Eskrima Sticks Concepts and Application Part 1

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Eskrima Sticks Overview

Arnis, Kali, Eskrima is known for its use of sticks in training aside from long andf short bladed weapons. In fact, Eskrima is also called as Stick Fighting Arts because of intensive use of sticks as in offensive and defensive moves and drills. Eskrima sticks does provide a more safer means of training and some how removes the dangers of fatal injuries if bladed weapons are used.

Types of Eskrima Sticks

There are many types of Eskrima sticks that are available out there, some of which are traditional sticks like Rattan, Labsika and Kamagong sticks, some are alternatives such as Bahi, Tumalin and Giho sticks and some are customized sticks like Competition Sticks and Padded Sticks. I will discuss the more common ones:

1. Rattan Sticks - is the most commonly used Eskrima stick. It is hardened by fire and is usually designed with a spiral burn. Rattan sticks are very flexible and can bend, in fact, it is used to create native furnitures due to its flexilibity and tenacity. Rattan sticks also comes in skinned and unskinned variations but I personally like the unskinned one. Because of the skin, the wear and tear is slower, the weight is a little heavier giving a more compact feel, and lessens splinters.

Because rattan sticks can be fashioned by burning with fire, there are also different kinds of designs that can be burned in the stick. Famous designs are spiral, ring, leopard spots, tiger stripes, scorpion, etc...

2. Labsika Sticks - are thinner, lighter and sturdier version of the Eskrima stick. Labsika are thinner in circumference as compared to their rattan sticks counterpart and because of this it is also lighter to hold. Labsika is also sturdier and does not break easily due to the generous distribution of its nodes which is about 6-8 nodes in one Labsika stick

3. Kamagong Sticks and Bahi Sticks - are heavier and thicker variation of the Eskrima stick. Kamagong or Iron wood is a very strong and dense wood. Kamagong sticks are hard to break, reason for calling it as Iron wood, and heavier in weight. Bahi is another kind of heavy stick and is commonly used in hammer handles.

4. Competition Sticks and Padded sticks - are Eskrima sticks that are used in competitions. Competition sticks are skinned rattan sticks that are measured and weighted for use in competitions, while padded sticks are thin rattan or labsika sticks that are wrapped with foam to cushion the impact of the strike.

On Part 2 of this article, we will examine the parts of the Eskrima sticks and how it corresponds to its bladed weapon counterpart. We will also discuss the uses and purposes of each part of the Eskrima Stick.

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