

# Peaceful Man With A Lethal Art

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Porter



Take your average black belt in karate. He can crash his hand through a concrete block.

Take Feeman Ong of Barberton. He can crash his hand through the truck that hauled the concrete to make that block. Or his foot. Or his elbow. Or...

Just back from a seven-month training program in Taiwan where he advanced from eighth to ninth degree black belt in Chinese Karate,

Ong is now the top-ranking practitioner of this ancient art in the United States.

**THE ACME** is 10th degree, of which there are less than 20 in the world, all in the Orient, and none under 70 years of age. Ong is not yet 40.

A soft-spoken, ever-smiling guy who packs about 200 pounds on a 5-foot-6 frame, Ong, according to those

who know about such things, could, take out Joe Frazier in a matter of seconds.

Except that he doesn't fight. He will walk across the street to avoid it. And if cornered, will use a mild form of retaliation that will not kill his attacker.

**THIS IS NOT** as easy as it seems, because Ong is so strong and so fast he can literally kill upon impact, and Chinese Karate, or Kausut, as they call it, is a 3,000-year-old killing sport.

In a demonstration the other day, he took two ordinary sheets of newspaper, tore half-dollar sized holes in the center of each page, inserted a stout, yard-long bamboo stick into the holes, and with his wife holding

one sheet and a friend the other, he took a second stick and crashed it through the bamboo without tearing the paper.

Now if you live to be 200 you will not be able to even break the bamboo because it is resting on single pages of newspaper, which offer no resistance. You will simply knock it to the floor, tearing through the paper as you go.

But Ong hits with such speed the bamboo breaks before it has a chance to tear the paper. It's the same principle of physics that enables a hurricane wind to drive a soda straw deep into a tree. The combination of speed and velocity creates so much energy that the molecules in the object being struck are rearranged upon impact.

**ONG ADMITS** he didn't have the speed to do this before this last trip to Taiwan. Then he was only an eighth degree, of which there is reportedly one other in this hemisphere.

But now he is alone up there at the top and, as in years past, refuses to go commercial, unlike so many black belts in Korean and Japanese Karate, which are both offshoots of Kausut, only not as stylized or as lethal.

Ong has a few students, if you can

call black belts students. They're experts in their own right and most have been training with him for years, some as long ago as 1952, when Ong graduated from Barberton High School.

**ONE OF THESE** student-experts flipped open the Cleveland yellow pages to "Karate" the other day and scoffed, "You'd think from reading these ads that Cleveland was the world Karate capital. Everybody claims to be a world champion."

Sure enough — so and so a four-times world champion, this guy five times, and so on.

Ong explained: "Karate isn't regulated in this country so anybody can

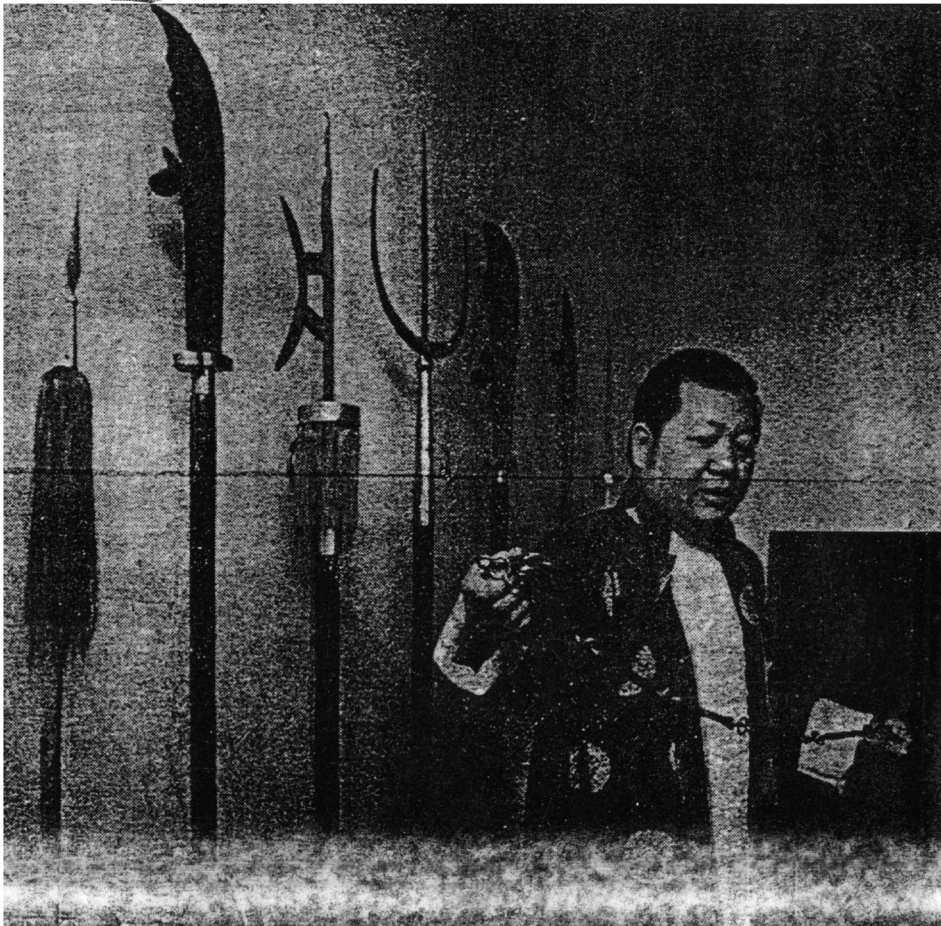
hold a world championship. Just invite a few schools to participate and if you win you call yourself world champion."

"All these guys," said a long-time karateist, pointing to the yellow pages full of champions, "wouldn't have any more chance against Feeman Ong than a snowball in hell. And that's a fact not even debatable. He would simply wipe them out."

**SO WHO** couldn't Ong wipe out? Surely somebody.

"I studied under Liu Pei-chung in Taiwan," said Ong. "He's a master

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Non-fighter Freeman Ong displays the deadly weapons of his sport, Chinese Kausut. It's lucky for any possible opponent that Ong doesn't like to get his toys bloody.

News  
and  
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# A Peaceful Man Is Alone At Top Of A Lethal Art

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(10th degree). He'd cream me in a fight."

Liu Pei-chung, according to China Pictorial Magazine, was born in 1883. That would make him 89 years old.

"I thought he was 90," grinned Ong, "but no matter how old he is, he'd still cream me."

IF SO, Liu Pei-chung is about the only one, because this year Ong won the President's Cup Kausut Tournament, the president being Chiang Kai-shek. There were 60 entrants, all upwards of seventh degree black belts, and for the first time in a while there were no fatalities.

"Some serious injuries, though," said Ong, the smile fading. "Sometimes in competition like this it's unavoidable."

With him in Taiwan were his wife and five children, all in elementary school, and one, Stephen, 8, has been working out with his father for two years.

"HE'S REAL good," said Ong, in the proud manner of a Little League dad. "I haven't awarded him any belt yet, but he's still real good."

"He'd be a black belt in some of those schools," said a karateist who'd seen the boy work. "He's 8 years old and there's not a high school boy in this county who could touch him."

Ong feels karate is good for a boy, or man, for three reasons — self-discipline, health and self-confidence. "I could walk anywhere and not be afraid," he understated.

BORN in China, Ong was put into a monastery for schooling at age 6, and remained there until 14, the equivalent of elementary school. It was there that he was put on a regimen of Kausut, which is a total fighting art that includes the use of swords and other more esoteric weapons, such as pitchforks.

Then, during the communist takeover, he and his family fled to Hong Kong, and a year later, still a teenager, he came on to Barberton, where his family had friends.

That was more than 20 years ago, and he's been going back to Hong Kong and Taiwan periodically for further schooling.

AFTER graduating from high school in '52, he entered Kent State to study architecture, but decided instead on law enforcement and became a deputy sheriff.

Then, a few years later, he became bailiff to Judge Charles Jenney of Barberton Municipal Court, a post he held six years until the judge retired.

Once, in court, the judge sentenced a man to prison and the man pulled out a couple of sticks of dynamite and began twisting the detonating caps.

Observers reported that all they saw was a blur hurtling over a table. Next thing they knew the convicted man was totally immobilized and disarmed.

To the rescue was Ong, actually

moving so fast nobody knew what he did until he did it.

AND NOW he's back home from the Orient, setting up a new house with a pool table in the front room, and planning on opening an import-export company, and working out three hours a day and not taking financial advantage of his skills.

"Money, it's OK," he philosophized, "but you only need so much."

Feeman Ong, built like Goldfinger's friend, Oddjob, only without the menacing look. A veritable mass of muscle with an 18-inch neck and calves the size of thighs.

Feeman Ong, who on first glance

seems totally harmless, like the guy next door, except that the guy next door can't walk on eggs without breaking them, nor crash his hand through almost anything, nor kill you dead right now by hitting you in any of more than 200 vital spots. And hitting so fast you don't even see the punch. Nor feel it, as you are already dead!

BUT DON'T GET the idea Feeman Ong is a violent man. He isn't. He hasn't been in a street fight in his life. And if he has his way, he never will be.

"I am a peaceful man," he said. He can afford to be.



Block that kick! Angela Ong, 13, delivers a foot in the role of an attacker during a workout in the Ong basement practice room. At right is Stephen Ong, 8. A hand parry (below) is practiced by Christine Ong, 12, under the tutelage of her father, Freeman Ong.

