

# JKD Camps

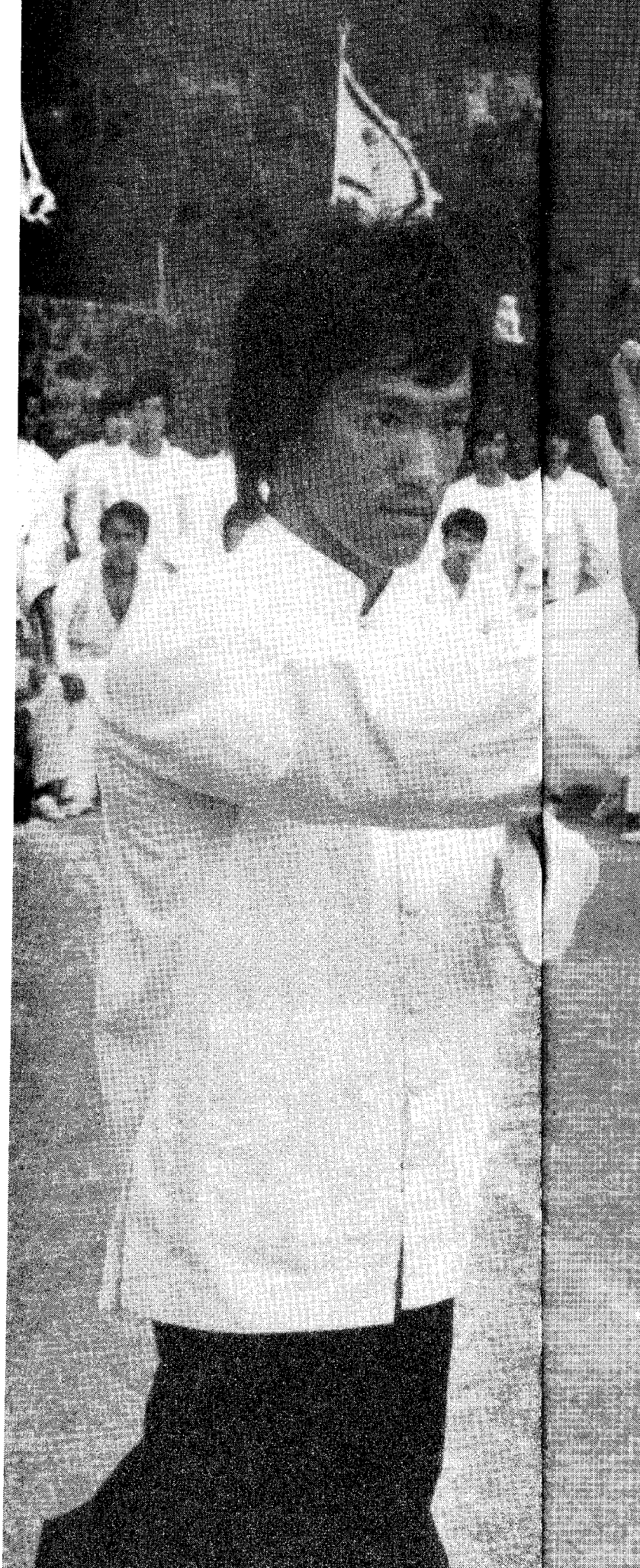
## An inside look

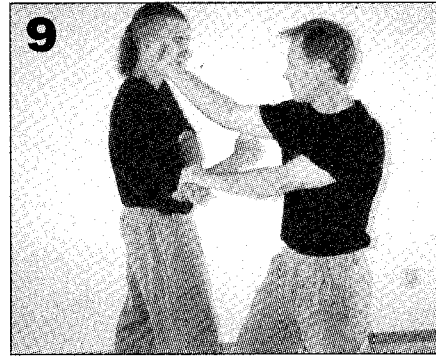
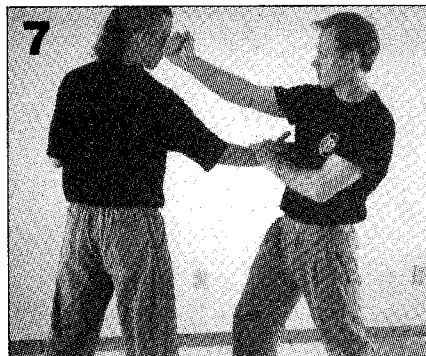
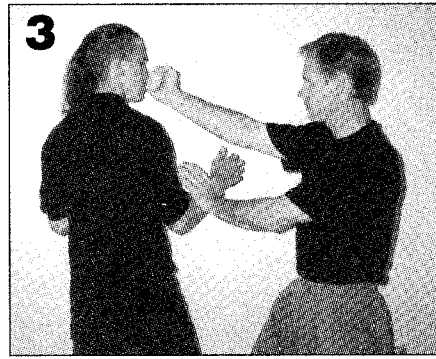
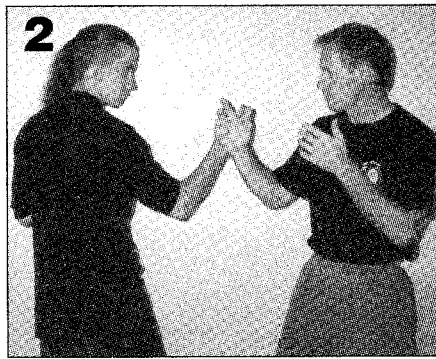
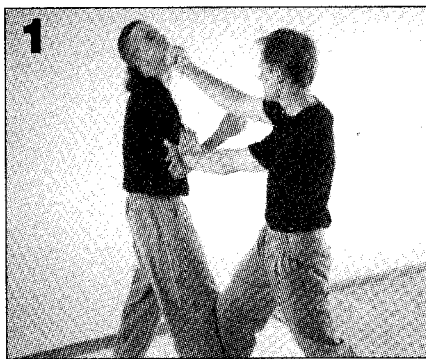
By Mike Rutter

The third annual Radford University Jeet Kune Do camp was held last June. Approximately 75 students attended this weekend event. I had attended the first one as a student; however, this time I had been asked to participate as an assistant instructor. My job would be to teach three one hour sessions on trapping as a kind of warm-up for the featured instructors - Sifu Ted Wong, Former Kickboxing/Karate Champ Joe Lewis, Tommy Gong, and Dr. Jerry Beasley. The remainder of my time I would spend either assisting Sifu Wong or participating in the classes.

Student and long-time friend Brian Rootes accompanied me on the straight-through 23 hour drive from St. Cloud, Minnesota. Some thought we were crazy for driving, but when you pack food, spend only about \$80.00 round trip for gas, catch up on a friendship, and get to relax while viewing some beautiful American scenery, it seems to counterbalance the shorter hustle-bustle of air travel.

We arrived Thursday afternoon and relaxed around the campus. Jerry Beasley showed in the early evening to let us into our rooms, and Ted Wong and Tommy Gong arrived later. Mr. Gong is a long-time student of Sifu Wong, and instructs a group in the San Francisco area. Friendly and easy-going, Tommy has done a lot of JKD research. The five of us sat in a dorm room discussing the current activity in the Jeet Kune Do field. (PLEASE NOTE: Throughout this article I will refer to "Original" or "Pre - 73" JKD simply as either Jeet Kune Do or JKD. Please do not confuse this with JKD "Concepts", which goes into dimensions beyond Bruce Lee's original teachings and practices.)





(Left and right page) (1) Ideal Trapping Position - locks up lead leg as well as both of opponent's hands. (2-3) Starting at Cross Hands to Pak Sao w/ punch. (4-5) Starting at Cross Hands to Pak Sao to Backfist to deal with the initial attack being deflected.

## CHECK-IN

The excitement grew throughout Friday's check-in period. I really enjoyed meeting with the participants, many of whom I recognized from previous seminars. There was a strong showing from the Int'l JKD Alliance group, including Lamar Davis himself. It was good to meet and talk with Lamar, who has trained with no less than eleven of Bruce Lee's original students! Particularly amusing was hearing Richard Torres, a JKD Instructor from Fishkill, NY, greet Sifu Wong. He perfectly mimicked a line from "Way/Return of the Dragon", asking "Is your name Tang Lung?"

Friday afternoon Sifu Ted Wong started with a one hour session for those that had arrived. He covered the basics of footwork: Step and Slide, Push Step, and Shuffle/Quick Advance & Retreat. If you've read my first article on JKD (see INSIDE KARATE, JAN. 95), you'll understand that footwork is extremely important to the art, and is perhaps the one area that differentiates it from other martial arts.

After-dinner attendees met again for orientation, and all of the instructors were introduced. Dr. Beasley asked Joe Lewis to re-introduce Ted Wong. Both of these original artists briefly discussed their personal training experiences with Bruce Lee. Mr.

Lewis emphasized that Lee trained with conviction, with real heart. Participants were then split into two groups, Sifu Wong taking one while Mr. Lewis took the other. I stayed with Sifu Wong's group, assisting the students as we worked the On-Guard position and the Front Hand Lead/Straight Punch, a tool sometimes referred to as the backbone technique of JKD. Sifu Wong is always impressive to watch, his moves are extremely smooth and non-telegraphic.

Meanwhile, Brian had taken Mr. Lewis's class, working on sparring strategies and ending with a spin kick/round kick combination. Brian came away from this session very impressed

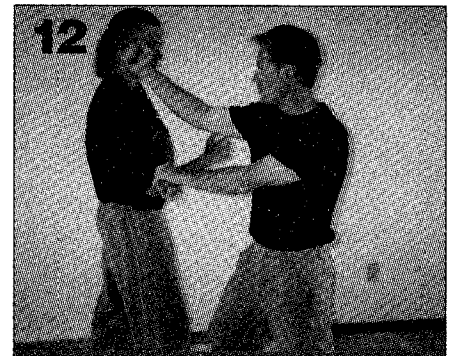
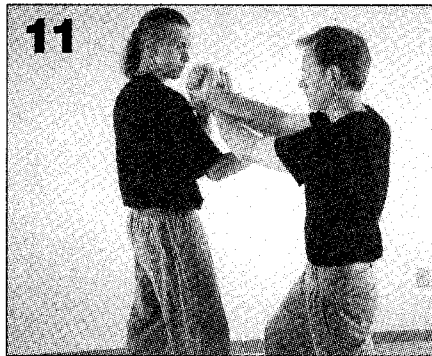
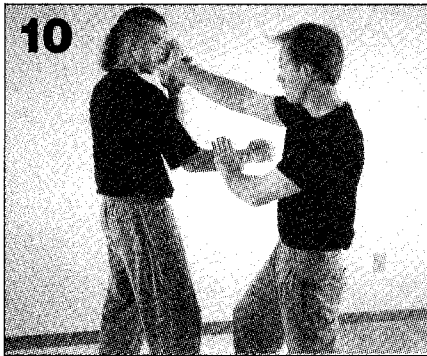
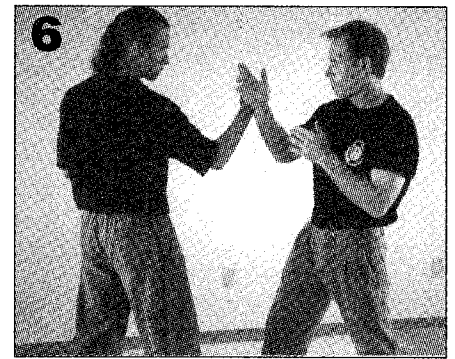
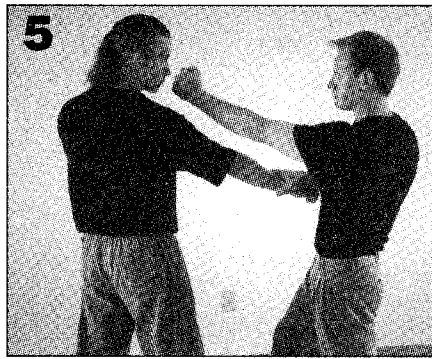
with Mr. Lewis, for both his knowledge and his fighting skills. Following these Friday evening sessions, Dr. Beasley shared his philosophical views with "Lessons from the Tao", and also led the group through a defensive trapping drill. Afterward there was time back at the dorm lobby for open discussions and networking JKD information, although some of us skipped out and went next door to "BT's", a local bar and restaurant.

## TRAPPING 101

Saturday morning came quickly. I was a bit nervous about teaching my first large group, especially since there was such a diversity of talent and skill levels. Fortunately for me, Sifu Wong had done a seminar for my group in Minnesota the month before, and I had a chance to review trapping and the related footwork. The group stayed outside this first session, enjoying the morning air as we started through the basics of trapping. I explained that trapping could be considered more of a skill than an exact measurable range. It works best in that "no man's land", the distance at which either you or your opponent can land an immediate strike.

If there is a true trapping range, it will include the proper foot placement to lock up your opponent's lead leg, as well as the ability to attack from an open angle. The principles and techniques of trapping I shared were from an offensive or aggressive attitude, where your initial attack is blocked or deflected. The ultimate reason to trap is simply to allow an immediate transition to a kick, strike, or grapple. Since it does not directly subdue any opponent, I did not take the "trap-to-trap-to-a-trap" methodology sometimes associated with this skill. We covered four basic traps this first session, using the Cantonese terminology common to Wing Chun Gung Fu:

Pak Sao/Slapping Hand - Forward or angled pressure applied with the palm to either open a window for attack, or done to check an arm so that it cannot deflect a strike. Usually



(4-5) Cross Hands to Lop Sao w/punch. (6-7) Cross Hands to Jut Sao w/punch. (8-9) Jao Sao - disengage low w/return to a high backfist. (10-12) Pak Sao to Lop

performed with the rear hand to the opponent's lead forearm, especially when their forward energy is weak, or their arm is being pulled back toward the body.

Lop Sao/Grabbing Hand - Grabbing the opponent's wrist with the blade or knifehand side of the hand. Can be performed with either the lead hand or the rear hand, a move sometimes called Lin Lop or Cross Grab. This technique is often used to trap the rear hand of an opponent who has deflected an initial trap/attack. Works well when there is strong forward pressure from the opponent's arm.

Jut Sao/Jerking Hand - Moving the opponent's arm out of the way by cupping the fingers over their wrist and jerking forward and downward. This trap is essentially the reverse of Pak Sao, working best when there is forward pressure from the opponent.

Jao Sao/Running Hand - Disengaging one hand while displacing the pressure with the palm of the other hand. Jao Sao can be effectively used to alternate low/high or outside/inside strikes without losing control of the opponent's lead arm. This works well when there is enough pressure from the opponent that you simply want to move around their arm without telegraphing your intent.

## OAKLAND ERA

After the session, I went to a class led by Tommy Bong. Everyone seemed to enjoy his humor and casual teaching manner. He has been in contact with several of the original students from the "Oakland Era", and so we performed a warm-up and drills practiced during that timeframe. Mr. Bong had heard from original students that Linda Lee would sometimes lead the Oakland group through the warm-ups. We started with a general warm-up and stretching routine, then did push-ups on knuckles, finger tips, and thumbs. He then had us perform a three - point speed kicking drill, using variations of front, side,

and rearward directions as the target area.

After an always excellent Radford University lunch, I instructed my second trapping course. This time we covered counters to the initial attack. Working off of Pak Sao and Lop Sao traps combined with a simultaneous punch, students went through a variety of methods to deal with an attack that is stopped or deflected by the opponent's rear hand. Although there are numerous counter-trap maneuvers, I kept things simple, and stressed the use of footwork to move to an angle to assist the secondary trap attack. Sometimes in this situation a second trap is not necessary, provided you can find an opening to strike immediately!

## REAL JKD

Concluding my session, I attended another of Sifu Wong's sessions. He stated that Jeet Kune Do is meant to be three things: Simple, Direct, Non-Classical. He also mentioned that, according to what he learned directly from Bruce Lee, the main sources and principles for Jeet Kune Do came from Wing Chun, Boxing, and Fencing (Fencing contributed much of the footwork and strategies, and also the strong-side forward principle). He went on to say that these components had been modified to the point where the resulting techniques could not be put back into the original arts. The group then worked on bridging the gap while attacking with either punches or kicks.

## SPARRING 101

Once this session had ended, I participated in Dr. Beasley's class on sparring, picking up pointers on controlling an opponent at an in-fighting range. Dr. Beasley also discussed the fitness and entertainment aspects of good, safe sparring! Both he and Joe Lewis highly recommended the use of good quality sparring gear such as 16 oz. boxing gloves, headgear, shin-guards, cup, and mouthguard. I had to agree, and will be trad-

ing in my fingered Kempo style gloves for standard boxing gloves soon!

Following Saturday's dinner, I attended another one of Tommy Gong's sessions. The group performed some of the more advanced footwork drills, then discussed the Five Ways of Attack, verbally dissecting and prioritizing them based on related information found in "The Tao of Jeet Kune Do" book. Tommy had done his homework!

## SPARRING 102

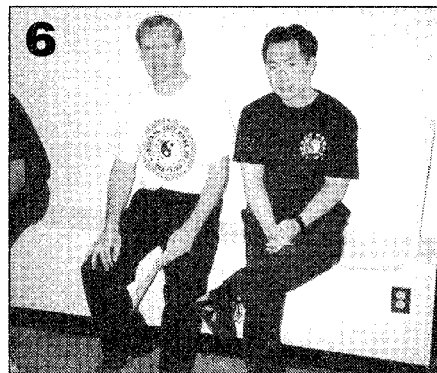
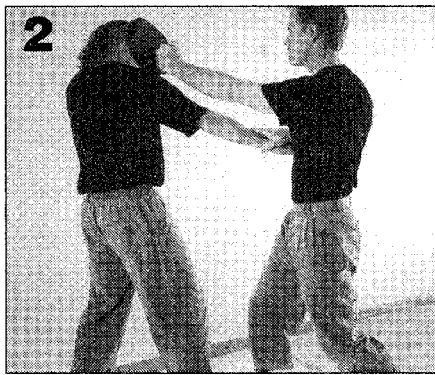
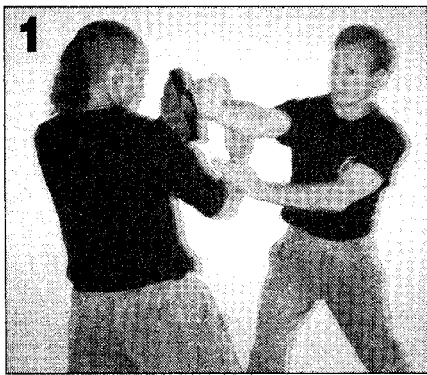
One of the weekend's highlights came next: Sparring evaluations done by Joe Lewis! An excited group watched intently as the legendary Lewis sparred with several volunteers. Some, like Mike Kanarek and Will Russell, had sparred Mr. Lewis at RUJKD-94, and knew what to expect. Yes, Big Joe clocked those he sparred with at least one good shot, but he did so in a way to emphasize a principle or point out a weak guard. He would sometimes verbally badger his opponents during the matches, and I later joked to Brian that perhaps there needs to be a sixth strategy - ABI, or Attack By Intimidation! It was worth the trip to simply watch Mr. Lewis apply the principles of JKD in sparring. I had thought there might be inconsistencies with his methods versus those I have been learning from Sifu Wong. The only significant difference I could determine was that Mr. Lewis primarily uses a strong-side back lead, although I would hesitate to call either his left or his right as a weak side!

Afterward, in addressing the group, there was a hint of frustration in his words: too many open targets, poor positioning during and after attacks, slow or incorrect footwork, and not

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*Instructor Staff from left to right: Tommy Gong, Joe Lewis, Ted Wong, Dr. Jerry Beasley, Mike Rutter.*



(1-3) Focus Mitts can be used to aggressively practice trapping attacks. (4) Graduation: Certificates handed out by Dr. Beasley. (5) Shaking hands with a legend (Joe Lewis & Mike Rutter). (6) Mike Rutter & Tommy Gong - taking a quick break between sessions.

entering "weapon first" were some of his observations. He stated that, to be a world class, premiere fighting art, JKD needed to be cleaned up and returned to its roots in pure combat. Since he readily proved this point with his skills, I, and probably everyone in the room, would have to agree.

Immediately following the evaluations the group watched a Bruce Lee documentary feature. Later, some of us again found our way over to "BT's". We discussed the day's events and the potential for networking seminar schedules and related info via an online service, with a newsletter going out to those without computer access.

## MORE TRAPPING AND INTERCEPTION

On Sunday morning New Jersey Instructor Vince Raimondi lent his assistance as I demonstrated aggressive trapping techniques to the group. We practiced trapping and attacking, having partners pair off with a single focus mitt to use as a target. To add combat realism, the partners holding the mitt were instructed to do their best to retreat or deflect the oncoming punch. This drill essentially forces the attacker to bridge quickly and trap effectively, otherwise they miss the target. We also worked the low backfist-disengage-high backfist trap/combination profiled in the "Bruce Lee Fighting Method - Advanced Techniques" book, and the Pak Sao to Lop Sao to Lead Hook Kick seen in Ted Wong's "JKD Comparison" book. I finished the session explaining the close relationship trapping can have with other strategies, and its use to enter into grappling range.

Sifu Wong taught the final session of the weekend. We worked pure "interception": slipping punches to perform a

counter, and simultaneous parry and counter against punches from various angles. Mr. Wong also demonstrated the use of footwork to control distance, and the use of the front hand lead punch against curved attacks such as the full swing and the rear roundhouse kick. As usual, his performance was fluid and precise!

As with other seminars I've attended, the long drive home afforded time for reflection. Brian and I laughed halfway to Minnesota discussing Joe Lewis' ability to communicate, teach, and even spar with wit and humor! But on a serious note, we both acknowledged how the extra-curricular discussions seemed to center around the current split between "original" and "concepts" JKD. Jeet Kune Do, as developed, practiced, and taught by Bruce Lee, is a viable choice for today's Martial Artist. All I have experienced since taking up the JKD journey has shown me that it contains everything necessary to be a strong, valid fighting art without anything extra. It can stand on its own merits, and if you cannot defend yourself with JKD, I doubt you'd be able to by any other means.

I hope a time is coming when all practitioners will transcend the need to further "expand" or "define", and simply refine the art to the point that we offer the world nothing but quality Jeet Kune Do. It clearly has structure, but is it a "style"? Perhaps the answer is contained in how you would translate "Do" (TAO) into modern-day language. If you are practicing the principles and strategies laid out by Bruce Lee, if you are guided by a viable source, if you are using modern fitness training methods, if you are keeping the art simple and efficient, and if you are doing this with conviction, then I contend that you are living the Jeet Kune Do "Lifestyle".