BLITZ

AUSTRALASIAN MARTIAL ARTS MAG

AUSTRALIAN PUBLICATION

AUGUST 2013
AUS. $7.95 Inc. GST
NZ. $9.95 Inc. GST

The Intercepting Fist
How to hit first, every time

Deflect, Smother, SMASH!
The devastating elbow techniques hidden in Goju kata

BRUCE LEE
THE ICON
Why he's still a force after 40 years

Do Martial Arts Make You PSYCHIC?
The scientific study that shows why masters are faster

MMA vs JKD
Why top UFC coaches come from Jeet Kune Do

Dan Inosanto
Bruce Lee's wingman tells it like it was

+ The Path to Power: Why Bruce Lee used kettlebells
Close-quarters: Are Americans better prepared for violence?

DRILL IT WITH KARL THORNTON

Engage Your Instincts

Test the difference between your trained reactions to a close-range sucker-punch and that of this technique based on the primal human reaction to attack.

THE TRAINER

Karl Thornton has over 30 years of experience across a broad range of martial arts and self-defence disciplines, including karate, kickboxing and Gan Gan Tao, a system based on karate and Wing Chun kung fu. He is an experienced executive protection specialist (bodyguard) and an active private special operative who is deployed to some of the world's most high-risk environments, conducting covert surveillance, intelligence gathering and rescue missions. Thornton, who runs Modern Defensive Tactics Australia (MDTA) out of Melbourne, was awarded the Medaille OTT by the International Bodyguard Association, which is given for meritorious and protective service in an area in conflict, including Iraq, Afghanistan, Balkans, Thailand, Northern Ireland, PNG, and Northern, Southern and Western Africa.

MDTA is a proud member of the World Combat Association (the renowned UK-based group founded by author Geoff Thompson and Peter Consterdine), and runs a WCA-approved syllabus.

THE DRILL

This drill is used to train MDTA's five fundamentals of survival as part of the MDTA Primal System. This begins with the IDR (instinctive defensive reflex) application. An IDR is what is commonly known as a flinch response, the human body's natural reflex during an attack (blinking, flinching where the arms respond to protect the face, etc.). The MDTA IDR is trained to become a flinch response to a surprise attack, and or a sucker-punch type attack, as shown in the drill here.

The IDR is a combination of what we call an elbow guard with an extended palm-strike. You tuck and cover your head, simultaneously launching (MDTA's term for closing the gap) so that on impact, the attacker's strike force is minimised by the force of your strike while your head is protected by an MTT or 'minimised-trauma technique'. At the same time, this simultaneous defence-and-attack reaction may reverse the attacker's psychological and physiological process from 'attack' to 'defend', so we continue with resistance strikes to keep the cognitive processes of the attacker flooded so we can then stop the attack and safely retreat.

It is highly recommended that both individuals training this drill (i.e. the person in the 'attacker' role and the defender) wear a mouthguard, head-guard, as well as elbow-guards and MMA-style gloves as they will both be allowing a flow of simultaneous strikes and combative techniques. As with any drill, once the system
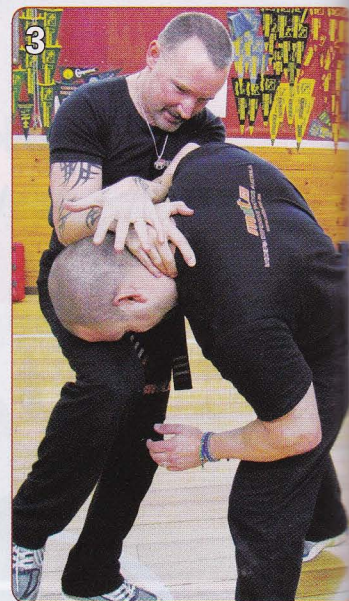
THE DRILL: IDR VS COMMON ATTACK
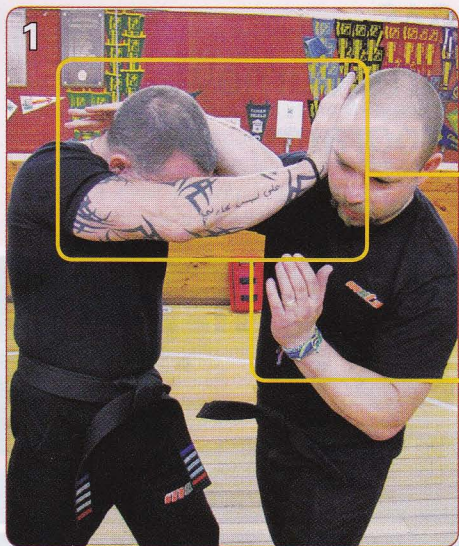
From close range, the attacker strikes and you respond with the IDR flinch response (a tight cover while simultaneously striking out with your palm)…
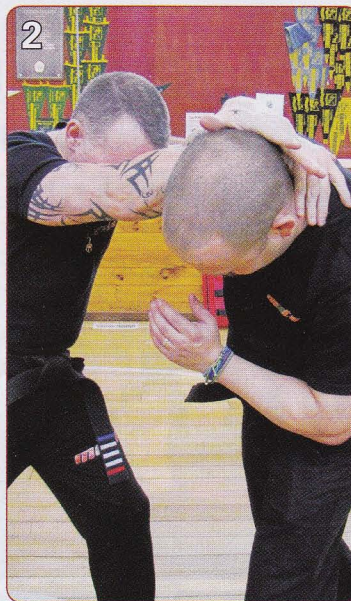
…then immediately flow into a counter, maintaining contact with the attacker. Here, Thornton drops his elbow down to strike the attacker on the back of the neck…

… while clinching it with his other hand to knee-the attacker's head, continuing to break down resistance…

is understood and can be applied correctly, resistance should be offered. It is best practised in a scenario style, with preceding dialogue and approach by the attacker, and the strike executed from close (conversation) range as per a real attack. The strike may be a designated type to begin with, then random strikes used as the receiver advances in their feel for the technique.

Also try the drill using whatever left-side/right-side block-and-counter combos your style trains and compare your rate of success with that of the more basic response of the IDR.

THE RESULT

As this system and drill are based on a surprise or sucker-punch attack, resulting in a flinch-type response to any movement from the attacker, we don't alternate the elbow cover and palm-strike action based on the attacker's strike, but instead train to use the one side at all times. This minimises the thought process and trains the student to use the most rapid (and thus effective) response — a 'primal' or mid-brain response that doesn't have the lag time of cognitive process that is involved in detecting a strike and determining the appropriate response before putting it into action.

The advantage of the IDR is that it is the same no matter which side the attacker strikes from. We can train the unlearned process of the IDR to respond to movement from the attacker without having to read and/or guess what side the strike is coming from; it could be a right hook, left hook, a wild haymaker, or even a straight strike.

(A full explanation and a more in-depth look at how the Primal System works can be found on MDTA's *The Primal System* DVD.) ■

…then applies a head-control technique to take the attacker down, ensuring he does not follow him to the ground.
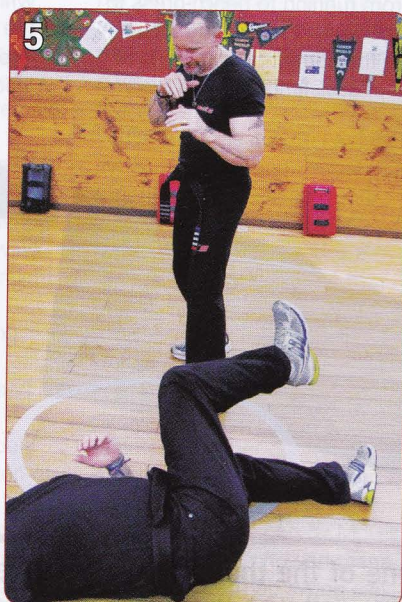
Practise retreating while maintaining your awareness and guard, then swap roles and repeat the drill.