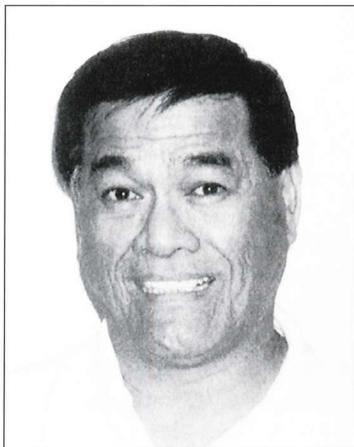


THE “KNOWING IS NOT ENOUGH” INTERVIEW

This Issue: Richard Bustillo

Interview Conducted by Paul Borrett

Richard Bustillo is the Founder and Chief Instructor of the IMB (International Martial Arts Boxing) Academy in Torrance, California USA. He is a former lecturer with California State University and a certified law enforcement defensive tactics instructor with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Los Angeles Police Department and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. He is a consultant with the LAPD's Civilian Martial Arts Advisory Panel, a former columnist for Martial Arts Training publication, the former President of the (WEKAF) World Eskrima/Kali/Arnis Federation '94-'96, and a Founding Member on the Board of Directors for (Bruce Lee) Jun Fan Jeet Kune Do.



A native of Hawaii, Richard has over 45 years of martial arts experience. He began judo training at age 10 at the Gray Y Center in Palolo Valley. He learned to box at age 12 in Kalihi Valley and competed in 'Biddy Boxing' and 'PAL' boxing under the Veterans Boxing Club in Honolulu's Aala Park. At age 14 Richard practiced the Kajukenbo system with the Kempo/Karate Club of Waipahu until graduating from St. Louis High School and moving to California to pursue a college education. While a college student at age 19, Richard competed in 'Golden Gloves' and amateur boxing tournaments for Shaw's Boxing Gym in Los Angeles. At age 24 Richard studied Jeet Kune Do under the legendary Bruce Lee at the Jun Fan Gung Fu Institute in China Town, Los Angeles.

In 1967 with training partner Dan Inosanto, Richard researched and studied the Filipino martial arts of kali/eskrima/arnis. Richard and Dan are credited and honored worldwide for reviving and promoting the martial arts of the Philippines. In 1974 Richard and Dan co-founded the Kali Academy in Torrance, California for two reasons. To share their Bruce Lee's Jeet Kune Do experience with others and to preserve and promote the martial arts of the Philippines. In 1976 Richard was promoted by Sifu Inosanto to senior instructor in Bruce Lee's Jun Fan Jeet Kune Do. In 1978 Richard studied Muay Thai from his student Niyum Piboolnakarin and in 1985 achieved the title Kru (teacher) in Muay Thai from Thailand's former Olympian and former Muay Thai Champion Nanfa (Lot) "Chiridichoi" Satenglam. Currently Richard is training with the Machado (Brazilian) Jujitsu USA Team for fitness and health.

Mr. Bustillo was certified by the USA Olympic Training Center as a coach and official of the U.S. Amateur Boxing of

Southern California. A certified Sensei (instructor) with the Catchascatchcan Wrestling Association of Japan. A Guro (instructor) in the Filipino arts of Kali-Eskrima-Arnis, a Sifu (senior instructor) in Jun Fan Jeet Kune Do (Gung Fu), and a Kru (coach) in Muay Thai (kickboxing). Mr. Bustillo is also an inductee in Black Belt's Hall of Fame - Instructor of the Year and in the World Martial Arts Hall of Fame - Pioneer Award. He was awarded a 9th degree black belt and the title Grandmaster with the fame Doce Pares organization of Cebu City, Philippines.

When he is not coaching or officiating boxing/kickboxing or conducting martial arts seminar around the country or aboard, Mr. Bustillo is on patrol as a Reserve Sergeant with his assigned Emergency Service Detail Marine Reserve Co. 218 (Search & Rescue) of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. He is a member of the National Association of Search and Rescue, the California Reserve Peace Officers Association, the California Association of Public Safety Divers, the Council of Grandmasters of Cebu, Philippines, the California Association of Force Instructors, and a member of the American Society of Law Enforcement Trainers.

After managing the personnel department of a Los Angeles, California major airline for three years (as the culmination of a twenty-year career); Mr. Bustillo elected early retirement to be a full time martial artist. To contact Mr. Bustillo, you may use the following numbers:

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Could you recap, for people who haven't met you, how you first got involved in Martial Arts?

I first got involved with martial arts when I was a kid. When I was eight years old I accompanied a Japanese friend to his Judo classes. I wasn't formally enrolled, but the sensei saw me with my friend and invited me onto the floor. I practiced Judo for almost nine months. At ten years old I got involved with boxing because my cousin, who was into boxing would throw jabs at me. I couldn't grab him and throw him with my judo so I trained in boxing from ten to thirteen years old. My other cousin who was practicing Kajukenpo started kicking me in a friendly sparring match. Kicking was something I had never done before so I took up Kajukenpo at Waipahu Kempo/Karate Club. After graduating from St. Louis High School in Honolulu I came to California for my college education. I saw Bruce Lee's awesome exhibition in 1964 at Long Beach. I searched him out to study his method of martial arts. In 1967 I was invited to the first orientation class at his new Jun Fan Gung Fu Institute in the Los Angeles Chinatown area.

What would you say was your first impression of Bruce Lee?

Awesome! My first impression of Bruce Lee at the exhibition was awesome. I liked his philosophies, explosive speed and power. His one-inch punch! His ability to non-telegraph his kicks and punches and still maintain speed and power. Bruce displayed an unbelievable exhibition of coordination, flexibility and strength. Everything he said about the martial arts were the same things that I believed in. I liked the part about the individual being more important than any established system or style.

Would you say that the different training that you did as a youth set the seed for cross training?

Actually no. Because in those days when you boxed you just boxed, when you did judo, you restricted yourself to just judo techniques. At that young age it was to concentrate on one thing or one activity at a time. It wasn't until I met Bruce that I actually started cross training. When we sparred in Bruce's classes we could punch, kick, trap or grapple. Bruce Lee's way was a case of being well rounded in all those fighting ranges and adapting to the changes.

So although you had trained in all those different styles it wasn't until you met Bruce that somebody encouraged you to put it all together?

Yes, it was Bruce and Dan Inosanto who taught me to adapt to the changes.

What would you say was Bruce Lee's biggest influence on your martial arts growth and development?

Having an open mind and being honest with yourself.

To the best of my knowledge Bruce Lee integrated boxing into his repertoire mostly during his L.A. period. Where did he get his technical knowledge of boxing from and was any of it from your boxing background?

Well I like to think that! (Laughing) But you know a lot of the guys that trained with Bruce had some boxing background. Bruce Lee was his own best boxing coach. Our class got into boxing right at the start of our training because Bruce wanted us to understand the combative way. Full contact, really hitting each other not practicing like the points system. To know what it felt like to get hit and to learn how to hit without getting hit back was our first encounter with Jeet Kune Do.

Where do you think he learnt the technique for the various boxing combinations and punches?

You know a lot of his stuff came from self-knowledge, he used to watch a lot of 8mm film of boxing matches. Muhammad Ali, Sugar Ray Robinson, Rocky Marciano etc.

How would you describe what you have done with your Jeet Kune Do since Bruce Lee's passing?

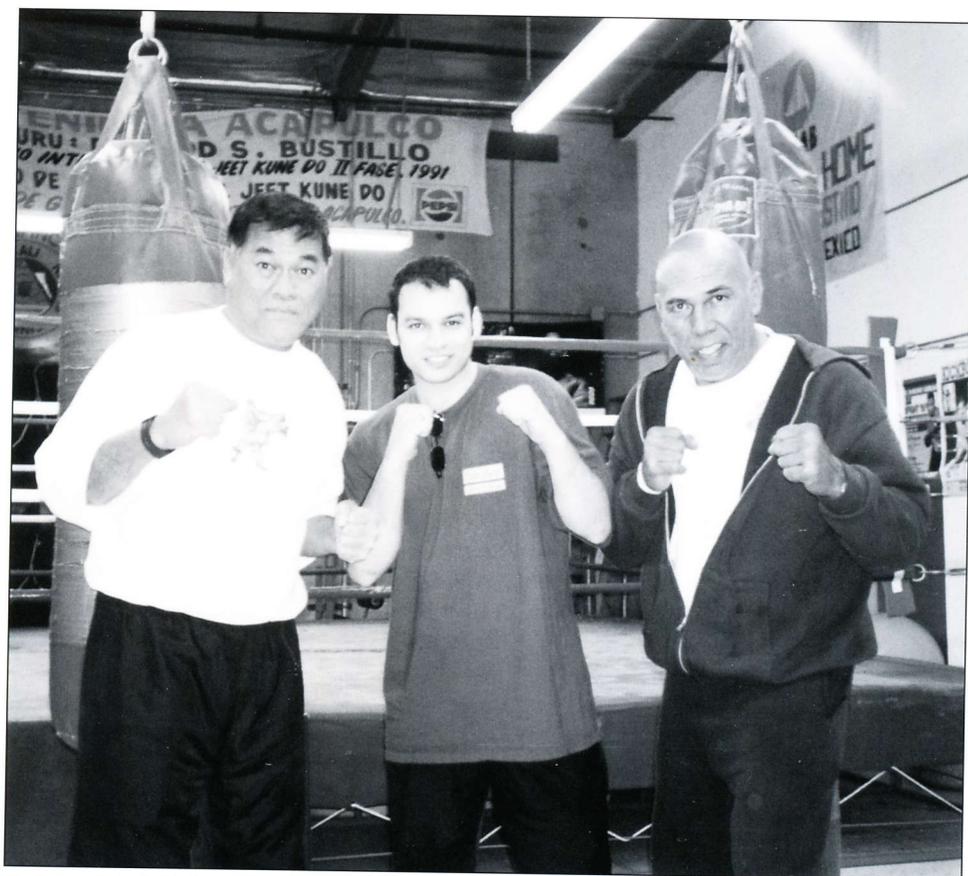
I think I have grown. All because of Dan, God bless Mr. Inosanto (Daniel Inosanto); he's the one who showed me how to practice with an open mind in martial arts training. To look at other arts and to see what best fits me. Mr. Inosanto would tell me, "you can't criticize any martial art until you have practiced it."

I know you have a very tight training and teaching Schedule, but do you continue to train with other Nucleus members when you can?

Yes I'd like to practice with the other guys. But because of time constraints and schedule conflicts, I get by best training with my own students. My goal in the martial arts is to have my students surpass me and to introduce them to masters of different styles, that way we are all growing.

One thing that struck me while you were teaching me some movements on the wooden dummy (mook jong). Bruce already told you that you had alive hands so I am curious as to what interested you in the Wing Chun influenced movements?

Because I had never done it before, I found it interesting. To explore the different techniques and incorporate them into my JKD, and on the other hand see how it can be beneficial or



(left to right) Richard Bustillo, Paul Borrett and Joey Orbillo.

restrictive. Now if I had never learnt it I would never understand the pros and cons of the Mook Jong Dummy.

Since Bruce's death a lot of JKD practitioners have incorporated Filipino Kali and Escrima into their trapping arsenal. Do you favour Wing Chun or Kali style trapping? Or is it too difficult to dissect once you get going?

Eskrima or Kali empty hands techniques are similar to Wing Chun or any other hand trapping arts. It can be hard to tell the arts apart once you get flowing. In midflow you don't know which art you are practicing, its instinctive, which means that JKD is doing its thing. The hands can only move certain ways. In the end, it makes no difference which art I favor. The important thing is to freely express yourself.

Lately a lot of JKD students are cross training everywhere. Do you think there is a danger that new students are not getting as much of the basics as perhaps a lot of the original students were getting. Perhaps to the point where something could be lost in the next generation?

Yes, you're right. New students can get lost by cross training. It is happening now. New instructors are watering down Bruce Lee's Jeet Kune Do. However, students who have been there and done the basics enjoy trying different arts to increase the knowledge level in all different ranges.

I noticed that you taught a children's class. A lot of children's classes have to be very structured. How do you manage to keep the children disciplined and train them responsibly in an all-encompassing system?

At that age they don't know what is and what isn't the standard way. They do what you tell them. If you start training them in different ways to be elusive and diverse in the different arts they pick it up real quick. I don't want my students to be restrictive and bound by set standards. I want them to change and adapt to the long range, close range, or grappling range on any given day.

What do you think is the most satisfying thing you get out of teaching?

There is a lot of gratification in teaching. Seeing the student grow above and beyond his potential is the biggest gratification any instructor can receive.

You started out in Judo as a child. Lately Brazilian Jiu Jitsu has become quite the flavor in grappling and I understand that it was originally brought to Brazil in the form of Judo. Did you find that it was significantly different or did you find that the judo actually helped you to understand the Brazilian Jiu Jitsu?

When I was a kid learning Judo it was just playing for me.

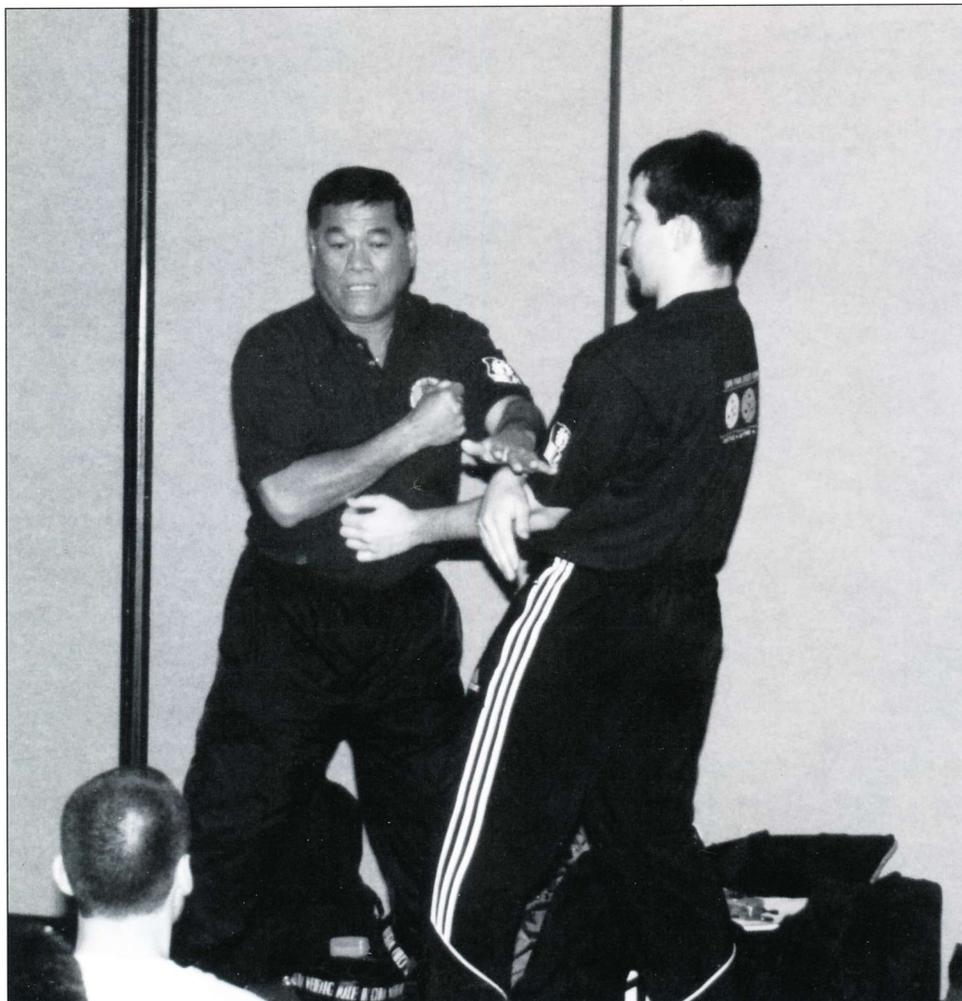
I wasn't really in to it in the same way that I am into Jiu Jitsu as an adult. Also I never knew that today I would be a martial arts teacher, had I known that then, yeah, I would have studied it intensively.

What would you want to see in the future for Jun Fan Jeet Kune Do?

Since we are expanding rapidly, more of the public will see our side of the martial arts. I would like to see others witness more of the same kind of atmosphere we experienced at the Seminar and Banquet in Seattle last week, or the ones we previously held in Los Angeles and in San Francisco. We had fun, we worked out, we cried, we laughed. I would like to take that same attitude outside of our seminars and share it with the general public and martial arts community.

Thank you for taking the time to do this interview and in particular what you have done for me here at the IMB academy.

Oh, you're very welcome Paul. Come back anytime. Our doors are open to you.



Richard Bustillo teaching at the 3rd Annual Jun Fan Jeet Kune Do Seminar.

