



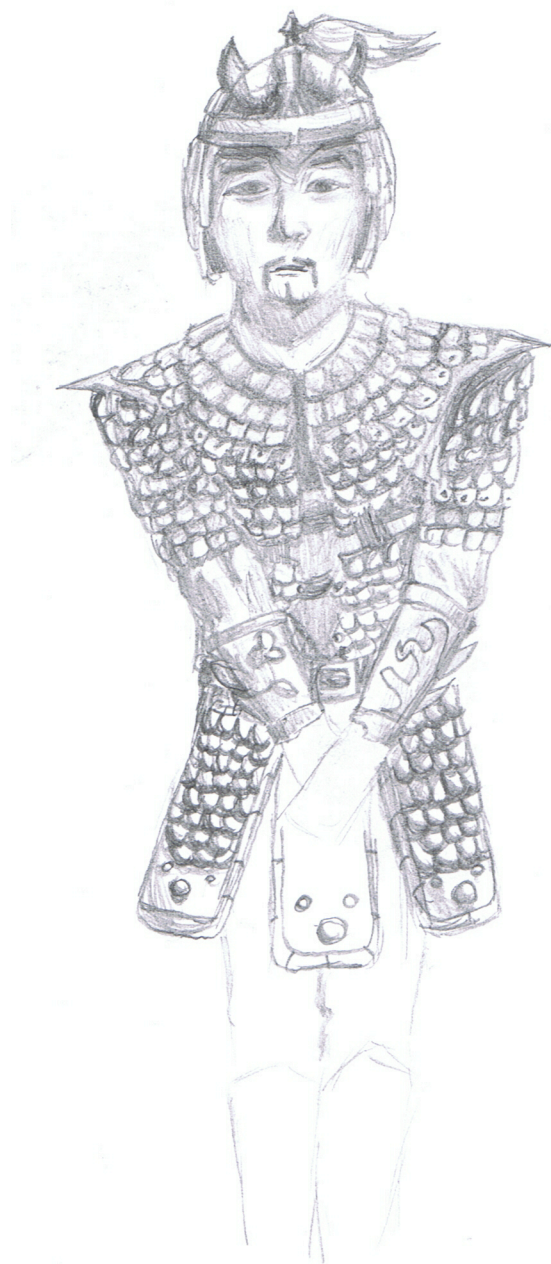
# Hwa-Rang

an Overview

화랑

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# Hwa-Rang



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Offered as a thesis towards testing to 2<sup>nd</sup> Dan

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## Introduction

This thesis is concerned with an overview, analysis and discussion around the Hwa-Rang Tul of Taekwon-Do. There are three areas that will be covered; the pattern itself, the History of the Hwa-Rang Youth Group, and the Hwa-Rang Code of Conduct.

The Hwa-Rang pattern is the 8<sup>th</sup> in the sequence of patterns learnt by the Taekwon-Do student on their progression from White Belt to Black Belt. The student will therefore be a Red Belt, grading to Red Belt/Black Tip when this pattern is demonstrated. It is comprised of 29 movements, honouring the 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division that was formed under the guidance and leadership of General Choi Hong Hi in Korea during the 1950s.

The pattern introduces a number of new techniques, stances, motions and movements. Red Belt signifies danger and a warning to opponents, and this is evident in the dynamic and powerful elements of Hwa-Rang Tul. As one Black Belt mentioned recently, this pattern recognises youth, and the flexibility and speed that youth possess is required to make this pattern look effective. It therefore is a fantastic challenge to the older student!

The Hwa-Rang Youth Group originated in the 6<sup>th</sup> Century C.E. in what is now North & South Korea but back then during the classic Three-Kingdom period. It was a time when the Silla Kingdom began its rise to prominence in the Korean Peninsula, and the Hwa-Rang were a key part of that rise, being the elite and loyal specialist warriors of the King.

Their Code of Conduct formed the basis of a moral code that differentiated them from common soldiers and probably influenced the Bushido movement of Japan in later centuries. It was based on Confucianist and Buddhist teachings, so deeply rooted in Eastern Philosophies. In addition to the skills of warfare the Hwa-Rang were taught dance, literature arts and sciences, creating well rounded individuals with clear skills and clear thinking.

This rounded education, including physical, mental and moral development is an inspiration to the modern student, whether of Taekwon-Do or other pursuits in life.

I would like to thank and dedicate this thesis to Mr Neill Livingstone, my Taekwon-Do instructor for the last five and a half years, for all the inspiration, support and encouragement to train and grade.

In researching and writing this thesis, it has become apparent that the Hwa-Rang Code of Conduct suffuses the Art of Taekwon-Do, and also seeps into the character of the Taranaki Taekwon-Do Club. It forms the binding matter between instructor and student, and between students. It makes the club not just a martial, learn-to-defend-and-fight group of roughnecks, but a family of like-minded people striving to improve themselves, physically, mentally and ethically, through an honourable Martial Art.

I also must thank General Choi Hong Hi, the great man who created Taekwon-Do to which we all dedicate so much of our lives.

## Hwa-Rang Tul

Hwa-Rang Tul is the pattern learnt by 2<sup>nd</sup> Gup (Red Belt) students progressing towards 1<sup>st</sup> Dan Black Belt. It is comprised of 29 movements and includes a number of new techniques and motions for the student.

General Choi Hong Hi, the Father of Taekwon-Do, chose to name and dedicate the pattern after the Hwa-Rang Youth Group of Korea. Its importance as a pattern is underlined by the meaning of the Red Belt, which is:

*Red signifies danger, cautioning the student to exercise control and warning the opponent to stay away.*

This denotes that by Red Belt, the student has gained skills and techniques that makes them capable of competent self-defence and response. Given this competency, the student is now advised that these skills must only be used in self defence, never to initiate a confrontation. Even when required to present these skills, self-control must be exercised, whether it is during training or used in real situations.



The opponent is warned that the wearer of a Red Belt has progressed through the Gup system to a stage where skills, techniques and the ability to demonstrate them have been developed. Therefore it is a foolhardy opponent that would advance with intent towards the Red Belt.

A recap of the Gup belt colours and meanings:

White	Signifies innocence, as that of the beginning student who has no previous knowledge of Tae Kwon-Do.
Yellow	Signifies earth, from which a plant sprouts root as the Tae Kwon-Do foundation is being laid.
Green	Signifies the plant's growth, as Tae Kwon-Do skills begin to develop.
Blue	Signifies heaven, toward which the plant matures into a towering tree as training in Tae Kwon-Do progresses.
Red	Signifies danger, cautioning the student to exercise control and warning the opponent to stay away.

The plant's growth into a towering tree from yellow to Blue belts suggests that red could also mean ***The colour of the first fruits of the tree.*** *Fruits* being the literal meaning as well as the fruits of training.

## **Pattern Meaning**

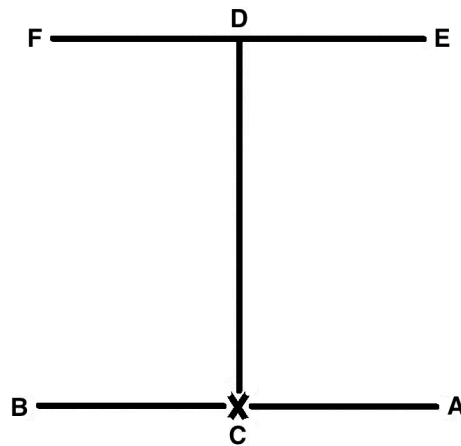
*Hwa-Rang is named after the Hwa-Rang youth group, which originated in the Silla Dynasty in the early 7th century. The 29 movements refer to the 29th Infantry Division, where Taekwon-Do developed into maturity.*

The two key components of this meaning are:

1. The Hwa-Rang youth group and the Silla Dynasty of the 7<sup>th</sup> Century
2. 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division and the development of Taekwon-Do

These components are more fully described later in this thesis.

## **Pattern Diagram**

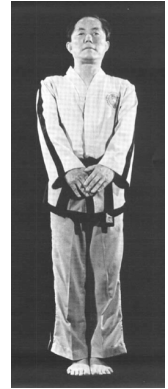
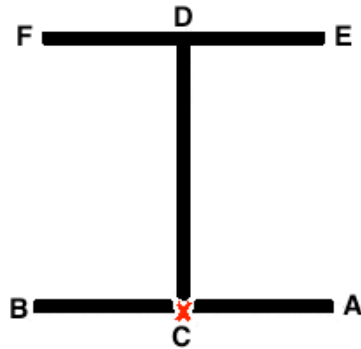


The pattern diagram is described as a “Capital I”. This follows a common shape for many of the patterns in the Gup syllabus. The starting point is at the 'X' position, facing towards 'D'.

Although the pattern shape is symmetrical, the movements in the pattern are not. This means it is important to maintain good stances during execution in order to successfully return to the starting point by the end of the pattern. It also indicates that by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Gup (Red Belt), the student has a good understanding of stances, their angles, distances and weights, and so by the completion of the pattern, all movements in one direction are balanced by movements in the opposing direction. Given the range of stances in the pattern, this is quite a challenge.

A hint from Dale Copeland (, “Ensure that the slide in movement 25 takes you back to the starting point”).

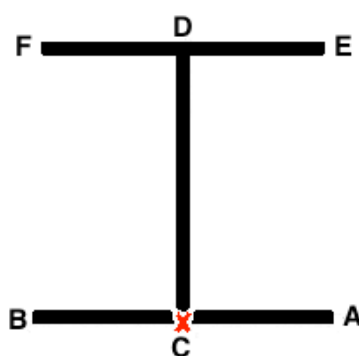
## Movements



### Ready Posture: Close Ready Stance C

1	Move the left foot to B to form a sitting stance toward D while executing a middle pushing block to D with the left palm.
2	Execute a middle punch to D with the right fist while maintaining a sitting stance toward D.
3	Execute a middle punch to D with the left fist while maintaining a sitting stance toward D.
4	Execute a twin forearm block while forming a left L-stance toward A, pivoting the left foot.
5	Execute an upward punch with the left fist while pulling the right side fist in front of the left shoulder, maintaining a left L-stance toward A.
6	Execute a middle punch to A with the right fist while forming a right fixed stance toward A in a sliding motion.
7	Execute a downward strike with the right knifehand while forming a left vertical stance toward A, pulling the right foot.
8	Move the left to A, forming a left walking stance toward A while executing a middle punch to A with the left fist.
9	Move the left foot to D, forming a left walking stance toward D while executing a low block to D with the left forearm.
10	Move the right foot to D, forming a right walking stance toward D while executing a middle punch to D with the right fist.
11	Pull the left foot toward the right foot while bringing the left palm to the right forefist at the same time bending the right elbow about 45 degrees outward.
12	Execute a middle side piercing kick to D with the right foot while pulling both hands in the opposite direction, and then lower it to D, forming a left L-stance toward D, at the same time executing a middle outward strike to D with the right knifehand.
13	Move the left foot to D, forming a left walking stance toward D while executing a middle punch to D with the left fist.
14	Move the right foot to D, forming a right walking stance toward D, at the same time executing a middle punch to D with the right fist.

15	Move the left foot to E, turning counter-clockwise to form a right L-stance toward E while executing a middle-guarding block to E with a knifehand.
16	Move the right foot to E, forming a right walking stance toward E while executing a middle thrust to E with the right straight fingertip.
17	Move the right foot on line EF, forming a right L-stance toward F while executing a middle guarding block to F with a knifehand.
18	Execute a high turning kick to DF with the right foot and then lower it to F.
19	Execute a high turning kick to CF with the left foot and then lower it to F, forming a right L-stance toward F while executing a middle guarding block to F with a knifehand Perform 18 & 19 in a fast motion.
20	Move the left foot to C, forming a left walking stance toward C while executing a low block to C with the left forearm.
21	Execute a middle punch to C with the right fist while forming a right L-stance toward C, pulling the left foot
22	Move the right foot to C, forming a left L-stance toward C while executing a middle punch to C with the left fist.
23	Move the left foot to C, forming a right L-stance toward C, at the same time executing a middle punch to C with the right fist.
24	Execute a pressing block with an X-fist while forming a left walking stance toward C, slipping the left foot to C.
25	Move the right foot to C in a sliding motion, forming a right L-stance toward D while thrusting to C with the right side elbow.
26	Bring the left foot to the right foot, turning counter-clockwise to form a close stance toward B while executing a side front block with the right inner forearm while extending the left forearm to the side downward.
27	Execute a front side block with the left inner forearm, extending the right forearm to the side downward while maintaining a close stance toward B.
28	Move the left foot to B, forming a right L-stance toward B, at the same time executing a middle guarding block to B with a knifehand.
29	Bring the left foot to the right foot and then move the right foot to A, forming a left L-stance toward A while executing a middle guarding block to A with a knifehand.
End	Bring the right foot back to ready posture.





## Pattern Techniques

### Pattern

Movement	Technique	Stance	Motion	Notes
1	Middle Pushing Block (L palm)	Sitting stance		
2	Middle Punch (R fist)	Sitting stance		
3	Middle Punch (L fist)	Sitting stance		
4	Twin Forearm Block	L L-stance		
5	Upward Punch (L fist)	L L-stance		
6	Middle Punch (R fist)	R Fixed stance		
7	Downward Strike (R knife-hand)	L Vertical stance		
8	Middle Punch (L fist)	L Walking stance		
9	Low Block (L forearm)	L Walking stance		
10	Middle Punch (R fist)	R Walking stance		
11	L palm to R forefist, elbow at 45°	L foot pulled towards R foot		Release – part 1
12	Middle Side Piercing Kick (R foot) Middle Outward Strike (R knife-hand)	L L-stance		Release – part 2
13	Middle Punch (L fist)	L Walking stance		
14	Middle Punch (R fist)	R Walking stance		
15	Middle Guarding Block (R knife-hand)	R L-stance		
16	Middle Thrust (R Straight Finger Tip)	R Walking stance		
17	Middle Guarding Block (knife-hand)	R L-stance (step turn)		
18	High Turning Kick (R foot)		Fast with 19	
19	High Turning Kick (L foot)			
20	Low Block (L forearm)	L Walking stance		
21	Middle Punch (R fist)	R L-stance		
22	Middle Punch (L fist)	L L-stance		
23	Middle Punch (R fist)	R L-stance		
24	Pressing Block (X fist)	L L-stance		
25	Side Elbow Thrust (R elbow)	R L-stance	Sliding	
26	Side Front Block (R inner forearm)	Close stance		L forearm is reaction
27	Side Front Block (L inner forearm)	Close Stance		L forearm

				is reaction
28	Middle Guarding Block (knife-hand)	R L-stance		
29	Middle Guarding Block (knife-hand)	L L-stance		

## Techniques

### Stances

Technique (English)	Technique (Korean)	In Movement	Notes
Close Stance	Moa Sogi	26,27	Also start and end
Sitting Stance	Annun Sogi	1,2,3	
L-Stance	Niunja Sogi	4,5,12,15,17,21,22,23,24,25	
Fixed Stance	Gojung Sogi	6	
Vertical Stance	Soo Jik Sogi	7	
Walking Stance	Gunnun Sogi	8,9,10,13,14,16,20	
<i>No stance</i>		11	In release from walking stance

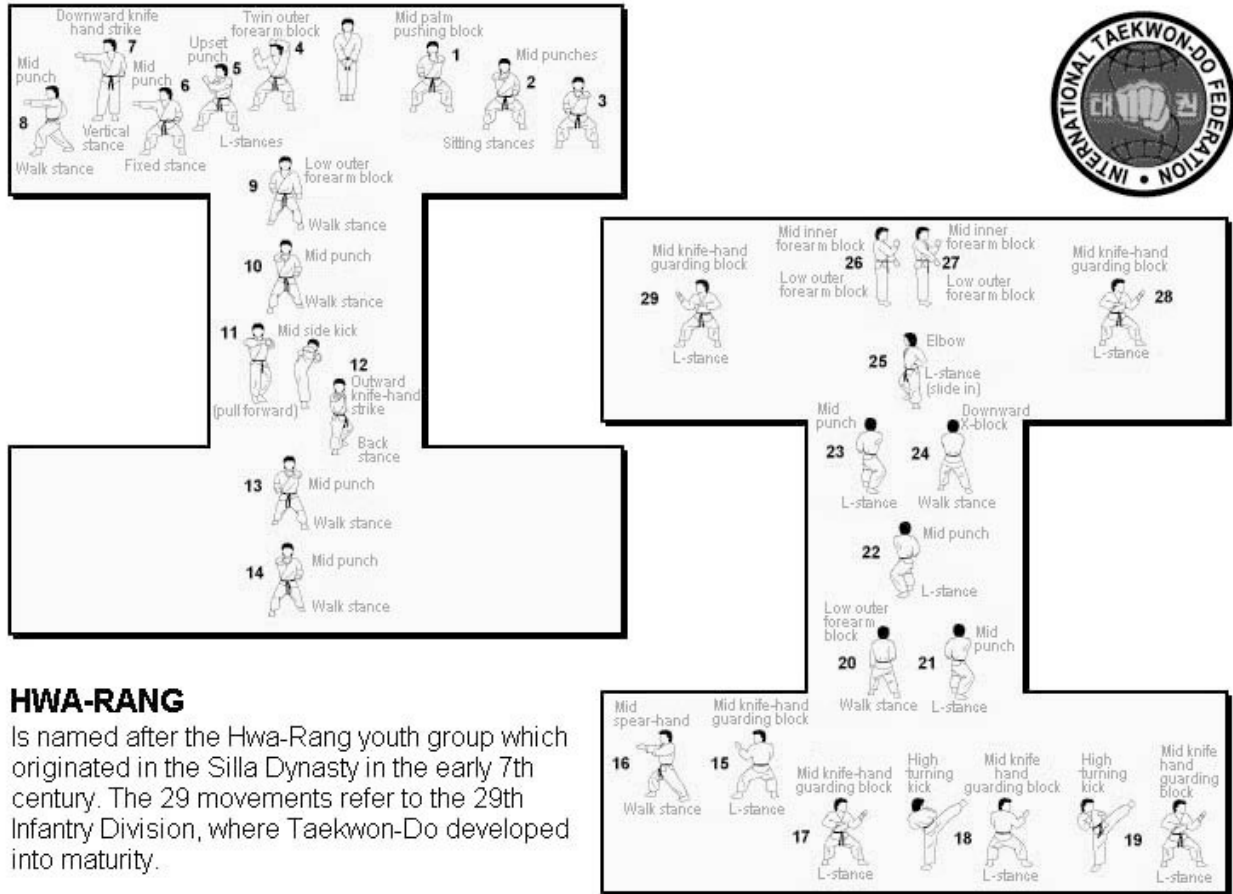
### Techniques

Technique (English)	Technique (Korean)	In Movement	Notes
Palm Pushing Block	Sonbadak Miro Magki	1	
Forefist Front Punch	Ap Joomuk Jirugi	2,3,6,8,10,13,14,21,22,23	
Twin Forearm Block	Sang Palmok Magki	4	
Upward Punch	Ollyo Jirugi	5	
Knifehand Downward Strike	Sonkal Naeryo Taerigi	7	
Forearm Low Block	Palmok Najunde Makgi	9,20	
Side Piercing Kick	Kaunde Yopcha Jirugi	12	
Knifehand Outward Strike	Sonkal Bakuro Taerigi	12	
Knifehand Guarding Block	Sonkal Daebi Magki	15,17,19,28,29	
Straight Fingertip Thrust	Sun Sonkut Tulgi	16	
Turning Kick	Dollyo Chagi	18,19	
X-fist Pressing Block	Kyocha Joomuk Noollo Makgi	24	
Side Elbow Thrust	Yop Palkup Tulgi	25	
Inner Forearm Side Front Block	An Palmok Yobap Makgi	26,27	

For a full Korean name of a movement it is usual to name the stance, followed by 'so' and then the technique. For example:

<b>Technique (English)</b>	<b>Technique (Korean)</b>
Sitting Stance Palm Pushing Block	Annun So Sonbadak Miro Makgi
L-Stance Upward Punch	Niunja So Ollyo Jirugi
Vertical Stance Knife-hand Downward Strike	Soo Jik So Sonkal Naeryo Taerigi
High Turning Kick	Nopunde Dollyo Chagi
L-Stance Side Elbow Thrust	Niunja So Yop Palkup Tulgi
Close Stance Inner Forearm Middle Side Front Block	Moa So An Palmok Kaunde Yobap Makgi

This is an interesting and visual depiction of the pattern:



### HWA-RANG

Is named after the Hwa-Rang youth group which originated in the Silla Dynasty in the early 7th century. The 29 movements refer to the 29th Infantry Division, where Taekwon-Do developed into maturity.

*Credit to the International Taekwon-Do Federation.*

The diagram is useful for helping to remember the pattern diagram, directions of movement and movement number of each technique.

### Notes:

- The encyclopedia states that movement 11 is only the release. Movement 12 includes the side piercing kick and knife-hand strike. The latter also is performed in a Right L-Stance, not a Back Stance as shown.
- After the High Turning Kick (right foot) in movement 18, the encyclopedia says to “lower it (the right foot) to F”. It does not say to form a middle knife-hand guarding block in right L-stance, as this diagram suggests.

## The Hwa-Rang

The history of the Hwa-Rang Youth Group forms a part of the history of Korea. Like the legends of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table in ancient Britain, the origins and subsequent formation and deeds of the Hwa-Rang Youth Group are shrouded in mystery and interpretation.



Primary sources of information concerning the Hwa-Rang come from three documents, Samguk Sagi (History of the Three Kingdoms), Samguk Yusa (Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms) and the Haedong Goseungjeon (Lives of Eminent Korean Monks).

During the 6th century AD, the Korean peninsula was divided into three kingdoms: Silla, Koguryo, and Paekche. Silla, the smallest of these kingdoms, was constantly under invasion and harassment by its two more powerful neighbours. The Hwarang were established by Chin Hung, the 24th King of Silla (540 AD), who was a devoted Buddhist and loved elegance and physical beauty. He believed in mythical beings and male (Sin-Sun) and female fairies (Sun-Nyo). These beliefs led him to hold beauty contests to find the prettiest maidens in the country, which he called Won-Hwa (Original Flowers). He taught them modesty, loyalty, filial piety, and sincerity, so they would become good wives. In one contest among 300-400 Won-Hwa, two exceptionally beautiful young women were favoured, Nam-Mo and Joon-Jung. Unfortunately, the two began to struggle for power and influence between themselves. Finally, to win the contest, Joon Jung got Nam-Mo drunk and killed her by crushing her skull with a rock. When the unfortunate maiden's body was found in a shallow grave by the river, the king had Joon-Jung put to death and disbanded the order of the Won-Hwa.

Several years after this incident the King created a new order, the Hwarang. "Hwa" meant flower or blossom, and "Rang" meant youth or gentle men. The word Hwa-rang soon came to stand for Flower of Knighthood. These Hwarang were selected from handsome, virtuous young men of good families.

Each Hwarang group consisted of hundreds of thousands of members chosen from the young sons of the nobility by popular election. The leaders of each group, including the most senior leader, were referred to as Kuk-Son. The Kuk-Son were similar to King Arthur's Knights of the Round Table in England around 1200 AD.

Trainees learned the five cardinal principles of human relations (kindness, justice, courtesy, intelligence, and faith), the three scholarships (royal tutor, instructor, and teacher), and the six ways of service (holy minister, good minister, loyal minister, wise minister, virtuous minister, and honest minister). After training, candidates were presented to the king for nomination as a Hwarang or Kuk-Son.

From Kuk-Son ranks were chosen government officials, military leaders, field generals, and even kings, who served Silla both in times of peace and war. Most of the great military leaders of Silla were products of Hwarang training, and many were Kuk-Son.

The education of a Hwarang was supported by the king and generally lasted ten years, after which the youth usually entered into some form of service to his country. King Chin Hung sent the Hwarang to places of scenic beauty for physical and mental culture as true knights of the nation. For hundreds of years the Hwarang were taught by Kuk-Son in social etiquette, music and songs, and patriotic behavior.

A Hwarang candidate had to be a man of character, virtue, and countenance. The Hwarang trained to improve their moral principles and military skills. To harden their bodies, they climbed rugged mountains and swam turbulent rivers in the coldest months.

The youth were taught dance, literature, arts, and sciences, and the arts of warfare, chariot, archery, and hand-to-hand combat. The hand-to-hand combat was based on the Um-Yang principles of Buddhist philosophy and included a blending of hard and soft, linear and circular techniques. The art of foot fighting was known as Subak and was practiced by common people throughout the three kingdoms. However, the Hwarang transformed and intensified this art and added hand techniques, renaming it Taekkyon. The Hwarang punches could penetrate the wooden chest armor of an enemy and kill him. Their foot techniques were said to be executed at such speed that opponents frequently thought that the feet of Hwarang warriors were swords.

In later centuries, the king of Koryo made Taekkyon training mandatory for all soldiers, and annual Taekkyon contests were held among all members of the Silla population on May 5th of the Lunar Calendar.

The rank of Hwarang usually meant a man had achieved the position of a teacher of the martial arts and commanded 500-5,000 students called Hwarang-Do. A Kuk-Son was the master and held the rank of general in the army. Hwarang fighting spirit was ferocious and was recorded in many literary works including the Sam-Guk-Sagi, written by Kim Pu-Sik in 1145, and the Hwarang-Segi. The latter was said to have contained the records of lives and deeds of over 200 individual Hwarang (sadly, it was lost during the Japanese occupation in the 20th century). The zeal of the Hwarang helped Silla become the world's first "Buddha Land" and led to the unification of the three kingdoms of Korea. Buddhist principles were so ingrained in the code of the Hwarang that a large number of monks participated in the Hwarang-Do. During times of war, they would take up arms to die for Silla.



One famous Hwa-rang adherent (allegedly) was Admiral Yi Sun-Sin (1545, 1598), the great historical figure for which the pattern Choong Moo Tul is named. Choong Moo (or Chungmu - 충무공, 忠武公, Duke of Loyalty and Warfare) is the posthumous title bestowed on Admiral Yi due to his many and great victories against Japan.

The knowledge of warfare and unrestrained loyalty exhibited by Admiral Yi is very similar to those qualities of the Hwa-Rang youth group. Even though the youth group itself has declined by this period, their proud history obviously inspired those that succeeded.

## South Korean 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division

General Choi Hong Hi was born on 9<sup>th</sup> November 1918 in Hwa Dae (now in North Korea) when that region was under Japanese rule. He served in the Japanese Army during World War II (1939-1945) but was implicated in a rebellion and imprisoned. On release after the war he joined the Korean Army and rose to the rank of Major General by 1954.

During his early life, the young Choi learnt the ancient Korean martial art **Taekkyeon**. While in Japan he also learnt Karate, and graded to 2<sup>nd</sup> Dan. General Choi combined elements of **Taekkyeon** and **Shotokan Karate** to develop a martial art that he called **Taekwon-Do** (태권도;跆拳道), which means "*foot, hand, the way*" or "*the way of hand and foot*" and it was so named on 11 April 1955.

Between the years 1950 and 1953 Korea was divided between North and South, and fought a war with each other. Each side had allies, the North with communist support from the People's Republic of China and the South with capitalist support from U.S.A and others.

In September of 1953, General Baek Sun Yuh, the Chief of Staff of the Korean Army, asked General Choi to create the 28th Division. Choi asked General Baek if this would be the last division created during the war? General Baek replied that one more division would be created in a few months. Choi asked Baek if he could create the last division, the 29th Infantry Division, and General Baek granted the request.

General Choi organised and activated the 29th Infantry Division at Cheju Island off the South Korean coast. The division eventually became the spearhead of Taekkyeon in the military. The first thing General Choi did was to create a distinctive division flag. On the flag, the number two of the number 29 symbolised the divided Korean peninsula. The number nine symbolised a fist. The flag he thus was a fist over the Korean peninsula. After seeing the flag, people gave the 29th the nickname, "The Fist Division" or "Ik Keu Division" and later "The Taekwondo Division."

General Choi's second task was to choose the division's command staff. To assist him in training the troop in military drills, he enlisted the aid of Colonel Ha Chung Kab and Lieutenant Colonel Kim Hwang Mok. He also recruited Master Nam Tae Hi and Master Nam Cha Kyo, both from Chung Do Kwan (Gym of the Blue Wave) to help him to train the soldiers in Tangsoodo. Although Choi still called the martial art Tangsoodo, the characteristic and quality of the techniques were now far different from the karate that he had practiced in Japan. A combination of Korean Taekkyeon and Japanese Shotokan and Tang-soo formed the basis of his teachings, but at this point his art was much different from these arts.

To his officers and Tangsoodo instructors, he gave very specific orders. "When the soldiers train in Tangsoodo, everyone has to bow to the instructors, regardless of military rank. Outside of the gym, salutations go according to military rank." The combination of military drills and Tangsoodo practice made this division unique among other division in the Korean Army; they were ready to fight with or without weapons.

The 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division was a crowning achievement for the General in his military career. It also acted as the nursery for his unique style of martial art, fused and developed from its historical roots. It also must have reminded him of the original elite fighting force and protector of the Korean Peninsula, the Hwa-Rang youth group. As such it held a special place in his heart, leading him to formulate the Hwa-Rang Tul with 29 movements.

# The Code of Conduct

- Be loyal to your King
- Be obedient to your parents
- Be honourable to your friends
- Never retreat in battle
- Make a just kill



The story goes...

“The Hwarang code was established in the thirtieth year of King Chin-Hung’s rule. Two noted Hwarang warriors, Kwi-San and Ch’u-Hang, sought out the famous warrior and Buddhist monk Wong-Gwang Popsa in Kusil Temple on Mount Unmun and asked that he give them commandments that men could follow whom did not embrace the secluded life of a Buddhist monk. The commandments, based on Confucian and Buddhist principles, were divided into the Code of the five Hwarang rules and nine virtues (humanity, justice, courtesy, wisdom, trust, goodness, virtue, loyalty and courage). These principles were not taken lightly by the Hwarang.”

The key here is that the Hwa-Rang needed a Code of Conduct, or Ethics, as a guiding influence to thought and deed. Without this code, they were simply trained warriors.

English	Korean	Korean	Korean
Code of Conduct	Sesok Ogye		
Be loyal to your King	Sa Kun E Choong	Sa Soon Yi Choong	사군이충 事君以忠 나라에 충성하고
Be obedient to your parents	Sa Chin E Hyo	Sa Chin Yi Hyo	사친이효 事親以孝 부모님께 효도하고
Be honourable to your friends	Kyo Woo E Shin	Kyo Woo Yi Shin	교우이신 交友以信 믿음으로 벗을 사귀고
Never retreat in battle	Im Jun Moo Tae	Im Jeon Moo Tae	임전무퇴 臨戰無退 싸움에 나가서는 물러서지 않으며
Make a just kill	Sal Saeng You Taek	Sal Saeng Yoo Taek	살생유택 殺生有擇 살아있는 것을 함부로 죽이 지 않는다



## **Original Meaning**

In the time of the Hwa-Rang it was common practice to send the young people of noble families out to live with other nobles or the royal city. This was done for many reasons. For some, it was a way to bind noble families together (sometimes resulting in marriage), for others, as a “hostage” or diplomat to ensure peace between regions. The Hwa-Rang, being composed primarily of young men from other noble families, seems to follow in this trend.

As such, we could consider the following interpretation of the Code of Conduct (in decreasing order of priority):

### **Be loyal to your King**

Allegiance to King and Country is foremost. The Hwa-Rang, being the elite armed body in service to the king, must of course have as their top priority, this allegiance.

For any army, allegiance to the ruling body is paramount. All too often in history, regimes are overthrown, not by the common people, but by military betrayal. This may have been justified in the case of terrible tyrannies! It is therefore understandable that any set of rules include as their first and foremost, loyalty to the ruling class.

The ancient Eastern peoples, like many in the world, were very hierarchal in their society structure. From the Kings and Queens (who derived their status from supposed divine birth or blessing), loyalty flows down the layers of society all the way to the peasant farmer, or slave.

### **Be obedient to your parents**

Allegiance to the noble family and region from whence the young nobleman derived. The youth do not forget their origins, and maintaining the link to their own family and region helps bind that region to the King and so remains a loyal vassal.

Also in Eastern society, family is a very important institution. This is still evident with the multi-generational family homes that are common in Asia. The elderly are respected and cared for in the family home.

### **Be honourable to your friends**

Honour and Peace between regions. The king has a desire and sees the importance of unity, and so strength in the country. This can only be achieved by the regions being at peace with each other, remaining strong in the presence of external threats from Chinese and Japanese neighbours.

Honour between friends in the Hwa-Rang youth group would have been an important and binding factor in the organisation. From honour springs respect, honesty, fairness and friendship.

As well as the practical benefits of friendship in an organisation, curbing theft, violence and power-games, friendship in fun!

### **Never retreat in battle**

Service to the King and Country means fighting to the best of your ability. Surrender and defeat are not options, and so there must be a willingness to die for the king.

Retreat in battle is associated with cowardice. It also (generally) means a defeat, and so at odds with the entire purpose of the armed body. Retreat therefore is not an option, and courage plus obedience are the required attributes of a soldier.

## **Make a just kill**

War and battles must be fought with honour and for a just cause. The primary goal is the defence of the realm. Respect is earned by those who fight honourably, and this motivates the common soldier and people to fight for their king and country as well.

## ***A Modern Interpretation***

The Code of Conduct can be deemed to consider five kinds of relationships that can be formed:

- To Superiors
- To Family
- To Friends
- To Self
- To Adversaries/Opponents

It also refers to five virtues:

- Loyalty
- Obedience/Respect
- Honour/Truth
- Courage
- Justice

These are universal concepts and attributes. As such they can be used to re-interpret the original meanings/translations into a modern code that is relevant to the modern person.

## **Be loyal to your King**

The Code of Conduct was formed at a time when modern-day Korea was the home of several Kingdoms. Loyalty was expected of all subjects in a Kingdom to the ruling King (or Queen). This was especially important and relevant to the military classes, including the Hwa-Rang.

Loyalty can also be expressed in relation to other institutions. This may include to a country, a region, a sports team, a club, a school or workplace.

## **Be obedient to your parents**

In some translations this may be interpreted as "Respect to your Parents/Elders". This may probably be more a reference to respecting others, especially those more senior, and the wisdom they have attained over time.

However, obedience to parents recognises the fact that they have raised and supported a child, and so deserve in turn, the support of the child.

In a wider scope, 'parents' can include other family members (especially those in the older generation), teachers, mentors, tutors, coaches, guides, captains (of sport teams), work superiors and supervisors, etc.

## **Be honourable to your friends**

There is a saying that states that in the first seven years of a child, the mother is the most important person (to the child), the following seven years are the province of the father, and the next seven (or more) years the young person is most influenced by his/her friends. Friendship is therefore a fundamentally important relationship to any person.

Being honourable to friends means being loyal, honest and fair in any interaction and activity. These qualities enhance the likeability of a person and binds them closer to their friends. This is important at all times but especially important when a friend is needed or needs help. People are much more likely to support a friend in need when they have shown honour and the other attributes in the past.

An honourable person is respected in society. Others are more likely to engage in business with an honourable person, and opportunities are more likely to open.

These qualities are timeless, and this statement is as true and relevant now as it was when first codified to the Hwa-Rang.

## **Never retreat in battle**

Few people in modern society are now actively involved in armed conflict. Battles are now fought and won in sports, business and academic pursuits. This line resonates with two of the tenets of Taekwon-Do, Perseverance and Indomitable Spirit. It intreats the reader to engage in all activities with conviction and determination. These activities include what is done in personal life, school life, business, sports, even leisure.

As an old saying goes, "If it's worth doing, it's worth doing right". This applies to simple activities such as school homework. "Never retreat in battle" can mean completing homework on time, and making a good effort to fulfil the requirements of that homework.

Another angle to add is to approach challenges with courage. Often in life there are tasks that must be performed that are distasteful or undesirable or even a little daunting/frightful (removing spiders from a room?). However, courage in the face of these challenges will strengthen the character of a person, and perhaps be key to facing larger challenges in future.

## **Make a just kill**

There are a number of alternative translations for this line to be found on the Internet. Its translation varies the most as compared to the other lines:

- Justice Never to Take A Life Without A Cause.
- Do Not Take Life Unjustly
- Justice in the killing of living things
- When taking life, be selective
- Prudence in the use of violence or in the taking of life
- Respect for human life

To deviate from the focus of killing, a modern (tee-shirt) interpretation could be:

- Do it for the Right Reasons

as opposed to a well known slogan, "Just Do It".

This line can be a counter-balance to the preceding one, "Never Retreat in Battle", tempering the desire to go head-strong into any pursuit with the question, "is this pursuit the Right One".

A 'kill' can therefore equate with 'decision' or 'action'.

'Just' refers to justice, fairness, honour, compassion and many other positive attributes. The line, so simple, can be expanded in meaning to an entire way to live a life. Living within these attributes will lead to a happier life for the practitioner and those around, family, friends and acquaintances.

## Reflections on Hwa-Rang

Here are a collection of thoughts on Hwa-Rang, made by some of the Black Belts in Taranaki Taekwon-Do:



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*Hwa-Rang, for me, is a bold and striking pattern requiring flexibility, balance, and technical thinking - perhaps more so than it's preceding patterns.*

*Hand techniques feel powerful, technical and explosive (especially from a sitting stance), while high section kicks add an extra dimension to the pattern by creating challenges for ones flexibility and balance.*

*The series of movements at the bottom of the diagram including two high section turning kicks is my favourite part of the pattern, and for me it also has a subtle link to the pattern meaning - as youth is often favoured with flexibility, which is required to perform such techniques.*

*This is why Hwa-Rang has been, and will remain one of my favourite patterns!*

### **Tod Rookes, 1<sup>st</sup> Dan Black Belt**

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*Hwa-Rang is one of my favourite patterns, and one with an explanation/history which I find profound. (I wrote a limited-edition book called 'Republic of Letters' and in it I showed the Korean calligraphic form of Hwa-Rang and quoted the code of conduct).*

*Although it all has meaning and relevance... loyalty, obedience and honour, it is the fourth line which really resonates with me. "Never retreat in battle". Or, in some translations, "Courage never to retreat in the face of the enemy".*

*If something is worth fighting for, you don't stop, you don't give up. Whether the battle is political, ethical or personal.*

### **Dale Copeland, 4<sup>th</sup> Dan Black Belt**

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*I like this pattern. It feels strong.*

*The difficult part for me is the high turning kicks. it really tests the flexibility in your hips. I also like what this pattern represents. The Hwa-Rang Youth Group and the 29th Infantry Division. These guys were the warriors of their time and they were summed up in the Hwa-Rang Code of Conduct:*

- *be loyal to your king*
- *be obedient to your parents*
- *be honourable to your friends*
- *never retreat in battle*
- *make a just kill*

*As martial artists we live by the student oath but we should also live by the Hwa-Rang Code of Conduct which can be translated into many aspects of everyday life through an individual's interpretation.*

### **Neill Livingstone, 5<sup>th</sup> Dan Black Belt**

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- why you like it

What I like about Hwa Rang in particular is the rhythm of the pattern. I find it one of the easier patterns to have a beat going in my head to perform it with good sine wave, emphasis on each movement and power- because of the beat...

- what's challenging in it

For me it's the two turning kicks. I use to love them but as I've got older, it's harder for me to perform them in fast motion as required, and at the required height.

- what "flavour" does the pattern have

I believe the pattern has a flavour of things to come in the more advanced black belt patterns. It introduces different movements and stances, sliding and pulling. It has simple movements but in more complicated sequences. Wearing the red belt certainly means danger where this pattern is concerned.

- favourite parts of the pattern

I really like movements 4 through to 8. I feel a lot of power, rhythm, and practical application with these moves. (self defence)

- Does the history/origin of the pattern and name hold interest to you?

Yes, i think the name and meaning of the pattern means a lot to the Korean people. It represents good morals, good people, and the youth group who essentially the pattern was named after.

### **Kirsten Livingstone, 5<sup>th</sup> Dan Black Belt**

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When I first learned this pattern it was described as the 'knife hand pattern' and that pops to mind every time I practise it...to me the Hwa Rang code of conduct offers strong ethical principles for good and useful living through loyalty, obedience, sincerity, trust and good judgement...these principles are backed up with the nine virtues of humanity, justice, courtesy, wisdom, trust, goodness, virtue, loyalty, and courage (I note that significant number 9 repeats itself through our practise).

I believe that if we work at understanding and personally implementing the Hwa Rang code and it's virtues we can certainly create balanced and contented lives and in turn contribute to the ideal of a more peaceful world.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Dan Black Belt**

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Hwa-Rang "feels" red. It is powerful, dynamic and challenging. I particularly like the Upward Punch early in the pattern and Pressing Block with X-Fist technique later in the pattern. They're powerful hand techniques that suite my physique and strengths. I also like the symmetry in movement of the pattern (capital 'I' shape), with differing techniques exercised in each line of movement.

There is a good balance of self-defence and attacking techniques. However, there is very obvious progression here, that all movements after a change in direction start with a block, followed by an offensive technique. This is an important message to the student (and learnt almost subconsciously) that self-defence comes before an attack/response, never the other way round.

### **David Apimerika, 1<sup>st</sup> Dan Black Belt**

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# Ancient Korean Peninsula





