

Filipino Martial Arts

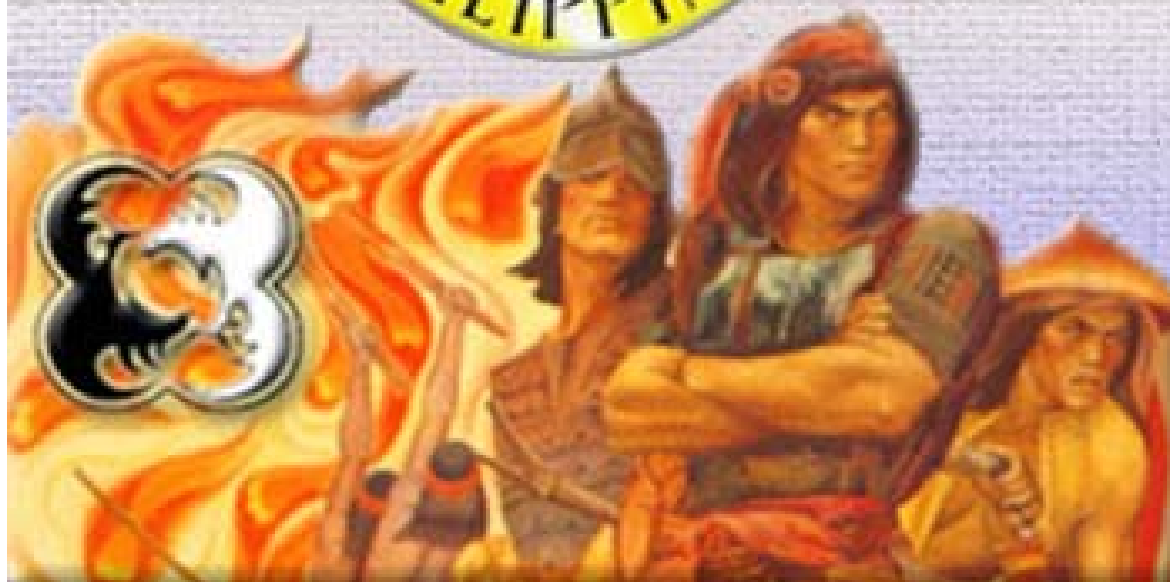
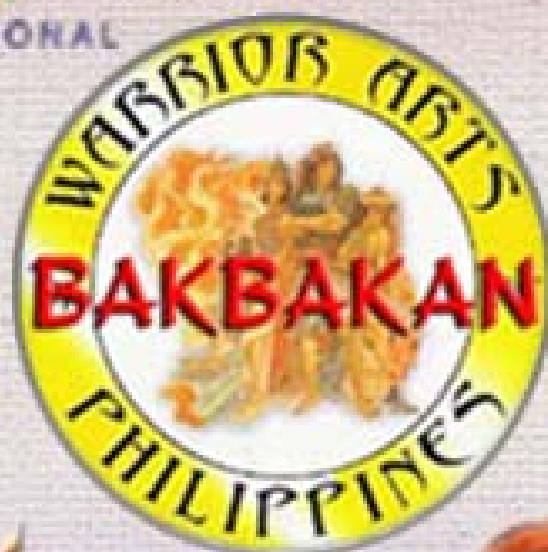
BAKBAKAN



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Contents

From the Publishers Desk

Introduction to Bakbakan

The International Brotherhood

Passion for Its Mission

The Fighting Arts of Bakbakan

The Force Behind Bakbakan

The Warrior of Bakbakan

Ronnie Ricketts

Forging of an Eskrimador

Reloj De Arena “Concept and Strategy”

Dakip-Diwa “Mental Training”

Hagibis “Throwing & Grappling”

Tulisan “Knife Fighting Art”

Bakbakan Groups

Women of Bakbakan

Bakbakan Work Shops & Seminars

Festivals, Ceremonies, Gatherings

Contact Bakbakan

WHQ - Training

Books

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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

This Special Edition could not have been possible without, Master Rey Galang and the Bakbakan Brotherhood.

It is an honour and privilege for the FMA Digest to bring to you the reader this Special Edition on Bakbakan. You may already know about Bakbakan, however we believe that there is some information, both written and pictorial that you may not know or have seen within these pages. And if by chance you do not know of Bakbakan, then prepare yourself to be educated.

In meeting Master Rey Galang, Master Topher Ricketts, and Guro John Jacobo one can see why Bakbakan is strong throughout the world. Great guys!

Master Rey Galang being an authority in the Filipino martial arts has written many books. If you have the chance you will want to add each and every one of his books to your personal library.

It is highly suggested that you visit the Bakbakan website - **www.bakbakan.com**.

Maraming Salamat Po



Rizal Park (Luneta) 1985

Edgar Sulite, Rey Galang , Grandmaster Antonio Ilustrisimo and Tony Diego

Introduction to Bakbakan



A Gathering of some of the Senior Members of Bakbakan International.
Dodong Sta. Iglesia, Ding Binay, Ronnie Ricketts, Rolly Maximo, Rey Galang,
Rey Dizer, Topher Ricketts, Edgar Aristorenas and Tony Diego

Bakbakan International is a **brotherhood of martial artists** from different disciplines of martial arts. **It is neither a style** nor representative of any single style. It is a center for the sharing of ideas, techniques and knowledge. Bakbakan serves as the driving force in keeping realistic, practical and proven martial arts at the forefront in these days of numerous "paper" masters and founders. This pioneering and innovative organization has an ever-growing but select membership representing progressive fighting styles. The ideas interchange between the diverse fighting styles and enthusiastic members create a dynamic foundation for continuously improving combat arts.

Bakbakan International brings together Grandmasters and Masters of different schools and styles. Although members of the organization represent and practice various oriental and western fighting arts, the association has undertaken the support, propagation and development of the **Warrior Arts of the Philippines** in the form of workshops, tournaments, camps, books and instructional video tapes. With this undertaking, it is expected that the Philippine combat arts will continuously develop and grow within and outside the Philippines.

Unflinching in its dedication and progressive ideals, Bakbakan International maintains its reputation of being an association of dedicated and skilled martial artists. Affiliation with Bakbakan International is not just an involvement, it is a commitment.

The religious, spiritual and fraternal heritage of the Philippines is evident in the symbols and rites adopted and practiced by Bakbakan International. The values and principles of Bakbakan International, following traditional, regional and Katipunan conventions, are evident in the ritual order in which members pledge their allegiance, loyalty and obedience to God, to country, and to the brotherhood.

The symbol of Bakbakan International is a visible reminder of man's constant struggle to master and control the opposing forces within himself, the raging battle between good and evil, and the quest to attain perfect union with God and mankind.

The Bakbakan International brotherhood's **primary covenant is to support, propagate and develop the Warrior Arts of the Philippines**. The ideals of Bakbakan are embodied in its tri-step salutation, emphasizing the following:

- Karunungan - *Knowledge*
- Katapatan - *Loyalty*
- Katarungan - *Justice or Truth*

The International Brotherhood



The Gathering 1997
Makati YMCA, Metro-Manila, Philippines

Visitors and students from Okinawa, Japan, Australia, Canada and the United States have attested to the fame of Bakkaban. Entry into Bakkaban, however, is no easy matter. Clinging to its fraternal roots, no Bakkaban aspirant is allowed entry without any referral from an active full- fledged member. This guarantees that all candidates are known personally to the responsible "sponsoring" member. Where a candidate has no patron, the aspirant is then subjected to a minimum of six months probationary period before even being accepted as an

Associate Member.

Although seemingly unnecessarily strict and elitist, this practice is embraced by the newly inducted members with fervor and they equally carefully watchdog any aspiring candidate with zeal and close scrutiny. Realizing that the strict screening process weeds out the undesirables, any time spent in training, teaching and grooming accepted candidates is unlikely to be wasted. It is because of this fraternal bond that the Bakkaban brethren display a close fraternal link above and beyond training sessions.



Last '**Masters**' group picture with Edgar Sulite taken March 15, 1997
Tony Diego, Edgar Sulite, Topher Ricketts, Rey Galang and Alex Co
Photo by Steve Tarani

The present form and structure of Bakbakan is credited to Rey Galang who is one of its founding and charter members. Many of its rules and regulations have been developed in close conference between the Masters and Senior Members as well as its revered Grandmasters.

The second generation of Bakbakan, headed by **Miguel Zubiri, Benny Litonjua, Jason Ricketts** and many others are making sure that Bakbakan's roots remain firm, progressive and uncompromising. It is the preservation of the true spirit and brotherhood of Bakbakan that has made it survive its many years and has made it into the institution that it has become.

Passion for Its Mission

Despite the discordant nature and meaning of its name, Bakbakan has managed to spearhead unity and cooperation among the diverse systems and organizations of Filipino Martial Arts. Living true to its covenant of promoting and preserving the Warrior Arts of the Philippines, Bakbakan's projects espouse an apolitical approach in fulfilling its passion for its mission.

This has been achieved through its book projects and its hosting and sponsorship of competitions. In the Philippines, the Bakbakan organization is much revered for its sincerity and openness in assisting any endeavor that promotes the FMA. Working with the staff of the Department of Tourism and various FMA organizations, Bakbakan has hosted and sponsored successful FMA exhibitions and tournaments that has created an emerging alliance of major FMA systems.

Its landmark book project "Warrior Arts of the Philippines" put together six different systems in one book and has done much to promote and preserve the legacy of the FMA. Placido Yambao's classic "Mga Karunungan sa Larong Arnis", written in archaic Tagalog, was given new life and exposure through its presentation in an expanded English publication titled "Classic Arnis." Another of the traditional arts given new lease on life was the art of the double stick, also known as Sinawali, Doble Baston and Adwang Mutun, covered indepth in the book "Complete Sinawali."

Most recently, the book "Masters of the Blade" has been published that "bares the heart and soul of the Filipino Martial Arts." The book focuses on the short edged weapon (knife) techniques of the FMA and presents the core tactics and concepts of many of the world acclaimed edged weapon combative experts.

Its latest and most ambitious book project, "Guardians of the Legacy", aims to present and promote the many of the contemporary masters of various FMA systems and organizations. The book's participants include actively practicing masters of the art from all four corners of the world. Ambitious in its timetable, this project is slated for publication in time for the 3rd FMA Festival to be held in the Philippines.

Beyond its own book projects, Bakbakan also generously shares historical classics such as “Swish of the Kris” and “Jungle Patrol”, both by Vic Hurley, on its web site, free of charge, to interested readers.

Living true to its mission statement, the Bakbakan organization’s fraternal links encircles the globe, joining hands with FMA organizations and practitioners all around the world.



An exclusive fraternity of martial artists with its headquarters located in Metro-Manila, Philippines, Bakbakan proudly carries on its covenant of promoting and developing the **Warrior Arts of the Philippines**. From its early beginning as an informal gathering of champions from different disciplines of martial arts, the brotherhood of Bakbakan has now grown into a literal *"Who's Who"* in Filipino martial arts. Fostering friendship, brotherhood and support of many activities that promote the Warrior Arts of the Philippines, the name Bakbakan has become a byword in serious martial arts circles.

Co-founders of the organization are **Christopher Ricketts and Rey Galang**. Christopher or Topher, as he is called by his peers and friends, is a well-known martial artist both in the Philippines, Australia and the United States. Known for his strict emphasis on basics and regular contact sparring, Topher has produced many champions, many of whom have become part of Philippine teams in Asian and international competitions. Rey Galang embodies the warrior-scholar image of the martial arts. His teaching and training methods have produced countless champions and many instructors that are equally producing competent fighters and instructors. Rey’s prolific contribution to many FMA activities and projects has endeared and gained him respect all around the world. Galang serves as the force behind Bakbakan and has developed the organization into the institution it has become.

Aside from his duties as Chief Instructor, Topher assists his brother, **Ronnie Ricketts**, a Philippine action star, in choreographing action scenes in movies. Numerous Bakbakan members have played cameo roles in Ronnie's movies, lending credibility to

the action sequences as well as drawing crowds to the theaters because of the authentic fight scenes.

Bakbakan has chapters in Australia, Canada, the United States, Italy, South Africa, England and New Zealand. It was Bakbakan that promoted the "*Masters of Arnis*" tour in Australia that featured **Christopher Ricketts, Antonio Diego, Edgar Sulite and Rey Galang**. The "Masters" as they have been nicknamed both within and outside of Bakbakan, share their knowledge and experience with each other, thus continuously improving Bakbakan's teaching methods and curriculum.



Weapons Systems

Grandmaster Antonio "Tatang" Ilustrisimo is the revered head of the Kali Ilustrisimo system. It is this system that is the basis of Bakbakan's Kali system now referred to as **Bakbakan Kali Ilustrisimo**. This name change does not purport to take credit away from "Tatang" Ilustrisimo but to identify the system developed and structured by Bakbakan based on Grandmaster Ilustrisimo's concepts and strategy. It is these training methods and structure that differentiate the Bakbakan Kali Ilustrisimo practitioner from any other Kali Ilustrisimo claimant. The effectiveness of Bakbakan's system of training has been proven many times in many competitions both local and international.

Tulisan Knife-Fighting System, an offshoot of the Bakbakan Kali Ilustrisimo system, is another of the arts practiced within Bakbakan that is fast growing in popularity. Based more on basic knife-fighting techniques and constant sparring rather than memorized pre-planned drills, Tulisan has proven its mettle in many sparring matches against knife-fighters from other systems.

Recognizing the need for ambidexterity and fluidity in the mastery of weapons, Bakbakan's research into the Philippine martial arts found its answer in the ancient system of Sinawali - a fighting style popular in the Central Luzon plains. Although not exclusively a double weapon system, Sinawali emphasizes double weapons training for obvious advantageous reasons.

Bakbakan's **Sinawali Fighting System** is a major stepping-stone into the realm of Espada y Daga (Sword and Dagger). Once familiarity and ambidexterity has been achieved, it is a simple progression to switch from equal length weapons to short and long armaments. Research and development of Bakbakan's Sinawali system is credited to **Rey Galang**, with contributions from Antonio Diego and the late Edgar G. Sulite.

Antonio Diego, the recognized and designated heir of the Kali



Rey Galang, Grandmaster Antonio Ilustrisimo and Tony Diego

Ilustrisimo system, is Bakbakan's official chief instructor for the Bakbakan Kali Ilustrisimo system. Known for his well-rounded expertise in both long and short weapons, Diego has proven his worth with the blade in many street encounters and contact sparring matches.



The late **Punong-Guro Edgar G. Sulite** of Lameco Eskrima is another of the first-generation Kali Ilustrisimo masters that helped develop the structure of the Bakbakan Kali system. Punong-Guro Sulite's Lameco System is part of Bakbakan's repertoire of fighting arts. It was the close fraternal ties with Bakbakan that prompted Edgar to have his Masters Tour within Bakbakan premises and with Bakbakan Masters and guest instructors from other systems conducting workshops for his Lameco students.

Unarmed Combat

Developed from drills and concepts formulated by **Dr. Guillermo Lengson** of the Karate Federation of the Philippines, **Sagasa Kickboxing System** has progressed into its present form through the efforts of Christopher Ricketts and senior members of Bakbakan. The intensive drills, known as **SERIES**, develop coordination, power and reflexes. Dr. Lengson, though no longer active, is regularly consulted for his expertise and in-depth knowledge of body mechanics and training methods. Many of the developments in other facets of Bakbakan's repertoire of fighting systems owe their structure and development to Dr. Lengson's timeless concepts.

Hagibis Combat System complements Sagasa as combat evolves from long and mid-range into close-quarters fighting. Developed primarily as throwing and tripping techniques, Hagibis also includes grappling and submission arts. Emphasis, however, is to throw or disable an opponent in such a way, that one is able to continue fighting multiple opponents which is the likely situation in a street confrontation.

Hagibis takes into consideration that a majority of street attacks are usually multiple and armed and therefore grappling, although studied and practiced, is only an option and the practitioner should always be wary of multiple armed assailants. Bakbakan's combination of Sagasa and Hagibis systems has qualified its members to participate and represent the Philippines in San Shou competitions internationally.

The art of **Ngo Cho Kun Kung Fu** is another of Bakbakan's repertoire of fighting systems. Incorporated into Bakbakan by **Alex Co** and Christopher Ricketts, the expertise of Bakbakan members in this particular art has developed to a point where a Bakbakan Ngo Cho team is a regular part of festivities in Manila's Chinatown. Ngo Cho helps develop power, stamina and concentration, qualities of enormous value to the martial artist.



The Force Behind Bakbakan

By Jim Winterbottom



Born in the heart of Manila's Chinatown, Master Rey Galang was exposed at an early age to the Chinese operas and legends of warriors and heroes that spawned and nurtured his love and interest in the martial arts. Having lost his father at an early age, Master Rey's early pursuit of the martial arts was nurtured and encouraged by his uncles. Stemming from a family with a tradition and history of military and police career officers and Filipino-Chinese bloodlines, the discipline and demands of martial arts training became natural for him. Master Rey attributes his exposure to the martial arts, specifically Filipino and Chinese disciplines, to his family.

The general public has been unaware of Master Rey's contribution to the organizations of Bakbakan, Lameco and Kali Ilustrisimo. He is the driving force and co-founder of the Bakbakan organization, the other being Master Christopher Ricketts. Master Rey officially named and registered the organization Bakbakan and also created its famous "double phoenix" or sabong (cockfight) symbol and "Matira Matibay" (Best of the Best) motto and logo. The first international exposure of Masters Antonio Diego, Christopher Ricketts and Edgar Sulite was with Master Rey's 1986 groundbreaking project "Masters of Arnis" which featured these three as well as himself on a promotion and instructional tour in the cities of Sydney and Melbourne in Australia. From this early beginning, the public became aware of the arts of Kali Ilustrisimo and Lameco as well as of the Bakbakan organization.

It was also at this time that Master Rey focused on making Bakbakan the organization into which it has developed. He standardized its ranking, certification and the classification of its arts. From the skills and knowledge gleaned from Bakbakan's collective strength, the separate arts of Tulisan, Hagibis and Sagasa were born. As part of his effort to continuously improve and enhance the training methods and regimen of Bakbakan, the desire to create a scientific and progressive training method for the art of Kali Ilustrisimo resulted in its spawning a separate and distinct art now known as Bakbakan Kali (Ilustrisimo).

Identical in principles to its parent art, the art of Bakbakan Kali is different in its methodology, progression and training. Master Rey developed a progressive and structured curriculum that has proven so effective that many of Bakbakan's relatively new students can face-off and win in tournaments against opponents of many years experience. This has been consistently proven many times over through the years.

In a visit to the Philippines to train and compete with their counterparts, Bakbakan Kali disciples were surprised and pleased to find that they could keep up and hold their own against their more experienced Philippine brothers-in arms. This was a further proof of the value of the training methods developed for Bakbakan Kali. Always emphasizing the need for realism in training, Master Rey puts a high priority on training that develops reflex and realistic application of techniques. He shuns drill "patterns" judging them of little merit which only build false confidence. Never one to dismiss a good technique because of its origin, he will meticulously analyze it to discover or develop a method of training that will process the technique into a conditioned reflex.

As the official designated heir of the knife fighting aspect of Kali Ilustrisimo - Master Rey developed it into its present form - the art of Tulisan. Among the handful of senior students of the legendary Grandmaster Antonio Ilustrisimo, Master Rey's Tulisan reigns supreme in knife-fighting tournaments. His latest changes to tournament rules in knife fighting will further improve this aspect of the Filipino martial arts. Because of his disdain for the lack of reality in some of the practices in tournaments, he is constantly seeking for ways to put realism and practicality back on track. It is this unselfish passion for perfection that has endeared Master Rey not only to his students but even to his colleagues in the Filipino martial arts.

His research into the unarmed combat arts of Asia and the Philippines has resulted in the integrated throwing and grappling art known as Hagibis. Master Rey holds ranks in the arts of karate, jiu-jitsu, judo and aikido. Despite the fact that he holds a high respect for the popular Brazilian form of jiu-jitsu, Master Rey nevertheless warns students that street encounters are rarely unarmed and one-on-one. Although throwing and grappling are practiced and part of Hagibis, the intent is to eliminate each opponent as quickly as possible and to be prepared to defend against other attackers in an ensuing melee. Notwithstanding this, Master Rey still enjoys getting on the mat with his students and partakes in the benefit of what he calls "proof and discovery" journeys. He explains this simply as showing proof that a technique is truly learned and the discovery of things to do and not to do.

His organizational and instructional skill has become so well known in the Filipino martial arts community that many have sought his assistance. Included among these is Lameco Eskrima's late Punong-Guro Edgar Sulite who sought Master Rey's support and advice in developing the final structure of the Lameco Eskrima organization. He assisted in designing and naming Lameco's grade and rank levels as well as the requirements for each category. He also designed the Lameco training "passport" booklet intended to keep track of a student's workshop and seminar attendance leading to certification credits. The Lameco instructor ring is also one of Master Rey's designs and it was at PG Sulite's request that permission was granted for Lameco to additionally use Bakbakan's logo and "Matira Matibay" motto on its ring. Master Rey also designed and edited Lameco Eskrima's newsletter "Vortex" of which he was one of its major contributors. He is also in the second highest ranked (5th Degree) group of Lameco

Eskrima instructors certified by PG Edgar Sulite, the highest, outside of PG Sulite himself, being held by only one person, Master Christopher Ricketts of Bakbakan International (Philippines).

Ever proud of his warrior heritage, Master Rey's research into his province's (Pampanga) legacy of Sinawali - the art of the twin blade, led him to many discoveries that he has shared in his book "Complete Sinawali". Recognized and named by his peers in the Philippines as the developer and founder of the present form of Sinawali, Master Rey is proud to have preserved and enhanced this long neglected and misunderstood art. Proof of his love for this art can be found and enjoyed in the many Sinawali forms he has developed to preserve the history, culture and techniques of this fascinating and powerful legacy. He never fails to point out that many of the Espada y Daga techniques are actually gleaned from and practiced in Sinawali. In addition, he states that the legendary Placido Yambao, whose superior sword and dagger techniques are documented in the rare book "Mga Karunungan sa Larong Arnis" (Classic Arnis), hails from the province of Pampanga, the birthplace of Sinawali. Another obscure fact is that Joaquin Galang of the Magtanggol Sporting Club, a family member, awarded Placido Yambao's instructorship diploma.

Many students preparing for competition find it a rewarding experience to spar with Master Rey. He points out the weaknesses and strength of their strategy and repertoire and assists them in overcoming the flaws in their techniques or strategy. Whether it is weapons or unarmed sparring, Master Rey will make time to help a student "discover" his fighting ability. Sparring with students whose ages could be that of his own grown children, he gives his best to yield the best from his pupils.

Nonetheless, Master Rey is not always that liberal in sharing his wealth of information and knowledge. Occasionally he has been known to pretend lack of knowledge, skill and interest to avoid teaching an individual he feels does not deserve to share the legacy. An astute judge of character, he has been proven many times correct in judging the selfish motives of an overeager candidate. By the same token, once a student has won his trust and confidence, the wealth of knowledge shared is limited only by the student's own capacity to learn. Always learning and studying, he claims that sparring with his students keeps him on his toes as well as enables him to harvest their individual discoveries.

Acceptance into the Bakbakan membership is intentionally spread over a period of time in such a way that the wannabes are weeded out without any restrictive requirements. The interval between apprenticeship into associate status and the final full-fledged membership is customized to automatically discard those that are looking for easy and fast recognition and to extract the committed and dedicated practitioner.

Recent years have seen Master Rey focusing on promoting and raising the standard of Filipino martial arts in general. His now celebrated annual tournaments have truly become "a Gathering of Warriors". Held three times a year, the tournaments have appealing names such as "Masters of the Blade" - held in the first quarter of each year; "Guardians of the Legacy" - held around the middle of the year; and "A Gathering of Warriors" - held before the last quarter of the year. Master Rey personally runs these tournaments, keeping track of each match as well as keeping a record of each participant's track record regardless of style or school. He also maintains the web site

where tournament participants can view their records and are kept informed of forthcoming events.

Until the opening of the Lodi gym a few years ago, the Bakbakan group was a "closed door " group to outsiders - you needed to know someone in Bakbakan, and only by personal introduction and a screening period were you admitted into the brotherhood. This is a little relaxed now; admission is open to the public. However, the beauty of belonging to this brotherhood is that the screening process still exists in order to ensure that students are pure in their intent and free from egos. I have never met a more dedicated group of martial artists whose sole goal is self-perfection and the propagation of their art using Master Rey as their guide.

The Warrior of Bakbakan

Master Christopher "Topher" Ricketts



To those familiar with the logo of the brotherhood of Bakbakan International, specially the full-color symbol, the individual attributes of the co-founders of the brotherhood are clearly represented. Master Rey Galang's contributions and personality are the topic in the article "The Force Behind Bakbakan." In this article, we look in-depth at the "Warrior of Bakbakan", Master Christopher "Topher" Ricketts.

With a well-earned and established reputation both as a fighter and trainer of champion fighters, Master Topher, as he is fondly called, focuses on constantly testing and proving the skills of his students and followers through full-contact sparring. Whether armed or unarmed combat, he is keen to accept and entertain matches against

all comers. With decades of teaching experience, Master Topher has constantly kept up with the times to make sure his fighters are geared and armed against the latest developments in martial arts evolution.

One of the designated seniors of the art of kali Ilustrisimo, Master Topher has trained directly under the revered late Grand master Antonio "Tatang" Ilustrisimo and has been instrumental in amassing priceless volumes of footage of this exemplary fighter. One of the original "five pillars" of Kali Ilustrisimo, Master Topher continues to develop training methodologies to preserve and structure the unique fighting techniques of Grandmaster Ilustrisimo.



Yuli Romo demonstrates disarming technique with Christopher Ricketts.

Also well known for his unarmed combat skills, he is a member of the Karate Federation of the Philippines under the late Dr. Guillermo “Doc” Lengson. He is also active in the arts of Ngo Chun Kung Fu and also trains and associates with the Hong Sing group in Chinatown, Manila. His skills in these arts enable a Bakbakan team, trained by him directly, to be fielded as part of the demonstration events in Chinatown, Manila. He has also produced fighters that have represented the Philippines in San Shou competitions.

Among his students and followers are many illustrious personalities in Philippine sports, politics and arts. High in this list are his brother, Ronnie Ricketts, his long time friend and student, Congressman Miguel Zubiri and another well known Olympic champion and student, Monsour del Rosario. His current crop of new black belts include TV personality TJ Trinidad, businessman Philip Yeung, artist Doran Zordo, arnis instructor Lance Velez, and many others.

His son, Bruce Ricketts, at 15 years of age has proven himself against established instructors and fighters from various disciplines. Bruce has been exposed to the fighting arts taught by his father literally since infancy. Barely a toddler and able to walk during the filming of the tri-volume Kali Ilustrisimo by Mandirigma Productions, Bruce has since become guardian of the Ilustrisimo legacy. He has proven his skill in the Filipino martial arts in all aspects of weapon expertise, be it single stick, double stick, sword and dagger or knife fighting.

Master Topher has recently moved to San Diego with his family and has started teaching private students and groups. He also conducts seminars and workshops on both Kali Ilustrisimo and Sagasa or kickboxing disciplines. He occasionally joins his counterpart in the East Coast, Master Rey Galang, and together they conduct workshops that cover both Kali Ilustrisimo and Bakbakan Kali systems. Training with Master Topher demands the best of each student for he gives his best in every training session. Many of those who have trained with him develop a life-long respect and admiration for this man who embodies the warrior traits of an era past. It is rare in this day and age to meet someone who not only teaches the way but also actually walks the way.



Master Topher Ricketts at a demonstration with his son Bruce



Master Topher conducted a seminar at the Inosanto Academy

Ronnie Ricketts

Philippine Headquarters

Contacts/Instructors: **Ronnie Ricketts & Monsour Del Rosario**

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AFP-JSOG workshop August 16, 2005

Monsour Del Rosario, Ronnie, Christopher and Bruce Ricketts



Ronnie Ricketts visit Bakbakan WHQ - 2004



Ronnie Ricketts with Bakbakan group at Oldbridge, NJ.

Forging of an Eskrimador

By Vince Ford



Guro John G. Jacobo has well over 20 years of formal training in the martial arts. For the past 15 years, he has dedicated a “hands on” approach to researching the combat principles and applications of several eskrima and arnis styles. His initial study began with the long-range system of Pananandata, a contraction of the Tagalog words paggamit ng sandata, meaning 'the art of using weapons'. The system was founded by Professor Amante P. Marinas and included a vast array of weapons stemming from the basic stick and knife to the more obscure lubid (rope), dikan (rattan ring) and latiko (whip). Guro John was most intrigued and participated in the free fighting, a long-range method of stick-fighting pitting unarmed opponents in a test of skill and courage. Although head strikes were restricted, he believed the notion of being completely unprotected heightens an individual's awareness and develops essential attributes rather effectively. He was involved with Pananadata for a few years but due to personal differences chose to pursue methods that would better compliment his philosophy.



Guro Jacobo with Master Galang, Circa 1995

In 1994, he met Master Reynaldo S. Galang and was introduced to Bakbakan International. A fraternal brotherhood of martial artists established in the Philippines back in 1968. This meeting was also his introduction to the family art of the infamous and revered Grandmaster Antonio “Tatang” Ilustrisimo. Kali Ilustrisimo unlike counterpart blunted styles draw from the sword experience and methods of its inheritor. A

common misconception is that all FMA systems stem from bladed methods. While many may have adopted the hacking mechanics of the machete, Guro John states that the sword requires different handling. He finds some of the techniques distinct claiming they are so refined that it allows maximum use of your weapon and offers little in terms of counter ability. Furthermore, it is the emphasis in principles that simplify a practitioners understanding. This aspect becomes universal unlike a technique.

He has been fortunate to meet and train with many outstanding figures of the indigenous combat arts from the Philippines. And when opportunities arise, he enthusiastically seizes them. This rather extensive list includes Master Christopher Ricketts of Kali Ilustrisimo, the late PG Edgar Sulite of Lameco Eskrima, Grand Tuhon Leo Gaje of Pekiti Tirsia, Master Sam Buot and GM Bobby Taboada of Balintawak, Grandmasters Cacoy & Dionisio Canete of Doce Pares Arnis, the late Professor Remy Presas of Modern Arnis and Guro Marc “Crafty Dog” Denny of the Dog Brothers clan to name a few. Guro John believes those before him have set such high standards and as a

contemporary he must work even harder to make an impact. He states that he does not rely on a style, organization, affiliation nor have the convenience of mass marketing. Rather, he stands alone and hopes people find his material sound and beneficial.



World FMA Expo in 2004



Tipunan sa Anaheim in 2005

SWACOM Evolves

Guro John recently undertook the name SWACOM, an acronym for his training group, “School for the Warrior Arts & Combatives”. He states that it is not a system by any means but best describes what he teaches and his philosophy of the arts. His modern day, less than traditional approach to the Filipino arts evolved from his aggressive nature and no-nonsense beliefs. Furthermore, admiration for Reality Based & Combative instructors has played an integral role in his evolution as both a practitioner and instructor. He considers authorities such as Jim Grover, Rich Dimitri, Carl Cestari, Geoff Thompon and Tony Blauer instrumental to his current program. Then further states that they took the fluff and B.S. out of martial arts and provided invaluable information often neglected by mainstream martial arts instructors and schools.



Kali Labanan Tournament 2005

When asked what can be expected in his class, Guro John humorously replied, “bumps, bruises and sometimes blood” claiming they are the results of good ole’ training and what brings my group closer. He later elaborated by outlining his empty-hand class, which runs for an hour and a half, sometimes 2. Class typically starts with attribute development such as striking, kicking and close quarter techniques. Bridging the techniques through impact and contact oriented drills or sparring is next. And finally, contact simulations for functional self-defense. The key is to understand principles while the techniques should be driven by gross motor skills. Next, is to constantly encourage the proper mindset during training. Without it, it’s a waste of time. When asked about weapons training, Guro John boldly answers, “It’s simple; I teach only combat or combat sport (referring to stick-fighting) application. I enjoy exchanging with people to hone my

skill. You cannot be an instructor without constantly solidifying your material...what better way than to bang away”.



Coaching from the sidelines



Edge Weapon Defense - Passing & Monitoring

Bakbakan's covenant is to preserve, promote and propagate the Warrior Arts of the Philippines. The genuinely close camaraderie not only within the brotherhood but also between many in the martial community has set precedence. It is this standard that he closely embraces and one that SWACOM upholds.



Some members of SWACOM & Bakbakan get together

Guro John's passion and hard work not only appeals to his peers but also is slowly and surely finding its way in the FMA. He genuinely cares about his student's progress and that is the difference. Featured in "Masters of the Blade" and with the much anticipated 3rd DVD release, "Defense Methods – Edge Weapon Awareness and Readiness", he will surely bridge the many faces of the martial arts with his flavor of the FMA.

More information can be found on Guro John G. Jacobo by visiting his website:
www.swacom.com

Vince Ford has been involved in the martial arts for close to 11 years. He currently holds a 2nd level black sash in Tien Shan Pai Kung Fu and has been training with Guro John for 5 years.



Simplicity, functionality and practicality. These are the essence, the root and foundation of Kali Ilustrisimo. It is in these timeless concepts that the secret of Kali Ilustrisimo lies.

Grandmaster Antonio "Tatang" Ilustrisimo's techniques have been chiseled down to perfection through countless hours of practice, application and experience. His regular regimen of teaching and practicing with a multitude of students from different styles, of different skills, produced the inevitable versatility and adaptability of the Ilustrisimo system. It was this constant exposure to unfamiliar and unorthodox techniques that produced a system that could adapt and overcome.

After long internship with Tatang, Bakbakan-Kali Ilustrisimo instructors and practitioners still watch in admiration witnessing his unique deflecting, sidetracking motions and angles of attack. What was already a committed attack somehow managed to marginally change direction, level or target, baffling and subduing the opponent. It is this in-motion shifting of direction, level and speed that confused and disoriented his adversaries.

Bakbakan-Kali Ilustrisimo instructors take turns sparring and practicing with Tatang. While the nominated "volunteer" spars with the master of masters, all others watch and observe carefully how the revered Grandmaster reacts to an attack or strategy that the instructors wish to dissect. This may seem like a strange ritual but it's not. Tatang rarely reacts the same way to an attack or attempted counter. This is not an exaggeration of Tatang's ability but simply, as he himself would explain, due to the variations and differences between the first performance and the succeeding ones.

The initial attack may have come from an Abierta position and aimed at Tatang's head with the weapon hand at waist level. The second time, the weapon hand may be at shoulder level but still aimed at the same target. However because of the difference in the levels of origin, not to mention speed and intensity of the attack, Tatang could most likely react differently.

But this is only one side of the issue. Tatang may have been in a Cerrada or Abierta position. Similarly his weapon hand could be at waist, shoulder or chest level. All this contributes to the variations that could happen. At waist level, Tatang could counter with an Aldabis or Salok strike. At chest level, he may just execute a Sungkite, Contra

Cerrada or even a Panipis. At shoulder height, he could execute a Bagsak, combined with Combate General or a host of other counter attacks.

Kali Ilustrisimo dictates that there is no set reaction to any given action. The reaction will have to be dependent on the circumstances at the time of engagement. This is the reason Tatang emphasizes sparring and free-style practice. Although there are fundamentals to be learned, it is in these sparring and free-style sessions that one develops the intuition and timing to apply basic principles correctly.



Tatang Ilustrisimo's uncanny ability to "break rhythm" during an engagement upsets the tempo that his opponent is attuned to. This break in cadence creates gaps that leave openings in the opponent's defense and/or gaps in reaction timing. Tatang admonishes that doing the unexpected, either by going faster or slower, confuses the opponent or upsets his strategy.

By applying what has been studied, analyzed and referred to by Bakbakan instructors and archivists as Reloj De Arena (Hourglass Pattern), Grandmaster Ilustrisimo could divert the angle of his attack by simply altering his body position or height. A thrust attack aimed at the eyes can, with a sudden bending of the knees, a drop in body height or an inside twist of the wrist, result in the attack being re-directed to the upper or lower torso without losing the momentum of the original attack. The attack and the angle of attack remained the same, only the vertical and horizontal coordinates changed.

With the application of the principles of Reloj de Arena, the block or parry for the initial movement becomes totally useless since the attack is no longer at its expected point of contact. By changing the speed, height and vertical position of an attack, Grandmaster Ilustrisimo transforms an attack or Enganyo into the unexpected. With the accumulated years of constant practice and actual combat experience, Tatang maintains the advantage of always being a micro-beat ahead, a fraction of a second faster (Prakcion), and already several levels beyond the engagement.

The secret to mastering any art is consistent, dedicated repetition and practice. Not just practice by rote, but quality practice. Repetitions without heart, mind and spirit (Dakip-Diwa) are nothing but calisthenics. Repetitions with the proper Dakip-Diwa (mind-set) results in superb reactions and skills. With the proper Dakip-Diwa, mind and body come together to mold, create and hone an aspirant into a warrior.

Once the individual techniques or skill has been developed to perfection then variations come into play. Variations in speed, body positioning and weapons placement will generate endless free-form scenarios. One will then begin to understand the reason why Tatang's counters cannot be predicted for he reacts depending on the circumstances at the time of engagement. With any change in attack or defense, no matter how minute, the Ilustrisimo eskrimador subconsciously evaluates, modifies and reacts automatically to the new parameters with confidence and familiarity.

In Reloj de Arena, the multi-horizontal and vertical lines represent the possible shifts in the origin and trajectory of an attack. Note that any subtle shift in coordinates X, Y or both, causes enough displacement to evade, parry, counter or pre-empt an attack. With each subtle change, new opportunities are presented to the eskrimador.

Understanding Reloj de Arena and Dakip-Diwa principles provides the aspirant with a clearer understanding of Kali Ilustrisimo concepts and strategy. Practice, dedication and discipline are the key ingredients to transform this understanding into expertise.



Among the feared and respected Grandmasters of Philippine Warrior Arts, there exists one common bond that ignores regional styles, tradition and dialect. There exists a common concept and principle shared by these warrior Grandmasters.

The drills, techniques, terminologies and training methods may be different and varied but the mind training, the mental attitude, the focus and control of mind, body and spirit, are one and the same. The alertness and adaptability of a Filipino warrior or Mandirigma is not a natural talent, but a skill honed and cultivated to its highest degree. The ability of the Mandirigma to expect the unexpected, to overcome the insurmountable, is the product of rigorous, serious training, discipline and dedication.

Dakip-Diwa is the secret behind the reputation, the art, and the skill of the Filipino warrior, the Mandirigma. In the practice and cultivation of this mind-set, the Mandirigma develops, trains and controls his mind for combat situations until Dakip-Diwa takes supreme and absolute control of his body, emotions and skills.

Fear and hesitation are ignored if not totally eliminated. Dakip-Diwa narrows the warrior's perspective to isolate and focus on the motions of offense and defense. The opponent becomes a mere representation of combat motion, angles and lines.

Under the control of Dakip-Diwa training, the enemy is no longer a person with physical and psychological advantages or threat -- only a source of offense and defense. With Dakip-Diwa, the size, reputation and psyche of the opponent is no longer of any consequence. It is only the physics and rhythm of combat that matters. Emotion is no longer a factor, only the action and the dynamics of combat matters.

In Dakip-Diwa training, the mind is trained to recognize motion and action for what it is, simple movement, nothing else. The enemy becomes faceless, devoid of personality. Dakip-Diwa seeks and studies the opportunities, the changes, and the dangers of live and active combat. The mind-set of warrior trained in Dakip-Diwa, sees the enemy as a battlefield of lines, angles and trajectories, of strength and weakness.

Under the tutelage of experienced and proven masters, the secret of Dakip-Diwa is passed on to the next generation of Mandirigma. The meticulous and tedious training required to attain Dakip-Diwa is a legacy that is selectively and discriminately given. What then is the essence of Dakip-Diwa? What is involved in developing Dakip-Diwa?

First and foremost, it is commitment, followed closely by dedication and sealed with discipline. A Mandirigma must develop his mind and body to expect the unexpected. A Mandirigma must know how to provoke movements and reactions and to take advantage of them. A Mandirigma understands the angles and positions a body can take during the execution of offense or defensive motions. A blind corner hides no surprises to a Mandirigma trained to anticipate surprise attacks. Peripheral vision and mental awareness is set to its maximum as one ventures into the unknown. A sudden motion, whether from an acquaintance or a total stranger, holds no surprises. Distances and ranges are always scrutinized unconsciously and possibilities analyzed.

Dakip-Diwa trains the warrior to move and flow within the dynamics of combat. The Reloj de Arena and Praksion principles of Kali Ilustrisimo are prime examples of Dakip-Diwa developed to its maximum. Recognizing these concepts and principles may give one a deeper and better understanding of combat, but without Dakip-Diwa training, they will remain nothing but concepts and principles, never combat skills. Grandmaster Antonio "Tatang" Ilustrisimo has made Dakip-Diwa the very soul of his art. Though seemingly relaxed and friendly, Tatang's Dakip-Diwa is constantly.





With the unleashed fury of a raging wave pounding on the surf, the once gentle, quiescent force of Hagibis, like water, permeates and integrates with little or no resistance, its force accelerated and amplified by the winds of energy, motion and momentum of combat.

Developed to complement the striking techniques of Sagasa Kick Boxing System, the throwing and grappling art of Hagibis blends and integrates itself into the dynamics of combat. Once called to the fore, Hagibis techniques ensnare the opponent and practitioner in its grasp to control and overcome without any warning and just as suddenly stop, the blending of energies and the fierceness of the opponent's assault having become a weapon against itself. The secret of the art of Hagibis is not in its techniques but rather in the principles and in the development of the mind-set (Dakip-Diwa) and its final and ultimate application.

Hoarding and nurturing the best, the most realistic and practical from its eclectic roots, Hagibis borrows, adopts and blends principal techniques from a multitude of sources. Unlike other eclectic systems, where the disparity of its many sources precludes a systematic and progressive curriculum, Hagibis has grown and evolved into an identity and presence all its own. The unification of the whole art is complementary rather than arbitrary, congruent instead of contrasting, and flowing, not floundering. Viewed as a whole, the unique blend of techniques and principles come together in an essence, structure and concept that is distinctly Filipino, a nation formed from many cultures, a consummate fusion of the gentle fury of wind and water.

With the Philippine combative arts as its primary root, Hagibis practitioners are trained to develop a mind-set and feel for the angles, motions and rhythm of combat. The general angles of attack are initially distilled into the basic Cinco Teros, the five general and basic angles or directions of attack. This concept is not new to the Hagibis practitioner, having previously trained in the major aspects of the Bakbakan curriculum. This grounding would involve cognizance and expertise in both armed and unarmed disciplines.

It is this awareness and experience in armed combat that makes the Hagibis expert wary of immediately engaging an aggressor with grappling techniques. The possibility of



Rey Galang and Jun Oriososa

combat evolving from unarmed hostilities to armed aggression necessitates caution and discretion. The preferred strategy is to hurt and disable an opponent without committing and restricting to any single engagement. This is usually accomplished by applying hyper-extended joint lock throws or body on body takedowns.

Engagement and development of combat into Hagibis mode would depend on several factors. The primary factor would be distance. In Hagibis, shooting-in for a takedown is not recommended. Instead, the striking techniques of Sagasa, the kick boxing discipline of Bakbakan, would be utilized. This restriction does not imply that Hagibis has neither takedown nor shooting techniques. On the contrary, most of Hagibis techniques are takedowns or throws designed to put the opponent out of commission, at least temporarily.

This restriction stems from the fact that shooting-in would usually lead to a grappling situation. Since most street encounters are rarely one-on-one, engaging and being tied up with a single opponent is inherently dangerous and must therefore be averted if possible. Stand-up striking techniques are best for street encounters, specifically against multiple opponents. However, circumstances and combat being dynamic, treacherous and unpredictable, one must prepare for all eventualities. Once the opponent is committed to an attack, a counter or a defense, the evolution of hostilities will dictate its development. An extended arm or leg, whether it is defensive or offensive, can provide the necessary hold for an arm drag, a lock, a break or a throw. It may also provide for the exposition of targets of opportunity for striking techniques. A deflection of this extended limb can change the entire direction and spectrum of combat.

The motion and movement of the opponent provides the seed for the development of the whirlpool of continuance that is the signature philosophy and keystone of Hagibis. The blending and fusion of energy, referred to in Hagibis as the "tightening of the circle", creates a whirlpool of motion that envelops and integrates both protagonists, snaring and hurtling them into the vortex of Hagibis's fury. Techniques are applied with the strategy and intention of making the assailant bear the brunt of the converging forces. Techniques that are designed and intended to injure and disable the aggressor, effectively reducing the number of potential adversaries.

A signature technique of Hagibis and Philippine combat arts in general is the use of down-weighting to generate the energy and force necessary to execute a takedown technique or generate the necessary joint lock pressure. This may involve a sacrifice throw, or a selection of key techniques known as Sakay-siko (lit, mounting the elbow) or Basbas (lit, benediction), both of which involves the trapping of a limb and using leverage against the crook of the arm and elbow to initiate a takedown. Sakay-siko may be classified as type of sacrifice throw except that it strategically positions the practitioner for continuance into a mount position or a side-positioned arm and wristlock. In contrast, Basbas drags down the opponent down and forward, leaving them open to strikes with the free fist or a powerful knee strike.

Grappling, locking, and throwing techniques from the native arts of buno and dumog as well as adopted expertise from the rich, exotic warrior arts of Asia and the simple, direct approach of western combat arts provide the ultimate and final weapons of unarmed close quarters combat. Emphasizing the use of "naked" or non-cloth based control techniques; the art of Hagibis takes into consideration the thin and flimsy clothing

that is the norm for Southeast Asian countries. It is these constraints that developed the many "naked" locking and grappling techniques of these regions.

Hagibis training takes on many forms. During the training and development of skills, each stage of combat is isolated and developed separately. This is subdivided into throwing techniques, takedowns, grappling and submission holds. Throwing and takedowns are practiced from either striking or catch-as-catch-can and shooting platforms. Grappling and submission holds exercises usually begin from Laban-Dulang or face-to-face kneeling and tie-in position. This precludes takedown and throwing methods and allows the protagonists to solely concentrate on grappling and wrestling maneuvers.

Each identifiable component can be isolated, to be arbitrarily included or removed during practice bouts. This compels the practitioner to continuously learn and train beyond their preferred proven techniques. A single training round may be nominated as anything goes, except for headlocks or any other specific type submission holds. This forces the combatants to experiment and attempt joint locks and other submission holds. Ironically, by restricting specific invariable favorites, the student is singularly liberated.

Using down weighing as a way of disturbing the opponent's center of gravity as well as accelerating the motions of combat, the techniques of Hagibis lessen, if not eliminate, the weight and size handicap of the average Filipino. The use of leverage, joint and wrist locks requires little power but demand much precision, an attribute learned, experienced, and developed in the weapons art of Bakbakan Kali Ilustrisimo.



By Reynaldo S. Galang

From the combat tested and proven art of Kali Ilustrisimo is born the knife fighting art of Tulisan. Developed under the watchful and critical eyes of the late Grand Master Antonio Ilustrisimo of Kali Ilustrisimo and the art's Chief Instructor and Heir, Master Antonio Diego, Tulisan has proven itself a totally realistic, dynamic and practical knife fighting system.

The word Tulisan means "pointed" or "sharp-tipped" as well as "an outlaw". Tulisan's emphasis on thrust techniques and the general public's consensus that knife wielders belong to the less desirable social classes and to the outlaws makes any of these translations appropriate.

The development of multi-level fighting concept and strategy is the emphasis of Tulisan. Realizing and accepting the fact that the most vulnerable moment is during any transition and in the early stage of an attack, a Tulisan practitioner is constantly aware of the traps and pitfalls that lurk at each level of an armed encounter. Honed in maneuvers and drills that prepare against a multitude of variations, Tulisan wallows rather than sinks in the unexpected.



Masters Tony Diego and Christopher Ricketts
in a classic **SABAYAN**

The art of Tulisan emphasizes the basics of knife-handling and blade edge awareness. The popular concepts of triangle footwork, both male and female, are thoroughly ingrained into its foundation drills. The practitioner is cautioned again and again, that the first and foremost action should be evasion with parry and counters only of

secondary value. Each of the form and drills build upon each other, reinforcing and cultivating awareness and sensitivity to the nuances of the edge weapon.

Beginning with the basic form of Alas, the novice is introduced to the concept of Tagis-Talim (encounter with the blade). The beginner learns to accept and explore the versatility and limitation of the bladed weapon. Keeping the opponent in constant guard and anticipation by the positioning of the wielded weapon, the Tulisan fighter learns to control and dictate the flow of combat. The on-guard thrust position that is unique to Tulisan is designed to intimidate the opponent and controls the center line of combat. It is also a strategic position from which an attack or parry can be easily and efficiently launched.

In espousing the concepts of Tagis-Talim, the knife fighter learns to become both efficient and effective in the use of the blade. The aspirant learns of the advantage, the limitations and the misconceptions between thrust and slash attacks. The enlightened pupil learns of the lethal aftermath that can result from a thrust even with an improperly honed or badly abused weapon. In the same vein, the practitioner discovers the diminished effect of a slash or cut against heavy clothing even when using a well-maintained weapon.

Trained through Sinawali to use both hands for weapons usage and control, the Tulisan fighter's Bantay-Kamay (guardian or alive hand) assists in parrying and controlling the enemy's attacks as well as in delivering coup de grace thrusts from the unexpected weapon transfer and switch (Lipat-Palit) technique of Tulisan. Training sessions in Bakbakan Kali always begin with Sinawali or double stick drills. This guarantees that the practitioner is constantly trained and prepared to use any weapon ambidextrously. In the art of Tulisan as well as in Solo Baston, the Bantay-Kamay becomes a vital defensive tool.

In the drills derived from the form Lengua de Fuego, the Tulisan practitioner is immediately absorbed in the nuances of simultaneous parry and counter. Beginning with the initial retreating step from the Maharlika (lit., noble or nobility. An stylized beginning or ending position that is more of a ritualistic nature rather than of any strategic plan or advantage.) the practitioner retreats into a defensive position to gain distance and to move out of range from a sudden attack, the student learns to parry and deliver a simultaneous counter against an independent or follow-up thrust using the technique of Lagusan (tunnel thrust). In this particular technique, the Tulisan fighter learns to dodge and parry the thrust attack and to control and occupy the center line to win the encounter and survive. First and foremost, however, is to make sure that one is outside or off the line of direct attack. Footwork, along with the requisite hand and body coordination, is practiced as a total strategy rather than separate entities. This prepares the knife fighter to move and defend against any sudden and unexpected attacks or combinations thereof. From the initial counter attack using the Lagusan technique, the classic thrust and cut technique of (Saksak-Hatak) flows smoothly as the Tulisan fighter steps forward at an angle and keeps blade and point towards and against the opponent. The advantageous and strategic positioning of the knife's edge is never lost even when reversing the blade's direction from a backward to forward motion.

Palis-Tusok, a lateral parry and thrust technique first encountered in Alas and subsequently emphasized in Lengua de Fuego and other advanced forms has proven itself many times over in competitions and even in actual confrontations. In executing the Palis, the practitioner has the option of executing a simple parry or a well-positioned and timed hand-cut. Executed with a simple parallel evasive movement, Tulisan practitioners recognize the critical importance of timing and footwork. Combined with the knowledge gleaned from experience and a thorough study and analysis of combat, the Tulisan expert anticipates the targets of opportunity that are exposed after each attack.

The Palis-Tusok technique is always executed with the body executing a sideways dodge and parry while delivering a cutting parry against the opponent's extended weapon arm. Without hesitation, the parrying weapon continues its circular path and ends in a thrust aimed at the opponent's neck. A back parry, known as Sima, is used to deflect the opponent's thrust marginally away from the body. This nullified attack is then followed back to its source with classic Tulay (bridge) technique, minimizing if not totally eliminating, the possibility of a defense or counter.

The Sima, also known as Pasungkit or Palis-Likod, is a backhanded parry that is used effectively with and against both long and short weapons. A simple and effective parry and maneuver, the technique of Sima gives the defender the opportunity to deliver a parry and a cut or thrust with the same weapon, along the exact same line as the invalidated attack, giving the opponent little or no option for defense.

A simple linear Hatak-Talim (a parry or counter that executes a single linear cut) completes the sequence of actions thus far. This is followed by a sequence of Saksak-Hatak (thrust and cut) techniques. The last Saksak-Hatak of the set is executed in the Makata (Poet) fashion. The technique of Makata hides behind its beautiful execution the deadly and lethal precision of its strategy. Incorporating the principles of Praksion (from "fraction", a concept that espouses being a fraction of a beat ahead of the opponent), this technique slides in-between the opponent's attack and delivers its deadly counter-attack within the narrow leeway created by the attack.

The technique of Tiklop (lit., to fold) is used to parry a singular, straight thrust. A versatile technique, Tiklop enables the Tulisan knife fighter to assess and reprise with a variety of options against the opponent's negated attack. In this particular case, the Tiklop becomes a Dukot-Likod (underhook arm trap) that exposes the opponent's torso to a well-positioned thrust.

Although not a favorite of Tatang Ilustrisimo, Hawak-Baligtad or reverse knife fighting grip is an option to be learned in order to understand its limitations as well as its covert uses and advantage in combat. In Lengua de Fuego, the Hawak-Baligtad is used to define the perimeters of defense as well as targets of offense. In a herringbone fashion, the areas of defense as well as the opponent's exposed flank are singled out and defined with unwavering precision.

Using the reverse grip to execute a reverse vertical outward parry, the Hawak-Baligtad's blade is used in a very speedy and lethal fashion to deliver a deadly cut at the opponent's exposed neck. The Bantay-Kamay is used to intercept and stop any protective or defensive move of the opponent.

In the final movements of Lengua de Fuego, the knife grip is changed from reverse grip back to saber grip. This switch, executed hidden from the opponent, restores the weapon's lost reach while it was held in the reverse grip. This last thrust is executed in an extended Makata (Poet) pose. A pull and cut motion brings the weapon back to its Maharlika starting position.

The breakdown of Lengua de Fuego, or for that matter, any of the forms in the Bakbakan Kali Ilustrisimo curriculum,



Rey Galang of Tulisan Knife Fighting System

into manageable and practical drills has long been a signature training method of Bakbakan. The timeless training concepts of Dr. Guillermo Lengson has been and always will be the foundation of the training structure of this elite organization. The blending of the tested, effective and efficient training methods of Dr. Lengson with the awesome repertoire of weapons techniques, concepts and strategies of Grand Master Antonio Ilustrisimo has given Bakbakan its international reputation for weapons expertise.

The technique of Saksak-Hatak (thrust and cut) and its variations best exemplify the concept and principle of Tagis-Talim. Tulisan trains the practitioner in using the knife optimally and effectively. A parry against a thrust is immediately penalized with a simple twist or repositioning of the blade to deliver a reciprocal slash.

Hawak-Baligtad (reverse grip), also known as Pakal or Susi, is also introduced in Lengua de Fuego. Despite its limited range and diminished versatility, the reverse grip is a deceptive form of weapon handling and can be used to great advantage during combat with Lipat-Palit (transfer and change) strategy. Applied covertly, the opponent's parry against an anticipated thrust can result in a debilitating cut as the intercepting hand encounters the weapon's turned-out blade instead of the expected wrist and forearm.



Tulisan training at BCI, Garfield
mid-1990s

The optimum range for Hawak-Baligtad is in close quarters combat where proximal body contact and veiled shifting thoroughly utilizes the weapon's lethal potential. Cuts and slashes can be delivered without any pronounced movement or chambering. The weakness of frontal thrusts in the reverse grip is a minor loss and sacrifice compared to the multitude of subtle and covert slashes that can be delivered from a broad range of angles. Tulisan practitioners refrain from delivering overhead and back thrusts in reverse grip as the risks outweigh the advantage of using such techniques.

The development and evolution of the knife fighting art of Tulisan owes much to the constant refinement and testing of its techniques. This is achieved through regular sparring and

constant emphasis on the reality of the knife. Once the practitioner becomes skilled in the use of the weapon, the techniques of Kisap-Mata (blink of an eye) are introduced. In this phase, the Tulisan practitioner, now fully aware of the potential as well as the limitation of the knife, is required to fight and defend without a weapon against a skilled and armed training partner. It is at this point that true knife fighting and the dawning of a blade master begins.

Bakbakan Groups



Bakbakan group picture (early/mid-1980s)



Bakbakan with GM Tatang Ilustrisimo (early 1990s)



The New Jersey Chapter (1996)

Front: Jan Jardiniano, Don Veluz, Rey Galang, Chary Salvo and Alain Salvo
Rear: Cyril Roderos, John Jacobo, Sonny Mocling and Jeremy Manalang



Changing of the Guard, Sydney, Australia (2002)



Bakbakan South African group (2003)



Women of **BAKBAKAN** INTERNATIONAL



The Black Rose

Wileen Arellano

Although there is a multitude of female members in Bakbakan International in the Philippines and Australia, there is but a single female full-fledged member at the World Headquarters in Lodi, New Jersey. Her name is Wileen Arellano, fondly referred to by her fellow members as “The Black Rose” and, sometimes, “The Black Widow.”

Wileen Arellano, looking all feminine and sweet, belies the fact that she has consistently won several championships in the Filipino Martial Arts. Even in internal Bakbakan coed tournaments, she has managed to garner 2nd place much to the chagrin of the 3rd and 4th place male participants. At various workshops and seminars all around the world, many male participants gravitate towards her, charmed by her sweet disposition, only to suffer and lose like many others when sparring bouts are called. Her moniker “Black Widow” came about because of many instances like this.

Consistently mistaken and assumed as the daughter of Master Rey Galang, Wileen enjoys this misconception and takes pride in the fact that she bears a close facial similarity with her mentor. She usually takes time off from her professional career to occasionally enjoy lunch with Master Rey at their favorite restaurants around the Lodi area where the WHQ is located. She enjoys her relationship with Master Rey as both her friend and father figure.

Wileen enjoys most the art of Tulisan, the knife fighting system taught in Bakbakan. She also finds intriguing and satisfying the many Sinawali or double stick forms that are part of the Bakbakan curriculum.

Among the many mentors and masters in the Bakbakan fraternity that she has studied are Rey Galang, Christopher Ricketts and Yuli Romo. At the WHQ, she has trained with Guro Roger Agbulos, Tuhon Ray Dionaldo, GM Bobby Taboada and Catch Wrestling coach Bill Cogswell. She has also met trained with renowned Grand Masters Tony Diego, Vic Sanchez, Bert Labaniego and others during her 2005 trip to Manila. She garnered a 1st and 2nd place in two of the international tournament events during the same period.

As the sole female member at the WHQ, Wileen is treated as an equal and like a sister by her fellow members. She enjoys this feeling of having all these big brothers looking after her, despite the fact that she has no need to depend upon them if push came to shove. Wileen has been featured in the books “Complete Sinawali”, “Classic Arnis”, “Warrior Arts of the Philippines” and, most recently, in “Masters of the Blade”. Despite the many achievements of Wileen, she is content to remain a student of Bakbakan although she occasionally assists in teaching and helping newcomers at the WHQ. Already a qualified advanced practitioner of Bakbakan Kali, Wileen enjoys being a student and looks forward to constantly discovering the many treasures of the art.



At the 2nd World FMA in Las Vegas.
(L - R) Wileen Arellano, Rey Galang,
Arnold Provideo, Christopher Ricketts,
Bruce Ricketts and John Jacobo.



John Jacobo, Roger Agbulos and Wileen Arellano

Reflections

Bakbakan

By Peachie Baron Saguin



Ever since I was a child I have always dreamed of becoming a good martial artist. I have always imaged myself involved in a fight, fighting and clawing my way to victory, reigning over my vanquished opponents. This deep ambition burned in me for a long, long time.

At first, I was just contented with simply fantasizing and using my imagination. Later on this desire turned into a consuming passion and martial arts became an obsession. This prompted me to watch and observe martial arts and their champions. All of the ones I've observed had their own unique qualities and superior techniques but none had the type of "action" I was looking for. My search finally ended when I chanced upon an old acquaintance who invited me to attend and observe a Korean discipline he was training in. As I watched with keen eyes, I noticed that it was like a combination of different martial arts disciplines all rolled into one. I was fascinated and captured by this martial art and decided to join.

My first day of training was really exciting. For me it was the realization of my dreams. I was oblivious of the time, of the hard training and of the rigid discipline. I was in ecstasy. I was always looking forward to each and every training session. My enthusiasm never waned, instead it seemed to increase more and more as my stamina and skills increased. However, a time came when I felt that the art that I was pursuing was not enough. I needed more and craved for more. I could not identify what was missing and yet knew that I was not fulfilled.

I eventually enrolled in another martial art as well, making sure that the sessions were not in conflict with each other. For a while this arrangement seemed to fill the gap that nagged at me.

One day I arrived early for my scheduled training session. I could hear commands being barked at where the Taekwondo classes were usually held. Curiosity got the best of me since I knew that there were no Taekwondo classes scheduled for that particular hour. I climbed the stairs and sneaked a peek at whatever was going on.

There before my eyes were two guys fully equipped with head gear, body protectors, and boxing gloves sparring at full force. Not a single blow was held back. Kicks and punches were being exchanged with precision and dodged and parried with grace and speed. I looked and asked myself: What discipline is this? I looked around and saw the other people in the training hall, men in black with this curious looking logo on their shirts. I did not see any familiar face. None of them were of the Taekwondo group. I focused my eyes back at the two combatants. I was mesmerized by the intensity and seriousness of their training.

I was thrilled and filled with excitement. Deep within me, my spirit was shouting "This is it, Peachie. This is what you've been looking for!"



Peachie undergoing focus mitt training with Chief Instructor Christopher Ricketts

I was to learn later on that I had eavesdropped in on a Bakbakan training session. The group present then was Ramon Tulfo, Miguel Zubiri, Edgar Aristorenas, Benny Litonjua and trainers Dodong Sta. Iglesia, Peter Sescon and Torry Seas. Conducting the classes were Masters Christopher Ricketts and Tony Diego. I stayed and watched and waited until they finished their training. From that time on, I always arrived early and took my position at the stairs to watch, making sure that I was inconspicuous and out of their way. For several sessions I was content to be at what I now

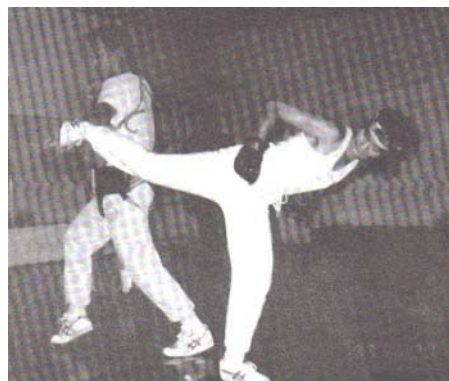
considered my perch, watching and admiring their training sessions.

One day their Master Christopher Ricketts approached me and gave me a chair to sit on telling me it was more comfortable than the steps I was sitting on. I realized then that I was talking to the Topher Ricketts whose name was held in high esteem by most serious martial artists in the Philippines. Later during that session he would return and ask me about my interest in the martial arts. I explained to him that I had been taking up two disciplines of martial arts but have recently dropped one and now concentrated only on one.

Summoning my courage, I asked him if he could teach me. His answer only made me admire and respect him more. He said, "I could only help you, but your loyalty should remain in the discipline you are in right now." And true to his word, he did help me. He assigned Dodong Sta. Iglesia to be my trainer. My training suddenly took an abrupt turn; I was back to the basics. The training was very rigid; I was pushed to the limits. I would finish each session exhausted but fulfilled. The training was very different. It opened up a new dimension for me. I then realized that I no longer had any interest in my one other remaining discipline. All the enthusiasm I had for it was not just waning but gone. The magic was no longer there. I realized that I would only be disillusioning myself and my instructors if I continued training with them.

I made my exit gracefully and with their blessing. They realized something happened to me for my performance improved leaps and bounds since I started training with Bakbakan. They were happy that I found what I was looking for.

From then on, Master Topher Ricketts and trainer Dodong Sta. Iglesia trained me on a regular basis. My stances were corrected, my form checked, my punches and kicks were made more defined. I was taught different styles of offense and defense. I was trained in unarmed combat as well as in weaponry skills, including sticks and knives. I



Ramon Tulfo, Bakbakan's Public Relations Officer and noted columnist, practices his dodging techniques against Peachie's kicks.

was also taught different katas from several disciplines to develop and improve my intrinsic energy. Because of this intense and rigid training, my skills have improved and my self-confidence bolstered to the point where sparring sessions have become the norm rather than the exception.

Looking back, I know and realize that I have become a different person, a far, far cry from what I was before. I owe it all to my teacher, Master Christopher Ricketts, to whom I have so much faith and reverence. Also to my trainer Dodong Sta. Iglesia who has been very patient and understanding. I also owe a debt of gratitude to the members of Bakbakan who have been very supportive of me, then the only female member of Bakbakan. And most of all to God who answered my fervent prayer and gave me a good mentor and a solid, supportive group. As I look back, I now understand why some of the members when given the traditional advice of “Ingat” after each goodbye reply, instead of acknowledging, with “Pare, Bakbakan tayo. Ingat ... sila!”



Note: More ladies joined Bakbakan after Peachie's pioneering move. Peachie's husband, Dr. Rimando Saguin, is a noted orthopedist in the Philippines and has become Bakbakan's Medical Advisor.

How Filipino Martial Arts Changed My Style of Combat

By Cathy Rowlands



Growing up and living in Johannesburg had its challenges and risks, especially for women. Every day there were reports of rape and murder victims and it became very apparent that in order to not become the victim, I had to train some form of martial art. I began with practicing Chinese martial arts for almost 10 years. The training I had been doing at the time was primarily empty hand, and I firmly believed that this would be my complete martial art's training. However, the risks of living in South Africa over the years escalated and I found that I needed more training than what I was getting. This was when I was introduced to the Filipino martial art, known as Bakbakan.

In the past I had dabbled with other martial arts from the Philippines from time to time throughout the years, but had not come across a martial art that was a complete system of training, and more importantly, containing the essence of what

I heard that the Filipino martial arts were suppose to be. I was so excited with the contrast of Bakbakan and Wing Chun, and yet how they complimented each other - I could not wait to learn more.

I was happy to train with the stick and knife, as even a broomstick can help you to defend yourself if you know how to use it effectively, and should somebody break into my home I would like to know that I could use a simple kitchen knife as an instrument of self defense without the fear of it being taken away and used against me. Also, besides the physical application of defending myself, Bakbakan has a large variety of forms which are great for coordination and speed, and also keep me physically fit.

To this day, I really enjoy my training, because each time I train I face an opponent who is bigger and stronger than myself. There is no differentiation between males and females in the class. We train full contact padded stick



Attacker with knife. Attacker thrusts low to Cathy's stomach, knife hand is parried with left and Cathy strikes attackers eyes with right hand. Right hand comes down to control the blade while left strikes attackers head. Left hand collapses the attacker's elbow and right and bends the wrist and pushes the knife hand back into the attacker's throat.

and knife sparring with appropriate protection gear. Although it can be daunting initially, once you have done it a couple of times you realize that there is a very little chance of personal injury. It also takes training as close as it's going to get to the most realistic level a woman can go to outside of class. Even in the safest environments, women are at risk of rape and assault, and training against men. At this level of training it gives me the confidence that I feel I can handle a harmful situation effectively should the situation present itself.



Attacker stands ready to strike.



Cathy strikes outstretched hand of attacker.



Attacker retaliates with strike to Cathy's head and Cathy roof blocks strike.



Cathy turns and strikes attacker across the head.



Attacker loses his stick.

Over the years I have become quite set in my ways with my footwork, and suddenly there was a new dimension which defied all that I had learnt - a small knife that added only an inch or two to my opponent's reach completely threw my footwork out the window. The speed of a punch and block is very different to the speed of a knife and block. The principle of deflect and give back twice as much energy no longer applied when the opponent had a knife in his hand - the only way around this was to move my feet - and that was a whole new lesson in life! The Filipino footwork is incredibly fast and rhythmic, and practicing this new style of combat really gave me a whole new outlook as to my own personal fighting skills. Where I had relied heavily on energy and angles previously, I now had added speed and even more agility.

Practicing the footwork drills has given me a lot more rhythm and speed in my feet, and by extension, more speed in my reflexes and hand actions. What I had learnt in previous years was not lost but actually enhanced by the newfound knowledge of the Filipino martial arts. Trapping skills became very effective once I had learned to close the range on a knife with my footwork, adding a higher element of surprise to the more flat-footed opponent.

In addition, when learning stick sparring, the stakes of the game became a lot higher. The opponents were predominantly bigger, stronger, and if experienced with the use of a stick (or long blade), were much faster than my previous empty hand opponents. The range had changed, and closing the gap with trapping techniques no longer worked. I had to, once again, go back to the drawing board and focus on my footwork. With practicing the sinawali drills along with repeating footwork patterns, my sparring skill suddenly escalated. I was able to get in and out of range much quicker with less physical damage. I found the only way of defeating a bigger and stronger opponent was to be faster and have better angles.

So, after developing speed, I had to look at my angles, the 45 degree angle that I had used in my other martial arts training helped a lot, but I had to change my

weight ratio on my feet to make it work – there is no ways angles in the stick fighting worked by being flat footed!

In selecting opponents, I find it a difficult task as a woman to go up against a man with the same level of skill. I believe that in sparring with men who are bigger, heavier and stronger with the same amount of skill you can only improve your skills because he is going to give you more opportunity to practice your blocking than you give him. In that way, you have more time to examine his line of attack for you block and counter-attack. There is always the risk of being hit harder than you give, but that is what protective gear is for - and I believe you should call the odds of sparring before you begin so each training partner knows their limitations and has respect for their partner's learning curve. Having said that, I think it is important to spar with people of my own size and weight ratio to measure my own progress.

The Filipino martial arts have given me a great opportunity to challenge myself in a lot of ways that I had closed doors to before. I was able to continue with the sinawali drills and footwork patterns while I was pregnant and thus able to maintain a lot of the skill through safe, slow and thorough training techniques. My son, now almost a year old, has picked up the art of holding and twirling a stick and it has had an enormous benefit in his coordination. In teaching him the tiny intricacies of even holding a stick it has become even more apparent to me that the earlier this skill is taught the better the left and right brain work together. My old habits of relying on my left-brain calculating logics and angles need to balance with the right brain working out creative and sneaky ways to defeat the opponent. This, I believe, can be achieved with training the double stick and working the left and right sides of the body, even though one side will most often be dominant.

In a final note, I am grateful to Master Ray Galang and Bakbakan International, also my partner Damian Halforty for introducing me to the Bakbakan system, and the Filipino culture, for giving me the opportunity to study their interesting, and devastating, martial art, and I will continue to train for as long as I am able.

Alas Form





The Bakbakan Experience

By Christine Trlifaj



Martial arts training has provided me with an opportunity to strive for perfection, and to learn how to be determined in the face of challenge.

Like many women, I initially became involved in martial arts to learn self-defense and to use it as a fitness program. Being attacked at the age of 17 by a man with a knife, I only know too well how defenseless, vulnerable and scared some women may feel. I wanted to take control of my life and learn how to defend myself.

I joined a karate school that advertised to teach self defense and although it wasn't originally what I had expected I stayed there for 5 years working my way up to a black belt. I realized that even though I thoroughly enjoyed it, I needed to find something that was more practicable & reliable for me to be able to defend myself on the streets. It was a good grounding and a stepping-stone in the right direction that taught me discipline and courage but I stopped karate and started looking for a different form of martial arts.

I started taking boxing lessons in 1999 with Rahneer Fabi. I enjoyed the challenge of boxing, but when Rahneer asked me to join his main martial arts classes I was hesitant because weaponry training sounded too dangerous and intense for what I wanted. My first class, where we learned knife techniques, trapping, sticks, and various other techniques was a revelation to me - I loved it! My perception had changed so I started attending regular classes.

There was one main obstacle I had to overcome and that was the personal closeness/contact while grappling. Being female and grappling with male students at such a close range was very uncomfortable and hard to get over. But over time and with Rahneer's guidance and mentoring I started finding strength inside myself that I didn't know I had. Rahneer has a special gift of teaching and has a way of sharing his knowledge so that everyone can understand and learn from. The training gave me a feeling of power and confidence and brought out my inherent drive for perfection. I was also fortunate enough to have been partnered with Rahneer's most senior and respected

student, Adrian Wade, throughout my Bakbakan years. He has always shown patience and willingness to pass on his knowledge & skills.

Over time I worked my way up through the levels and progressed to a senior ranking student and was then asked to take on teaching duties. Although outwardly confident, I was always a fairly shy person, and the idea of teaching made me nervous. This was compounded by the fact that most new students were male, and many joined the classes imagining themselves to be experts in the field. Although I was the teacher, and much more experienced, they usually questioned what I said and always thought their way was better. To gain their respect I found I had to prove my skills to them, to demonstrate the techniques so they had no illusions about my abilities or strength. Once they saw what I was capable of they seemed to settle down and were easier to teach. I realized that teaching other students also helped me to better understand what I had learned.



My experience with other woman doing training has been mixed. Women often joined the classes, but the majority never seemed to be too interested, once learning what was going to be the levels of hard work they would have to do to learn martial arts they would drop out. Having few women in the classes never worried me because I'd always prefer to train with men as they seem to want to train harder and take the training and instruction more seriously.

One of the best things about being a part of Bakbakan has been the experience of meeting new people, and especially training under different masters. Over the years I have had many memorable experiences, gained lots of knowledge and met many people whom I admire and respect to the highest degree. I have had the privilege to meet and be trained under Master Rey Galang, Master Tony Diego and Master Christopher Ricketts and others. Each Master gave me a new insight into the art of Bakbakan: Master Rey, for example, when he traveled to Sydney in 2000, taught me the true meaning of Bakbakan brotherhood. He trained our class hard with weaponry, drills/combinations, boxing, self-defense moves and much more. Master Rey taught me how to spar confidently with a knife.

The second time he came to Sydney in 2002 I managed to do my first Bakbakan grading and with great excitement I received my 1st degree black belt. I was particularly proud as at the time I was 8 months pregnant, and only performed the non-contact sections. It was an experience I will never forget.

In 2001 I traveled to the Philippines with a group of Australian Bakbakan students to train with Master Tony Diego and Master Christopher Ricketts, to experience the culture there. It was a fantastic and challenging experience. Being one of the first women from Australia to train with the Masters made me feel a bit nervous, as I wanted to make a good impression. Rahneer had a lot of faith in my capabilities and, because of his trust in me; I didn't want to disappoint him with my performance as part of the team. One of the highlights whilst training in the Philippines was when each of the Masters fed a stick drill to me in front of their students. I was really nervous because I didn't know what to

expect from them. I had to go on my natural instincts and free flow just like Rahneer had taught me. It was fantastic! When leaving the Philippines I felt within myself a stronger person physically and mentally. I took home an experience I would never forget. With the martial arts I have learned I feel more confident walking around the streets. Like most females I know and my original thoughts on learning self defense was it could be learned by attending a 2-day workshop and you could learn all the tricks and techniques needed. But overtime I realized that to defend yourself properly you have to have natural instincts and reactions, leaving no time to think or to use knowledge. This is something that is learned over a long period of time.

Although I'm currently absent from training due to being pregnant with another baby, I'm always there in spirit, and whenever there is a Bakkakan meeting or grading session I always try to attend. As soon as I can train again I will be back. My husband Joe will be the first to encourage me, as he has always been supportive and understanding towards my training. Training has taught me the value of having positive influences and support, and having people who encourage you to be the best you can be.

Set 1



Set 2



Set 3





Discovering The Filipino Martial Arts

By Natasha Whittaker



I started training in the Filipino Martial Arts in 2002 when I discovered Amok quite by accident. I suppose I was attracted to the art because it was very practical, easy to follow and simple. Amok was a very self defense orientated Martial Art which made it very useful as well as a great compliment to the other traditional martial arts I was practicing at the time.

Prior to that I had not known much about the fighting arts of Philippines. When I started training in Amok under Sifu Dean Jones who also taught Wing Chun at the Wu Chi School in Johannesburg. While at the Wu Chi school Damian Halferty introduced a form of Filipino stick fighting and started teaching it on a regular basis.

As time passed Damian decided that he wanted to teach a complete system from the Philippines and started researching several different styles of Filipino martial arts. Damian eventually found Bakbakan and out of all the research that he did found this art to be an excellent system and this would be the system he would teach us. Bakbakan was then adopted as the official style at our school and Damian proceeded to teach us Bakbakan.

At this point, training became very interesting, definitely more complicated and a lot of coordination was required. When I first started I wasn't sure if I would be able to manage, learning this art, it seemed completely foreign to me.

Our school has definitely enjoyed the teachings and training of Bakbakan and Master Rey Galang visited in November 2004 giving a seminar. This was a wonderful



Natasha Whittaker in Red

experience as we were able to see the bigger picture of what Bakbakan entailed. Master Rey Galang was patient and very approachable.

In May of 2005 Master Ray visited once again for another seminar. This was a great seminar and we learned a great deal, since everything was a bit more familiar with having had the prior seminar in November 2004.

Unfortunately Damian Halforty immigrated to New Zealand in 2005 and Sifu Dean Jones has taken over as instructor.

I have really enjoyed Bakbakan in the short time that I have been involved in it. It involves quite a few things such as fitness as there is a lot of sparring involved. Footwork is very important, as you need to be light on your feet. We practice floating footwork and 45 degree angle footwork. Coordination is a major part of Bakbakan, you need to be able to do forms and set a sequence of moves with weapons and then apply the movements in sparring. This involves hand and foot coordination and timing. Learning to work with weapons such as stick and knife is a great learning experience, which requires mental discipline and focus.





Front row: (from left to right) Keef Whiteman, Asen Krastev and Iemraan Kara
Back row: (left to right) Natasha Whittaker, Karen Meadows, Jason van Wyngaard, Sifu Dean Jones, Colleen du Plessis, Chris Tochev

Bakbakan Work Shops & Seminars



Tulisan workshop for
 DEFTAC Training group, Connecticut



De Campo workshop with Roger Agbulos
 at Bakbakan WHQ, Lodi, New Jersey



Balintawak workshop with GM Bobby Taboada, Bakbakan WHQ, Lodi, New Jersey



Catch Wrestling workshop at WHQ with Bill Cogswell



AFP - Joint Special Operations Group



Bakbakan kali workshop, Los Angeles, CA (2005)



Kali Ilustrisimo workshop
with Christopher Ricketts at WHQ



FCS seminar
with Ray Dionaldo at Bakbakan WHQ

Festivals, Ceremonies, Gatherings



Bakbakan Promotion and Initiation Meeting (1988)
Ayala Alabang Country Club, Alabang, Metro-Manila, Philippines



Opening Ceremony
1st World Invitational Arnis Championships
PNP, Camp Crame. December 2005



1st World Invitational
Arnis Championships
Carlos Cobles, Rey Galang
and Peachie Saguin



Souvenir photo after Philippine Festival of Martial Arts presentation

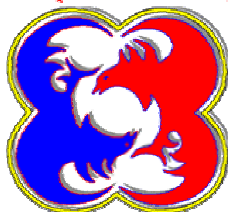


2nd WFMA at Las Vegas, Nevada
Roland Dantes, Rey Galang, Bobby Taboada, Christopher Ricketts,
Bruce Ricketts, John Jacobo and Jorge Penafiel



2nd WFMA - Las Vegas, Nevada

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WHQ – Training



Topher Ricketts leads “Sumbrada” drills



Cuatro Cantos drill
Christopher Ricketts with Carlos Cobles



Catch Wrestling session



Sanay-Lubid (rope-training drills)

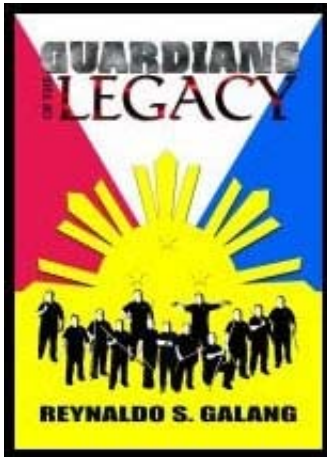


Topher Ricketts conducting ‘Pa-upo’ drill



Urong-Sulong (forward and back shuffle) drill

Rey Galang Books
To Purchase [[Click Here](#)]

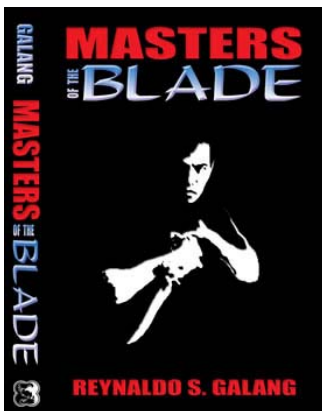


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Guardians of the Legacy

Another milestone in Filipino Martial Arts history.

MASTERS of the BLADE



In this truly groundbreaking masterpiece of academic research, highly acclaimed Filipino Martial Arts warrior and scholar, Rey Galang, collaborates with renowned “Masters of the Blade” to bare the heart and soul of the Filipino martial arts. In a presentation that goes beyond and across boundaries, discover the techniques, the training methods, the strategies and concepts that have been honed, tested and proven through centuries of combative application. Discover the essence of the Filipino Martial Arts that has made them respected and utilized worldwide by law enforcement officers, armed forces personnel, frontline operatives and members of the public interested in self-protection with and against edged weapons.

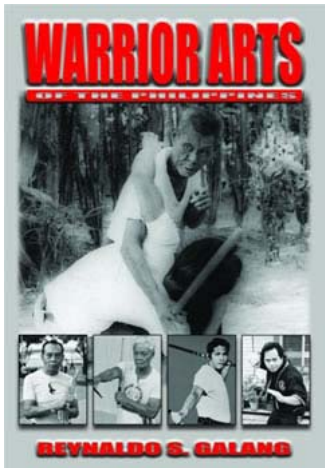
Destined to become another classic resource on the Warrior Arts of the Philippines, this massive collection, profusely illustrated with over 2700 photos, presents the core tactics and concepts of many world acclaimed edged weapon combative experts.

“One of the finest self-defense knife instructors I’ve had the pleasure to know is Master Reynaldo Galang of Bakbakan International. His ability to develop the reactions and quickness of his students while maintaining their safety in his training is outstanding. I’m honored to write the foreword for ‘Masters of the Blade’, his latest in a series of excellent books.” --- GM Bobby Taboada, Balintawak Arnis Cuentada



Rey Galang and Topher Ricketts doing pictorial for book and magazine projects.

Warrior Arts of the Philippines



Profusely illustrated **with over 1600 photos**, this historical and highly informative publication is destined to become a classic and valuable resource on the Warrior Arts of the Philippines.

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Kali Ilustrisimo
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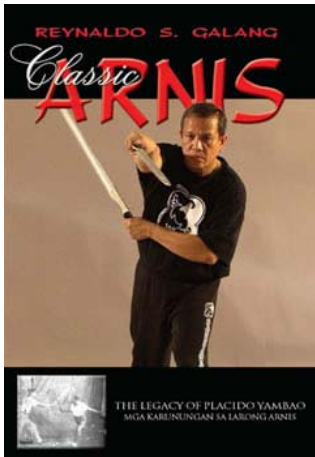
Lightning Scientific Arnis

Modern Arnis

San Miguel Eskrima

Relive and experience the journeys of warriors past and present through the interviews and writings of the eminent masters and disciples of these celebrated combat arts.

Classic ARNIS - The Legacy of Placido Yambao



"Placido Yambao's art form, for half-a-century, had intrigued Filipino martial artists and aficionados everywhere. "Mga Karunungan sa Larong Arnis," his original book written in Tagalog, had been likened to a mysterious road map waiting to be charted. In the earnest, unending search for martial art's hidden treasures, there will always be the relentless explorers--they who wish to acquire the wisdom, the knowledge and finesse of generations-old, down-home mode of a revered fighting man's art. Obscure only to the uninitiated but popular to any serious seeker, Yambao's manuscript was the first of its kind to be widely circulated. Kindred souls that they are--though generations apart-- Placido Yambao and Rey Galang share a common Pampango heritage. Both share a distinctive

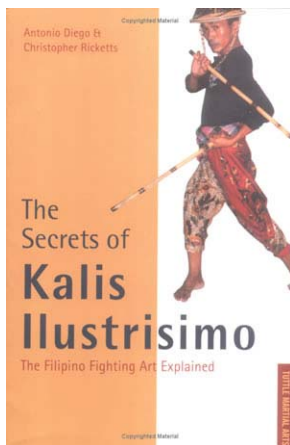
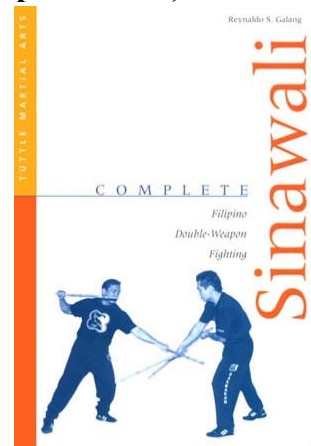
mastery of Pampanga's esoteric fighting art, the Sinawali or "Adwang Mutun." To be sure, the seeker who will attempt to imitate an art form without ample insight into the modes and movements that Yambao executes rather casually (and takes almost for granted) will easily be confused. Now the veil of mystery and wondrous riddles in Yambao's art form is happily swept away. Martial artist and author Galang, after zealous study and tedious research, finally deciphers the timeless, priceless treasures that have been hidden in Yambao's enduring legacy."

- Conrado Rigor (Editor/Publisher: Filipino-American Bulletin, Seattle, WA).

Complete Sinawali: Filipino Double Weapon Fighting (Complete Series)

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This book documents the history and structure of the system, the fundamentals of practice, the defensive movements and applications, and the training techniques used to prepare for actual personal combat. It also includes photographs showing the essential movements and techniques of the style.

The art of Kalis Ilustrisimo hails from Cebu, Philippines. Named after Antonio "Tatang" Ilustrisimo, the master who taught the style to both of the authors of this book, Kalis Ilustrisimo has been in the Ilustrisimo family for more than five generations. Based on traditional Philippine stick and sword fighting methods - and refined by Antonio Ilustrisimo's vast personal experience in challenge matches - it offers a powerful, flexible, dynamic, and effective fighting style.

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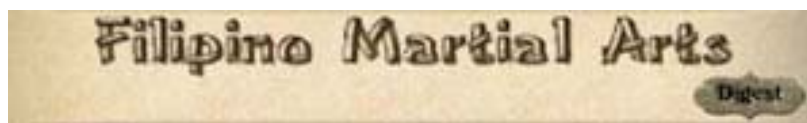
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