



XIN QI SHEN DOJO

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Seattle, WA 98117
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Thanks for your support!

I'd like to express my appreciation to all club members for your support in helping me make time for the ice shows this spring. Initially I had no idea it would be so time consuming and demanding upon my teaching times.

Even with a back injury it went very well. The ability for me to be able to not worry about the classes, practice and teaching enabled me to put the effort into my on-ice training which made the shows a success.

Xie Xie,
Andy



Different in Walking: Qi Gong

When to walk the circle and when to walk the octagon? As Bagua students know, when we walk the circle the inside foot steps directly forward. It's the outside foot that slightly toes in to keep us walking in a circular pattern. If we are practicing by ourselves we actually end up walking an octagon instead of a circle, this is correct Bagua circle walking. The purpose of this is first to save the knees as we work on sitting and getting a stable stance. It connects us with the ground, our base of power, develops the legs, and helps us understand our alignment. Especially as the postures get harder and we have to twist more. In the basic Bagua snake step our foot lands flat and the pressure is even on all parts of the foot. This is our training. As we walking in our practice we seek to sit so our thighs get all the work and strengthen. This also permits us to work on the 3 bows and 5 curves since our base stays constant as we walk the circle. Even though there is qi gong benefit to this, it is a martial art and thus the specific requirements for training and learning our body mechanics.

In Qi Gong and Tian Shan circle walking the emphasis and walking manner is quite different. First of all we're not working on sitting in a low posture as we walk the circle. We're not training our muscles but primarily focusing on opening and nurturing Qi flow. The postures are more upright, natural. The hands don't have the "jin zhang li da", the extension and reach that Bagua training requires. This extension is to engage all the muscles in the body so the body moves snake-like. The most important of all is the difference between Bagua and Qi Gong circle walking is in walking! In Qi Gong walking we walk the line of the circle. Specifically we place our inside hand to the center of the circle and walk a circle using our hand as if it's touching the center pole of the circle, thus our circle is fairly small, this is Tian Shan circle walking.

According to Master Yueng the reason for this is to work the energy and meridians in the foot as well as in the rest of the body. As you trace the line of the circle in your walking you'll notice that your toes, specifically the inside toes (close to the inside of the circle) grip and move since you are walking a small curve. The walking stance is a natural stance, no sitting like in Bagua training. The walk is natural, what Bagua practitioners call the lion step, heel touches first and the pressure rolls to the ball of the foot. This maximizes the overall flow of qi in the body, down to the toes.

Bagua practitioners who practice both methods should be able to notice quite a difference between the two methods. First of all the Qi Gong walking is much more relaxing and gently loosens up the body. But the main difference is in where the energy flow is focused. During Bagua inner palms the primary energy flow is directed to the hands regardless of posture. With the Qi Gong walking, though the hands do get a strong energy flow, it's more even throughout the body.

We tend to easily look at something and judge it by our own views and assumptions. Here is a good example. If you watch someone walking the circle, as a Bagua practitioner if you see them tracing the circle with their inside foot you might just jump to the conclusion they are practicing wrong. But on the other hand they may just be doing circle walking qi gong!

Andy

BA GUA IN RUSSIA???

By Victor Crandall

Sometimes it is a very small world. I have been meeting lately with Eugene Sukhorukov formerly of Simferopol, Ukraine. Eugene practices a martial art that has very striking similarities to Ba Gua. Eugene contacted me after searching for a practice partner through my brother Joe's website. Joe's site is www.jps.net/stma and yes that is a plug. Eugene asked Joe about instructors' in San Diego and Joe gave him my number. The coincidental thing was that my wife, Marina, had met Eugene and his wife, Elena, at a house buying seminar one month earlier. So everyone was a little surprised when we linked up.

History - Eugene's martial art is called Shou Dao (sp?). The name was invented in the last generation so the original name is unknown. Eugene's teacher was a Russian karate instructor who learned the art from a Chinese gentleman. This Chinese teacher mysteriously appeared, taught, and mysteriously disappeared. It is a family art supposedly kept inside a clan or tribe. The legend is that the tribe originally came from Eastern Europe. They were tree worshipers. Over time they migrated from Europe to India and on to China and back to Russia. They were warriors and picked up the best martial techniques from various cultures along the way. The art is supposed to be a Taoist art. The story smacks of a typical Chinese martial art novel. From tree worship as in Tung Hai Chuan's Taoist tree circling sect, to traveling secret warrior cultures, and mysterious disappearing teachers, who knows what is true and where the art really originates? I am speculating that the Chinese gentleman learned Ba Gua somewhere and modified it or it was modified in the family to round out what was learned. I could be very wrong. But then does it really matter? I found the art to be, principally sound, intriguing, and, highly effective.

Similarities - Many of the aspects of this art look exactly like the Ba Gua that Master Bok Nam Park teaches. It uses a rolling step and circle walking practice just like Park's. It contains defensive pivoting movements and palm striking movements exactly as Park teaches them. The art is soft utilizing circles and yielding to pressure. As in Ba Gua the movements are not specific in intent. So the hand movements could be blocks, strikes, ward off, etc. Constant changing is emphasized both of hand movements and position. Weight is held on the back leg, although the stance is more in appearance to a cat stance than the Ba Gua single palm. Stepping is small usually no more than 2 foot lengths. Eugene demonstrated a "toe in" exercise exactly like Parks but did not have a single palm change or toe out.

Differences - The circle walking hand positions are held differently in the static circle walking. The bottom is held palm horizontal to the ground. The top hand is held vertical like a chop. The most interesting aspect to me was a supplemental small circle walking exercise in which you face one direction only. As an example he would stand on the south edge of the circle facing in. He then moved around the circle always facing North. This involves stepping forward, across, and backward adding an interesting aspect to the footwork. The idea is to train balance so the practitioner is constantly in balance responding to pushes he receives. The hand movements are primarily circling movements like cloudy hands. They use the yin/yang principal throughout the movements. If one hand is high the other is low; if one is out the other is in. The rolling circling movements of the hands are done on several planes and directions so that a rather large area is covered. The hands constantly move and seldom held still. In his circle walking, Eugene would rotate the hands through movements independent of the stepping. As I watched him the movements looked surprisingly familiar but I could not place where I had seen them before. He was unfamiliar with the drilling aspect (rise, drill, overturn, fall) of Ba Gua. This may be due to the cloudy hands emphasis.

Practice - We went through a number of two man drills and soft hands practices. His and mine were very similar with only minor differences in the emphasis point of the exercise. We ran through some slow sparring and I was impressed with the versatility of the cloudy hands movements as he was utilizing them. He did tend to back away slightly when I would close in. I do not know if this was the art of just Eugene's comfort zone. I liked the small circling exercise and his cloudy hand drills. I got a lot of stuff to add to my practice and certainly enriched my Ba Gua. At this point we are meeting once a week to practice two man drills and slow sparring. I'll certainly pass along any interesting drills that I pick up in the course of our practice.



**BASIC CLUB FEE
INCREASES TO \$65
SEPTEMBER**

Due to rental agreement the dojo rent goes up this fall. Basic club fee will be \$65 monthly for one style. There will be no increase on additional classes. Basic fee \$65
Two sessions \$75
Three sessions \$85
Four session \$95

MONDAY ROUSHOU

New sessions will start only when there are 4 or more members to start a new beginning group. Consistent attendance is required.

CLUB SHIRTS AVAILABLE

Blue & Maroon
T-shirts \$15

Sweat Shirts \$25

**WHAT TO EXPECT THIS
FALL**

Toward mid September, unfortunately we will have to start moving indoors.

Qi Gong group:

E'mei system

Chen Taiji group:

Chen Pao Chui

(for those completing the 48)

Yang Taiji group:

7&8 (for those past section 2)

Bagua continuing group:

Qi Gong-Zhan Zhuang

8 Flowing Forms

Partner set

DOJO CLOSED

August closed

See calendar

MY CELL PHONE

Remember my cell phone # is to be used for canceling private lessons or checking to see if class is in the park or at the dojo. I use this phone as an emergency phone so if you need to leave me a message or have other questions call the dojo number.
206-283-0055

CONGRATULATIONS

On from completion:

CHEN 48 FORM

Tom Flener

Derryl Willis

Kim Ivy

Russ Fish

David Chaus

Anne Walker

Jim Doulong

Belinda Frazier

Michael Hall
David Briggs
10 INTERNOCKING RINGS
Chris Laliberte
Rikki Scandora
Joe O'Malley
Russ Fish
Joel Hartshorne
Brendan Mattson
David Wheeler
Nora Lih
Levi Dempsey
David Wheeler

**ROUSHOU WEEK
Aug 13-17, 7-8:30 \$60
Discovery Park**

\$90 for both

**SHORT STAFF WEEK
Aug 20-24, 7-8:30 \$60
Discovery Park**

Roushou means 'soft hands' and is a step passed push hands. It's primarily a series of exercises that sensitizes the nervous system to deal with strikes. The aim is to understand force, guide and relax with it. The Monday night roushou class is limited to members who have been in the club for a short while. There is a 3 month progression of the basic exercises that the group will follow. Each week a new dimension of last weeks exercise is introduced. New sessions start only when there are 4 or more to begin a new group since this class is run systematically and requires good attendance.

In mid-August I will be doing a week long workshop, M-F, 7-8:30 in Discovery Park covering a simple version of the Monday night class. This week session will be open to all, not merely club members, and all levels.

Andy

This will be a weeks long session on basics and partner work of the short staff (shoulder height). I will combine methods from the Aikido Jo and the Bagua short staff as basic drills for the fist half of the session. The last part of the session will be devoted to the partner staff. This is a paired short form that works on attack and defense. Those students who already know the short staff will have the option of working on the partner cane form. The staff should be shoulder height and either a hard wood or bamboo. We will be doing some striking drills so don't use a broom handle since they crack and pieces go flying in all directions when hit.

To sign up for any of these workshops phone me at (206)283-0055 or send me an email to dojo@wuji.com

Andy



UP AND COMING THIS FALL

Xin Qi Shen dojo will doing a bi-monthly workshop on teaching and learning methods. This workshop will be scheduled on Saturdays, 11:30-1:00. It will feature various instructors. More details in the fall issue.

In addition to the popularity of the teaching workshops there has been great interest in a continuation of the "Internal Energies" workshop. This will cover basic and lesser know energies of the art, including sword, saber and staff. The fall schedule is in process right now.

Summer Calendar

July 2001

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28 Chen
29 Chen	30	31				

August 2001

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
No classes this month! No club discounts for workshops this month			1	2	3	4
				Bandon Oregon Retreat		
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Bandon Oregon Retreat						
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Roushou Sessions 7-8:30 Discovery Park all weather \$60						
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Partner Short Staff 7-8:30 Discovery Park all weather \$60 (\$90 for both)						
26	27	28	29	30	31	
Discovery Park Practice 7-8:30 Roushou-Mon, Yang-Tues, Chen-Wed, Bagua-Thur Going through all forms					Energetic Retreat Lake Crescent Aug31-Sep 3	

September 2001 New Beginning Classes start

WHAT'S REALLY IMPORTANT?

"Well, the grandmaster of my system was never defeated," "His son was hired to train the military," the stories and claims go on.

First of all, was it the system or the person practicing the system that was good? Were they naturally talented? Worked extra hard? Lucky? Given the secrets? What does it really matter now, they're dead!

In order to make our own system, teachers, and art special we tend to have a need to spout the claims of our grandteachers and other lineage systems. Nowadays the same holds true to an extend. Instructors claiming to be the best, to have the 'secret' knowledge passed on from the grandmaster, to be the only one trusted with it. There is an assumption that if my grandteacher was excellent I am too. If this system had many heroes then . . . as part of that system I can plug into it and I can be a hero also. I'm special!

Isn't it all kind of dumb? Does it matter if no one can push you over or throw you to the ground, in real, daily life? Does this happen often to you???? What I'd like to hear is what type of person were these masters. Were they kind, generous, mature individuals or meatheads only able to rely on their physical abilities and talents. How did they treat their family? Were they honest? There are stories of Chen Fake neutralizing some of the challengers he had without disgracing or humiliating them. Now that seems pretty cool to me.

Teaching these arts, we get all kinds knocking at the door wanting to learn, or asking who to study with. If I study with a 'real' master then I'll be real. What is a real master anyway? I feel very luck having stumbled onto the various instructors I found in my beginning years, very lucky indeed. After a while I found out that I've learned more from the character of my teachers, and their qualities than merely what they taught.

Now when asked where or what to study my answer is to visit every school and check the feeling, character, and atmosphere of the school more than what is taught. One teacher may have a lot of forms while another teaches only a little bit but with greater depth and quality.

For instance, I had no plan or interest in learning Chen Taiji, I had enough on my plate. However, after meeting Master Gao Fu and seeing her skill, humility, and knowledge there was no way I wasn't going to study with her. It turned out that she was teaching Chen Taiji.

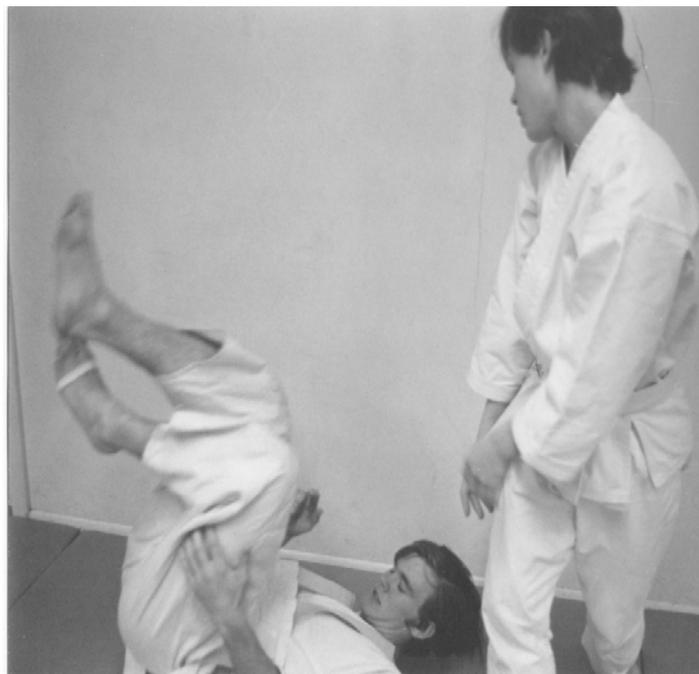
The silliness of who to learn from also extends onto what forms they teach! Well, if it's a short form it isn't traditional so they can't be good. If the form isn't

exactly the way Yang Lu Chan, or Chen Chan Xing did it, it can't be beneficial or lead to high skill. Now I'm not saying that older is any worse or better than modern variations but . . . How many of you would still prefer to drive a Model A Ford? Or still use one of those old phones with a crank? Or give up your central heating? Old may be traditional but not necessarily better. Also, what body types, personalities, physical attributes did these masters of old have? One size doesn't fit all. As the arts are becoming more stylized there is a danger of missing the point. We are practicing, researching, studying, and trying to refine the principles that these arts were based on and teach. If you talk with some teachers you'll hear that if you can't touch your chin to your toe you'll never be any good at Taiji. Others believe that if your snake creeps down doesn't creep low enough you can't develop any skill. Look at Master Yang Cheng Fu for instance. As he grew older he gained quite a bit of weight. Does that mean, since he couldn't raise his knee high in Golden Rooster his Taiji stopped being good? Or in some Chen Taiji schools, the only correct stance is when the bottom of your thigh is parallel with the ground. So . . . When you're too old to take those deep stances your Taiji is no longer correct or any good?

How is the quality of your life? Are you happy? Are you healthy? What really matters? What does the art contribute to your life?

Go practice!

Andy



1972 Guess who?

Thank
You
Lisa!

One of my goals for the club is to establish workshops on how to learn and how to teach. (We already have a monthly teacher's session for the assistant instructors to discuss club business as well as teaching methods.) My hope is to improve the quality of teaching these arts as well as help students improve the quality of their learning and individual practice. Our first guest for these workshops was Lisa Ware, nationally and internationally famous ice skating choreographer, coach and director of the Kingsgate Ice Area skating program in Kirkland.

It was voted a unanimous EXCELLENT by the students. Lisa shared with us her philosophy and insight on teaching. She also made us ask ourselves questions about how we teach and learn.

"We want her back!" was a common response. "When is her next session?" was another.

TEACHING & LEARNING WORKSHOPS

This will be a bimonthly workshop with guest instructors from various fields. (We will definitely have Lisa back again and again!)

The bottom line is that there isn't just one way to teach and that we all learn slightly differently. The purpose of these workshops is to see and encounter many different philosophies and methods of teaching to help improve our

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