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A photograph of a man in a white Taekwondo uniform with a black belt, performing a high kick. He is in a dynamic pose with his right leg raised high, foot pointing towards the top of the frame. His left arm is extended forward, and his right arm is bent at the elbow with the hand near his face. The background is a soft, circular glow.

**RICHARD
CHUN**

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Spellings of certain words in this second edition have been changed to match the modern usage of the World Taekwondo Federation. However, the spelling of 'Tae Kwon Do' has been retained in the title (only) of this book for both editions.

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Preface

Taekwondo, the art of punching and kicking, is not merely a fighting skill; it is a way of life and a way of thinking. In order to truly master the essence of the art of Taekwondo, one must learn to master oneself, to be totally committed to the mental as well as the physical discipline demanded.

As you diligently practice the physical techniques, you must internalize the philosophical principles of Taekwondo. If you do not do this, you are studying the art superficially, and you will not derive the full benefit from it. By combining the two equally important aspects of Taekwondo, you will gain confidence and a feeling of well-being in a non-aggressive, non-violent manner.

The study of Taekwondo can improve you as a person. It will teach you to control your own *Id*—your aggression, your temper, and your insecurity. It can make you extremely sensitive to your environment, so that you cannot be taken unaware, and it will help you to truly know yourself, so that you will be in full command of your own strengths and weaknesses and able to perceive the strengths and weaknesses of your opponent or opponents as well as those inherent in any situation.

Everything in nature is interdependent, including ourselves. We must try to learn to live in harmony with the Universe and not try to manipulate it for our own gains. At the same time we must cultivate and preserve life along with our individuality.

We must endeavor to avoid a confrontation before it becomes a physical threat. If attacked, we should not use excessive force to defend ourselves. Moderation is an important principle that we must develop, and this can only be done by knowing our strengths, our weaknesses, and ourselves. Only then can we know our opponent, his strengths, and his vulnerabilities. Our worst weakness is fear. Once we serenely accept the fact that in defending our life we may be killed, we eliminate panic, and we no longer have anything to fear.

The Um and Yang principle teaches us that we can allow an attacker to overextend himself and thereby provide a means for his self-defeat. Where there is action, there is reaction; this is the constant balance found in nature.

We must strive for harmony by developing strong character to withstand adversity and to conform to the social order in which we live. We must respect family members and the authority of society. This should be carried into the Taekwondo class, which is like family. Respect, humility, and trust must be shown to the teacher, who is the father figure and to the students and place of practice. We should harmonize with society yet not allow the impersonal forces to limit our individuality. We should not attempt to dominate, nor should we allow fear or other forces to dominate us.

Meditation can help us to eliminate distractions, so that we can know ourselves by penetrating our self-created illusions. This self-knowledge will help us to understand and overcome our opponents.

Patience is absolutely necessary to the study of Taekwondo. Through patience and discipline we can develop better concentration while practicing our physical techniques. The mind must be calm and the will determined, in order to increase our moral courage. A troubled or distracted mental attitude will blur our perception, and this can spell





Richard Chun at Bulkook Temple, Kyung Joo, Korea. Young aristocrats called *Hwarang dan* trained Taekwondo 2000 years ago.

defeat. Once we have perfected our physical techniques and combined them with the proper mental attitude, we will react properly to an attacker without having time to stop and think. The parts of the body will flow as they are totally attuned to our mind, our instincts, our senses, and our perceptions.

This is one of the meanings of total awareness in Taekwondo. It flows naturally and automatically out of the concept of oneness with the Universe and the shedding of ego and worldly thoughts.

This is the Way of Taekwondo.

There is great emphasis on forms in this advanced book. There are several reasons for this. Forms are the basics of Taekwondo. Diligently practiced, they provide you with strong defensive and offensive positions as a foundation for advanced combinations.

As you learn your advanced forms, you are learning advanced hand techniques and kicking techniques that occur in combinations and can be used in free fighting. All of the advanced techniques and combinations are explained in Chapter 10.

Due to the confines of space, I have not delved into the most basic kicking, punching, falling, and self-defense techniques of Taekwondo. These are exhaustively covered in my first book, *Tae Kwon Do: The Korean Martial Art* (Harper & Row, 1976). I strongly suggest that you refer to that volume for detailed explanations and illustrations of basic and advanced kicking, punching, blocking, and self-defense techniques.

I wish to express my deepest appreciation to the following people for their efforts in the preparation of this book.

I wish to thank Dr. Un Yong Kim, President of the World Taekwondo Federation, for making this book possible. His example, devotion to the art, untiring efforts to make Taekwondo an international sport have been an inspiration.

I wish to thank Richard Jackson for his help in editing this book, Herb Fogelson and Marco Vega for the photography, Sheba Emerson for her artistic drawings, and my students who have helped make this book what it is.

CHAPTER 3



The Science of Physics
in Taekwondo

TAEKWONDO is both science and art. For over twenty centuries, it has made instinctive use of the principles of classical mechanical physics, which were intuitively understood but not codified until Isaac Newton did so less than three hundred years ago.

Newton's Three Laws of Motion state:

1. A body at rest tends to remain at rest, and a body in motion tends to remain in motion—unless some outside force acts. (This is the Law of Inertia.)
2. Force equals mass times acceleration. ($F=ma$. A mass exerts no force when it is moving at a constant velocity. The velocity must be increasing—accelerating—to create force. Acceleration is defined as the increase of velocity with time.)
3. Every action has an equal and opposite reaction.

Newton's First Law of Motion explains why it doesn't hurt when you drive your knuckles through a pine board. The key is inertia. Inertia is the phenomenon which makes it harder to get a car rolling by pushing it than it is to keep it rolling. Inertia also explains why the car is difficult to stop once it gets rolling.

We have all had the experience of doing push-ups on our knuckles. It hurts. It hurts because the layer of fluid and flesh (which is mostly water) between the skin and bones of the knuckle deforms, or gives way, under the slow, steady pressure of our weight. Then, it's bone against nerve, which equals pain.





Now, take the case where you break the board with those very same knuckles. Because of the velocity of the blow, the layer of fluid simply *doesn't have time* to deform, and for that instant, it behaves like a tough, rigid body. The board is more brittle, and since it doesn't have time to deform either, it breaks. The damage to the board occurs in the first $\frac{1}{64}$ inch of contact.

There are numerous other examples of fluids acting like rigid bodies on impact. When an airplane crashes at sea, the plane doesn't simply sink. Rather, it smashes at the surface, as if it had hit a brick wall.

Another example is the woodchuck your car hits at 60 mph. The hapless woodchuck dies from *internal* injuries. Most of the time, his skin isn't even broken. But look at your car—four hundred dollars worth of damage to your bumper and your fender, all because the soft woodchuck didn't have time to deform.

Thus, soft is hard, because of inertia. And a known weak material can break a strong object.

In Taekwondo, we use Newton's First Law in many ways. When an attacker is in motion, we use his inertia against him. (Remember, a body in motion tends to remain in motion.) We allow his inertia to get him off balance. Sometimes, we help a little by tripping him or throwing him. Or, as he comes headlong at us, we kick—providing the outside force mentioned in the First Law.

In the same way, we use our own static inertia to give us maximum stability. This is the function of our basic stances: Horseback Stance, Front Stance, and Back Stance.

We use Newton's Second Law in as many ways as the First Law, primarily in our hundreds of striking techniques. The law says force equals mass times *acceleration*. Every punch, kick, or strike we learn is effective, not because it is moving along at a nice, uniform velocity, but because it is accelerating. The velocity itself is increasing at a measurable rate.

When the Forward Middle Punch, for instance, is used to break a board, the striking fist begins at the hip. It is at rest, the body relaxed. When the Forward Striking Punch is thrown, the fist picks up velocity very rapidly. When the fist has traveled about 85 percent of the distance to the full extension of the arm, it has achieved maximum



velocity. This velocity has been measured for a black belt student at Taekwondo by a stroboscopic camera with a strobe flashing at 120 flashes per second. The maximum speed of the punch was measured at velocities up to 9.8 meters per second! Once the fist hit the board, it decelerated at a rate of 3500 meters per second. This translates into impact energy on the order of 100 joules. A board will break at 6.4 joules of energy. A concrete patio block measuring 40 centimeters by 90 centimeters by 4 centimeters and weighing 6.5 kilograms requires only 8.9 joules to break it.

The energy created by other kinds of blows is even more impressive. The peak velocity of a downward Knife-Hand Strike was measured at 14 meters per second. The Roundhouse Kick reached 11 meters per second, and both the Front Thrust Kick and the Side Kick reached maximum speeds of 14.4 meters per second.



At 14 meters per second, the Knife-Hand Strike exerts an impulse force of 675 pounds on the unfortunate board.

Newton's Third Law finds expression in the pull/push techniques of our punches and kicks. Using the Forward Middle Punch as an example, we pull the non-striking fist simultaneously with the strike. This creates a "coupling" effect, which doubles the force of the punch while neutralizing our own inertial forces and compensating for the equal and opposite reaction, which would steal power from the blow.

All of this is very instructive, but many people who routinely use these techniques and break boards, roof tiles, bricks, and even stones are not even dimly aware of the classical physics involved. Yet it is important, in our modern world, to recognize that our ancient art is founded upon scientific principles, which although relatively newly discovered, have nonetheless been operating since before our planet was formed.



ADVANCED LEG-STRETCHING EXERCISES

1. Side Leg Stretch

Five different standing methods.





5. Two Jumping Side Stretches



ADVANCED KICKING TECHNIQUES



1. Turning Wheel Kick

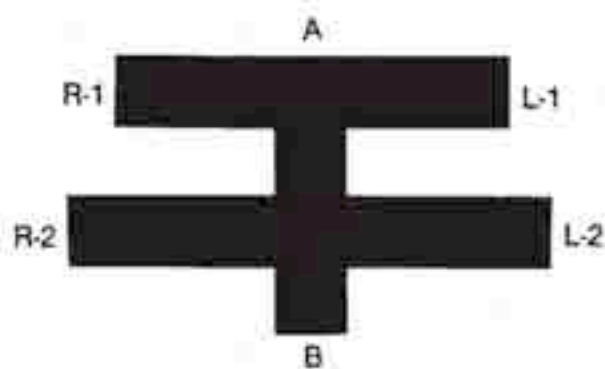
Turning your body to the right, pivot on the ball of the left foot, raise your right foot, and execute a Turning Wheel Kick, striking the opponent's face with the outside of your heel. Continue swinging with the knee locked.



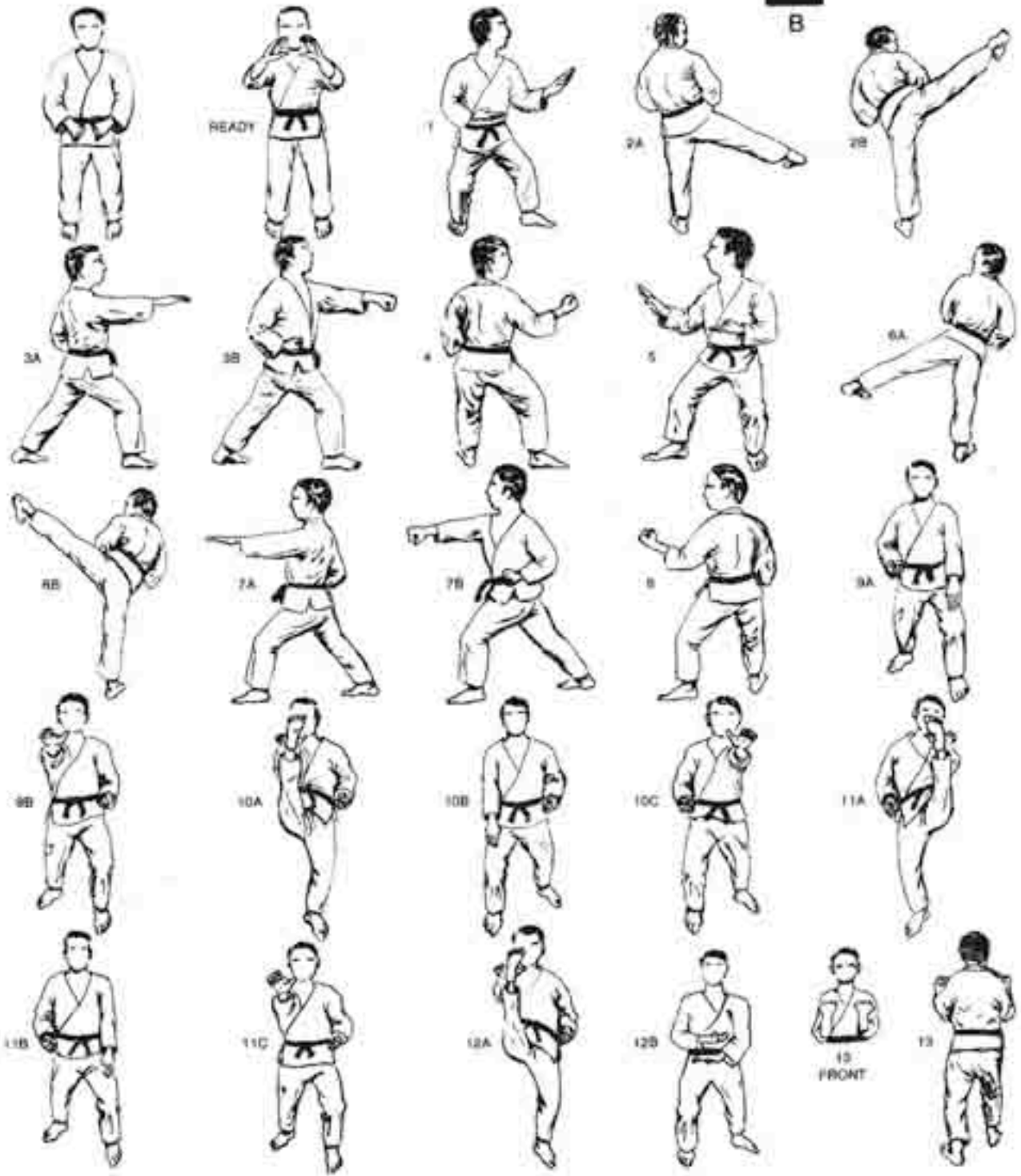
KORYO (KOREA)

The word "Korea" derives from *Koryŏ*, the name of an ancient dynasty (A.D. 918-1392). The Koryo men were people of strong convictions and will, which they demonstrated in battle. They persistently resisted the aggressions of the Mongolians, who were sweeping the world at the time. Their firm resolution and intrepid spirit, born of wisdom rather than brute strength or numbers, earned them the title "men of conviction."

The form Koryo can be a way of cultivating the strength that arises from firm conviction. With every motion, you must demonstrate confidence and a strong will.



Koryo



**Ready (Barrel Pushing Ready), (Tong-Milgi-
Choonbi)**

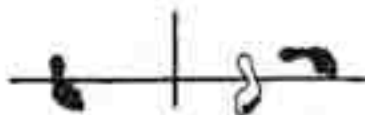
Maintain ready stance, facing B at point A, eyes focused straight ahead. At the same time raise both open hands to neck and push forward, palms out, with arms and hands tensed, as if pushing a heavy barrel.



First Position:

Knife-Hand Middle Block

- a. Slide your left foot 90° to the left (toward L-1).
- b. Assume Left Back Stance.
- c. Simultaneously execute a Left Knife-Hand Middle Block.



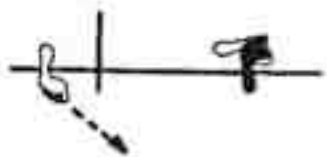
Second Position:

**Low Side Kick, High Side Kick, Outside
Knife-Hand Strike (*Sonnal-Bakat-Chiki*)**



1. Low Side Kick

- a. Place your left fist at waist level, palm up, and place your right fist over your left fist, palm in.
- b. Simultaneously execute a Side Kick with your right foot to knee level (toward L-1).



2. High Side Kick

- a. Keep fist in same position as in Low Side Kick.
- b. Consecutively, without placing your foot on the floor, execute a Side Kick with your Right foot to the face.



3. Knife-Hand Strike

- a. Immediately bring your right foot down one step forward.
- b. Assume Right Front Stance.
- c. Simultaneously, execute a Right Outside Knife-Hand Strike to the neck; palm down.



Taeguek: The Eight Other Branches of Palgwe

When Albert Einstein died, he was working on a unified theory, which would explain all of the basic phenomena of the universe, including electricity, magnetism, gravity, and the forces that hold the nuclei of atoms together. His magnificent theory of relativity would have fit into this unified field theory. However, Einstein was not able to complete the unified field theory.

For the practitioner of Taekwondo, the phenomena of the Universe are explained by the ancient philosophy of Um (Yin) and Yang, as described in the *Joo-yeok*, the *Book of Changes*. In this ancient Oriental work, the Palgwe symbolizes the phenomena of man and the Universe.

Palgwe means "law" or "command." It symbolizes the eternal duality of all that exists—the interdependence of good and evil, of plus and minus, of North and South, of Heaven and Earth. These are opposite, yet they are part of the same whole. They are in constant dynamic struggle with each other, yet they can never break apart.

Consider the nucleus of an atom, the basic building block of the Universe. This nucleus is composed of positively and negatively charged particles in extreme proximity. The forces with which like particles repel one another are measured in billions of electron volts, yet they do not fly apart, for they are bound together by an even greater yet unexplained force. This nuclear force binds them together no matter how they struggle to break apart. It is truly cosmic force cohesion—like the force that joins the opposing Um and Yang forces into a single duality.

In Taekwondo, the infinite and unknowable constancy of Truth and the truth of constant change are expressed in the Palgwe forms. These forms have a deep philosophical root. They express the mutually contradictory concepts which are forever developing and growing by combining and changing. Within this struggle, there is Truth, which is the integral strength, and cosmic Order, which brings harmony out of chaos.

The principle of Palgwe is that he who knows himself and his environment will find the path of harmony between the changeable forces of the world in which he lives. As the Taekwondo practitioner executes the Palgwe forms, he must bear in mind the reciprocal commands they represent.

These commands may be translated as:

1. Know yourself and be in harmony with the Universe.
2. Be responsible for yourself and loyal to your commitments.
3. Be respectful of our relationships; know the limits beyond which your freedom encroaches on the freedom of another.
4. Be pure in motive and direct in action.

Palgwe, in its most profound philosophical sense, symbolically expresses all of the phenomena of man and the Universe. It is the most basic philosophic principle contained in the ancient *Book of Changes*.

Within Palgwe, there are sixty-four *gwe*s, or commands, which naturally flow from its basic, all encompassing law. These *gwe*s are grouped into eight trigrams, or branches, which are called *Taegeuk*.

Taegeuk is written 太極.

Tae (太) means "bigness," *geuk* (極) means "eternity." Thus, Taegeuk has no form, no beginning, and no end. It is the eternal infinity whose vastness contains the essence of everything, and from which everything in the Universe originates.

TAEGEUK 1 JANG

In Taekwondo, there are eight Taegeuk forms corresponding to the eight aspects of eternity.

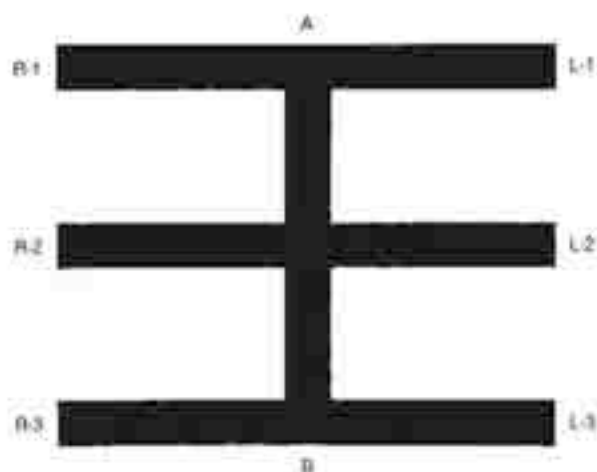
The first of these is Taegeuk 1 Jang, which applies the actions of Keon (☰) to Palgwe. Keon is the principle *gwe* in the *Book of Changes*. It represents Heaven and Light. It is the powerful and manly *gwe*, the source of creation and the symbol of the father. As Heaven, it is the symbol of pure creativity. Keon originally meant "dry," and since the dry is light, it floats up to heaven. Thus Keon came to be identified with Heaven.

From the time that *Homo sapiens* became aware of their ability to think, mankind has followed divergent paths in its search for the true meaning of existence and of the origin and meaning of the Universe. Sometimes however, those paths converge. Compare, for instance, the concept of Keon with the Biblical account found in *Genesis 1:2-3*: "And the earth was without form, and void... And God said, 'Let there be light.' And there was light."

Keon signifies the infinite concentration of Yang energy.

This form represents the source of creation by presenting the most basic techniques—the Low Block, Inside Middle Block, Middle Punch, and Reverse Kick. These techniques can be easily learned by the beginning student but are practical throughout the study of Taekwondo. Taegeuk 1 Jang, therefore is the foundation from which the other forms build. Most of this form is performed in High Front Stance, which is easy for a beginner to maintain. However, the Front Stance is introduced, and the student learns to shift from one stance to another.

All eight forms, Taegeuk 1 Jang through Taegeuk 8 Jang, follow the same I-shaped floor pattern, which can be used as a reference for all eight forms:



Assume Ready Stance (at center, A)



1. Turn your body 90° to the left toward L-1 while sliding out with your left foot forward into a Left High Front Stance, simultaneously executing a Left-Hand Low Block.



2. Slide your right foot forward toward L-1 into a Right High Front stance, simultaneously executing a Right-Hand Middle Punch.



3. Turn your body 180° to the right toward R-1 while pivoting on the ball of your left foot and stepping forward toward R-1 into a Right High Front Stance, simultaneously executing a Right-Hand Low Block.



4. Slide your left foot towards R-1 into a Left High Front stance, simultaneously executing a Left-Hand Middle Punch.



5. Turn your body 90° to the left toward B while sliding out with your left foot forward into a Left Front Stance, simultaneously executing a Left-Hand Low Block.



Note: Fifth and Sixth positions should be performed in a rapid, continuous motion.

6. Maintain the Left Front stance and execute a Reverse Right-Hand Middle Punch.



7. While turning your face and body 90° to the right, pivot to the right on the ball of your left foot and slide your right foot forward toward R-2 into a Right High Front Stance, simultaneously executing a Left-Hand Middle Block (outside to inside).



8. Slide your left foot forward toward R-2 into a Left High Front stance, simultaneously executing a Reverse Right-Hand Middle Punch.



9. Turn your body 180° to the left toward L-2 while pivoting on the ball of your right foot and sliding out with your left foot forward toward L-2 into a Left High Front Stance, simultaneously executing a Right-Hand Middle Block (outside to inside).



10. Slide your right foot forward toward L-2 into a Right High Front Stance, simultaneously executing a Reverse Left-Hand Middle Punch.



11. Turn your body 90° to the right toward B while sliding out with your right foot forward toward B into a Right Front stance, simultaneously executing a Right-Hand Low Block.

Note: Eleventh and Twelfth Positions should be performed in a rapid, continuous motion.



12. Maintain the Right Front Stance and execute a Left-Hand Reverse Middle Punch.



13. While turning your face and body 90° to the left, pivot to the left on the ball of your right foot and slide your left foot forward toward L-3 into a Left High Front Stance, simultaneously executing a Left-Hand High Block.



14. a. Execute a Right Front Kick toward L-3.



- b. Step forward with your right foot toward L-3 into a Right High Front Stance, simultaneously executing a Right-Hand Middle Punch.



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