

'The Hand Is My Sword'

Karate Expert A Humble Man

By BOB MILLER
Journal Sports Writer

The hands were arranged on a strangely-decorated felt emblem—one clasped over a fist, two outstretched palms out, two in a praying gesture.

Husky Bob Trias stared at them for a moment and suddenly became solemn, like a man who had just uttered an eternal oath.

"That's the rule we go by," he said, pointing to each set of hands. No one enters this school without thoroughly memorizing their meaning.

The school is Bob Trias' International Institute of Karate and Judo, an academy dedicated to the proposition that the human hand is one of the world's most lethal weapons. TRIAS' school is located at 101 W. McDowell and passers-by invariably are startled by shouts and fierce pounding sounds coming from within.

Another strange sight is to see Trias' students outside, practicing their "kiai," or yell, as it's known in karate. Few people stand and watch. There's something about the earnestness of it all, that moves them.

Actually, karate, as taught by Trias, second-ranking man in the U.S., and eight in the world, is not terrific, nor is it savage. It is a complete and deadly means of self-defense that paradoxically teaches an individual confidence yet humbles him.

"Karate is for the humble person," Trias said. "That's where the audience count is. Hand over fist means never to be used offensively. Hands with palms out indicate the person bears no weapons. The praying gesture signifies forgiveness over a 'maximum measure' necessitated to preserve life, family or nation."

"Any student who attempts to 'try out' his new ability, even when provoked, does not last in this school," Trias added solemnly. "A student is taught to walk away from a tormentor, slowly, as he seeks to escape."

"Only if you have a 'kill'," Trias said slowly as he displayed a six-pronged spiked dagger. "It is the most lethal weapon. And from merely to disable—to 'kill'."

The student of karate who has a religion and... as Trias dates back 5,000 years. It's originator, as legend has it, was Okinawan Prince Daruma, whose subjects were frail and open to attack.

HIS THEORY was to utilize both hands and feet as weapons, combine them with a systematic rhythm, strict self-control and the element of surprise.

The system was perfected in Okinawa and there it flourished, virtually unnoticed until 1952 when the Japanese invaded the tiny island.

Okinawans put to use their terrifying "hand swords" well enough that the invaders adopted the system. They gave it the actual name, karate, which means "empty hand."

Trias insists that proper breathing is one of the secrets to profient karate. Breath must be controlled deep within the stomach.

This is what necessitates the "kiai," a releasing of air from the lungs simultaneously with the deadly flash of hand or foot. Trias says breathing must be in time with the heart beat.

After karate control comes emphasis on speed, karate essentials, and endurance. It's simply a matter of hoisting the three—which takes years.

The two concrete blocks could have been bamboo shoots for Bob Trias. He explains it this way:

"Breaking a rock, heavy piece of lumber and etc. requires the breathing, speed and so on. But the vital ingredient is knowing you can do it."

"Karate is associated with the ancient legend of Zen, a group playing mental conditioning over all else. During trips to Japan, I have seen karate players plunge their bare hands into boiling water with no ill effects."

"The water did not harm him, because he KNEW it wouldn't. It sounds impossible, unless you know the Zen mind."

"The veteran karate player's hand is understandably like an iron glove." It takes hours of conditioning, first by banging the fist into a box of rice, later against beams, and finally sand and gravel.

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MIGHTY MITE Size is no great handicap in karate as Robert Trias, 42, demonstrates in warding off mock punch by father. Miss Trias is quick enough to instruct always.

"... knowledge of the human anatomy, the body's... and general disabling areas. The nasal region, the... kidney, spine, and near the heart all are regions where an experienced flick of the wrist spells fins.

Keeping up on the multitude of karate's "katas" and the varied styles of the game is enough to tax any memory. Trias' brand is the widest taught and most respected called "Shorei." It says

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Tourney Popular

Designed expressly to give Mr. Average Bowler an opportunity to compete for national honors, the BFAA National Team Handicap Championship, now in its eighth year, is proving itself the most popular competition of its type in the country.

More than 1,600 teams soon will be engaged in regional rollups in nine different areas and they are survivors of qualifying tournaments in establishments, counties, cities and states conducted by affiliated associations of the Bowling Proprietors' Association of America.

THIS REPRESENTS a 20 per cent increase in overall participation over 1961, which had a 30 per cent increase over the previous year. And, there's a possibility the tourney will explode beyond even wildest belief in 1963.

There were five regions last year and the total prize fund shared by 1,377 teams was \$125,365, with a dozen teams qualifying for the national finals and a \$39,600 prize fund at Burlington, Iowa.



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About Our Cover

JOURNAL Photographer Earl McCortney's stirring pictures emphasize the deadly power that makes karate. On the cover, world-ranked Bob Trias shatters two concrete slabs with a single chop of his hardened right hand. At the moment of impact he let forth a piercing shout, vital to "power concentration."

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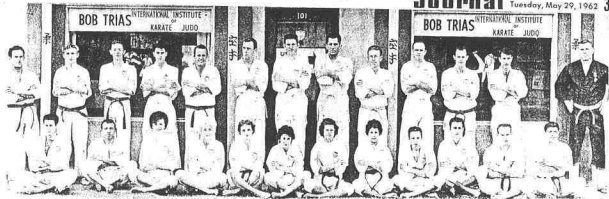
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This Article was given to Peralas Hanahi by Contreras Hanahi at a Shorei-Ryu Camp as a gift. Mr. Wiseman had a copy in his archives. He received it from Peralas Hanahi.



(Continued from Page 2)

Trias, is tutored only by the masters. Another variety of karate is "Gojuin," which closely resembles the first. Others are Ieshin, still taught in Okinawa, Shotokanryu, Koshu-Ryu, Shito, Wado and Tae Kwon Do. Main differences lie in technique, whether the defense is geared chiefly low, high, with emphasis on hands or feet or both.

Trias, who published a book on karate in 1958 entitled "The Hand Is My Sword," works in the traffic safety division of the Arizona Highway Dept.

HE BECAME interested in karate during World War II while stationed at the Solomon Islands. His career, which has carried him to the No. 1 non-Oriental authority in the world, started by accident.

"I was fooling around with boxing and a Chinese worked out in the same gym," Trias said. "He was interested in boxing, and offered to teach me karate in return. I scoffed at his jumping

and kicking antics for months until finally consenting to mix with him in the ring—his system against mine."

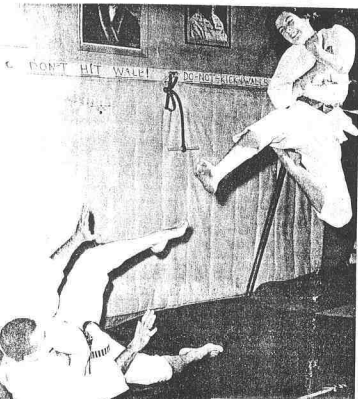
"Fortunately, he just toyed with me, or I could have ended up with a broken jaw or neck."

Trias' school has about 200 students, with facilities for men and women of all ages and also for children. He teaches Judo, Jujitsu, police tactics and general self defense.

His school is part of a 23-club network which includes Japan, the Philippines and Okinawa. Two of Trias' more prominent local students are pro golfer Frank Stranahan and Judge Fred Struckmeyer. Doctors, attorneys, and other professional men also receive his teachings.

The great John L. Sullivan, famed for his boast "I can lick any man in the house," mercifully was born about 100 years too late.

Imagine the Boston Strongbow's fate if Bob Trias had stepped out of the crowd.



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LAST MONTH'S winners were the trio of Avano Hardick-Berens and their gas dragster. They were so close pressed all the way by the Brown Brothers and the team of Hughes-Hokker-Hawkins. The completely paid for vacation is in addition to trophies, cash, and bonds also won in the every Saturday night competition.

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