

# FMA

# Informative

Propagating the Filipino Martial Arts and the Culture of the Philippines

Informative Issue No. 67

2013

## Kalis Ilustrisimo

*Master Tony Diego*



*Ms. Peachie Baron-Saguin*

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The FMA Informative wants to thank Ms Peachie Baron-Saguin for setting up the meeting and interview with Master Tony Diego in Luneta Park and finishing up the photo session at her home.

Also a thank you to the senior students Bruce Pimentel and Arnold Ndrzo, along with Alex Ercia and the rest of the students for their patience and cooperation while Master Tony was being interviewed and during the photo sessions.

Master Tony Diego is a very distinguished, knowledgeable and reputable practitioner that has continued to carry on and promote the art of Kalis Ilustrisimo.

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#### **Master Antonio “Tony” Diego**

When Master Tony moved to Manila, he trained in the Balintawak style of Arnis with the Eskrimadors from Cebu while he was working at the docks and at the same time training with Berting Presas (Modern Arnis) in Quiapo, a district of Manila. Soon after, he met Antonio “Tatang” Ilustrisimo in 1974. Tatang’s simple but ferocious style greatly impressed him. He then requested Tatang to teach him. At first Tatang would not teach Master Tony, explaining that it was only for his use alone! He said he remained undefeated because others do not know his style. Master Tony, far from being deterred, relentlessly pestered Tatang with attention and gifts until the old man finally agreed to teach him the ways of the blade.

As a teacher of Eskrima, Master Tony has earned the highest reputation as a person and as an instructor. He fully believes that a student who learns the Ilustrisimo system should give credit where credit is due, and not to learn and then claim it or its derivatives as a personal innovation or declare it as coming from an imagined family tradition.

Compared with Tatang, Tony teaches almost the same way with the exception that he has structured his instruction procedures into sets of techniques which make learning easier. This comes from having seen it from the student’s point of view.

Tony has insisted on maintaining the purity of the system as Tatang taught it. The only change is the way the Ilustrisimo system is now taught in a structured sense, which Tatang did not.

**Any Questions Contact:** Ms. Peachie Baron-Saguin at: [peachiebaron@yahoo.com](mailto:peachiebaron@yahoo.com)

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## Kalis Ilustrisimo in its Pure Form

Compared with Tatang, Master Tony teaches almost the same way with the exception that he has structured his instruction procedures into sets of techniques which make learning easier. This comes from having seen it from the student's point of view. Master Tony has insisted on maintaining the purity of the system as Tatang taught it.

**Kalis Ilustrisimo** in its pure form tries to maintain the life and death combative perspective and expresses this point of view in its techniques and their applications. There has been also a need to enter the Filipino martial arts world, which has a greater emphasis on the sports aspect. For this, Ilustrisimo methods and techniques have performed been modified in order to keep within the structure of the necessary constricting rules of sports. These rules are meant for the safety of participants and life and death combat movements are illegal. This is true for other martial arts - Kendo, Jujitsu, Fenc-

ing, etc.

Because of the greater emphasis on sports in the present Filipino martial arts community, students are more - keen on learning techniques believing these will enhance their skill and their chances of winning competitions. In contrast, instruction in Ilustrisimo is based on the foundational combat philosophy of Antonio "Tatang" Ilustrisimo when teaching the techniques and their application. This point of view delineates objectives which give rise to the movements or techniques necessary to achieve such objectives.

### 12 Strikes from Abierta

1. Angulo
2. Planchada low Cerrada
3. Planchada low Abierta
4. Angulo Cerrada
5. Tusok Stomach
6. Tusok Cerrada Heart
7. Tusok Abierta Heart
8. Tusok Cerrada Belly (liver)
9. Aldabiz (Al ravez)
10. Tusok Cerrada Right Eye
11. Tusok Abierta Left Eye
12. Angulo from Cerrada

Then moves on to the Cerrada strikes one through twelve.

### 12 Strikes from Cerrada

1. Angulo from Cerrada
2. Planchada low Abierta
3. Planchada low Cerrada
4. Angulo Cerrada
5. Tusok Cerrada Stomach (liver)
6. Tusok Abierta Heart
7. Tusok Cerrada Heart
8. Tusok Stomach
9. Cruzada Cerrada
10. Tusok Abierta Eye
11. Tusok Cerrada Eye
12. Real Abierta

After this when the student masters the different kinds of strikes, the next step is the Cruzada Planchada.

The original main objective of Tatang's fighting system is winning in battle and coming out of it alive and unhurt. For this, a flexible fighting capability is necessary. Thus the Ilustrisimo system has a varied set of techniques which are effective at various distances and with various weapons all the way to empty hands.

In using Kalis Ilustrisimo they use what one would call fraction (Master strikes at the student according to numbers). The Master strikes the student first countering the strikes one through twelve strikes, Abierta:

## Single Stick vs Double Stick - Fighting Form - 12 strikes

The forms of punta y daga can be applied to Double sticks or double swords. The photos will just serve as guide but the application will depend on the angle and distance of the players.

**Peachie** - strikes to the left temple

**Master Tony** - counters by striking the arm

**Peachie** - strikes to the right hip

**Master Tony** - counters with a thrust then continues to disarm

**Peachie** - strikes to the left hip

**Master Tony** - counters by striking the arm, then parries with his right while his left is ready to thrust

**Peachie** - strikes to the right temple

**Master Tony** - does the media fraile while his left stick thrust

**Peachie** - thrust to the belly

**Master Tony** - deflects the stick while his right hand strikes his opponents dominant hand while his left hand transitions, ready to disarm



**Peachie** - thrust to the heart from cerrada position

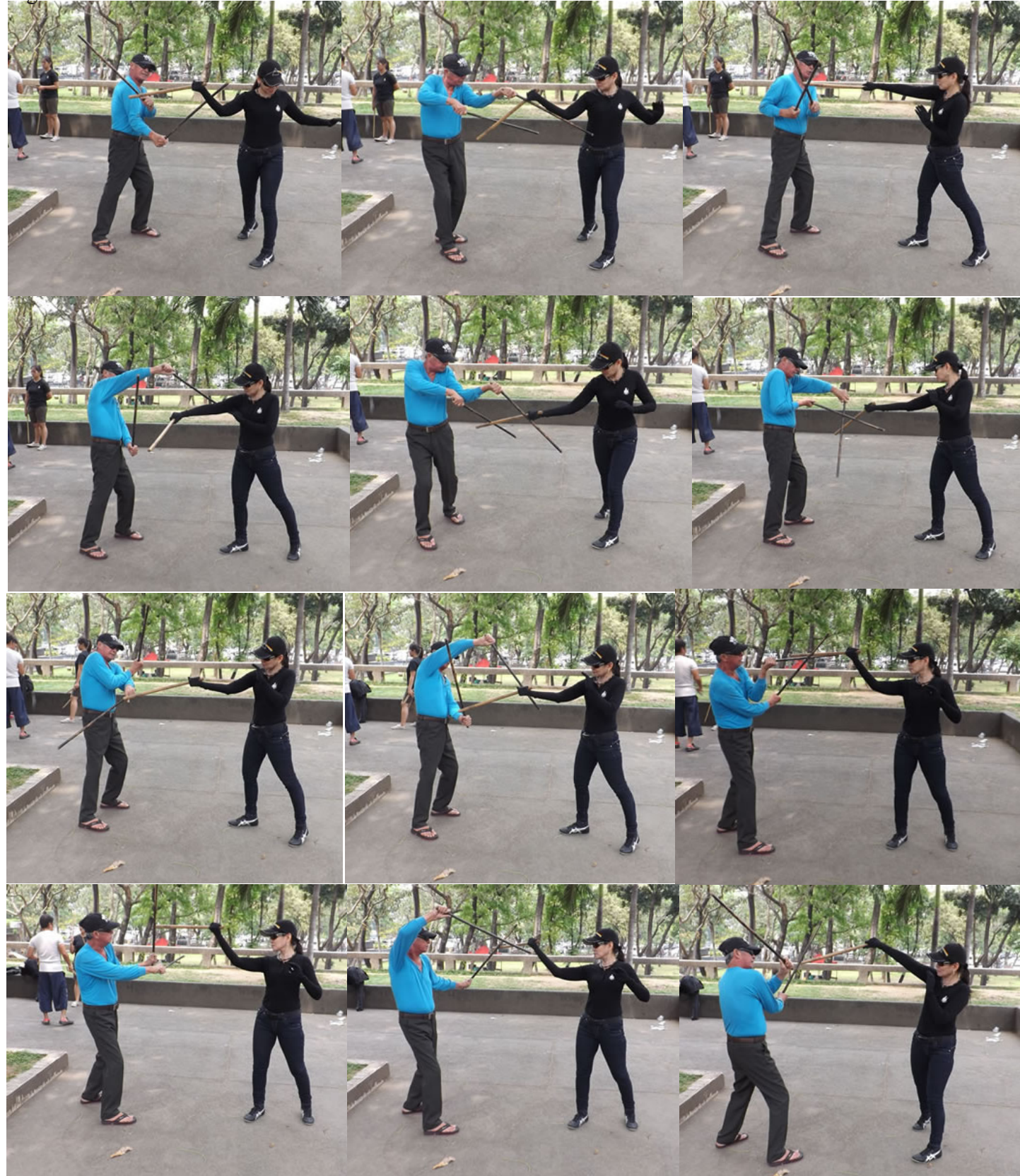
**Master Tony** - deflects with his left while striking with his right

**Peachie** - thrust to the heart from the abierta position

**Master Tony** - deflects with both his left and right hand stick and execute a thrust with his right

**Peachie** - strikes below the navel from the cerrada position

**Master Tony** - ready to disarm, left hand above Peachie's stick, while his right hand below the stick for disarming



**Peachie** - strikes coming from below - aldabiz

**Master Tony** - executes sampal with his left, and with his right strikes vertical from cerrada

**Peachie** - thrust from cerrada to the right eye

**Master Tony** - executes a pluma, ready to cut

**Peachie** - thrust to the left eye

**Master Tony** - deflects with an angolo, and transitions to aldabiz from cerrada, then executes a thrust

**Peachie** - executes angolo from cerrada

**Master Tony** - executes aldabiz while thrusting with his left, then a fraile, an angolo bagsak and panipis



Once the 12 strikes and thrusts have been practiced and defensive maneuvers have been established, then strikes and thrusts are executed randomly.

Just a few examples below:



**(Strike No# 7)** Peachie attacks with a thrust to the heart. Master Tony parries with his right and his left ready to disarm.



**(Strike No# 5)** Master Tony attacks with a thrust to the belly. Peachie counters by parrying with her left, then pivots to execute a counter thrust from the back then follow thru with a cut in the arm.



Master Tony and Peachie on a fighting stance.  
**(Strike No# 2)** by Peachie to left hip of Master Tony. Master Tony parries with his left and executes a thrust with his right.



**(Strike No# 3)** by Peachie to the right hip of Master Tony. Master Tony counter by parrying with his left and executing a Real (cut/slice) with his right.



## What is the Best Way for a Student to Develop flow?

Practice, in Kalis Ilustrisimo is the No #1.

Tatang to Master Tony Diego, “*master the strikes and thrusts.*” If you master the strikes and thrusts and no matter how good the defender, even if they are an excellent blocker, then the defender will always be defending, and in no time the opportunity to accomplish a strike or thrust or even a counter to the defenders block will materialize.

Using the fraction system,

**Note:** Thus we have two types of retreat

- 1) Purong Retirada - meaning pure retreat or retreat foot works at all times.
- 2) Retirada Atrakada - meaning retreat and attack.

first using the retikada (Retiratda) which has two systems.

One is waiting for the attack moving away countering. The other is Retikada (Atrakada). Using the opponents multiple[attack]

To understand fraction the student strikes and the Master will not block the strike, but will let the strike go and then counters in the pena pensud (free flow), where the Master attacks the student and the student counters the Master then defends the attack.

### Praksyon

From the word “fraction” meaning a portion of. Praksyon means that a feeding set of, say 1-2-3-4-5 is suddenly broken up so that the feed can be a 5-3-4-1-2. This is the original meaning that Tatang explained for FRACCION (Spanish spelling). This is different from the common interpretation of praksyon which is actually a matter of timing which involves either cutting before your opponent’s cut has matured or cutting after your opponent’s has expended itself. This matter of timing also involves the setting up of the opponent so that he can cut only in a certain direction, left and down, left and up, etc., from his chamber or when he is unchambered and still out of control of his weapon. Praksyon can also mean a broken rhythm.

## Some Examples of Abanico Drills for Disarming and Cerrada Techniques



*Arnel attacks with an angolo at left temple. Master Tony counters with abanico, and a ponyo while his left hand bends the opponent;s weapon hand.*



*Arnel strikes angolo to the left temple of Master Tony. Master Tony counters abanico with his dominant hand to the right temple, while his other hand pulls the dominant hand of Arnel while putting pressure on his hand at the same time guiding the dominant hand of Arnel under his armfit for disarming.....*

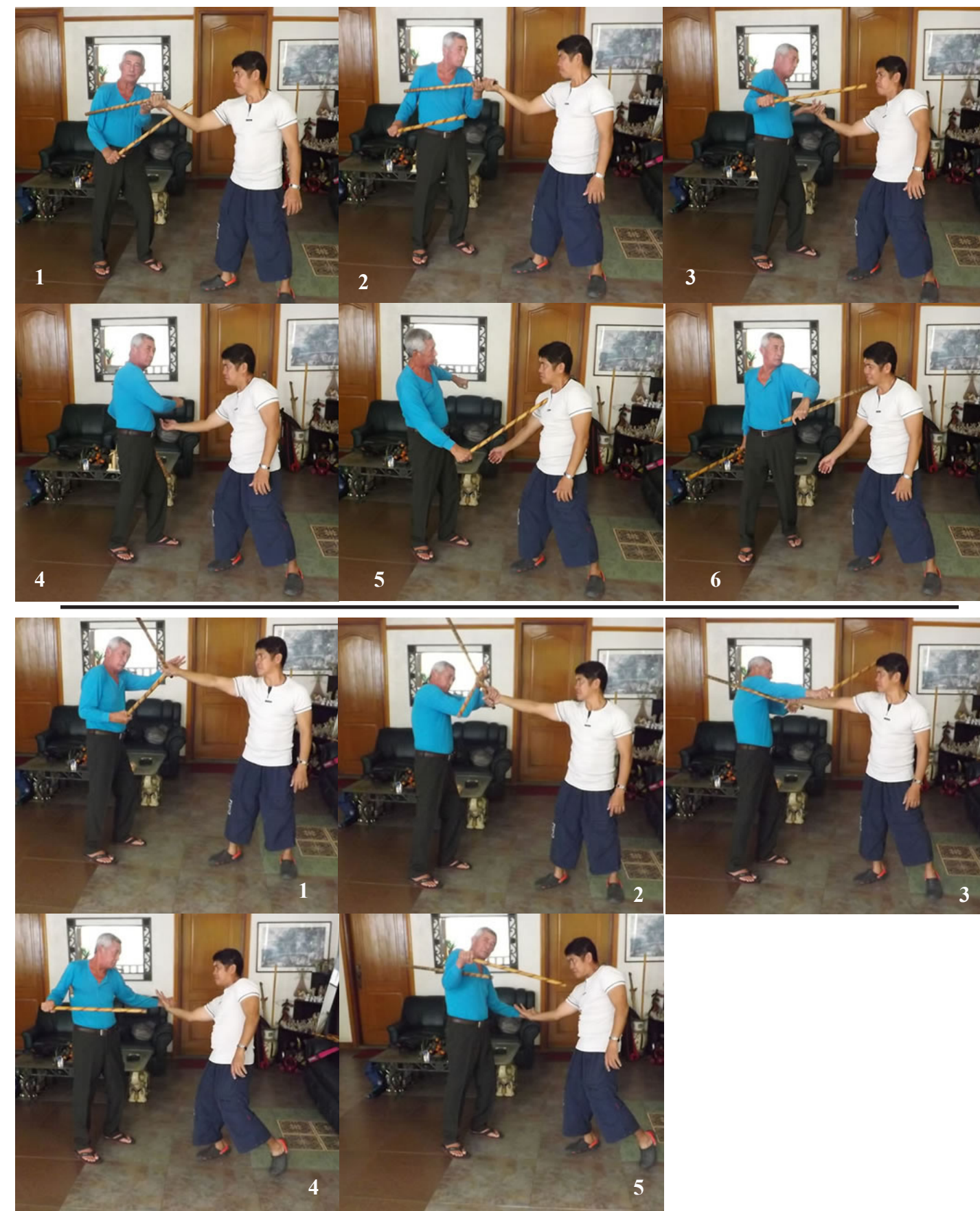


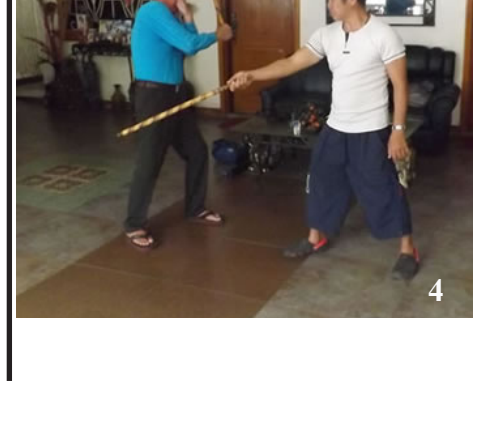
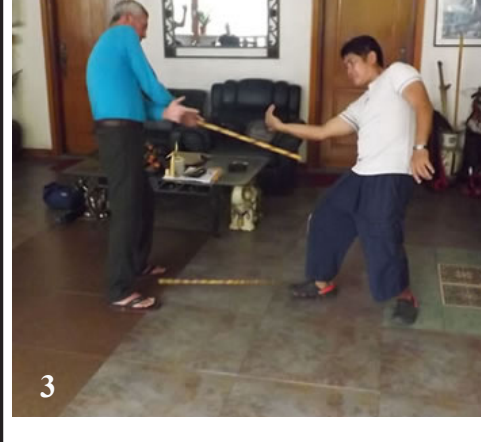
Arnel attacks with a Tusok Abierta to the heart. Master Tony made a side step with his left foot moving first, pivots while his weapon hand blocks Arnel's thrust. his left hand supporting ready to bring down Arnel down as he press his dominant hand down.



Arnel attack's with a tusok cerrada to the heart Master Tony counters by side stepping to the left moving away from Arnel's line of attack as he blocks Arnels arm with his stick. If this is a sword, Master Tony counters with a cut to the arm, then moves his weapon hand up to disarm

*Note:* Another counter with the same attack is also to move sideways, to cut or block the attack before executing a disarm and finishing with a counter strike to the left temple of the attacker.





1. Master Tony in Cerrada position
2. Cruzete high for a planchada high strike attack
3. Cruzete low for a planchada low strike attack
4. Counter attack (Tutchada) for a thrust attack

Note: 2 and 3 are the same except for the angle of the attack, one is high and the other is low.





## Training With No Partner

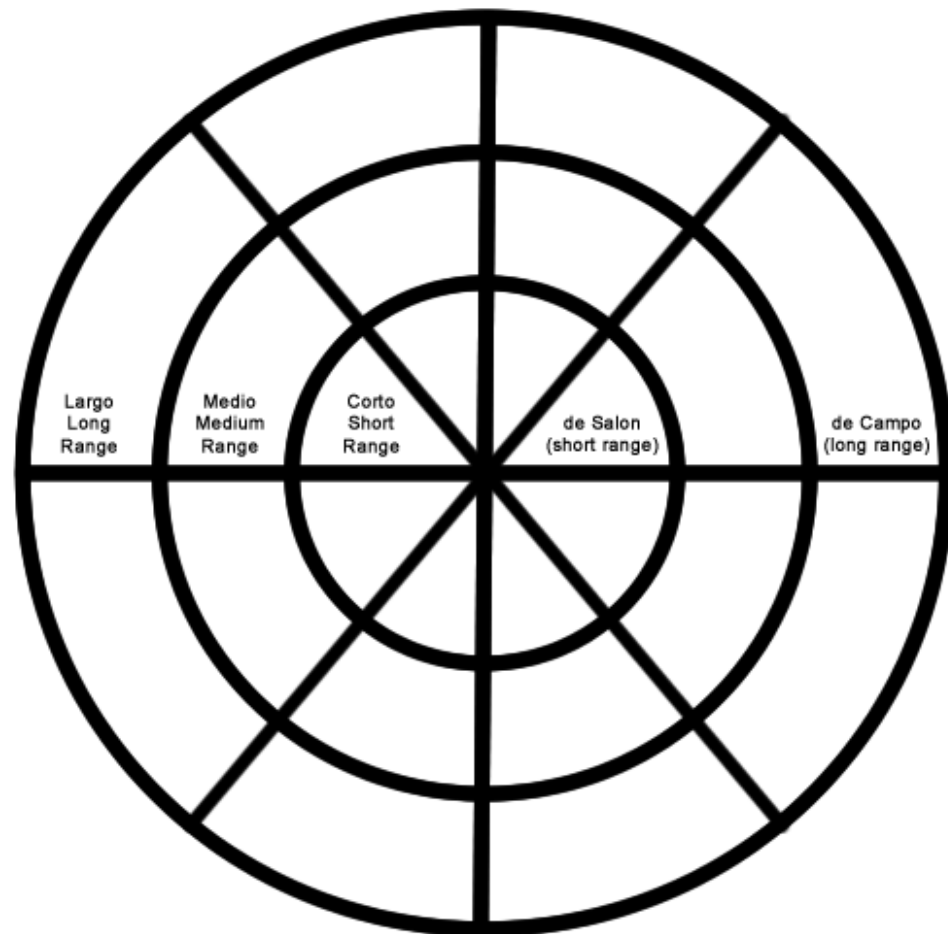
If no partner to practice with what can be done to develop flow? Practice the strikes always using the footwork.

Which are: Retirada - Natural footwork (Purong Retirada- Ekis foot work is used or the Retirada Atrakada - usually Lutang footwork is used), Ekis. Lutang, Angulo, Tatlong Bao Palihis, Tatlong Bao Paatras, Doblete, and the Combate General.

This gets a practitioner in to utilizing the circle for practice using the different kinds of movements in coordination to the circle.

If the circle is on the ground it is used for footwork in moving in to the medium range from the long range, or the medium range to the short range or a combination in developing the stances, movements of flow. If the circle is on the wall it can be used for strikes and thrusts for the different angles etc.

Circle in the logo represents the footwork and the different strikes of Ilustrisimo



The 8 points sticks represents the 8 foot works



1 - Master Tony explaining the 8 rays representing the 8 foot works. His position is in the long range, assuming he is on the outer perimeter of the biggest circle.

2 - Master Tony on the cerrada position on the second circle representing middle range

3 - similar to Explanation one except Master Tony is in the Cerrada position.

**Note:** This rays and supposed to be circles represent the 8 foot works of the Ilustrisimo when placed on the ground. The circles are the different ranges, the long, medium and short range. When mounted on the wall the lines represents the different basic strikes of the system.

## Basic Tactical Ranges

The origin of Kalis Ilustrisimo can be traced back in Bantayan Island in the Northern part of Cebu City. Kalis means blade and Ilustrisimo is the name of the propagator of the system focusing on two methods,

**de Campo** (*the long range*)

**de Salon** (*the short range*)

The three combat ranges in the Filipino martial arts are corto (close-range), medio (medium-range) and largo (long-range).

**Hakbang:** general term for footwork.

**Corto Mano:** close range, short movements, minimal extension of arms, legs and weapons, cutting distance.

**Serrada:** “split step”, short range footwork, quick, split action, front and back, low stance. Serrada footwork is the base of a triangular framework methodology.

**Largo Mano:** long range, extended movements, full extension of arms, legs and weapons, creating distance.

**Fraile:** short range footwork, hopping action, balanced position, short hop, pushing off from the lead foot.

**Ritriada:** short range footwork, shuffling action, pushing backward by pushing off the lead foot, giving six to eight inches of range per action.

**Banda y Banda:** side to side action.

## Walong Apak ng Kalis Ilustrisimo (*The Eight Steps of Kalis Ilustrisimo*)

The walong apak is practiced to develop coordination of striking and footwork which includes footwork’s pivoting and sudden change of direction that is required in a multiple attack scenario. The student is imagining that there is an 8 directional diagram on the floor. North-South-East-West, NE-NW-SE-SW.

In the pictures below is the description of the Walong Apak. Please note that to save some space we did not cover all eight moves. Different strikes can be practice as one performs this drill

**Demonstrated By:** Alex Ercia



Figure 1-3: Student is in ready position or starting position facing North. The student initiates a step forward in coordination with an angulo. Angulo strike a diagonal downward cut from the left temple of the head or neck/collarbone.



Figures 4-5: Pivoting 180 degrees on the ball of the back foot going south or behind the student, he executes an angulo.

Figures 6-7: The student now pivots 90 degrees to the right going NE executing an angulo.  
 Figures 8-9: Student now turns to E and executes an angulo.

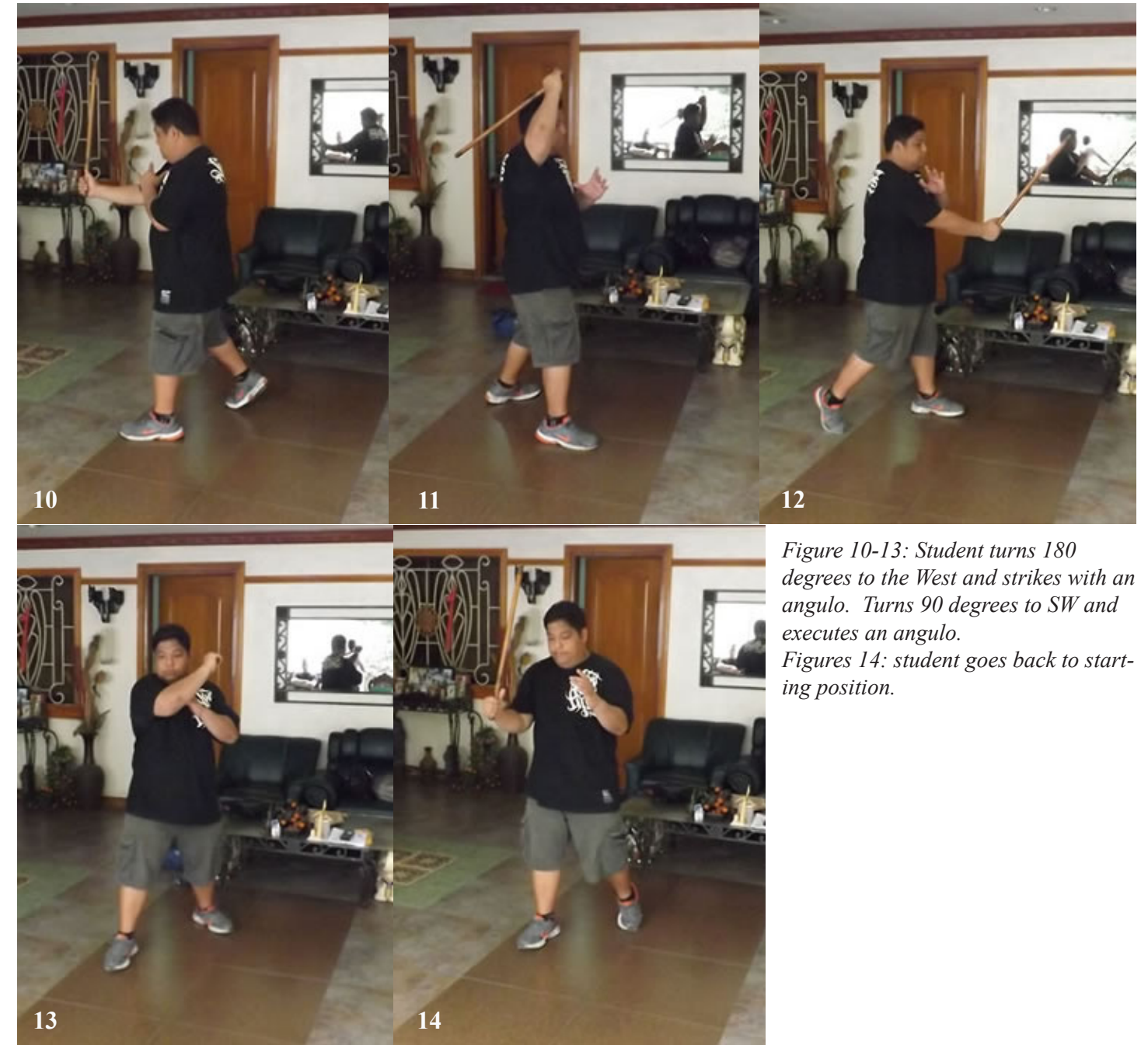


Figure 10-13: Student turns 180 degrees to the West and strikes with an angulo. Turns 90 degrees to SW and executes an angulo.  
 Figures 14: student goes back to starting position.

March 9, 2013



The Sting ray was chosen as the Kalis Ilustrisimo emblem because of its characteristic, silent but deadly. When an adversary approaches, it dives underneath its enemy and strikes with its tail. The strike is similar to Witik. The 8 points star represents the footwork and the different strikes of Ilustrisimo. The green circle at the background signifies the cycle of life and the color green symbolizes life. Also Tatang, the propagator of the system came from Bantayan Island where sting rays are abundant.

### ***School Submission***

The schools listed teach Filipino martial arts, either as the main curriculum or an added curriculum.

If you have a school that teaches Filipino martial arts, or you are an instructor that teaches, but does not have a school, list the school or style so individuals who wish to experience, learn and gain knowledge have the opportunity.

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We welcome your article, ideas and suggestions, and look forward to working with you in the future.