

CHINESE MARTIAL ARTS EXTERNAL

# CHINESE FAST WRESTLING **FOR** FIGHTING

THE ART OF SAN  
SHOU KUAI JIAO

THROWS, TAKEDOWNS, & GROUND FIGHTING

中國散手快跤



Liang, Shou-Yu and Tai D. Ngo

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

### *Master Liang, Shou-Yu* 梁守渝

Master Liang, Shou-Yu was born on June 28, 1943 in the city of Chongqian, Sichuan Province (四川、重慶), China. When he was six he began his training in Qigong, the art of breathing and internal energy control, under the tutelage of his renowned grandfather, the late Liang, Zhi-Xiang (梁芷箱). Mr. Liang was taught the esoteric skills of the Emei Mountain sect, including Da Peng Qigong (大鵬氣功). When he was eight, his grandfather made special arrangements for him to begin training Emei Wushu (martial arts) (峨嵋武術).



In 1959, Mr. Liang began the study of Qin Na (擒拿) and Chinese Shuai Jiao (Wrestling) (摔跤). From 1960 to 1964 he devoted his attention to the systematic research and practice of Wrestling, Wushu, and other special martial power training.

In addition to the advantage of being born to a Wushu family, Mr. Liang also had the chance to come into contact with many legendary grandmasters. By the time he was twenty, Mr. Liang had already received instruction from 10 of the most well-known contemporary masters of both Southern and Northern origin, who gladly instructed and inspired this ardent young man. His curiosity inspired him to learn more than one hundred sequences from many different styles. His study of the martial arts has taken him throughout mainland China, having gone to Henan Province (河南) to learn Chen style Taijiquan, Hubei Province to learn the Wudang system, and Hubei Province (湖北) to learn the Nan Yue system.

With his wealth of knowledge, Mr. Liang was inspired to compete in martial arts competitions, in which he was many times a gold medalist in China. During his adolescence, Mr. Liang won titles in Chinese wrestling (Shuai Jiao), various other martial arts, and weight lifting.

Through and beyond his college years, Mr. Liang's wide background in various martial arts helped form his present character, and led him to achieve a high level of martial skill. Some of the styles he concentrated on include the esoteric Emei system, Shaolin Long Fist (少林長拳), Praying Mantis (螳螂), Chuo Jiao (戳腳), Xingyi (形意), Baguazhang (八卦掌), Taijiquan (太極拳), Liu He Ba Fa (六合八法), Shuai Jiao (摔跤), Qin Na (擒拿), vital point striking, many weapons systems, and several kinds of internal Qigong.

Mr. Liang received a university degree in biology and physiology from West-South National University in 1964. However, it was a time of political turmoil, and because of his bourgeois family background, the Communist government sent him to a remote, poverty-stricken area to teach high school. Despite this setback, Mr. Liang began to organize Wushu teams in the local community, and he trained numerous farmer-students in Wushu and in wrestling.

Then came a disastrous time in modern Chinese history. During the years of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1974 A.D.), all forms of martial arts and Qigong were suppressed. Because he came from a bourgeois family, Mr. Liang was vulnerable to the furious passions and blind madness of the revolutionaries. To avoid conflict with the Red Guards, he gave up his teaching position. Mr. Liang used this opportunity to tour various parts of the country to discover and visit great masters in Wushu, and to make friends with people who shared his devotion to and love for the art. Mr. Liang went through numerous provinces and large cities, visiting especially the many renowned and revered places where Wushu was created, developed, and polished. Among the many places he visited were Emei Mountain (峨眉山), Wudang Mountain (武当山), Hua Mountain (华山), Qingchen Mountain (青城山), Chen's village in Henan (河南), the Cangzhou Territory (沧州) in Hebei Province (河北), Beijing (北京), and Shanghai (上海). In eight years he made many Wushu friends and met many great masters, and his mastery of the techniques and philosophy of the art grew to new horizons.

At the end of the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese government again began to support the martial arts and Qigong, including competitions. There was a general movement to organize and categorize the existing martial and internal arts. Research projects were set up to search out the old masters who remained alive, select their best techniques, and organize their knowledge. It was at this time that the Sichuan government appointed Mr. Liang as a coach for the city, the territory, and the province. So many of his students were among the top martial artists of China that in 1978 Mr. Liang was voted one of the top national coaches since 1949. He also received acclaim from the People's Republic of China Physical Education and Sports Commissions, and often served as judge in national competitions.

After the Cultural Revolution, and despite his many official duties, Mr. Liang continued to participate actively in competitions at the provincial and national level. Between 1974 and 1981 he won numerous medals, including four gold medals. His students also performed superbly in national and provincial open tournaments, winning many medals. Many of these students have now become professional Wushu coaches or college Wushu instructors themselves. Other students have become Wushu trainers in the armed forces, or have become movie actors in Wushu pictures. In 1979, Mr. Liang received several appointments, including a committee membership in the Sichuan Chapter of the China National Wushu Association, and an executive membership of the Wushu Coaches Committee.

1981 marked a new era in the course of Mr. Liang's life, when he first visited Seattle, Washington in the United States. His art impressed every one of the Wushu devotees immediately, and the Wushu and Taiji Club of the University of Washington retained him as a Wushu Coach. In addition, Mr. Liang offered lessons at the Taiji Association in Seattle. The following year, Mr. Liang went north to Vancouver, Canada, where he was appointed Taiji Coach by the Villa Cathy Care Home, and Honorary

Chairman and Head Coach by the North American Taiji Athletic Association.

In 1984, Mr. Liang became Chairperson and Wushu Coach for the School of Physical Education of the University of British Columbia. In 1985, he was elected coach of the First Canadian National Wushu Team, which was invited to participate in the First International Wushu Invitational Tournament in Xian, China. Competing against teams from 13 other countries, the Canadian team won third place.

In 1986, Mr. Liang was again elected coach of the Second Canadian National Wushu Team, which competed in the Second International Wushu Invitational Tournament held in the city of Teinstin, China. This time, 28 countries participated, and the Canadian team earned more medals than any other country except the host country itself. Mr. Liang's role and achievements were reported in 14 newspapers and magazines throughout China, and the performances and demonstrations of Mr. Liang and his team were broadcast on the Sichuan television station.

Mr. Liang has not limited his Wushu contributions to Canada. He has given numerous lectures and demonstrations to Wushu professionals and instructors in the United States. Adherents of many disciplines, including Karate, Taiji and others, have benefited from Mr. Liang's personal touch. In addition to instructing in such cities as Houston, Denver, Boston, and New York, Mr. Liang was invited to several cities in Italy for seminars in 1991. Mr. Liang has also judged in the National Wushu Tournament in the United States, and has produced an instructional video program teaching Liangong Shr Ba Fa Qigong ( 練功十八法 ) in conjunction with the Chinese National Qigong Institute.

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

### *Mr. Tai D. Ngo*

Tai D. Ngo was born in Viet Nam. In his adolescence he lived and traveled to various regions in Viet Nam and China, and became fluent in both languages. In 1981 Mr. Ngo came to Boston for school. In 1985, while at Northeastern University studying Electrical Engineering, Mr. Ngo began his martial arts training at Yang's Martial Arts Association (YMAA). Under the guidance of Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming, Mr. Ngo learned Shaolin Long Fist and Shaolin White Crane Gongfu and Yang style Taijiquan.



After graduating from Northeastern University in 1988, Mr. Ngo went to work in the field of computers, and continued to train with Dr. Yang, eventually attaining the rank of Assistant Instructor. He then began to teach Shaolin and Taijiquan at YMAA Headquarters in Boston. In 1989, Mr. Ngo met Master Liang, Shou-Yu and learned Hsing Yi, Baguazhang, Chen style Taijiquan and was introduced to San Shou Kuai Jiao.

Since 1991, Mr. Ngo has been a top competitor in national martial arts tournaments in the United States. In 1992 he won the Men's All-Around Internal Styles Grand Champion at the United States National Chinese Martial Arts Competition in Orlando, Florida. In the same year he finished top in all the events he competed in at the United States Koushu Championship in Towson, Maryland. Also in the same year, Mr. Ngo was invited to join the United States Chinese Koushu National Team, and competed in the 7th World Koushu Tournament in Taiwan.

In 1994, Mr. Ngo won two gold medals for excellent performances in the World Grand Wushu Festival, the "Oberon Cup," held in Shanghai, China. He also toured and performed in many cities and towns in China with the North American Martial Arts Team, led by Master Liang. After returning from China, Mr. Ngo again won the Men's Internal Styles Grand Championship at the United States National Chinese Martial Arts Competition in Orlando, Florida.

Mr. Ngo continues to teach and train under Dr. Yang at YMAA Headquarters. He lives in Malden, Massachusetts. This is his first book.

## FOREWORD

*Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming*

It is commonly known in Chinese martial arts society that in order to fight effectively and survive in a battle, any proficient martial artist must acquire four basic categories of fighting techniques: kicking (Ti, 踢), punching (Da, 打), wrestling (Shuai, 摔), and Qin Na (Na, 拿). Technically speaking, wrestling was designed to deal with kicking and punching, Qin Na (i.e., joint control) was created to cope with wrestling, and kicking and punching were to be used against Qin Na. You can see that these four categories mutually support and also conquer each other. That means in order to become a proficient martial artist, you must master these four categories, which exist in every Chinese martial style.

When Chinese martial arts were imported to Japan, kicking and punching became Karate (空手道, The Dao of Barehand), wrestling became the root of Judo (柔道, The Dao of Softness), and Qin Na built the foundation of Jujitsu (柔術道, The Dao of Soft Techniques). Later, the combination of Judo and Jujitsu became today's Aikido (合氣道, The Dao of Harmonizing Qi).

For example, it is commonly recognized in Japanese Karate society that the root of Japanese Karate was Okinawan Karate, and Okinawan Karate originated from the Chinese Southern White Crane style of Fujian province, China. Not only that, it is recorded in Japanese documents, *Collection of Ancestor's Conversations* (先哲叢談), *Volume 2, Biography of Chen, Yuan-Yun* (卷二·陳元贊傳) that Chen, Yuan-Yun (1587-1671 A.D., Ming dynasty) was the person who brought the "soft techniques" (i.e., wrestling) into Japan in 1659 that became today's Judo.

When Chinese martial arts were imported to the West in the 1960's, the majority of techniques focused on kicking and punching. In order to make the contents of Western Chinese martial arts training more complete, I have written four Qin Na books to introduce the art of seizing and controlling. However, the Chinese wrestling arts are still not well-known or understood by Western Chinese martial artists. In order to fill this gap, I have been encouraging Master Liang to write a few books about Chinese wrestling. Master Liang is well known as an expert in this field, and he has won several gold medals in wrestling in China.

I am very happy to see that with Mr. Tai D. Ngo's help, this wrestling book is finally available to Western martial artists. In order to preserve the martial arts that have been developed over thousands of years of human history, we must put what we still know into books and on video. This way these arts will not become lost treasures.

*Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming*

June 11, 1996

## **PREFACE**

### *Master Liang, Shou-Yu*

Traditional Chinese free fighting is generally called San Shou (散手). San Shou fighting includes the four main fighting categories of Ti (Kicking, 踢), Da (Striking, 打), Shuai (Wrestling, 摔), and Na (Qin Na, 擒拿). Among these four basic techniques, Shuai Jiao (Shuai) has an important value in San Shou fighting. In the past, winning a San Shou match required knocking your opponent off the Lei Tai (competition platform, 擂臺) or taking him down to the ground by using the skills of Ti, Da, Shuai, and Na. Therefore, Shuai Jiao is a very important skill when a martial artist is in a real combat situation. If a fighter does not have any Shuai Jiao experience or training, the chance of winning or surviving in a San Shou match is very slim. Therefore, more and more San Shou practitioners around the world are recognizing the combat value of Shuai Jiao and incorporating the techniques into their fighting styles. Even in daily life, Shuai Jiao can be an effective tool for self-defense. Combining the Shuai Jiao skill with your own self-defense skills can be a helpful weapon to fight off an attacker on the street. Because of its practical value, Shuai Jiao is an important part of Chinese martial arts.

All the different styles of Chinese Gongfu (功夫)(Wushu, 武術), have some Shuai Jiao training methods in their forms. Unfortunately, not all martial practitioner realize that there are Shuai Jiao techniques in their style. I believe this is because in traditional Gongfu training, a teacher will spend years to watch and test a student's morality to see if that student is worthy of teaching to pass on the secrets of their style. Without detailed teaching and explanations from the master, the student will only learn a lot of forms and flowery techniques. Therefore, many students practice martial arts for many years, but are not able to get the essence of their style. All they have learned are forms. It does not matter how beautiful the forms are: martial art forms without practical usage are called Flower Fist and Brocade Leg (Hua Quan Xiu Tui, 花拳繡腿), which means "useless." Many people I have met said to me that their Gongfu style does not have Shuai Jiao techniques. I asked them to demonstrate their forms and then showed them the Shuai Jiao techniques in the form they just performed. They were very surprised to see Shuai Jiao techniques. Even a simple form like 24 postures Taijiquan has many Shuai Jiao techniques.

Kuai Jiao (快跤), simply means "fast wrestling" in Chinese. During fighting, you will want to find an opportunity to throw down an opponent very quickly and skillfully. The fight should end quickly and you should not be tangled-up with your opponent like a bull fight.

The foundation and principles of Kuai Jiao are based on traditional Chinese wrestling (If the reader is interested in this ancient throwing art, please refer to the Traditional Chinese Wrestling book by Master Liang, Shou-Yu & Tai D. Ngo, coming soon from YMAA Publication Center). In general, most of the Kuai Jiao techniques introduced in this book are



based upon traditional Chinese wrestling. This book will introduce about 75 Kuai Jiao techniques for San Shou fighting, and the Traditional Chinese Wrestling book will have more than 300 techniques. If you have a strong foundation in traditional wrestling, it will help your Kuai Jiao skill greatly.

The contents of this book are built upon the foundation of the traditional Chinese Wrestling training. Therefore this book can be used as a reference for martial artists of all different styles. Mastering the techniques in this book will help to bring your fighting ability to a higher level. However, the primary goal of this book is not just for martial artists who love to fight, but rather for all martial arts lovers with an interest in learning and exploring this art. You can easily incorporate these Kuai Jiao techniques into your training. The movements of these techniques are simple and very easy to learn.

The primary goal of this book is to introduce San Shou Kuai Jiao (Fast Wrestling for Free Fighting, 散手快跤) for self defense. However, we will also introduce some ground fighting techniques in the last chapter of this book. One of the reasons is that quite often when you fight, you may fall or be taken to the ground by your opponent. These ground fighting techniques are very useful and also easy to learn.

When practicing, it is not enough to just run through the forms and techniques. You must have a strong basic foundation in order to become good and efficient in the art. This book also introduces some valuable traditional basic training methods with bare hands and with equipment to cultivate and enhance body conditioning and train this art's specialized skills. These methods have passed down from generation to generation. The training methods are simple and refined, and can be fun, challenging and exciting. I hope the reader will enjoy the book and find it helpful.

Here I would like to take this opportunity to express my special thanks to my brother Dr. Yang, Jwing Ming for his encouragement and his many forms of assistance for this and other books.

I would like to thank Al Arsenault for his contribution of all the techniques in the last chapter of this book, which he both demonstrated and wrote. He has studied martial arts since 1971, with special interest in street-applicable techniques from a wide variety of martial arts including Judo, Jujitsu and Qin Na. Mr. Arsenault also trained Shuai Jiao in China. He attained the rank of 3rd degree black belt in Nisei Karate-do in 1986 and is currently founding president of the International Sansho Do Association and is a 4th degree black belt in this discipline. Mr. Arsenault's profession is a Tactical Trainer, Crowd Control Member, Non-Firearms Weapon Expert and First Class Career Constable (since 1979) for the Vancouver Police Department in Canada.

Also I would like to thank my students Sam Masich and Huen Siu Hung for their time and energy and participation in the photo shoots. Sam Masich has studied martial arts since he was young, including Judo and different Chinese internal arts. Sam was member of Canada's first National Wushu Team in 1985. He won two United States National Tai Chi

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**Preface by Master Liang, Shou-Yu**

Championships in 1987 and 1988. He also has a very deep understanding of, and experience in the art of Tai Chi pushing hands and teaches seminars in Canada and the United States.

Huen Siu Hung was also member of Canada's first National Wushu Team in 1985. He has studied a wide variety of Chinese martial arts and has trained in Chinese wrestling since 1985. He has won many gold medals in martial arts competitions in China and the United States.

This book is a collaboration between myself and Mr. Tai D. Ngo. It has been a great pleasure to work with him on this book. He is originally from Viet Nam and his profession is in the field of computers. He loves martial arts and trains very hard. He has participated in many martial arts competitions in the United States, Taiwan, and mainland China, and is the 1992 and 1994 United States National Chinese Martial Arts Competition Grand Champion in men's internal styles.

In addition, I would like to thank Tim Comrie for his photography, Al Loriaux for his help in the last chapter of this book and many YMAA members for general help, including Andrew Murray for his editing.

***Liang, Shou-Yu***

## **PREFACE**

### *Mr. Tai D. Ngo*

Since I was a boy, learning Gongfu is something that I always wanted to do. I was first introduced to Gongfu by a close friend of my brother's when I was nine years old back in Viet Nam. My training, which only lasted a year, was interrupted by war. During my adolescent years, I traveled and lived in different places in Viet Nam, China and Hong Kong. There were times that martial skills were highly valued for self-protection. Naturally, my desire to learn martial arts was strong, and has not lessened.

It was not until 1985, when I attended Northeastern University in Boston to study Electrical Engineering, that I had the opportunity to meet my teacher Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming. The introduction was brief and quite unique. I asked Dr. Yang what style of Gongfu he taught. He told me that he taught Shaolin Long Fist, Southern Shaolin White Crane, and Yang Style Taiji. He started to explain and demonstrate a few Qin Na techniques on me. His execution of the Qin Na techniques was most impressive and painful. I dropped immediately to the floor. When I got up, I told him I would be back tomorrow to join the class. I've been training with him ever since.

In the late 80's I had the good fortune to meet Master Liang, Shou-Yu at one of his seminars. His knowledge of internal and external Gongfu styles and of Qigong is vast. Born into a martial arts family, Master Liang had the opportunity to meet many legendary grandmasters. Over the years, I had the opportunity to learn Xingyiquan (Hsing Yi Chuan), Baguazhang, and Chen Style Taijiquan from Master Liang. Also in one of these seminars, I was first introduced to Shan Shou Kuai Jiao. I was immediately fascinated with the effectiveness of the art and started to realize how important Shan Shou Kuai Jiao was to my martial arts training.

Although Master Liang is well known in many styles of Chinese martial arts in China and in North America, few people know that he is an expert in Chinese wrestling. In fact, during his adolescent years, Master Liang won many wrestling matches in private challenges and public competitions. During the political turmoil of the Cultural Revolution in China (1966-1976), Master Liang trained many farmer-students in Wushu and wrestling to defend their homes and villages.

The material in this book is a culmination of Master Liang's many years of extensive experience. I was responsible to help Master Liang translate, compile and write some basic theoretical information. But because of my inexperience in writing martial arts books, all my writing has been checked and corrected by Master Liang and my teacher Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming.

When my teacher asked me if I could help Master Liang write this book, I hesitated because I knew it would be an important commitment, and also because of my limited understanding of the art. But with the

encouragement of Master Liang and Dr. Yang, I gladly accepted the task. It is a great honor to help Master Liang introduce this exciting art to the public.

This book is the first book written in English to introduce the art of Shan Shou Kuai Jiao with complete traditional training methods. For those readers new to the art of Shan Shou Kuai Jiao, this book may serve as a thorough introduction to the art. In chapter 1, we will discuss the basic principles, basic requirements and training stages of the art. In chapter 2 and 3, we will introduce barehand and equipment training for body conditioning. In chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7, we will introduce different varieties of throwing methods. In chapter 8, we will introduce some basic ground control techniques.

Here I would like to take the opportunity to express my gratitude to Master Liang, who believed in me and gave me the honor of helping him write this book, from which I have benefited the most by learning so much. Also, I would like to give special thanks to my teacher Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming for his encouragement, insight, and technical advice. Thanks to Al Arsenault for sharing his knowledge of ground fighting in chapter 8. Finally, thanks to Andrew Murray for helping to clarify my writing and for general editing.

***Tai D. Ngo***

# Chinese Fast Wrestling for Fighting

## *The Art of San Shou Kuai Jiao*

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# Chapter 1

## General Introduction

一般介紹

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### 1-1. Introduction

*San Shou Kuai Jiao* (散手快跤) refers to the techniques used in free fighting to take down or throw an opponent. Because *San Shou Kuai Jiao* emphasizes speed, it is known as Fast Wrestling. The words *San Shou* (散手) in Chinese mean free fighting, and imply the use of bare handed martial skills. *Kuai Jiao* (快跤) means quickly downing or throwing an opponent.

Traditionally, Chinese martial arts fighting techniques are divided into four general fighting categories: *Ti* (踢), *Da* (打), *Shuai* (摔), *Na* (拿). *Ti* is kicking; *Da* is striking; *Shuai* (short for *Shuai Jiao*, 摔跤) is wrestling; *Na* is *Qin Na* (擒拿), i.e. seizing and controlling an opponent's joints and cavities. Generally speaking, when you encounter an opponent in a fight, leg techniques are used in long ranges and hand techniques are used for short ranges.

To become a well-rounded martial artist, you must be proficient in the four basic fighting skills mentioned above. In the past, *San Shou* competition was held on the *Lei Tai* (擂臺), a 24 x 24 foot platform 5 feet high. Victory was decided when an opponent was thrown off the *Lei Tai* or knocked to the floor. Therefore, *Shuai Jiao* is an important part of *San Shou* fighting. A martial artist without any *Shuai Jiao* skills would not easily survive a *San Shou* match.

*Shuai Jiao* is believed to be the oldest martial art in China. Its history can be traced back thousands of years. Legend tells that *Shuai Jiao* already existed during the reign of the Yellow Emperor (*Huang Ti*, 黃帝 2697 B.C.) and was used to train soldiers. Throughout Chinese history the art has been adopted by governments of different dynasties as a military training method. However, *Shuai Jiao* was not only used as a tool for military training, but also widely practiced among civilians. It was the civilians who perfected and popularized the art.

In the Song dynasty (960-1278 A.D.), Shuai Jiao skill had reached a very high level and fast wrestling (Kuai Jiao, 快跤) already existed and was very popular. During this period, throws became more complex, and speed and skillfulness of movement was emphasized.

Technically speaking, the foundation and basic principles of San Shou Kuai Jiao are based on traditional Chinese wrestling (Chuan Tong Shuai Jiao, 傳統摔跤) and adapted for combat training. San Shou Kuai Jiao techniques and principles are very simple, effective and—most importantly—quick. Because of its speed and effectiveness, an opponent often does not have a chance to fight back. San Shou Kuai Jiao is an art that does not rely just on muscular strength—it must be done skillfully. It always emphasizes avoiding direct impact with an enemy's power. It also emphasizes getting close to an enemy quickly and using the enemy's power against himself. Because of its effectiveness, San Shou Kuai Jiao has been trained along with all styles of Chinese martial arts for thousands of years.

San Shou Kuai Jiao can cause tremendous physical damage to an opponent. The severity of the damage is dependent on the degree of power used in the technique. Moderate use of power can quickly throw down an opponent and disable his fighting ability. Excessive use of power can permanently injure an opponent. Therefore, the value of San Shou Kuai Jiao has been recognized by Chinese martial artists for centuries. Even with today's modern military technology, San Shou Kuai Jiao is still an important combat skill. In China today it is used to train the police, the military, and special forces.

### **Differences Between San Shou Kuai Jiao and Other Styles of Wrestling**

In general when fighting, the conflict becomes a competition of power, speed, technique, and adaptability to changing situations. The goal is to quickly disable your opponent's fighting ability so that he cannot fight back. When fighting on the street, you cannot risk tangling with your opponent too long. You need to end the fight as soon as possible, especially if you are facing more than one opponent. San Shou Kuai Jiao is perfectly suitable for self-defense on the street because it specializes in throwing techniques to disable an opponent's fighting ability. Throwing techniques can be used whether you initiate the attack or are defending against one. Almost every part of your body can be used against an opponent. The most common body parts used are: head, hands, elbow, shoulder, foot, knees and hips.

As mentioned earlier, San Shou Kuai Jiao is a special kind of martial art technique used to throw or take down an opponent very fast. This art shares many similarities with other wrestling styles, especially traditional Chinese wrestling and Japanese Jujitsu and Judo. This is no surprise because San Shou Kuai Jiao's foundation is based on traditional Chinese wrestling, and traditional Chinese wrestling influenced Jujitsu and Judo.

Many martial arts historians believe that it was Chinese wrestling that greatly influenced the soft arts of Japan. During the late Ming dynasty, a government officer and martial artist named Chen, Yuan-Yun (陳元贊, 1587-1671 A.D. Ming dynasty) fled China to Japan in the year 1659 and later taught martial arts there. This is recorded in Japan's history documents *Collection of Ancestor's Conversations* (先哲叢談), *Volume 2, Biography of Chen, Yuan-Yun* (卷二·陳元贊傳). The Japanese built a monument to honor his contributions to Japan's martial arts. This monument still stands outside of a temple in Tokyo.

Generally speaking, most San Shou Kuai Jiao techniques were derived from traditional Chinese Wrestling (Shuai Jiao), and Shuai Jiao is the oldest form of Chinese martial arts. However, because Shuai Jiao already existed for thousand of years, it became a complete system by itself. Therefore, Shuai Jiao provides many important foundations for San Shou Kuai Jiao's techniques and development.

Although San Shou Kuai Jiao shares some similarities with traditional wrestling and other arts, from a technical point of view, San Shou Kuai Jiao's technique construction, basic principles, applications and purposes are quite different from the rest. These differences are San Shou Kuai Jiao's distinctive characteristics. In general, we can summarize these differences as follows:

First, compared to traditional Chinese wrestling, Jujitsu and Judo, **San Shou Kuai Jiao emphasizes more speed when throwing.** In contrast, traditional wrestling, Jujitsu and Judo emphasize obtaining good grappling position on an opponent's body or uniform first, and then applying the throw. In this way, it takes more time to throw down an opponent.

Second, **San Shou Kuai Jiao incorporates kicking and punching techniques.** San Shou Kuai Jiao always combines hand and leg techniques. However, traditional wrestling, Jujitsu and Judo, especially the sport varieties, do not emphasize these techniques.

Third, unlike Greco-Roman and free-style wrestling, Jujitsu, and Judo, San Shou Kuai Jiao generally **avoids falling to the ground and grappling too long with an opponent.** One simple reason is that it is dangerous to tangle with an opponent on the ground in a real fight, especially if you face multiple opponents.

These differences do not imply that one style is superior to another. Fighting is a very complicated subject. There are many factors behind victory. Winning a fight depends on situation, timing, location, skills, strength, and the spirit of the individual. It does not depend on the style itself. As a martial artist, keep an open mind to accept and absorb the effective elements of other styles. In turn, it will help to bring your skill to a higher level.



## **1-2. General Principles of San Shou Kuai Jiao**

Like many other different martial art styles, successful strategies for attack and defense will generally follow the style's basic principles and rules. Without understanding the style's principles and rules, you will not achieve a high level of skill. One of the basic principles of San Shou Kuai Jiao is **taking advantage of your opponent's body posture and applying the appropriate techniques at the right time to make your opponent fall**. When applying a San Shou Kuai Jiao technique, you must follow your opponent's body postures and techniques, and know how to borrow your opponent's power and use it against him. For example; when your opponent's body is extend forward, you should not try to throw him backward, and vice versa.

There are two basic elements in a successful throw. **First, the opportunity to quickly throw your opponent depends primarily upon his body posture. Second, you must use the right San Shou Kuai Jiao technique at the right time.** The throw will not be successful if you miss either of the two elements mentioned above.

San Shou Kuai Jiao techniques are concealed by or mixed with hand and leg techniques. The techniques can be defensive or offensive. When used defensively, you must lure an opponent to come in and attack first, or intercept your opponent's attack at the right moment, then apply the appropriate technique. When used offensively, you need to be able to create throwing opportunities by attacking first. Kicks, punches, and fakes will force an opponent to concentrate on defense while you look for the right opportunity to throw him.

Opportunity is an important factor in a fight. But in order to take advantage of an opportunity, timing and decision are important. You need to know how to capitalize on the opportunity when it comes. During fighting, you and your opponent will move and change fighting strategies constantly. Therefore, body postures also change all the time to adjust to new situations. The change in body posture will happen in the blink of an eye. However, there is always a chance that the opponent will make a mistake. When he does, you need to make a quick decision and apply the appropriate technique. If your timing is off or you are indecisive, the opportunity will disappear. And if you pursue a disappearing chance, not only will your efforts be in vain, you may also put yourself in a dangerous position.

In order to be proficient in the art of San Shou Kuai Jiao, not only must you understand the basic principles, but you also need to have many other skills. You need to have the right mindset when facing an opponent; your techniques must be alive, fast and powerful; and you need know how and when to capitalize on opportunities and apply techniques in an ingenious way. Of course, the use of strategy in a fight cannot be ignored.

The following key points are emphasized in San Shou Kuai Jiao training. Each point will be discussed in detail.

- 1). Coordination of the External and Internal.
- 2). Grasp the Advantageous Opportunity in a Fight.
- 3). Techniques Must be Skillful.
- 4). The Execution of the Techniques Must be Quick.
- 5). Prepare Mentally.
- 6). Adapt Strategy Wisely.

### 1). Coordination of the External and Internal

All proficient Chinese martial artists train the coordination of external physical action (Yang, 陽) and internal mental strength and energy (Yin, 陰). Through this coordination, the entire body is able to manifest power and execute techniques with maximum strength and efficiency. Therefore, external emphasis is on: **hands** (Shou, 手), **eyes** (Yan, 眼), **body** (Shen, 身), **techniques** (Fa, 法), and **stepping** (Bu, 步) and internal emphasis is on: **essence** (Jing, 精), **spirit** (Shen, 神), **internal energy** (Qi, 氣), **muscular strength** (Li, 力), and **Gongfu** or **Kung Fu** (Gong — time and energy, 功). These ten requirements can be considered the root and foundation of Chinese martial arts practice. When these internal and external elements are united and harmonized, the martial techniques will be alive, fast, and powerful. Naturally, since San Shou Kuai Jiao is a part of Chinese martial arts, these ten requirements are also heavily emphasized and practiced in San Shou Kuai Jiao training. In fact, the effectiveness of San Shou Kuai Jiao techniques depends totally on all ten training requirements.

Externally, your eyes must always be on your target. It is the eyes which first observe and detect an opponent's movement, and then a decision is made by the brain. Once a decision is made, the techniques are executed through the hands and the legs, in coordination with the body. That is why it is said: "The eyes arrive, the hands immediately arrive, and the body and stepping also arrive." (Yan Dao Shou Dao, Shen Bu Ye Dao) (眼到，手到，身步也到).

Internally, in order to manifest the external techniques effectively, efficiently, and powerfully, you must learn how to conserve your essence and cultivate and raise your spirit. Then, you can build up abundant Qi (internal energy). When this abundant Qi is directed to the muscles, they manifest strength and power. In addition, once your mind is in a highly alert state, your movements of hands, eyes, body and foot stepping will become agile and will move as one unit. In order to reach this goal of energy manifestation, you must know methods of internal cultivation and how to apply them externally. Without knowing the methods of the training, all of the techniques will be without strong internal support. Consequently, the techniques will be ineffective and weak. Next, let us discuss these ten requirements one by one, beginning with the external.

**EXTERNAL:**

■ **Hand Drills**(*Shou Fa*, 手法 )

Shou Fa generally refers to the hand techniques used for attack and defense in martial arts. Different martial styles have their own hand techniques and unique ways to manifest the characteristics of the styles. Naturally, San Shou Kuai Jiao also has many different hand techniques and their usage and application depend on the situation. Common hand techniques used in San Shou Kuai Jiao are: grabbing, pulling, thrusting, blocking, holding, lifting, twisting, and pressing. Most importantly, since hands are the main tools in a fight, in order to execute techniques effectively and powerfully, you must train until your hands are strong and fast. In San Shou Kuai Jiao, in order to execute your defensive and offensive techniques effectively, you must be able to extend and withdraw your hands very fast, and grab strongly and tightly. Hand/arm conditioning training will be introduced in chapter 3.

■ **Eye Training** (*Yan Fa*, 眼法 )

A pair of clear and sharp eyes will bring your fighting skills to a higher level. In a fight, the eyes make the first contact and observe your opponent's movement and intention, and then the mind makes judgments to adapt to the situation. Having good vision helps to detect every movement of your opponent and reveals mistakes an opponent makes so you can choose the right decision for an offensive or defensive move. In addition, a good stare can put a lot of mental and psychological pressure on your opponent.

When fighting, look into your opponent's eyes to detect his motivation. When your opponent is scared, you can see that his eyes are not focused but scattered. If he is careless and rude, he will stare back at you. If your opponent is the cunning type, his glance will be subtle. Different fighters have different personalities and different levels of skills; therefore, each will have a very different expression in his eyes.

There are a few ways that you can detect your opponent's intention when you watch his body movements, his facial expressions, and his eyes. When an opponent stares to your left, be wary of an attack to your left side. When an opponent looks down, watch out for his legs. When an opponent attacks with his mouth open, more than likely he will not have much power in his punch or kick. When an opponent attacks with his mouth closed, the power will be strong. Observing shoulder movements is also very important. When the opponent's left shoulder is sinking, very likely he will kick with his right leg. When the opponent's right shoulder moves backward, very likely he will strike with his

## Chapter 5

# Over the Back/Holding the Waist Throwing Methods

過背抱腰摔

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### 5-1. Introduction

The goal of San Shou Kuai Jiao techniques is to disable your enemy's fighting ability as quickly as you can. To achieve this, you need to throw your opponent as hard as possible. However, the opportunity to throw your opponent to the ground does not come often in a fight, because you and your opponent's body positions change constantly. You need to react to the changes and be able to improvise so that you can apply similar types of techniques but use them differently to achieve the takedown. In any case, success depends on the situation and opportunity. There is no best throw. The technique that works for you is the best technique at that time.

In this chapter, we will introduce two different types of throwing techniques. The first type is **Over the Back Throwing Methods**, which have very high combat value and are often used in fighting. In these types of throws, your back is to your opponent and you rely on the coordination of the hips, arms and legs to throw your opponent high over your back or shoulder. These kinds of techniques are extremely useful against an opponent who doesn't know how to fall. If you do not know how to fall, it is natural that you will panic while you are in the air and have no control over your own body. Falling incorrectly can cause devastating injury to the body.

The second type is **Holding the Waist Throwing Methods**. With this type of throw you use your arms to hold an opponent's waist and then lift him up to throw him, or to upset his balance for a takedown. This

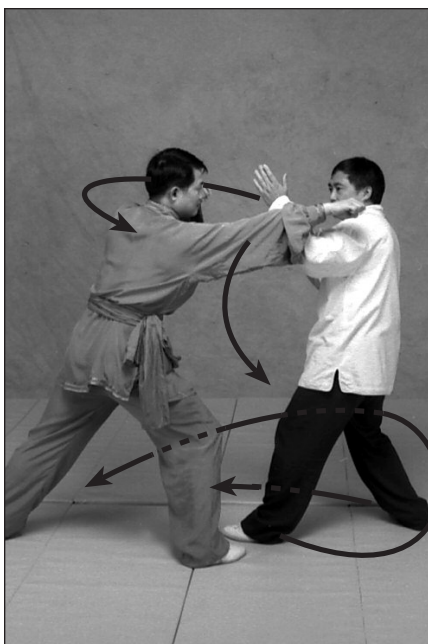


Figure 5-1



Figure 5-2

kind of throwing technique is best suited for a shorter person with a low center of gravity. Of course, strong arms and legs are also a help.

## 5-2. Over the Back Throwing Methods 過背摔法

### 1. Squeezing the Neck, Hip Throw 夾脖擗摔

- a). With his right foot forward Gray attacks with his right hand. White blocks the punch with his left forearm, presses downward and tightly grabs Gray's upper arm (Figure 5-1).
- b). White then steps forward and, using the ball of the right foot to pivot to the left, steps inside Gray. White's heels are now parallel in front of Gray's feet, with both knees slightly bent in a high Horse Stance. White presses his buttocks tightly against Gray's abdomen. At the same time he uses his right arm to lock Gray's neck (Figure 5-2).
- c). White snaps his upper body upward to the left and bends forward with body momentum. Simultaneously, he pulls Gray downward and to the left with the arm and neck lock. By coordinating the waist, buttocks, and the pulling of both arms, White uproots Gray and throws him over his back to the ground (Figures 5-3 and 5-4).

### **Key Points**

- a). Both knees should be bent for good root and balance.
- b). Your left hand should keep pulling your opponent's right arm throughout the throw.



Figure 5-3

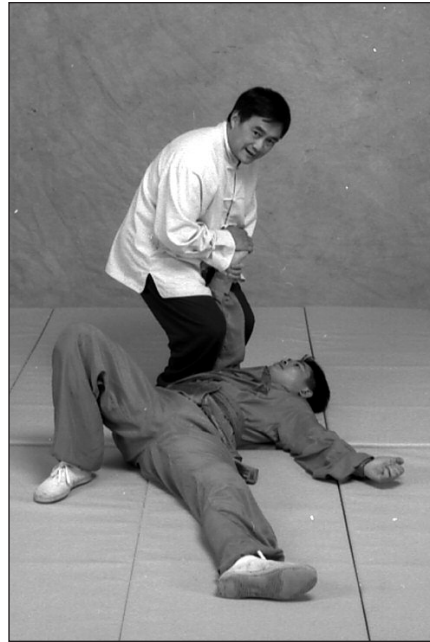


Figure 5-4

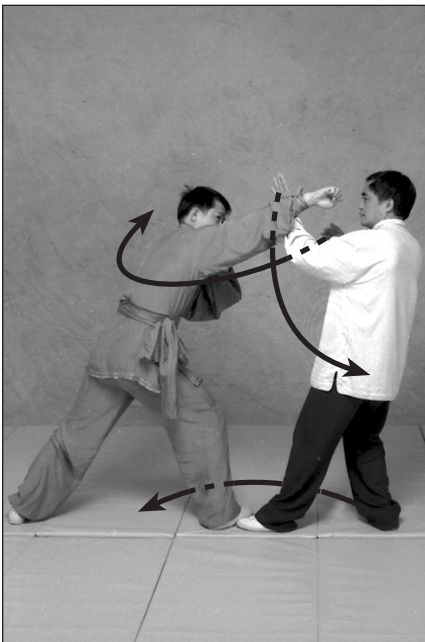


Figure 5-5

**2. Lifting the Arm,  
Holding the Shoulder,  
Over the Back**

**Throw** 插腋抱肩過背摔

a). Gray attacks with a right hook to White's head. White steps forward with his left foot and blocks the punch with his left arm from left to right (Figure 5-5).

b). White steps forward with his right foot and puts it between Gray's feet. At the same time he thrusts his right hand into Gray's right armpit and lifts upward. White uses his left hand to grab Gray's right upper arm or clothing and pull downward into White's chest. At this point Gray should be leaning forward to his right (Figure 5-6).

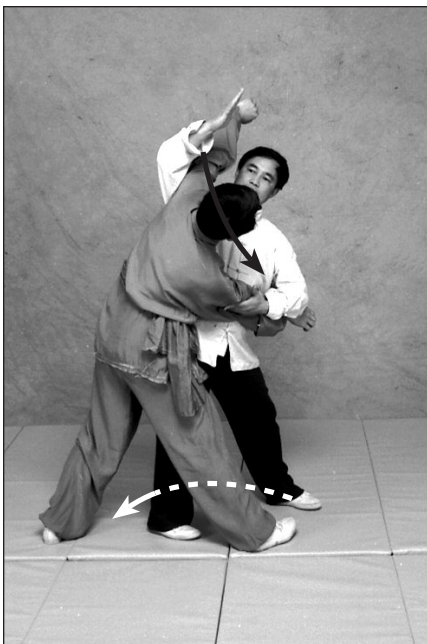


Figure 5-6

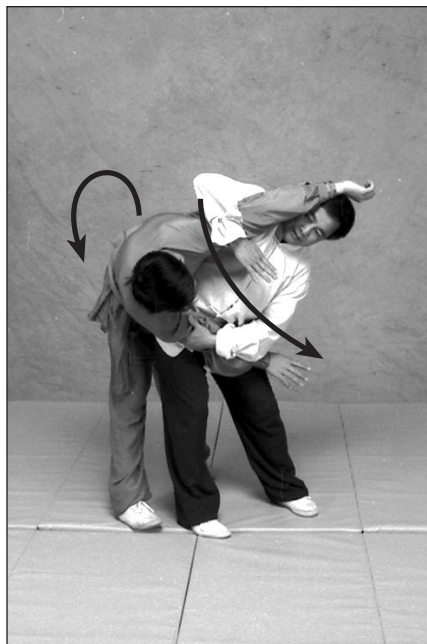


Figure 5-7

- c). White steps his left foot behind his right foot and turns to the left into a high Horse Stance. Both feet are parallel and in front of Gray's feet. White's back is now to Gray and his right buttock presses against Gray's abdomen. White twists to the left and makes a circular, downward motion with his right hand to keep Gray's left arm stretched out (Figure 5-7).
- d). Simultaneously, White's knees spring up while his left hand keeps pulling Gray's right arm. White moves his body and keeps lifting with his right arm and hip so that Gray is pulled over his back (Figure 5-8).

### **Key Points**

- a). Always keep your opponent's body close against your right hip.
- b). Both arms should make circular motions when pulling your opponent down.

### **3. Holding the Waist, Over the Back Throw 抱腰過背摔**

- a). Gray attacks with right punch to the head. White dodges right, steps forward with his left foot, and blocks the punch with his left arm (Figure 5-9).
- b). White steps forward with his right foot and puts it in between Gray's feet. Simultaneously, White moves his right hand under Gray's right arm to hold Gray's waist. With his left hand White then grabs Gray's right hand and pulls it downward close to his body (Figure 5-10).



Figure 5-8

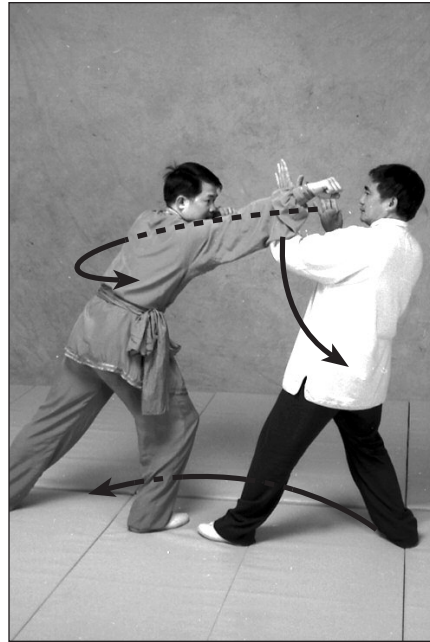


Figure 5-9



Figure 5-10



Figure 5-11

- c). White steps his left foot behind his right foot and turns to the left into a high Horse Stance, knees bent. Both feet are parallel, and White's back faces Gray while his buttocks press against Gray's abdomen (Figure 5-11).
- d). Keeping his head tucked in, White springs up with the knees, lifting Gray with his hip and pulling Gray with his left hand.





Figure 5-12



Figure 5-13

Still holding Gray's waist White twists his body to throw Gray over his back (Figure 5-12).

### **Key Points**

- a). This technique is very similar to technique #2 except that your right arm holds your opponent's waist instead of lifting his right arm upward.

## **4. Penetrating and Holding the Arm, Over the Back**

### **Throw** 穿臂抱臂過背摔

- a). Gray attacks with a right punch to the head. White dodges right and blocks and grabs the punch with his left arm (Figure 5-13).
- b). White then reaches with his right hand to grab and hold Gray's right arm while pulling with the left. Simultaneously, White steps his right foot forward and his left foot behind and around the right foot into Horse Stance, knees deeply bent. Both feet are parallel, and White's buttocks press against Gray's abdomen (Figure 5-14).
- c). Keeping his head tucked in and springing up with straight knees, White lifts and throws Gray over his back (Figure 5-15).

### **Key Points**

- a). After entering the throwing position, both hands should pull continuously on your opponent's right arm to upset his balance.
- b). Keep both knees deeply bent and keep your body close to your opponent's.