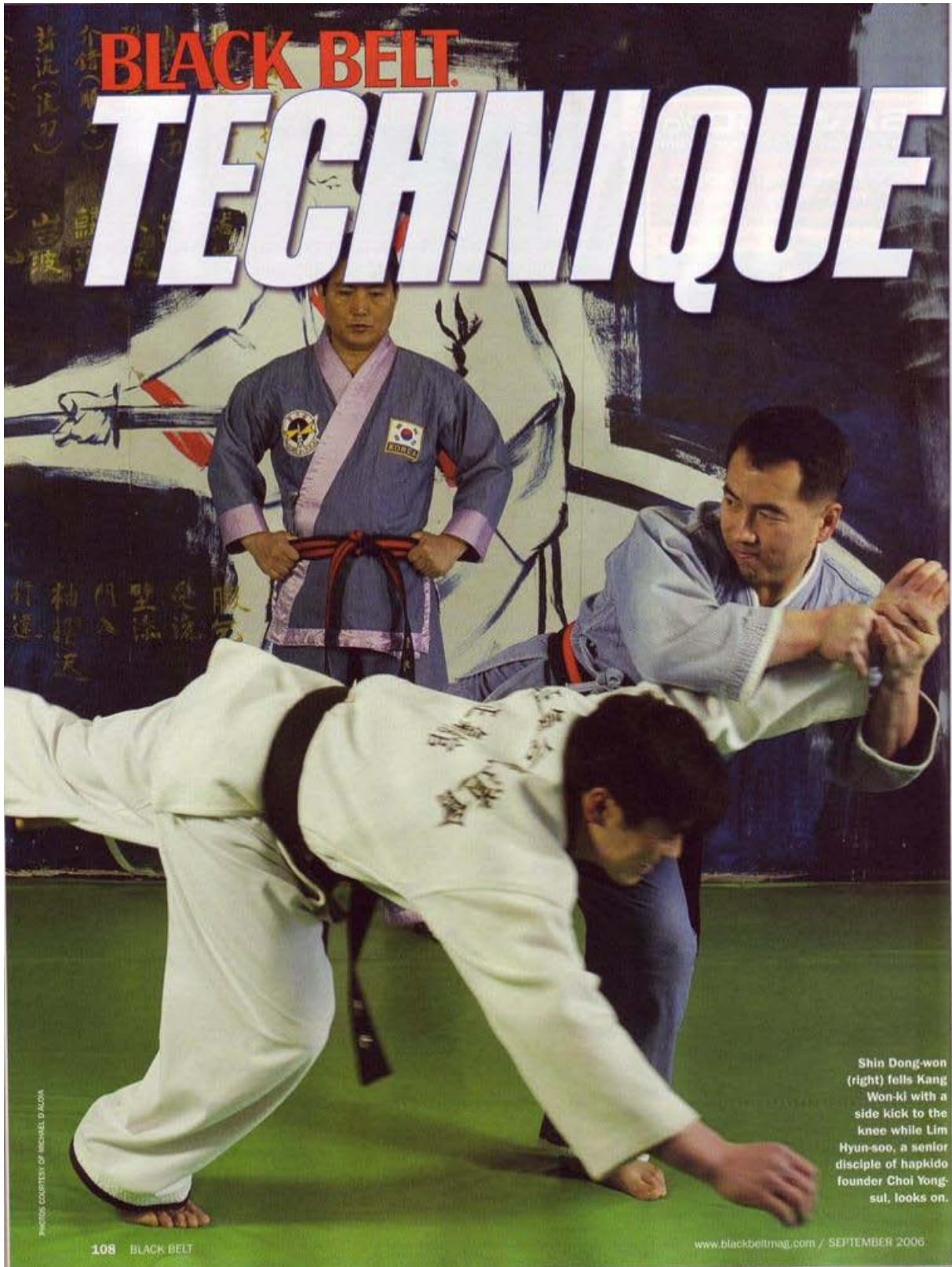


BLACK BELT. TECHNIQUE



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MICHAEL D'ALONIA

Shin Dong-won (right) fells Kang Won-ki with a side kick to the knee while Lim Hyun-soo, a senior disciple of hapkido founder Choi Yong-sul, looks on.

GUIDE

The 10 Original Kicks of Hapkido

by Michael D'Aloia and Sheryl Glidden

Every hapkido practitioner worth his salt knows the name of Choi Yong-sul. He's the Korean martial arts legend who founded the art, which has been deemed one of the world's most effective forms of self-defense. More than a few Korean masters insist they spent considerable time with Choi, learning his techniques and absorbing his knowledge. However, none can legitimately claim to have spent more time with the founder than Lim Hyun-soo, one of the few men promoted to ninth-degree black belt by Choi himself.

Lim, who now serves as president of the Jung Ki Hapkido and Kuhapdo Association, is an essential key to hapkido's history and the preservation of Choi's teachings. With 2006 marking the 20th anniversary of the founder's death, Black Belt asked Lim to share some information about his time with Choi and to shed some light, figuratively and photographically, on hapkido's 10 original kicks. —Editor

Black Belt: How long did you study hapkido with Choi Yong-sul?

Lim Hyun-soo: I was a student of his from 1965 until his death in 1986. For nine of those years, he gave me special private lessons.

BB: Do you know anything about Choi's family?

Lim: He had one brother and one sister. A person his family knew—a candy-business owner—told them that if Choi were to follow him to Japan, he would be able to go to school and have money. So at age 8 or 9, he left home.

BB: How did Choi meet Sogaku Takeda?

Lim: After the businessman and his wife took him to Japan, Choi started misbehaving. There was much arguing. The

candy man left him at a Buddhist temple. A monk who lived there was friends with Takeda.

BB: Did Choi tell you of his training with Takeda?

Lim: Yes, he said it was very hard. Training would last all day.

BB: What martial art did Choi learn from Takeda?

Lim: *Daito-ryu aikijujutsu*.

BB: How does aikido-founder Morihei Uyeshiba fit into the picture?

Lim: Takeda had been teaching Choi

ARCH-OF-THE-FOOT KICK: The opponent (left) grabs the hapkido practitioner's wrist (1). He responds by circling his hand upward (2), then grabbing the man's wrist and pulling him off-balance (3). He finishes with a sweeping kick to the lead ankle (4).





FRONT KICK WITH THE TOES: The assailant (left) seizes the martial artist's lapel (1). The martial artist controls his wrist (2) and executes a toe kick to the groin (3) before following up with a standing armbar (4).



for quite a while. Choi was 19 years old when Morihei Uyeshiba entered to train with Takeda. At that point, Choi was already Takeda's martial arts helper/student instructor.

BB: Did Takeda and Choi live in the same house in Japan?

Lim: Yes, they lived in the same house.

BB: Did Choi speak Korean, Japanese or both?

Lim: He spoke Japanese 30 percent of the time and Korean 70 percent of the time during the first two years after he returned to Korea. After that, he spoke only Korean.

BB: Did he teach cane techniques?

Lim: He taught some *jipangi* (cane/umbrella) techniques.



REVERSE/INVERTED ROUNDHOUSE KICK: Lim Hyun-soo (center) is accosted by two attackers (1). He immediately smashes the groin of the first man with his right foot (2). With the assailant incapacitated, Lim can focus on neutralizing the second opponent.

Kicking in the Art of Hapkido

Numerous viewpoints on *hapkido's* kicks have been proffered by martial artists of all backgrounds. Some believe that the fancy leg techniques taught by a few practitioners stem from the art's earliest days, but that's not accurate, says Lim Hyun-soo, a master who received his ninth-degree black belt from hapkido-founder Choi Yong-sul. To preserve the essence of Choi's art, Lim teaches the following 10 original hapkido kicks. For information about how to execute them, refer to the photo sequences.

- Arch-of-the-foot kick Target: lower ankle, inside ankle
- Front kick with the toes Target: testicles
- Reverse/inverted roundhouse kick Target: groin, testicles
- Side kick with the outside knife edge of the foot Target: knee
- Front kick with the inside knife edge of the foot Target: knee
- Front kick Target: chin, jaw
- Fanning kick Target: thigh, femoral artery
- Heel kick while spinning/pushing the opponent Target: spine, back of the leg
- Low side kick Target: back or side of the knee
- Back kick with the rear foot Target: chest —M.D., S.G.



SIDE KICK WITH THE OUTSIDE KNIFE EDGE OF THE FOOT: Shin Dong-won (right) blocks a hand strike executed by his foe (1). He then traps (2), twists (3) and torques (4) the man's arm before thrusting a side kick into his knee (5-6).

BB: What was Choi's adult life like before you began training with him?

Lim: He grew up in Japan and married a Korean woman there. He, his wife and his son lived in Japan until 1945, when they returned to Korea. He had one son and, I believe, three daughters.

BB: What was his son's name?

Lim: Choi Bong-yul.

BB: Did his son practice hapkido?

Lim: Yes, he practiced for 20 years with his father. After the birth of his son, Choi Bong-yul stopped practicing. He became a businessman.

BB: Is he still alive?

Lim: No, he died of cancer in 1987 at the age of 63 or 64. It was one year after the death of his father, who passed away after he had a stroke and was paralyzed.

FANNING KICK: The opponent (right) grabs the hapkido expert's shoulders (1). The hapkido stylist raises his right fist and blasts a punch into the man's abdomen (2). He immediately





FRONT KICK WITH THE INSIDE KNIFE EDGE OF THE FOOT: The defender's (right) wrist is grabbed by his partner (1). He thrusts his hand downward to weaken the grip (2), then reverses the hold (3) and executes a kick to the knee (4-5). The technique destroys the assailant's balance, and a quick pull with the hands sends him to the mat (6).

unleashes a fanning kick using the bottom of his foot to strike the inner thigh (3), causing the man to drop (4).



BB: Did you attend Choi Yong-sul's funeral?

Lim: Yes, it was a very big funeral.

BB: Did any of his other students attend the ceremony?

Lim: Yes, I recall that So Buk-sub (supposedly the first hapkido student) attended.

BB: Do you think Choi is more famous today than when he was alive?

Lim: Yes, he is much more famous and well-known now.

BB: Many people claim to be students of his. What's your opinion of that?

Lim: Many men studied with Choi Yong-sul but only for a short time. Some studied for one year to three years, and some only attended seminars. Many would spend a short time training with

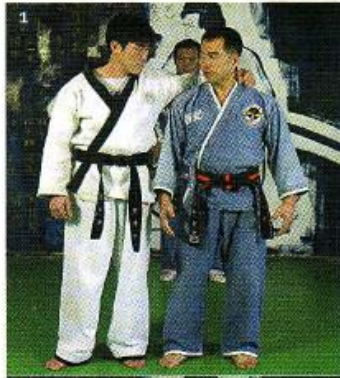


FRONT KICK: The enemy punches, and the hapkido master blocks with his left arm (1). He then grasps the man's forearm while chambering his right foot (2). The final move is a kick to the chin (3). Note that this technique is one of the rare instances in which hapkido advocates kicking above the waist.



HEEL KICK WHILE SPINNING/PUSHING THE OPPONENT: When Shin Dong-won (right) is grabbed (1), he positions his left hand to pull downward on the man's right arm (2), then completes the pull while executing an upward strike to the chin with his right palm (3). Continuing the motion of his right hand, Shin pushes the opponent's head backward (4), creating an opening for a heel kick to the back of the thigh (5-6).





LOW SIDE KICK: The attacker (left) grabs the defender from the side (1). The defender responds by placing his right hand on the man's far shoulder (2), then slamming a kick into the side of his knee (3). The blow buckles his leg, sending him to the ground (4).

him, take a picture together and then say he was their teacher. Choi told me he wouldn't show many techniques to those students, and the ones he did show, he wouldn't get into the details of how to execute them properly.

BB: When did Choi close his dojang?

Lim: It was on June 6, 1976. He closed his dojang and spent every day for the rest of his life at my dojang, the Jung Ki Kwan.

BB: When Choi would make his daily trip to your dojang, what would transpire?

Lim: He would teach and practice hapkido. We would have discussions, talk politics and play Korean chess, called baduk.

BB: What's the most important thing you'd like the world to know about Choi?

Lim: My teacher was warm-hearted and composed. He always emphasized practice—talking less and practicing more. He

had no facial expression, so one couldn't see his feelings. However, behind his expressionless face was a warm heart.

BB: Can you tell us about the kicks he taught you?

Lim: He taught only 10 basic kicks to the lower body and vital targets. He stressed that it's very dangerous to kick the upper part of the body and doing so can lead to a fatal wound if you make a mistake. He emphasized that hapkido is not a sport; it's a martial art. Therefore, his kicking philosophy was to [attack] the lower part of the body. ✕

About the interviewers: Michael D'Aloia is the chief instructor at Iron Eagle Hapkido in Clifton, Pompton Lakes and Wayne, New Jersey. Sheryl Glidden is the chief instructor of Jung Ki Kwan Maine in Yarmouth, Maine. Special thanks to Park Gab-sun for translating. For more information, visit <http://www.blackbeltmag.com> and click on Community, then Black Belt Authors.

BACK KICK WITH THE REAR FOOT: Shin Dong-won (center) is confronted by two assailants (1). He strikes the first man with a knuckle punch to the throat (2-3) and thrusts a back kick into the torso of the second (4). With each man wounded, Shin can focus his attention on the one who presses the attack.

