

THE DRAGON'S LAIR

NEWSLETTER OF THE IRON DRAGON KUNG FU AND KICKBOXING CLUB

91 STATION STREET, UNIT 8, AJAX, ONTARIO L1S 3H2



**August 2010
VOLUME 2, ISSUE 8**

(905) 427-7370 / ajaxdragon@hotmail.com / www.iron-dragon.ca

COMMENTARY

MONEY CAN'T BUY...

In the same way that money can't buy love (in the conventional sense at least), money cannot buy health and fitness. You must put in the effort to reap the benefits of a health and fitness lifestyle!

This is not a small undertaking. There are constant obstacles, temptations and pitfalls along the way – some that can be avoided and others perhaps not so much.

Imagine that your hard training at Iron Dragon enables your body to function like a water dam. The onrushing water (in this example) would be impending old age, deterioration of your physique and health problems....eventually death. I'm assuming that we all know "in the long run, we are all dead"! LOL!

With that understanding, realize that we cannot completely block the onrushing "water"! We can however, slow down this "river" with the prudent maintenance of our "dam". We can strengthen our "dam" and patch it as leaks arise.

In our example, the obstacles, temptations and pitfalls that constantly challenge your "dam" can be considered leaks. If you patch at least a few leaks you will minimize the water that gets through your "dam". If on the other hand, you don't follow a regimented maintenance program ie work out on a regular basis, you will soon have a very leaky "dam" that will allow all manner of destructive forces to penetrate it!

Let us maintain our "dams" as best we can, lest we get swept away by the river of maladies that await us if we do not!!!

Iron Dragon Members**AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SI HING'S (OLDER BROTHERS) AT IRON DRAGON**

In traditional Chinese Kung Fu, a Kwoon (Club) is considered to be a "family" of individuals that train in a common martial art. The ranking at the Kwoon (Club) is similar to the traditional family. The Sifu (Master Instructor) takes the position of Father and the respective students are comprised of Older Brothers (Si Hing), Older Sisters (Si Jie) or Younger Brothers (Si Dai), Younger Sisters (Si Mui). The actual sash ranking is considered secondary to the traditional family ranking system.

Here in order of seniority are some of the senior Si Hing (Older Brothers) in our club. You will occasionally see them helping or teaching other students at Iron Dragon.

John Sawchuk

John joined Iron Dragon in 1998. John had trained in the martial art of Taekwondo and had become disillusioned when his original club requested \$1,500 for his Black Belt testing fee! I remember John phoning me from the bar he worked at to find out more about Iron Dragon. He agreed to come in and try a class. John loved it and has trained with us for over 12 years!

Si Hing John is Iron Dragon's highest ranking student and 1 of only 2 Black Sashes that have been produced at Iron Dragon! Over the years, John has provided solid sparring for many of Iron Dragon's up and coming competitors! Si Hing John is currently progressing towards his Gold Sash (equivalent to 3rd degree Black Belt)!

Barry Macleod & Devon Macleod

Barry (Blue Sash) joined Iron Dragon in 1999 and is the 2nd highest ranking student (based on the traditional ranking criteria).

Barry began with an interest in Kickboxing. Billy Blanks and Tae Bo were at their commercial height in the fall of 1999 and Barry like many people), was wondering what all the hype was about! He enrolled in the Kung Fu Kickboxing program at Iron Dragon to find out!

When the Tae Bo craze died down many people gave up Kickboxing. Not Barry! He explored the martial art underlying the Kung Fu Kickboxing taught at Iron Dragon and discovered Hung Gar Kung Fu - a martial art steeped in 1,500 years of tradition, philosophy and history!



The Macleod Family

It was Barry that rekindled my interest in teaching traditional Hung Gar Kung Fu as a separate class. Over the years I had abandoned teaching the traditional Hung Gar forms and had in fact stopped practicing them myself. At Barry's behest, I set about relearning the forms I had originally learned many years ago from David Lee. It has taken a few years but we have successfully reintroduced many of the core Hung Gar forms to the curriculum at Iron Dragon and continue to add new forms as our senior students progress!

The Lil Dragon and Young Dragon programs at our club were also started at Barry's request. I had attempted to teach children previously but found that their efforts in class fell far short of my expectations.

With Barry's encouragement, I started the Lil' Dragon and Young Dragon Programs in the Fall of 2005. In fact, our first Lil Dragon student was Barry's son Devon (Orange Sash). Devon is now also regarded as a Si Hing!

John Kewell

John Kewell (Blue Sash) began his training at Iron Dragon in the summer of 2005. He was immediately drawn to the Traditional Hung Gar Kung Fu program at our club! He, along with Barry Macleod has been a staunch supporter of our Hung Gar Kung Fu program at Iron Dragon.

John has remained dedicated to our club despite the fact that he had to relocate to Burlington to follow up on a career opportunity. John faithfully commutes to Ajax every Sunday morning to continue his Hung Gar training at Iron Dragon!



John Kewell, Si Hing

Jeff Davis

Jeff started his Martial arts training in 1985 under the guidance of Martin McNamara at Twin Dragon Kung Fu Club in Toronto. Later on, Jeff brought his son Cameron to train at Iron Dragon Kung Fu Club when it was still a Twin Dragon, Ajax franchise.

After several years spent bringing his son to class, Jeff decided to take the plunge and train at Iron Dragon as well. Jeff has trained consistently in our Hung

Gar Kung Fu program for over 3 years despite a debilitating back condition. Jeff became so enthusiastic in his training that he offered to assist me in teaching the Young Dragon and Lil Dragon classes at our club! He has done so for the last 2 years!



Jeff Davis, Si Hing

Omar Ally

When I first took over the Twin Dragon, Ajax franchise in 1997 I was immediately faced with a problem. The previous interim owner was not a qualified Red Sash and had not screened the membership applicants prior to accepting them as members. The result was a club populated with thugs, as was evidenced to me by the owner of the Bar adjacent to our club parking lot.

The owner stormed into our club one day and complained that our members were starting fights in his premises while wearing our club uniforms. I told him to come back when I was running a class and let me know who these members were. My jaw dropped when he returned and pointed out almost the entire class! My first order of business as the new owner of Twin Dragon, Ajax was to expel almost the entire membership from the club! One of the few remaining members was Omar Ally!

Omar continued to train with us for a time but stressful working conditions resulted in his attending fewer and fewer classes until he no longer trained at all! Omar's heart remained with the club however. He frequently phoned me to remind me that he would be back. Many times he encouraged me when our club floundered occasionally in the early days!

Finally in 2009 he called again. This time I noticed a change in his tone. He seemed depressed by the fact that he was not training and that his health was failing. I half jokingly told him that I was no longer asking him to come back – I was telling him! In a bizarre twist of fate, Omar decided then and there that he would indeed come back! He has been back now for over 7 months!



Brendan Hale

When I began teaching kids again in 2005, Brendan was one of my first Lil Dragon students. Brendan (with the support of his parents Colleen and Dave), has faithfully trained away and is now a Green Sash. He also by now has become a Si Hing at Iron Dragon!



Brendan and Dave Hale

We at Iron Dragon are very proud to have our members continue training year after year. Martial Arts training is not easy and the drop out rate is high but the Si Hing at Iron Dragon are glowing examples of what can be achieved if a student continues to train for many years!

KUNG FU HISTORY

The re-emergence of Kung Fu training after the Boxer Rebellion

In the aftermath of the disastrous Boxer Rebellion Circa 1901, the Chinese populace as a whole lost much confidence and respect for Chinese martial arts. Luckily, Kung Fu was saved from certain extinction by a radical change in the way it was taught and disseminated.

The creation of the Chin Wu Athletic Organization on July 7, 1910 in Shanghai was a major factor in the re-emergence and modernization of formal Kung Fu training. Formed by a group of prominent martial artists, the Association was

created in an effort to preserve and reestablish Chinese martial arts in Chinese culture.

Traditional Kung Fu training had until that time involved the withholding of “secret” techniques by a few select individuals. Very often, as these individuals died off, the “secrets” were lost forever! There was very little interaction between different styles of Kung Fu styles at that time thus there was very little “cross” training.

The Chin Wu changed all this by encouraging interaction between the different styles that were taught at the school. In fact, every student that was accepted at the Chin Wu had to learn a set of 10 forms drawn from all the different styles that were taught at the institute prior to specializing in one particular style.

Huo Yuan Chia was the most prominent of the founding fathers. After his early death (just months after the founding of the Chin Wu), the other founding members named him the founder of the Chin Wu Association to honour his memory. In fact, it was a collaboration of several styles and masters that led to its founding. Strangely, Huo’s own style of Kung Fu, My Jong Law Horn – The lost track style was never included in the curriculum at Chin Wu!



Huo Yuan Chia

Many fictional accounts of Huo Yuan Chia’s death have been put forward, yet the true cause of his death remains undetermined. A fictional account of his death was put forward in the movie “Fists of Fury” aka “Chinese Connection” starring Bruce Lee. In the film Huo is poisoned by rival Japanese Karate experts and is avenged by Bruce Lee as Huo’s fictional student Chen Chen.

Here are a few clips from this amazing film:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L8yokvEILFU>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m8YRSlt-ld8>

Again, this is a fictional account. No true cause of death has ever been given for Huo Yuan Chia!

Lam Sai Wing documents 3 pillars of Hung Gar forms training

In much the same way that Kung Fu training was saved from extinction by the establishment of the Chin Wu Athletic Association, around 1917-1923 famed Hung Gar master Lam Sai Wing realized that in order for Hung Gar Kung Fu to survive there would have to be major changes in the way it was taught and proliferated.

Lam Sai Wing took the three most treasured forms in Hung Gar Kung Fu and documented them in three books. The “Taming the Tiger”, “Tiger Crane” and “Iron Wire Fist” forms thus became the first public disclosure of heretofore secret Kung Fu techniques. These 3 books have served as concrete reference points for the Hung Gar system of Kung Fu and have been cited as the main reason Hung Gar has become the world’s most popular form of Kung Fu! Needless to say this has since been emulated by most of the other styles as well!



A section from Lam Sai Wing's famed Tiger Crane Form book

Martial Arts Personalities

Kareem Abdul Jabbar

Kareem Abdul Jabbar is an all time National Basketball League Legend. He dominated the sport as no other for the 20 years he played in the league from 1969 to 1989. He scored more points than any other player in NBA history, won a record 6 MVP awards and participated on 6 NBA Championship teams! A lesser known fact is that Jabbar trained with Kung Fu legend Bruce Lee!



As an upcoming actor in Hollywood, Bruce Lee did not have the time to conduct classes at a fixed location. He did however take on several wealthy California celebrities as private students. His clients were taught a modern fighting system that he had created from the traditional Wing Chun Kung Fu and myriad other

martial arts styles that he had studied in his youth. Bruce named the art Jeet Kune Do – “The way of the Intercepting Fist”.

He was a very much sought after instructor due to a number of highly publicized demonstrations he had done on the Karate circuit in the late 60's and early 70's. One such private student was Kareem Abdul Jabbar! His training with Bruce Lee ultimately resulted in a film role as the main villain in Bruce's last film “Game of Death”.

Here is a clip from that film featuring the final fight between Bruce and Kareem:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LsSoX6qB9N0>



Scenes from “The Game of Death” – Kareem vs Bruce Lee

Kung Fu in the Media

The Last Dragon

In 1985, the Kung Fu movie genre made a comeback of sorts when Berry Gordy of Motown made a film that combined the 1970's formula of Blaxploitation and Martial Arts movies with 1980's dance music!!! The movie starred Taimak, a 20 year old martial arts master as the hero ie. the Last Dragon.



The poster from the 1985 theatrical release



Box Cover Art from the Video Release

Here's the original theatrical trailer for "The Last Dragon"

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eKF9jzZLg-I>

With tongue placed firmly in cheek this movie captures many of the cliché scenes that made the 1970's martial arts movie craze so much fun. Strangely named characters with "over the top" personalities are sprinkled liberally throughout the film! Bruce Leeroy is the "good guy" while The Shogun of Harlem is the main bad guy".

There is a hilarious scene where a group of Chinese hoods take on the stereotypical 70's "Black" persona while the Black hero takes on a stereotypical 70's "Chinese" persona. Hilarious! Here is that scene:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2MUNixy8Jxg&feature=related>



Bruce Leeroy a "Chinese" black man



"The Shogun of Harlem"

When I first saw this movie back in 1985, I was far from impressed! I was insulted by the comedic aspect of the film. I felt that the martial arts were far too spiritual....the underlying philosophy far too important to be made fun of! In addition, I found that that the martial arts action and choreography of this film was pretty poor.

In hindsight, after 25 years to ponder the matter (LOL!), I now find the comedic value tremendous in that it reminds us not to take our involvement in martial arts too seriously all the time. There is room to sit back and have fun with our Kung Fu!

****There are indications that "The Last Dragon" (which has become a cult classic since its release in 1985), will be remade! Apparently Quentin Tarantino has been in discussion with Samuel L. Jackson to play the villain "The Shogun of Harlem". I enjoyed Tarantino's "Kill Bill" and "Kill Bill 2" and look forward to the completion of this project!***

ME FIRST FITNESS – GUEST COLUMNIST MARK ROBSON

The following article was graciously contributed by my former student and good friend Mark Robson. Mark is a Certified Personal Trainer with numerous certifications in multiple disciplines of physical training. If you have specific fitness goals that may need additional help, Mark is the man to consult. Mark's contact info follows the article. I highly recommend his services! His contact information follows the article.

Top 10 Exercises using only your Bodyweight

Here are 10 bodyweight exercises that will build strength, burn fat and improve balance and endurance.

1. Push-ups: The push up is great for developing muscular strength and endurance in the chest, shoulders and triceps. To increase resistance add a weighted vest or elevate your feet for more incline. To add even more challenge try using one hand or adding a clap in between.
2. Sit-ups: Sit-ups and their many variations can work your entire abdominal region, obliques included. To target the sides just add a twist. If you are not yet able to do a full sit up, abdominal crunches are a fantastic option.
3. Burpees: The ultimate in bodyweight exercises, the burpee is not only hard on every muscle in your body, it also taxes your heart and lungs to their extreme. From a standing position, kick your legs out behind you and lower yourself into a push-up position. Then after completing a full push-up, spring back to your feet and follow it up by jumping into the air with your hands extended above your head. Repeat and see how many you can do.
4. One Legged Squats: This is a great exercise for your glutes and quadriceps muscle groups that also tests your balance and stability. By standing on one leg you are automatically doubling the weight of a regular free standing squat.
5. Towel Rows: Simply grab a large towel, place it in both hands and find a sturdy beam or pole to wrap it around. With your feet close to the base of the support piece you are using, lean back and extend your arms fully out while gripping the towel tightly with both hands. Then flex your arms and pull yourself back up into an upright position. This is a great substitute for a lat pull down and works your lats, biceps and shoulders.
6. Tricep Dips: Find a sturdy and elevated, flat surfaced platform about knee high. With your back to it squat down and place your palms with open hands on it while extending your legs out forward in front of you. Now bend at the elbows and lower your butt to the ground before bringing it back up. This is a great exercise for the back of the arms.

7. Supermen: The lower back is part of your core muscle group and often overlooked. To do this exercise lay on the ground, face down with hands extended out in-front of you as if you were flying. Begin by raising your right arm into the air while simultaneously lifting your left leg, then lower the two and raise the opposite right left arm with right leg. Start slowly and as you get better make faster transitions without touching the ground.

8. Bicycle Kicks: From an abdominal crunch position with your knees bent and feet in the air, bring your right elbow to your left knee then pull back and switch sides, this time bringing your left elbow to the right knee. Go back and forth in rapid succession until both your abdominal and oblique muscles burn.

9. Stair Steps: You can use almost anything really for stepping exercises. A table, bench, chair, step platform, curb or stairs in your very own staircase. This is a great cardio workout and excellent for the glutes. Count the amount of steps you can do in a 2 minute time frame, and then try to better it as your fitness level improves.

10. Jumping Jacks: Who needs a treadmill when you can just as easily elevate your heart rate by standing in one spot and doing a well known and favourite child hood activity? Jumping Jacks, also known as Star Jumps in other parts of the world, are a great cardio workout and excellent for your warm-up. Try to do 2 or 3, two minute rounds before engaging in these other exercises.

- Mark Robson, Certified Personal Trainer

One Body, One Mind, One Life, One Choice

ME FIRST FITNESS

www.mefirstfitness.com



PROVERBS TO LIVE BY.....

Be the first to the field and the last to the couch.

Chinese Proverb – Author unknown

PONDER UPON THIS.....

Chinese wisdom, proverbs, traditions, etiquette and history were as much a part of the art of Kung Fu as the physical fighting techniques that were taught. In keeping with that tradition, it is hoped that this, one of many proverbs to come, will enhance our students' martial arts experience for many years. In this day and age where many cultures have come together we are fortunate to receive proverbs of wisdom from many different cultures. It is my intention to present proverbs of any culture that are relevant to our training goals. These proverbs are intended to foster a dialogue about some of the less obvious facets of our art. The proverbs are purposely kept simple so students will ponder their significance and relevance in their own lives and experiences. Going forward it is hoped that all students will contribute to our monthly proverb. Short proverbs or wisdom from any culture that are relevant to the goals of our Martial Arts Community / Club are welcomed. Email: ajaxdragon@hotmail.com to submit your contribution.

PAST EVENTS

July 24, 2010 Iron Dragon 14th Annual Kids Summer Party

A great time was had by all as Iron Dragon Kung Fu and Kickboxing Club celebrated our 14 Annual Kids Summer Party. There were some incredibly high kicks thrown in the Jump Kick Contest. Clearly the training at Iron Dragon is paying off! After the Pizza Lunch and Martial Arts Movie, all Lil' Dragons and Young Dragons had to face off against Ol' Sifu in the Annual Water Gun Fight – “The Shootout at the Iron Dragon Corral”! Here are the results:



Soaked kids a plenty!
Winner for the 14TH Year in a row – SIFU!!!!



Kickboxing Ring + Balloons = FUN!!!



Flying High Front Kick Contest



Awesome Cake! Thanks Rhonda Tournay!

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 4, 2010

Trentwinds International Centre, Peterborough, Ont.

Extreme Kickboxing Event

Iron Dragon's own Chris Martin will fight Extreme Kickboxing & MMA's Mike Jocko in a 5 round for the Eastern Ontario Fight League Championship belt!



Chris Martin

Miguel Baptista will be fighting a 3 round preliminary bout against an opponent from Total Martial Arts Centre, Timmins, Ontario.



Miguel Baptista

UNTIL NEXT TIME.....

Until next time.....keep KUNG FU FIGHTIN'!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITiSzFp4arg>

Karl, Sifu