

The Flying Butterfly

Article by Jesus Luz Sampedro

Master Chang Dang Sheng soars high. He is one of the very few Kung-Fu masters who is actually tested. In the garden of the Chinese martial arts, he is the glorious butterfly.

Master Chang, who is Grand Champion of martial arts in the Fifth National Athletic meet in Nanking in 1933, beating his arch rival, Liu Chiu-Sheng, to win the title. Old-time Kung-Fu includes boxing, grappling, and wrestling, and contestants were grouped according to weight. There were 700-plus participants in the 1933 competition.

Master Chang Dang Sheng is now living in the Taiwan Republic of China and has been teaching Kung-Fu "Shuai Chiao" (Chinese wrestling) in the regional police college for 26 years. In April of 1975, he was invited to Morocco to give an exhibition of the Chinese art of self-defense to the king. During the stay, a fourth Dan Korean Tae Kwon Do instructor, who is the instructor of the bodyguards of His Majesty, challenged Master Chang and he accepted. The Korean instructor was trying to knock him down with a single punch and Master Chang briskly dodged away, with just a slap to his rival's right side, the bodyguard instructor fell unconscious to the floor for a few moments. These days people are very interested in Chinese martial arts, but they are only familiar with Japanese martial arts like Karate and Judo. However, knowledgeable martial artists know they originate from China. In the Chinese sense, Kung-Fu should include wrestling (shuai chiao), (shuai) vital energy points (ti'en), boxing (tui).

Master Chang started practicing Kung-Fu when he was seven years old. His teacher was the most famous master of Pao-Ting (one of the four styles of Shuai Chiao). His name was Chang Fong-Yen. Master Chang said that Master Fong-Yen was the best teacher in that time and was a rich man in the town of Po-Ding, Hopei



province. He had a big store in the city and lived out of town. Many students from all over wanted to learn from him, but it was very hard to be accepted. When any student of Shuai Chiao wanted to be a student of Master Chang Fong-Yen they had to go to his home and wait outside. The Master sat in front of the big house and looked over all the candidates. He drank tea and played with iron balls as the candidates did the basic exercise of Shuai Chiao. He did not accept any students if they didn't know the basic exercise. After he looked at everyone, he chose one or two; sometimes none. Those who were chosen were invited inside the house to practice with students who were

already accepted.

Master Chang Dang Sheng tells us that he learned the basic exercise from his grandfather and father. He tells us also that Master Chang Fong-Yen liked one kind of bird that only came in winter, and Master Chang Dang Sheng caught many and gave them to Master Chang as a present.

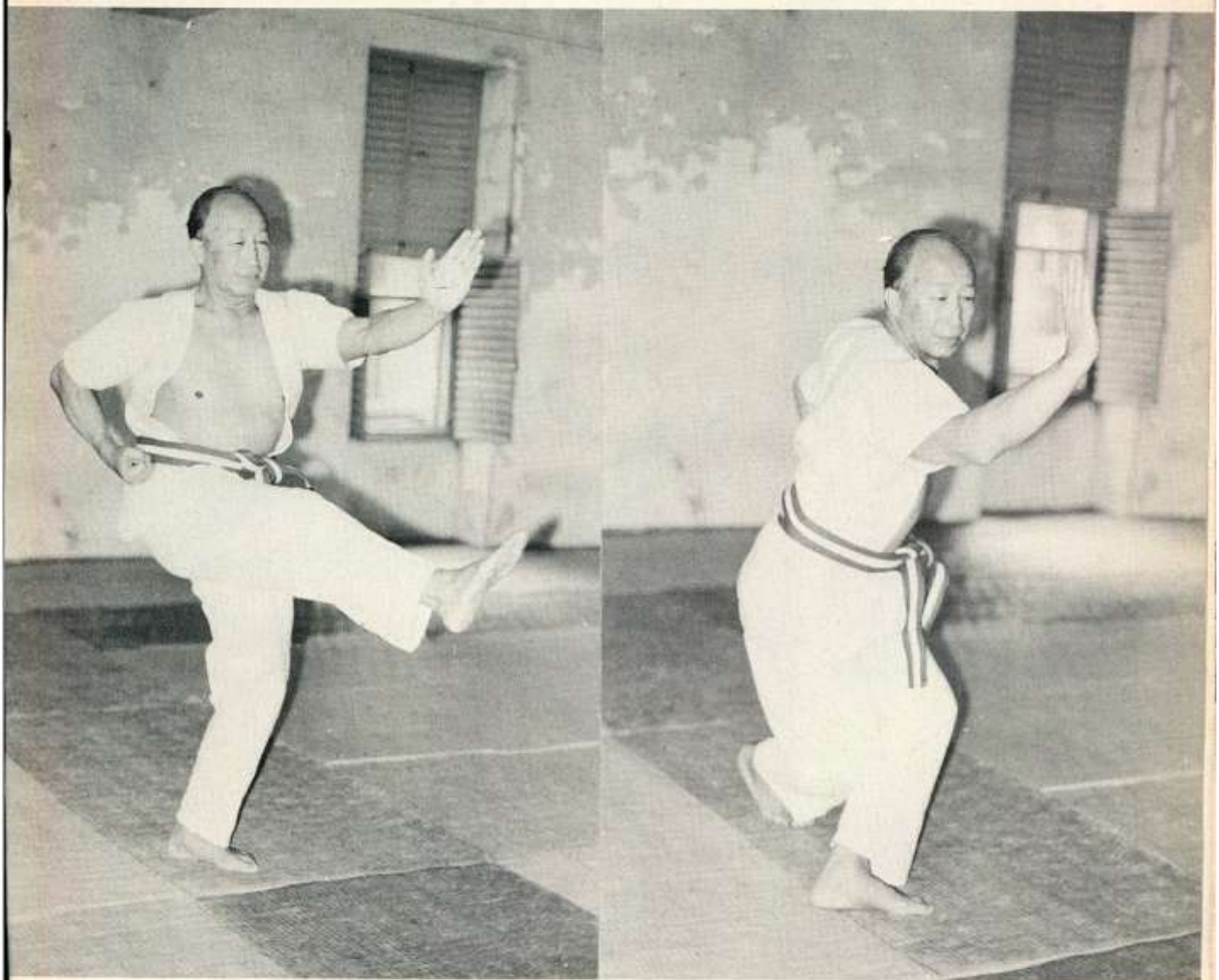
All the students who were accepted had to practice very hard inside of the house of the Master. They had to practice four times a day. At five in the morning they began to practice the basic exercise and each had to practice his basic exercise of climbing a hill. Sometimes one or two students fell down. One of the exercises

consisted of catching grasshoppers with the basic movement.

Only with a good base can you have succeeded in the martial arts. That is one of the reasons Master Chang said never believe in people who say they can give you a punch and send you 30 feet. Some of them say things that never happened.

The word Kung-Fu means time. That is the reason that when people can do something well in China they said good Kung-Fu.

After years past, Master Chang came to be the favorite student of Master Chang Fong-Yen and he also married the second daughter of his master, Mrs. Chang Shou Chi, who lived with him in



Taipei. Master Chang Dang Shang tells us that he had different teachers and that in Shuai Chiao he looked for different teachers that were very famous in one movement of that style. He would go to a teacher's house and ask if they would teach him that technique. He did that with more than 50 teachers.

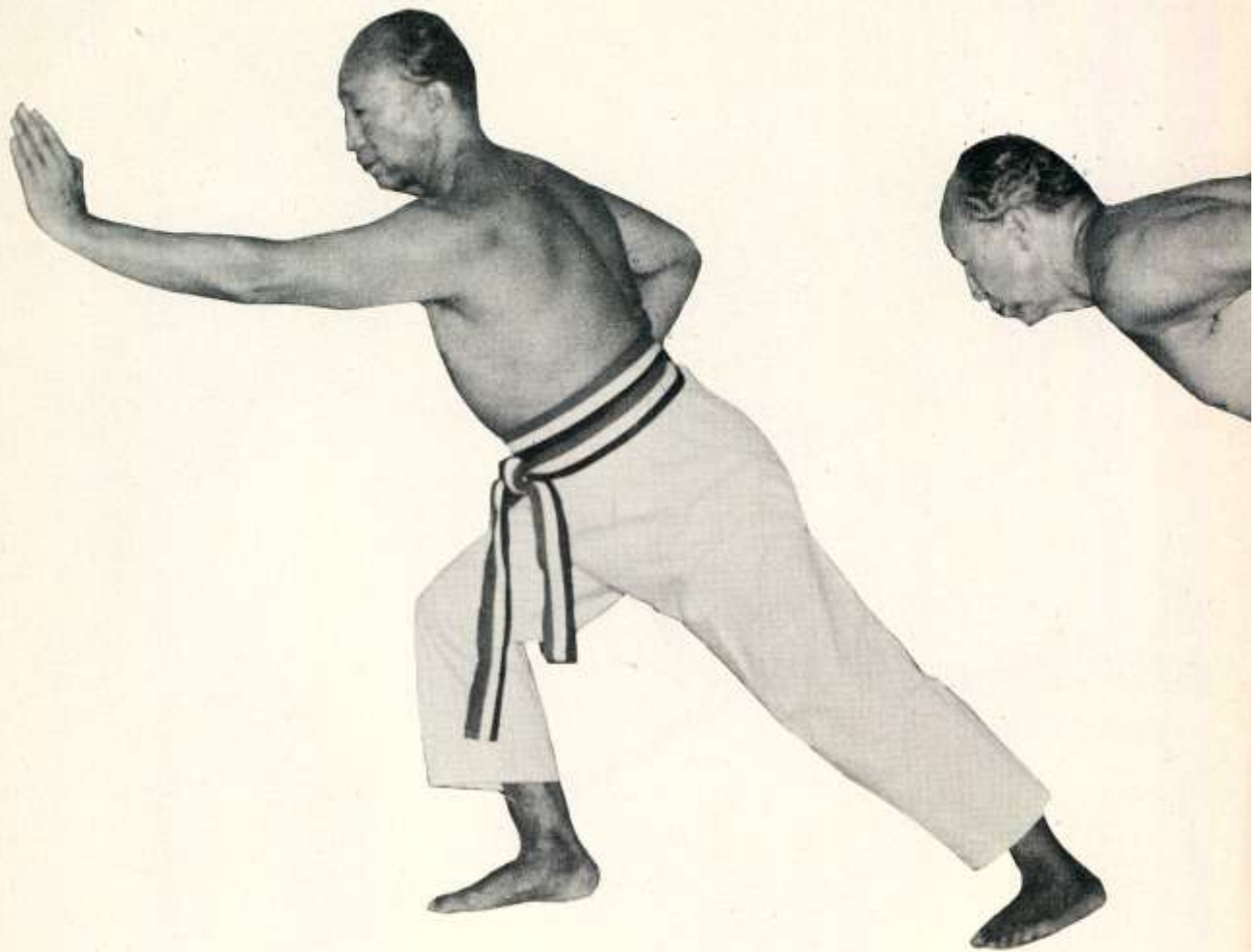
Master Chang is not only a master in Shuai Chiao style, but also knows various different arts—such as Shaolin, Pa-Kua, Shing-Yi, Tai-Chi, Lou-Han and Ca-Chu. Master Chang went far to seek rivals. He hoped to further mature his own techniques by experience in more tournaments.

The old-time Shuai Chiao was free

style. People were allowed to use all techniques to throw down their rivals. They might come up with an iron-hand chop or trained finger, hitting the rival's vital points. Thus, it was not new to see people start a battle of karate or aikido before competing with their wrestling skills. Such being the case, in the old days there were four styles of Kung-Fu wrestling in China: Peking Tien-Chen, Pao-Ting style, Mongolian style and Mio Yao Li Chao of southwestern China. Each style being different, experts exhibited their specialties with but one purpose: to knock the rivals down. At that time, masters hesitated to pay visits to experts not formally introduced by friends or relatives. An un-

screened acceptance to spar could result in humiliation. If the visitor wins, the home expert might shut the door at once and start tough practicing trying to regain face in three years or even ten or twenty years time. This was the reason few people volunteered to visit experts in other places, unless they were very well known beforehand.

Master Chang left Pao-Ting, Hopei province, for Peking. His teacher's reputation and his own popularity offered him the opportunity to see all high-level Kung-Fu masters in Peking and Tien-Chin areas. Numerous contests and sparrings further confirmed the techniques he had commanded as being highly effective. He



won all bouts and made lots of friends. Meanwhile, his techniques improved by experiencing different styles. Then he went to see Mongolian experts.

In Chang-Chia-Kuo, where Mongolians held their annual wrestling meets, Master Chang met his gigantic rival, Kuhli, who was winning the championship. The jumbo Mongolian tried to catch Chang just like a hungry tiger. Hundreds of attacks failed. By pure wrestling skills of Shuai Chiao Kung-Fu, not using other Chinese pugilistic techniques, he threw down the jumbo Kuhli with many beautiful moves and won a standing ovation.

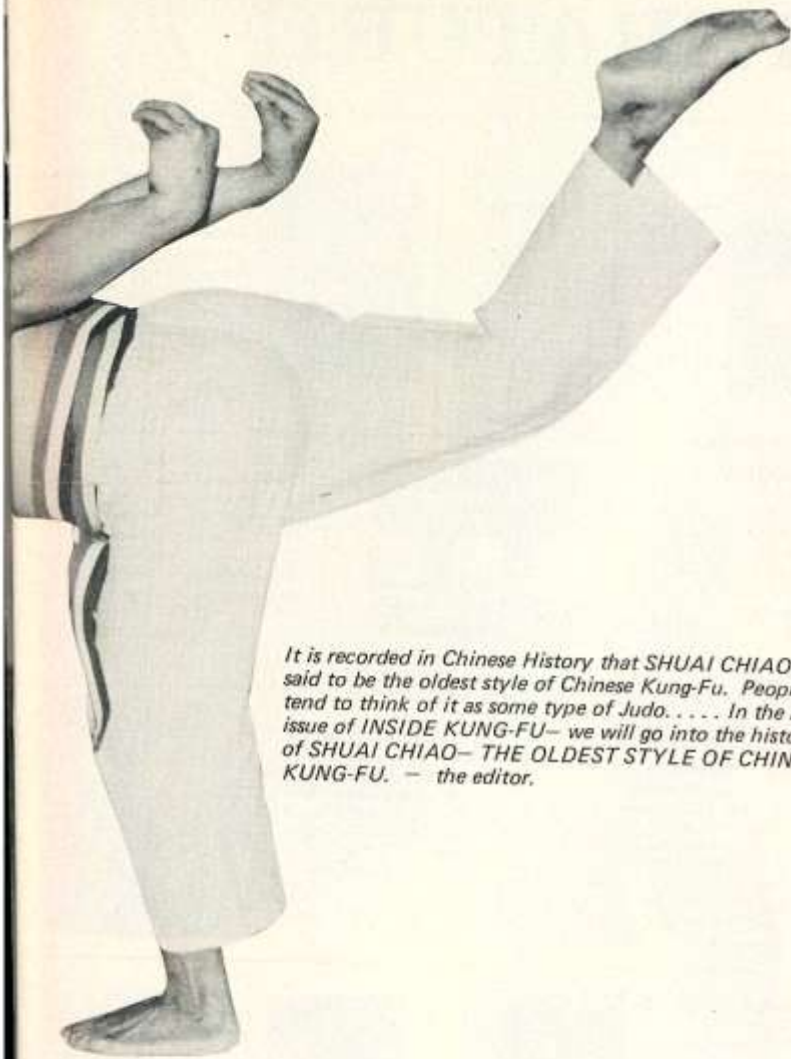
At the peak of his reputation, Master Chang participated in the Fifth National Athletic Meet in Nanking. The age-old Chinese Kung-Fu competition was the

most popular event in the meet. People knew he would win the contest and get the championship. It was a three-round contest, each round five minutes long without any protectors or guards, using just a pair of gloves. Contestants were allowed to beat their rivals by any techniques they commanded.

Master Chang was a colonel paratrooper during World War II. He had lots of experience in wrestling with Japanese judo experts before the Sino-Japanese war was declared. Master Chang still talks about the stories of contesting with Japanese rivals. One of the most interesting events Master Chang likes to mention happened at the end of the war when Japanese troops attacked Kuan-Si province and lost the battle. More than a

thousand Japanese prisoners of war were kept in the camp by the mountainside.

The prisoners amused themselves by practicing judo all day long. Proud of their general command of judo among the prisoners, they challenged their Chinese guard troops. At that time Master Chang was teaching in Kue-Lin, capital of Kuang-Si province. He heard about the challenge and went to the camp. There was a burst of applause after the interpreter announced his arrival. After that there was complete silence. The first one who challenged Master Chang was Nakayama Taido 20 Dan. Master Chang beat him with precision techniques and the audience was startled. Many others followed up and lost as well. At last, it was Hisa Kuma, a heavyweight judo 3 Dan. Weight



It is recorded in Chinese History that SHUAI CHIAO is said to be the oldest style of Chinese Kung-Fu. People tend to think of it as some type of Judo. . . . In the next issue of INSIDE KUNG-FU— we will go into the history of SHUAI CHIAO— THE OLDEST STYLE OF CHINESE KUNG-FU. — the editor.



and experience helped the Japanese, but before long he was thrown down by Chang's lightning techniques. Now there was only one able challenger left and he was Michi Masao. The bear-type wrestler was not an easy rival but was soon beaten. Chang won all the games.

In 1948, the 7th National Athletic Meet was held in Shanghai. This time Shuai Chiao was an independent contest for pure wrestling techniques, not allowing uses of other styles of Kung-Fu in the game. Master Chang represented the army and took part in the contest. Without doubt, he won the championship. The Sino-Japanese war being over, participants came from 32 provinces, 12 special municipal cities, nine overseas Chinese teams, and 58 military police units.

Chang beat all his rivals.

When Master Chang was 20 years old he came from Hopei province to NanKin, the capital of China at that time, to study in the Central Koushu School, the best in all China, to learn all the styles of Kung-Fu. He said that in that school he learned many things and also that there he had the chance to practice with the best students in all China. He practiced for five years in the school and after which he became the instructor of the Shuai Chiao department. At the same time he taught in the army. After that he went to teach in the Kung-Fu school of Hu-Nan. During his stay in that province he met two very famous masters. He practiced every day and gained lots of experience.

Master Chang is the principal judge in

the provincial games here in Taiwan in the branch of Shuai Chiao. He is always invited by different associations in different countries to give demonstrations. Last July he went to Singapore to give a demonstration and performed the six days of the tournament with different techniques each day.

The nickname of the flying butterfly was given to him by the people in the tournaments in which Master Chang took part. This is because when he held his opponent he would move around very fast which made his rival also move fast making a circle. When they are moving it looks like the wings of a butterfly. That technique was used by him. He never gave his rival a chance to move; he always took control.





