

Reflections on Wing Chun's Bue Gee Form

By Augustine Fong & Joy Chaudhuri (*All rights reserved by the authors*)

Bue Gee! Shooting Fingers! This is the capstone of the three interlinked hand forms of the martial art of Wing Chun Gung Fu. There are other forms besides the three key hand forms. The hand forms can be performed separately or sequentially beginning with the foundation siu lim tau followed by the chum kiu with the bue gee at the end completing a line and eventually a circle of mastery of martial motion. Without substantial mastery of the first two forms the execution of bue gee is likely to be riddled with weaknesses despite knowing the order and the superficial appearance of the moves.

The three hand forms are developed carefully in sequence and eventually empower each other in a quality circle. Bue Gee comes back to enrich the siu lim tau thus returning the gift from the shooting motions such as bue sau introduced in the first form. The long hand bue gee motions complements the short hand motions of the first form. The links between the forms allows one to fashion a circle of skills that constantly strengthen each other. Truly a system!

The roots of the system are quite deep. The evolution of the art came from pruning out uneconomical motions in the shaolin arts in order to develop a conceptually rich and efficient system. Also the development of the art occurred in the environment of rebellions against the Chi"ng government. Hence relative secrecy and attention on effectiveness rather than showmanship were very early features in the art. In Grandmaster Yip Man's time at the turn of this century bue gee was not to be "let outside of the door" . Today with more open teaching there are people who have memorized the motions but quality bue gee remains a rare achievement. The bue gee develops shooting energy into the extremities including the fingers. Without correct practice and alignment a person can hurt their own fingers. Once at his Sifu's school the grandmaster corrected Augustine Fong by essentially saying "Dont break your fingers. First learn blocking with bue gee". Sifu Fong's teacher spent as much quality time with Yip Man as anyone. Under Ho Kam Ming's guidance Master Fong went on to complete the system including bue gee in great depth.

The many facets of bue gee cannot be done justice in a single brief article, but some salient features are worthy of note. Bue Gee is often referred to as a real emergency form within the broader context of self defense. The worst emergency is losing control of the centerline.

The bue gee is designed to assist in the recovery of the centerline, quickly and effectively.

Bue Ma the shooting stance and step quickly closes the gap at close quarters. Bue gee's circling steps also can quickly aid in recovering the momentum and the line. They can also cut off evasion or shifting by the opponent. The ducking down and then coming up motion towards the end can also aid in quick line control and in warding off some low and high attacks. The flying elbows of bue gee can save the day when the palms and fists do not quite have the line or are jammed and trapped.

Bue Gee motions cover the entire sphere around the body both horizontally and vertically.

It is also useful when one is unwillingly falling or has fallen. With a turn, a step or a swivel, bue gee covers all directions for recovering the line and getting a bead on ones "shadow".

The motions are not techniques. So depending on the structural and dynamic relationship with the opponent, bue gee motions can block, attack, control, trap, throw or use combinations for controlling the opponent and oneself.

Bits and pieces of bue gee are carefully imbedded in the first two forms getting the student ready for the explosiveness of bue gee. The student by that time hopefully has learned how to avoid the wrong muscle tension, to control himself and the opponent, mobility and the unity of the body. In wing chun joint locks, throws, pressure point work and groundfighting are not artificially grafted onto the system. They are natural results of the true bue gee stage of development. The mok jong/wooden dummy, the knives and the pole reinforces knowledge of lines , footwork, and the appropriate release of energy into the target.

There is a proverb as old as Sun Tzu which has passed into the wing chun world in its own way. The proverb basically says " You may move first, but I move faster". The proverb assumes that knowledge of pathways and terrain and timing is superior to mere strength or speed. The Bue Gee form of wing chun captures the essence of the proverb. I f the other fellow moves first and you need to regain the line quickly and attack at the same time, Bue Gee's shooting fingers can take you there.

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