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KOREAN ART OF SELF DEFENCE



Senior Instructors Course 21st - 24th January 2010

REPORT

by

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&

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All senior masters and instructors were scheduled to meet in Gatwick airport at 1 p.m. and, reminded of the BUTF motto, everyone arrived early therefore "on time". Being a newbie to this course, we were being taunted by the old guns.

Mr. Liu VI started his trip badly with his "hand luggage" being too big to be allowed on to the plane and needing to send through check in, whilst Mr. Joannou V used his strength to deceive the check in staff to think that his hand luggage was light.

Even the plane knew how the BUTF worked and arrived at Alicante airport half an hour early meaning that we were 'on time'. When we arrived we were welcomed by Grandmaster Choy IX and Master Au VIII. Mr. Sheehan V and Mr. Snelders V picked up the rental cars to ferry us to our hotel. Mr. Sheehan then decided to test the patience of the local authority by first parking in the middle of the road and when he was told to move, parking in a disabled parking bay. The officer was not best pleased with Mr. Sheehan's display.

Once all the pleasantries were over we rushed off to our home for the next 4 days and 3 nights the lovely Hotel Meridional in Guardamar del Segura directly in front of the Mediterranean Sea. When we arrived we had a little time to refresh ourselves then straight to business with the AGM, where all senior instructors would discuss the operations of the federation. This was the first time that both Mr. Cheng IV and Mr. Rigg IV had the privilege of attending but only in the role of observers.

The meeting was followed by dinner, over four courses, and then it was off to see the local town with Mr. Whitley VI being nominated as entertainment manager 'El hombre de la Hospitalidad de la Noche', unfortunately by the time we got out from dinner the night was no longer young, as most of the shops were closed and we did not see many people around. Mr. Rigg and Mr. Joannou then decided to have a World's Strongest man competition, however no one told them that the weights that they were trying to pick up were cemented to ground.

In the end we managed to find a karaoke bar, where Mr. Austin V spent ages looking for a song, but could not find any songs that he knew, due to him not noticing that he was scanning through the Spanish song list. Eventually he found a song to sing as a duet with Mr. Joannou, which was a rendition of "Easy" with completely different attitudes, with Mr. Austin being our PA man taking the "cool" look with his eyes closed and emotion to the



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song, and Mr. Joannou with a less relaxed stance with his hands firmly in his pocket and replacing the words 'cos I'm easy' with 'cos I'm sleazy'.

On the second day all the instructors woke up nice and early in time to go for an 8 a.m. morning jog and some training on the beach which was just in front of the Hotel the hotel. Taking advantage of the beautiful setting some of the instructors (Mr. Liu, Mr. Cheng and Mr. Joannou) decided to do some posing with the sun rise and the Mediterranean Sea behind them, whereas other Master Manning VII and Mr. Kambo V decided to perform techniques on the fine sandy beach.

After building up an appetite it was breakfast at 9 a.m. followed by a stretching program, led by Master Sangha VII and Master Manning VII. Master Manning demonstrated how he used to stretch with Grandmaster Choy and kindly choose Mr. Rigg to be his sorry partner (thanks to Mr. Cheng) After stretching, filming commenced for the 3rd, 4th, 5th & 6th Dan DVD's, all under the careful instruction of Grandmaster Choy. We were Lucky enough for the weather to be warm and sunny, and after the snow in England is was a refreshing sight. Because it was a brilliantly sunny day it was decided to film outdoors with the Mediterranean Sea as the backdrop. It was a truly beautiful setting with all involved showing that they had put in many hours of practice to perfect their performances, especially Mr. Liu who showed the humility that all black belts should have, when asked if he was ready replied 'I was born ready!' However, his performance led us to wonder what he was born ready for, as there were more retakes than a Jackie Chan movie. After lunch more filming and when finished we were all looking forward to the dinner ahead.

At 7.30 sharp all instructors met up in the foyer of the hotel. We all got into the cars when we noticed that Mr. Born to be ready Liu was missing. We ran into the hotel to call his room, to be answered by an extremely confident man on the end of the line shouting 'whaaa you wannn!??' However when we told him that we were leaving, a less confident and probably scared cry came out. The speed with which he left his room and got into the car could be matched to his speed back in his hay days. We went to a Korea Wok Buffet Restaurant in a town called Benimar where the variety of food was unmatched by anything in the UK and with the added choice of selecting the food and have the chef cook it in front of us. After dinner some tried their hand at karaoke at Grandmaster Choy's villa in Spain. The venue was very welcoming, and with the exception of Mr. Kambo, had better not give up their day jobs. This was a very memorable night which included Mr. Whitley getting a little too comfortable on Grandmaster Choy's sofa. After all fun and games Grandmaster Choy and Master Au took us back to our hotel where we of course as good senior instructors went straight to bed to rest and did not leave the hotel again to go to experience the nightlife of Alicante. We definitely did not let Mr. Rigg and Mr. Snelders take us on a scenic route back to the hotel at 3 a.m!



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Up early on the third day for the obligatory morning run, breakfast and then stretching program following which we commenced with a run through all the Kup grade patterns, with all Senior Instructors being precise in every movement, showing dedication to the Art and demonstrating that with diligent training, what could be achieved. Filming of all the set pieces followed and then on to a well deserved lunch. After lunch was free time to explore the surrounding areas. Everyone returned to share each others experiences along with showing off their purchases. This included a toy that Mr. Joannou bought as a present, which he was really proud of until the arms fell off it in front of all of us.

At 7.30 sharp we assembled in the foyer of the hotel ready to depart for a night of fine dining and entertainment organized by Grandmaster Choy and Master Au. During the 65 mile high speed drive on the AP7 motorway to the Benidorm Palace, Mr. Liu and Mr. Joannou delighted in the fact that newbie Mr. Cheng was stuck in between them and for once having nowhere to run thereby enabling them to demonstrate to him the finer points of close quarters combat! Both the meal and the ensuing show were excellent with the late finish meaning that we did not arrive back at our hotel till after 2 a.m.

Day four meant an early rise for breakfast, check out and then the flight back to the UK.

It was an awe inspiring experience to be in the company of the other senior Black belts for who TKD is not just a sport or hobby but a way of life, it's in the blood. This is down to many years of training under the guidance of Grandmaster Choy, who is without a doubt a truly inspirational man and a true Grandmaster. I feel honored to have spent time with my fellow seniors and value the input and energy that is present in their training

In conclusion we would like to thank Grandmaster Choy IX and Master Au VIII for their guidance, support, hospitality and making this trip possible.

Photos: Mr. Nick Sheehanxx 'Oh' Dan
Mr. Keith Whitley 'Yuk' Dan)
Mr. Alan Liu 'Yuk' Dan) Contributions
Mr. Gursharan Kambo 'Oh'Dan)

