

# HSFA Insider

Houston's Martial Arts News Source

### Every Issue is Filled With

- Martial Arts Insights
- Editorials & Personal Perspectives
- Training Tips
- Instructor Spotlight
- School Spotlight
- Events



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### Types of Matches and General Rules of HSFA Gatherings

The Houston Stick Fighting Association offers several types of matches for martial artists to spar in. One thing we like to do is create variety in the matches available. Keeping variety helps to maintain a certain level of proficiency in self defense.

By offering multiple types of matches to the participants, it helps cultivate a sense of well roundedness that is not always addressed in certain types of training. Also, by letting the “rules of engagement” be determined by the two participants in the match, assists the combatants to maintain a sense of control and self awareness in their growth and training gained at the gatherings.

We offer single weapon matches, whether it be single stick, single training blade, or single knife/dagger. We have double weapon matches, such as double stick, double training blade, double knife/dagger. There are staff matches as well. These are matches of longer weapons, such as 4 ft, 5 ft, and 6 ft staffs. The staffs are usually made of wood but can be polymer based. Next, is the espada y daga matches. These

are stick and dagger or training blade and dagger matches. We also have uneven weapons matches. These can include nunchucks, whips, European weapons, short lengths of chain, and tonfas.

For 2018, we are adding a new type of match. We are offering empty hand matches. These matches are for anyone who wants to test their empty hand skills against someone with a weapon. This will help us stay well rounded in our training. It is not often that we will be evenly matched with our attacker in real life. It is even less likely that we will have a weapon in hand when we are attacked. These matches will have more restrictive rules as far as intensity of the match for safety reasons.

As far as rules go, most of them are agreed upon between the two combatants that will have the match. We let the combatants decide what type of match, what intensity, and what general rules will be applied to their match. This helps everyone grow and expand their skill set.

Equipment requirements are simple. Headgear

and gloves are mandatory. Groin protection, elbow and knee pads, and any other type of protective gear is voluntary.

There are illegal targeting areas. These are thrusting to the throat or neck. There are no butt strikes, puno strikes or pommel strikes to the neck area. Attacks to the spine including the back of the neck are also not allowed. Grabbing the mask is prohibited. Bad sportsmanship, reckless behavior, fake injury, or illegal contact and techniques may result in forfeiture of membership.

Combatants should be clear on the rules with each other. When agreeing upon intensity they should be specific on how much power will be used when striking. If an opponent says, “Whatever, it doesn't matter,” then they should know that they have agreed upon a match with no intensity/power limits. If you are not wanting to go full power, make that very clear before the match starts and that your opponent agrees to the terms of the match.

- Jason Evans

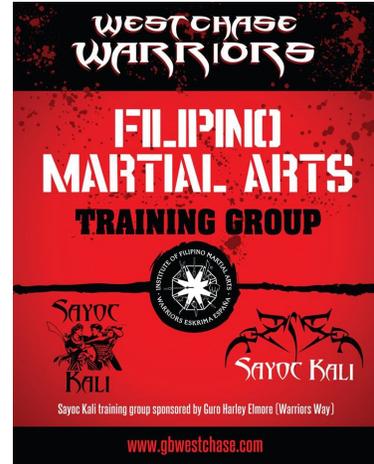
### School Spotlight — Westchase Warriors

Westchase Warriors is located inside of Gracie Barra Westchase in the Westchase area of Houston, TX. The school is lead by instructor Juan Babiloni. Juan is an accomplished martial artist with years of experience. Westchase Warriors offers classes in Sayoc Kali and Warriors Eskrima.

Their classes are 3 times per week at Gracie Barra Westchase. They also offer monthly workshops in Warriors Eskrima at “Fight Back Fit” (Bayou City Crossfit). Juan offers private classes in the Galleria Area.

Their locations are Gracie Barra Westchase located at 2610 Fodren Rd Houston, TX and Bayou City Crossfit .

Juan can be contacted through the Westchase Warriors Facebook page.

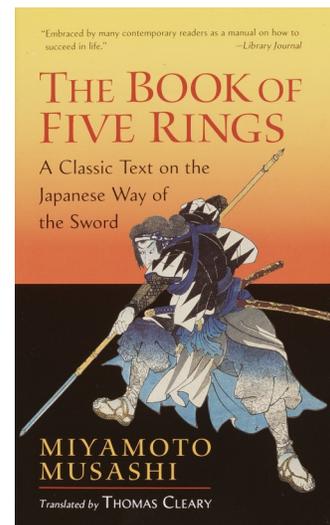


### Recommended Reading — Book of Five Rings — Miyamoto Mushashi

When the undefeated samurai Miyamoto Musashi retreated to a cave in 1643 and wrote *The Book of Five Rings*, a manifesto on swordsmanship, strategy, and winning for his students and generations of samurai to come, he created one of the most perceptive and incisive texts on strategic thinking ever to come from Asia.

Musashi gives timeless advice on defeating an adversary, throwing an opponent off-

guard, creating confusion, and other techniques for overpowering an assailant that will resonate with both martial artists and everyone else interested in skillfully dealing with conflict. For Musashi, the way of the martial arts was a mastery of the mind rather than simply technical prowess—and it is this path to mastery that is the core teaching in *The Book of Five Rings*.



“There are mainly 2 ways in which the stick can be used in training: using the stick as a stick (impact weapon) or using the stick as a “representation” of a sword (a cheap sword).

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**The Use of the Stick in FMA**

One of the things that I like to explain when someone comes for the first time to train in our Eskrima/Kali classes is the way the stick can be used in training, as it is the first training tool most commonly used for beginners.

The stick is a great training tool that it is used everywhere in FMA, but usually you can find some misconceptions about how it should be used.

There are mainly two ways in which the stick can be used in training: 1) using the stick as a stick (impact weapon) or 2) using the stick as a “representation” of a sword (a cheap sword).

The first approach, using the stick as a stick, sounds pretty obvious but sometimes it isn't. This means treating the stick as an impact weapon, looking to generate power and end the fight via KO. This kind of training will make more emphasis on body mechanics to deliver power on every shot and the targets will be mainly bones... like the elbows, knees, fingers,

and temple. For this purpose, training with different woods as rattan, bali or kamagong is very common to get different “feels”. The heavier sticks will provide a bigger KO power and will help to build a stronger grip and good body mechanics, although your training partner may not be willing to take the shots, as harder/heavier sticks will have the capability of breaking bones.

In this context, the stick can also be used to enhance your grappling skills as a “force multiplier” as it will expand the options available for painful submissions.

The second approach is to use the stick as a “cheap sword”, something less obvious for people without previous experience in weapons training. Bladed weapons won't require delivering as much power as an impact weapon, so movements usually will be shorter and tighter. Also edge awareness becomes relevant, and here is mainly where some people get it wrong, as they don't adapt the movements to the characteristics of the weapon.

When you use the stick this way, the emphasis should be more on using slashing and thrusting motions targeting soft parts of the body and looking for the main blood vessels of the body or nerves/tendons that can make our opponent unable to keep fighting.

In closing, the way in which we are using the stick is going to make a difference on how our movements work, body mechanics will be different and some maneuvers, such as hand switches used with the stick won't translate to a sword. Be aware of the differences and make sure that you are not doing “crazy stuff”. I see it more often than you would think.

- Juan Babiloni, Westchase Warriors

**Hipcore Fitness Corner - Horse Stance**

Lately I have been practicing an old school martial arts movement, the infamous horse stance. Almost every martial art has a type of horse stance in it's training. This exercise is really good for leg strength, hip flexibility, and most importantly increasing the flow of chi throughout the body. I practice two types of

this stance. The five step toes forward and the five step toes out. Start with feet together then toe point out then heels till you are 5 steps wide in your stance. Now, sit back and squat down like your sitting in a chair keeping the back straight. Hold your deepest position, relax, and ground yourself into the Earth.

Breath deeply and hold your arms in the hold the ball/hug a tree position. I like to go for 10 minutes but start at two minutes and slowly increase time. Research this timeless exercise and develop your own daily routine.

- Hip



**Instructor Spotlight — Juan Babiloni, Westchase Warriors**

How did you get started in martial arts (what drew you to it)?

I started training just after finishing middle school with a friend. The idea of becoming skilled and stronger through training looked very “appealing” at that time. I guess that martial art TV series and movies had a lot to do about it. So my friend and I decided to join the local Tae Kwon Do school, where we trained 5 times a week (Monday through Friday), it was tough but fun at the same time and I experienced a big improvement in my physical attributes in a few months; since then, martial arts training became part of my daily routines/habits.

How long have you been training in martial arts?

Since 1,995 so about 22 years.

How many arts do you train in & have rankings in and what are they?

Although I have trained in many different martial arts through the years, currently my training focuses mainly in Filipino Martial Arts (Kali/Eskrima). Weapons

training should be the focus for any person looking to protect himself and/or the ones he/she cares.

I train Sayoc Kali under Tuhon Harley Elmore (Apprentice), before moving to Texas I used to train Sayoc Kali under Guro Krishna Godhania in Europe (since 2,005).

Since I moved to Texas, I also joined the Warrior’s Way Martial Arts program under Tuhon Harley Elmore, which covers Kali, JKD, Muay Thai and Silat (Apprentice Instructor).

I also train Warriors Eskrima under Guro Krishna Godhania (Katulong Guro/ Apprentice Instructor).

I also train Brazilian Jiu Jitsu whenever I have a chance at Gracie Barra Westchase (Purple Belt).

I have trained Kajokembo for almost 20 years and taught classes for over 10 years (4<sup>th</sup> degree black belt). When I got my black belt, I also trained Ed Parker’s Kenpo for a few years (brown belt).

I have trained kickboxing and boxing for 15 years achieving

“black belt”, coaching and referee certifications under several organizations.

Why do you enjoy sharing and teaching martial arts?

Martial Arts training can bring so many benefits/ improvements to your life that sharing them with the people that are willing to follow that path is very rewarding.

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

I would sum up in just a few words: martial arts excellence. My standards are high and I push everyone to improve and become better in everything they do. I don’t lower the standards for people to feel better (something that not everyone likes), I want my students to become better by overcoming obstacles and pressure in training; so everyone gets “something” (at their level of skill).

What motivates you to continue sharing the arts?

To see how people enjoy the training at the same time it helps to improve their lives. All of my long term students are like family members; and so far I haven’t had any bad experi-

ences, so my selection process seems to work pretty well.

What do you feel is the key to being successful in martial arts & teaching martial arts?

The most important part is to love what you do. To be a good teacher, you need to be a good student; and that requires to keep training yourself and learning from the best sources. As many of the good things in life it requires sacrifices (usually time and money) and sometimes it may be difficult to “stay on mission”.

Anything else you want to let people know about you as a martial artist and instructor?

Not really much to add. If anyone is interested in joining my classes, I am currently teaching weekly classes at “Gracie Barra Westchase” (3 times per week) and monthly workshops in Warriors Eskrima at “Fight Back Fit” (Bayou City Crossfit). I also offer private classes in the Galleria Area.

**HSFA Gathering Updates!**

There are two main announcements for 2018!

First, all participants in the HSFA gatherings will be required to sign a waiver before they can participate any gathering. The waivers will be available for download at our website.

Second, we will be implementing a new incentive program beginning at our first quarterly gathering in March. This incentive program is to help promote participation in each gathering. This program will ensure everyone who participates in all four gatherings for 2018 will receive a commemorative patch at the

4th quarter gathering at the end of the year. We will be doing this every year going forward, with each year having a new commemorative patch for each member who participates in all four gatherings that year.

**Emotional Detachment**

Emotional Detachment is not a means to become emotionally numb or emotionally dead. In fact, emotional detachment raises awareness to one's emotional machine within them. When a person can gain and maintain the ability for emotional detachment when in action against an opponent in a fight, a higher sense of clarity in perspective takes place where there are less, to zero distractions. When knowing that emotion does have it's place and time in combat, it's best when one can keep the emotion-charged impulses (to act without deliberation) in-check. For example, when a person is angered, they experience stress in

the moment and when too much anger gets stressed on, even the most intelligent people end up doing some very stupid things that they know they will regret later. Truth is, a person's reactionary habits are the result of how they condition the way they think via self-defeating talk in a darker light of self-fulfilling prophecy that more than likely becomes true, the more they repeat themselves at such a low level of energetic projection. On the other side of that coin, the same process can be converted to train oneself to act the opposite with the same pattern of process yet yields positive results. Some folks call that posi-

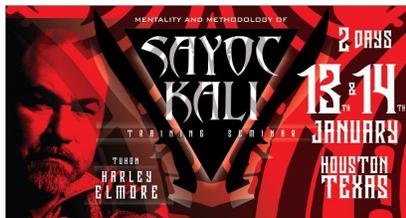
tive reinforcement through the use of affirmations, which is a productive version of the self-fulfilling prophecy process of manifestation. When one cannot be angered in a fight, one cannot be controlled by the opponent. Basically.

- Daniel Arola, DAMAG, INC

**Upcoming Events**



1st Quarter Gathering will be held on March 10, 2018 12-2 pm at Ground Dwellers BJJ at 9222 Louetta Rd Spring, TX



SAYOC Kali Seminar with Tuhon Harley Elmore January 14-14 at Ground Dwellers BJJ at 9222 Louetta Rd Spring, TX

**Past Events**



On the weekend of 11-12 November took place in Houston the 4<sup>th</sup> Warriors Eskrima seminar with Guro Krishna Godhania at Fight Back Fit. Guro Krishna covered several topics, as usual, covering different topics and weapons: knife, single sword, karambit, stick and dagger and panantukan. One of the most interesting themes of the weekend was the application of the Warriors Eskrima Amaras (combinations) to different weapons, using their characteristics. The Amaras are usually practiced with sticks, and the seminar covered advance applications of the patterns with the sword and the karambit amongst other topics.



4th Quarter Gathering was held on December 02, 2017 at Houston Martial Arts Academy/ F3 Cross Training. 13 participants had over 23 matches. This gathering saw people from 4 different schools get together and trade ideas, philosophies, and strikes.

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[www.houstonstickfighting.org](http://www.houstonstickfighting.org)



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[htownstickfights](https://www.instagram.com/htownstickfights)



[JasonREvans](https://www.youtube.com/user/JasonREvans)

*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.*

#### **Schools - Associated with Houston Stick Fighting Association**

[Houston Martial Arts Academy](#)

[Ground Dwellers BJJ](#)

DAMAG-INC Kali Combatives

Combat Nation

[Texas Jeet Kun Do](#)

Southeast Texas Escrimadors

Westchase Warriors GB Westchase

[TX 3rd Coast MMA](#)

North American Self Defense Institute

SwordtoSword