

# Filipino Martial Arts

Digest

## LAKAS 8

Special Edition  
2009

Larong Arnis Kuntaw Aycoco Silat 8



*Grandmaster Frank Aycoco*



**Publisher**

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Dennis M. Santos

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The FMA Digest is published quarterly. Each issue features practitioners of martial arts and other internal arts of the Philippines. Other features include historical, theoretical and technical articles; reflections, Filipino martial arts, healing arts and other related subjects.

The ideas and opinions expressed in this digest are those of the authors or instructors being interviewed and are not necessarily the views of the publisher or editor.

We solicit comments and/or suggestions. Articles are also welcome.

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## From the Publishers Desk

### Kumusta

I have known Grandmaster Frank Aycocho for almost 20 years. In that time what I have found that he is a quiet, humble, respectful man and self sacrificing individual, who listens and observes all that is around him. At the same time Grandmaster Aycocho is a straight forward, no-nonsense professional Filipino martial artist.

Grandmaster Aycocho originally from and growing up in Bicol, Philippines, and knowing his obstacles and challenges while growing up; one could say his life while growing up was not an easy one, and he worked and earned all that he has accomplished.

Becoming a Kuntaw practitioner he has continuously promoted and promulgated the art of Kuntaw, until recently were he has taken his training and teaching to another level and has combined Kuntaw, Silat, and Arnis creating and Founding LAKAS 8.

With a strong foundation and attitude towards his future goals pertaining to LAKAS 8, it is no doubt he will prosper and establish the art and it will continue to grow.

If visiting the Philippines it might be worth your time and effort to visit Grandmaster Aycocho and experience the art of LAKAS 8.

Enjoy and learn a little about Grandmaster Aycocho and the art of LAKAS 8.

**Maraming Salamat Po**



L-R: Grandmasters Daqooc, Sobrino, Vasquez, Frank, Tongson, and Aycocho



## Grandmaster Frank Aycocho

Master Aycocho was a self-supporting child without parents. He worked as a house boy for Jim Mediavillo a policemen and instructor in body building, Judo, Jiu Jitsu at the Bicol University. Frank by watching the classes, self studied the Judo and Jiu Jitsu.

It was 1966 at the age of 14 years of age, at a barrio fiesta in Bicol, Philippines there was a ring set up for kick boxing events. The ring announcer called all the kids to step up into the ring wearing uniforms for a competition. The Referee explained that there would only be only 2 fouls in the match no hitting the groin, and no biting, this was kickboxing like the K-1 that is now shown on TV.

In 1967 Jim Mediavillo sent Frank to his 1st year of high school, Frank joined the Balmaceda Jiu Jitsu Karate and Arnis classes and at a stage show he danced tinikling with an arnis partner.

One year was all Frank got to attend for high school due to financial reasons. He had to go to work and worked as a utility man at a hotel. At the same time Frank joined the YMCA Karate program ran by Sensei Jun Legaspi who was the instructor, at a tournament he had his first taste of Kuntaw due to competing against some of the Kuntaw students in the area.

As time passed Frank then found another job as a utility man at a hospital with his earnings he was able to finish high school by attending night classes. I

Frank Aycocho then joined a school that taught Kuntaw, Karate, Ju Jitsu and arnis whose instructor was Jun Orence.

In 1974 as a 3rd Degree Black Belt, Frank went to Manila to join in the competition of the 1st Asian invitational Karate



Tournament at Araneta Coliseum, and won individual Kumite.

Frank enlisted in to the AFP. He was an instructor of hand and foot combat of PGB, (Presidential Guard Battalion) at Laog City Marine Camp Training Center. He transferred to the Special Service Group and became a member of the PCRП Team-Karate (Philippine Constabulary), but decided that this was not a good for him, so he transferred to the Medical Service, OJT at AFP Medical Center, V-Luna taking up EMT Paramedic, O.R. Tech, MEMU Tech.

After many years of service Frank left the AFP and signed a contract, with the OFW in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, working as EMT-Paramedic for the 997 National Emergency Rescue Royal Commission.

In his free time Frank was allowed to teach Kuntaw at the Royal Commission Recreation Center, which was open to multinationals of all ages, (Saudi Arabia law prohibits OFW to pay double compensation). Frank got paid by a deal where he shared profits from his classes with the recreation management.

Saudi Arabians loved Kuntaw sports competition. Master John Bais and Frank Aycocho promoted Kuntaw for 12 years in K.S.A. Master Frank Aycocho was appointed as Director of Kuntaw, Middle East by Grandmaster Carlito Lanada of KNP-IKF. Frank Aycocho earned the rank of Master (Red, White and Blue Belt) in Kuntaw.

Master Aycocho competed in Dubai; full contact karate competition when he worked with CGGFRANCE Oil exploration.



Arnis drills with his team for the Asian Invitational Karate Tournament in Saudi Arabia.



Group picture during the mass promotion we have done with Grandmaster Jon Bais and Grandmaster Frank Aycocho in red uniform.

In 1998 Master Frank Aycocho returned to Manila, starting over again, opening an IKF Chapter in NCR Manila which was published in the Manila Bulletin newspaper dated Jan 14 1999 and was visited by Grandmaster Lanada returning to the Philippines for a visit from the United States Grandmaster Lanada and Master Aycocho organized a Kuntaw National Tournament in Olangapo City. The guest speaker was the Honorable Dick Gordon.

Master Aycocho with his students from the Manila KNP-IKF chapter took only one trophy in the tournament, winning the forms competition with Sayaw-An form and the Maya Form. Grandmaster Lanada offered Master Aycocho the position as KNP-IKF President. Master Frank Aycocho has been waiting for the appointment in writing, but to no avail up to this time.



Master Frank with Grandmaster Lanada's son Junior



Struggling always due to geographic location and lack of support from the head office of the IKF, Grandmaster Aycocho moved on and Founded KUMANDOS in 1999, then establishing and Founding LAKAS 8 KUNTAW mixing the art of Arnis wiht Kuntaw and Silat, Founded on August 8, 2008 (8-08-08)

Due to the popularity of Mixed Martial Arts on TV, Filipino cinema, and by the Americans, it has come down to Grandmaster Aycocho to teach mixed martial arts.

Antonio Graceffo "The Monk from the Bronx" trained and earned a Brown Belt in Kuntaw Mixed martial arts style. (In Kuntaw Black Belt level cannot be earned on a short period of time). Antonio Graceffo has promised to return to study more and earn his

Black Belt, he's got an amazing adventure in martial arts world wide and Master Aycocho found it easy teaching Graceffo, he is a fast learner, He reminds Master Aycocho of one of his students in K.S.A. which was a popular tournament champion of champions Valentino Reyes, who is now employed by OFW in Lebanon. Valentino Reyes won 5 trophies in one tournament which was sponsored by ARAMCO winning in the middle weight, heavy weight black belt divisions and also in Kumite. Champion of Champions also includes kata forms competition.

A philosophy of Grandmaster Aycocho is "*It is not worthy or worth while teaching martial arts to bullies, people with no conscience and especially violent people*". Grandmaster Aycocho teaches only to a select group of individuals confined in his school for privacy and full attentiveness for one month with complete and strict discipline.



**Larong Arnis Kuntaw Aycocho Silat 8**

Grandmaster Aycocho has found new concepts in teaching martial arts, and has developed a style/system which he calls Larong Arnis Kuntaw Aycocho Silat 8 and has become the Founder of the Organization Lakas 8. Among the highlights of Larong Arnis Kuntaw Aycocho Silat 8 is a triple combination of Filipino fighting arts with or without weapon sports type in the sense that bladed weapons techniques are only open for law enforcement.

Basically, Kuntaw is the foundation of Grandmaster Aycocho's own philosophical theory, an ancient art of modern practice, the **W** stands for water; the **M** stands for metal and divided by a belt representing sports martial arts type of discipline. It came from the theory of Yen Yang, good/bad or



“God/Evil.” Martial arts as classified into two types, the soft open hand techniques and the hard close fist techniques.



Figure 8 are the angles of strikes elutriated from the head to the foot of the human body. Easy to learn for the novice utilizing a figure 8 waving motion following the flow of force of the strikes.

The flag of the Philippines has the sun with 8 rays representing 8 major regional provinces base on original creation. Grandmaster Aycocho has this method to make the differences among other Arnisadors, single stick with a reversible and invertible hold. Grandmaster Aycocho has Founded LAKAS 8 on August 8th 2008 (08-08-08).

A single strike of an opponent once anticipated with a blocking follows a disarming strike then the 8 angles continues the strikes. To be able to execute the artistic motion one must be physically flexible, any one who can ballroom

dance can do the action.

The FMAdigest asked Grandmaster Aycocho to clarify and elaborate on some of the aspects of Lakas 8.

**FMAdigest:** *You stated that Lakas 8 is a triple combination of Filipino fighting arts. What are they and can you explain what areas of each you have taken and how you have combined them?*

**Grandmaster Aycocho:** Triple combination in the sense that techniques are taken from the principles of Chinese, Japanese and Arnis, basically the linear and circular foot motions with open hand for trapping, grabbing, spear thrust, chop, palm striking and close fist for striking such as knuckle punch, hammer, back fist all types of close and open hand strikes. The single stick arnis combines bladed and non bladed weapons both sports type and combat street fighting which applies different striking techniques of both hand and foot. The free hand is for the advantage in trapping, grabbing, and disarming.

**FMAdigest:** *In training in the Lakas 8 style, what are some of the basic principles that make up the foundation of the style?*

**Grandmaster Aycocho:** Lakas 8, **L** stands for the word Laro - games or sports. The basic principles are the angles of stick strikes to different spots numbered on human body which are the fatal areas. Any offense delivered by an opponent is anticipated by a blocking and disarming plus 8 multiple punishing strikes to use as a counter to take down the opponent.

**FMAdigest:** *You have said that it is a sports style. So it is only for competition? Or is reality of today's society also in the teaching for outside the school?*

**Grandmaster Aycocho:** Sports type in the sense that forms of Kuntaw, Karate-Do and Arnis are required from students for a high standard of merit to effectively gain points in competition as well as sparring for competition. Students are carefully oriented with the flexibility of techniques applicable to the event of fighting. In competition, Professional etiquette is imposed, techniques are limited according to the ground rules passed by organizers, Lakas 8 can automatically adopt to avoid fouls and end up in disqualification, dancing with the tune of music being played, do not step into the fighting arena to sleep on a spinal board or go to war and do nothing.

**FMA Digest:** *Can you tell us about the basic principles of the empty hand part of Lakas 8; the importance of balance, speed and timing and how the student can train to bring these areas together to excel in the art?*

**Grandmaster Aycocho:** Principles of empty hand is basically a self defense type, being a martial artist one walks without a weapon or weapons at hand. The body parts are weapons, don't walk around in public places with weapons then you get arrested. The importance to stay alert standing in balance is avoid being injured even without a fight if you fall you can get injured, walk on a normal speed and timing otherwise you slide and fall, students excel discovering discipline how to eliminate fear, developing physical and mental skills, learning how socializing with martial artist and non-martial artist and earn respect with the other stylist.

**FMA Digest:** *Do you have required forms for both empty hands and Arnis? And can you tell us a little about them?*

**Grandmaster Aycocho:** Yes forms are required to develop the students on proper stances, focus, timing, balance, execution of strikes, pause of concentration generating force and speed, mental skills in memorizing in the continuity of motion avoiding flaws in the action. All of judges references to determine the merits of points in competitions. All this applies in Arnis and Karate-Do and Kuntaw forms competition. In Karate-Do competition kumite, kata and kubudo have it all, that makes us qualified to compete even in kickboxing or UFC, URCC mix martial arts of today's popular sports competitions.

**FMA Digest:** *In teaching your art what do you require of a student?*

**Grandmaster Aycocho:** To be considered for admission applicants are required to pass medical examination stating their health status, signing a waiver of voluntary participation in practice of physical martial arts activity, uniforms and safety gear is required to avoid injury, and discipline is strictly observed. This is a school similar to rehabilitation but no person is admitted having mental deficiency. Exemptions are considered for persons holding degrees and professionals, Physical Education teachers, Lawyers, etc. Martial artist in taking this training as they earn their advancement they are adding knowledge, skill, and wisdom.

Grandmaster Aycocho thank you for clarifying some aspects of your style of Lakas 8. Also Grandmaster Aycocho explains this is an independent style that does not require any obligation to graduate students. The student gets what they deserve and pays documents required by law of a Lakas 8 school which is located where the business operation has a legitimate permit.

Matters concerning safety; accepted students are required to sign a waiver in case students accidentally get injured during training. For minors under 18 years of age parental or guardian consents must sign a waiver. Upon admission he or she is carefully interviewed to gain knowledge of any physical limitation or incapability, blood pressure is checked prior to physical exercises.

Subject matters are divided in different sections during the course;

1. Sports Sciences (Bio-mechanics)
2. Physiology of exercises physical fitness
3. Traumatology (first aid and basic human anatomy)
4. Sports Psychology (teaching methodology)
5. Sports and recreation management
6. Philosophy and hygiene

### **Areas of Discipline**

**Arnis 1** - Basic: Foundation of skills for beginners and P.E teachers.

**Arnis 2** - Cultural: Forms creative and classical, both with or without weapons in hand.

**Arnis 3** - Sports - Officiating rules, mechanics and strategies for competition.

**Arnis 4** - Mixed martial arts techniques: Defense/ offense, counter defense/ offense with or without weapons, (Kuntaw, Karate, Jujitsu, Kick Boxing, Arnis and Silat).

**Package deal** - is optional for admission: pre-arranged training schedule, students fees complete sets of uniforms, lecture notes, belt, certificate total package 3,500 pesos.

**Confirmed package** - with one month accommodation, board/ lodging (Fully furnish air condition room ), documents and 2 sets of uniforms, 25.000.00 pesos

**Contact:** Grandmaster Frank Aycocho can be reached at:  
(**Frankayacocho@yahoo.com**) or (0919) 883-1120.

## Concepts of the Daga

### Master Frank Aycocho of LAKAS 8

By Antonio Graceffo

People ask me the biggest difference between Philippine Kuntaw and Cambodian Bokator, my other all-encompassing martial art. And the big difference is the knife. Where the Cambodians are masters of the elbow, Filipinos are masters of the knife.

Hand and foot fighting can injure a man, but the blade can kill. We don't advocate killing, but it is still nice to learn. "When a thrust comes, you push the knife out of the way."

Master Aycocho showed me how you wait for the knife to come, and then block the wrist or hand just by pushing it gently. Don't grab the wrist. If you grab, your opponent will pull away or become aggressive. By just gently pressing against his hand, he can't stab you.

In Kuntaw, we always want to think about two things. Think about redirecting



him. Twist the wrist and break it or force him to release the knife. Twist the wrist towards his thumb, then, continue pushing the knife out the space between his finger tips and his palm. Aim for that natural open area. You can even press on the knife itself. Just press on the flat, not the edge of the knife. Use the length of the knife as leverage to take the knife away from him.

Master Frank Aycocho showed me how he was always careful to keep his arms



using your opponent's force against him, and think about using your bodyweight to force his hand in a direction that you want. Redirect, use his force and momentum, and move in the same direction, gently guiding the knife if a safe direction, so you don't get cut. "Always disarm and return to sender. Use his knife against him."

The goal is always to press against the elbow with your whole body weight. This can break his elbow or it can disarm



tight against his body, so he could maximize his power and weight. Never reach out, away from you, to grab an opponent. If you grapple, get close. You should be body to body, then direct your body weight and if possible two of your limbs against one of his. When you are in a good position to grapple, that is when you grab the wrist. But don't rely on holding the wrist alone or the man will pull out. When grab the wrist, also grab the elbow. Now you will have good control.



Once the Master had control of my wrist and elbow, he could twist and get me in a shoulder lock or elbow lock. Through all of this, he was careful to keep his arms close to his body, and always stayed close.

“When you see opponent with knife, you should get close. If you go far, you can't defend yourself. Often a man will threaten you by showing you the weapon; gun or knife in his belt. If he does this, you know his first move will be to reach for his weapon.”

So, now you are one move ahead of your opponent. If you can stop him before he gets it out, the problem will be solved. Wait till his hand is coming across his body. Step in close, and press his hand against his body, even against the hilt of the weapon, trapping it. Twist your whole body, and get him in a shoulder lock. Now he can't get the weapon and you are in control of

him. Move to a shoulder lock position, rotating your feet out, around and behind him. Drive him into the ground, face first.

According to Antonio, the rule of knife fighting is: if you opponent has a knife and you don't have a knife run away. If he has a knife and you have a knife, run away. The goal is to run away, but if you have no choice, wait till he is reaching for his weapon, and get him. Follow through the elbow lock, break his arm, and run away.

“If you are too late, and the knife comes out, gently block his wrist before he strikes. Reach under his arm with the other hand and grab your blocking hand. Use your entire body for leverage and twist, breaking his arm. For added control; step in, step on his foot or step on his foot and lean your bodyweight into the side of his knee.

Another way of taking control, if the opponent wrestles you to the ground or if he has you in an arm lock and drives your face into the ground, grab his pants leg. Once you are holding the pants leg, you can control him, you can pull or scoop or sweep or break the knee. Another opportunity to grab a pants leg is when your opponent kicks. Step aside and grab his pants leg. Twist the ankle and then use your elbow to apply pressure on the side of the knee. This can break the ankle or knee or just cause a lot of pain.

In a self defense situation, you can remember back to school days, the bully would grab your shirt. When someone grabs your shirt, your instinct is to pull away, but this is not the best strategy. When someone grabs your shirt and pulls you toward him, you grab his hand and pull him toward you. You lay your hands over his hand, and trap his hand against your chest. Drop your body weight and shatter his wrist, or you can trap his hand with one hand and attack his elbow with the other.

Most Philippine arts practice the double stick. Master Aycocho always says people like to show off too much, twirling two sticks. In Kuntaw, Master Frank teaches

the students to use only one stick and one empty hand. The bare hand can be used for grappling, disarming, and defeating or killing your opponent.

In stick fighting, just as in knife fighting, don't grab the wrist. Just push it to control it. Use the free hand for disarming techniques. Come into a good position to use the leverage of the stick and leverage of the body to take his stick away. Use a snake technique. Your free hand wraps around, snakes around, the opponent's stick, and then with your elbow locked in tight against your body you twist the stick out and jerk it from his grasp.

In stick and knife fighting, always go with the flow. Whichever direction the opponent is already moving, move with him. When you block, you aren't stopping his strike, just redirecting the energy into a safe or advantageous direction.

Using the butt of the stick is very important. Master Aycocho said that even when you use a knife, you should avoid killing. You draw a knife in a self-defense situation to get a psychological advantage, but at the end of the day, you don't want to stab or slice someone, or commit a crime. So, you draw the knife, but you launch a non-lethal attack with the butt. And, of course, using the butt of the knife is first learned and practiced with the stick. You can use your free hand to trap his stick against your body, and then come in with the butt-strike to the temple or to the jaw. You can also use the butt to grab and wrestle the opponent.

The stick is extremely versatile. You can block by holding the stick upside down, pointed at the ground. Reinforce the stick with your shoulder. Laying your stick along your shoulder and arm, step in, jamming the strike. Now your body is close, and you can strike with the butt, grab, or grapple. In stick grappling, you want to try and insert your stick under his arm and use it as a leverage bar to wrench or destroy his shoulder or elbow. To get more leverage, reach behind his neck with your stick from under his arm. Now his arm is the fulcrum. The stick is the lever, and you can throw him to the ground.

Whether fighting with your hands, your feet, your knife or your stick, Kuntaw stresses perfect execution. Use leverage, weight, position, use your brain and get every advantage.

Antonio Graceffo is the author of five books, available on amazon.com. He is also the host of the web TV show, "Martial Arts Odyssey." To see Antonio Graceffo's Filipino and Burma martial arts videos, **Click Here**.

See his website [www.speakingadventure.com](http://www.speakingadventure.com) contact him [Antonio@speakingadventure.com](mailto:Antonio@speakingadventure.com) Join him on facebook.com

## **Punong Guro Dennis M. Santos**

4th Degree Black Belt  
Puerto Princesa City Chapter

Dennis Santos a 4th Degree Black Belt and currently the Chief Instructor of Lakas 8 Kuntaw chapter at the City Sports Office of Puerto Princesa City, Palawan, Philippines, under the office of the city Mayor. At the time of this write Punong Guro Santos is quite busy for the regional meet in Romblon City, Philippines.



Punong Guro Santos started with Kuntaw in Dammam, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia under Kyud (brother) Fernando Santos of Porac, Pampanga, a student of Kyud Robert Lao, unfortunately Kyud Frando had left and went back home. Dennis called up Kyud Frank Aycocho who was the Middle East Director way back in 1993 and joined his team in Royal Commission, “We were the hottest team of Kuntaw competing at every martial arts invitational tournament done every quarter at the Eastern Province of K.S.A. Jubail, Dammam, Rastanura and Al Khobar” all adjacent martial artists having fun competing with different groups and styles. Kuntaw was huge in the number of participants and it seemed that we always ended up the overall Champion, we were approximately having

600 hundred members composed of multi-nationals Saudis and OFW's from different companies both government and private. Dennis thinks to be exact there were 13 chapters in the eastern province that Grandmaster Aycocho use to handle.



Dennis Santos learned a lot of things from Grandmaster Aycocho not only in Kuntaw, but also in the art of Arnis. Including the professional way to deal with co-instructors and the motivation of students, although some of Dennis's knowledge in the martial arts fighting techniques he knew from his own study and has developed. Dennis still looks back with Grandmaster Aycocho philosophy, Dennis Santos respects him a lot as he is a true Master who always appreciates new things and never sets aside techniques of the other styles, he is never a showy type of person and as Dennis has never forgotten his words, “*If you work for a man work for him and speak well of him, loyalty is worth a*

*pound of cleverness.”*

Dennis and Grandmaster Aycocho use to practice and train in their free time along the seashore while fishing. One time Dennis was actually trying to out maneuver

him in a lock that he had on him, but unfortunately Dennis couldn't. I had asked Grandmaster Aycocho that day what is the secret of that lock? He told me, "the KUSOG". Thou he is smaller than me in height and in built, but the power inside and outside of this man is limitless.

He told me, "*A martial artist who practices a thousand techniques ends up a loser*". "*But he who practices a dozen times of an 8 angles strikes could knock down a number of assailants and end up a winner!*" Mabuhay and Kudos .



### **Rogelio Buera Jr.**

1st Degree Black Belt

LAKAS 8 KUNTAW, Davao City Chapter, Philippines

I first knew Grandmaster Frank Aycocho at my video/cd shop with an American companion looking for a UFC DVD, an ordinary simple soft spoken guy no one will ever think he is a Grandmaster of the Filipino martial arts. One of my clients school teacher Danny Donaeo referred Grandmaster Aycocho who lives nearby and teaching Arnis and Kuntaw at the University Pamantasan Lungsod ng Maynila, National College of Physical Education with Professor A. Soteco. I waited for another chance to see Grandmaster Aycocho

again to find out how I could study Arnis and Kuntaw.

Let me introduce myself, I am Rogelio Buera Jr. of Davao City, I spent over 6 months studying LAKAS 8 KUNTAW under Grandmaster Frank Aycocho almost every day. I went to his gym 3 hours, for each practice; finally, I reached the rank of Black Belt on Christmas day. I was tested at the Arnis tournament in Marikina during my brown belt rank, Grandmaster Aycocho said, I needed exposure, to win or lose doesn't matter, what matters most is knowing where you stand with wisdom and with both feet on the ground.

I never ever idolized anyone even my high school teachers, studying martial arts with Grandmaster Aycocho made me realize that what I learned could not be paid in any amount.

I was not charged a professional instruction fee except for my 2 pairs of uniforms and belt payable by installment.

I have learned a lot of things like human anatomy, basic first aid management of injury, sports management and officiating, self control, anger management, inner power



for a single strike TKO, the importance of philosophy in fighting arts of linear and circular motion and bring about my opponents unbalance and control against single or multiple opponents.



Guro Buera assisting a student in stretching

I consider LAKAS 8 Kuntaw to be a complete martial art. One thing I admire about Grandmaster Aycocho, he is always aware of safety, he never demonstrates in public the display of techniques with bladed weapons, Grandmaster Aycocho said, *"It's one way to avoid being duplicated by others - likely being copied by unqualified people then they end up injuring themselves."*

I am now back in my hometown Davao City and have started teaching LAKAS 8 Kuntaw to my relatives and friends. Hopefully I can continue sharing what I learned from my humble friend Grandmaster Aycocho.

Soon I will be competing with the LESKAS group here in Davao City under Master Del Rosario.

## **Guro Val Reyes**

Grand Champion of the Invitational Kuntaw/Karate Tournament  
"Battle of Champions"  
Aramco Rastanura, K.S.A. 1993

It was before the gulf war when Grandmaster Frank Aycocho and Guro Val Reyes occasionally meet at Royal Commission Sports Center where he worked as an attendant for the ARCO, a company that operated the recreation facility. Grandmaster Aycocho provided services for the National Emergency response in the area being employed as a paramedics of MMS, Mouwasat Medical Services for Royal Commission of Jubail and Yanbu, K.S.A.

ARCO was searching for a qualified and certified martial arts instructor and Guro Reyes visited Grandmaster Aycocho regularly at his ambulance station trying to convince him to submit documents for approval at the Prince office, Grandmaster Aycocho told Guro Reyes that he was waiting for Grandmaster Carlito Lanada Sr. to send him documents. Grandmaster Aycocho sent a request to the Founder (Grandmaster Lanada) and a copy to the IKF President (at the time) Steven K. Dowd, but



no response was received. Grandmaster aycocho was in contact with Carlito Lanada Jr. who had sent him an old document signed by him on behalf of his father.

At the time Grandmaster Aycocho was hesitant to get any documents thru Grandmaster John Bais knowing he operates under Kuntaw ng Pilipinas. He wanted the IKF in K.S.A. We meet and talk and his followers agreed with my IKF ideas.

The Royal Commission allowed Grandmaster Aycocho with the agreement to share profits with the company that ran the recreation management, so he started, then a months later Grandmaster Aycocho and Grandmaster Bais organized the Kuntaw Showdown at the Royal Commission Recreation Center and it was published in the Saudi Gazete Arab newspaper by Andy Tumagos, dated July 11, 1993.

Grandmaster Aycocho did not have any black belts on his team so Rolie Descalgar lead his team sparring with Val Reyes as his team mate. The success that my team achieved for the royal commission in twinning 24 trophies and a dozen medals having the highest number of awards taken out of 43 students.

Grandmaster Aycocho students joined in every Invitational Karate Tournament every quarter at the Eastern Province of K.S.A. For three tournaments Val Reyes competed and never won any trophies. He almost gave up "saying he is always being cheated by officials from Karate-Do team". Grandmaster Aycocho advised him to be patient that on the right time and place he would get what he wanted. He was already a brown belt.

The Aramco Battle of Champions was set by our colloquies Rudy Lorejo. The time has come I said to Val Reyes, stay focus on your dream to win. He was declared winner in Forms competition in the brown belt division of Individual and Team Forms. Then Team Sparring he lead the team being a senior brown belt and won the Individual Sparring Black Belt Light Weight Division again he wins and then comes the Battle of Champions winner against winner Black Belt Division open weight ending as the overall Champion of the tournament. Grandmaster John Bais was the Chief Referee and Val Reyes was so happy he could not believe that what I had told him was right; he could hardly carry 5 big trophies in his arms. However, one the student Abe was a casualty in the sparring, hospitalized for 5 days injured during the tournament.

A month later Grandmaster Aycocho and Bais conducted a mass promotion for Black Belts in Kuntaw prior to the departure of Grandmaster John Bais migrating to the United States.

SUNDAY, JULY 11, 1993 PAGE 15 arab news

## Sports

### Kuntaw exhibition set at RC Center

By Andy Duatin Tomagos

JUBAIL, AL SINAIYAH, July 10 - The International Kuntaw Federation (IKF), Saudi Arabia Chapter, Martial Arts Association propagating the art of discipline in the development of mental and physical fitness among children and adults, will hold a "Kuntaw Showdown 1993" at the RC Recreation Center, Al Huwaylat Sports Club, Jubail Industrial City on July 23.

Kuntaw is a translated Filipino dialect taken from the origin of some of the ancient martial arts of the world such as Kalari of India, Kuntao-chu'an of southern China, Kung-fu in Mandarin, Kempo of Korea and Kempo in Nippongo.

Kuntaw was transformed into an art of foot and hand fighting techniques in the 14th century. It later became the orthodox study of self-defense of the new generation as it combines the two types of martial arts in the world, the soft and hard karate styles.

The IKF-Kuntaw is under the umbrella of a happy picture. The World Union Martial Arts Federation (WUWO-WUMAF), an organized body of martial arts with representation in the Olympic Committee.

The IKF-Saudi Arabia chapter has gained access at the Royal Commission Recreation Centers with the support from the RC Social Services, Jubail through Paul Street, Operations Manager of ARCO, Al Huwaylat Sports Club and assisted by Frank Ayco Cho, a professional physical training specialist at REMT/PPTS.

According to Kyud Mike Labatiao, IKF-Middle East Director all Kuntaw chapters will be represented during the tournament. Preparations are now underway and all chapters members are now practicing rigidly for the upcoming tourney.



The Kuntaw RC Chapter, which is set to host the "Kuntaw Showdown 1993" at the Huwaylat Sports Club in Jubail, make (Photo by Andy Duatin)

Among the 13 competing Kuntaw chapters, the IKF Chapter 0095 of RC Recreation Center poses with pride in preparation for the Kuntaw Showdown 1993. They are: (L-R), R. Timoteo, D. Mahinay, P. Camana, Val Reyes, Frank Ayco Cho, R. Soana, J. Berriangel, M. Ibanez, T. Olayao, and P. Iamano; Frnc Ayco Cho, head instructor of IKF Chapter 0095 appeared in the movie "Best of the Best Part I" under the screen name "Francis Cho".

He is a 4th degree black belt and a member of WUKO-PAKA No. 1275.

Kuntaw ng Pilipinas-IKF is recognized by the Philippine Government under Security and Exchange Commission No. 31590.



Group picture during the mass promotion we have done with Grandmaster Jon Bais and Grandmaster Frank Aycocho in red uniform.

After John Bais gracefully exit I received orders from the Founder of IKF appointing Grandmaster Aycocho as Director of IKF Middle East but we had already chosen Mike Labatiao to be the Director of Kuntaw Eastern Province. Conflicting interests came out, developing factions amongst the groups of Kuntaw, Grandmaster Aycocho's Royal Commission Team was surprised.

Another appointment came from WAMA World Alliance of Martial Artists / USNKA United States National Karate Assn. Grandmaster Aycocho was appointed as Director of Middle East chapter by Kirk Austien and Shoshihandai Jim Mather PhD, US Olympic Committee Chairman. Grandmaster Aycocho was featured in the California Chronicle inviting him and his team to compete in Milpitas, California USNKA Tournament. Grandmaster Aycocho and his team were not able to participate due to their visa's being denied along with Arab Nationals as conflicts of the Gulf War continued to risk at the border of Iraq and K.S.A.

Time went on and Grandmaster Aycocho sent recommendations, some Black Belts requested rank adjustment thru him. So Grandmaster Aycocho passed the requests to the head office of IKF with automatic fees enclosed to the IKF, using his salary in advance and which got wasted, in return ending in his decision to fabricate certificates for non-black belts that causes trouble with his credibility. Another cheque was sent amounting to \$600 for the cost of certificates and I.D's. Aafter 6 months, Grandmaster Aycocho learned that it was Steven Dowd who pushed the Founder to respond and many students were promoted, like Roly Descalgar, Rudy Lorejo, Vic Villafuerte, Avelino Gatpo, Danny Roque, Juanito Aguilar, Ismael Harder, Val Reyes, Dennis Santos, Mario Merculisa, Arnel Quiquinto, Mhmed Abrantes, Ed Bugayong, Mar Lanada, Boy Yango and others.

Some students ran away without paying their fees for certificates, putting Grandmaster Aycocho sacrificing his time and monies, his team was also scattered.

Grandmaster Aycocho transferred employment and so with Guro Val Reyes who got employed in Lebanon.



## **My Experience with Grandmaster Frank Aycocho and the Filipino Martial Arts**

By Antonio Graceffo

I have been in martial arts for about thirty years now. I started with boxing and Kung Fu in the United States, when I was eleven years old. I boxed in the US military, with an unofficial record of 24, 0 and 1. In 2001 I came to Asia to study martial arts and Asian languages. I have spent more than seven years traveling through Asia, training in various arts with different masters in about ten countries. My main fighting background is boxing/Muay Thai and Cambodian Bokator.

My first brush with Filipino martial arts was studying with Master Ricky, one of the leaders of the Filipino community in Hong Kong, who taught me basic Arnis. In 2006 I went to the Philippines for the first time, to do write about Mayor Hagedorn, in Puerto Princesa, Palawan. In Puerto I began training with Dennis Santos, who is a black belt instructor under Grandmaster Frank Aycocho. Eventually, Dennis recommended that I go to Manila to train with the Master.



Guro Dennis Santos and Antonio Graceffo



Grandmaster Aycocho

I flew to Manila and stayed with Grandmaster Aycocho and his family for several months, training every day, in Kuntaw.

Grandmaster Aycocho is progressive and understands modern martial arts and the needs of fighters. After our training each day he would drop me at the gym so I could keep up my strength training. In the evenings we watched fight tapes from Pride and UFC, and he gave me his opinions and commentary on modern fighting arts and how they could improve by taking some lessons from the ancient arts.

What I liked about Lakas 8 was that it was an all inclusive art, which incorporated hand, foot, grappling, and weapons. My main martial arts interest is fighting in a ring. I love Arnis, but sometimes question whether weapons training will really improve my fighting. Lakas

8 was great because, you can't study Filipino martial art without learning something about stick and knife, but Lakas 8 allows you to concentrate on empty hand fighting as well with its Kuntaw applications.

**Lakas 8 Stick and Daga** - Lakas uses a combination of a stick and dagger combined with sweeps to finish an opponent.



*“In Manila there is a lot of trouble on the streets. People learn street fighting as a kind of self defense. A few years ago underground fighting was still popular. They would meet in the cock fighting arena and bet money,”* said Grandmaster Frank Aycocho. I told the Grandmaster I had heard that there were also fights with real knives. *“I believe that would not be advisable,”* he said, gravely.

Frank is a Master of Philippine martial art and an expert at stick and knife fighting. We practice some stick and knife fighting, but it comes from Modern Arnis and Kali. We practiced the old way, with one long stick and one short stick. We call the sticks, espada and daga. This system was based on Spanish fencing, because during the Spanish colonial time our language absorbed many Spanish words. The Spanish used a short knife and a sword, but we use a short knife and a stick. ”

Although all four martial arts use elements of stick, knife, hand and foot fighting, Kali generally refers to knife fighting, Escrima and Arnis to stick fighting and Kuntaw to hand and foot fighting.

Similar knife fighting arts are prevalent in other Muslim countries, such as Malaysia and Indonesia. In Indonesia and Malaysia, they train with the Kris, a special curved knife with a serpentine blade. But in the Philippines, they usually use the bolo, a large hacking knife like a machete.

The stick can be used for blocking, and the dagger for cutting. *“Each time we block the strike, we slice with the dagger. Always slice the hand that is holding the knife,”* said Grandmaster Frank.

As a rule, Grandmaster Aycocho prefers the method of using only one stick or knife. “With both hands full, you can’t grapple or disarm the way you would in single stick or single blade fighting. So the disarming technique here is the slice. You slice the hand that is holding the weapon. Each time he strikes, you block and slice eventually the weapon will fall out of his hand involuntarily.”

“We don’t teach stabbing with the knife because it is too aggressive, too violent. We are not teaching violence. We are teaching self defense. Also, the Philippines is a Catholic country. People could be offended if we start talking about stabbing people.”

The stick is often referred to as a cane. “We have cane techniques called Cinco Tiros (five strikes) and tres manos (three hands) and the twelve strikes, and the abanico.

In the abanico, you strike the temple, and then do a quick twist, striking the other temple, and then a quick downward smash to the top of the head. This is done with blinding swiftness. The students practice this short combination thousands of times until the sound of the three strikes sounds like a triple tap on the trigger of an assault rifle.

Basic combinations have only three or five strikes, but advanced can build up to as many as twelve or more. The twelve strike works like this. Number one strike is to the side of the neck, and then the stick rotates around and hits the other side. This quick twist and strike to both temples is called the abanico. When the strikes are delivered to the temples, you must be in cat stance, with both knees bent and the front leg dragged in close to you. Next, strike the two sides of the floating ribs, followed by two strikes to the ligaments above the knee. The next strike is a thrust. Step forward and thrust to the center of the body, the solar plexus. Eighth and ninth strikes are above the elbow, ten and eleven temple from the other side. And number twelve is straight down on the head. But the top



of the head strike is done with a huge powerful strike which goes all the way through like if you were cutting the man in half.



When using only one stick, you can grapple with your free hand. Grandmaster Aycocho showed me one technique where he blocked my strike with the stick pointing at the ground then insert the end of the stick into the crook of my arm and applied pressure. Using his stick for leverage on my arm, he forced my arm to hyperextend and my stick came right out of my hand.

The techniques work for both bladed and non-bladed weapons. If you opponent attacks you with a stick, you can block and grab his stick with your free hand. If he is using a bladed weapon you have to grab his hand. Grandmaster Aycocho stressed to always block with your stick first, then with the hand. Push the attacker's hand or weapon down so it is not pointing at you. Then counter strike and disarm. If you block with your stick pointing down at the ground, you can rotate your hand around, insert the end of your stick in the

crook of his arm and use leverage to disarm him. In this case, the attacker's fingers become trapped between your stick and his stick. And he is forced to let go. When the attacker releases the weapon, you grab it. Now you have two sticks.

In Lakas 8, anytime you disarm the opponent, your next move is a sweep. A powerful hook sweep to the back of the leg is used. Your sweep follows through with such force that you wind up in a stork stance, with your sweeping leg coming up in the air. Once your opponent is lying on the ground, deliver the finish, which means a two-stick double strike, with your full body weight on your opponent who is now passed out on the ground.

*"Follow the flow of the stream."* said Grandmaster Aycocho. This way, you will not waste any energy or any time in your striking. When you block, without stopping, allow your stick to bounce off his stick and strike him. Next, allow the energy to carry through and spin the stick around your head and strike him a second time. This is a multiple strike. If he grabs your stick, you can push forward. Allow the force of his pulling action to pull the butt of your stick into his throat or face. When that happens he will probably release, in which case you can continue the momentum with a double strike. After delivering your strikes, step back into on guard position and be ready.

In the movies, people love to twirl and spin the sticks and do all of these movements, but it is too much. It looks nice, but it doesn't win the fight. The object in stick fighting should be to defend your self, and to finish the opponent quickly. The Grandmaster said you must always think, with every strike, what am I trying to achieve here? Which part of the body am I trying to destroy?

*"In the tournaments, these guys are just hitting, hitting, hitting to get points. But they should be thinking about effective striking and ending the fight quickly."*

My first Kung Fu teacher, H. David Collins, once told me. “You don’t need a lot of techniques. If you master one kick, one punch, one block, and one throw, no one could defeat you.”

Grandmaster Aycocho has a similar theory about winning stick fighting. His basic stick fighting strategy was consisted of only five movements: strike, block, disarm, sweep, and then deliver the finishing blow. When the Grandmaster was working in Saudi Arabia, he trained an American in this simple five step process. The American flew to Philippines to compete in the World Escrima competition. Just using this very basic strategy, stressing fundamentals, the student won the world championship.



“We practiced Kali, weapons, against Kuntaw, open hand. When the opponent is armed with dagger and stick, and you are unarmed, you must wait until you see him flinch. He must flinch. In order to strike with either the stick or the knife he must first draw back, to get power. That is the moment you must attack.”

When the Grandmaster was working in the desert, he was attacked by a big man, wielding a knife. “He tried to stab me. I saw him pull back first. I would have gone in then, but because of the sandy earth, I was moving too slowly. I kicked his arm, just below the elbow and the knife flew away. Next, I grabbed one finger and threw him. It was an overhead hip throw, but instead of grabbing his arm, I was only holding one finger. Afterwards, I told him don’t ever try that on a small guy like me again or I will break all of your bones.”

“*Do you still have that finger in a drawer somewhere?*” I asked.

Not a one dimensional purist, the Grandmaster believes you must train in several martial arts before becoming a master of one. “I like training with the Katana sword. But I want a real one from Japan. I bought one which was made locally, used it on a tree once, and it shattered. The katana sword is good because it locks in the case, and you can use the scabbard as a weapon. Also the blade is like a mirror. One reason why the Japanese have a lot of techniques where they hold the blade up at eye level is because they are looking behind them. If you have one opponent in front and one behind, you should attack the one behind first because he is not expecting it.”

Winning a fight to the death is all about timing and technique. “You execute your strikes in between your opponent’s strikes. When he makes the motion that he is about to strike, you must get in. This is called anticipation of action by your opponent. This is the same for hand or stick. In stick fighting, he will retract first to get strength. That is the moment you have to get in and execute your disarming.”

I had to leave Manila to go do some shows for Discovery Channel, about Cambodian martial art, Bokator. While I was back in mainland Southeast Asia I wound up going into the warzone in Burma. The Shan State rebel army was defending the Shan ethnic minority from genocide. It is one of the longest running armed conflicts in the world, and no foreign governments were helping. A good number of foreign volunteers,

particularly Americans, were risking their lives, crossing the border, negotiating minefields, and dodging enemy army patrols to bring aid to the Shan people.

I originally went to Shanland as a journalist, but stayed to train the Shan soldiers in close quarters combat. The style I developed for them had to be very simple and effective. So, I took hand and foot techniques primarily from the Cambodian art of Bokator and took the knife and stick techniques from Filipino martial arts.



While I was training the troops, we were posting videos on “YouTube”. One of the many things I like about Grandmaster Aycocho is that he is so open to other martial arts. He watched all of my Cambodian Bokator videos and really liked the art. During the civil war in Cambodia, the communist Khmer Rouge, under Pol Pot, killed nearly a quarter of the country’s population. They tried to murder all of the martial arts masters, and nearly succeeded. My Cambodian master is one of

only about ten who survived. Together, they sat down and tried to write a book, preserving all of the aspects of their traditional martial art. Sadly, the short stick fighting was nearly lost. So, my master and several of his students traveled to Manila to compete in the SEA Games and to relearn stick fighting, from the Filipinos.

Both Grandmaster Aycocho and my Cambodian Master, San Kim Saen, watch the videos of each other and hope that they can one day meet. I would be so excited to bring the Filipinos to Cambodia and some Cambodians to the Philippines. But, we need sponsors.

After I left the war zone, I returned to the Philippines to stay with Grandmaster Aycocho and continue my training. Because of the all inclusive nature of Lakas 8, Grandmaster Aycocho encouraged me to seek out other Masters and more fully explore the Filipino martial arts. I also trained with the Yaw Yan hybrid team, lead by Sir Henry and Sir Jerry. The Yaw Yan guys focused on Kick Boxing, similar to Muay Thai, combined with ground fighting. After my forays into other arts, I would always go back to Grandmaster Aycocho, show him the videos and discuss my training.



Just before I left the Philippines, Grandmaster Aycocho took me to a meeting of the top Filipino martial arts Masters, who were preparing for the big, International Martial Arts Exhibition. Yaw Yan had not been invited to the meeting. So, basically, all of the Masters used slight variations of stick and knife fighting. Grandmaster Aycocho was the only one who demonstrated hand and foot fighting. He showed them a very basic block and lock technique, which even basic Kuntaw students would know, but to these masters, it was something new. They stared in amazement.

Now, I am training in Taiwan. Grandmaster Aycocho likes to read my reports and see my photos of San Da, Chinese kickboxing. He keeps me up to date on the

developments of Kuntaw, Sir Jerry also keeps me in the Yaw Yan Hybred loop. Hopefully I will be back in Philippines for more training in the next few months.

**Video:** Kuntaw Stick Fighting (Part 1) **Click Here**

**Video:** Kuntaw Stick Fighting (Part 2) **Click Here**

Brooklyn Monk, Antonio Graceffo, takes you back to Manila, to the school of Kuntaw Grandmaster Frank Aycocho, who demonstrates the basics of Filipino stick fighting, and explains the difference between Kuntaw and Arnis. This video was edited by Andy To, the American film student, who is quickly building a name for himself as an expert with martial arts videos.

Antonio Graceffo is the author of five books, available on amazon.com. He is also the host of the web TV show, "Martial Arts Odyssey." To see Antonio Graceffo's Filipino and Burma martial arts videos, **Click Here**.

See his website **www.speakingadventure.com** contact him **Antonio@speakingadventure.com** Join him on facebook.com

## **Professor Armando C. Soteco**

PLM School of Arnis Professionals

Knowing Grandmaster Frank Aycocho in person was a great deal in the field of the Filipino martial arts, I heard about him, then he texted me, and we meet at the Arnis Tournament in Malate, Manila. I introduced him to Grandmaster Rene Tongson, Master Bambet Dulay and many others who were present at the tournament, at first he asked permission to take pictures for the FMA Digest and explained taking pictures requires individual permission for usage purpose stated by law. I said I knew and meet Punong Guro Steven Dowd and Frank replied, "*Yes, we have known each other for the past 20 plus years ago*".



Professor Soteco and  
Master Frank Aycocho

One of the reasons to meet me was for the purpose to ask me for a copy of the Arnis Tournament ground rules for his study and comparison to other Arnis Sports rules, and I supplied him with a copy of the rule the second time we met at the Trinoma coffee shop. I also wanted his C.V. to evaluate to see if I could use his skills as a resource person at the PLM School of Arnis Professionals. I was impressed with his professional ability, and then I mentioned his name during my Sports Radio interview.

I hired him as instructor for the class. Grandmaster Aycocho presented a program of lessons; an introduction of Arnis - Kuntaw - Silat philosophy, each in a very basic method. He started with a few lectures amongst the students particularly in the safety avoiding sports related injuries and then continued with actual demonstrations. With the

information the class learned creative classical anyo. The students were impressed, however time was so short. At least the students were able to absorb some of the skills to add with their career as BSED major in P.E.

I talk to Grandmaster Aycocho about taking him to the FMA Festival 2008, Boracay and Iloilo. We agreed and together we continued to share our expertise under one objective, successfully ending with different awards and recognitions of all participants for the undying support of the event that made everyone happy during the gala night in Sarabia Manor Hotel, Iloilo. Participants included DAV-Germany, IMAFP-USA, Switzerland, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, Saudi Arabia, CSSDCS- Slovenia, Bosnia, and RAP-Russia.

The martial arts brotherhood doesn't end with both young and old Masters meeting regularly for a cup of coffee, bonding, harmony, sharing new ideas for better future of the Filipino martial arts Federation. Just recently, Grandmaster Roland Dantes, Grandmaster Frank Aycocho, myself (Professor Soteco) of PLM School of Arnis Professionals discussed agendas for the Class 2009 P.E. teachers that will start this April 2009.



Grandmasters Aycocho and Dantes, with Professor Soteco

Interested participants are encouraged to contact us, as soon as possible, to have a better for availability to register, Contact:

**For enrollment fees, class schedule and venue contact:**

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**Grandmaster Roland Dantes** - roland\_dantes@yahoo.com

Grandmaster Frank Aycocho taught at the 2008 PLM School of Arnis Professional. The following is from the Special Edition Practical Introduction to Arnis



Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila  
(University of the City of Manila)

with 18 accredited units in college physical education. Master Frank Aycocho 7th Degree Red, White and Blue Belt of Kuntaw “The Filipino Ancient Martial Art of Hand and Foot Fighting” and an expert in Kali and Silat of linear and circular motion technical offense and defense, taught the students martial arts philosophy, first aid and safety awareness in sports injuries during exercise and in competition.

Master Aycocho also instructed traditional anyo and dwelo in technical winning of points in competition, basic anatomy of human body for vital and fatal nerve pressure points, and target spots that merit points in competition with proper execution of technique balance and focus. He continued with the self defense aspect of Silat empty open hand techniques.

Professor Armando C. Soteco of Pamantasan Lungsod ng Manila the organizer of Professional Arnis Instructors Course, Class 2008 5th Batch graduate Bachelor of Science Education. Fifteen teachers of different Universities taking up majors in physical education attended.

The course titled Professional Arnis Instructor entitles individual registered teachers a diploma and a certificate for under graduate



Professor Soteco and  
Master Frank Aycocho

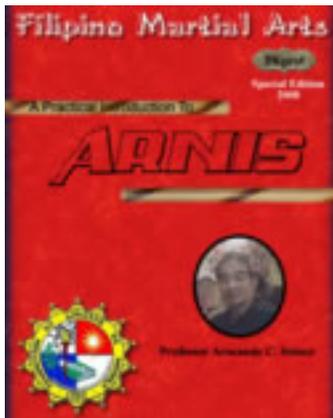


Master Aycocho was assisted by his students Jojo Velvis, Ron Belda and Mr. Ryan from Iloilo.



Master Aycocho remarked that it was fun teaching martial arts to a group of intelligent college graduates who understand the philosophy of the fighting arts.

Master Aycocho has studied the martial arts of Kuntaw, Arnis, and Silat for the past 40 years and each art is noted and considered deadly and effective fighting arts throughout the world. Some think for survival on how to defend one's self or to take advantage to robbers who are assaulting the person, and yet others as a profession to earn money.



Master Frank Aycocho found a new concept and explained before starting the lesson, "teaching my style is to keep alive the Filipino tradition and culture in form of cultural dance and sports Through teaching the martial arts Master Aycocho has found a way to educate people to prevent violence and also learn to exercise the proper way

**Download** to help prolong life in a healthy way and of course to defend and save life.



## Experiencing the 4th FMA Festival

The 4th FMA Festival started with several meetings by the organizers of the upcoming event which was to be held at Boracay Island, Philippines. The Director of the program Professor Armando C. Soteco, Director, School of Arnis Professionals had convinced me attend the meeting, and I was honored and it was a gratifying moment. The meeting was at the house of the IMAFP President and Chairman

Atty. Salvador De Maisip, and was attended by a dignified Dr. of Philosophy, Alejandro L. Dagdag Jr. D.E.M. Executive Director, NCPE-PLM, Senior Master Samuel “Bambit” Dulay, invited guest instructors Senior Master Rodel “Smoking Stick” Dagooc of IMAFP, Master Frank Sobrino, Master Celso Sandigan, and of course myself representing Arnis Kuntaw. Preliminary plans were discussed and everyone demonstrated the type of art to show with the presence of Antonio Graceffo the ‘Monk from Bronx,’ author of Martial arts Adventure in Asia who came to document and interview the gatherings of Filipino martial artists.

As time passed another meeting was called to discuss changes of the events program, everyone got an assigned task so to provide a smooth and orderly function to impress the visiting participants. I was assigned as the Paramedic to supervise the safety, this in addition to my schedule to teach and show the difference and orthodox style of Arnis weaponry in combat with the reverse hold of the baston with its effective defense and offense in real fighting situations. No one knew that this is what I was going to teach, as I was avoiding anyone to duplicate my signature. I was scheduled to teach on 23rd but the program Director called up and advised me to report to the venue in Boracay on the 21st of July to assist in his demonstration of SSS. I had a complete plan to show my advance technique of SSS, but kept it to myself to surprise even the inventor of SSS, Professor Soteco.

I arrived on time on the 21st of July, and was told that the program had been change by Senior Master Dieter Knuettel. It was decided that Master Frank Sobrino would instruct.

July 23rd, my day had come for me to show and share my knowledge and skills. I went on smoothly surprising everyone. My style; has less fancy moves with the solo baston, with the inverted hold of stick defensive but more effective in real combat, the UMBAG way refers to the power strike of arnis that could knock out the opponent in a single strike without breaking the cane.

Once I had completed my instructional period, another group was assembled and Grandmaster and Founder Nick Elizar of Nickelstick Balintawak



commenced his instructional period. Grandmaster Elizar demonstrated his artistic fast and fancy stick moves with Senior Master Philipp M.D. of Germany. In another area, Senior Master Dieter Knuettel, Master Bram Frank, Senior Guro Edessa Ramos, were instructing on bladed and non-bladed weapons while in another area Grandmaster Rene Tongson was instructing Classical Arnis, and some practitioners left to compete in the Arnis Tournament which was being held at the Robinsons Mall in Iloilo City.

Senior Master Rodel Dagooc waited patiently for his turn to do his part of in demonstrating and instructing the techniques of advance smoking stick and ended in shooting a film with Kyud Dennis Santos and Dieter Knuettel, while the other group was training with Senior Master Vasquez. A laundry paddle was introduced by Master Lozanes another alternative of cane similar defense and offense to the SSS.

On the last day on Boracay Island the 24th; started with warming up by mass exercises conducted by Senior Master Dagooc, followed by Master Paulo Motita sports arnis while Atty. Buddy and I assisted in safety supervision during sparring sessions. The class of Master Dani Faynot went on and was suspended for safety reasons while other instructors were doing individual lessons of their own art and style, some participants were

hesitant using live sharp bladed weapons such as Master Bram Frank with his knife and Master Jerry Evangelisan, Dekiti Tirsia Siradas exhibiting his bolo (Ginunting).

At the end of the day some were rushing to buy souvenirs from Boracay Island resort others having fun drinking beer with Master Borut Kincl of Slovenia, Europe representing Ryu Kyu Kempo the giant among the participants standing 6'9" with a perfect body built for competition in the UFC.

On the 25th, the early morning started another adventurous day traveling by boat and van to Iloilo City, lunch was at the Chicken House Restaurant in Iloilo City then checking in at the Sarabia Hotel so we could rush to the Arnis Tournament nearby at the Robinsons Mall. I was supposed to assist Master Paulo Motita unfortunately the Professor Soteco needed some assistance for his personal shopping spree downtown.

Upon completion of the shopping adventure we rushed back to the hotel to change into attire for the Gala Night and Lapu-Lapu Award banquet. I was called by Senior Master Dulay to change and wear my full uniform for my art, in which a minute video was made of me twirling my cane to add to the other video clips, done in seconds, I rushed back to the hotel to change into proper attire for the banquet, I came out like a diplomat wearing my Barong Tagalog with a matching cowboy butch.

*“Old masters never fade away, we exist to spread and protect the legacy of Filipino martial arts and culture, some are maybe physically weak of some illness but mentally strong to stand on his own wisdom, we stand united, divided we fall.”*



Cast of 2008 modern Magellan and Lapulapu troops fight at the seashore of Boracay.



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## The Concept of Aycocho Arnis Korambit (AAK)

By: Frank Aycocho



**What is Korambit?** An ancient double bladed curve knife of Filipino; disguised as a farm tool during the Spanish time in the Philippines when carrying of the arnis stick was banned by the Spanish in 1764. The Korambit is a Filipino native word similar to Karambit, an Indonesian Kuntao and Penjak Silat weapon with origin from the

Philippines farm tool, used to harvest palay and coconut. It is 12 inches total in length, with a sharp edge on one side while the Korambit invented by Sr. Master Frank Aycocho combines a farm tool and a shoe makers tool. It is designed for multipurpose uses in military combat hand and foot.

The Karambit of Emerson Knives ([www.emersonknives.com](http://www.emersonknives.com)) is different than AAK. The AAK is an innovation of Spada Y Daga, Spada - sword represents the stick in arnis, Korambit represents daga (dagger), in the sense of promoting sports competition in the Philippines, Arnis being one of Filipino National Sports. The AAK was presented at the Filipino Martial Arts Festival on July 22, 23, and 24, 2008.



Differences between the Karambit and the Korambit

The Korambit is a double bladed curve knife short for a quick maneuver of cutting at all direction within a twist of wrist followed by the flexibility of the body, hips, shoulder and pivoting of feet to flow on its momentum of motion. The finest techniques of close quarter combat, artistically designed for military combat fighting.



In the mechanics of the technical application which combines the art of Silat with an Arnis stick and the kerambit, one hand holds the baston and the other hand has the Korambit with four fingers inserted to the hole of Korambit handle for an option to grab

and control an opponents' action and if you lose your grip on the opponent the opponent will be cut.

The kerambit a rubber knife is designed to provide training practice and for sports competition for safety reasons. The arnis stick shall be made of hard rubber for the same reason of safety to avoid injury rather than wearing a safety vest that slows down the reflexes of contestant.

The size, weight and length of martial arts weapon must be equal for both players and must be marked with colored chalk for visibility of marks to count and determine the winner.

The competition shall be 3 minutes per round with 3 rounds of competition. If in case of tie at the end of 3 rounds, one round shall be allowed, at the end of the extra round if points remains tie, another 3 minutes round shall be extended in a rule of martial arts in one contact first strike point and winner shall be declared even if the last 3 minutes extension is not consumed.

If one player loses a weapon in his hand, the fight shall continue and the opponent with the lost weapon shall continue to defend himself, "losing a weapon is not grounds for defeat," but he/she is not allowed to recover a lost weapon.

Light contact is allowed on selected parts of the body, Bleeding, eyes, genital and lips are prohibited targets and biting is also prohibited. 3 warnings for fouls are grounds for disqualification.

In respect to martial arts of any other nations style, allowing them to participate, display their own techniques in competition with unlimited selections of points is a way to promote peace, harmony and camaraderie among martial artist worldwide, we are in the future of mixed martial arts, but we have our right of identity of our culture and tradition, let us promote martial arts for sports, physical fitness and self defense.



**Sports Supplies are available:**



Kamagong Standard Stick 28"	300 pesos each piece
Kamagong Diamond Stick	300 pesos each piece
Kamagong 40"	300 pesos each piece
Rattan Stick	35 pesos each piece
Padded Sticks	100 pesos each piece
Black Bag Stick Case	15 pesos each piece
Customized LAKAS 8 Uniforms (comes in white, black and red in 3 colors combination)	700 pesos per set
Instructor and Master Belts	300 pesos each piece

**Korambit Aluminum Knife:** non sharp blade with kamagong hard wood black handle 1,200.00 pesos includes shipment, 10 % off for whole sale over 50 pieces.

**Korambit Rubber Knife:** 120.00 pesos includes shipment, 10 % off whole sale over 100 pieces.

**Korambit Military Combat knife:** authentic with sharpen blade \$300 U.S.D. includes tax and shipment.

**Korambit knife and 2 Rattan sticks w/case**  
(standard 28inches): 200 Pesos, includes shipping and tax.



**AAK Lightweight Polyester Camouflage Uniforms:** 3 sizes, V cut - \$50 USD includes shipping and handling outside the Philippines.

**Traditional Red Uniform Pants:** Cotton canvas, garterized with waist draw string - \$50 each.

**Contact:** Frank Aycocho (0919) 883-1120  
or **Email:** [Click Here](#)

**Trademark:** AKDPhilippines

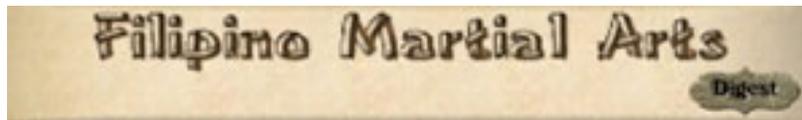


LAKAS 8 Founder Grandmaster Frank Aycocho center and students with Grandmaster Rodel Dagooc opening the Arnis Village at Bgy. Tulo, Taal, Batangas near Casa Cecilia and Polymedic Hospital.

**For more information call:** (0919) 507-2916 or (043) 403-2004 learn the ultimate techniques of LAKAS 8



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