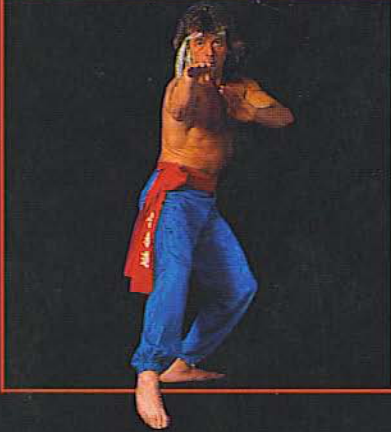
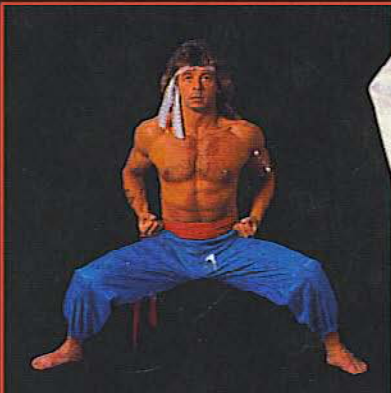
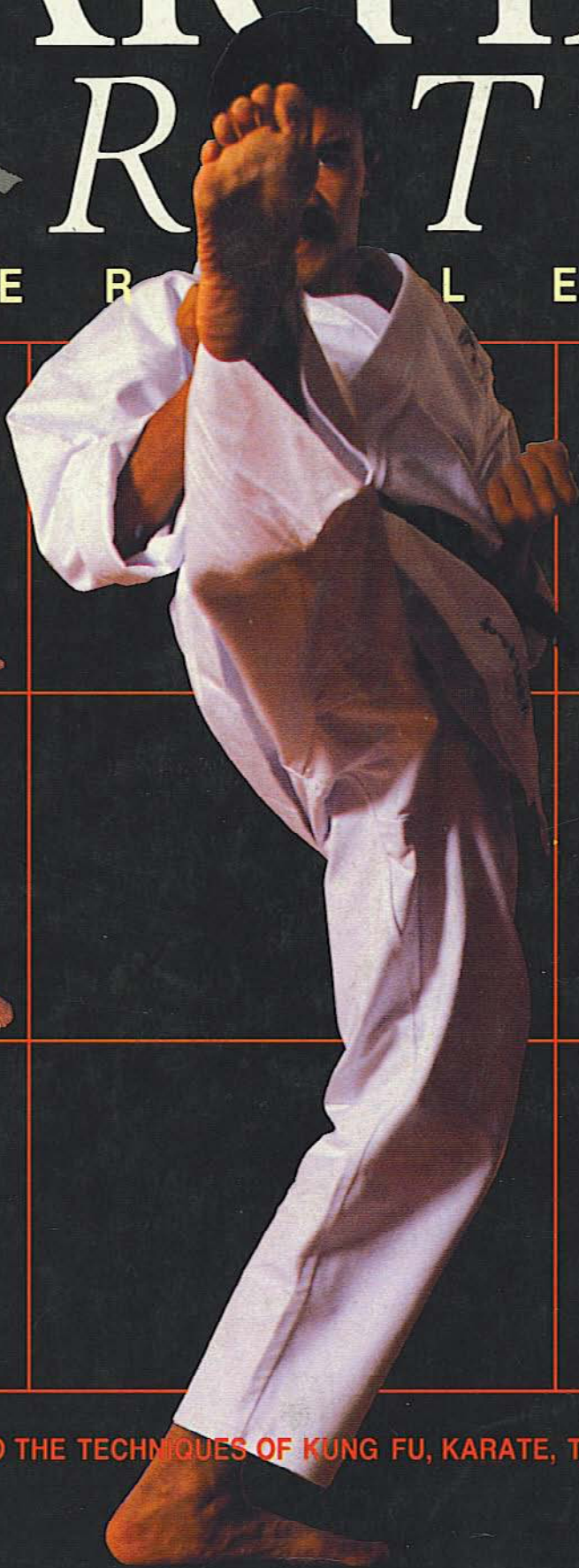


THE MARTIAL ARTS

P E T E R L E W I S



A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO THE TECHNIQUES OF KUNG FU, KARATE, TAEKWONDO & NINJUTSU

get into a ring to fight wearing crude boxing gloves made of hemp. Often these gloves were dipped in a mixture of glue and ground glass to produce terrifying results. Almost one in three fights ended in the death of one of the competitors. Perhaps the most lethal blow in Thai boxing was the elbow strike to the temple, which is now banned.

Towards the mid-1970s Thai boxing was introduced into the United States, where it has become very popular, partly because it resembles another art introduced at that time, called full-contact karate.

Full-contact, as it is generally known, was the brainchild of a few martial artists who were tired of the controlled sparring methods allowed in karate and taekwondo. They decided to don boxing gloves and fight in a square ring, like professional boxers, so that they could employ full-power kicks and punches against one another, instead of having to let their attacks fall just short of a designated target area. Almost overnight this new sport was a huge success. Within two years television gave it air time and a new spectator sport was born.

A little later on, semi-contact came into existence. This allows competitors to fight under virtually the same rules as their full-contact brothers, but strikes and kicks are judged more on a points system, points being awarded for perfection of technique rather than for pounding a competitor into the ground or knocking him out. Thai boxing has also been introduced into Europe, where it has become very popular, with matches and tournaments being held on a regular basis.

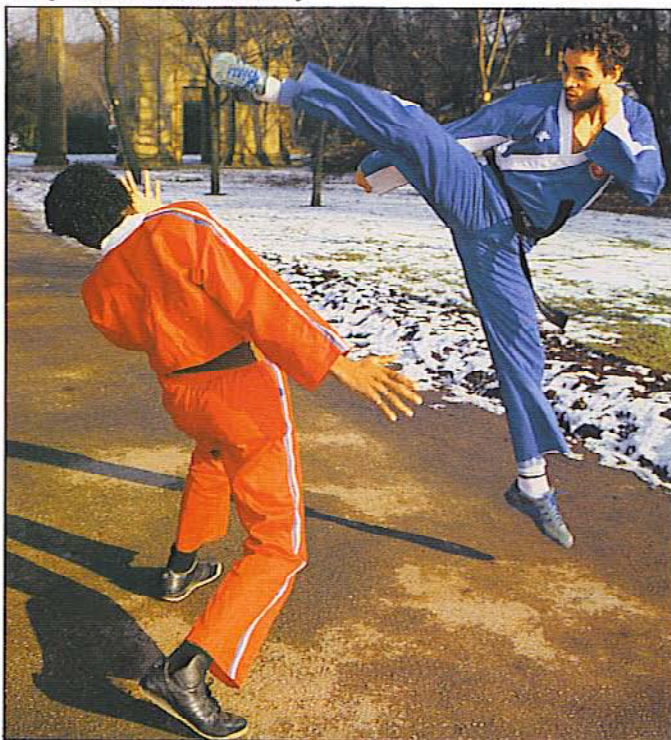
Before long another form of combat came to the attention of the world's martial arts population. It was called kickboxing and was a combination of muay thai and full-contact karate in one. Associations were formed and rules instituted, and kickboxing gained a high degree of popularity. Low kicks to the legs are not allowed, but apart from that and a few other rules, kickboxing is similar to the other martial art ring-sports.

Traditionalists from many branches of the martial arts feel that many modern practitioners, drawn to the arts as sport, are missing their true meaning and aiming only for self-gratification and glory. Individuals begin training in a martial art for many different reasons, for fitness, for self-defence or purely for the discipline that it offers. Whatever the reason, once the journey on that path is commenced, the martial artist can travel down many avenues. It is up to him to ascertain how far he wishes to travel and by what route. The purpose of this book is to aid the reader by showing him what is entailed at the beginning stages of four of the most popular and widespread martial arts. As it is said in the East, 'only by seeking, can one find'.



A typical example of an eclectic fighting art: a Mugendo professor executes a roundhouse kick against his student. Today's martial artists are constantly

looking at other forms of combat technique in order to broaden and improve their own fighting methods.



A semi-contact fighter executes a jumping spinning roundhouse kick. Semi-contact karate is one of the most

popular forms of competition fighting. It started in the USA and spread across the world in less than four years.