

HSFA Insider

Houston's Martial Arts News Source

Every Issue is Filled With

- Martial Arts Insights
- Editorials & Personal Perspectives
- Training Tips
- Instructor Spotlight
- School Spotlight
- Events

"Cool Things To Know About Training Knife Sparring"



Volume 2, Issue 3

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Sparring with training knives from wooden to padded in stand-up range is one of those kinds of training methods that can improve one's skills in any other martial art and sport that one is involved in. Although it is an essential step, one does not really have to learn the basics of the Filipino martial arts to practice Kali-based training dagger sparring. A slash is a slash, a stab is a stab, and a cut is a cut and neither participant wants to get cut by a live blade. Thus, we SIMULATE and concentrate on the given purpose for the time being.

Cool things about knife/dagger sparring:

-It doesn't take much muscle tension to hit a target effectively.

-This is an area where utilizing a sense of playful, yet realistic imagination can be effective when integrating the fear of getting cut with the sense of heightened awareness of one's surroundings without and within. As Albert Einstein said,

"Play is the highest form of research."

-The build-up of an accelerated sense of timing and distance judgement backed by the psychological processing of the fear of getting cut, that is converted into a minimized form of "navigational awareness," to make it less distracting, thus an increased sense of effectiveness.

--For those who have trouble with building speed, a heightened sense of timing and distance control can make up for it, which can be built-up from regular knife sparring practice.

-Knife sparring improves one's sense of grounding by coordinating the attributes of upper and lower body into a working order of body mechanics dedicated to a sense of ALIVENESS, which contributes to the value that one sees in it that serves them best.

-Knife sparring brings out the honesty in one's footwork, which makes the foundation of the techniques that each Filipino

no martial arts student practices. For example, by working on landing an effective hit while moving along with the designated mindset for effective performance instead of concentrating on isolated sequences while standing, still yields a more realistic truth about the techniques that one is learning, practicing and applying.

-Knife sparring is like an atmosphere of self-reflection because it challenges one's beliefs about what they have been learning, which offers them the opportunity to change or modify flexibly in accordance to given situations, placement and timing.

-One also learns that it doesn't take much muscle to get tired quickly either. Since much of the tension comes from one's own mentality.

- Daniel Arola, Damag-Inc.

School Spotlight — Davis Martial Arts Academy

Davis Martial Arts Academy is owned by Roy Davis. Roy started his training in jiujiitsu in 1999.

The goal of DMAA is to change your life. Davis states, “That’s our goal. To change lives. At Davis Martial Arts you will have the opportunity to grow not only physically, but mentally as well. Through our Jiujiitsu, Kickboxing and Filipino Martial Arts programs, the opportunity for growth is beyond even your own expectations. While training at Davis Martial Arts, you will build physical strength and endurance, take on leadership roles, and build relationships with instructors, training partners and even opponents. Build confidence and respect within

yourself. You will find within yourself, a strength you did not know existed.”

DMAA offers Jiujiitsu, kickboxing, and Filipino Martial Arts. They have adult and kids programs. Open 6 days a week.

Davis Martial Arts Academy

19333 Hwy 59 Humble, TX 77338

281-540-8443

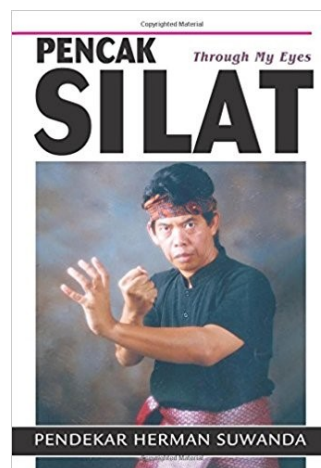
dmaa1903@gmail.com



Recommended Reading — Pencak Silat: Through My Eyes: Indonesian Martial Arts

This is a complete presentation of the principles and applications of one of the most effective martial arts styles. Written by one of the most sought-after Silat masters of all time, the late Herman Suwanda, the book explores the art and science of this Indonesian combat method. There is a detailed breakdown of the offensive and defensive skills used in Pencak Silat, the tactical elements of timing, dis-

tance, rhythm, cadence, and tempo. The unique principles and techniques of Silat as taught by the late Herman Suwanda are fully described in this authoritative book. It is a true gem by one of the legends masters of Pencak Silat.



“Let's face it, none of us get into the martial arts for the drills and training. We got in because we all wanted to fight...”

FORMS, KATA & PATTERNS vs DANCE, SHADOW BOXING & SAGITA

Over the years, I've listened to so many martial artists arguing or defending their method of solo training. Which is correct? Boxers think that martial arts forms are stupid and unrealistic. And they are. BUT...no martial artist thinks that they're going to pull off an entire set of techniques...in a row...in a fight. Just like when a boxer does a jab-cross-hook-cross-lead uppercut-rear overhand, while shadow boxing, they realize that in the ring, they won't be able to make contact with each of those strikes. They throw them all, like they've practiced, because they hope 2 or 3 actually get in. In reality, you might get 3 punches or kicks in, in a row, before your opponent moves and you've got to reset and start over anyway.

So, stepping outside of our systems, we realize that all of these things are really the same. In Kali, a forward slash, backhand slash, upward stab and butt strike to the nose, could also be a front punch, back fist, uppercut, knife hand strike in karate. Or a front kick, hook kick, knee kick and an ax kick in Tae Kwon Do. It's all just angles and a flowing motion.

So... how long do you work a pre-arranged set in the air, or how long do you practice your kata's each class, or each week? An hour a week? An hour each night? An hour each year? Personally, I hate doing kata's. I've been doing them since 1970 and I'd almost rather be doing anything in my workout. The same with shadowboxing. BUT...there

are few things out there that teach you footwork and being able to flow from one move in one direction to another move in another direction, or that teaches you how to retreat and advance with solid footwork, like these forms do. So, I teach them and I do them, but I try not to spend too much time during classes on them. 15 minutes a night is more than enough I believe. Why? Because if you were shadowboxing in a gym, you'd normally be about 5 rounds of 3 minutes. Round 1 you might work footwork. Round 2 defenses. Round 3 straight line jabs and crosses. Round 4 circular strikes. Round 5 puts everything together. Grapplers do shadow wrestling in a similar manner.

Let's face it, none of us get into the martial arts for the drills and training. We got in because we all wanted to fight, and be good at it. The hours, weeks, months, years and decades it takes to become good at what we do, is NOT why we started. We wanted to be great that first night. Unfortunately, we all learned that wasn't going to happen and if we wanted to be any good, we'd have to stick around for years and practice. Remember that old saying...you've got to do something 1000 times to get it down and 10,000 to master it? Each time we throw a jab or front kick, counts toward that 1000 times. Tonight, I might throw 50 at a bag or pad or in the air, as I'm warming up before class. Then maybe another 50 after class to cool down. So, there's 100. After 10 classes, I'll start to have that technique down. After 100 clas-

ses, I should be able to throw it and be pretty affective, landing it when I want. Obviously, the more I do it, the faster those 10,000 are finished.

Our forms give us a way to work all of those basics, by ourselves, together. Honestly, throwing 1000 front kicks in the air is pretty boring. No one wants to do that. Put in the middle of a fighting pattern, it's not QUITE as dull. So, we get to work footwork, defenses, stances/foundation, punches, kicks, timing, speed, power, body movement in place and while moving, balance, how to "stick" your feet and plant, how and when to look around for target acquisition, and how to advance and retreat while both attacking and defending.

We may think forms are stupid or useless, but all systems have them in some way, and there's a reason for that. Various systems may place more value on them than other's but they do have their place.

- Curt Doyle, NASDI

Instructor Spotlight — Billy Atwood, Davis Martial Arts Academy

How did you get started in martial arts (what drew you to it)?

I got started in martial arts after I graduated from high school. My fascination with martial arts began with my dad, who had been a member of the Houston police department. As a child he would show me wrist locks and other control techniques that fascinated me. After that I was hooked!

How long have you been training in martial arts?

16 years

How many arts do you train in, have rankings in, and what are they?

I was given the rank of guru in Sapon Arnis by my instructor Alvis Solis. I currently train in Jiu-Jitsu and in the past I have also studied JKD, Silat, Muay Thai, Boxing, and Dog Brothers Marital Arts.

Why do you enjoy sharing and teaching martial arts?

For me, it's more than just a hobby it's a purpose. We all know the many benefits of training, and I enjoy bringing those benefits not just to my students, but our communities are now enriched and safer with them in it.

What is it you hope students get out of training with you?

I hope that novice students gain a new confidence in themselves through the skills that they gain. I hope that seasoned martial artists are able to expand their skills and their way of thinking by training with me.

What motivates you to continue sharing the arts?

I teach because of my continued belief that my art is a

force working for good in the world.

What do you feel is the key to being successful in martial arts & teaching martial arts?

To me, being successful in martial arts means setting goals and then meeting them. Goals can be big, such as getting a black belt/becoming a champion or small, learning a new technique/making more classes.

For me as a teacher, I consider success to be producing quality martial artists both in technique and character.

Anything else you want to let people know about you as a martial artist and instructor?

I still feel like there's a lot to learn out there and I'm looking forward to exploring it.

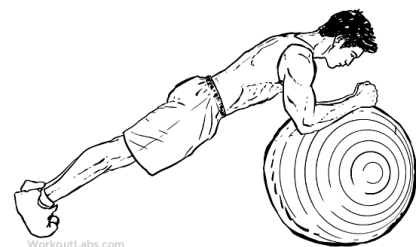
Hipcore Fitness Corner - Yoga Ball Planks

All types of martial arts require a strong, powerful core to execute effective movement. The stronger the midsection the more explosive a player becomes in well practiced patterns. With that being said, one of my favorite ways to improve the core is the yoga ball plank.

The plank is a yoga type position that engages every part of the core complex. It is usually done on the floor and while it requires no movement to work, the addition of performing it on the yoga ball makes it incredibly more useful for combat artists. Start by doing it for 30 seconds and

increase to 3 minutes or more over time. Take short rest breaks and repeat multiple times for a powerful, tight stomach area.

- Hip



WorkoutLabs.com

HSFA Observations

Over the past ten years I've had the chance to watch and be part of quite a few hard sparring matches in the Houston Stick Fighting Association and outside the association. I have of course learned more from participating than by simply watching and have learned some hard lessons along the way. Watching matches has still been very helpful in informing me on some of our collective stick fighting habits, and I'd like to share a few points.

Firstly, it's not point sparring, small taps and light flicks of the wrist won't convince anyone to respect you or your power. When I swing at someone, I'm not trying to kill them, but I also don't want someone to feel comfortable standing in front of me and trading blows. If our ultimate goal is to sharpen our skills for real world scenarios, then we cannot let ourselves stand toe to toe and trade head shots. A good helmet may save your IQ in a sparring match, but it is not likely to be there for you out in the world. The same can be said for relying too heavily on gloves to block your opponent's shots. Even with gloves on, you can receive a stinging shot or broken finger. Without the gloves, a blow from a tire iron or other impact weapon can be devastat-

ing. A good shot is one that is both powerful and clean.

There also seems to be a lack of overall respect for the reality of grappling in general. I know that the HSFA gatherings are meant to focus on the stick aspect of our arts, but the part that focuses on reality must also take into account grappling. When a participant loses their stick, their opponent often simply lets them pick it back up. It's a very gentlemanly thing to do, but let us be fighters first and gentlemen second. If a fighter is forced to grapple, whether they know how to or not, an important lesson is learned and that's what we are really here for. A fighter that simply forgoes the stick fighting aspect and only grappled every opponent to the ground immediately would also, I feel, be missing the point.

I have had the privilege over the years of training in a number of different martial arts systems over the years that deal with stick fighting. I have also watched countless videos and read quite a few books and articles on the subject of disarming sticks (or other impact weapons) and I don't think I've ever seen any of them work at full speed in a hard sparring match. The two most common disarms that

I've observed involve hitting the opponents hand or stick so hard that the stick goes flying out or simply grabbing the stick and snatching it out of the other persons hand. The former is my personal favorite, the first I was ever taught and my most successful. The latter doesn't take much skill to execute, just a bit of timing and strength and it's yours. I wouldn't go so far as to say that the old disarms don't work, but we definitely don't see them much in the live matches. It could be something as simple as the fact that we wear gloves and our martial arts forbearers did not - that might account for this. Alternatively, it may be that we simply don't spend enough time practicing the techniques and putting in the necessary reps.

I have learned much more through both observation and participation than I've managed to put down here and I feel that there is still much more for me to learn in the future. I feel we owe it to ourselves and to our communities to test our boundaries and explore the many dynamics available to us through our arts. As the world evolves, we evolve with it and I'm looking forward to where it takes us next.

- Billy Atwood, Davis Martial Arts Academy

Upcoming Events



Warriors Eskrima seminar
Guro Krishna Godhania
11-12 November 2017
Time: 10 AM- 4 PM (both days)
Houston, Texas
For more details, send email
to: babi_tudo@hotmail.com

4th Quarter Gathering will be held
on December 02, 2017 12-2 pm at
Houston Martial Arts Academy/F3
Cross Training, 2012 Center St.
Houston, TX 77007

Rope Climbing Workshop:
October 21st 10-11:15 am
F3 Cross Training—EaDo
912 St, Charles St, Houston, TX 77003



Body Analytics at F3:
November 4th 08-11:00 am
F3 Cross Training—EaDo
912 St, Charles St, Houston, TX 77003

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www.houstonstickfighting.org



[Houston Stick Fighting Association](https://www.facebook.com/HoustonStickFightingAssociation)



[@htownstickfight](https://twitter.com/htownstickfight)



[htownstickfights](https://www.instagram.com/htownstickfights)



[JasonREvans](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCv8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8)

The Houston Stick Fighting Association ("HSFA") founded in 2006 is an association for like-minded martial artists that engage in simulated combat to test and improve their skills in the blade-based and stick-based fighting arts. Membership in HSFA is open to martial artists of all styles, all systems, of all ages, from beginner to advanced levels. Members of the HSFA are striving to develop and improve their skills through simulated combat to see what works and what does not with a resisting opponent. Along the way, we build friendships and camaraderie with our sparring partners and share our respective arts with each other.



Graphic by Daniel Arola

Schools - Associated with Houston Stick Fighting Association

[Houston Martial Arts Academy](#)

[Ground Dwellers BJJ](#)

DAMAG-INC Kali Combatives

Combat Nation

[Texas Jeet Kun Do](#)

Southeast Texas Escrimadors

Westchase Warriors GB Westchase

[TX 3rd Coast MMA](#)

North American Self Defense Institute

SwordtoSword