

# Sharpening up the attack in WingTsun | WingTsun-World

As I have spent October on a research tour related to the martial arts, I have requested Dr. Oliver König to help out by writing a guest editorial on the importance of correct and effective, appropriate attacks to stop an opponent.

## Attack training

Training for the important factors when attacking is often undervalued. But why is it important also to develop and train the quality of the attack?

The beginner to WT already learns the 4 *Blitz*-attacks in the first two student programmes. These are quite easy to learn, and can be very effective provided that the quality of the attack is really good.

Factors involved include striking power, no preliminary drawing-back, the timing of the blow, use of the torso and leg muscles (not only the muscles of the arm), energy transfer etc.

If the *Blitz*-attacks are carried out poorly they lack stopping power, which means that the opponent may become even angrier and be provoked into making more powerful attacks.

However, the good quality of an attack is not only important for beginners, but also in the more advanced programmes. In the *ReakTsun* programme – to give one example – the aim is to develop the right reactions to an opponent's attack. But if the partner is unable to deliver a good attack, e.g. a punch, it is not possible to practice a realistic defensive response. This leads to a false sense of security, as incorrectly practiced defensive responses will fail in a real situation if the opponent delivers good attacks.

## Some remarks on striking power

The idea that striking power is unimportant in self-defence, as points can be attacked where no great force is required, is not to be dismissed (e.g. a finger-jab to the eyes or a chop to the neck).

It is indeed correct to some extent, however there are good reasons for developing striking power anyway.

One important reason is that e.g. a blow to the neck must also be carried out with a certain amount of force to be effective. The striking power required for an effective (fight-stopping) strike to the side of the neck varies from person to person. An attack that is too weak can therefore prove unsuccessful. Moreover, an attack such as this is sometimes not possible because no gap presents itself.

Another reason to extend our repertoire is that it is then not immediately necessary to jab an opponent in the eyes or strike vital points such as the larynx or carotid sinus during self-defence. The ability to deliver good striking power therefore also helps us to respond more appropriately.

## How should we train the quality of our attack?

Exercises to develop attack quality should be performed regularly, preferably during every class.

Drills with focus-mitts, punch-pads etc. have become well-established in the student programmes. These have the additional advantage that the student undergoes varied training, and at the same time engages in a physical activity that improves the level of fitness.

In the medium term the aim is to learn the use of the torso and larger muscles. Most beginners are unable to develop striking power using the whole body. They mainly use their arms. Body involvement should therefore be practiced at an early stage, using non-specific exercises such as pulling and pushing. Other important training aspects include coordination of the footwork with the strike, and the timing of a blow.

Guest editorial: Dr. Oliver König

