

# THE MARTIALIST VOL. TWO NO. ELEVEN

## A Note from Your Editor

By Phil Elmore

Thank you for subscribing to *The Martialist*! This is our eleventh issue of YEAR TWO, the second season of our publication. Remember that this is only half of the magazine, too. The other half is our free content at **themartialist.com**. You may not always agree with what you read here, but we hope you will find it interesting and informative.

The exchange of ideas is vital to education – and education is part of what makes survival and success in self-defense possible. **You may read things here that strike you as wildly inadvisable** or as spectacularly good advice. You may read things you love and you may read things you hate. **If so, write your own article and tell us what you think** in a future issue of *The Martialist*. We will regularly feature point-counterpoint articles that look at both sides of issues. I will seriously consider any article that crosses my desk, though I cannot promise they will all make it in. This is your magazine and I welcome your feedback.

- Phil Elmore, [phil@philelmore.com](mailto:phil@philelmore.com).

## DISCLAIMER

**YOU MUST BE 18 OR OLDER TO READ THIS MATERIAL!**

**I AM NOT A LAWYER and THIS IS INFORMATION ONLY. I do NOT encourage you to do anything. You MUST consider the legal implications of everything you do, exercising YOUR JUDGMENT as an adult. You also MUST follow the law or PAY THE CONSEQUENCES. The Martialist is for entertainment purposes only and cannot be construed as legal advice.**

## A Plea for Perspective in Alloys

By Phil Elmore

Recently, a major knife company announced its new products for the coming year. Among the products were several knives whose blades are made from what many knife aficionados would consider “low-end” steel – such as 420 or its equivalent. The term “420 J2” has long been a dirty one among knife people, speaking as it does to fantasy blades and other cheaply produced knives at which many high-end users scoff. Another major player in the knife industry announced a Chinese-made line of imports that all use relatively mundane blade steel, and this, too, was met with skepticism.



Photo by Phil Elmore

What's forgotten in the rush to condemn a given product for not containing the latest in ultra-hard tool steel – or some other exotic alloy, the presence of which guarantees the knife will cost at least two to three hundred dollars – is that most people don't *need* a knife that costs that much or works that hard. Now, I'm not about to dictate to you what you do or do not need – that's your choice – but I think it's time we put into perspective the use to which the majority of daily carry knives are put.

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How many of us have actually used and re-sharpened the same pocket knife so many times that we wore the blade down to an unusable shard? How many of us use our daily carry blades for industrial tasks? How often have we experienced lock failures or blade breakage? While any of us could offer an anecdote along some of these lines, these are the exceptions, not the rule.

The fact is that the average knife owner's blade will see only moderate use. My daily carry folder is used most often to open mail and packages. Throw in a few other odd chores and you still don't have a formula for heavy use. Any knife with a good lock will serve me, from a 420J2 fantasy folder to a custom-made automatic with a Damascus blade. The only difference is how much the folder in my pocket will cost me to replace if I lose or otherwise misplace it.

Even a self-defense blade need not be of extraordinary steel. Most of us will go through life never fighting for our lives in a violent encounter (let's hope so, anyway). A blade used for self-defense need only be sharp enough to penetrate a human body (and perhaps the clothing over that body) – and it will not be called on to perform that many cuts or thrusts in the course of the encounter. Provided you're not using it to pry open manhole covers or perform daily duty breaking down cardboard boxes, your self-defense knife need only be sharpened once and then left alone. Why would you need some super-alloy to do that?

Buy whatever blade you like and pay as much as you are willing. Select an alloy that delivers the performance you desire. In so doing, keep your knife's use in perspective. ♠

## **Developing Power: The Drop Step**

By Tony Manifold

One of the most important factors for success in any hand to hand situation is hitting with *power*. In most cases, he who hits the hardest the most wins. A crucial tool in developing power is the *drop step*. The drop step is a method of utilizing a tremendous amount of your body weight to add power to your attacks. The best description of the drop step (or *falling step* as he called it) comes from the legendary boxer Jack Dempsey in his book, *Championship Fighting*:

Stand in the middle of the floor. Point your left foot at any distant object in the room. Place your right foot to the rear and slightly to the right of your left foot. For the chap about 5'10", the heel of his right foot should be about 18" back (and slightly to the right) of the heel of his left foot.

Bend your knees slightly. Bend your body forward slightly as you shift your weight forward on to your left foot, so that your right foot is resting only on the ball of the foot. Remember that the knees are still slightly bent. Teeter up and down easily (half bouncing without leaving the floor) to make certain you're in a comfortable, balanced position... You are resting only lightly on the ball of your right foot, remember...

NOW – WITHOUT ANY PRELIMINARY MOVEMENTS – take a long, quick step forward with your left foot, toward the object at which your left toe had been pointing... You unquestionably will be tempted to shift some of the weight from the "left" foot to the right foot, which is resting lightly on its ball. NO PRELIMINARY MOVEMENT! Just lift the left foot and LET THE BODY FALL FORWARD IN A LONG, QUICK STEP.

It is a quick, convulsive and extremely awkward step. Yet, it's one of the most important steps of your fistic life; for that falling step lurch is the rough diamond out of which will be ground the beautiful, straight