



Military Man

After 21 years in the military as a Close-Quarter Combat instructor and bodyguard, Kyoshi Rob Gear put his extensive experience into founding his own system, Budo-Jitsu CQC. He recently established the International Close-Quarter Combat Federation.

Along with predecessors like Major John Whipp, you were instrumental in developing Close-Quarter Combat and hand-to-hand fighting in the Australian Army. What sort of changes did you implement?

Firstly, there's a huge difference between unarmed combat and Close-Quarter Combat. John Whipp, a real gentleman who I greatly admire, was the pioneer who contributed so much to the Defence Force in developing unarmed combat, which preceded CQC. To the unarmed combat training, I introduced a lot of Thai boxing moves such as thigh-kicks, fighting combinations and combat routines. At that time, unarmed combat had too many throws and too much grappling, which didn't suit the Close Personal Protection (CPP) training I was developing. A soldier needs to pick up an entrenching tool and learn to cave in the attacker's head quickly to neutralise the threat. There was a need for a more refined combat system to complement the bodyguarding drills and Military Police employment.

In 1981, I was given the opportunity to develop and research a new system, which had to include unarmed combat skills, close-combative drills with firearms for urban survival, room entries and counter-terrorism combat techniques. It had to be ruthless, efficient, effective and work with the body's

natural reactions under extremely high levels of stress. My rapid decentralisation techniques, which I incorporated into the CQC programme, facilitate the neutralising of an attacker within three-to-five seconds.

The system I developed was taught within the military, but I was frustrated and hindered by an incompetent and arrogant Military Police hierarchy, who lacked foresight and experience, and did not view any form of combat defence as appropriate. However, due to demand, I opened clubs in Brisbane and Canberra at the Australian Defence Force Academy for military members who could not train within their units.

In 1993, my friends Hanshi Tino Ceberano and Kyoshi Bruce Haynes advised me that I should present CQC as a martial arts system, hence Budo-Jitsu Close-Quarter Combat was conceived. CQC specialist training remained in the Defence Force until I retired in 1997. In total I had 21 years of military training, experience and opportunity to trial and perfect what Budo-Jitsu is today. When I left the military, no-one was identified as an instructor to pass on the valuable skills and techniques. Budo-Jitsu was then exposed to the public.

How did your experience in the military change the way you viewed and practised the martial arts?

The primary emphasis has always been on real situations. Extensive research has been conducted around the globe into the history of conflict and encounters from the perspective of both international police and military combatants. This provided me with the perfect template from which to formulate the Budo-Jitsu Close-Quarter Combat training programmes. The discipline, professionalism and no-nonsense approach derived from the high-intensity training within the military have sculpted the philosophy and character of the Budo-Jitsu system.

How different from the military material is the syllabus you teach to civilians today?

The military are disciplined professionals. They are learning primary survival skills in an environment of conflict, where the threat is known. Psychologically, they are prepared for combat. Civilians, however, are investing their

time and finances into the development of personal welfare. They are learning primary urban survival skills in a safe, encouraging environment. Teaching civilians is less political and the scope of learning is only limited by the imagination of the individual. We teach according to the needs of the client and the threats within the environment.

People come to me from all walks of life; from the military, police, custodial officers, bodyguards and security, through to professors, students, CEOs, office staff and labourers. The standard of our clients is much higher than that of the military personnel, due to their personal commitment to ongoing training.

The CQC Federation offers training for police and military personnel, yet they already receive such training within their organisations in order to do their jobs. Is the Federation filling a void in the training these organisations give their members?

Yes — one only has to look at the minimal time allocated to defensive tactics training within the curriculum of the law-enforcement services to see why. We have a lot of police officers come to us, even after completing their basic courses, wishing to learn our reality-based training programs. Some officers lack confidence in their physical capabilities as a result of the minimal introduction of basic techniques within their organisations. This often leaves them feeling vulnerable under pressure in the course of carrying out policing tasks, while still having to maintain a duty of care. We offer ongoing training to fill that void. Some military personnel are also frustrated with the lack of ongoing training provided and train under the Federation to obtain extra skills that aren't otherwise available.

The Unarmed Combat Federation is directed at police and military personnel, while the Close Quarter Combat Federation is for the general public who wish to think and train outside their comfort zone. They receive scientifically tested and proven skills appropriate to the level and nature of the threat, urban awareness, defensive tactics, pre-emptive strikes, self-control, humility and a whole lot more. **BLITZ**

