

My Journey Into Silat

-TIM ABNER

My journey into Silat Seni Gayong started in the summer of 2007. I am a Police officer for a small suburban Municipality in the Chicago Metro area. At the time, I was a school liaison officer. After an incident occurred at the high school, I took a hard look at what my true self-defense ability's were and what was my ill-conceived perception.

One of my jobs as a Police officer was to work at the High school during school hours. My job was to take reports and investigate crimes that occurred in the school. This ranged from theft to armed robbery to criminal sexual assault. The school has approximately 3,400 students who range in age from 14-20.

After the incident, I started looking at different styles and started talking to people I trusted for advice in this matter. Then one day I was sitting and watching the discovery channel at home and saw an episode of Human Weapon on Malaysian Silat.

I watched with curiosity as to the movements and concepts of this strange art. After watching the show I went to the internet and watched the show several more times. Needless to say, I felt that I had found an art that would be practical for my profession and was not full of, as I like to call it, fu-fu moves and kicks.

I started looking on the internet for schools or instructors in the Chicago area. I was surprised to find out that there was Malaysian Silat and much to my luck, it was offered at the local community college. This is where I started to become a Silat. I took the first step by e-mailing the instructor by the name of Guru Sheikh Shamsuddin Tan Sri SM Salim or whom I later would come to know as Cikgu Sam. After the initial meet and greet, I was invited by Cikgu Sam to come and try the class out at the College.

I still remember my first technique I was shown. It was a body lock technique that required no brute force but was extremely effective. It was not till later that I understood that it was a fruit (buah) technique. The technique that I am speaking of is fruit #3. I find this technique extremely useful and find that it is not just a chokehold that most Americans think they can apply but a control technique which when correctly executed as I have been taught.

You can not only choke them but also break their arm and spine if they are truly a threat to you. I will

caution everyone reading article that as a police officer in the United States, you can defend yourself or others against people who are a threat to killing you or doing great bodily harm, BUT once the offender has been



handcuffed or subdued you can not continue on and do further harm. Again this is why I love this art because it covers all the elements of taking someone under control but if they persist with doing harm you have experience and a skill set to allow you to make decisions and adapt a move to the circumstances at play. Or another way of saying it, you know how to really mess their day up.

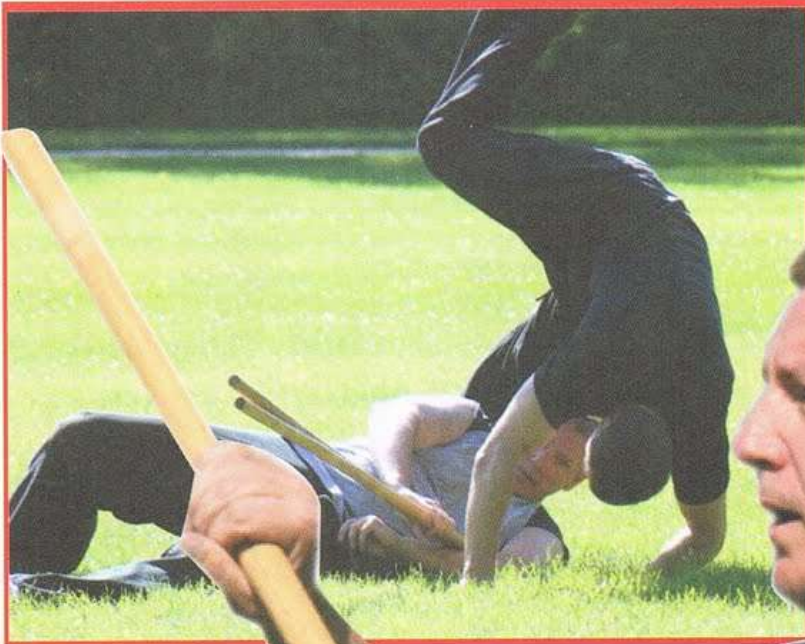
Ever since that first class I have been a devoted practitioner of Gayong. I would be dismissive if I did not mention the other reason why I fell in love with this style. This of course is due to the overwhelming support and guidance that I have received, not

about him that allows for all his students to be at ease and not feel completely overwhelmed. Of course this does not help me at test time but that is just me. I think.

Silat Seni Gayong has helped me in my line of work by instilling confidence in my ability to defend not only myself but others that I am sworn to serve and protect. I have had the opportunity in my everyday work to share what I have learned and have brought some useful techniques to a Multi jurisdiction Swat team that I am involved with. As my knowledge and growth in Silat Seni Gayong continues I am hopeful that I will be able to assist with the spread of this art into the local police jurisdictions. The Swat team that

I am apart of is a multi-jurisdiction team that has 19 officers at this time. We train 8 hours a day twice a month on the basics. This includes Warrant service, Armed barricaded subjects, Hostage rescue, Linear assaults onto buses or trains and of course hand to hand confrontation. I have instructed the team on what I have knowledge on but also called in the expert's. The swat team has been taught by Cikgu Sam. Cikgu Jen and others from my class. For this I am thankful. We have done mostly knife defense and techniques, which allow a full-gearred person with an assault rifle to take on and subdue offenders.

So in conclusion what started off as a journey to better myself as a police officer, has turned-out to be a journey that I feel will make me not only better professional but also a better person, Secure in my person. I look forward to visiting Malaysia and continuing my study under Cikgu Sam.



only from Cikgu Sam, but also from Cikgu Jen (Jen Para) and Cikgu Daniel and the rest of the class. Cikgu Sam teaches the techniques with precision that one would expect but also allows and stress that each technique can be modified due to your size, ability and flexibility. This allows me to grow in this art for anyone who knows me realizes that at 6'03 at approximately 260 lbs. some flexibility is mmm. How do we say NOT THERE? I also find that Cikgu Sam in my opinion is a very humble man who has a calm

