



Asking the MASTERS

By Harjit Singh Sagoo

In this interview, I talk to the legendary Frank Dux. That name will be familiar to many. His experiences in the 'Kumite', an underground NHB tournament, were portrayed by Hollywood star Jean-Claude Van Damme in the cult classic *Bloodsport* (1988). Frank, however, has become a controversial figure due to those who question his martial arts abilities and claims about his background. So I felt it was important to give him the opportunity to share with us the real facts in place of myth or third party hearsay.

Harjit Singh Sagoo: Thank you for allowing me to conduct this interview.

Frank Dux: No, it is I who must thank you. I rarely am allowed the opportunity to share the facts, as they really are.

Harjit Singh Sagoo: Your critics say that the underground 'Kumite' tournament which you claim to have participated in and won was fictitious. Did such an event really exist and did you really defeat all the contenders and go on to become the Kumite champion?

Frank Dux: Of course it's real! We are talking about an event known by different names its lineage dates to the original Olympics in 776 BC. Introduced to Asia Minor by Alexander the Great in 321 BC and migrated via the Silk Road, institutionalized by Genghis Kahn's empire. Starting from the beginning of his reign the martial art event possesses twenty generations of internationally acclaimed martial art masters to back it up. The Chinese cult tale, *Fearless*, made into a movie starring Jet Li, is based on

Right: Frank Dux in Kimono. "Without doubt, I have lived an extraordinary life but that is only because I am an ordinary man who was not afraid to venture outside of my element, but not before having prepared myself to be capable to improvise, adapt and overcome great challenges."

Opposite Page: Frank Dux, in late 1980s, sports a beard as he concentrates his talents on drug interdiction efforts, inducted Knight Chevalier by Police Hall of Fame; Adjunct Faculty Member of Criminal Justice Centre, St. Petersburg, FL.

the Kumite in which my own instructor Senzo Tanaka had participated and triumphed. Bill Ryusaki, the soke of Kajukenbo and personal friend of Bruce Lee amongst many other great masters, like the father of American Karate Ed Parker, martial art legends like Gerald Okamura, Ted Tubura, S.B. Moon, Yeshoua Sofer, Irving Sotos, Rick Robinson and many others are on record speaking about it. Bill Ryusaki stated in a 2002 documentary, "Everybody wanted to do it. I wanted to do it."

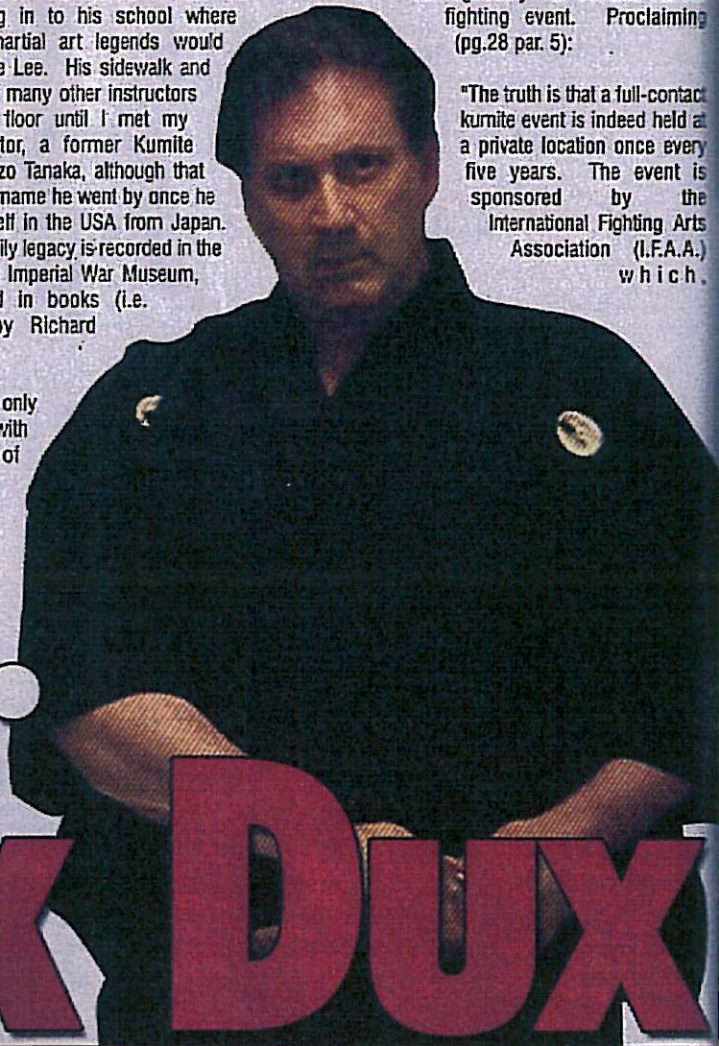
Through acts of kindness "Sensei Bill" is adjoined to that legacy. When I was 12, my family could not afford to pay for me to take formal lessons. Sensei Bill would let me watch and learn from him on the street from the outside looking in to his school where occasionally martial art legends would train, like Bruce Lee. His sidewalk and the sidewalk of many other instructors was my dojo floor until I met my formal instructor, a former Kumite champion, Senzo Tanaka, although that was not the surname he went by once he relocated himself in the USA from Japan. The Tanaka family legacy is recorded in the Archives of the Imperial War Museum, in Japan, and in books (i.e. *Kempei Tai* by Richard Deacon, etc.).

I am not the only one to put up with this kind of

defamation and spin. It is misleading to intimate I am making these claims without also making mention of the fact numerous periodicals and news shows are reporting my achievements as substantive fact. My achievements and skills are what brought me to the attention of many others, like *Black Belt* magazine, when my Kumite fight was occurring.

In the expose *Kumite: A Learning Experience*, *Black Belt* magazine, Nov. 1980, the editorial staff announced how they discovered the event. First, through rumours (years before ever meeting me) and then through their own journalistic investigation that yielded their discovery of the existence of my championing the legendary Full-Contact Kumite fighting event. Proclaiming (pg.28 par. 5):

"The truth is that a full-contact kumite event is indeed held at a private location once every five years. The event is sponsored by the International Fighting Arts Association (I.F.A.A.) which



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although not a publicity-seeking organization, is far from secret."

Black Belt magazine and its parent publishing company editorial staff are also on record stating (pg. 28, intro par. 1):

"Because we do not want our readers to be misinformed, Black Belt has a policy of strict verification of all the facts pertaining to any article. In this case, several members of the staff have invested considerable amounts of time and energy checking the details...."

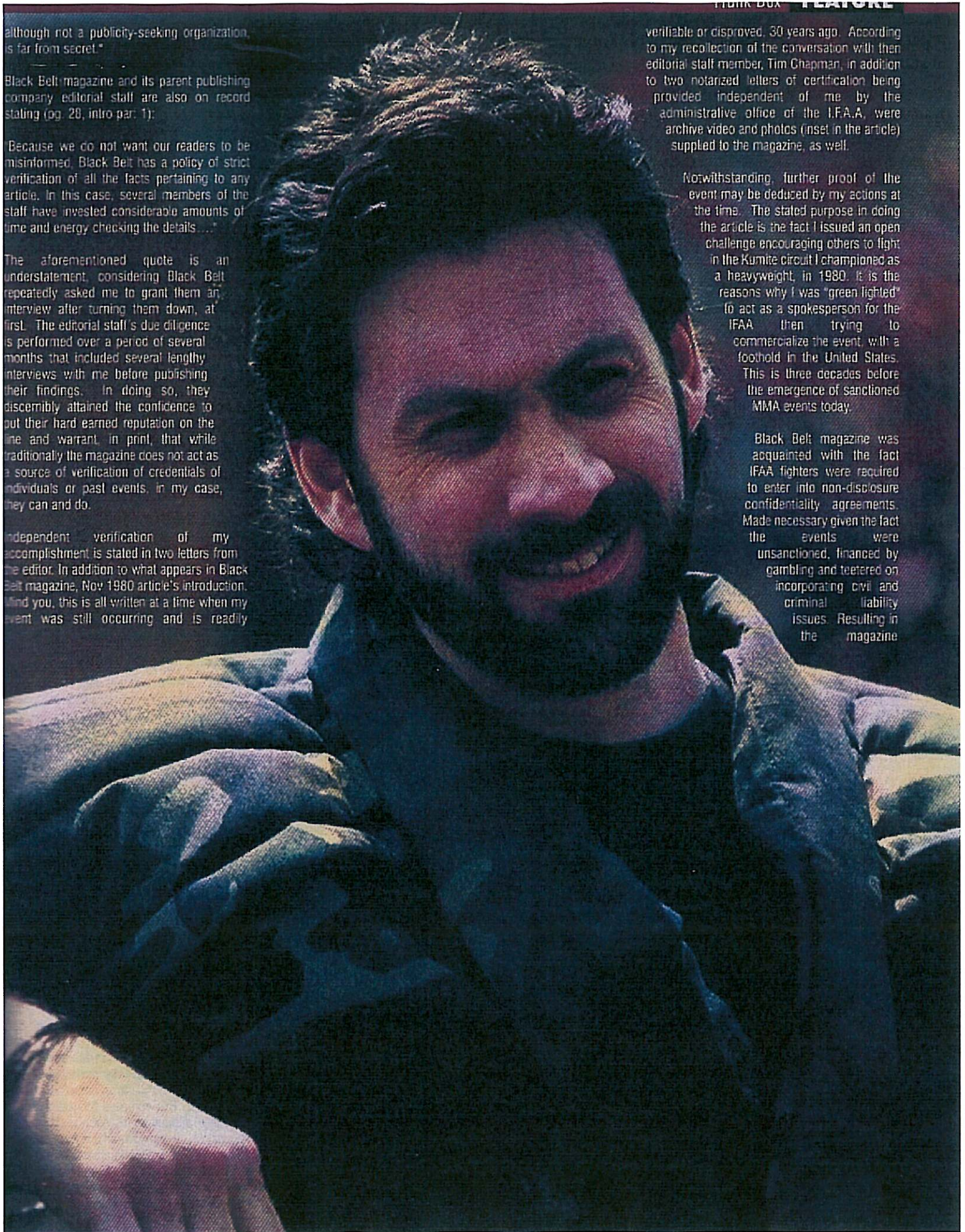
The aforementioned quote is an understatement, considering Black Belt repeatedly asked me to grant them an interview after turning them down, at first. The editorial staff's due diligence is performed over a period of several months that included several lengthy interviews with me before publishing their findings. In doing so, they discernibly attained the confidence to put their hard earned reputation on the line and warrant, in print, that while traditionally the magazine does not act as a source of verification of credentials of individuals or past events, in my case, they can and do.

Independent verification of my accomplishment is stated in two letters from the editor. In addition to what appears in Black Belt magazine, Nov 1980 article's introduction. Mind you, this is all written at a time when my event was still occurring and is readily

verifiable or disproved, 30 years ago. According to my recollection of the conversation with then editorial staff member, Tim Chapman, in addition to two notarized letters of certification being provided independent of me by the administrative office of the I.F.A.A, were archive video and photos (inset in the article) supplied to the magazine, as well.

Notwithstanding, further proof of the event may be deduced by my actions at the time. The stated purpose in doing the article is the fact I issued an open challenge encouraging others to fight in the Kumite circuit I championed as a heavyweight, in 1980. It is the reasons why I was "green lighted" to act as a spokesperson for the IFAA then trying to commercialize the event, with a foothold in the United States. This is three decades before the emergence of sanctioned MMA events today.

Black Belt magazine was acquainted with the fact IFAA fighters were required to enter into non-disclosure confidentiality agreements. Made necessary given the fact the events were unsanctioned, financed by gambling and teetered on incorporating civil and criminal liability issues. Resulting in the magazine





blacking out the faces of competitors seen in photographs that appeared inset in the article, the magazine stating:

"We are not at liberty to share the corroborating evidence with the public..."

Some people have a hard time believing this event occurred because you rarely hear about the other fighters and there were some really great ones. For instance, when someone asks me, did you really fight my instructor and give me a name I shrug my shoulders. "Maybe." I ask "What was his handle?" Mine was Pha Ma, Flying Horse. We rarely knew each other by our names due to fear at any moment the doors to the room could be kicked in and we would end up jailed, with all the gambling going on. There was the fear, what if we accidentally killed or seriously injured somebody, as well.

I reluctantly fought when in one instance 16 video and/or film cameras (I don't remember the exact details) were introduced. Some of the highlight footage provided me I shared with my most earnest students. Anyone who has done this kind of quasi illegal fighting will confirm for you why there exists a whole host of reasons to maintain a code of silence. I have paid a price for it by acting as a spokesperson, in 1980, but of course not without the benefit of *Bloodsport*, in 1988.

Regarding the second part of your question enquiring if I defeated all contenders?

In Black Belt magazine, in 1980, I stated I lost

Above:
Frank Dux was dubbed Pha Ma (The Flying Horse) for his trait of finishing his opponent's off before they could drop by a flying jumping splashing back kick, as seen here.

Right:
Graduation Day - Marine Corp Recruit Depot, San Diego, 1975



one fight in my career (by decision as an amateur). It wasn't until the producers of *Bloodsport* performed their due diligence, that I learned I was incorrect. The producers' and screenwriter's due diligence included their viewing printed handbills (i.e. betting slips, event programs and rare 8mm and 16 mm fight footage highlights transferred to video tape). The producers required I provide this to them before commissioning Sheldon Lettich to write the screenplay as well as their putting at risk millions of their dollars.

During filming some of the crew and producers enjoyed the opportunity to hear eyewitness accounts of various unsanctioned Kumite fighting events by various fighters and champions. Like the first person to fight in mainland China, Muay Thai Champion, Paulo Toche ("Paco" in *Bloodsport*) and "Kyuokoshinkai" Swedish Karate Champion, Kurt Peterson (whom the Ray Jackson character is partially based on), to name just two fighters.

Currently, I am assisting in the production of a documentary, begun in 2002, in which martial art legends Bill Ryusaki, Gerald Okamura, Ted Tabura, Cynthia Rothrock, Rigan Machado, Billy Burke, Richard Norton, Douglas Wong, Olivier Grunner, Hector Echaviera, Joe Charles, Anthony Kleeman, Mark Para, and many notable others have been video taped discussing the legendary Kumite and its profound closed circle history. Including the Warner Bros. executive who introduced Bruce Lee to Steve McQueen, Joseph Sinda who is on camera stating he attended as a VIP guest. Sinda was asked by Bruce Lee to find me and did so, two years after Lee's death. I plan on making clips of his and the others' video interviews available on my upcoming official website shortly.

The observable fact without question is that the allegation my story is fictitious is nothing more than mean-spirited trade libel, legally couched. Given the previous sources, it flies in the face of an abundance of substantive evidence and eyewitness testimony.

"Some will point you in the direction of sources that contest his (Frank Dux) accomplishments while deceptively failing to mention the material fact, that most of these same sources were exposed in a court of law to be guilty of making or repeating unsubstantiated allegations and presenting fabricated physical evidence".

— Artesia Daily Columnist, Kathy Kolt, July 18, 2008.

Harjit Singh Sagoo: Is it true that the trophy you say you won from the underground tournament was actually purchased by you and not won?

Frank Dux: This complete fabrication can be directly attributed to John Johnson, an acquaintance of my ex-wife. It was made at a time I was embroiled in a bitter divorce. Until that event, for thirteen years, my reign and retirement as World Full-Contact Kumite Champions was without blemish or question.

In my book, *The Secret Man*, HarperCollins, 1996, (pg. 64-65) I briefly describe how John Johnson appears on the scene thirteen (13) years after I won the event. An alarming number of individuals Mr. Johnson interviewed stated to me he consistently refused to accept their statements of fact, even arguing with them. He attempted to intimidate any one who challenged his false allegations; like Ed Parker, the father of American Karate who had stated he would produce members of his own family that were eyewitnesses and participants. This prompted my attorney, Michael Lucero, to call upon the LA Times editor, before the piece was ever published.

To shield the paper from anticipated liability of libel, the piece was legally couched and published as an editorial that is deceptively disguised to appear as an article.

One cannot litigate or force a retraction of opinion.

In the editorial, John Johnson is claiming I supplied him with newspaper clippings making representations I was a decorated Vietnam veteran, their existence he could not confirm. This never occurred as no exchange of documents ever took place. My meeting with him was tape recorded and conducted in the presence of a third party, Kirk Texteria, who witnessed Johnson literally run away in the midst of the interview but not before taking my recorder along with him. Fleeing after my suspicions were raised by a leading question that resulted in my asking him if he was behind dropping handbills on local restaurants, super markets, etc. and posting posters attributing to me statements I never made holding me out to be a decorated Vietnam veteran and Medal of Honour winner. Coincidentally, the photo on these bogus handbills and posters of me is the exact same photo that appears inset, in John Johnson's editorial. Draw your own conclusions. Martial art legend, MMA referee Cecil Peoples and other local school owners remember how these ludicrous posters were glued to their windows and doors - obvious to everyone someone was trying to stir the pot.

Keep the following in mind, my trophy has been in my possession and on public display since January 1976. John Johnson alleges, in 1988, he was able to obtain the receipt for my trophy made out to me and commissioned in my name - twelve years after my trophy is in my possession!

The trophy shop owner, Mr. Moody, is quoted by John Johnson as saying that it was "partially" manufactured by Moody in his trophy shop, located near my home. After the editorial's release I spoke with Mr. Moody, who became irate and claims John Johnson misquoted him totally out of context as he denied ever supplying Johnson this mysterious receipt and his comment was referring only to a time Moody repaired another trophy of mine, after my studio was broken into by students of my business competitor. My most valued personal property deliberately destroyed by them. The only consolation being, these perpetrators were arrested and convicted - a matter of public record.

Notwithstanding, the alleged trophy receipt in John Johnson's possession that he holds up as credible serves as the substantive proof he was acting with malice, in light of just a few of the following contradictory facts that would cause a reasonable and prudent person to have judged this "receipt" a

fabrication of evidence, given the details:

The alleged trophy receipt is in actuality a Xerox document anyone could create on their home copier.

The trophy inscription name on the alleged photocopy of a trophy receipt is incorrectly spelled D-U-K-E-S and not D-U-X (the correct spelling of my name) as it is inscribed on my trophy.

The alleged trophy receipt is dated 1982 when first presented to my attorney and me by the LA Times editor in his office. We point out this date on the alleged receipt is two (2) years after I appeared in Black Belt magazine, Nov 1980 issue, seen holding my trophy.

In court, when attempting to enter the receipt into evidence, and before the cameras of Court TV, the photocopy of a trophy receipt's date is now corrected to read 1979 but what opposing counsel's attorney and the forger did not know is the photo in which I am seen holding the trophy in the Nov 1980 issue of Black Belt magazine was taken and remained in the photographer's possession since 1976, three years prior to the altered date LA Times.

The John Johnson photocopy of a trophy receipt is for a three tiered trophy with a Judo figure on top. Whereas, my trophy is a two foot pedestal base that has a huge silver bowl as its crown. Not even remotely close.

This photocopy of an alleged receipt, just like the allegation I purchased my trophy, was dismissed as a fabrication in that very court of law just on its face alone.

Harjit Singh Sagoo: You claim to have broken several records, such as, fastest punch with a KO (.12 seconds), fastest kick with a KO (72 mph), etc. Were there any witnesses to this?

Frank Dux: First off, frame speed from video/film is what was used to calculate my speed. Regarding my

making these claims, I know no single professional athlete that tracks and documents their own stats. I recalled what I was told by my promoter and referred Black Belt magazine's editorial staff to the promoters and directors of the organization who attributed those records to me. They were responsible for keeping all the records when the documentation was readily available, at the time. To my knowledge the producers of *Bloodsport* acted likewise.

Regarding witnesses, I have had many but most don't speak English as their first language.

The fact is one of many witnesses is Richard Robinson, one of the few highly respected master instructors of Small Circle Jujitsu, under Wally Jay. Grand Master Irving Sotos contacted me [to say] how he was queried regarding my fight records, recently. He affirmed my records and our fighting in Kumite in separate weight classes to the inquiring blogger who posted, deceptively, not in its entirety. Concealing the fact Sotos is also a Federal Police Officer, which goes to his credibility and truthfulness.

Harjit Singh Sagoo: There are claims that the bullet-proof glass you smashed through with your hand was in fact Plexiglas or even sugar glass. What do you have to say about this?

Frank Dux: In breaking the "bullet proof" glass it took me two attempts, candy or Plexiglas would obviously break on the first strike, considering I generated enough force to have cracked the glass with the bullet wed still in it and visibly bend the 1/2 inch steel frame holding it backwards with my first strike, as captured by the European telecast and watched by millions.

The source of this libel and slander can be directly attributed to originating in 1999, six years after the fact - by a hostile witness, a disgruntled ex-employee whose services I terminated in an auto business I owned. He presented himself in my court case with Jean-Claude Van Damme under the name Richard Alexander. Blogs present him as a friend I knew for twenty years whose testimony they allege hurt me in



FEATURE Frank Dux

a court of law and caused me to lose my case with Van Damme. All of which is a far cry from the truth.

Richard Alexander, a musician, held himself out to be a props expert who fabricated fake bullet proof glass and the frame holding it, as seen on Court TV. Unfortunately, the Court TV show switched to covering another trial during the live broadcast before my attorney, Steven Kramer, had the opportunity to reveal Richard Alexander to be not remotely credible, under cross examination. Richard Alexander lied about everything, beginning with his name, that is in actuality Richard Shimer.

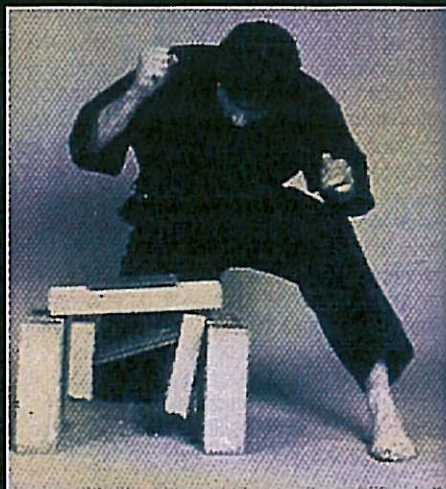
Richard Alexander aka Richard Shimer might not have even appeared at all on the stand without the judge allowing Van Damme's witnesses to sit in the courtroom to hear each other testify, amongst other unprecedented acts, as pointed out by Point of View magazine. Columnists Jennie and Terrie Frankel write:

"The judge karate kicked Dux below the belt with a series of unprecedented rulings that precluded the testimony of any rebuttal witnesses, any impeachment witnesses and all actual eyewitnesses to the deal. Kramer (Dux's attorney) argued these witnesses were critical to his case, but to no avail."

This kind of star struck favoritism is corroborated by a one hour Court TV documentary. Richard Alexander aka Richard Shimer's lies could have been totally nipped in the bud had the judge not acquiesced to Van Damme's attorney. The judge, arbitrarily, did not allow me to put into evidence the Bushido magazine video tape where I can be seen punching through the bullet proof glass that can be purchased on the internet. Thereby preventing me from

impeaching Richard Alexander aka Richard Shimer's testimony by my demonstrating that his proof (still photos) he claimed he took when the glass was shot were actually still frames captured from the video, on sale. Laying the foundation for the lie to take root that the glass was candy or ordinary Plexiglas.

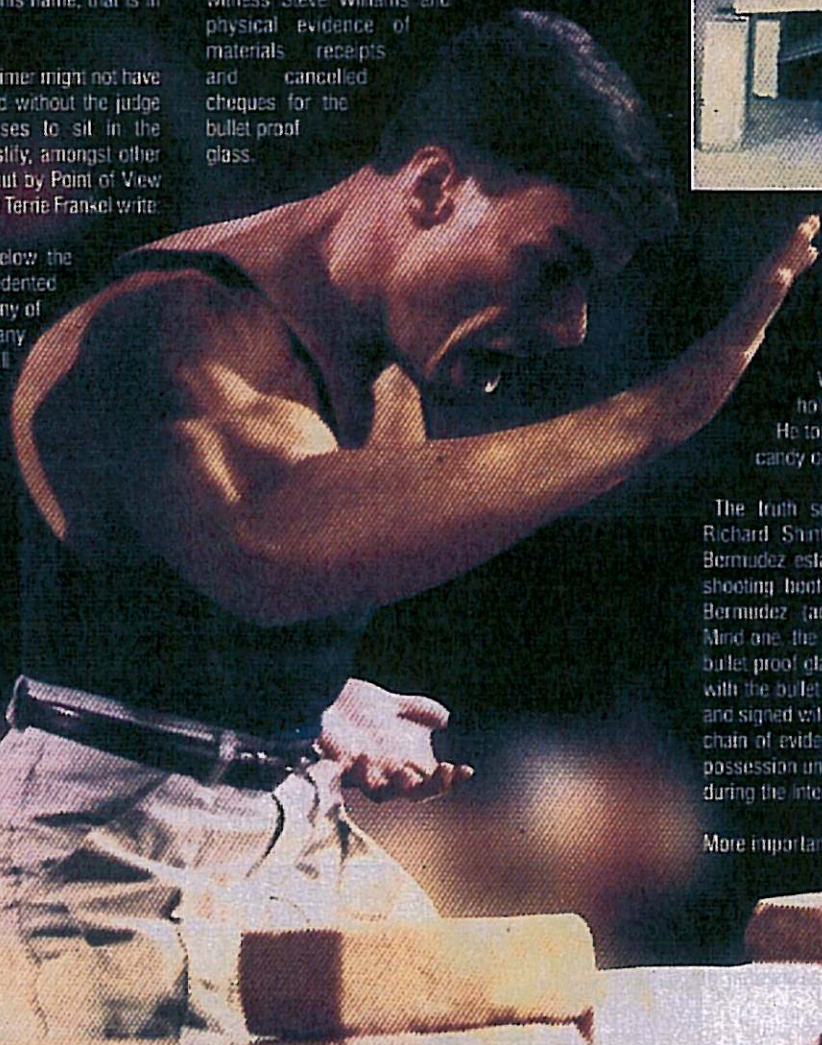
Court transcripts will confirm that in actuality the glass was framed by professional fabricator, Jose Bermudez, who took the stand and provided testimony corroborated by eye witness Steve Williams and physical evidence of materials, receipts and cancelled cheques for the bullet proof glass.

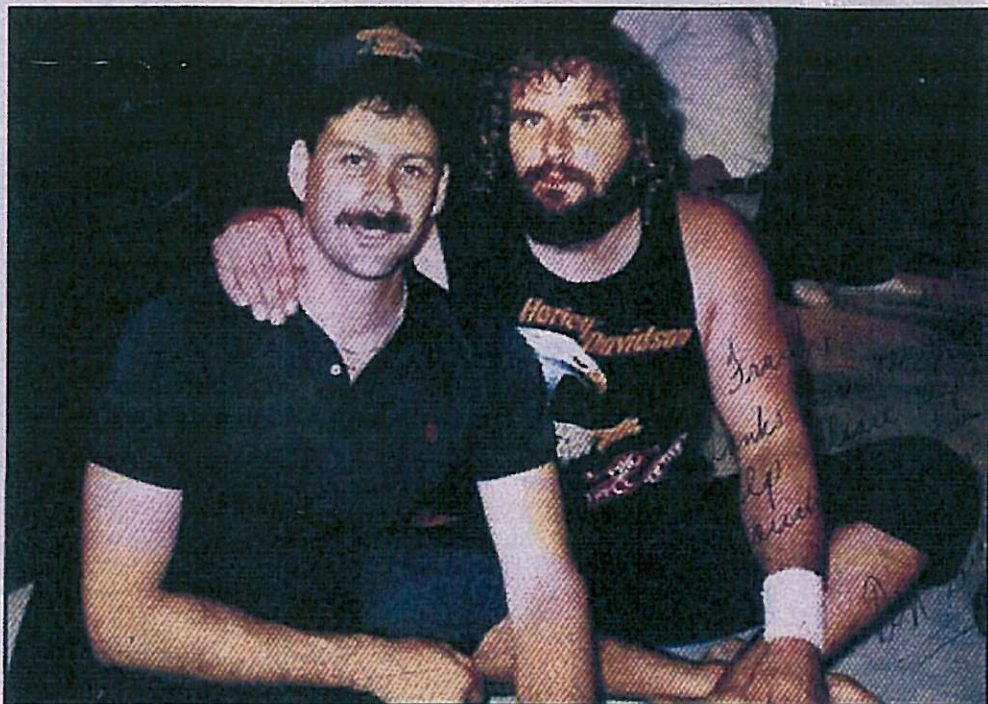


Richard Alexander aka Richard Shimer admitted he was not present when I performed my feat, in Paris, whereas Steve Williams was and can be seen holding the bullet proof glass on tape. He too, under oath authenticated it is not candy or ordinary Plexiglas.

The truth surrounding Richard Alexander aka Richard Shimer became overtly obvious with Bermudez establishing there was no room in the shooting booth for anyone but the shooter and Bermudez (acting as the video-photographer). Mind you, the gun is video taped being loaded and bullet proof glass can be seen shot and recovered with the bullet wed embedded in the glass, circled and signed without any edits, in order to establish a chain of evidence that the glass was never in my possession until I took the stage, in Paris, at Bercy, during the International Martial Art Festival.

More importantly, there is no disputing the fact, the





European media establish the bullet proof glass had been inspected by the editorial staff of Bushido magazine, along with thousands of spectators and international journalists, as it was put on display before and after my performance, as Steve Williams testified to under oath and as displayed in photos in my book *The Secret Man*, HarperCollins, 1996.

In anticipation of the scepticism of cynics the broken shards were distributed to members of the international press for them to test for themselves that this was indeed bullet proof glass, who never contested its authenticity, as a result.

Harjit Singh Sagoo: To many, it may seem far fetched that you were recruited by the late William Casey, who was the Director of Central Intelligence, to work in covert operations for the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Were you actually recruited by him or is this just a fantasy of yours as your critics claim?

Frank Dux: In as much as, someone may view my covert past as far fetched because it is foreign to their daily reality there is no arguing with the fact it is verified as substantive fact not in one but three separate court actions.

Without doubt, I have lived an extraordinary life but that is only because I am an ordinary man who was not afraid to venture outside of my element, but not before having prepared myself to be capable to improvise, adept and overcome great challenges.

To say I worked for the CIA is misleading. Let us begin by eliminating any misconceptions due to the misdirection of others. I never held myself out as having worked for the CIA as a card carrying or NOC (non-official cover) agent, especially in light of the Boland and Logan Amendments. The CIA making a public denial of my serving with the CIA is truthful but it is also cunningly deceptive, considering how it is

unwarranted.

Notwithstanding, my covert activities as it appears in my book *The Secret Man*, HarperCollins, 1996, are well corroborated. It was vetted (facts independently verified and substantiated) prior to its publication by the HarperCollins law firm of Slade and Metcalf. The US Congressional Intelligence Oversight expert witness and Iran Contra paymaster, Lt. Cmdr Alexander Martin USN, identified me under oath as a covert operative whose activities were being denied by my own government. Former USSR Major General Kornienko under oath and at the direction of the Ukrainian Military Authority pens the introduction to my book, identifying my contributions as covert operative. A former Soviet Military ID authenticated via the issuing military authority was delivered to legal counsel through its consulate, is also evidence. There exists documented video interviews with the Deputy Minister of Defence and Health discussing my former activities surrounding the joint search and recovery of alleged WMD's headed for the black market, which is just the tip of the iceberg.

I have worked with and been asked to advise numerous elite spec ops units the world over, like BERKYT, the Ukrainian elite anti-terror unit, etc. I am listed as a contributing source in the compilation and creation of the US NAVY SEAL SPEWAR CFC manual, K431-0097 (as is verified on page 10). I appeared on numerous news shows renowned for the quality of their experts, like Geraldo Live, NBC, etc.

Notwithstanding, they say you know a tree by the fruit it bears. In my case, let me emphasize I say this for information purposes, that fruit would be those I have advised, like leading SWAT teams, devising tactics that solved their indigenous problems and improved their performance. One being Danbury SWAT, placed

Opposite Main Image:
Jean Claude Van Damme portraying Frank Dux in Bloodsport

Opposite Inset:
Death Touch "Dim Mak" first performed by Frank Dux on numerous TV shows and exhibitions - the fragile ceramic tiles remain intact while only bottom concrete slab (not a wall cap) breaks

Above:
On set with Don Gibb aka "Jackson" in Bloodsport

in the top ten consecutively, since entering the SWAT Olympics. My students serve as leading Defensive Tactics Instructors for various police departments and personally conduct seminars for "teachers to teachers" of SWAT and martial arts systems. Head of SWAT and Defensive Tactics Training, Burbank Police Officer Brent Ambrose will assure you the training I instilled in him, based upon my firsthand experiences, saved his life. Brent sharing that knowledge has saved many others. Ambrose has been inducted into the Martial Art Hall Of Fame and was recently featured in a leading martial art magazine, dubbed "Chi Na Cop". Officer Larry Eklund is not only my student but with my training serves as the Defensive Tactics training officer for his police department. Larry is a regular source contributor to *Iron Man* magazine regarding strength training, nutrition, etc. Another student Jacob Bressler has now parlayed his knowledge, becoming a founder of an elite Israeli commando fighting system, which he is engaged in introducing to North American martial art community.

Recently, Artesia Daily Columnist Kathy Kolt, July 18, 2008 also reveals this about me:

"In 1996, he was with HIDTA, High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area at the Criminal Justice Centre. He designed strategies and tactics and evaluated their existing training program. In 1997, he received awards from the Multi Jurisdictional Counter Drug Task Force for drug task investigations. He also was sponsored by the DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE to teach NEOA, Narcotics Enforcement Officers Association, covert activities. He is an adjunct faculty member of the Saint Petersburg, Florida Criminal Justice Institute. He was knighted in the ORDER OF SAINT MICHAEL, KNIGHT CHEVALIER, by the Police Hall of Fame, MIAMI, FLORIDA." ■

Look out for Asking... Frank Dux part two in the next issue of Martial Arts Illustrated.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Harjit Singh Sagoo, born in 1984, in the UK, began his martial arts journey at the age of 9. He is a proud Sikh who has informally studied several fighting methods. After many years of serious research on realistic fighting, he has developed a fighting system which he has named 'Harjit Singh Yuddh Kalaah' (which translates as 'Harjit Singh's fighting art' in the Panjabi, and Sanskrit language). He continues to adopt and develop more effective fighting techniques. He enjoys reading martial arts manuals but loves writing his own.