



Special Edition on  
The Inaugural World Wing Chun Open Competition

“Timing is achieved through practice.”

~ Ving Tsun Maxim



Sifu Jim Kragtwyk with Helen Guilding and Heidi Erhardt

**Message from Sifu – March 2019**

**The Inaugural World Wing Chun Competition: December 2019 Foshan, China**

I am so honored and grateful to have travelled and participated in this event with two students from our club and to have joined many from the extended Sunny Tang family as part of Wushu Team Canada. I wish to express how much gratitude I have for my Sigung Sunny Tang for his relentless efforts and persistent Chung Chi (forward sticking energy) in making this event possible. He has advocated and promoted Ving Tsun Kung Fu under the provincial, national and international Wushu organizing umbrellas for decades to realize this apex event.

This was the very first, stand-alone world Ving Tsun competition sanctioned by the International Wushu Federation. Well done, Sigung!

This was a special event for so many other reasons as well. I was honored that my student Helen Guilding had the desire, willingness and courage to compete in this event, despite the anxiety, discomfort, commitment, cost and preparation of putting herself “out there”. While I do not have any children of my own, my students are as close as that gets for me. I certainly felt like a proud papa when Helen took those steps to compete. I was grateful that I could be there with her to witness, encourage and support her. Of course, it was a bonus that she won four gold medals and was honored as the female grand champion of the event. Well done, Helen!

It was also a precious gift to be with our extended Sunny Tang family and Wushu Team Canada members, representing our clubs from Victoria, Calgary, Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa and North Bay. The shared experiences, bonding, fun and celebrations deepened our already precious connections with each other.



Team Canada and friends

We also had the privilege and honor to travel to Hong Kong. We visited and paid homage at our Grandmaster Ip Man's grave, while enjoying the culture and FOOD of such a vibrant place. Other special memories include visiting the Ip Man museum in Foshan, training in Kung Fu corner at Kowloon Park and witnessing a ninety-year old Tai Chi master teach his students.

This was a very special experience for me. I continue to deeply feel the blessings for being part of this traditional Chinese martial art, family and lineage. Bows in gratitude.

- Sifu Jim Kragtwyk ☺



*Sifu Jim Kragtwyk, Heidi Erhardt and Helen Guilding*

## **A Word from Grandmaster Sunny Tang on the Inaugural World Wing Chun Open Competition in China**

With great appreciation, I would like to formally thank the IWUF (International Wushu Federation) for the exceptional opportunity to create, develop and host the Inaugural World Wing Chun Open Competition in Foshan China, held in December of 2018. In brief, it was hailed a great success by all participating countries and athletes. Wushu Canada sent forty athletes to take part in the competition.

A few years ago, the IWUF began to vigorously promote traditional kung fu along with competitive wushu to the world. To facilitate in the marketing and promotion of kung fu to the world, Executive Vice-President Anthony Goh founded the Traditional Committee, authorizing me to help in organizing the first World Wing Chun Open Competition. This competition was considered a test promotion of traditional kung fu.



*Grandmaster Sunny Tang and Sifu Jim Kragtwyk*

Even before the opening ceremonies, the Inaugural World Wing Chun Open Competition was deemed a success, as it attracted close to 2,000 participants from China and other countries around the world. It was a rewarding experience for us to organize the competition and I have much gratitude for Anthony Goh and his secretarial team, Mr. Zhang Quiping of the Chinese Wushu Association, the Local Organizing Committee and the many volunteers for their great efforts and contributions to the event. After the closing of the competition, Anthony Goh asked me to write a brief report with comments. This document will be used to help improve the protocols and standards for future competitions. I graciously did so and have included it below.

*As a board member of the IWUF and Senior Executive of Wushu Canada, I have been involved with and have participated in nearly every international competition held by the IWUF since 1993. From this vast experience, I have found that a strong judges panel is vital to a successful competition.*

*A seasoned judge must have attained a senior education level and well-developed sense of sportsmanship. In addition, he/she must possess a strong knowledge of kung fu, especially of traditional kung fu, including a strong understanding of the fighting movements and techniques as well as the expression of [Xin Fa] 心法 (heart method) and [Fa du] 法度 (Wing Chun's rules). The experienced judge will recognize the speed and power and know what the movements represent. This would also include an understanding of [Gongfang Yishi] 攻防意識 (offensive and defensive awareness). It is imperative that all judges are well-trained and that every judge must be selected from national Wing Chun experts. Each judge should have a minimum of ten years of teaching experience to ensure they have their Wing Chun [Xin Fa] 心法 and understanding Wing Chun's [Fa du] 法度 and its [Gongfang Yishi] 攻防意識, in order that all competitors will pay full respect to all the judges.*

*Additionally, I have a few further recommendations for future consideration. First of all, we need to develop a detailed job description for the future organizing committee. Their mandate needs to contain a generous budget in order to provide reliable local transportation, guest hospitalities, multi-lingual onsite registration process and a safe environment with solid security. The venue must have all the required competition equipment, complete with the computers and software for an efficient communication between the sideline judges and the head judges. The Competition Organization Team cannot interfere with the judges panel and competition regulations. It is recommended that the IWUF set up an (IWUF) internationally recognized technical committee to provide the competition rules and to set up a program for training qualified judges.*

*Also, the regulation for the competitors' uniforms is very important. As our goal is to bring the Wushu Kung Fu to the international stage, we need to ensure disciplined and respectful competition attire. At the December competition, I saw competitors wearing t-shirts, old blue jeans and even shorts to*

*compete. When I brought this to the attention of the head judge, he said, "Don't worry, they will receive a score deduction." I vehemently disagreed, stating that they should be disqualified immediately and dismissed from the competition, but the head judge did not listen to me. After the competition, Anthony Goh set up a meeting with all of the officials and volunteers in the hotel lobby. At that time, I raised my concern again. One of the officials said to me that they cannot mandate the competitors to wear a unified uniform, as they have their own club's t-shirts or uniforms. I strongly disagree. We should follow the standard set by Taekwondo and Karate, which are official Olympic events, both of which have implemented a standardized uniform for all of their competitors. Have you ever seen the school names on their uniforms? In conclusion, Wushu Kung Fu still has a long road ahead, with many things yet to learn.*

*One last item to mention: the volunteers at the hotel were helpful, respectful and they spoke English well. While they did their best to help everyone, unfortunately they were not allowed to make decisions. They were even afraid to make small decisions. For example: a few of the competitors did not receive their dinner vouchers because of late arrival. The volunteers did not give out the vouchers due to headcount control. These small situations and problems should not happen and are not worth arguing about. I introduced myself and asked for a few extra entry passes to the arena for my unexpected media friend from Canada. They claimed they did not have the authority. I finally had to ask Lily Fan, IWUF's secretary, who got me the pass within minutes. These incidents should not happen at an international event of this magnitude.*

*- Grandmaster Sunny Tang*



## Training

Each newsletter features two discussions: an account from a particular new student, and an account from a senior student. These write-ups are focused on what that individual is working on with their training. This way, we can appreciate different perspectives rooted in different skill levels and experience.



*Helen Guilding and Vincent Meng, grand champions with their gold medals*

## Reflections on the Competition

It has been a few months since I returned from the World Wing Chun Open Competition in China. In that time, I have had the opportunity to reflect on both the competition and the trip.

I had a fair amount of anxiety preparing for the trip. Public performance is not on my list of the top ten things I enjoy doing, or even my top one hundred for that matter. That fact, however, was actually one of the reasons I wanted to go. By having to work through my anxiety, I was hoping to advance both personally and as a martial artist.

In preparation for the competition, I practiced daily for the events in which I was participating. I also worked on my performance anxiety with the help of my kung fu brother Arne. Arne uses hypnotherapy to help free people from their anxieties. This work helped me tremendously, and I was able to prepare for the trip without an immediate sense of dread.

From previous experience, I know that my performance anxiety manifests itself through tension in my body. Due to the work I had done with Arne, during the competition itself my body felt strangely relaxed. My mind, however, had different ideas. Rather than just letting my body do what it knew how to do, I started to overthink movements and routines and mistakes were made. Despite these mistakes, my body stayed relaxed and I managed to continue on as if the mistakes had not happened. I now know I need to start working on aligning my mind and my body to perform optimally in these high-pressure scenarios.



**International Wushu Federation -  
IWUF**

2018 World Wing Chun Open Competition ·

*Helen Guilding, in the zone with the Mok Jong*

Looking back at the competition, what I will remember most and what I will always treasure is the spirit and the comradery of Team Canada. We were by far the biggest international team there and we certainly made our voices heard while supporting our team members. It was very special to share such an incredible experience with my kung fu family from across Canada, both to deepen existing friendships and to make new ones.

Highlights of the trip for me were: getting to participate in a world competition for Team Canada; getting to spend time with so many amazing people from our kung fu family; paying my respects at Ip

Man's grave; training in various parks in China and Hong Kong; and dancing to the very early hours on my birthday in Hong Kong.

Thank you to everyone who supported me in making this trip possible and to my Sifu and Simo for accompanying me on the trip. A big thanks to Sijo Sunny Tang for his efforts organizing such an amazing event.

*-Helen Guilding, Brown Sash*

## The Trickle-Down Effect



*Norm Stainer*

At first my idea was just to create a fundraising envelope and ask for a few cash donations at the club to go toward Helen's upcoming trip to Foshan, China. I had just recently received my red sash and knew it was time to do more at the club. When we move up to red sash in our kung fu journey, we are all encouraged to find more ways to contribute to the club. This not only helps support and further the growth of the club, but also begins to foster a real unity between students. So when I heard that Helen, my Sije, was the only student that was going to compete from our club at the first ever Ving Tsun

competition in China, the dots connected. I knew this would be a good way to help and give her a little support.

If any student deserves to be supported by our club, it is Helen. She shows up for almost every class, trains outside of class and is always available to help other students. Helen has developed a strong understanding and foundation of Ving Tsun. She has a strong work ethic, high skill level, sensitivity and a real passion for the art. She is also very generous when working with other students and always seems to be able to give just enough feedback to help where the student is at and improve their skill level.

I brought my idea to Sifu and Simo regarding the open envelope. Simo graciously volunteered her support to set up a GoFundMe site online in order to bring the fundraising to a larger platform and help raise more money. This worked great! Many, many people all over the world were able to reach out and support Helen.

Thank you everyone! Our goal was reached Helen brought back a gold. Talk about club morale going up! The China trip was very successful. Sifu also brought back a gold medal. It really is a trickle-down effect. All of their hard work and experience is now being passed down to every member of our club.

I started training Ving Tsun with West Coast Sunny Tang Victoria in 2013. I had just moved back to Vancouver Island and I found out about the club from Wade Morgan who was training at the time. Thanks, Wade! I enjoyed it so much that I trained full-time for one year. After a year of training, I had to let it go because my life wasn't fully established yet. It took me four and a half years to get grounded and established in Victoria. I finally got a night position at my job, which then allowed me to start training again. I've been training consistently ever since.

In the beginning of my training, I would sometimes overthink things. I would get into the politics a little

bit within my own mind by comparing myself to other students. Or sometimes I would look around and see somebody that might not have been training as long as me and they seemed to be doing something a little bit more advanced. I would ask myself, "Why not me?" Or, "How come I'm not doing that?" It really just came down to the fact that I could be judgmental and hard on myself. I think we can all definitely be our own worst enemies because we are constantly being corrected, over and over again. Something seemingly simple can take a lot of effort to master. A lot of days the body doesn't even want to listen or cooperate.

At the point I am at in my training now, those negative thoughts don't come up anymore. I've gotten over that hump. I'm learning to let that go. Now, I'm just aware that I learn a little bit each time I train. I keep coming back to class and try to start again where I left off, with the same excitement and the same curiosity for learning.

These are some of the things that I like to share with the new students: the thoughts and challenges that they're going to be faced with that I've already gone through. I think Ving Tsun is kind of a slow process at first. It's very one-dimensional in the beginning. But the more you stick with it and continue to train, it becomes two-dimensional and then three-dimensional and then 4K! Those challenging thoughts don't matter. Keep showing up. Keep training. And little by little Ving Tsun will reveal herself to you.

Enjoy the process! There will come a time in your training where you start to question where you're at in your own ability. You begin to wonder how you can describe and explain things to younger students. You're sometimes asked to demonstrate or work with younger students and you want to explain things in a way in which they can understand.

Sometimes I find that the younger students end up not really understanding what I'm explaining. They're just agreeing. That is also a great process for me because I'm trying to help and it makes me

question if what I'm doing is correct or not. All of this is like a mirror. Anything that I'm trying to explain and show them is only what I know from where I'm at in my current training. Obviously, I want to be really clear, so I slow it down, break it down into its components and it helps me to better understand it too.

I wanted to go to China, but couldn't afford to go myself. By supporting Helen, I knew everything she would learn and experience would trickle down to all of the students and the club as a whole. Like Helen has said, it wasn't just the money that helped her out, it was all of the people who trained with her, all of the encouragement from her friends and family and the backing of the club. There are so many ways that we can support one another. It's like what Sihing Mark says, "The better you are, the better I'm going to get by training with you." This really motivates me.

I'm at the point now where I've realized that Ving Tsun has become part of my life journey. It's woven into the fabric of everything I do. Specifically, I value what I've learned about body awareness, body mechanics and learning how to use my body and how the body works. We can be so much more aware of all of those unconscious things that we do through this practice of training Ving Tsun. It has become one of the foundations in my life, like my health, my mental state and my overall well-being. Ving Tsun is part of the whole. It makes us better people and brings me right to the Source. Ving Tsun, like math, is based on universal law. It's ingenious the way it's been put together. The entire system and curriculum is set up so that every piece is included. There is nothing that has been left out.

Ving Tsun is for all who want to participate. No matter what body type or strength you have. It is a journey that will take time and dedication. Stay on course. I would like to see our club continue to thrive, for all of us to improve and to foster healthy relationships with each other. Ultimately, I'd like to see us all succeed together.

- Norm Stainer, Red Sash



*Natalie Rogers receiving her green sash*



*Tim Personn receiving his green sash*

**Congratulations to the following students on attaining their new respective sash levels during the last quarter:**

- Natalie Rogers (Green Sash)**
- Eben Hensby (Green Sash)**
- Tim Personn (Green Sash)**

**Excellent work!**

**Welcome to our new students:**

- Connor Harlan
- Tyler Cooper
- And welcome back:**
- Parker deBruyne

**Special Events**

- \* March 2019: Goodbye Lunch for Instructor Tim Lui
- \* March 2019: Book Club: *The Art of Learning: An Inner Journey to Optimal Performance*



*Eben Hensby receiving his green sash*



*Sifu Jim Kragtwyk honouring Instructor Tim Lui for over a decade of teaching service for the club*



*Sifu Jim Kragtwyk and Instructor Tim Lui*



*Celebration goodbye lunch for Instructor Tim Lui*

**Editor: Heidi Erhardt**

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*Note: We use the spelling Ving Tsun, which late Grand Master Ip Man used to differentiate our kung fu from the various branches.*

**Please check out our Facebook Page (@WingChunYYJ) and website (victoriawingchun.com) for more information about Ving Tsun, Sifu Jim Kragtwyk's talks on various aspects of the system and instructional videos.**

Big heartfelt thanks from the entire club to our Dai Sihing and instructor, Tim Lui, for all of his years of teaching and dedication to the club. Congratulations are also in order as he and his wife prepare to welcome a new baby!

Sihing Tim, we wish you all the best on the next phase of your journey.

## **UPCOMING**

\* April 27 2019: Celebrating 30 years of Ving Tsun for Grandmaster Walter Jakimczuk in Ottawa, Ontario

**Click or cut and paste the links below to see several videos from recent classes:**

<https://www.facebook.com/WingChunYYJ/videos/1262754807226958/>

<https://www.facebook.com/WingChunYYJ/videos/1225751564260616/>



*Ida Becskereki demonstrating side kick*