

Russian Combat Academy Seminars

By Nancy Evans

Each time I attend a class or a special seminar at the Russian Combat Academy, located in Sarasota, FL, the theme music from the James Bond 007 movies or Mission:Impossible comes to my mind. Look out 007! 0013 is in training!

Good morning Ms. Evans. You have been invited to attend a special seminar entitled: "Realm of Encounters and Confrontations with Edged Weapons" (aka "KNIVES"). Should you damage yourself or any other students in attendance, or cause any property damage, your publisher will disavow any knowledge of your existence, and your Photo Journalist I.D. will evaporate in 10 seconds. Play nice and get some great photos!

I, and about 20 other enthusiastic students, (including some law enforcement officers), were in attendance for this training seminar on "edged" weapons, known to most of us as knives, or razors, or anything else with a sharp edge to it. Some students came from as far as Ft. Myers, to have the privilege of having "Sonny" Puzikas, instructor of the Russian Martial Arts, "The System" for this important session.

I walk a fine line here, because I can't give too much away, as this is a method of Martial Arts that has been kept in secrecy since the 10th century, was reserved for only the most elite combat units and special forces in the former Soviet Union, and still is not widely known. This method is kept closely guarded, so unless you actually attend classes or seminars, or happened to catch the special segment on Sonny's Russian Combat Academy which aired on Sarasota's SNN news channel recently, you will need to read on and then contact Sonny to learn this simple, yet very effective method of self-defense.

Sonny likes to call it the KISS system. "Keep it simple "System". Contrary to most self-defense, which wants you to keep your opponent as far away as possible, with the Russian "System", you want your opponent or attackers as close as possible to you so you can do your "work". (Yes, closer is better, believe it or not!). "Work" is any of the pushes, hits, kicks, punches, take downs, or pain inflicting movements to various pressure points and joints that you are taught to do.

You are taught to be humble, and go the way your opponent decides to go, and then follow their lead. (Like dancing). Anyone can be taught this method. (There

are no belts involved, and no "forms" to learn as in most Martial Arts). Actually, a flexible, loose, relaxed body is better than someone who is tensed up.

Sonny uses a student or students and demonstrate several different scenarios as drills, that he in turn wants us to practice with each other. (Using dull knives in class). You will be surprised at how simple the solutions can be. They Work!

Everything is done in slow motion so it can be observed, and then, as we are prac-



ting, he goes about the room and is constantly checking on our movements, positioning of your body, arms and legs, etc. Did you move the right way, or did you just get a knife wound? And, he always asks if there are any questions or any other scenarios that we would like to have demonstrated. Sometimes the questions can turn into another whole set of drills to learn! Sonny also teaches you to get into your attackers head, and will show you ways to distract them, and where on the anatomy to hit them to be the most effective in the shortest period of time.

Sonny has all types of ingenious "real" physical conditioning and strengthening exercises that can be done either alone or with a partner in class. These are difficult and fun at the same time!

Sonny will demonstrate the exercise first, of course, and makes it look sooo easy. Then, when we all attempt to do it, we wind up falling down, or do very poor imitations of what he did without even batting an eye! This guy is amazing, he is so strong! These physical strength exercises will assist you in "working" on your opponent. This type of strength is even better than the "I can throw lots of weights around" muscles that you get at the gym.

These are very useful exercises, and most of them you can practice at home!

Some of the other drills we practiced during the day were the various ways to grip a knife and use it, and also to defend against attacks with those various grips. Overhand, underhand, slashes from the front and sides, and back. Another one was knife attacks, and timing of your body movements to defend against it, and methods to avoid stab wounds.

I highly recommend Sonny's regular classes and seminars to anyone who wants to learn "real life" situational self-defense survival methods that are simple to learn. We have many people in our class who have backgrounds in other Martial Arts, but the Russian Martial Arts "System" beats them all. Ladies, especially, should be taking Sonny's classes, he's the best to learn self-defense from! And, to those involved with Law Enforcement, Military, or security professionals, Sonny has "Specialized" courses available in addition to his regular classes and special seminars.

Speaking of special seminars, the next Russian "System" Seminar will be held Saturday and Sunday, May 15th and 16th, featuring guest instructor Mr. Jim King, on the "Art of combat and survival". Please call to make your reservation as space is limited.

If you would like to learn more about, or join in and experience the Russian Combat Academy for yourself, all you need to do is call Sonny at either 941/356-9371 or 941/330-1866. The facility is located at 126 North Orange Avenue, Sarasota, FL. (2nd floor, rear entrance). E-mail at: progressivecombat@att.net www.russiancombatacademy.com

