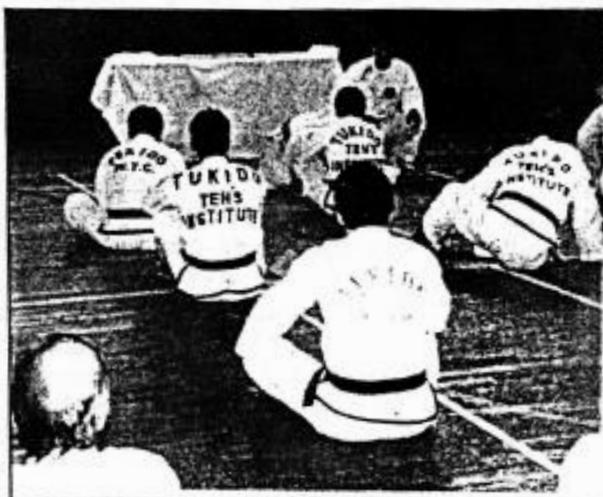


# Tukido

## Instructors' training course

by TOM KNIGHT



Master Teh explains how to increase the stretch.

**A**NY MARTIAL ART stands or falls by the quality of its instructors. If a good instructor is an inspiration to his or her students, a bad instructor can put people off altogether, regardless of the merits of the system being taught.

Pure technical ability is no guarantee of success in passing on complex skills to complete beginners. Also needed are the somewhat different skills of the teacher, the psychologist, the physiotherapist and first aider — and, though these are often forgotten, those of administrator and diplomat!

Perhaps the most complete, and certainly one of the most demanding, training courses for martial arts instructors is that run by the UK Tukido Council — devised by Tukido's founder, Grandmaster Hock Aun Teh. To find out the details, I went along to the Autumn '88 Tukido instructors' training course at Allan Glen Secondary School, Glasgow.

For a Tukido instructor, the learning process never stops. Attendance at one of the two instructors' courses held every year is compulsory. There was a good attendance at the October course; 45 instructors, from as far afield as London, Newcastle and Aberdeen turned out for what proved to be a very interesting weekend.

The Saturday morning session saw the group split into two. Experienced instructors — those who had already completed the instructors' course and who were now running their own clubs — moved downstairs to sit a two-hour exam. This paper was unexpected — a spot-check organised by Master Teh to keep the instructors on their toes.

The questions covered every aspect of Tukido: From how to teach a

simple double punch, or Tukido sparing forms, to how to set up a grading examination room, and the complex aspects of managing a club. There were also general questions about first aid — describing symptoms of concussion, for instance — and about fitness, general sport and other martial arts. A final question covered the system of symbols devised by Master Teh for use at gradings — a unique martial arts "shorthand" which provides every student sitting a grading with a detailed record of any faults or problems which arise.

So, if a student is simply raising, not kicking, a symbol exists to point out the problem and describe which kick is at fault. Similarly, there are symbols for poor co-ordination, faulty punching, wrongly-executed blocks — the system is complete enough to describe every aspect of Tukido (or, for that matter, most techniques in other martial arts).

The setting of these spot-check papers from time to time has a serious purpose; close scrutiny of the answers helps Master Teh with speedy identification of any problem areas which might, in time, lead to a lowering of standards.

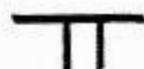
The group not sitting the exam that morning comprised recently-qualified black belts — first-timers at the instructors' course — and black belts who attended the previous course last

A sample question from the instructors' course examination. The symbols were devised four years ago by Master Teh as the perfect system of shorthand for expressing martial arts techniques. Though the newly-qualified instructors are not required to write the symbols down themselves, they are expected to be able to read them.

### TUKIDO



Thumb extended in knifehand



Basic movements



More stretching exercises required



Excessive contact



Reverse turning kick incomplete



Rhythm



Side kick off target



More courage required

spring, but who had not yet taken the final exam.

For a new Tukido instructor, the training course is long; a minimum of six months must pass, assisting at classes under the supervision of a qualified instructor, who provides not only encouragement, help and advice but also an official assessment, before the final exam can be taken.

None of this seemed to deter the 12-strong group of newcomers who lined up on the Saturday morning to be taken, step by step, through the standard Tukido 25-minute warm-up by Master Teh.

The warm-up was divided into sections; first came the gentler exercises — ones to loosen up first neck, shoulders, arms and waist, then trunk, back and legs. Next followed the aerobic section, with Master Teh outlining the bouncing exercises to be used and the theory behind their use. Next the abdominal exercises, where the fledgling instructors were taught how to blend simple stomach-crunching exercises — for abdominal strength — with others which strengthened the lower back or improved body mobility for beginners. Finally came the stretching exercises, vital for Tukido's devastating foot techniques.

Since they began their training in Tukido, the black belts had been through these exercises hundreds of times — but this was different. Master Teh spent more than three hours explaining and demonstrating the correct way to perform each one, while the class took notes on the beneficial effects of each, and the proper method of teaching them, both to beginners and more advanced students.

Teaching method was, in fact, Master Teh's main pre-occupation throughout the day. From simple tips on how to deal with awkward situations, to in-depth advice on instructing strategy, Master Teh's message was built around giving the black belts the correct tools to do the job of instructing a class properly.

"Your voice is one of the most important things of all," said Master Teh. "It can provide the lift which keeps students going for those last few repetitions of an exercise, or for the last five exhausting minutes of free sparring. It can also provide clues to help students with their stretching. Getting the rhythm right is vitally important. It is also a key part

in your whole approach, which must be utterly professional.

"Being professional means giving the students your full attention. It really upsets me to think of a black belt shouting out stretching exercises while he does his own stretching or practises his sparring forms on the platform or in another part of the hall. Don't do it!"

Master Teh stressed that it was extremely important to understand students' problems — instructors must get to know which exercises were hard for the overweight, the young or ladies. They should be sure to know which muscle groups were involved in each, and explain their effects.

"Telling students that a certain exercise will help their turning punches, or their side kicks, is very useful, because it helps them to gain an understanding of how their bodies work," he said.

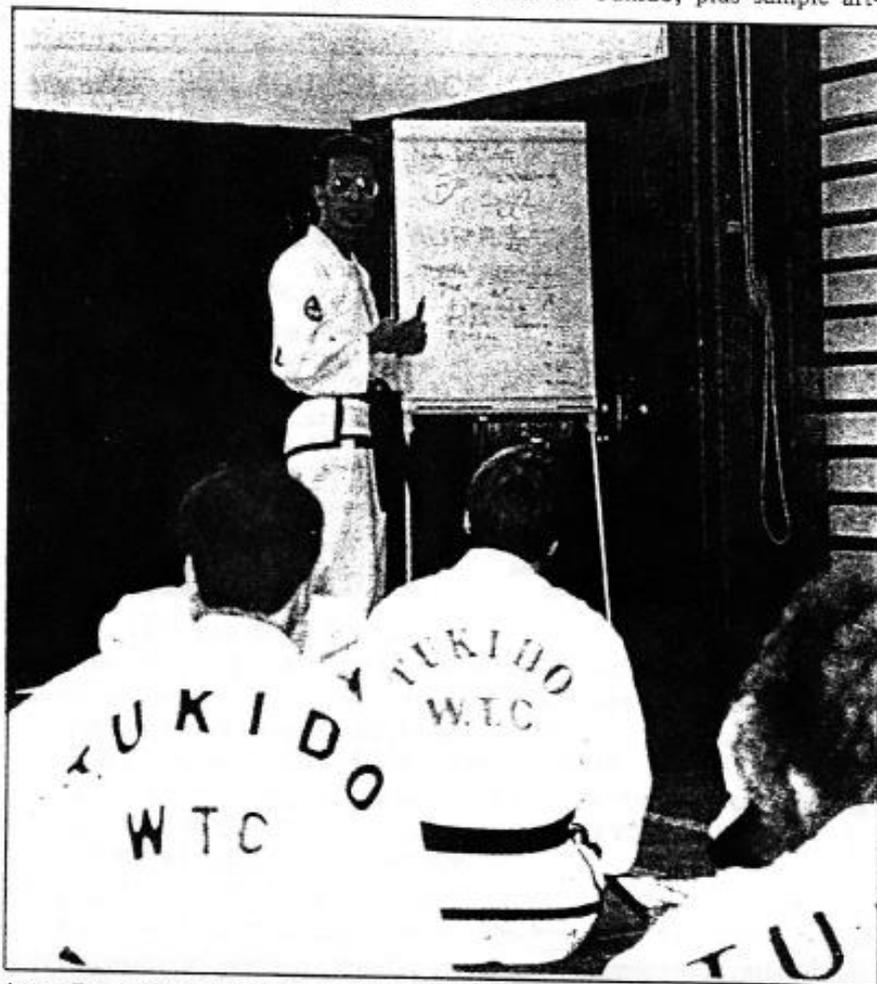
Moving on to the teaching of basic movement, Master Teh began to concentrate on the particular problems of dealing with new students. He outlined the method of teaching double

punch, plus the various kicks and self-defence techniques in the white belt syllabus. His main topic, however, was the motivation of newcomers — how instructors could ensure that each got as much out of his or her training as possible.

"You must reassure them that they are doing well. Tell them they are improving — it is important to make them feel that they are making progress. If you look at their sparring, and see five things wrong, don't go up to them with a list — tell them one fault at a time, and let them know when you see improvements.

"If you point out that they are now doing something that was impossible for them six weeks ago, they will feel very pleased, and then work all the harder. It is up to you to see that they do not lose interest," said Master Teh.

After lunch, the beginners' group was joined by the experienced instructors. The afternoon session started with a short talk from Master Teh on dealing with the press; some sample press releases and photocopies of stories on Tukido, plus sample art-



Leong Teh, 3rd Dan, explains how Newton's 2nd Law applies to Tukido movements.

work for advertisements, were distributed. Advice was given on the placing of advertisements, and dealing with the press generally.

Before the main business of the afternoon began, Master Teh's brother, Kok Leong Teh, 3rd dan, BSc (Hons), MSc, gave a mathematical explanation of a phenomenon outlined previously by Master Teh — why a punch or kick delivered with "snatch impact" (ie a blow delivered in the shortest possible time) should be more powerful than one of equal force delivered with a longer blow. He used Newton's second law (familiar, of course, to everyone with O level physics) to describe the process.

Leong's explanation ran something like this: Newton defined force as the rate of change of momentum. The impulse (or impact) generated by an applied force is therefore equal to the rate of change of force — expressed as force divided by a time interval. This implied that the shorter the time taken to deliver a blow, the greater its impact.

To take an easy example — if, for a given force of 100lbs, two blows are made, one delivered over one second

and one delivered in a tenth of a second, the results will be as follows: 100lbs force  $\times$  1 second = 100lbs impact force; 100lbs force  $\times$  0.1 second = 1,000lbs impact force.

Leong continued by illustrating in mathematical terms, using the principle of the resolution of forces, another practical truth. For maximum force, he said, a blow had to be executed horizontally towards its target — meeting the target, as near as possible, at a right angle.

This was physics used to back up common sense — once the principle is explained, it is obvious that a punch or back fist which travels diagonally upwards or downwards towards its target must lose power. However, with correct application of the laws of physics, you can actually calculate this loss.

Continuing the session, Master Teh took the whole group briefly through the warm-up again, later moving on in detail to cover basic movement for all grades, plus one-step and two-step sparring, the Tukido sparring forms, power tests and free sparring, with particular reference to what to look for in the run-up to gradings.

His main theme for the afternoon was uniformity. It was important Tukido, wherever it was taught, would have exactly the same form — exactly the same exercises, names for things, procedures and discipline.

"Wherever a student goes, whether in Britain, Australia or any other country where Tukido is taught, it is important that the content remain exactly the same. That is one of our great strengths at the moment, and it must continue," said Master Teh.

He then spoke in detail about the change in emphasis in Tukido at white belt stages, away from sparring towards self-defence. This was in response to a demand from new members for self-defence techniques which would be instantly available to them.

The day was completed with a round-up by Master Teh of Tukido's continuing expansion. Since the beginning of the course in the spring, a number of new clubs had opened in various parts of Britain, from Scotland to the Midlands. There were also exciting developments such as the departure of Dundee instructor Michael Li, 3rd dan, for Sydney, Australia as Chief Instructor for Australia.