

UNITING THE WORLD THROUGH **MARTIAL ARTS**

TKD *TaeKwonDo* TIMES

NOVEMBER 2014

ATA'S
CHIEF
MASTER
G.K.
LEE

SAFEGUARDING TRADITION

KICKING HER WAY
THROUGH HOLLYWOOD

CAITLIN
DECHELLE

LIVING THE LIFE OF A SAMURAI:
TAREK HUSSEIN
WORLD

THE MAN BEHIND
THE MEDALIST

U.K.'S MICHAEL CLEGG

Breaking Stability

by Master Terry Wisniewski



Breaking is one of the main reasons Tae Kwon Do became the most popular martial art on the planet. Proof? Read Dr. Kimm's new Taekwon-Do History book and learn how government support came because of the impressive power demonstrated by a fore-fist break. Even today, the most popular part of any demonstration, or Black Belt exam, is the breaking.

However, breaking is a double-edged sword. Succeed, and you are a hero. Fail to complete the break, and you are a zero. The same goes for breaking in classrooms, when students break they are pumped and motivated, which keeps them around so they can earn their Black Belt.

The question is, how can we better guarantee success? It is easy. Control the difficulty of the board they are trying to break and ensure a Stable Breaking Platform (SBP).

We reviewed boards in a previous issue, but a quick recap is that the new plastic re-breakable boards offer many choices in consistent, controlled breaking difficulties, unlike wood boards that have huge swings in difficulty level.

Humans are not good at creating Stable Breaking Platforms. Often their hands are not big enough to hold more than four boards, and it is very difficult to lock out every joint while maintain-

ing a specific height. The most common fix was the creation of the "human pyramid" of holders: two people holding the boards, then two more people holding their wrists, and then finally, two or three guys holding their backs. It helps, but it still isn't ideal. This does nothing to alleviate the



risk of kicked fingers, faces, stomachs, jammed wrists, and elbows and broken boards that fly into their faces.

Past painful experiences also cause human holders to flinch at the critical moment of impact, or, the kicker holds back out of fear of injuring the holders, which often causes the break to fail.

Demonstrations are supposed to bring students into your school, not chase them away, because they saw a holder get injured, or the breaker look ridiculous because he or she failed.

The solution is a Board Holder. The usual thought that follows is some contraption made out of wood or metal constructed by a student or a friend. While these ingenious devices may work, they are usually clumsy, heavy, and limited in where and how you can use them. However, there are a myriad of choices in professionally designed and fabricated board holders. Just go online and search "martial art board holder," and shop around. Without a doubt, you can find a board holder that will suit your needs.

As you search, I suggest you consider the following 8 questions:

PORTABILITY:

Are you always going to be breaking at your school, or will you be breaking at demonstrations?

VERSATILITY:

Is it strong enough for your biggest Black Belt, yet simple and light enough for children to use?

SAFETY:

Are there hard exposed edges for students to injure themselves on if they miss? What about if they follow through?

ECONOMY OF SPACE:

Are you going to leave it up in your school all the time? What if you want multiple machines up?

CONVENIENCE:

If you are taking it down between uses, does it set up quickly and easily?

CUSTOMIZABLE:

Are there various mounting options that can suit your school and students?

UNIFORMITY OF TRAINING EQUIPMENT:

Can your students use the same gear you use, at home?

CHECK WHOLESALE AND RETAIL PRICING:

Is it affordable for you and your students?

Find the right board holder for you and your students and see the joy that successful breaking brings to your students. **TKD**

• Master Terry Wisniewski is a 7th degree Black Belt in ITF Taekwon-Do and founder of Tien Lung Taekwon-Do. He is a full time professional Taekwon-Do instructor with three schools. As a 9-time coach for Team Canada he has trained World Champions in Patterns, Self Defense & Power Breaking.