



Wushu News

Newsletter of The Wushu & Tai Chi Practitioners Association Inc.

Volume 8 No: 2 April 2010

Wushu & Tai Chi Practitioners Association Inc.
Co-operation Education Excellence

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Hi Everyone

This edition I would like to extend a special thank you to all members who have contributed news of events and articles on various aspects of Wushu & Tai Chi since the inception of this newsletter. I'd also like to extend an invitation to those members to keep the good work up. This newsletter is for the members and on that note I would ask all members to consider providing information about their practice, schools and events. Without your support there would be no newsletter.

NEWS & EVENTS

Tai Chi for Arthritis Update

Presented by Rosemary Palmer for Arthritis SA.
17th-18 April 2010
Venue: 118 Richmond Rd. Marleston, S.A.
Contact: Carol Spargo at Arthritis SA. Ph. 08 8423 0912 Email: c.spargo@arthritissa.org.au

World Tai Chi & Qigong Day 24 April 10 am

Everyone is invited to be a part of World Tai Chi & Qigong Day!

On the last Saturday of April each year an unprecedented and spectacularly moving global happening occurs in over 65 nations, in hundreds of cities worldwide. Tens of thousands of people come together across racial, ethnic, religious, and geopolitical boundaries . . . for the sole purpose of advancing personal and global health & healing. There are over 30 events Australia wide. WTCQD commences in the world's easternmost time zone (New Zealand) and spreads westward throughout the world.

One World . . . One Breath . . .

South Australia : Peace Park, North Adelaide from 10.00 am - 11.00 am Contact: Rosemary
Email: movingm@chariot.net.au Ph. (08)83817969

Victoria

Essential Fitness & Taichi: Queens Park Moonee Ponds (next to the Bowls Club) 10 am to 11 am
This is a chance to join other like minded people and share the fun and joy that is Tai-Chi and Qi Gong, it is a world wide event for peace and good health. Participation is free, but please bring water to drink. Any further details, Please feel free to contact James on 03 9331 3106

Bayside Tai Chi Centre: Ricketts Point Beach [200 metres south of cafe] Beach Road Beaumaris Melway 86 C9 at 10 am

Queensland:

Rob Fennell Tai Chi Group: Bell Park, Emu Park, Capricorn Coast 10.00 am to 11 am.

Life-Enhancement Qigong

(The Enlightenment Form) *Wuji Gong* (March 28th booked out) Second workshop: Sunday 23rd May 2010 St Michaels Primary School BERWICK, Melbourne. 10am - 4pm BYO Lunch, refreshments & notes supplied.
Cost \$50 (Concession \$45) (Early Bird \$45 by 30th April) W.T.P.A. members \$40
Enquiries & Bookings: Maxine Gardner 0409 193 315 healingmoves@exemail.com.au
www.ntpages.com.au/school/24377
A flyer will be forwarded with this newsletter.

Shibashi X and Tai Chi Skills Workshop

presented by Grandmaster Gary Khor.
Day 1: Shibashi X - Estonian Hall, Childers Street, North Adelaide.
Day 2: Tai Chi Skill Development - Mitcham Cultural Village, Cnr. Torrens/Princes Roads.
Cost: TCAA & WTPA Members: \$250 Others: \$280 (2 days) \$160 (1 day). Early bird: \$20 discount if paid before 16th April. For further information and registration form please contact Rosemary (08) 83817969
Email: movingm@chariot.net.au

2010 Weekend Intensive Taijiquan Workshop

by Master Peter Wu Shi-zeng
Saturday 1 and Sunday 2 May
Jin Training Method - Level 1(Part 2)
In this workshop, Master Wu will provide further details of the first 4 fundamental topics, namely relaxation, opening, upright and bow theory. New participants and individuals who have attended previous workshop will gain invaluable insights to raise their Taijiquan skills to entirely new levels.
Enquiries: Tel/Fax (61 3) 9898 8118 Peter's Mobile: (61) 0403 066 032 or Angelina's Mobile (61) 0419 109 356 Email: peterszwwu@hotmail.com Website: www.peterwutaichi.com Cost: Full fees AUD \$250. If paid by 1st April 2010 \$240. Additional \$10 discount for WTPA & TCAA members. A Registration Form is circulated with this newsletter.

12th WTPA Tai Chi & Wushu Festival

Sunday 29 August 2010 - At the usual venue Monash University Clayton - Basketball stadium.
30 Competition Events, Guests Demonstrations, Traditional & Competition Wushu Forms, Individual, Group Events. Dual Sparring Sets, Swords, Sabre, Cudgel, Spear & Other Weapons, Taiji, Xing-Yi, Bagua & much more.

Tell your friends.

ARTICLES

The Birth of a new Taijiquan Style – Dong Yue

by Tara Brayshaw (25/2/2010)

January 1 in the year 2000 and 40 million people in 150 countries around the globe watched and waited as the sun progressively revealed the world's pinnacles of culture and tradition. From native dancers in New Zealand to Rio's sunny beaches filled with revellers, from confetti-covered parties in Times Square to lifesavers on Sydney's Bondi beach, television panned its lens across continents, oceans and time zones to capture the dawn of a new century. As the sun shone on the most populated country in the world, viewers waited to see what China's gift would be. A lone man, on a mountain top brought the Shining Pearl of Chinese culture to the world – Taijiquan!

The man was Professor Men Hui Feng, acknowledged as one of the top ten masters of wushu in China; the mountain was Tai mountain, the greatest of the 5 famous mountains in China; and the Taijiquan, Dong Yue, the most recent of the 6 officially recognised styles of Taijiquan. Professor Men Hui Feng was born of humble parents in Tianjin, Jinghai County in 1937. Not being of the privileged classes his time was occupied in working for the family and educating himself. When his work was done he would sneak down the road and peer through a fence to watch a local Taijiquan master training his students. And so began a lifetime devoted to the study and development of Taijiquan both in China and around the world.

As a young man, Professor Men studied Chuo Jiao, LuHe, Shaolin boxing, Fanzi, Ba Ji Quan, Ba Gua Zhang, Xing Yi Quan and a variety of Taijiquan styles and techniques. In 1956 he won an Outstanding Performance Award from the General Assembly and in 1959 came first in the 11th National Wushu Games Competition. He graduated from Beijing Institute of Physical Education (now known as the Beijing Sport University) in 1963, but stayed on to teach and share his passion for the Chinese Martial Arts. It was during this time that he met his wife and fellow top ten recognised wushu master, Professor Kan Gui Xiang. Professor Kan graduated from the Beijing Institute of Physical Education two years after her husband and eventually went on to become Professor of the Wushu Department. Her main specialty has always been Chen style Taijiquan. She studied under many famous teachers including becoming a disciple of the late Tian Xiuchen, who was himself one of Chen Fake's disciples.

Together they were a force to be reckoned with. They trained group after group of outstanding coaches and athletes in wushu and more specifically, Taijiquan. This consistent success proved to be the catalyst for what we now know as the Chinese Wushu Duan Grading System. Even though they had extremely busy lives, in 1979 Professor Men was appointed the Deputy Head of National Wushu Research and started travelling extensively giving lectures and workshops both nationally and internationally.

While Professor Men was travelling, Professor Kan continued to compete and won many gold medals



Professor Men Hui Feng

at National Wushu Competitions. She also became involved in numerous well known Taijiquan associations but it was her work as one of the founders of the Beijing Chen Style Taijiquan Research Association that she will always be fondly remembered for.

Professors Men and Kan saw the need to keep developing Taijiquan to ensure it was not lost in a cultural backflow as the 20th Century marched ever on. They worked tirelessly researching the health benefits, martial accuracy and emotional stability inherent in Taijiquan movements. They were also aware of the need to provide standardized forms of Taijiquan to encourage group practice and competition. As a direct result of their efforts, credited with being cofounders, we now have the Beijing 24, Beijing 48, 42 Bare hand, 42 Sword, 32 Sword, 36 Chen Bare hand, 36 Chen Sword, 56 Chen and 73 Sun not to mention numerous other Chen, Yang, Wu and Sun style forms.

However, as the millennium drew to a close, the couple wanted to leave a legacy to the global Taijiquan community. They wanted to create a style that evoked the harmony of Heaven, Earth and Man; a style that would transcend the specifics of individual disciplines; a style that would combine their lifetime of experience, research and knowledge; but above all, a style that would herald the 21st Century. The style, named after their love of Tai Mountain was Dong Yue, Mandarin for East Mountain.

Dong Yue Taijiquan is influenced by the Lui Pai (6 systems) of Chinese martial arts being Taijiquan, Xing Yi Quan, Ba Gua Zhang, Ba Ji Quan, Chuo Jiao and Fanzi. However, the dominant element in all the forms of Dong Yue is Taijiquan. The internal energy generation of Chen; the generous stretching of Yang; the soft and agile aspects of Wu; the unique footwork and open-close palm of Sun; and the compact force of Wu (Hao) were all combined with a focus on the Tai Chi's roundness and ever-shifting elements of Yin and Yang to create a style that enriches the life and life energy of anyone who practices it.

Since its inception, Dong Yue has taken on a life of its own. Within a couple of years it was officially recognised by the Chinese Wushu Association as the sixth style of Taijiquan. In 2004, the Beijing Wushu Association Dong Yue Taijiquan Research

Association was formally established. Not long after that the Dong Yue Taijiquan Association was formed. The Association now has member countries including Australia, Belgium: Charleroi, France, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Kanaky (N.C.Fr.), Korea, Martinique, Morocco, Spain, Switzerland and the USA, who actively participate in bi-annual Dong Yue Taijiquan Festivals. The magnificent Tai Mountain has a Dong Yue School near its pinnacle that plays host to thousands of Chinese and foreign students every year: at least those students who can manage the last two thousand steps up! Dong Yue started entering the international competition lexicon in 2006 and has become a feature of many competitions and festivals around the world since that time. But probably the highlight for Professors Men and Kan is the knowledge that Dong Yue is being practiced by one of their devoted students somewhere in the world at any given moment on any given day. To date, the Dong Yue compendium of published forms includes two Bare hand, a Straight Sword, a Broadsword, three Short Staff, a Cudgel, two Spear, a Dagger and a Sword-to-Sword duel. It is Professor Men and Kan's intention to have three forms for each of the traditional Taiji weapons disseminated across the globe within the next 5 to 10 years. The only disappointment is that many of the forms will never be seen in a festival setting as they are too short in duration to qualify for competition. That said, Professors Men and Kan want people to practice and display the style wherever possible so encourage the repetition of certain movements to meet competition time guidelines.

The style has also given birth to a new weapon. Professor Men wanted to create drama in the first of his spear forms so he designed a thrusting movement that causes the spearhead to extend from short-staff to long-pole length. Obviously the spear needed to be specially designed which led to the development of the Dong Yue Combination Weapon: a short staff, long pole, extendable spear and dagger all in one. The combination weapon now takes pride of place in any Dong Yue practitioner's weapon bag.

And the form that started it all; that revealed to the world their love affair with Taijiquan and Tai Mountain, was the Bare hand Form One as demonstrated by Professor Men on January 1, 2000, 1545m above sea level as the sun crept over the horizon. Dong Yue – the dawning of a new millennium in Taijiquan.

Postscript

The Chinese Wushu Association has just created an Expert Committee to ensure the future of wushu both in China and around the world. The committee comprises 18 experts and Professor Men Hui Feng has been appointed as one of the 18 inaugural members.

In Australia, we are very fortunate to have had Professor Men come and teach many of the Dong Yue forms over the past 6 years. We have also been honoured to host Master Hui He Tong, one of Professor Men's disciples, who continues to disseminate this beautiful art form around the

world. Should you wish to know more about Dong Yue or training possibilities please feel free to contact Master Han Jin Song for more information on 03 9889 9999 or taichiaustralia@hotmail.com. Thank you Tara for this interesting article

Stop Press: Dong Yue Winter Workshops 14, 19 & 20 June. See notice with this newsletter.

Tai Chi in the Dark

Further to the article in the last newsletter on artist Assi Ben Porat is this interesting extract on his tuition of a blind student Ilan Amit.



For 17 years they have been meeting once a week for a lesson in the art of Tai Chi Chuan. The teacher Assi Ben-Porat has already managed to teach Ilan Amit a wide range of exercises including Chi Kung, Tai Chi Form, Sword form, partner work (Joining Hands) and more. The fact that Amit is blind they forgot long ago. In a joint interview they told the interviewer about the mutual learning process they went through, about the love of movement and about freedom within limitations.

By Illy Berr.

Photography: Osnat Krasnansky

A Study of Taijiquan

"Wu Ji is the natural state occurring before one begins to practice martial arts. The mind is without thought; the intent is without motion; the eyes are without focus; the hands and feet are still; the body makes no movement; yin and yang are not yet divided; the clear and the turbid have not yet separated; the qi is united and undifferentiated."

So commences Chapter 1, Part 1 of "A Study Of Taijiquan by Sun Lutang" the founder of Sun Style Tai Chi, as translated by Tim Cartmell.

This book should be of interest to all devotees of Sun style Tai Chi including those practising styles such as "Tai Chi For Arthritis".

The book commences with an Overview of Sun style, a biography of Sun Lu Tang and some introductory studies before moving on to Sun Lu Tang's works - Part 1 – A Catalogue of the Postures of Taijiquan and Part 2 Taijiquan "Striking Hands" Applications.

The Translator Tim Cartmell trained under Sun Jian Yun and Sun Bao An the daughter and grandson of Sun Lu Tang and has translated and written works on Chin Na, Combat Throws and Xing Yi. He runs a Martial Arts Academy in California.

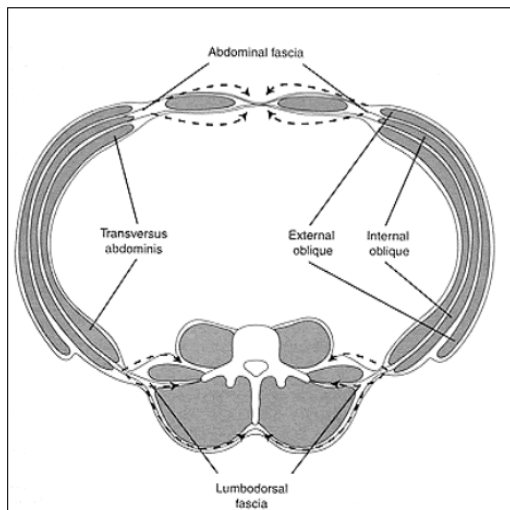
Posture, Core Strength and Tai Chi

The following article is from "A Tai Chi Instructor's Blog"

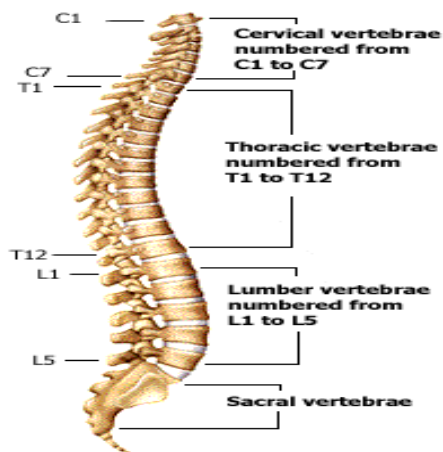
<http://taichicentral.blogspot.com/2006/11/posture-core-strength-and-tai-chi.html>

Needle in the Cotton.

This term is often used to describe the principle in Tai Chi which draws attention to spinal / core strength. There are several muscle groups that comprise what we consider the "Core Muscles". Here is a picture showing the core groups in cross section.



Notice the six large muscles positioned vertically around the spine? These deep stabilizers are very important to overall back health and are typically very hard to reach with a regular exercise routine. Mainly because some of these muscles

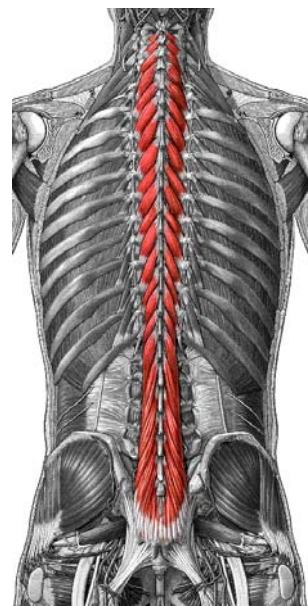


respond early to light loads and the others respond later, if the load becomes excessive or the spine is placed in danger through twisting or off angle alignment. Tai Chi is one of the most effective exercise routines I have found to activate these deep core muscles groups because we focus so much on strong posture, within a steady, load bearing environment. Each load bearing movement in the form changes postural angles, challenges

flexibility and strength while working to keep the spine in strong posture.

There are four natural curves to the spine, shown above. In proper Tai Chi posture, each curve should have a natural position and not be forced to straighten or curve excessively. By moving very slowly and in many different directions, Tai Chi serves to stimulate spinal health through increased circulation, flexibility and stability.

There are many intricate muscles surrounding the spine. As we get older these muscles may get less work and become weakened leading to muscle spasms, chronic back pain, Dowager's Hump and nerve impingements (pinched nerve) to name a few. Many if not all of these dis-eases are preventable through strengthening and consistent attention to proper posture.



Tai Chi helps to bring awareness to our posture and gives us tools to develop proper alignment. We become aware of our bad habits and can work to change them in our daily environment. Because Tai Chi is a gentle form of exercise the key to gaining optimum benefit is a consistent routine of practice.

Bottom Line:

Core strength is critical to spinal health and Tai Chi is one of the best ways to develop it safely at any age.

More on this topic next issue.

Reminder

Closing date for the next newsletter is Sunday 6 June. Please forward news items by that date.

If you are receiving a hard copy of this newsletter and have an email address please let us know that address so that we can save on paper and mailing costs