

Protecting Oneself Against a Club, Bat, Pool Cue, Or Any Other Real Or Improvised Impact Weapon Attack

Some thoughts on this topic:

- If you have awareness, time, distance, and the ability, ESCAPE is always your first choice !!!!!!! Realistically, however, this may not be an option.
- Depending upon awareness, time, distance, ability, and the environment, equalize the fight by getting to a "real" or "improvised" weapon yourself.
- If the above two principals cannot be achieved, penetrate and dominate the opponent while physically protecting your head at all costs

A fellow instructor stated; "training should hurt, but not injure." On this subject, I believe there are no truer words spoken. Unfortunately, there are many who theorize as to what to do physically against a real or improvised impact weapon attack, without first "acid testing" their recommended counter tactics in a survival stress environment. As can be appreciated, most of these theories, when put to the test, will fail miserably. Remember, there are NO absolutes in combatives, but if we can apply and teach techniques that have high probabilities of success in a "real" open environment, we are best preparing our students for the realities of such attacks.

To acid test what we do, and keeping in mind that training should hurt but not injure, we utilize the following training aids here at the school:

We take Newspaper and roll it up to a variety of different lengths (including baseball bat size) leaving a hollow core. We then fill the hollow core with sawdust, and then wrap the entire length of the newspaper with duct tape several times. This then gives us a training aid, with some weight, that when hit with will hurt, but not injure.

What we empirically uncovered "acid testing" several techniques being taught as defenses against a swinging impact weapon attack were:

- Unless you are about seven feet away from the attacker to begin with, if the attacker swings a baseball bat sized impacting weapon, with speed and intent, it is virtually impossible to move backwards to get out of the arc of the bat. Why, because as one moves backwards, the attacker will naturally step forward with his swing to increase the striking range of his bat (which can almost double). Having said this, if you are at the eight-foot range, your success rate in escaping the arc of the bat is greatly increased if one dynamically moves backwards. This fact, however, can be negated given environmental factors that may limit one's ability to move to the rear. It should be noted that realistically, the attacker who wants to hit you with a real or improvised weapon, would likely be within the seven-foot arc from the very get go.
- Given the above noted bullet, we next proceeded to acid test moving dynamically into the swing of the blow. We found that in most cases we were able to get inside the arc of the bat's tip, but in a large percentage of cases, we would still get hit with a portion of the bat that was less powerful (from a kinetic fluid shock perspective) but depending upon target hit, was often still very debilitating.
- Prior to the attacker swinging his real or improvised impact weapon, apply a psychological/physical pattern interruption first. We primarily utilize a "spit" to the attacker's face first. We found that when this tactic was used, the attacker would consistently flinch their face away from the spit thus giving you the positive time frame needed to penetrate into the attacker, thus cutting down his reaction time and arc of movement. We have acid tested this technique many many times on unsuspecting students, wearing face shields with great success. Some students have also applied this tactic on the street with positive outcomes. Try it, you will be amazed !!!!!

- As we penetrate and dominate, we protect our heads with our hands and forearms. Yes we sacrifice our ribs for a potential attack, but this is more desirable and survivable when compared to a headshot.
- As we penetrate, and if the attacker is holding the weapon with both hands, we do so to the opposite shoulder/arm holding the bat, which cuts down the arc of movement making it easier to jam the upper body.
- After we penetrate, we now physically dominate the attacker and not the weapon
- We are also psychologically desensitizing ourselves to getting hit with a real or improvised impact weapon to some degree. This is why using the above noted training aid is so important.

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