

FIGHTERS

The Martial Arts Magazine

NOVEMBER 1989 £1.20

**GEORGE
CANNING**

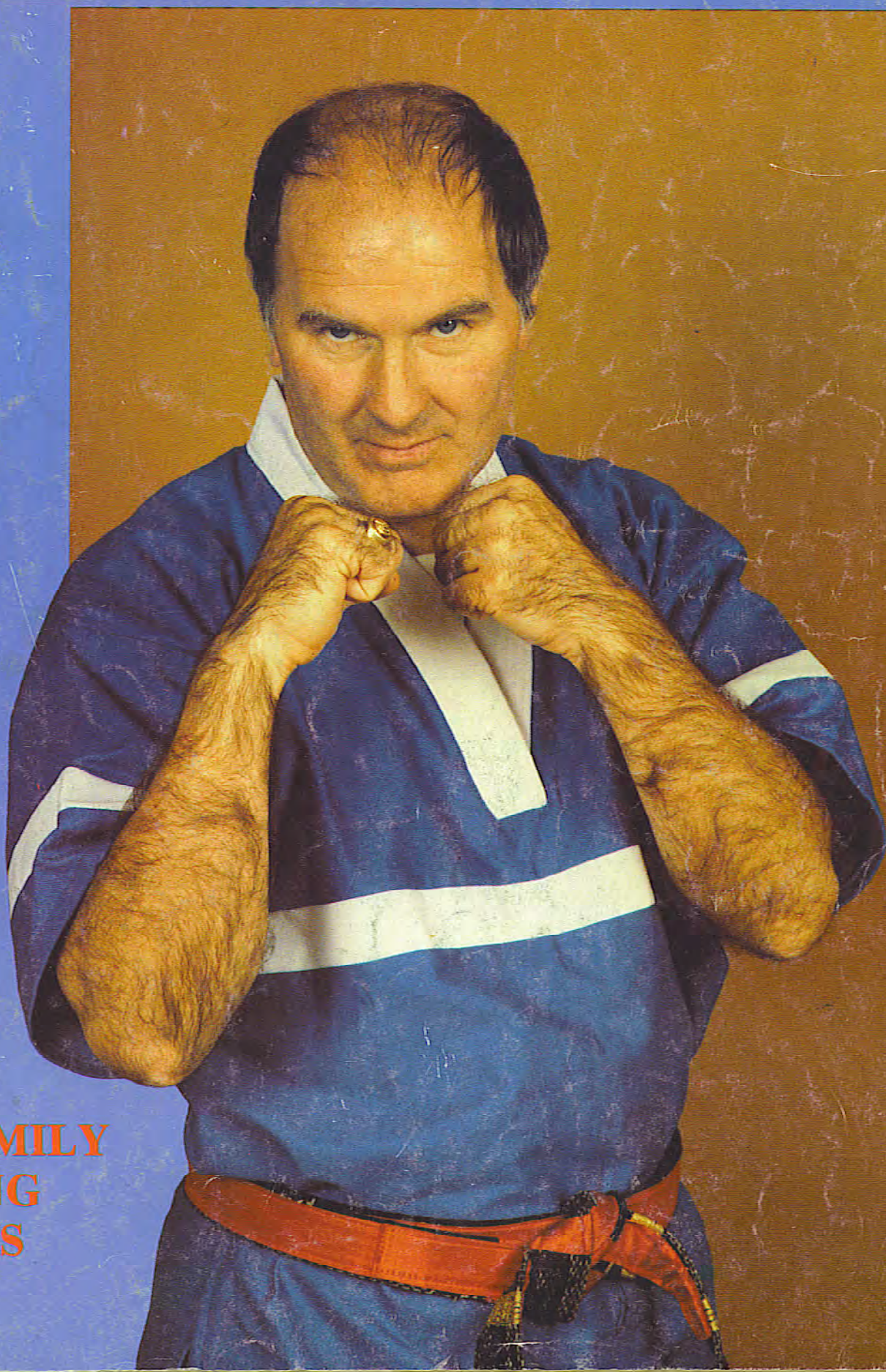
RETURNING
TO HIS ROOTS

**WORLD
Kung Fu
Championships**

**SNAKE MEN
OF
OXFORD**

*Teaching
in
Martial Arts*

**CHOW FAMILY
PRAYING
MANTIS**



GEORGE CANNING

assesses his
martial arts
career

by

Returning to the Roots

FOR MUGENDO'S Professor George Canning the last few years have been ones of self-examination and re-learning. His once flamboyant personality has re-routed itself into areas of personal growth and inner spirituality. His time spent in Yugoslavia with bio-energy and then at his home in Southern Ireland have left George with questions that still wanted answering and pathways still to be trodden. His studies into the forces of bio-energy have led him in a kind of full circle in the martial arts, and consequently back to his roots.

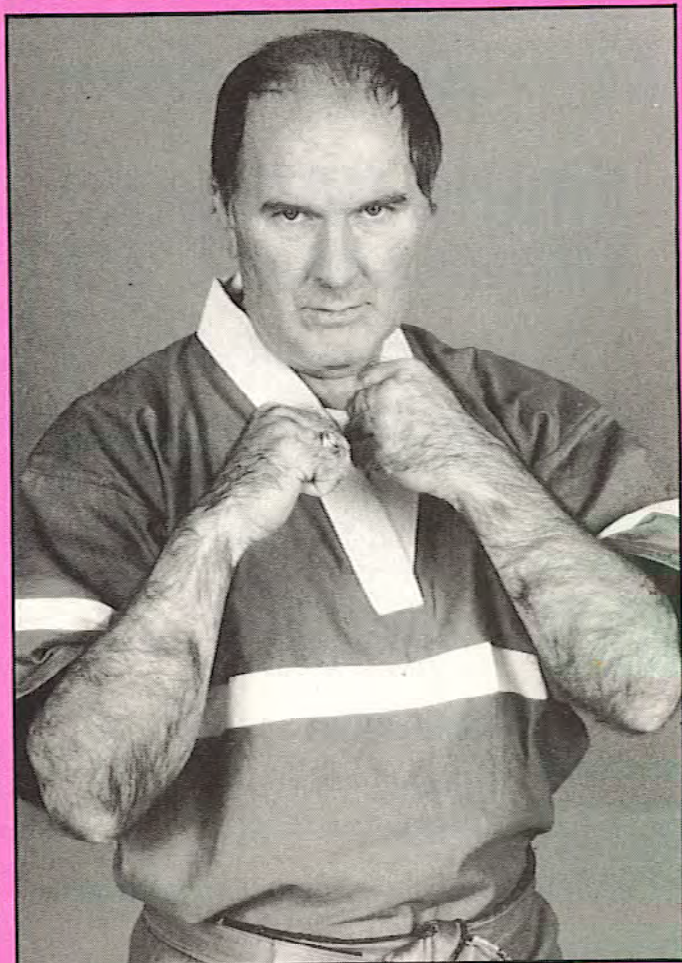
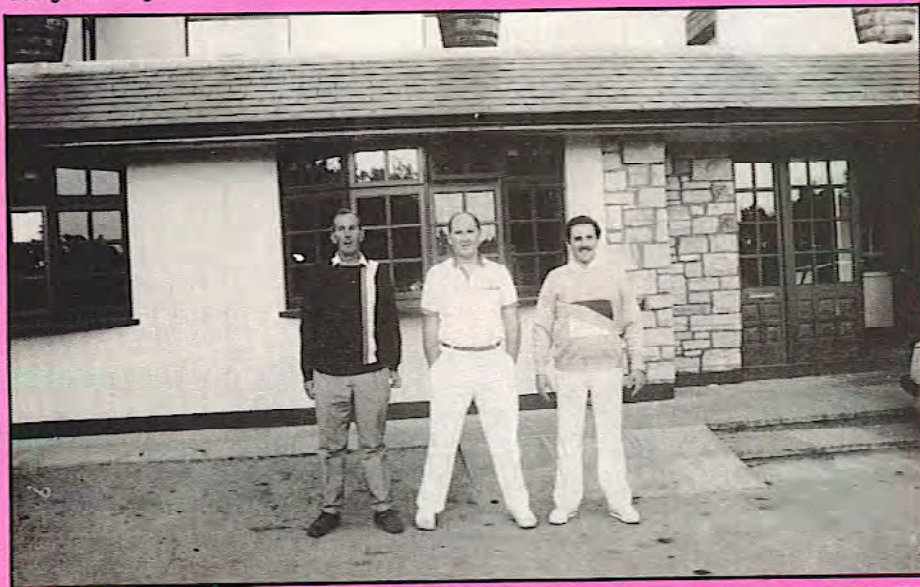
Teacher

George comments: "When you first begin training in a martial discipline you should stay with the same teacher. If you find that the art isn't what you wanted and you switch

to something else, then OK, you do that. But you must never comment about that first man who started you off on that path to learning. He was

the one who got you off and running, so you shouldn't call him out at some later date. Too much of this goes on in the martial arts today. You start

George Canning and friends outside his clinic in Killarney.



capabilities as they do when telling stories to the little groups after the class they would be good in their own right. They talk about what they did to this guy tonight, and what they did to that particular guy last night. It's the same as a doctor talking about his patients. When a doctor talks about his patients openly, then he is not a good doctor. When a martial arts master or leading student talks openly amongst his students about how great he is, then he is not a good martial artist. A good martial arts master is a humble man who doesn't talk openly in front of his students about how great he is. They know how great he is. He doesn't have to prove it outside the dojo.

"A good instructor keeps his students properly trained and doesn't hold anything back from them, because when you hold back you are, in effect, keeping them under your control. The difference between teaching in the East and in the West is quite stark. In the East they teach and then say 'go and learn'. The western method seems to be teach, keep your students under your control and keep them with you for as long as possible. Keep taking their money and don't tell them when their technique has



surpassed your own and you can offer them nothing else. Some martial arts teachers have no conscience. For myself, whenever anyone came to me to learn, whether it was for a week, a month, or one lesson, I always made them better than they were when they first came to me."

Retired

I approached George with the question that many people were voicing, in that he had retired from active martial arts to follow the pursuit of bio-energy healing.

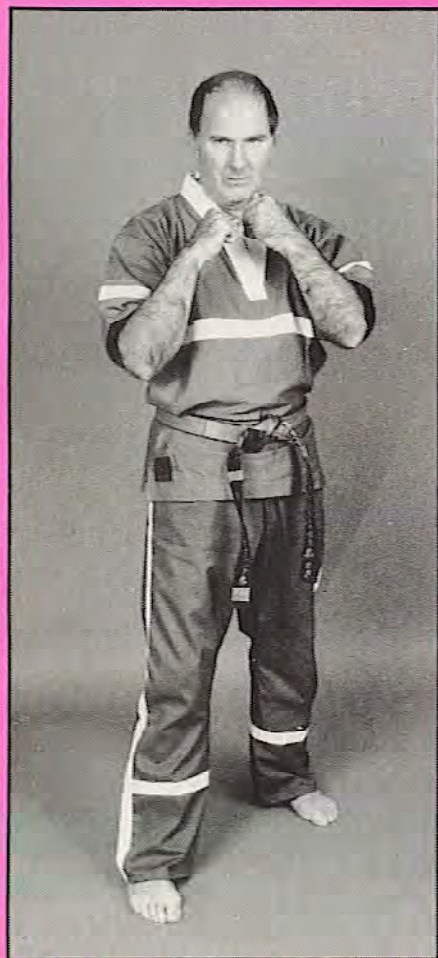
'It does little harm to occasionally look into the mirror and see deeper than the image that is there'

George replied: "This is not so. I have taken time out to follow something (bio-energy) that quite blew my mind when I had first-hand experience of it. Doing this has changed my perception of not just the martial arts but of life as a whole. I have always been very positive in

everything that I did. I still am, perhaps more so now, but there is also a kind of inner calm within me. Studying the concepts of healing through bio-energy has enabled me to re-examine myself and where I am going. My values have changed, so too has my outlook on life. The quality of my life and my martial arts teaching has improved two hundred per cent. But perhaps even more important, I now view life and my goal in life with a totally different attitude to the one I once had. There is a saying, 'You never appreciate freedom until it is taken away from you'. Well, in that same concept you don't appreciate your own health until you see others less fortunate than yourself. I have viewed this from my platform as a healer in bio-energy. Being among sickness and infirmity makes you realise what the gift of good health really is.

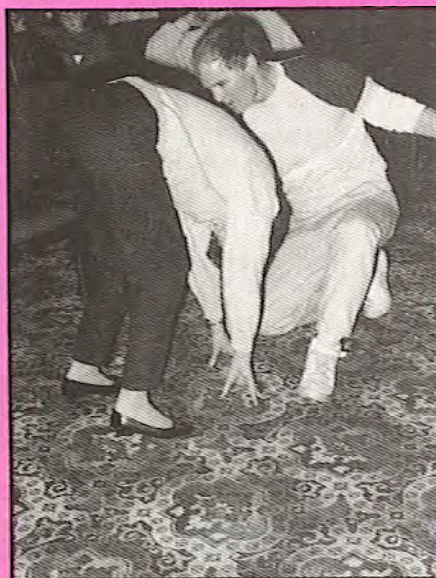
Changes

"Everything changes. Attitudes change. I am now entering life with a great positive energy, which will reflect right across the board, in my day-to-day living, in my martial teaching, in dealing with people. In fact, by returning to the roots I have had time to assess aspects of my life that needed changing. The philosophical side of the martial arts is often sadly missed or bypassed when one is on a high and shooting





Before seeking treatment at George's clinic, the lady in the following sequence had been unable to bend down, even to tie her own shoe laces.



She can now bend down without feeling any pain.



obscurity and oblivion once their fighting prowess begins to wane and others behind them take over. What is left for them then? Yet if they applied that same positive energy to their teaching and observed the philosophical side of the martial disciplines their influence could last forever and their students could carry on their name into new generations.

"The martial arts have survived for hundreds of years because of those aforementioned qualities in the teachers and instructors of a bygone age. If they are to survive (especially in the west) for hundreds of years to come then surely instructors' at-

titudes will have to change. It does little harm to occasionally look into the mirror and see deeper than the image that is there. By returning to the roots one can begin again, only begin with a difference, because you will have the knowledge up to that point. You only need to re-apply that knowledge positively and with feeling, taking care to leave the ego behind and let your maturity guide you and the art that once filled your rice bowl will do so again, but this time the food will be sweet and not sour. Let me end with a famous quote, 'What lies before us, and what lies behind us, are nothing compared to what lies within us'."

for the stars. Today's competition greats will reach their zenith on the tournament circuit and then fade into