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Tournament '09 my gold medals

By Sue Terry

This week I wanted to share some experiences I had at the [United States Kuo Shu Federation Championship Tournament](#) in Hunt Valley, Maryland on July 25/26 2009. As some of you already know, I entered three events, and took home gold medals for each.



My Events

Mixed Taiji 50-and-over CMC Adv. Women Women's Push Hands

This particular kung fu tournament represents both external and internal styles. Internal kung fu styles are t'ai chi chuan (also spelled taiji); bagua zhang, and xingyi.

My events were Mixed Taiji Form 50 and Over (yes, I turned 50 this year!); Cheng Man Ching (the style of taiji I am currently studying) Advanced Form, and Women's Push Hands. Push Hands is an exercise that we play to sense energy moving in ourselves and in the opponent, and to feel where the "center" is. If your levels of sensitivity and skill are very high, you

can make the opponent move quite a distance--and even toss him to the ground--with very little physical strength in the arms. One's legs must be very strong, however, because you are often holding most of your weight on one leg. In tournament play, Push Hands can get pretty rough, especially in the men's division!

If you can disrupt the opponent's center, you can move him/her even if she's bigger than you in height or weight. As you can see from the photo below, in this match my opponent outweighed me and was also a head taller. I defeated her pretty easily. The thing I was most happy about, though, was how I managed my energy

during the contest. In past tournaments, I got very winded and lost my energy quickly. I was trying to use strength to beat girls who were younger and stronger than I was. This year I made a lot of progress in push hands, and I was able to use taiji principles rather than strength. This year, instead of praying for the match to be over, when the last round ended I was just getting warmed up!



Study with Sue On the Internet!

Do you feel confident about your playing? Is distance, or time, preventing you from getting the help you need to improve? TAKE ACTION. The point of power is in the present moment. For a limited time, you can

[get a lesson with the "Superwoman of Jazz"](#) and "High Empress of Cool" author of Practice Like The Pros and the Step One Sax/Clarinet series--Sue Terry. On the Internet! There's nothing like a private consultation with an expert to jump-start your playing and understanding of music.

Latest Video: "Why Your Music Is Important" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LojEtqEiZMI>

Luck, or Preparation? or a sniff of Scotch

At last year's USKSF Tournament, I was recovering from a knee injury (for the 2nd time) and only managed to win one bronze medal. This year, I was determined to do better, and practiced hard all year. I made up a new taiji routine (in tournament you only have 3 minutes to demonstrate form) that showed what I thought were my best moves--in other words, the moves I felt I had gained new insights on and thus was executing better--and I went to the tournament with the intention of winning at least one gold medal. Also I was going to the park in Brooklyn Chinatown a lot, to play push hands with the Chinese guys who meet there in the early morning every day. Usually my friend Eli and I are the only Americans there! Once in a blue moon, some fair-weather gringos from Manhattan show up to get tossed around by Master Meng.

In the days leading up to the tournament, I fantasized about winning all my events, but I'm not sure I really believed it could happen. I think my excellent showing was due to a combination of:



with Sam Ida, the other gold-medalist from our school, and our sifu, Master William C. Phillips

1. knee injury healed & feeling good
2. feeling relaxed & prepared
3. better focus and concentration
4. better understanding of principles
5. intent to win
6. shot of scotch before the events Just kidding. Only sniffed it.

Notice I didn't say anything about luck! My views on Luck are a bit unconventional. More on that in a future newsletter . . .



Master Meng

If you're alive, you've got qi what you gonna do with it

I felt proud to be able to win more medals for my school, Patience Tai Chi, located in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn-- www.patience Tai Chi.com.

I have been studying taiji since 1992, and it has helped me tremendously in physical healing, body alignment & posture, and ability to focus on detail. All of these things are also directly applicable to music and playing wind instruments, so taiji and music have been wonderfully complimentary disciplines for me. This is why I named my company "Qi Note, Inc." Qi is the Chinese word referring to the life force flowing throughout the body. If you're alive, you've got qi. The challenge is knowing what to do with it!



Thanks to all my sifus and colleagues at PTC, and a special thank you to Marisa Coluccio who took the photos!

Osu!

Sweet Sue

(BTW my taiji name is "Su". Add that to the list of my other names. . .)



There is another [tournament in NYC on October 25](#) that some of us are planning on entering. [Follow me on Twitter](#) to get the blow by blow!



Thank you Sifu Bill, for all your help this year!