



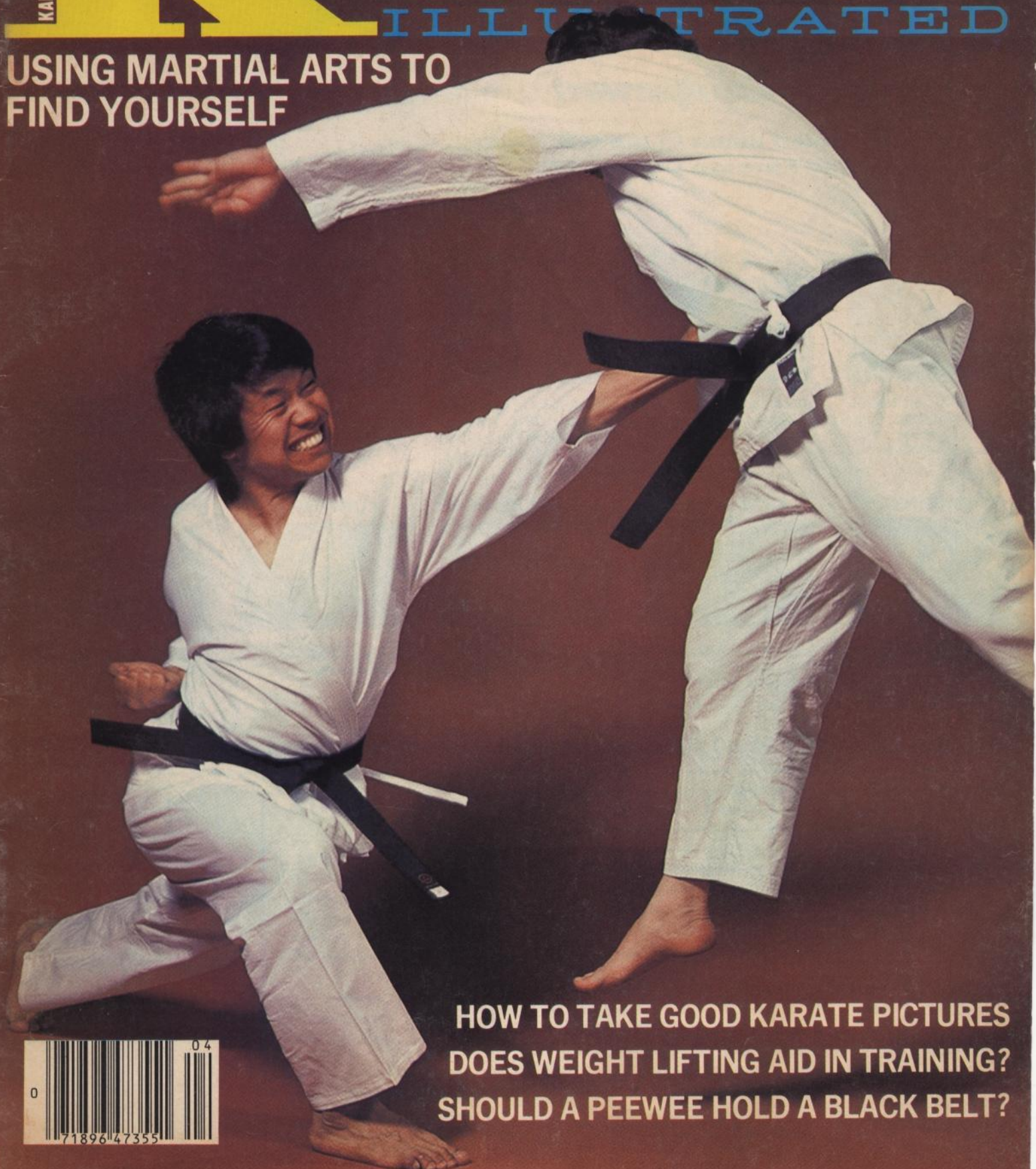
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HOW TO TAKE GOOD KARATE PICTURES  
DOES WEIGHT LIFTING AID IN TRAINING?  
SHOULD A PEEWEE HOLD A BLACK BELT?





## KARATE and the CAMERA

# Film is the Creative Medium

by Ben Kalb

After mastering the art of taking good karate photos with a still camera, you are ready to progress to the art of using a motion picture camera. Heretofore, you probably were content with making those good, old-fashioned and somewhat boring home movies. Now, with a little care, patience and creativity, your films can have a little class to them.

To focus in on filmmaking, KARATE ILLUSTRATED interviewed black belt Terry Wilson, Los Angeles television (KCOP) producer-director, who won a local Emmy award in 1974 for his show, *Karate, Kung Fu and the Arts of Self-Defense*.

"Film is a creative medium," says Wilson. "You don't just point your camera and shoot. You have to want to create a scene."

Wilson suggests the amateur moviemaker use a Super 8 camera with either Kodachrome 40 or Ektachrome 160 film. "If the lighting is ample, use the Kodachrome," says Wilson. "The Ektachrome will allow for a lower light-level, but the film will be grainier."

Wilson then suggests the use of a tripod. "Don't try to hand-hold the camera. Your movies will be bouncy," says Wilson. "Get in one position and follow the action."

Following the camera setup, you, of course, have to check your focus and set your depth of field. "You want to focus on the center of the action," says Wilson.

It is also highly recommended that an amateur filmmaker use a filter and an automatic cable release, not to mention having an ample supply of batteries and film. "Another important thing is to write down the fighters' names on the cartridge when you finish with one," says Wilson. "Don't trust your memory."

After you have figured out the technical end of the operation, your creativity comes into play. "Use the camera as an instrument," says Wilson. "The fighters should make the action for the camera."

Although creativity is in the eye of the beholder, and personal taste plays an important role, Wilson offers a few camera tips. "For the best overall shot of the action, you [the camera] should be looking down on things slightly." If you want to jazz things up a little, Wilson suggests shooting below the level of action. "Ground level will give you more of a dramatic effect, but you won't catch the techniques as well," says Wilson.

Catching the peak of action as well as the proper emotions comes from experience. "You're not just filming those guys,"



Photo by David M. King



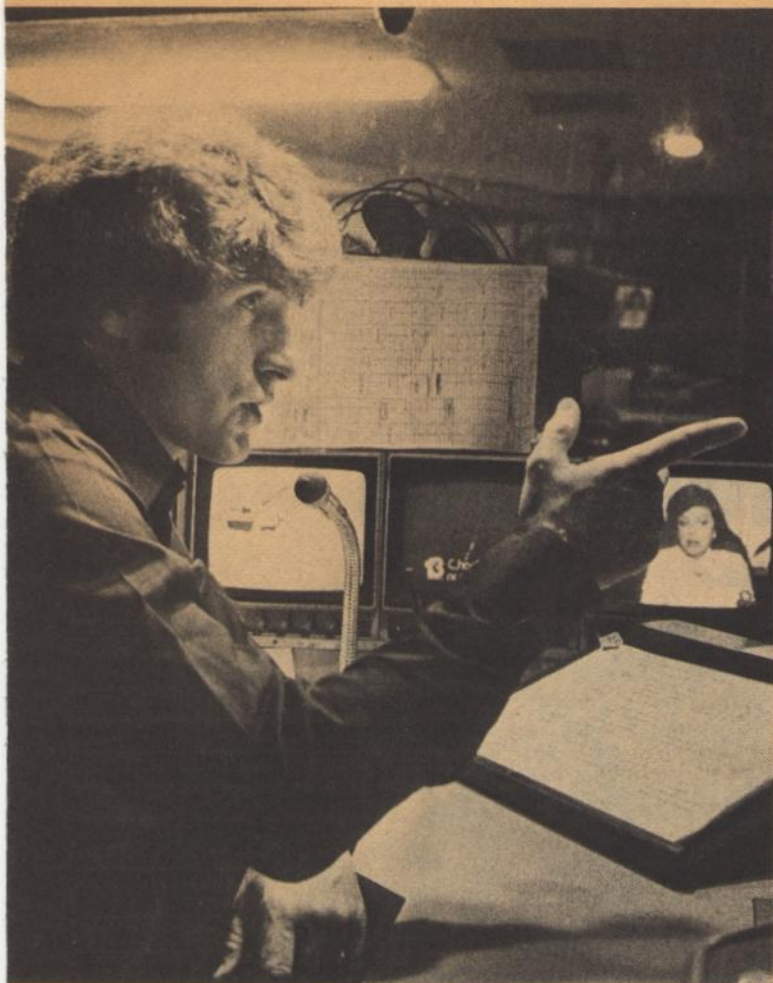


Photo by David M. King

says Wilson. "You are in effect fighting both opponents. You're watching the action just like another fighter. You learn to anticipate what the fighters will do next. But all that comes with the experience, a knowledge of the art, even a working knowledge of the fighters."

Although it may seem insignificant to the amateur filmmaker, one technical trick called the "breakaway shot" can make the difference between a good production and a home movie. "Stay on your fighters. Never stop filming until you're sure the action is completed," says Wilson. "But the moment they have stopped, shoot something else—the crowd, the referee, the arena, whatever. You must show a definite break in the action. If you don't, it will result in a jump cut."

Wilson recommends shooting breakaways right after a point is scored or a piece of action is completed. "People usually show the most emotion right after some really good action." Wilson says he sometimes takes wide angle, breakaway shots of the arena and crowd even before the action starts. "It's good just in case you get in trouble while the match is going on."

Wilson, 31, rarely gets into filming troubles nowadays. He has learned his trade well enough to avoid most of the things that trouble the inexperienced filmmaker. But, as with most people, he paid his dues before reaching his present level.

Wilson majored in radio-TV at Miami of Ohio, but his first professional job came as, of all things, a stand-up comic. "At school I was the master of ceremonies for a Bill Cosby concert," recalls Wilson. "He was late, so I did fifteen minutes of comedy to fill the time." Wilson had practiced and studied comedy routines, but he was strictly small-time. "Nina Simone caught my act, and I went on tour with her. Later I was doing gigs for Simon and Garfunkel, The Byrds, The Yardbirds and



Terry Wilson sits in his director's booth (left) at KCOP in Los Angeles and calls out orders to his crew. Above, he teaches self-defense classes to women. Below, he poses in gi prior to workout. In filming karate, Wilson says, "Stay on your fighters. Never stop filming until the action is completed . . . In effect, you are fighting both opponents. You learn to anticipate what the fighters will do next."

Photo by Ed Ikuta





Peter, Paul and Mary."

Following that summer and graduation, Wilson became a disc jockey for WOXR in Oxford, Ohio, and the thing that gave him the most notoriety was his 200-hour announcing marathon for charity. "I was broadcasting twenty-four hours a day from the window of a restaurant," says Wilson. "I think it was the mental willpower from karate that got me through that." Wilson says he even hallucinated, and at one point he spent a little time "interviewing" a little man in his roast beef sandwich. It was easy to see why he needed to spend a week in the hospital after the 200 hours were completed.

Following his work as a disc jockey, he was hired to learn the directing ropes at a television station in Dayton. Then in 1970, he quit and set out for California. "I just said, 'Hey, it's time to try for the big time,' and I left."

Wilson worked his way across the country by performing his comedy routine in small lounges and bars. Most of his days were spent in towns whose names have slipped from memory, but he did manage to make a little money in Albuquerque and Las Vegas.

Upon arriving in Southern California, Wilson was quick to notice there was no red carpet waiting for him. He was not in demand for a position. His first stop landed him at a small radio station in Anaheim, but he was fired a few days later when it turned into a Spanish-speaking station—a language with which he was unfamiliar.

Three poverty-stricken months later, and with a bus ticket to Ohio in hand, he took one more stab at a job, and landed one at KCOP. He's been there ever since.

He started out directing *Romper Room*, a show geared toward children, then took a small step upward and began directing pro wrestling and *Roller Derby*.

In 1974 he produced and directed his award-winning martial arts special, which featured such people as Chuck Norris, Ed Parker, Bong Soo Han, Fumio Demura and Malia Dacascos. In 1976 he received an Emmy nomination for his television special on sharks. This year he did a special on whales that he figures should lead to another nomination, and possibly some awards.

When not working with television, Wilson can usually be found practicing his karate or jujitsu. He started taking karate in Dayton when he was 15 after he was beaten up one afternoon coming home from the movies. He trained in Okinawan shorin-ryu under Jim Wax and received his black belt when he was 22. He also became a black belt in jujitsu under University of Dayton instructor Brother Al Syrac. In California he usually works out with Emil Farkas. He also is in demand to teach women's self-defense courses.

Wilson's karate background makes him the likely candidate to produce and direct karate shows. He has had experience with full contact matches and noncontact tournaments. "When you are doing it professionally, the only thing to use is videotape," says Wilson. "I would also use three cameras, one a hand-held. Two cameras can cover it, three are better."

Wilson says it is important to look for drama and emotion when filming karate, either professionally or as an amateur. "I take everything on an emotional range. Everything can't be heavy or light," says Wilson. "You have to combine the two to fulfill the emotional need. For example, *Jaws* was extremely impressive. In one twenty-second span, the director [Steven Spielberg] took you through almost every phase of emotion."

By reading this, KARATE ILLUSTRATED doesn't expect you to go out and become a Steven Spielberg or even a Terry Wilson, but at least you can have the basics to progress from those dull home movies.



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