

HSFA Insider

Texas' Martial Arts News Source



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I've been teaching for almost 20 years; began teaching kids in public schools, then training teachers, and now training adults ranging from 18 to 86 years. As an experienced teacher, I have come to the conclusion that the most valuable result of learning is the gains in potential to teach oneself.

Today, most people living in a modern society have a great deal of access to information. Some may argue this can cloud one's ability to discern between what is credible and what isn't. The surge of information may be overwhelming for some, resulting in people seeking others to help orient them amongst a sea of data, opinions and promises.

The feeling of being lost is understandable. In addition to a tremendous exposure to information, many people today find themselves desperate; desperate to: look a certain way, optimize health, obtain a partner, start a family, or find work. With a simple search one may easily find a person or a system that claims to have the answers one is looking for. George Carlin once said something to the effect of: *Any salesman who keeps smiling is probably selling you something you don't need.*

I'm not suggesting that one

Train to Train Yourself

shouldn't seek teachers, however, I am suggesting that no one has the answers that one is looking for except for oneself. Turn your bullshit detectors on, I implore. Learn, be inspired and experiment. Ultimately, no one should tell another person how to eat, act or think. Always question and seek answers for yourself through experimentation, evidence, and common sense.

I am a former school teacher and current personal trainer. I have taught people how to think, read and write in a public school setting in order to provide structure so that, when they are ready, they may find their own manner of generating ideas, testing them and articulating understandings. As a teacher, I would make this clear to my students throughout the learning process. It is important for those who put themselves in positions of authority to encourage student self-reliance.

As a personal trainer, I train clients to ultimately train themselves. I orient them within the gym, introduce them to equipment and how it is safely used, and invite them to move in a variety of ways, allowing them to develop preferences. I teach them the fundamentals of building stability, strength, flexibility and balance. Most importantly, I encourage cli-

ents to listen to their bodies, identify limits and work within them. I offer clients the opportunity to establish a foundation (both physical and mental structure) on which to build.

Once one gains proficiency and confidence, they are then challenged to create: to write, think, move... There is no way around this. I believe human beings were made to progress and change, and not to lie in stagnation. We all have a responsibility to learn to care for ourselves in order to grow. Life is dynamic. Our bodies are constantly changing. As a result, our actions should support this change. Teachers, parents and friends all provide a little help along the way – the blessing communities provide.

Be sure not to mistake the teacher outside of you, however, for the ultimate teacher within.

- Denise Horvilleur, CPT
Central Motion Martial Arts

Business Spotlight — Space City Vikings - A Prospective Lag of Jomsborg

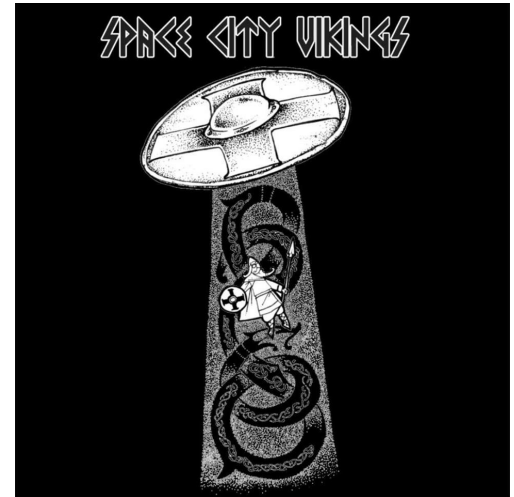
Space City Vikings is a prospective chapter of the Worldwide Brotherhood of Jomsborg, which combines historical reenactment and combat reconstruction. We try to construct an interpretation of Viking combat using several sources: historical sources including the sagas and HEMA manuals, archaeological/forensic evidence, and existing martial arts.

We have chapters all over the world that train and fight together against other Viking groups in sport combat competitions, which attempt to simulate as safely as possible Viking battlefield conditions.

We have 3 different fighting sys-

tems we train our fighters in for varying applications. Western and Eastern style combat are limited fighting systems used for the sport combat simulations that focus on fighting with and without armor. The last fighting style is full contact fighting using HEMA masks, known in the community as Hus-carl. We also train in glima, the national grappling art of Iceland which can be traced back to the Viking Age.

Our classes are held every Sunday from 3-6 at Fighter Nation Boxing Gymnasium.



Recommended Reading — On Combat, Dave Grossman

On Combat looks at what happens to the human body under the stresses of deadly battle: the impact on the nervous system, heart, breathing, visual and auditory perception, memory - then discusses new research findings as to what measures warriors can take to prevent such debilitating so they can stay in the fight, survive, and win. A brief, but insightful look at history shows the evolution of

combat, the development of the physical and psychological leverage that enables humans to kill other humans, followed by an objective examination of domestic violence in America. The authors reveal the nature of the warrior, brave men and women who train their minds and bodies to go to that place from which others flee. After examining the incredible impact of a few true warriors in battle, *On*

Combat presents new and exciting research as to how to train the mind to become inoculated to stress, fear and even pain. Expanding on Lt. Col. Grossman's popular "Bulletproof mind" presentation, the book explores what really happens to the warrior after the battle and shows how emotions, such as relief and self-blame, are natural and healthy ways to feel about having survived combat.



“These basics are not to be taught and once learned, forgotten for more advanced techniques.”

The Evolution of the Reverse Punch

Training in martial arts starts with the basics. Basics in movement. Basics in Coordination. Basics in understanding yourself. Many martial arts have basic techniques that are taught to beginners. These basics are then built upon with more advanced techniques and sometimes forms or katas. These basics are not to be taught and once learned nor forgotten for more advanced techniques. These are the building blocks of the system. Basics are to be continuously practiced and honed. Revisiting basics in martial arts are a way of learning deeper meaning than what was once taught. You will always find more behind the face value of the basics from when you first learned them. In Tae Kwon Do Chung Do Kwan there are 15 basic techniques that are taught. It's the 14th basic I am going to discuss, the reverse punch. Several systems and arts have a reverse punch. I have been going over the reverse punch lately and the variations I can think of on the basic reverse punch.

The way you first learn the reverse punch in Chung Do Kwan is by performing a down block with your forward hand blocking in front of your forward thigh, then punching with your back

hand. Your back hand starts in the chambered position, then the punch is thrown. While the punch is thrown with the back hand, the forward hand is simultaneously put in the chambered position. All the while the hips do not move. There is no twisting of the hips motion to gain power or torque. This is the way a reverse punch is thrown as a basic.

After that is taught and able to be performed, I have the student work the reverse punch with the twisting motion of the hips to gain that power and torque. Showing this slight difference, they can see the evolution of the punch. This is then taken into a sparring stance and worked as a straight right punch. The straight right is a very common punch and a very effective one. We then incorporate footwork, body positioning, and hand placement into the straight right punch. Incorporating the body movement, the student can see effectiveness and fluidity of the straight right punch as an offensive technique.

Once that is worked and understood, the straight right punch then is taught as a counter punch. The student learns to slip the jab from their sparring partner and deliver the straight right punch, over or under the opponent's jab, while moving and defending a live

opponent. Moving, defending, attacking, all while being in different ranges is what makes the beginning of a complete fighter.

The reverse punch is just one of 15 basic techniques learned in Tae Kwon Do Chung Do Kwan. Every basic technique has an evolutionary chain to it. Every basic technique has value in it even after you are no longer a "beginner". The consistent and proper training of basics helps a martial artist grow faster than one who does not revisit the basics and beginnings of their training. Like the old saying goes, "How do you know where you are going if you forget from where you came?" Basics help us find more than what is taught to us. If we look hard enough and long enough, most sets of basics have the foundation to the entire system hidden within them.

- Jason Evans, Houston Martial Arts Academy

Viking Martial Arts in Living History

“Today, many in the Viking reenactment community are hard at work in consistently improving upon their fighting systems...”

Today, most living history in the US is understandably centered on American history. And there is nothing wrong with that. I started my living history journey with 18th century reenacting at the age of nine and moved into the 19th century by the time I was in college. I still have great interest in American living history and continue to pursue it. But I have always had an interest in the medieval period as well. It was one of my focuses in graduate school and when I discovered Viking reenactment after college, it was extremely eye opening to how it has evolved compared with American living history. For starters, the martial material culture used has led to an incorporation of martial arts and/or sport combat applications into historical interpretations. Since the late 20th century, this incorporation has been gradually increasing in these communities and has led to the recruitment of a new generation of living historians. In addition, such pursuits have allowed for a better understanding of medieval material culture, but perhaps most importantly, it has created a new way to have fun in reen-

actment! Currently, a group of like-minded individuals and I are exploring these facets with our Viking living history organization in Houston, Texas. As part of a larger international organization for Viking reenactors, we are looking at new ways of preserving history.

As a child, I had always been fascinated with martial arts, but my parents never watered that seed. My martial arts career has been admittedly short, and as such, I cannot claim any fame in martial prowess or expertise. However, it is something that has become a passion of mine in recent years. I started seriously training in martial arts only a few years before my introduction to Viking reenactment and even within that separate pursuit, my interest was historically driven. To learn about different fighting styles from varying historical periods and how they developed has been fascinating, not only from a systematic perspective but also a cultural one. Even before I started training, I had avidly read about different martial arts and inevitably stumbled across what today is known as HEMA, or

Historical European Martial Arts. This moniker refers to a collection of historical fighting systems that come out of Europe. Some aspects can be said to still exist, albeit in sport form such as Olympic-style fencing, boxing, or wrestling; however, most must be reconstructed using manuals written in the Late Medieval, Renaissance, and Early Modern periods. Although a smaller movement in the larger community of martial artists, there has been a lot of excitement and growth within the HEMA community in the last few decades as various practitioners from all backgrounds have attempted to interpret and accurately reconstruct what these arts may have looked like. Just as in living history, debate continues as new interpretations are constantly being introduced.

Indeed, entire articles have been written about the development of HEMA alone, but I will attempt to be brief in its introduction. There isn't really a fixed date for what HEMA is and within the community you'll find different perspectives as to what constitutes it chronologically. Con-

ceivably, HEMA could be any systemized fighting that is both historical and European in origin from Antiquity to the 20th century. It is understandable that for some people, interest in the HEMA community has drifted outside of the more traditional parameters. Civilizations such as the Greeks, the Romans, the Vikings, and many others did not leave us any manuals (at least none that survived) akin to the ones in later historical periods. To what extent their fighting was systemized in the same way as traditional martial arts remains a mystery, and there are endless debates concerning this. Nevertheless, interest in the weapons used during these periods have inspired some to attempt to construct an interpretation of what combat during those times may have looked like.

As the HEMA community has evolved, so too has medieval living history. For Viking reenactment specifically, unchoreographed fighting has been a staple of this scene in Europe since at least the 1980s, and in some cases potentially earlier. At the time of its development, it was limited due to safety and geared towards a

more competitive sport combat mentality. Now with the introduction of HEMA and the training methods developed within that community, crossovers have been increasingly prominent. New safety gear has been developed and overall knowledge of European weapon design and use have increased exponentially. Today, many in the Viking reenactment community are hard at work in consistently improving upon their fighting systems to more accurately portray what Viking combat may have looked like.

In 2015, I discovered The Worldwide Brotherhood of Jomsborg, an international organization that is making great strides in Viking living history. In spring of 2016, I formed a prospective chapter of Jomsborg in Houston. Together with help from sister groups that can be found in major cities across Texas and the US, we have strived to bring our love of living history and the Viking Age together with our interest in martial arts. We officially train Viking every Sunday afternoon, although many of us train together during the week as well. Weapons we focus on include

the sword, axe, spear, Dane axe, langsax, and scramsax. All one handed weapons are taught in conjunction with the Viking shield. We train in a variety of ways including limited targeting for sport combat and full contact fighting with fencing masks. We also train in Viking armor as well as the Icelandic grappling art of glima, which can be traced back to the Viking Age.

The organization of Jomsborg is based off of the Jomsvikings, a professional corps of Viking warriors described in the sagas. It is structured as a military organization with a chain of command. Within each chapter, or lag, there are two contingents: the fighters and the hearth. Everyone is required to create a historically accurate Viking kit; this allows those to choose where their primary interests lay: either in the reconstruction of combat or the reconstruction of the artisan aspects of Viking life. Men, women, and children from all walks of life are welcome to pursue either vocation, but children are not allowed to fight on the field until the age of 16.

In addition to Jomsborg, there are several independent Viking

living history groups throughout the US. Together, we are adamant about bringing the European scene to the New World and introducing something that has never been seen here before: the Viking market. But to effectively do that we need people, and as such, we are always looking for others to share this with. We need living historians, martial artists, and artisans of all kinds.

Whether you fit one of these requirements or you're still starting out, you are welcome to join us. If you or someone you know is interested in pursuing this vocation, we are here and we are waiting. Check out our website at www.houstonvikings.org and send us a message! If you are too far from us, we can put you in contact with a group in your area, or if you're of a mind, help you form your own group. In the end, our goal is simply to feed the flame to preserve Viking Age history and create a long-lasting community for the entire family.

- Chase Ables, Space City Vikings

Instructor Spotlight — Chase Ables

How did you get started in personal training (what drew you to it)?

Honestly, I just kind of fell into it. With some of the Eastern martial arts, I am mainly just an assistant and that just comes with knowing a little bit more than the newer person. With HEMA, I had been training with a HEMA club called Order of the Dragon, but their training times weren't always consistent with mine. I started the Viking group in 2016 because no one else in my area did it, and I started introducing HEMA more into that group because the curriculum fit so well. Eventually, we got tired of training in parks, and I already trained with Professor Anthony Bernabeo at Combat Nation, so I talked to him about bringing something new to Combat Nation and he was all for it. So now we still incorporate HEMA into Viking, but we have since separated it out so we also have classes that are just about interpreting HEMA sources for those

with that primary interest.

How long have you been training?

I've only been seriously training martial arts for about 5 years.

What do you train in & have certifications in and what are they?

I've trained in several martial arts, so I'm kind of a jack of all trades, master of none. Combat Nation as a whole has a JKD mentality and our instructors really try to show students how everything integrates together conceptually. But mainly I train HEMA, Pekiti Tirsia and LaCoste Kali, Wing Chun, Glima, and kickboxing. I do a little BJJ on the side when I can as well.

I have a Free Scholar rank in HEMA with Sword and Buckler through my time in Order of the Dragon, a red belt in Wing Chun under Combat Nation and Rister Interna-

tional Martial Arts, Level One certification in Modern Army Combatives courtesy of the US Government, and a Student Level One certification in Combat Glima under Master Danny Hoskins.

Why do you enjoy sharing and teaching/training/coaching others?

Well I already teach history by day, so teaching is just part of my life. I think the best way you learn something is by learning to teach it. It really puts you on the spot to know what you're talking about, but it also allows you to see different perspectives and incorporate it into what you already know or think you know.

What is it you hope students/clients get out of training with you?

At the end of the day, I hope students come away with tools for their toolbox they didn't have before. Whether that is physical fitness, a technique, a

martial concept, or simply historical knowledge.

What motivates you to continue sharing/training/coaching others?

Pursuit of knowledge. For me, teaching means being a life-long student. The challenge for me is to get a student to my level so that we can start challenging each other and learning things together.

What do you feel is the key to being successful?

Consistency, humbleness, and tenacity.

Anything else you want to let people know about you as an instructor/coach?

Not really lol

Hip's Fit Corner - Barbell Hip Thrusts

As martial artists who are constantly working on developing skills, the issue of making those skills powerful through strength training becomes an important avenue to make your art functional. As I began training Kali and studied my teacher's movements, I noticed he moved from his center using his core and hips to execute strikes and blocks. Recently, I started

using an exercise to power up my hips since squats were a no- no with lower back issues. This move is the Hip Thrust.

This exercise requires little time to master and makes your hips become strong and powerful in a short time. My favorite variation of the Hip Thrust is using the smith machine. Make sure to put padding

on the bar and concentrate on driving the hips all the way to completion using the glutes. There are several excellent videos on YouTube showing correct form. Brett Contreras has several which break down the usefulness of this move.

- Hip

Past Events



Alamo City Stick Fighting Championships



HSFA 1st Quarter Gathering was held at Ground Dwellers in Spring, TX

Upcoming Events



HSFA 2nd Quarter Gathering of 2019 Saturday, June 22th 12-2 pm at Gracie Barra Westchase in Houston, TX.



Texas Stick Fighting Championships



Sayoc Seminar with Tuhon Harley Elmore at Ground Dwellers in Spring, TX



Stick Fighting Tournament at the Universal Martial Arts Hall of Fame



Carlos Machado Seminar at Ground Dwellers in Spring, TX.

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The Houston Stick Fighting Association ("HSFA") founded in 2006 is an association for like-minded martial artists that engage in simulated combat to test and improve their skills in the blade-based and stick-based fighting arts. Membership in HSFA is open to martial artists of all styles, all systems, of all ages, from beginner to advanced levels. Members of the HSFA are striving to develop and improve their skills through simulated combat to see what works and what does not with a resisting opponent. Along the way, we build friendships and camaraderie with our sparring partners and share our respective arts with each other.

- Jason Evans, Director

Recommended Businesses

- [Bunal Brand](#)
- [Caraboy Apparels](#)
- [F3 Cross Training](#)
- [FMA Supply](#)
- [Headhunter Blades](#)
- [Prometheus Design Werx](#)
- [Purpleheart Armoury](#)
- [Pyndus Acupuncture & Wellness](#)
- [Street Forge Armoury](#)
- [Arola Chiropractic](#)

Recommended Schools

- [Houston Martial Arts Academy](#)
- [Ground Dwellers BJJ](#)
- [DAMAG-INC Kali Combatives](#)
- [Combat Nation](#)
- Southeast Texas Escrimadors
- Westchase Warriors GB Westchase
- [TX 3rd Coast MMA](#)
- North American Self Defense Institute
- [SwordtoSword](#)
- [Davis Martial Arts](#)
- [Central Motion Martial Arts](#)

