

The emblem of the Se-Jong system, like the system itself, is a blending of Yin and Yang.

The words, "Tae Kwon Do," represent the "hard" element in Se-Jong, for Tae Kwon Do is traditionally a "hard" system of oriental art.

The broken lines of the emblem are the "Earth above and Earth below" from the I Ching. It is a symbol of yielding, passivity, etc. The words, "Yield and Overcome" are taken from Chapter Twenty-two of the Tao Te Ching.

The symbol from the I Ching and #22 of the Tao Te Ching represent the "soft" element in the Se-Jong system.

二十二章

曲則全。枉則直。窪則盈。敝則新。少則得。多則惑。是以聖
人抱一爲天下式。不自見。故明。不自是。故彰。不自伐。故
有功。不自矜。故長。夫唯不爭。故天下莫能與之爭。古之
所謂曲則全者。豈虛言哉。誠全而歸之。

Chapter Twenty-two

Yield and overcome;
Bend and be straight;
Empty and be full;
Wear out and be new;
Have little and gain;
Have much and be confused.

Therefore wise men embrace the one
And set an example for all.
Not putting on a display,
They shine forth.
Not justifying themselves,
They are distinguished.
Not boasting,
They receive recognition.
Not bragging,
They never falter.
They do not quarrel,
So no one quarrels with them.
Therefore, the ancients say,
"Yield and Overcome."

Is that an empty saying?
Be really whole,
And all things will come to you.

- Lao Tzu Tsu,
Tao Te Ching

History, Myth and Mythology in the Martial Arts

To write a history of the martial arts in general, or of a specific martial art is so complex it is almost impossible. The reasons are myriad. Most martial arts originated in the Far East, where the concept of history is much different from that of our western culture.

In the Far East, meanings of events and people are much more significant than facts. Often in the culture of the East, the truth is much more important than fact. As a result, myths and legends abound in the ancient arts, and even some modern arts have developed a mythology. Some of the more modern “arts” and many modern artists have, for financial reasons, lied about their experience, their art and/or their qualifications. Because of ethnocentrism, many countries claim to be the original source of martial arts, however, as the origins of martial arts predate factual history it is impossible to determine the precise origin or development of most of the arts.

A very brief overview of the Martial Arts

Tae Kwon Do, is a Korean martial art. The beginning of martial arts in Korea is clouded in antiquity, but historical records tell us that it flourished.

The name, “Tae Kwon Do,” is a generic name adopted by the Korean Government in the late 1940’s and 1950’s that was applied to an assortment of martial arts that had been practiced there for centuries. The Masters of each system met, and agreed to practice and function under the name Tae Kwon Do. Under the leadership of General Choi Hong Hi, it was hoped that Tae Kwon Do would eventually become the name that would identify the Korean arts.

Because of politics, financial considerations, human machinations, economics, and egos, almost as soon as the name Tae Kwon Do was agreed upon and the government-sponsored International Tae Kwon Do Federation began, it started to unravel. Government pressure, the dream of political advancement and/or money motivated most Masters to remain a part of the ITF. Some Masters refused to conform to the new name and philosophy, some even developed new names for the old systems and began to market them.

A brief history of Tae Kwon Do

At the same time, the Korean government used the ITF as a diplomatic tool. Young instructors were sent by General Choi to various parts of the world as “good will” ambassadors for Korean culture. These young men were ordered to distant lands, with almost no money, to establish Tae Kwon Do schools. In the late 1950’s and early 1960’s, several of these students found their way to the United States to teach. Among them were Jhoon Rhee, Jung Sul Park, Young Il Kong and Hee Il Cho.

Young Il Kong found himself in the small eastern Pennsylvania town of Pottstown. He taught and lived in a small wooden frame house (a single room) along the Perkiomen River. The house was hot in summer, cold in winter, damp in fall and musty in the spring. It was never comfortable.

Several of his original students came from the Norristown Tae Kwon Do school that was located in the Norristown YWCA. Ben Millard, along with his student, Robert Connolly, were among those students who studied with Young Il Kong in that dilapidated room.

Mr. Kong eventually moved to Baltimore, but would return to Norristown bi-monthly to conduct class or administer promotional testing. On many weekends the students at the Norristown Y would travel to Baltimore to continue training with Young Il Kong. During this period of time, a young man by the name of Ron Dragon became a student at the YWCA in Norristown.

In those years there were both good and bad times. Poorly attended tournaments; Mr. Kong’s wedding in Baltimore; exhausting hours on day trips to Baltimore; shock at General Choi’s flight for safety and

exile from Korea; the privilege of being with him; being included in Mr. Kong's family gatherings and a growing sadness at the increasingly commercial motivation of the Kong schools.

For Robert Connolly, Martial Arts were a great vehicle for building confidence and self-esteem.

(Scripture would describe that as setting people free.) As the commercialism grew, Connolly decided to teach with a different approach. In 1974, he found himself working in Bishop Walsh High School in Cumberland, Maryland, where he began to teach free classes in the High School gym. When he left Cumberland, Maryland, he left behind three Black Belts, but, due to various circumstances, the school in Cumberland did not last long after his departure.

In 1978, Connolly began teaching classes in St. Canice Parish in the Knoxville section of Pittsburgh. When he moved to Natrona Heights, PA, there was little hope that the Knoxville school would continue. Providentially, at this time Mr. Ron Dragon was transferred by his business to the Pittsburgh area. He contacted Connolly and volunteered to keep the Knoxville school operational.

When Connolly moved to Natrona Heights, he immediately began a Tae Kwon Do school. Along with attending their classes in Knoxville, many of the Knoxville students would travel the long and tedious Route 28 to attend classes in Natrona Heights. There were now two free schools.

There was much enthusiasm among the students in Knoxville and Natrona Heights, and it soon became obvious that as Black Belts were trained more schools would be opening. It was suggested that if the number of schools grew, the group should have a name.

Most of the active students at that time became involved in hours of discussions (with much laughter) not only with regard to a name, but on the many aspects required to form an organization. The name Se-Jong Tae Kwon Do was finally agreed upon, and the emblem was developed. The group deliberately stayed away from the common practice of using a family name or the name of any living person to identify itself. Se-Jong was chosen because he was a scholar as well as a King, and the group wanted to emphasize not only the martial aspects, but also the intellectual and noble aspects of the martial arts.

Connolly did not intend to start a distinct organization or system. He simply wanted to provide an opportunity for people to study something that would benefit their lives. He envisioned it as part of his ministry. The enthusiasm of his students and their desire to teach and spread what they were doing evolved into Se-Jong Tae Kwon Do.

Currently, in 2004, Se-Jong has well over 100 Black Belts with four at the 6th Dan level. Its 22 schools are attended by hundreds of student a week. While most of the Se-Jong schools are located in the Greater Pittsburgh area, there are schools located in the Philadelphia and Meadville, PA, areas, as well as in Utah and North Carolina.

On the first Sunday of the month, Se-Jong offers a seminar for its students. On the third Sunday of the month there is a class specifically geared to Black Belts. The Black Belt class not only provides a learning environment, but also the all important element of fraternity, which is the glue that holds Se-Jong together. A week-long camp is held every summer that can only be described as "an experience."

The heart of Se-Jong is the Instructor. The Instructor perpetuates Se-Jong, its principles and its attitudes. By their example, students will either come to understand what Se-Jong and martial arts are supposed to be, or they will gain a distorted view. Se-Jong is in the hands of the Instructors.

Father Robert Connolly

Founder, Se-Jong Tae Kwon Do

8th Dan Black Belt, Tae Kwon Do

4th Dan Black Belt, Aikido

Se-Jong Tae Kwon Do System

“To overcome others requires force
To overcome one's self requires strength.”
– *Lao Tzu*

Tae Kwon Do is a Korean art of mind and body. It developed over many centuries and was exemplified in the Hwa-Rang tradition. Tae Kwon Do, like all oriental systems, (Judo, Karate, Gung fu, etc.) is not primarily a means of self-defense, although the roots of all martial arts are the systems developed by warriors to overcome armed and unarmed enemies.

The oriental systems of mind and body are at least as ancient as recorded history. The place of origin and their evolution are disputed.

Over the centuries, martial arts techniques were appropriated by monks as dance-like exercises to prepare for prayer, to practice self-defense and to integrate mind and body. This would explain their systematic development and is perhaps why some of the earliest references to the arts refer to temple boxing. In Japan, the opposite evolution took place. As the militaristic society became more pacified, the art became less militaristic.

Because of necessity or the greed of renegade monks, the combat qualities of these systems were taught to outsiders without the emphasis on the philosophical and spiritual roots. What had originally developed to enable the individual to find peace became techniques of destruction. As a result, violence replaced power and physical prowess replaced discipline. In short, the means was confused with the end.

Today, the combination of failure to teach discipline, and an exaggerated emphasis on the martial aspects of the arts has led to aberrations. These aberrations are seen in such things as schools of street fighting using martial terms, Ultimate Fighting Challenges, Tough Man Contests and highly trained, but undisciplined, men and women who try to render one another unconscious and call it art. Many traditionally trained martial artists compromised discipline and technique in order to become commercially competitive.

The Se-Jong system stands in contradiction to these “martial arts.” It is an attempt to return to the holistic concepts of the original systems.

Se-Jong Tae Kwon Do demonstrates the Christ dimension that is already at the root of all gentleness and peace. Emphasis is placed on moral rectitude, development of Ki, the power to heal, the Hyungs, and the recognition and development of true power.

Students learn about themselves (physically, spiritually and mentally) and about their fellow human beings. Through this knowledge confidence and compassion will be developed.

The Se-Jong system is, in short, a philosophy of the wholeness (i.e. holiness) of the human person.

The study of Tae Kwon Do is a study of a lifetime. There are no experts, only students.

Robert Connolly
Founder
Se-Jong Tae Kwon Do

“That which shrinks must first expand. That which fails must first be strong.”

– *Lao Tzu*

The students of Se-Jong should have a profound respect for:

The Four Respects

The Tao (Way, Truth, Life i.e. God)

The Master

Others

Self

The Se-Jong student should develop a deep appreciation of:

The Five Appreciations

Nature

Family

System

Rank

Country

Because of their training, the students of the Se-Jong System express themselves through:

The Nine Expressions

Courtesy

Gentleness

Humor

Kindness

Honesty

Patience

Generosity

Humility

Peace

“Knowing ignorance is strength. Ignoring knowledge is sickness.”

– *Lao Tzu*

Some terms useful to a member of the Se-Jong School:

Se-Jong: Name of the Korean king who instituted the Korean alphabet in 1443. It was the first Asian alphabet. Se-Jong is also the name of this system, implying an intellectual approach to the art. The Se-Jong Hyung has twenty-four moves, representing a full day, a full cycle, a lifetime of study. The Se-Jong Hyung also consists of “Basic” movements, which are the foundation of the art.

Tae Kwon Do: The way of the hand and foot.

Aikido: Pure art of defense. The use of the aggressor's energy and balance against them.

Dobok: Korean word meaning uniform. (Japanese = Gi).

Hwa-Rang: Historically a youth group, who used the art to teach their countrymen higher principles. Today represents the principles for which all students of the art should be striving.

Hyung: Dance-like movements designed to incorporate one's mental, physical and spiritual elements.

Ki: Korean equivalent to Ch'i. Inner strength ... Power ... Life Force.

Shiatzu: Art of healing touch. “Accupressure.”

Tao: The Way. Ultimate truth. Life.

Government of Se-Jong

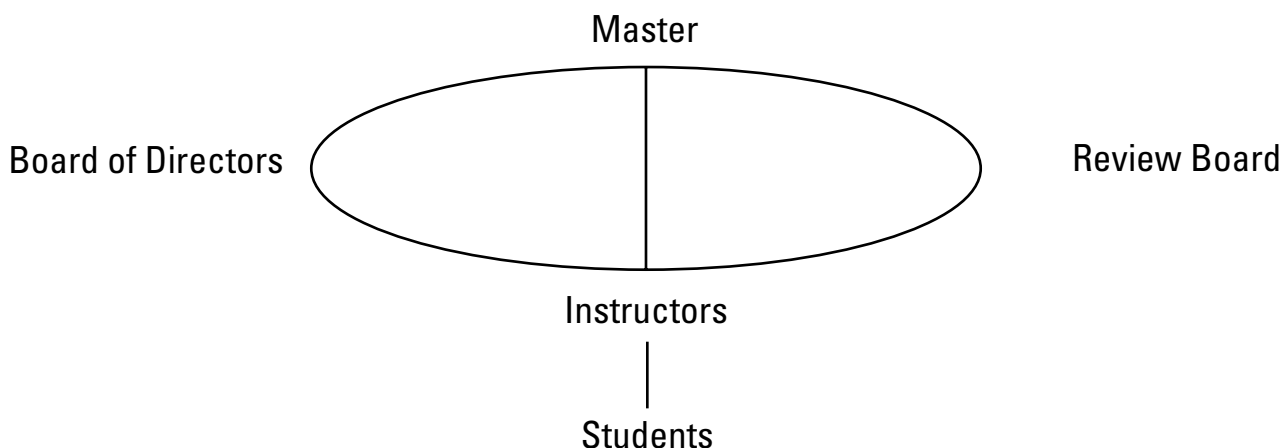
The absolute teaching authority of Se-Jong Tae Kwon Do is the Master of the style, the “Instructor of Instructors.” Practical government is the Instructor of each school, who has complete control in his/her school.

The Master will appoint a Board of Directors to manage all but the teaching aspects of Se-Jong. The Master will choose those from the Se-Jong system that he feels best personify the principles of Se-Jong. The number of Board members is left to the discretion of the Master.

In the case of sudden and permanent incapacity of the Master, if he has not chosen a successor, the Board will do so in a manner that it sees fit.

If the Board is aware of the Master's choice, they must make it public. If not, they will choose the person they feel most personifies the principles and ideals of Se-Jong.

The Master will designate a Review Board. The purpose of the Review Board is to insure the standardization of basics and patterns in all the Se-Jong schools in his/her area. The Review Board is to augment the individual instructors and act as a resource. They are not to supercede or replace the Instructor. The Instructor has complete authority in his/her school. The Review Board is the personal representative of the Master and should be treated as such. The Review Board is in constant communication with the Master regarding patterns, basics, and resolving conflicts and questions.



Membership in Se-Jong

Anyone who has earned a rank in the Se-Jong system, and adheres to its principles and actively participates in classes, is considered a member.

Conduct unbecoming Se-Jong can result in loss of membership. The Instructors have the responsibility of maintaining the integrity of Se-Jong Tae Kwon Do. If an Instructor dismisses a student, no other Instructor may adopt that person as a student without the Master's approval.

Se-Jong Discipline Protocol

Discipline is freedom. The purpose of rules is primarily to insure maximum benefit to the student and perpetuate the traditions of Tae Kwon Do. The tangible evidence that a member of Se-Jong is achieving the goals of the system is found in following the proper Protocol.

Grade Level Belt Protocol

Bowing exemplifies the protocol of Se-Jong. Bowing indicates that the individual embraces the goals and ideals of Se-Jong. It creates an attitude of learning and it bonds an individual to fellow students. It is a sign of both welcome and farewell. It demonstrates respect for others and an atmosphere of learning. A properly understood and performed bow shows the attitude necessary to be a student of Se-Jong.

- Bow to the flag and Instructors upon entering and exiting the workout area.
- Students are required to bow to all Black Belts upon first verbal greeting.
- Refer to all Black Belts by Mr., Mrs., Ms., Sir, or Ma'am. All Black Belts are to be addressed formally when they are in uniform, in the do-jang, and in all formal situations.
- Upon the arrival of the school Instructor or any Master Instructor it is the responsibility of the student who first notices the Instructor to call the room to attention and to bow in greeting. The "sho" command releases the class from attention.
- When students are brought to attention, they should gently tap their hands at the side of their legs at the thigh level.
- Whenever a formal instruction is given, the students respond with, "Yes sir/ma'am."
- The first technique (or series of techniques) executed after the class has been instructed to change techniques is followed by a "kihop."
- After an Instructor makes a correction/adjustment/comment regarding a student's technique, the student responds with, "Yes sir/ma'am."
- During line drills, when the students are instructed to turn, the technique (or series of techniques) performed during the turn is followed by a "kihop."
- Each student is expected to expend maximum personal effort during class workouts.
- If at any time during the class a student becomes sick or injured, it is the student's responsibility to bow out and tell the instructor what is wrong. Do not enter/leave class without permission from the Instructor.
- Students must hold the last instructed position until directed otherwise.
- When the instructor says, "Sho," the student says, "Thank you sir/ma'am" or "Komapsumida."
- Loud conversations, laughing in excess, and chewing gum, have no place in the do-jang. Talking is prohibited and jewelry is not to be worn during the instruction period.
- An **all white uniform** free from patches, flags or any other symbol is required at all occasions.
- The student's dobok is to be neat and clean at all times. Respect for the uniform must be practiced.
- The student's belt should be neatly folded or tied when removed. As a gesture of respect, it should not touch the ground and never be dropped on the ground.

- The student's current belt rank must be displayed on the belt by color or stripe. The stripe should be 1/2" to 3/4" wide and placed one belt width from each end.
- Do not give a demonstration or teach Tae Kwon Do without the approval of your Instructor.
- A student must have the approval of his/her Instructor before participating in any tournament or competition.
- When a student is late for class he/she must stand in a paro position until the instructor acknowledges their position. He/she must respond by asking, "Permission to enter class."
- Students are expected to practice outside of class on a regular basis.
- Students must have a mutual respect for all fellow classmates and Instructors. All students are expected to be courteous and understanding. Advanced students are expected to set a good example to new students and to assist such students when necessary.
- The student must maintain and control his or her temper at all times. Unsportsmanlike conduct (i.e., profanity, unnecessary roughness toward a fellow student, etc.) will not be tolerated.
- Do not ask a senior belt or Instructor to free spar. **Do not spar without the presence of an Instructor.** Proper equipment is required (a minimum of mouthpiece and head gear).
- Do not engage in any activities that might degrade the code of Tae Kwon Do or the reputation of your school.

Black Belt Protocol

- All aspects of under belt protocol are to be followed.
- Black Belts should have a single dot with the proper degree color representing their current rank. All Black Belts should have only the dot of their current rank on the belt. **Do not** keep the former rank dot on the belt. The dot is to be placed in the center, one belt width from the end of the belt.
- All Black Belts are expected to maintain an active membership in Se-Jong. If you do not maintain the skills of your rank, you do not hold that rank. A lack of participation in Se-Jong for one year will require a demonstration of skill before rank is reactivated.
- Any Black Belt requesting to be reinstated to the active list must first have the permission of the Master of the system. Permission from the Black Belt's previous instructor (when possible) is also required.

At any time the Master of the system can choose to update or further refine all protocol items to fit the needs of the system.

Dress Code

The Dobok of Se-Jong is Plain White.

An **all white uniform** free from patches, flags or any other symbol is required at all occasions.

Students: When a student is in a situation where he/she is formally representing Se-Jong Tae Kwon Do, they should be properly dressed. Their clothing should be neat and clean at all times (both dobok and street clothes). “Street Clothing” should give the appearance of being dressed up; they should not appear casually dressed.

Black Belts: Black Belts in Se-Jong are the official representatives of the system. Therefore, in formal situations, such as demonstrations, all tests, lectures and tournaments, they should dress as follows, if they are not wearing a dobok:

Men: Dress shirt and tie, dress slacks, sport coat or equivalent, and dress shoes. The Se-Jong Black Belt Pin should be worn on the left lapel of the jacket.

Women: Dress equivalent to the men, as current fashion and/or modesty dictates. The lapel pin should be displayed.

Formal situations include: Demonstrations, Tests, Lectures and Tournaments.

Non-formal situations include: Seminars, Black Belt class and weekly classes.

Failure to appreciate the significance of the dress code is a failure to recognize the dignity of representing Tae Kwon Do. If anyone finds this dress code excessive, or impossible to adhere to, they should resign from Se-Jong.