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Fourth Edition







Written by PETER DELL'ORTO and SEAN PUNCH
Additional Material by VOLKER BACH and C.J. CARELLA
Edited by SEAN PUNCH
Cover Art by BOB STEVLIC
Illustrated by ABRAR AJMAL and BOB STEVLIC

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GURPS System Design ■ STEVE JACKSON
GURPS Line Editor ■ SEAN PUNCH
Indexer ■ NIKOLA VRTIS
Page Design ■ PHIL REED and
JUSTIN DE WITT

Managing Editor ■ PHIL REED
Production Manager ■ MONICA STEPHENS
Art Director ■ WILL SCHOONOVER
Production Artist ■ ALEX FERNANDEZ
Print Buyer ■ MONICA STEPHENS

Marketing Director ■ PAUL CHAPMAN Sales Manager ■ ROSS JEPSON Errata Coordinator ■ ANDY VETROMILE GURPS FAQ Maintainer ■ STÉPHANE THÉRIAULT

Research Assistance: Kim Bernard, Richard Johnson, Seth Milstein, and Brian Wasson

Lead Playtester: Jeff Wilson

Playtesters: Alex Borghgraef, Dave Brown, Jonathan Carryer, Giuseppe Chiapparino, Ken Clary, Doug Cole, Ciaran Daly, Andy Dokachev, Shawn Fisher, Scott Harris, Leonardo Holschuh, Dan Howard, Rob Kamm, Jonathan Lang, Jason Levine, Norman Lorenz, Phil Masters, Antoni Ten Monros, and Emily Smirle Special Thanks: Phil Dunlap, Jin Kazeta, Don Wagner, Old Sensei Don,

Kromm's Victims (Marc Bourbonnais, Martin Bourque, Bonnie Punch, Mike Ryan, Stéphane Thériault, Robert Thibault), and Peter's Victims (Andy Dokachev, Jessica Dokachev, Mike Dokachev, Aaron Falken, John Milkewicz, Sean Nealy, and Tom Pluck)

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### **About GURPS**

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of *GURPS* players. Our address is SJ Games, P.O. Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! We can also be reached by e-mail: **info@sjgames.com**. Resources include:

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*Bibliographies*. Many of our books have extensive bibliographies, and we're putting them online – with links to let you buy the books that interest you! Go to the book's web page and look for the "Bibliography" link.

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set*, *Fourth Edition*. Page references that begin with B refer to that book, not this one.

# Introduction

Chain Whip

Say "martial arts" and most people start talking about karate, katanas, and ninja... or kung fu (or the old *Kung Fu* TV series)... or Bruce Lee. Non-Asiaphiles will share their views on such sports as boxing and fencing... or no-holdsbarred fighting... or good old rasslin' ("Pro wrestling is

real!"). And Europhiles will bring up *pankration* in ancient Greece, English "Masters of Defence," and the deadly truth about the rapier, pausing only to lament that Europe gets short shrift with martial-arts fans – or to recruit you as a live-steel reenactor.

Sport vs. combat, unarmed vs. armed, movies vs. reality, Asia vs. everywhere else – the truth about the martial arts can be confusing. Who's right? The answer is "All of the above."

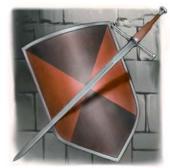
GURPS Martial Arts examines the fighting arts of the world, or at least a good-sized sample chosen from the past three millennia. It doesn't let fiction color reality or realism stand in the way of a good story – such deci-

sions are left to the GM. Of course, because many martial arts originated with the warriors who carved out the world's great empires, and the best-kept records are those of the Asian and European powers, there *is* an almost inevitable bias toward the fighting styles of those regions. But *Martial Arts* does its best to venture outside that territory; to balance the historical with the modern; to give equal time to combat, sport, and art; and, especially, to dispel myths.

The biggest myth laid to rest is that the martial arts aren't appropriate for every genre and setting – that they only belong in historical games and those based on action movies. *Martial Arts* definitely supports cinematic games – of the Hollywood, Hong Kong, *and* Tokyo varieties – while also presenting historically accurate styles, but it doesn't

assume a genre or a setting. You can use it to give fantasy warriors the depth of knowledge and ability that spells give wizards... or for hand-to-hand combat in a gritty modern technothriller... or for futuristic swashbuckling with force swords.

So grab your katana, rapier, or *iklwa* – or just bandage your knuckles. Say a prayer to Allah, scream a *kiai*, or psyche yourself up with a little



Longsword

shadowboxing. You won't know who's out there until the arena door opens – but with *Martial Arts*, you'll be ready!

## **Publication History**

This is the third edition of *GURPS Martial Arts*. It was inspired by *GURPS Martial Arts*, *Second Edition* (1996), which itself combined *GURPS Martial Arts*, *First Edition* 

(1990) with *GURPS Martial Arts Adventures* (1993). Other important *GURPS Third Edition* supplements were *GURPS Japan*, *Second Edition* (1999) for Japanese fighting styles and equipment; *GURPS Low-Tech* (2001) for weapons in general; and *GURPS Swashbucklers, Third Edition* (1999) for European swords and swordplay. The authors also wish to thank Volker Bach for access to two articles originally published in *Pyramid* magazine: "The Western Way of War" and "Vechten Unde Schirmen: European Martial Arts Before The Rapier."

The current volume is a new work, not a revision of *any* of the above – they served

primarily as sources of concepts, references, and terminology, not text.

## **ABOUT THE AUTHORS**

Peter V. Dell'Orto started roleplaying in 1981, with *Dungeons & Dragons*, and has played *GURPS* since *Man to Man*. He has been active as a *GURPS* playtester, editor, and contributing author since 1996, and has written many *GURPS* articles for *Pyramid* magazine. Peter is an enthusiastic martial artist who has trained in places as varied as a McDojo, a private instructor's garage, and a hardcore gym. He has practiced Goju-ryu and Shorin-ryu Karate, T'ai Chi, Kali Silat, and Wing Chun, and has trained in at least a dozen other styles. His most recent studies have been in Kachin Bando and Kendo, and fighting amateur in Shooto. His other hobbies include fitness, reading, painting miniatures, and music. Born and raised in New Jersey, he presently lives and trains in Niigata, Japan.

Sean "Dr. Kromm" Punch set out to become a particle physicist and ended up as the *GURPS* Line Editor. Since 1995, he has compiled the two *GURPS Compendium* volumes, written *GURPS Wizards* and *GURPS Undead*, edited or revised over 20 other *GURPS* books, and masterminded rules for dozens more. Most recently, he created the *GURPS Basic Set*, *Fourth Edition* with coauthor David Pulver and wrote *GURPS Powers* with coauthor Phil Masters. Sean has been a fanatical gamer since 1979. His non-gaming interests include cinema, computers, and wine. He lives in Montréal, Québec with his wife, Bonnie. They have two cats, Banshee and Zephyra, and a noisy parrot, Circe.

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