional marketing, advertising, and operational materials to make your school grow faster than you ever dreamed possible. This allows you to focus on the area that motivated you to open a school in the first place; teaching Martial Arts. NAPMA was designed from the ground up to be so affordable that any school could afford to participate. Besides, the program is set up to pay for itself by adding just TWO new students! And the whole program is backed by NAPMA's unconditional money-back guarantee! But these are just part of the reasons why NAPMA is experiencing this incredible growth; if the program didn't work, it wouldn't continue to grow.

Why NAPMA Works

Since NAPMA launched, back in January 1995, over 500 schools have signed on and are already enjoying the benefits and advantages of the latest in innovative martial arts marketing, teaching and business education. NAPMA membership gives your school a major advantage over your competition by helping you retain more students, sign up more new students, and become more successful WITHOUT selling out!

Monthly Marketing Muscle

As a NAPMA Professional member, We'll supply you with everything you need to help make your school a success, including:



• Camera Ready Ads That Get Results!



NAPMA has contracted a team of professional design experts to provide you with the most powerful ad campaigns our industry has ever seen, all camera-ready, and designed to get results fast! For instance, Terry Bryan's school in Colorado Springs, Colorado enrolled over 70 students from our special NAPMA promotional tie-in with the Power Ranger film in theatres. Our marketing strategies get results, and we do all the design, copy, and research work for you, leaving you free to concentrate on providing quality training.

National Black Belt Club Renewal Program

It's no secret that in the past some Black Belt Clubs were used as a way for students to "pay" for black belt status without earning one. This is absolutely not the case with NAPMA and our program is set up entirely different. Our National Black Belt Club is designed to help you, the school owner, attract and retain quality students though their commitment to reaching Black Belt Status the right way; through hard work and discipline.

The National Black Belt Club is the perfect system for generating a steady monthly source of highly profitable renewals and should account for 60% of your tuition income while having a huge effect on the atmosphere and energy in your school. NAPMA provides you with all the flyers, brochures, patches, certificates, posters and most of all, national affiliation for your Black Belt Club students.

Video Training Seminars for Your Staff

NAPMA members nationwide say that this is the most valuable tool they have ever used to educate and motivate their staff. Imagine the benefits of exposing your staff to the most successful martial artists in the industry; sharing their drills, their business strategies for success, and their experiences. Our monthly video training provides you with three 20-minute seminars targeted to a specific area of the school: Instructor training, office training, and owner training.

Professional Designation



Only NAPMA member schools receive the authorization to use the designation, "Member: National Association of Professional Martial Artists" on their marketing materials, ads, business cards/letterhead, and even on the school itself. This designation shows your affiliation with a nationally recognized professional organization and speaks volumes to the public about your commitment, integrity, and concern for your school and your students. NAPMA schools uphold the highest ethical and safety standards in the business and it's our intention to inform the public of the benefits of patronizing NAPMA member schools.

Networking

We've found that NAPMA member schools want to help each other succeed. Many school owners find this an invaluable resource; the ability to instantly have a common bond with another member school and to interact on a variety of issues, techniques, and challenges all school face in today's marketplace.

Toll-Free Consulting Hotline

The NAPMA hotline is there as your link to getting the most from the NAPMA program material, videos, Black Belt Club program, and all aspects of NAPMA membership. School owners have told us time and time again, how important this toll-free access is.

Cutting Edge Developments

cardioKARATE® THE WORKOUT THAT PACKS A PUNCH™

Aerobic Kickingboxing is the new fitness sensation and NAPMA is proud to announce an exclusive new program for its member schools. With this new program NAPMA schools will be the first in their area to take advantage of this exploding new market.

Our exclusive Cardio programs, provided to NAPMA member schools at no additional charge, come complete with ads, marketing ideas and video curriculum examples so you can launch the NAPMA Cardio-Karate™ or Cardio-Kicking™ program in your school right away.

As a NAPMA Professional member you will have the opportunity to implement many of the latest, cutting-edge marketing strategies months before your competition even knows what hit them. NAPMA members always get the competitive marketing edge.

In-House Promotional Events

These can be very lucrative (potentially generating thousands of dollars in additional monthly profits) and easy to produce. We'll provide you with step-by-step instructions, plus ready-made ads and flyers for super successful in-house promotions for student retention and additional profits.

continued on next page

"I have run successful martial arts schools for over thirty years now. After viewing the NAPMA material, it looks like an old dog can learn a few new tricks. I'm joining today."
—JIM HARRISON
American Karate Legend

"In my first month with NAPMA, I enrolled 10 students into the National Black Belt Club. Thank you!"
—SCOTT ASHLEY KARATE
Kickboxing Athletic League

"John Graden has a great ability to communicate how to take total charge of your success. His landmark program will set the standard for high caliber schools."
—JOE LEWIS
World Heavyweight Champion



Don't Let Your Competition Get The Upper Hand, Enroll Today!

NAPMA Membership

NAPMA Professional Membership includes a monthly support program that provides you with:

- A three-part video seminar each month
- Separate Audio Tape Seminars
- Camera ready advertisements that get quick results
- Proven Retention techniques and strategies
- Pre-designed marketing campaigns
- Authorization to use the NAPMA member designation on your printed materials
- In-house NAPMA sponsored promotions for student retention and profit
- The National Black Belt Club
- Travel Discounts
- Toll-free consulting hotline to help you get the most from the material and much, much more..

That's really just a sampling of the benefits of NAPMA's Professional Membership.

We made NAPMA affordable for every school

NAPMA membership is an ongoing monthly subscription at $99 (+$3 shipping). There are no contracts and you can cancel at any time. If NAPMA helps you enroll just two more students and they stay in class, your yearly membership is paid for by their tuition. That's not two students per month; that just two students period! That's only $23 per week for all of the value of the NAPMA Professional membership.

NAPMA Start Up Kit

The NAPMA Start Up Kit includes a sample month's material plus two bonus books:

Bonus #1: THE BLACK BELT MANAGEMENT MANUAL

This fully illustrated guidebook to success is considered to be the best book ever written on the subject.

Bonus #2: THE NAPMA RETENTION AND FINANCIAL CONTROL SYSTEM

This control book is designed with the retention, statistical and enrollment forms needed to interface your school with the NAPMA program.

The NAPMA Start-up Kit is only $99 plus $10 shipping and handling.

How To Get Started

Take the first step and give us a call at 1 (800) 9-SENSEI (973-6734). For your convenience we accept VISA, MasterCard, and American Express. Call today and order our Start-up Kit and enroll—before your competition does.

Money Back Guarantee!

We are so confident in our program, and so many schools have had such resounding success with our program, that we extend a full 30-DAY MONEY BACK GUARANTEE from receipt of your Start-up Kit.

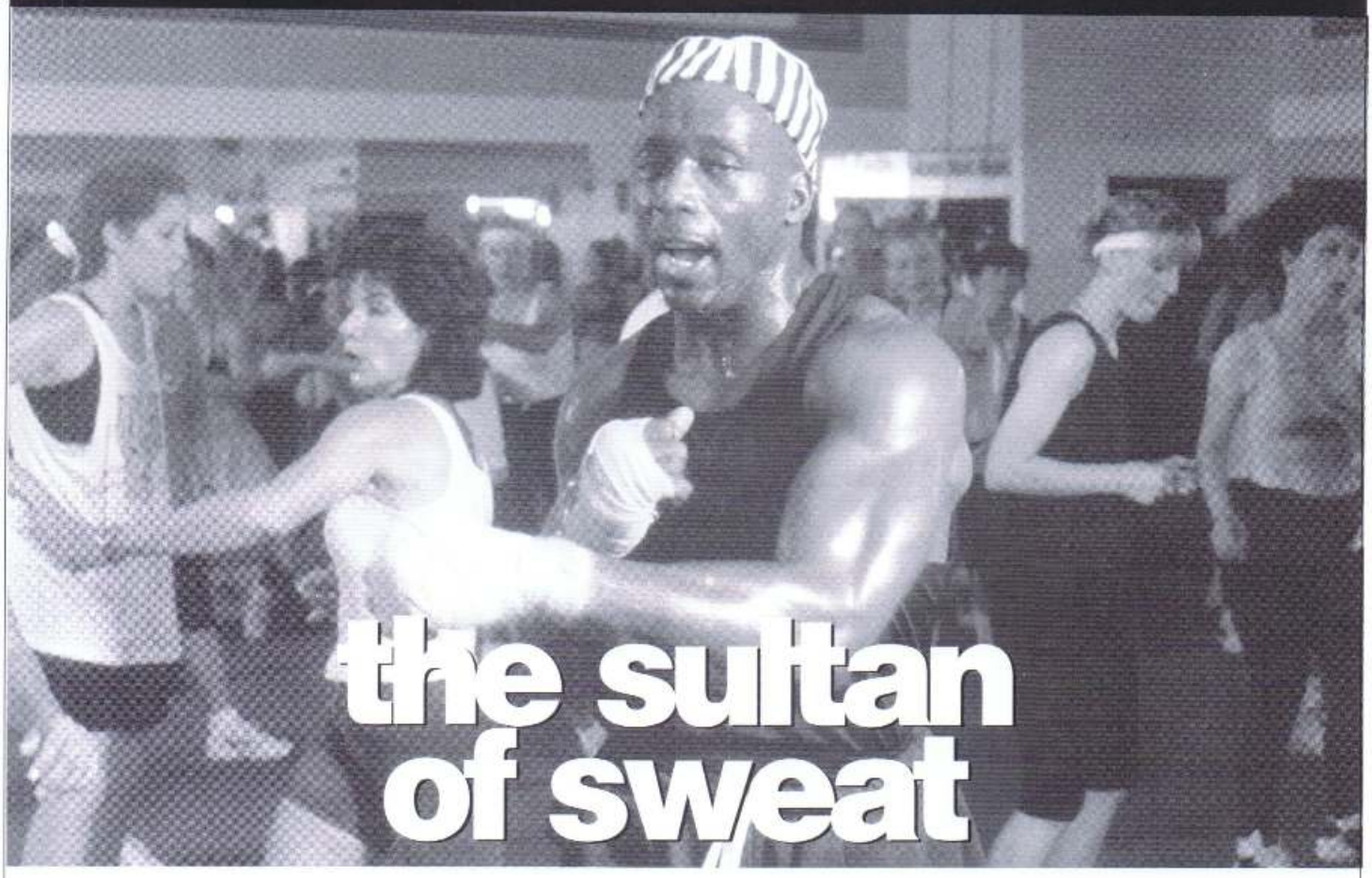
Run the ads, watch the tapes, read the material and learn all you can. If you don't agree that your school will benefit from NAPMA membership (at $3.25 a day), then return our package for a full refund.

NAPMA

National Association Of Professional Martial Artists

3950 3rd Street N. • Suite C&D • St. Petersburg, FL 33703

1-800-973-6734 (Outside U.S. call 813-895-0409)



the sultan of sweat

As you'll read in this final installment of our four part series on the aerobic kickboxing movement Billy Blank's skill as a martial artist is exceeded only by his business savvy. Like most tinsel town products, Billy's story seems to be the stuff of fantasy, but it's all too true.

BILLY BLANKS Part II WORLD TRAINING CENTER

an interview with billy blanks

Tae Bo ("Leg Boxing") Aerobics classes start at 6:30 a.m. sharp at Billy Blanks' popular World Training Center, where, Blanks estimates, 1,000 people a day pass through his doors! Each class is one continuous hour of nonstop aerobics integrating a wide variety of martial arts movements with conventional aerobics routines. Our photo session for this two-part interview was scheduled for the 8:30 a.m. class and we showed up early. The 7:30 a.m. class was filled with about 60 clients, only two of which were men.

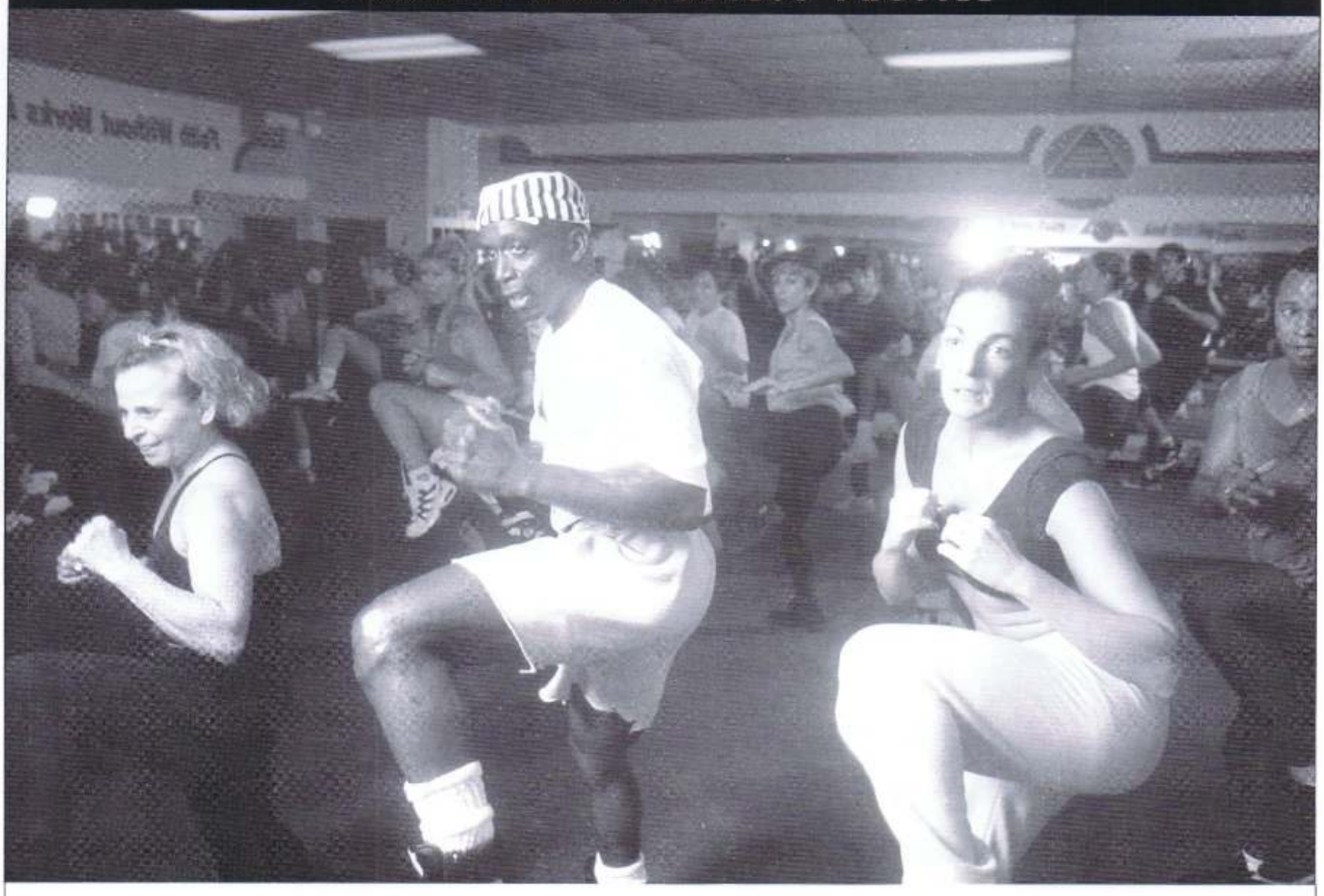


Billy Blanks

The line for the next class stretched all the way down the hallway outside Blanks' training center. And as one class ended and the sweat-soaked clients poured out, the clients for the 8:30 a.m. class literally ran into the room en masse. There were three men and 62 women, spanning an age range from teenagers to those in their 50s. The upbeat music, already cued up, commenced and the clients tore into the workout with gusto.

In a separate room — the dojo — just four students were taking karate lessons! In an adjoining weight room, three women were working out with

interview by john corcoran



weight-training equipment.

Of the three types of workouts at Blanks' studio, which do you think represents the wave of the future? Which do you think will bring in female clients? Which do you think will fill an empty martial arts studio during off-peak hours?

Here's what Billy has to say about it. Read 'em and reap!

MA PRO: *What do you charge for both your Tae Bo and your karate programs?*

BLANKS: I don't use the usual payment systems. I go by one month, three months, six months, and one year. The basic price for karate is $80 a month. I offer three options for the Tae Bo Program: $8 per session if you buy it individually, or 15 sessions for $90, or 30 sessions for $150.

MA PRO: *How much square footage do you have in your studio?*

BLANKS: 5,000 square feet. We have outgrown my current studio, so I'm getting ready to move to a new studio with 8,000 square feet.

I've been teaching martial arts for a long time and I've seen a lot of studios, but I swear I've never seen anything this successful.

Do you know who Greg Silva is?

MA PRO: *Yes. He's president of United Professionals.*

BLANKS: He always tells me how well his association is doing, how good business is, and how you can make a lot of money teaching the martial arts. So I told him about a thing my wife and I created called "Customer Appreciation Day." We did a Customer Appreciation Day three times. The first time we did it we made $9,000 in one day. The second time we did it we made $14,000, and the third time we made $35,000.

I'm talking about in one day! I'm talking about cash you can put in your bank. I'm not talking about contracts like guys like Silva talk about, where people pay a monthly fee.

MA PRO: *What did you do to make that kind of money?*

BLANKS: We close up for one day and call it "Customer Appreciation Day." We buy juices and fruit and give it to all our customers. Then we give them anything they want in the studio free for one day. It could be private lessons, Tae Bo Aerobics classes, weight-training privates — whatever they want.

That same day, we have a "Sign Up Program" where, if they sign up early they can get 10% off the cost of any program. We get people to sign up for six months, for a year, for 20 or 30 private lessons. And they pay up front.

MA PRO: *Are these walk-ins off the street, coming to you through advertising?*

BLANKS: No. I don't do any advertising. It's all through word of mouth. In fact, I haven't done any advertising since I first opened my studio. After that it has just been word of mouth.

To continue my story, I was talking to Silva on the phone. He said, "Billy, no karate studio makes as much as the people do in my association."

I said, "You guys are more than welcome to come visit me to see how well my karate studio is doing. At 7:30 in the morning, I already have 150 people in my studio — 80 in one room and 70 in another room."

He didn't believe me so I invited him to come in. He said, "I have to go to Las Vegas, but when I come back out to the West Coast I'll come in and see you.

But you know what? He tried to surprise me; he showed up anyway, at 7:30 a.m. And when he walked in he couldn't believe all the people that were in my studio. He asked, "What happens after 7:30?" I said, "It gets bigger."

MA PRO: *What kind of retention do you have?*

BLANKS: I can ask my wife, but most of the people have been with me for seven years.

MA PRO: *You mean you have no turnover at all? Somebody's got to drop out sometime.*

BLANKS: They don't drop out. When someone starts to get bored, I tell them, if you don't like karate, or if you don't like Tae Bo, go to kickboxing. I have a lot of different programs I offer at my studio. So they have a lot of options they can choose from. And they do.

That's the way to keep your black belts too. I have 50 black belts — 27 of them are females — who've all been with me for seven years. And I've got close to 100 brown belts right now. I've got so many things students can do at my studio that they don't get bored.

MA PRO: *What is your ratio of men to women?*

BLANKS: Overall, 70% women and 30% guys.

MA PRO: *How many black belt instructors work for you?*

BLANKS: I have 24 salaried employees.

MA PRO: *Who are some of your celebrity clients?*

BLANKS: Wayne Gretsky, Paula Abdul, Connie Selleca, Farrah Faucett, Shaquille O'Neal, Sugar Ray Leonard, Valerie Bertinelli, Justine Bateman, Sinbad. . .

MA PRO: *Okay. You have a fitness show on ESPN 2 TV. How did that deal come about?*

BLANKS: I got that ESPN 2 deal because I had gotten a lot of publicity on television about my Tae Bo Aerobics program. The producer of an ESPN 2 fitness show called "Crunch" saw my cover story in *Shape* magazine. He asked me if I could come on as a guest and do four different types of fitness programs. I did a segment on a kickboxing and aerobics program I call "Kickology," another I call the "Billy Blaster Workout," one on weight training, and one on Tae Bo.

That lead to them offering me my own half-hour show. It's called "Martial Arts Fitness" and it airs every other week.

MA PRO: *What does the deal entail?*

BLANKS: I signed a deal for 46 shows, or two years. On the show I teach what I call "Tae Bo Funk."

MA PRO: *We've seen you all over the mainstream media in the past year or so. You're everywhere! Did you hire a big-time p.r. firm to generate this publicity for you?*

BLANKS: No. All of this publicity comes through word of mouth. Everything I've done so far has been through the clients in my studio. I just did a half-hour exercise show for pregnant women with Demi Moore, Jane Seymour and Pamela Anderson, and just last week "Extra" did a segment on all of us.

I'm also getting ready to film a big infomercial on it, and Wayne Gretsky and Shaquille O'Neal will be appearing in it to help me. They'll be telling people how good Tae Bo is and what it's done for them as athletes.

Sugar Ray Leonard and I are getting ready to do our own video too. I also have a film coming out this fall called *Balance of Power* that will be released in theaters and not go straight to cable-TV.

MA PRO: *It's tough to get a theatrical release for a martial arts film these days. What is special about* Balance of Power?

BLANKS: It has a bigger production company behind it, Live Entertainment, and had a bigger budget than the usual martial arts film. I'm the star, but they surrounded me with a good supporting cast. And it's a very good story for kids that study martial arts. In the movie, I teach kids how to become better people through the martial arts. I think martial arts instructors will love this movie. ■

Billy Blanks can be reached at his studio in Sherman Oaks, California: (818) 906-8528.



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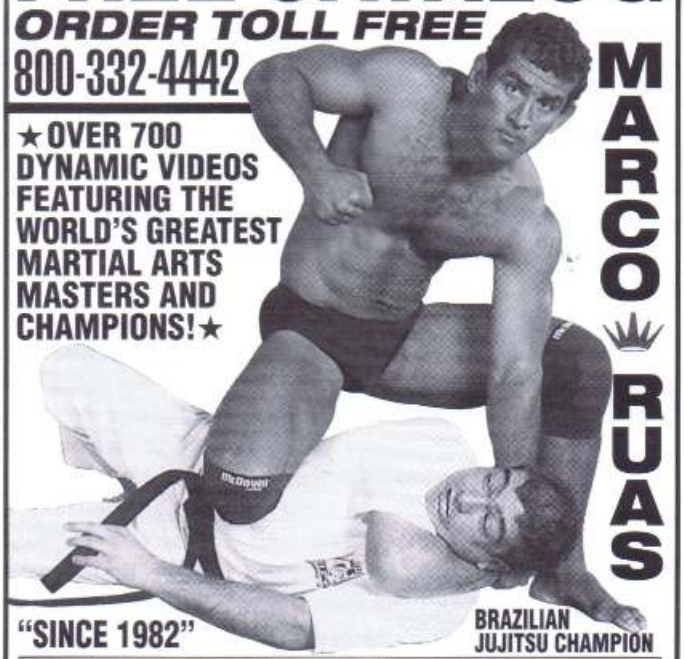
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Fights, Camera, Action!—from page 9

Daniels, and the like.

MASLAK: That's a really hard question to answer. You see, most film buyers at what we could call "the wholesale level" want to pay only the percentage of the actual budget that their territorial market represents as a part of the film's total revenue stream. That's like trying to buy a house or car at cost.

So if the producer told the truth about the budget, the film could only break even at best. As a result most producers either lie outright, or they refuse to say at all.

Another reason it's a hard question is that the larger production companies have the advantage of an economy of scale. They might own their cameras and editing equipment, or cut bulk deals for various vendor supplies and services. A million dollars goes a lot farther for them than it does for a small company.

In general, however, these martial arts pictures cost well over a million dollars, but less than five million. Any budget number between those two marks on the low and high side is quite realistic.

MA PRO: *Where does the investment money come from to finance these films?*

MASLAK: Some money comes from private investors, but most money comes from within the film industry itself. I already described how a Roger Corman might finance a series of films. Our current Cynthia Rothrock picture was financed by rolling over some of the capital from our last film, *Red Sun Rising*, as well as by preselling a few foreign territories.

The big "but" here, however, is that you must be established in the industry as a bona-fide professional filmmaker before you can make this sort of internal financing work.

MA PRO: *Where and when does the investor make his return?*

MASLAK: The "where" is like any other business. . .from the total revenue streams of the picture, which vary a bit from film to film. The "when" is usually 18-24 months before any single film crosses the break-even mark.

MA PRO: *What are the sources of revenue?*

MASLAK: Licensing fees from foreign wholesale buyers, from wholesale buyers for domestic theatrical, pay-cable, satellite, video, TV syndication, as well as from buyers for many ancillary markets such as airlines, large hotels, luxury liners, the U.S. armed forces network, CD-ROM, merchandising, etc.

MA PRO: *What markets are the biggest?*

MASLAK: As you might expect, the biggest markets are the biggest per-capita economies: the U.S., Japan, Germany, South Korea, United Kingdom, Canada, Brazil, etc.

The Marketing

MA PRO: *Why can't most martial arts films get theatrical distribution?*



Producer-Director Paul Maslak setting up shots with his star of "Sworn to Justice," Cynthia Rothrock.

MASLAK: Overseas, very many of them do play in the theaters. It's only in this country that there's a problem. The reason has to do with the history of Hollywood itself.

In 1948, the U.S. Supreme Court declared the entire industry to be vertically integrated and, therefore, an oligopoly and in violation of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. An oligopoly is a closed-door, behind-the-scenes monopolistic conspiracy between two or more companies. In this case, there were eight — all the existing studios.

The Paramount Consent Decree which followed the Supreme Court's ruling prohibited film companies from having a womb-to-tomb operation: film production (manufacturing), distribution (wholesaling) and theatrical exhibition (retailing). They could be involved with any two of the former, but not with all three.

(Editor's Note: Of interest here is the connection of a main player in this early anti-trust case and the sport of kickboxing during its infancy. Barney Balaban was president of Paramount Studios at the time of the Supreme Court ruling. His daughter, Judith Balaban Quine, was a co-founder of the Professional Karate Association and a pioneer of the sport of kickboxing who tried to follow in her father's monopolistic footsteps.

She and her husband were PKA partners from 1974-85 and were often criticized for trying to "monopolize" the sport by 1) putting the world champions and all their title



challengers under contract (thus controlling the talent or the "product"); 2) owning the production company, Sport Karate, Inc., which produces the sport for TV (thus, owning the "wholesaling" vehicle; and 3) tying up all rights to television broadcasts (thus controlling the primary means of distribution, or "retailing").

Afterwards the "B" movie circuits, spearheaded by the drive-ins, and the art house circuits grew up. During that era, most martial arts films could and did get theatrical distribution in the U.S., independent films like Bruce Lee's and Chuck Norris' early films.

But in the late 1970s and early 1980s, real estate prices climbed so high that the drive-ins largely got sold off. And with the rapid growth of the new home-video market during that same period, almost overnight the "B" movie circuit turned into a direct-to-video and cable business.

The reason you hear so much about art films today is because the art-house theatrical circuit still exits. The "B" movie circuit does not.

MA PRO: *How strong is the current demand for the martial arts genre film?*

MASLAK: Martial arts films are a staple of both the low-budget and the big-budget action film market, just as the western was years ago. Unless you've got Jean-Claude Van Damme in the lead, you can't just make a let's-hold-a-tournament-and-fight-to-the-death movie. Audiences have noticeably wearied of such stories. So demand for the pure martial arts film a la *Enter The Dragon* is down.

MA PRO: *Where is this demand for martial arts films coming from?*

MASLAK: From action film fans worldwide.

MA PRO: *How long have martial arts films been commercially viable?*

MASLAK: There have been several cycles during which martial arts films were more or less commercially viable. The first big cycle began in 1971 with *Billy Jack*, followed by the *Kung Fu* TV series and the Bruce Lee phenomenon. But that cycle died down about 1977 when *Kentucky Fried Movie* spoofed *Enter The Dragon*, leaving Chuck Norris and some Hong Kong chop-sockies to carry the torch single-handedly for many years.

Then in 1986, on the heels of the *Karate Kid* films, *No Retreat, No Surrender* became a surprise "B" circuit theatrical hit. And in 1987, *Bloodsport* became one of the last "B" theater circuit hits. Martial arts films have been viable ever since.

MA PRO: *Will the demand for martial arts films continue, or do you see it waning?*

MASLAK: It's already started to wane. The future depends entirely upon the ability of filmmakers to create stories which capture the public's interest. If we keep making the same old tired formula crap, the genre will go the way of the western. Right now, I'd say that Jackie Chan's surprise hits, *Rumble In The Bronx* and *Supercop*, are a very hopeful sign for the future.

The Stars

MA PRO: *Jean-Claude Van Damme and Steven Seagal have been very successful. Why do you think they seem to have a hard time earning respect from the established film community?*

MASLAK: I don't know why you'd think Van Damme and Seagal aren't respected by the film community. Anybody — or anything for that matter — with that kind of star power is both pampered and coddled like conquering heroes by Hollywood.

What you're probably picking up on is the fact that film critics frown on almost anybody who's not giving an Academy Award-worthy acting performance in some slice-of-life drama or other.

Also, to be honest, Hollywood is a bit of a Peyton Place. Some people are jealous of Van Damme and Seagal's success. Others just don't like them personally for one reason or another. And the tabloid media like to play that up.

MA PRO: *Are there any martial arts stars out there, other than Van Damme and Seagal, who can demand a higher price or who have a built-in audience?*

MASLAK: Rumor has it that Sly Stallone periodically flirts with the idea of starring in a martial arts film. Jackie Chan recently signed a deal with Universal Pictures to star in a buddy picture for a reported $12.2 million. And you never know when a Dolph Lundgren, a Chuck Norris or a Wesley Snipes might put together a new high watermark deal.

Also, we have many potential "A" stars waiting in the wings for the right opportunity to jump ahead of the pack. To mention a few, these stars include — in alphabetical order — Mark Dacascos, Gary Daniels, Olivier Gruner, Phillip Rhee, Ernie Reyes, Jr., T.J. Roberts, Cynthia Rothrock, Robin Shou, Jeff Speakman and Don "The Dragon" Wilson.

Other names are Loren Avedon, David Bradley, Daniel Bernhardt, Ian Jacklin, James Lew, Kurt McKinney, Ken McLeod, Vince Murdocco, Kenn Scott, Karen Shepard, Jerry Trimble and Michael Worth.

After our experiences with Van Damme [*No Retreat, No Surrender*], among others, my producing partner and I have come to believe that you can never count anyone out of the superstar sweepstakes. ■

Next month, in Part II of his insightful interview, Paul Maslak focuses on issues ranging from what makes a good fight scene, to what he foresees for the future of the martial arts film genre.

SAVED BY THE BELL

how to develop a profile of your caller (part II of "the four Ps)

By Rick Bell

Last month we learned that callers to most martial arts schools are met with poor telephone procedures, and that in order to be successful a school must develop a system to turn incoming info calls into appointments.

I introduced you to a system I developed called the 4 P's, and told you about the first P, which is The Pivot. This month we will discuss the second P, which I call "The Profile."

"If the caller is a parent inquiring about lessons for a child you will say, "Tell me a little about Johnny. Is he shy or is he outgoing?"

The idea of a caller profile is nothing new. Martial arts business organizations have used caller "info sheets" in one form or another for over 30 years. I even have the original Ed Parker business system telephone script in my office at EasyPay.

The problem with the old caller info sheets is that they asked too many questions that really were not pertinent to the caller enrolling in classes with you. Questions like:

- Have you ever studied before?
- What do you hope to get from your training here?
- I even heard of one question that asked the caller who made the decisions in their house — them or their wife!

If you know anything about the generation in which we live you know that we are a nation of self-centered people. Oh, I don't mean that in a negative sense, I just mean that everyone is interested in what the world has to offer them, and very little else. You've heard the old saying about everyone's favorite radio station being "W I I FM" (What's In It For Me), but have you ever stopped to realize that your hand is on the radio dial, and that you must tune that station in for people if they are ever going to hear its message! Once you find where "W I I F M" is on the dial for a person, they will usually be easy to win over to your way of thinking.

Great, so all I have to do is tell people what they want to hear and they'll be happy, I'll be rich, and we'll all live happily ever after, right? Not exactly. You do have to tell people what they want to hear, but with one little qualifier: It has to be the truth. No matter how good you get at telling people what you think they want to hear, if you are fabricating facts, reality will soon enough catch up with you, and failure will be close behind.

The nice thing about selling martial arts lessons for a living, is that we never have to lie about the benefits of our product to anyone. When we tell a potential student that enrolling in our program will improve his/her confidence, we know it to be true. When we tell parents that they can expect an improvement in their child's discipline when he starts classes with us, we know they will see just that.

As the teacher of a skill that features so many benefits, we could talk about five different benefits and still not hit on the one that truly interested the caller. This is where The Profile comes in.

When someone calls you to inquire about your lessons you will develop a short, simple profile of them, or their child, to determine what they want from your program by asking the following question. If the caller is an adult you will say, "Tell me a little about your job and some of your hobbies. Do you play any sports?"

By asking about the caller's job you will not only learn if he/she has one or not, but you will possibly get an insight into what kind of lifestyle they have. If they work behind a desk all day, they may be extremely "de-conditioned" (a nice little phrase invented by the health club industry).



On the other hand, if they work for a tree-trimming service, they may be very athletic and looking for a challenge. By asking the second part of the profile question about their hobbies and sports participation, you can further identify their probable areas of interest.

If the caller is a parent inquiring about lessons for a child you will say, "Tell me a little about Johnny. Is he shy or is he outgoing?"

Once you get a parent to start talking about his/her child being either shy or outgoing, he/she will usually keep talking, and you will more than likely be able to understand exactly why the parent has contacted you about lessons in the first place.

Next month we will discuss what to do once we identify the caller's motivation by learning the next P — "The Praise" ■

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THE SEVEN LAWS OF SUCCESS WITHOUT SELLING OUT

PART V

the law of multiplied efforts

BY JOHN GRADEN

PART FIVE OF THIS series features excerpts from the top-selling martial arts business manual "Black Belt Management, a Guide to Success Without Selling Out."



Regular meetings of your leadership team are critical to its success.

Your success will be in direct proportion to your ability to duplicate your efforts.

Acres of Diamonds: How to Surround Yourself With Ready, Willing and Able Instructors

One of the biggest management challenges facing school owners is a perceived lack of instructors. I say perceived, because it's my feeling they may be surrounded by instructors just waiting to be discovered. Some owners don't feel as though they can afford to pay someone to teach, and often they're right.

Others judge the potential of instructors by the level of their technical execution. Yet, they may have a number of very personable, enthused and responsible students who may not have the best side kick, but would love to help the school by teaching.

Seek and Ye Shall Find

The question is, how do you find these diamonds in the rough? The secret is the formation of an intern or leadership program.

In obtaining a degree in education, university students are required to be interns for a period of time for little or no money. In pursuit of a medical degree, one of the most difficult and trying periods is the internship. In following our idea of operating a karate school like a private academic school instead of a gym, it would certainly be advantageous to look at this internship program very closely.

In the classes of most successful schools, you will find the student body broken down into groups of six to eight people per group. While the class may number 25-30 students, the school endeavors to keep an eight-or ten-to-one student-to-instructor ratio. Paying four to five instructors for each class would not only be impractical, it would be impossible. However, these instructors are members of the leadership program and as such are very enthused and trained volunteers.

They receive weekly classes in leadership skills and communication in addition to straightforward lessons on how to teach the curriculum. Payment is the furthest thing from their mind. They are honored to have the opportunity to help their school and flattered to be asked to help teach, and they should be. Good schools take great pride in the quality of student produced and if someone is considered skilled enough to contribute to that, then it is indeed an honor. As a result, many leadership-team students go on to become part of the professional, paid staff of the school.

With rare exceptions, this leadership team never runs a class or is responsible for more than six to eight students for any longer than 10-15 minutes at a time. They are not ready for that level of responsibility. Students want the main instructor to work with them.

However, it's not necessary that the main instructor work with the class every minute. A parallel example would be a dentist's or doctor's office. The assistant takes care of the preparation for the first half of the visit, and then the doctor comes in and takes care of the expert detail work.

With a leadership team, the main instructor is very careful to match a group or individual with a leadership-team member with the ability to handle the job. Often, leadership-team members are restricted to just wandering corrections. As they advance in skill and experience, they progress to teaching small groups or individuals.

The beauty of this system is that you are really helping these people take their martial arts skills to a new level. As you well know, teaching is an art in itself that instills confidence, clear and concise communications skills, and the ability to motivate. These skills can be translated outside of the school in both the professional world of management and the academic world.

Leadership-team members are given special privileges in recognition and appreciation of their outstanding contribution to the school. They may receive special uniforms, patches and, in rare cases, scholarships for tuition. The key is to select your leadership team carefully, then monitor and train them. In other words, inspect what you expect. ■

HOW TO SET UP A SEMINAR

part two

by Lee Wedlake, Jr.

Seminar Fees

How much should you charge for the seminar? I remember a Joe Lewis seminar in Chicago in the early '70's costing just $10. In general, seminars run about 1½ hours and $25-35 dollars a person. The seminar teacher's time seems to have been cut back in the past few years. It was almost standard that two hours was the length. Possibly, that's just too much time out of a day, or people just can't absorb as well in two hours.

Information overload or aching backs from standing for two hours could be answers. It depends on a lot of factors. It really should not be less than an hour and a half.

Basically, you use this formula. Take what you think the whole thing will cost. Divide that number by what you propose to charge. That gives you the number of participants you need to break even. If you think you'll have that attendance, fine. You'll work for free, but it won't cost you anything.

Example: Instructor fee: $500. Airfare: $300. Hotel: $120. Printing and mailing: $100. Misc.: $75. Total: $1,095.

Consequently, you need 44 people at $25 each to break even, 37 at $30, 32 at $35, etc. Now you just have to make a profit by getting more people in the door either to participate or as spectators.

Some instructors don't like spectators. They feel they're getting the same information as those on the floor and should either be out there doing it with everybody else, or pay the same amount even if they just sit ad watch. Others feel it just does not make a difference.

A big name can justify a spectator charge. It's up to you. If you do it, make sure they have a comfortable place from which to watch. After all, they just paid to be entertained.

Seminar Location

The facility must be large enough to handle the event. Twenty five people in a 1,200-square-foot studio will work but it will be tight. I've had 60 on the floor in mine (2,400 sq. feet) at one time and it's really crowded. Sean Kelley and I regularly have 80-100 people at a time in our events, and the space is 3,000-4,000 sq. feet. That's just about right for that many.



Seminars with veteran martial artists like Jim Harrison can be educational and fun.

It may require that you scout out a ballroom, VFW hall, school gym, etc. to rent for the seminar. It's going to cost more and you'll sometimes have to provide proof of insurance, or even have to buy some. Don't forget to factor that into the overall costs.

The facility must also be appropriate to the event. Carpeted or even tile floors are usually okay for karate-style seminars. A judo clinic would need mats. A school or college would probably have them there, but the VFW wouldn't. So plan accordingly.

The Day Before The Seminar

The day approaches. Make sure you know exactly when, where and what airline your guest is coming on. Confirm that he got his tickets. Many large cities have two airports. Get the right one and don't take anything for granted.

Be on time for the pickup. Some airports will allow you to be at the gate, some won't. Try to remember to clarify where you'll be with the instructor so you don't miss each other.

Agree to meet at the gate, security or baggage claim area and make sure the instructor knows who will be meeting him, if not you, and how to identify each other. Seminar instructors have been missed a few times and it panics the promoter.

Get him checked in at the hotel. If possible, check him in early and hand him the key so he doesn't have to stand at the hotel check-in desk.

Be attentive to his needs. He's been on the road for hours, so ask if he'd like to rest a bit or get something to eat. Don't just drag him down to the studio to show him off; there's time enough for that later. If he wants to go directly to the studio, he'll say so.

Seminar Day

Check and double-check your registration lists. Make sure nobody gets deleted accidentally; it slows things down at the door. Since you'll probably have a printed master registration list, you should also keep the original registration slips on hand as a backup.

Don't even let anyone on the floor without paying first. Get help to do all of this. You will need at least two other people besides yourself. One to do check-in and collect fees at the door, another to either be security at the door or act as "gofer." You will be too busy with details and answering questions, as well as acting as host to the guest instructor.

You should have handled everything else possible well beforehand. Things like making sure you have change for the door person, bringing registration lists, participation certificates, having tables set up where needed, bringing and setting up sales items, marker or chalkboards if the instructor requested one (Ed Parker always used one), etc. This makes the day easier.

Start on time or as closely as possible. Don't wait for people who may or may not show up. Get the group in some semblance of order



Whether or not to invite outside schools to your event is one decision you'll have to make in the preparation of your event.

when the instructor is ready to start. Make your introductions. Introduce yourself since many people may not know you, but just your name. Make any necessary acknowledgments, such as to people who drove a long way, your teacher, or the person who brought the most students. Be brief. Introduce the instructor and get out of the way, your part is almost over.

After The Seminar

Photos are taken, certificates passed out, thank yous said and hands shaken. Remember to get an autographed photo for yourself to put up in the studio. Leave the area as you found it; you'll usually want to use the facility again, especially if it's your school.

Most promoters arrange time for a meal with the guest and other special people. It's always fun for a student to say, "I had dinner with my teacher and Bill Wallace," or, "My instructor invited all the black belts out to lunch with Ed Parker." It's a great highlight to the event.

Back at the hotel or immediately after the seminar in the office, it's time to pay the instructor for his or her services. It's been agreed on already, so there should be no problems. If you were not happy about something, you should say it now. You bought a service and paid for it. Usually, the guest will ask if everything was okay and solicit comments. It helps him keep his presentation fresh by getting your input and making necessary changes. We have exit surveys at our large events to get immediate feedback.

It's Over

Confirm the departure time, when and where (lobby or room) to pick up your guest. Be on time. You know how long it should take to get to the airport, your guest probably does not. Chances are he has never been to your town before. Plan for rush hours and any delays. Don't be late! How would you like to sit at the airport for hours because your ride was late? Especially in some smaller cities where the availability of flights is small.

If the media was not present at your event, send a photo and a press release about it. Most of the local papers will accept it and many of the major martial art magazines will print some mention of it.

It's all over other than to bask in the afterglow knowing it was a job well done. You have just been through an organizational task akin to arranging a wedding. It's taken time, energy and money. A well-planned event realizes public relations value, educational needs, student motivation, and puts money in your pocket. So get ready — you have to do it again next year. ■

Lee Wedlake, Jr., a member of the National Association of Professional Martial Artists, has been a studio owner since 1976 and seminar instructor both here and abroad as a senior professor of Ed Parker's Kenpo Karate. He can be reached at (941)481-9947, 9131 College Pkwy., 13-A, Ft. Myers, FL 33919.

Highlights From Part 1

1) Choose your format: One-day, single instructor session; one-day, two-instructor session; or multi-day, multi-instructor weekend.
2) Negotiate meticulously all details, including fee(s) and expenses, with your guest instructor(s).
3) Carefully choose your date so that it doesn't conflict with important holidays, major sporting events or other nearby martial arts events.
4) Give yourself three months to promote your seminar.
5) Arrange travel and hotel accommodations early, and book a facility if needed.
6) Send out two flyers, one at least 2-3 months in advance of the event, the second within 2 weeks of the event. Make follow-up phone calls.
7) Contact your local mainstream media 2 weeks before your event.

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Willie "Bam" Johnson (Creative kata and weapons) 301-776-0909



Willie "Bam" Johnson

Billy Bryant (Cadena De Mano Silat) 757-548-8721



heavy hitters

Mike and Cathy Anderson

Stats, 1st year and this year
We opened our doors in October of 1991 with a dozen former backyard and garage students and "rec center refugees." As of Spring 1996, we had grown to over 400 students, which was too much for our 1,450 square foot facility. Our present goal is to maintain 350 active paying students.

Founding Capital
Cathy and I each put $5,000 into the "karate kitty." At that time (1991) it wound up costing us around $6,000 to open the doors, so we had money left over.

Earliest Must Have
As a karate and judo studio, we needed a floor sized mat. Cathy assured me that she knew how to make a sawdust mat for next to nothing. The day before we were scheduled to open, Cathy called around and located a sawdust supplier. As I finished shoveling the sixth pickup load of sawdust into a tall pile in front of our studio-to-be, she confessed that her mat building expertise was limited to having read one paragraph. However, after twelve hours of shoveling and packing it down, we indeed had a mat.

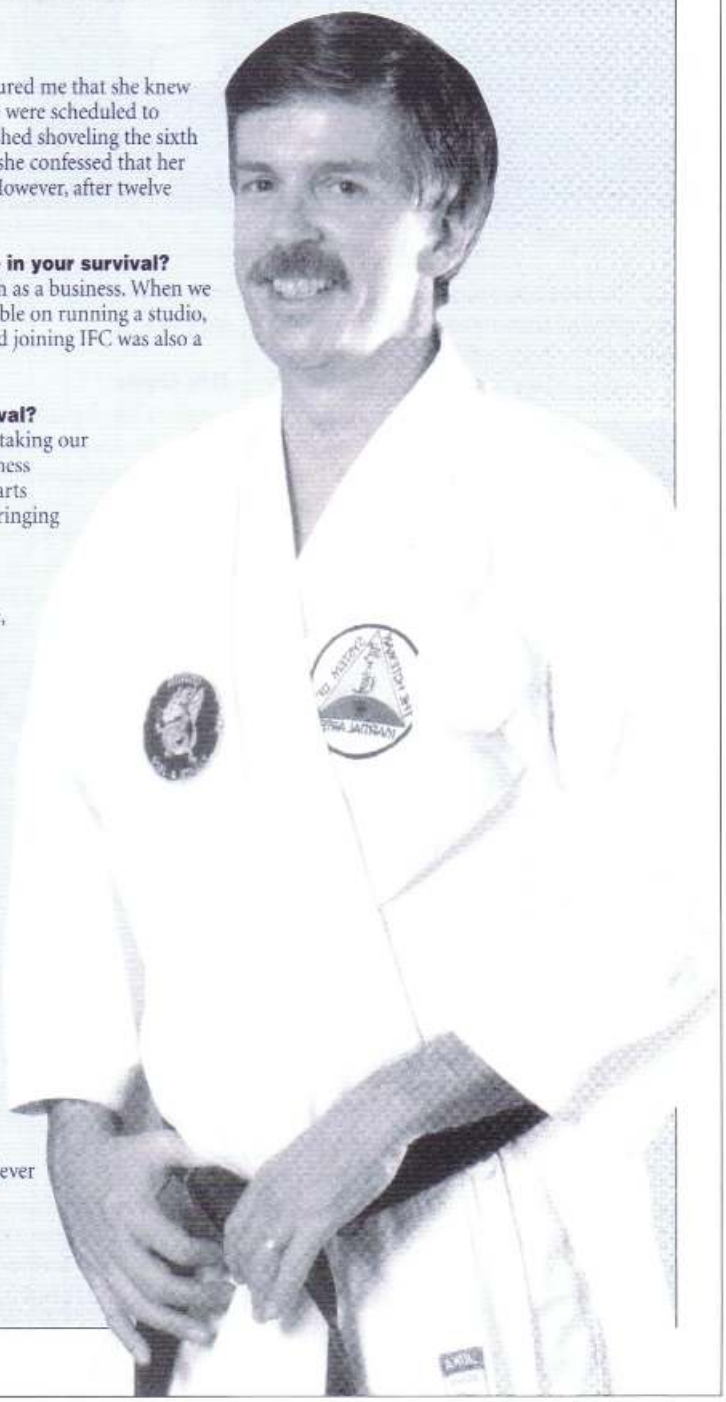
Best Decision—What single move made the biggest difference in your survival?
We knew that we needed more than a love of martial arts to flourish as a business. When we opened in mid-1991 there wasn't much professional material available on running a studio, but we snapped up every bit we could find. Meeting Larry Doke and joining IFC was also a major turning point for us.

Worst Decision—What single move almost cost you your survival?
Although we've been fortunate in avoiding pitfalls, we stay wary of taking our success for granted. We try to stay fresh by regularly attending business seminars by NAPMA and others. We also frequent various martial arts seminars. This helps us to keep the student perspective, as well as bringing fresh ideas back to class.

School Name Year One and Now
"Goshin" (pronounced GOH - shin) means self defense in Japanese, but we'd choose differently if we were starting out today. Most people pronounce our name as "GAH-shin", as in 'gosh-golly-gee', especially by telephone solicitors. ("Is this "Mr. GAH-shin?" "I'm sorry, Mr. GAH-shin is gone on an expedition to Zambia!!")

Most Creative Coup
We started using patches and cards to reward and motivate our students. After seeing how popular they were at Goshin, we began marketing them to other studios. Goshin Power Products now markets to over 1000 studios nationwide.

Salary, Year One and Now - What can a new, ambitious school owner living the American dream expect to make?
Our income has risen to, er, a very comfortable six figure level. But, the non monetary rewards — sharing in the many "life victories" of our students — are equally satisfying.
- The young woman who broke her ex-boyfriend's jaw when he tried to beat her up.
- The middle-aged adult whose doctor told him that the level of fitness and weight loss he'd achieved from training had probably saved his life.
- The child whose teachers had given up on him and is now an achiever in every area of his life.
- and all the rest. . . . .We can't buy a Lexus with those intangible rewards, but they're no less valuable.



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