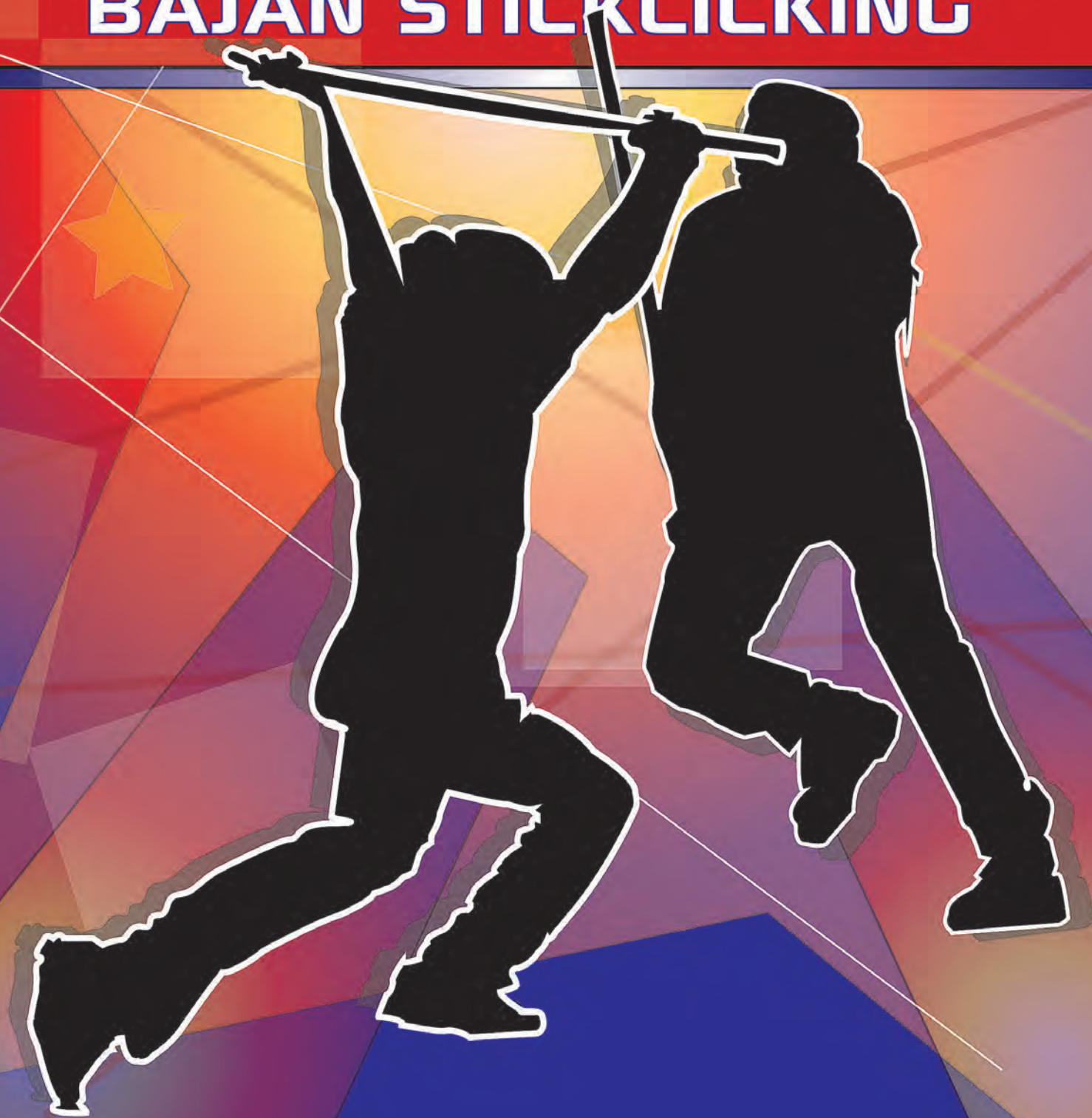


# WHAXX PALAXX

## A TEACHERS' GUIDE TO BAJAN STICKCLICKING





# Barbadian Stick Licking Teachers' Manual

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# CEO's Foreword

**T**he National Cultural Foundation (NCF) steadfastly continues towards the realization of its mandate to preserve, develop, inform, train and promote our tangible and intangible cultural heritage through its programming, productions and publications. This Stick Licking Teachers' manual is the newest addition to our collection of documented resources focused on training the trainers.

The Whaxx Palaxx Teachers' Manual is designed to document in detail, core examples of Barbados' rich Intangible Cultural Heritage. As with our Barbados Landship Teachers' Manual of Manoeuvres, this new manual serves as a centralized repository of techniques in this local martial art form which has been handed down from generation to generation and has evolved within Barbados' particular cultural landscape.

It will support the NCF's renewed thrust in training in traditional practices at the community level and will also encourage further research into the practice of this 'stick science'. Developed for teachers, researchers and persons who have a vested interest in learning the history and practical application of Bajan Stick – Licking. The manual's easy to use instruction, illustrations and links to video demonstrations allow for multiple forms of information access and pedagogy.

The National Cultural Foundation thanks the leads writer and researcher, Dr. Philip Forde, and demonstrators who willingly collaborated in making this publication possible.



**Carol Roberts-Reifer**

Chief Executive Officer  
National Cultural Foundation





# Message from the Dance Desk



**Alicia Payne/Hurley**  
Cultural Officer Dance  
National Cultural Foundation

**W**haxx Palaxx the Bajan Stick Licking Teachers Manual is the second in our Teacher Training Series. The purpose of the manual is to offer potential teachers a comprehensive guide to mastering the rudiments of our indigenous martial art, Bajan Sticklicking.

The manual's design is in keeping with the first Teachers' training resource in the series. It provides a combination of historical context, codification and links to audio visual aids which capture everything from the prefight ritual to the stick preparation and various sticklicking cuts. Whaxx Palaxx takes you on an exciting educational journey as we unmask the intriguing history of this Barbadian cultural form.

It is always with a sense of great pride that we bring these resources to you, the reader. It is a celebration of what is indeed an important part of our rich cultural heritage while ensuring that these cultural forms have a sustainable future.



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## Overview/ Historical Significance

Stick fighting, or stick licking as it is called in Barbados, is a form of self-defense, a sport, or most often, a leisure activity, and was popular among Barbadian men until the 1950s and 1960s. It was part of popular culture with its use depending on the circumstance. Evidence suggests that its decline in popularity coincided with the growing popularity of cricket and increased access to cricket fields in rural areas.

The stick fighting systems of the Caribbean played an important role in the display and construction of black masculinity among enslaved men and their descendants. In fact, Elombe Mottley argues that Bajan stick lickers were responsible for the name "Bad John" coined by Trinidadians who were exposed to the aggressive Bajan stick lickers (23). Their proficiency as stick lickers was often attributed [by the Trinidadians] to the incorporation of Obeah, an African belief system, in the preparation of sticks (37). However, I have found no evidence of the use of Obeah or any other spiritual practices in any aspect of stick licking. When I asked about the use of Obeah, my informants were adamant that it was never used.

Several West Indian writers have spoken to the importance of pastimes to the enslaved and oppressed. These include Richard Burton and George Lamming. Richard Burton states that enslaved Africans had a variety of pastimes whose function 'was precisely to rehumanize the lives of men, women and children who were in other respects reduced to the level of animals, even objects' (7). George Lamming is quoted by Rex Nettleford as saying that, "The body belonging to the oppressed is a powerful means of communication, and personal control over it places it beyond the reach of the oppressor" (89). Lamming adds, "Our bodies can here lead us to discovery of self and to positioning in the world by using them as performing agents." (89) Desch Obi supports this view when he states that:

While whites proved their public worth and distinguished themselves as individuals through their work (success of a plantation or a private practice), for most blacks their labor took place in the "culture of coercion", the sphere of guarded and forced behaviors. Thus, public performance became the activity through which they asserted and maintained their individuality and self-worth (Fighting for Honor 92).

The stick fighting systems in the West Indies would have been one of the pastimes used to improve the self-worth and individuality of the enslaved Africans and as a vehicle through which masculinity was performed.



# Origins of Stick Licking

A wide variety of African ethnic groups were brought to the Americas, so that tracing the ethnic origin of enslaved Africans is problematic. However, certain conclusions can be drawn. After an investigation into the aborted 1675 slave revolt, Hilary Beckles notes that the investigating committee declared that almost all the leaders of the revolt were Coromantee (Akan) men. He further states that 'Governor Atkins reported that the majority of slaves in Barbados were "Coromantines" and described them as "a warlike and robust people".' (37) Beckles concludes that, 'Taking all of these difficulties into consideration, it is possible to make the generalization that the most blacks brought to Barbados during the seventeenth century were from the Ga, Ibo, Ashanti, Ewe, Edo, Fanti, Adangme, Dahomey and Yoruba peoples' (27).

It would appear that the numerical dominance in Barbados of enslaved Africans from Angola in the early seventeenth century was surpassed by Coromantines later in that century and eventually by Igbos by the late eighteenth century. However, this numerical dominance did not mean the exclusion of other ethnicities. Barbados seemed to have received a steady supply of enslaved Africans from the Bights of Benin and Biafra, the Gold Coast and West Central Africa throughout the period of the slave trade, although in shifting amounts.

The stick fighting systems of the Caribbean are examples of the creolization of several African fighting systems. Although similar in many ways, each Caribbean country has elements unique to its socio-economic history. These affected the 'spaces' in which cultural practices have evolved and developed, leading to different creolization processes across the region.

Although research has shown that stick licking evolved from a style similar to the Kalinda (Kalenda) stick fighting styles in practice, or in many cases, practiced in other Caribbean countries, it has significant differences in techniques, pedagogy and performance practice. It however has some similarities to the stick fighting practiced among the Maroons of Jamaica, as displayed at the Jankanu Festival, and has a similar prefight ritual to one from Haiti.

Stuart Hall states that the first priority of the enslaved Africans was the retention of old customs like religion, dance, and music. Hall goes on to state that these retentions helped the Africans survive the trauma of slavery, even as they were influenced by the colonizers' culture. In other words, the process of creolization was taking place (29). Creolization also took place between the different African ethnicities brought to the cultural melting pot of the Caribbean plantation system. There are, however, African ethnic groups who had strong stick fighting traditions and, as such, might have had a significant influence on the stick fighting systems of the Caribbean.

With regards to Barbados specifically, evidence suggests Akan, Dahomey, Igbo and Angolan influences in stick licking. There is also evidence of European influences in some techniques and pedagogy. T. J. Desch Obi argues that the use of the stick was important to cattle herding cultures, for example,





## Origins cont'd

the Kunene of Angola and the Fulani from Western Africa. Kunene soldiers would have been among the enslaved Africans brought to the Caribbean (46).

Speaking of the Kandeka, Desch Obi states:

Kandeka was a central concept in Kunene martial traditions and could refer to stick fighting, slap boxing, or a war dance. Primary among these was the art of stick fighting. (Fighting for Honor 31). The first Africans to be brought to the plantations in the West Indies had the opportunity to establish aspects of their culture in the fledgling African/Creole plantation culture. Mervyn Alleyne states that, 'The dominant group in the formative period would have set the pattern to which other groups then and later would have had to conform.' (114) With a majority of Angolans in the Caribbean in the early days of plantation slavery, they would have been able to establish stick fighting as part of the emerging culture.

Desch Obi argues that stick fighting was central to Kunene culture but he recognizes that stick fighting was also important in other African cultures. He states that, 'Beyond the Angolans, the Fulani of West Africa were well versed in a stick duelinthat grew from their pastoral lifestyle" (Fighting for Honor 142). The Fulani is a nomadic ethnic group of cattle herders that spreads across many West African countries including Guinea, Niger, Nigeria and Mali. The Fulani are from the interior and not the coast. Despite this, some of the Fulani would have been among the Africans that were enslaved and shipped across the Atlantic (Desch Obi, Fighting for Honor 72).

Desch Obi states that, 'Likewise, the fighting stick was also the primary weapon in the "bloodless wars" of Biafra. They also played some role in the combative arsenal of other regions of West and Central Africa, including the states of Dahomey, Oyo, and the Sokoto Caliphate' (Fighting for Honor 142). Melville Herskovits mentions that the hoe-handle was the weapon Dahomeans fought with in early times (73).

Desch Obi states that, 'Although the exact numbers are debated, most scholars agree that Igbo comprised the majority of the enslaved sold to Europeans in Biafra' (Fighting for Honor 72). The Igbo ethnic group had a stick fighting tradition (9). Desch Obi states:

In conflicts between groups with real or putative blood relations, the drawing of blood, let alone killing, was abhorred and avoided at all costs. Therefore, most fighters used nkpo (fighting sticks) and abariba (wooden machetes). (Fighting for Honor 59).



I have found no records of the fighting traditions of the Akan ethnic group from Ghana. This ethnic group would have been brought to the British West Indies in significant numbers. However, I mentioned previously that there is a similarity between the stick fighting systems practiced by the Jamaican Maroons and Barbadians. The only thing that connects these two populations is a common Akan ancestry.

**The first record we have of stick fighting in the Caribbean is from the island of Dominica in the eighteenth century (Desch Obi 144). Agostino Brunias painted the scene in 1779.**



Dominica was one of the islands that the French and British fought over before it became a continuous British colony in 1763 and would have received its first influx of Africans as a French colony. These Africans would have been of the same ethnicity as those in the other French colonies in which the Kalenda style of stick fighting was also practised. Moreover, Beckles states that, 'During the slavery period, Barbados was one base from which the colonization and settlement of Trinidad, Guiana and the Windward Islands was launched' (151). The English speaking enslaved African seen fighting in the painting above was probably one of the creolized enslaved Africans the British brought with them from Barbados.

There was also an early record of the practice of Martial Arts in Barbados by Richard Ligon who visited Barbados in 1647-1650, and describes the enslaved Africans wrestling or, as he referred to it, 'their play'.

Richard Ligon also describes a scene at Colonel James Drax's plantation during his visit to Barbados that further suggests that the enslaved men brought their martial arts skills with them across the Atlantic, in this case, their armed martial arts:

Some of them, who have been bred up amongst the Portugals, have some extraordinary qualities, which the others have not; as singing and fencing. I have seen some of these Portugal Negroes, at Collonal James Draxes, play at Rapier and Dagger very skilfully, with their stookados, their Imbrocades, and their Passes: And at single Rapier too, after the manner of Charanza, with such comeliness; as, if the skill had been wanting, the motions would have pleased you; but they were skilful too, which I perceived by their binding with their points, and nimble and subtle avoidings with their bodies, and the advantage the strongest man in the close, which the other



## Origins cont'd

avoided by the nimbleness and skilfulness of his motion. For, in this Science, I had been so well vers'd in my youth, as I was now able to be a competent Judge... (52)

Kongolese soldiers, who would have included a large number of Kunene, fought their wars with muskets, swords, lances and axes. The muskets and swords were not part of their traditional weapons but they would have obtained them from the Europeans and in the case of swords, they would have adapted this weapon to their traditional stick and hatchet techniques.

It is likely that what Ligon observed were the Africans practising their traditional combat system possibly using European weaponry. Ligon described it according to what he was accustomed to in England. In other words, he observed it through "European eyes" and described it using European terminology. Furthermore, the martial art display observed by Ligon would not have been limited to the 'Portugal Negroes' if it had been taught to the enslaved Africans by the British or copied from them. I believe the enslaved Africans that Ligon described as having 'been bred up amongst the Portugals,' are Africans from Portuguese Angola. As Beckles reminds us, 'African culture, then in becoming Afro-Barbadian, absorbed elements of Euro-creole ideas and practices' (69). Finally, Richard Dunn states that the 1661 Slave Act of Barbados reported that 'Within each plantation the overseers were expected to keep the Negro cabins under close surveillance, searching twice a month for stolen goods, clubs, and wooden swords' (240). This stipulation suggests that the weapons used by the enslaved Africans included sticks in the form of clubs and wooden swords. The use of the word 'club' would suggest a short thick implement, whilst 'wooden swords' would suggest a longer, slimmer weapon similar to the sticks presently used in Bajan stick licking.

Stick licking, though mainly of African origin, borrowed from the dominant European culture by the process of interculturalisation. One of the places this would have taken place was in Army camps. Kamau Brathwaite states that, 'The markets and Army camps were among the chief places of inter-racial concourse' (17). It will be argued later that stick licking in Barbados includes elements of sabre techniques that were based on observation of drills performed by members of the British Army.

In a conversation with Professor Pedro Welch, he indicated that there were not a lot of historical references to the training of the military stationed in Barbados but that it would have been in line with British military training of the corresponding era. In an article by the Sheffield Academy of Western Martial Arts, it is stated that after heavy losses in the French war, the Indian war, and the American war of Independence the British army adapted the sabre. 'In 1793, Horse Guards requested new swords pattern(ed) for the Army from the Board of Ordinances. These were to be sabres for cavalry and infantry' (2). This article continues with an explanation of basic sabre techniques. The sabre has eight



categories of "Guards and Parry Positions" with more than one sabre position in each category. The Johnsons style of Bajan stick licking, as outlined below, has seven 'cuts' each with more than one stick position. The sabre positions of Tierce, High Tierce, Horizontal Quarte and Quinte correspond to Johnsons third, cross third, fourth and cross fifth stick positions, respectively.

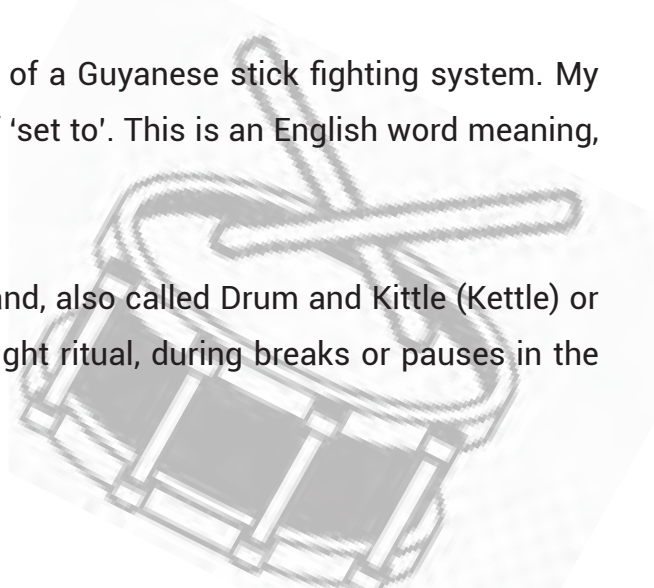
The sabre manual then shows eight individual strikes, called 'cuts' for the obvious reason, which comprise the basic sabre attacks. Next is shown what is called the 'Moulinet sequence' which is a fixed sequence of seven sabre strikes or 'cuts'. This is similar to the Johnsons first 'cut' that has seven strikes. It is possible that the use of the term 'cuts' to designate the levels of training in stick licking could have been borrowed from sabre terminology. It is also possible the 7th Cut in the Johnsons style got the name, 'Horse Guard', from the British Military 'Horse Guards' mentioned above.

## Stick Licking Spaces

**T**raditionally, men would meet on Sundays and bank holidays to fight or practice. Competition was most often - though not always - associated with the working class and was predominantly a male pursuit. Stick lickers and their supporters would travel to the designated meeting place for stick licking contests, known locally as a sitoo (situ), often in dance halls, rum shops, or cinemas. The competitions were a source of village rivalry and the champions a source of pride.

The term sitoo (situ) is similar to setu which is the name of a Guyanese stick fighting system. My research suggests that sitoo (situ) could be a derivative of 'set to'. This is an English word meaning, among other things, to argue or fight.

Stick licking contests were often accompanied by a tuk band, also called Drum and Kittle (Kettle) or Kittle and Drum. The tuk band would play during the prefight ritual, during breaks or pauses in the fight, and sometimes played a controlling role in the fight.



# The Pedagogic Structure of Stick Licking

Despite the relatively small size of Barbados, several different styles of stick licking existed. These include the Johnsons, Queensberry, Square Diamond, Donnelly, Mapps, Creole, Sword and Jack Prancy. Queensberry and Johnsons were the most popular and the only ones to have survived in their entirety.

Some of the origins of the names of these styles might be linked to British Boxing. The Queensberry style could have gotten its name from The Marquis of Queensberry Boxing Rules, a theory that has merit because stick licking adapted some of these boxing rules in its competitions. Tom Johnson was the English bare-knuckle boxing champion from 1784-1791 (Mottley 42) and the Johnsons style could be named after him. However, it is my opinion that the influence of the first black heavy weight boxing champion, Jack Johnson between the years 1908-1915, is also a credible source of the name Johnsons. The Donnelly could have been named after 'Ned Donnelly who styled himself as the "Professor of Boxing to the London Athletic Club"' (Mottley 43). I have found no evidence to prove or disprove these various theories, nor has my research found any theories on the origins of the names of the other styles listed above.

Barbadian stick licking is not a fixed fighting system. Although the practice has a very stable pedagogic structure, it thrives on experimentation and innovation: it is both traditional and creative. Raymond Williams explains that:

A culture has two aspects: the known meanings and directions, which its members are trained to; and the new observations and meanings, which are offered and tested. These are the ordinary processes of human societies and human minds and we see through them the nature of culture: that it is both traditional and creative... (54)

Research shows variations within the two main styles of Bajan stick licking, which could be explained by the preferences of individual practitioners, and as a result of the techniques being passed on orally. These variations of style are not unknown in the Martial Arts arena. T. J. Desch Obi states that:

Martial arts are dynamic and open to variation; yet, at the same time they contain fundamentals that can, at times, be relatively stable across time. The Japanese term for this continuity is kata, which refers to the ideal form of an art, as opposed to the personal variation developed by each unique individual in free practice. Thus, while the student in application may adopt variations on techniques more suited to his/her body, aesthetic sense, or experience, there is often a theoretically immutable point of reference that will be passed on to students. The African martial arts are not as regimented as the Japanese styles, but the same principle holds

true. Martial art styles can be 'invented', transformed, and taken in new directions. More often, however, individual practitioners will stress particular aspects of the style and develop their own variations on technique, but without jeopardizing the fundamental paradigms of the tradition. (Fighting for Honor 7)

Stick licking is taught using a system of seven stages or 'cuts'. Each 'cut' can have a particular position or positions in which the stick is held, a sequence of strikes and blocks, and in some cases, fighting strategies. The sequence of strikes and blocks in the 'cut' would be the equivalent to Japanese Kata.

Given the strong influence of the church, the use of seven 'cut' could be derived from the Bible where it is of great significance. For example, God is said to have created the world in seven days. Another influential factor could be the seven "standard" education system in use at that time. Seeing that the church was in charge of the education system, it might not be a coincidence that seven stages were used in the educational structure. Progress through the "standards" was not automatic or determined by age.

The Johnsons and Queensberry styles shared many common techniques. There are however some significant differences. The Queensberry style is a more fluid style with few static stick positions and, as shown to me, includes the technique of holding the stick at both ends (double sword) and holding it at one end (single sword). The Johnsons that I was taught only used the single sword method and had an emphasis on static stick positions many of which seem to be influenced by military sabre postures. As stick licking evolved, many practitioners were familiar with both styles and practiced a composite style. There was also a gradual evolution towards to use of the single sword style exclusively.

**For the purposes of this exercise, I will be showing the Johnsons style of stick licking with some additions.**

## Stick Preparation

**T**he most common method of stick preparation in Barbados was to cut the stick from the desired tree and, while still green, singe it on an open fire until the bark started to crack.

The stick was then removed from the fire, the bark peeled off, and the stick sanded with sand paper until it was smooth and then cut to the required length. Another method involves burying the stick in the manure in a cow pen for two weeks when the bark would have fallen off and the stick cured.

Sticks would sometimes be soaked in old engine oil, animal fat or buried in a water course after they were singed to absorb the liquids and become heavier.

Guava, Rod Wood, Black Sage, Myamosy, River Tamarind and Dogwood were among the types of wood used for sticks. Sticks were generally 40 inches in length although there was some variation.





# Prefight Ritual

There is evidence of a prefight ritual practiced by Bajan stick lickers which included music performed on percussion instruments. The stick lickers would form a cross with their sticks in the middle of the circle and walk around it in a clockwise direction and at some time pick up their sticks and commence fighting. This is similar to a prefight ritual also practiced in Haiti.

The spectators would form a circle around the fighters. There is some variation in how the actual stick fight was initiated. Sometimes the fighters would circle until the referee would shout 'down' to signal to pick up their sticks and begin to fight. At other times the fighters picked up the sticks at a specific time. When a Tuk Band or kettle drum was present the fighters would circle to the music and pick up the sticks when the music stopped.

It is possible that the Bajan stick licking ritual of circling crossed sticks is a derivative of the engolo practice. Desch Obi states that, "Within the counter clockwise movement is drawn or implied a Kongo 'yowa' cross" ("Deadly Dances" 78). And that, "...For the good, wise, and heroically strong, this cross within the cosmic circle represents eternal life in the Kongo ideal of a salvation like religion" ("Deadly Dances" 79). Given that most stick fighters were right handed, it would have been necessary to have your fighting hand towards the sticks crossed in the centre to facilitate an easy pick up. Thus circling in a clockwise manner in the context of Bajan stick licking is more practical. This would indicate that Bajan stick fighting is the merging of different fighting traditions, and the ensuing adjustment of composite traditions.

Kongo was used to describe ethnic groups from central and south central Africa, and would have included the Kunene and hence, engola practices. The religious significance of these practices would have been lost as a result of pressure to adopt a Christian cosmology. Hall states that, "The customs have not remained wholly intact...never outside of Christianity or entirely out of the reach of the church," (29). The use of the circle as the fighting area and the use of music in the prefight ritual links Bajan stick licking to other stick fighting systems in the Caribbean.

When the spiritual significance of the crossing of the stick was lost fighters started to devise ways to use it to their advantage, leading to its discontinuance. If a fighter's stick was on top his opponent's stick and he got to his stick first he would step on his opponent's stick as he picked his up thus preventing his opponent's from getting his stick. If his stick was below, he would grab his stick and in doing so flick his opponents stick away and so gain the advantage. The fighter that retrieved his stick first could, and usually did, start striking his opponent who could receive several lashes before he could retrieve his own stick from the ground.

# Instructional Section

## Definition of Terms & Abbreviations used in this Teachers' Manual



Stick Licker (SL)



Stick Position refers to the position in which the stick is held in relation to the body. (SP)



The dominant hand is the one used most often. (DH)



The non-dominant hand is the one used less often. (NDH)



The dominant side is the side of your body corresponding to your dominant hand. (DS)



The non-dominant side is the side of your body corresponding to your non-dominant hand. (NDS)



The dominant leg is the one corresponding to your dominant hand. (DL)



The non-dominant leg is the one corresponding to your non-dominant hand. (NDL)



The basic stance is as follows: Your feet should be shoulder distance apart with the DL one stride in front. You should have most of your weight on the back leg (NDL) unless you are stepping forward to strike. (BS)



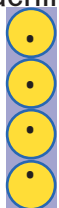
# Guiding Principles and Safety Issues

**S**tick licking is a martial art and its aim is to defeat your opponent. It can also be a leisure activity with no intention to hurt your partner but the techniques are no less dangerous. Conventionally, stick licking contests begin outside of stick range with the participants 'feeling out' each other's knowledge and proficient use of stick postures or positions (SP). If an SL does not use the stick positions (SP) properly, they expose themselves to a successful attack from their opponent.

To launch an attack, you usually need to step forward which will put you within range to hit your opponent. To successfully strike your opponent you must extend your hand fully. Your attack could be one or more strikes after which you would normally step back putting yourself out of range again. This is necessary in case your opponent counterattacks.

There are no rules about where you can strike your opponent but you are not to attempt to strike your opponent at the same time that he has initiated an attack. The old stick lickers called that 'cutting through the guard' and it was strictly forbidden. Defence against attacks is the most important part of stick licking technique. Two fighters striking at each other at the same time makes it impossible to block or evade the other's strike. This is very dangerous and could result in one or both fighters being seriously injured.

I recommend the following protective gear when learning stick licking. Although these were not used traditionally, I recommend them unless an experienced SL is teaching or present.



- Goggles to protect the eyes
- Amateur Boxing Head Gear.
- Grappling Gloves
- Groin Guard





## Recommended use of this Manual

**F**or dramatization purposes you could start with the prefight ritual, demonstrate various stick positions and go through a predetermined sequence of attacks, blocks and counters. You could use one of the sequences outlined below or develop your own.

For those wishing to become stick lickers, slow and careful practice with a partner is essential. Do not be tempted to move through the cuts quickly. It is essential to master the 1st Cut as this is the foundation of your technique, coordination and reflexes. In stick licking, you do not see the strike coming so your defence depends on muscle memory. That is, the ability to respond subconsciously. This is not acquired quickly.

*“You do not see the strike coming so your defence depends on muscle memory. that is, the ability to respond subconsciously. This is not acquired quickly”.*



## Basic Stick Techniques and Exercises



The stick is held in your DH approximately 6 inches from the tip of its bigger end (the butt). The basic grip is to make a fist with the thumb resting on the index finger and middle finger. The thumb should not be placed on the stick.



The first basic exercise is to spin the stick on a vertical plane on your DS - for example, a right hander will spin the stick on his right side. Spin the stick both forwards and backwards. The butt should rotate closest to your body with the longer part of the stick outside of your arm. No attempt should be made to maintain the basic grip when spinning the stick; rather the grip is more open with the stick held in the webbing between the thumb and index finger. The wrist must rotate freely to ensure the spin circle is along the vertical plane.



The second basic exercise is to spin the stick forward in a downward direction alternating from one side of the body to the next making a figure eight. This is akin to a series of vertical strikes to your opponent's head. When spinning the stick on your DS, your palm is facing up - wards and when spinning on the opposite side (NDS) your palm faces downwards. Again the wrist must be flexible and the grip relaxed.



The third basic exercise can be considered the reverse of the second as the stick is spun forward but in an upward direction. This is akin to a series of vertical strikes to your opponent's groin.

**Please note the sequences of strikes and the corresponding blocks will be reversed for left handers. Although this manual is written from a right handed perspective, every effort has been made to use neutral handed language.**

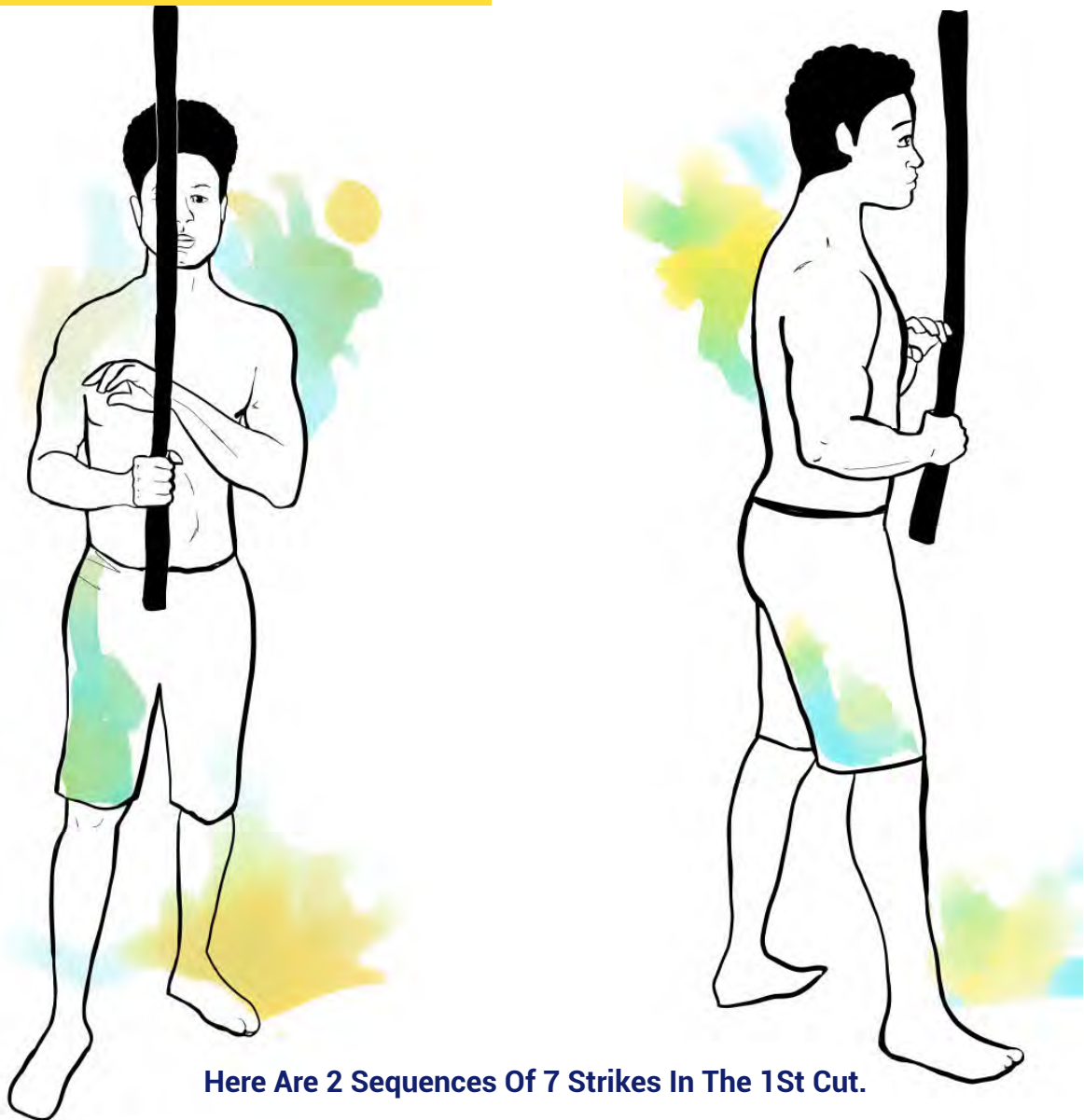


## The 1st Cut

The main purpose of the 1st Cut is to teach the BS and the basic strikes and blocks of stick licking. Though the strikes and blocks can be practiced alone, practicing with a partner is crucial. Practice should be slow at first only gradually increasing in speed when the blocks are becoming second nature. This requires hours of practice.

The SP for the 1st Cut is shown below.

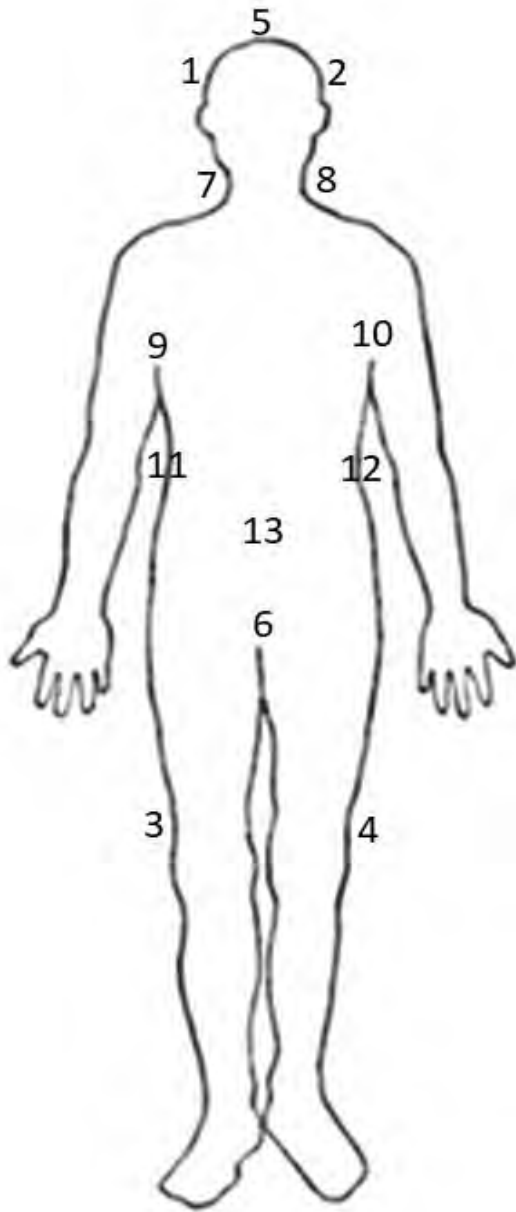
The SP for the 1st Cut starts with the BS. The stick is then placed vertically in front of and close to your face, with the tip of the stick pointing upwards. The forearm of your dominant hand should be parallel to the ground. Your other forearm should be across your body just above your abdomen and slightly above the other forearm. The left hand (NDH) can parry or grab your opponent's stick if necessary.



Here Are 2 Sequences Of 7 Strikes In The 1st Cut.



## Figure of numbered targets



The 1st sequence is done described above, and is as follows:

- A horizontal strike to 1.--
- A horizontal strike to 2.
- A horizontal strike to 3.
- A horizontal strike to 4.
- A downward vertical strike to 5.
- An upward vertical strike to 6.
- A downward vertical strike to 5.

The 2nd sequence is done from the 1st Cut SP described above, and is as follows:

- A horizontal strike to 2.
- A horizontal strike to 1.
- A horizontal strike to 4.
- A horizontal strike to 3.
- A downward vertical strike to 5.
- An upward vertical strike to 6
- A downward vertical strike to 5.



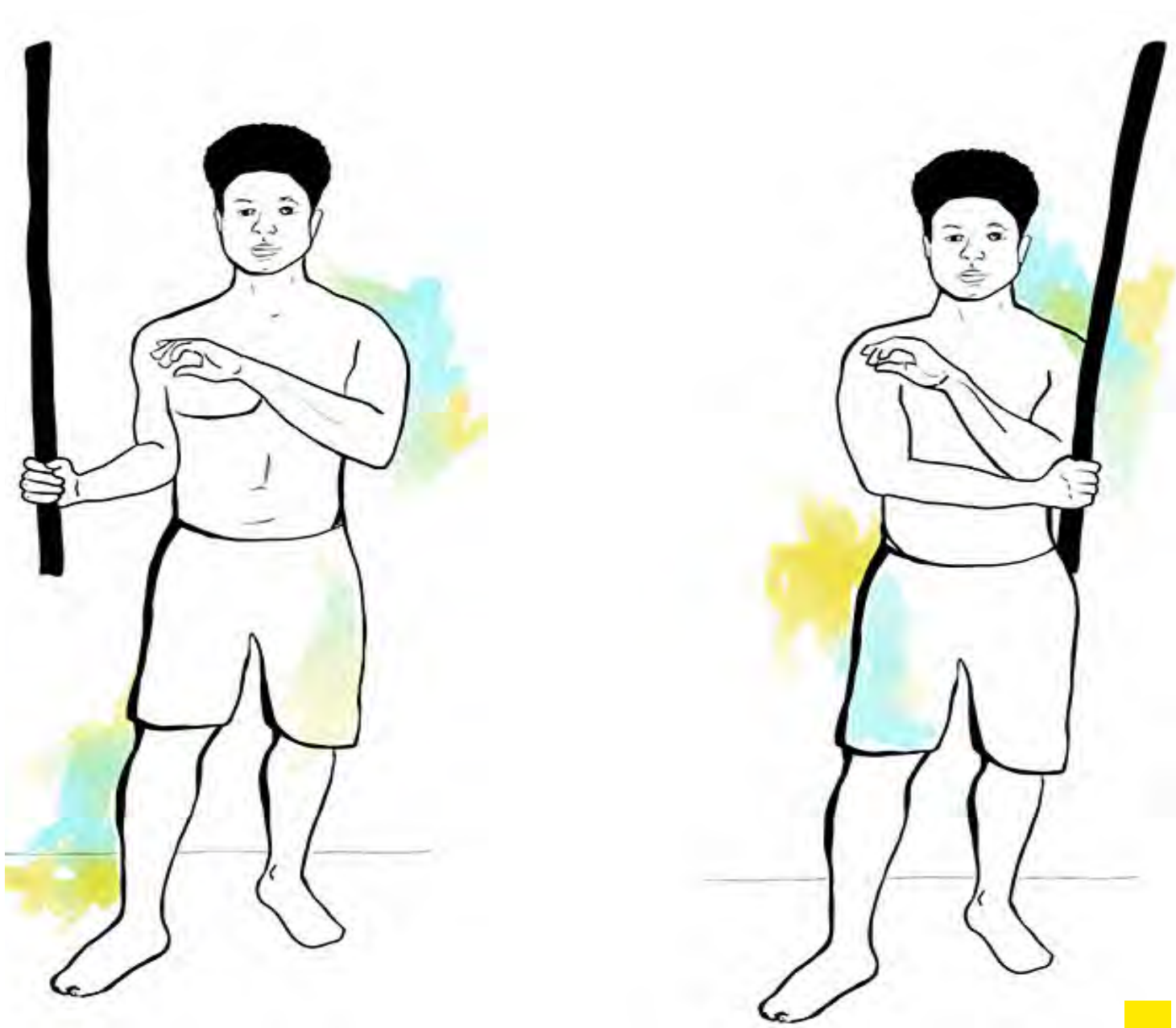
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After each strike, the stick is pulled back towards the body before striking again. Horizontal strikes pulled back pass over the head or in front of the face. Vertical strikes pass at the side of the body.

**The blocks for the 1st sequence of strikes are as follows:**

- From the 1st Cut SP, to block the strike to the right side (DS) of your face, move the stick from the center of your body to just outside of your right (DS) shoulder keeping the stick close to your body and vertical.



• To block the strike to just under your right (DS) knee, turn the stick so that the tip is pointing downward just outside your right leg (DL) keeping the stick close to your body and vertical.

• To block the strike to just under your left (NDS) knee, push the stick from just outside of your right (DS) leg to just outside your left leg (NDL), maintaining its vertical downward position.



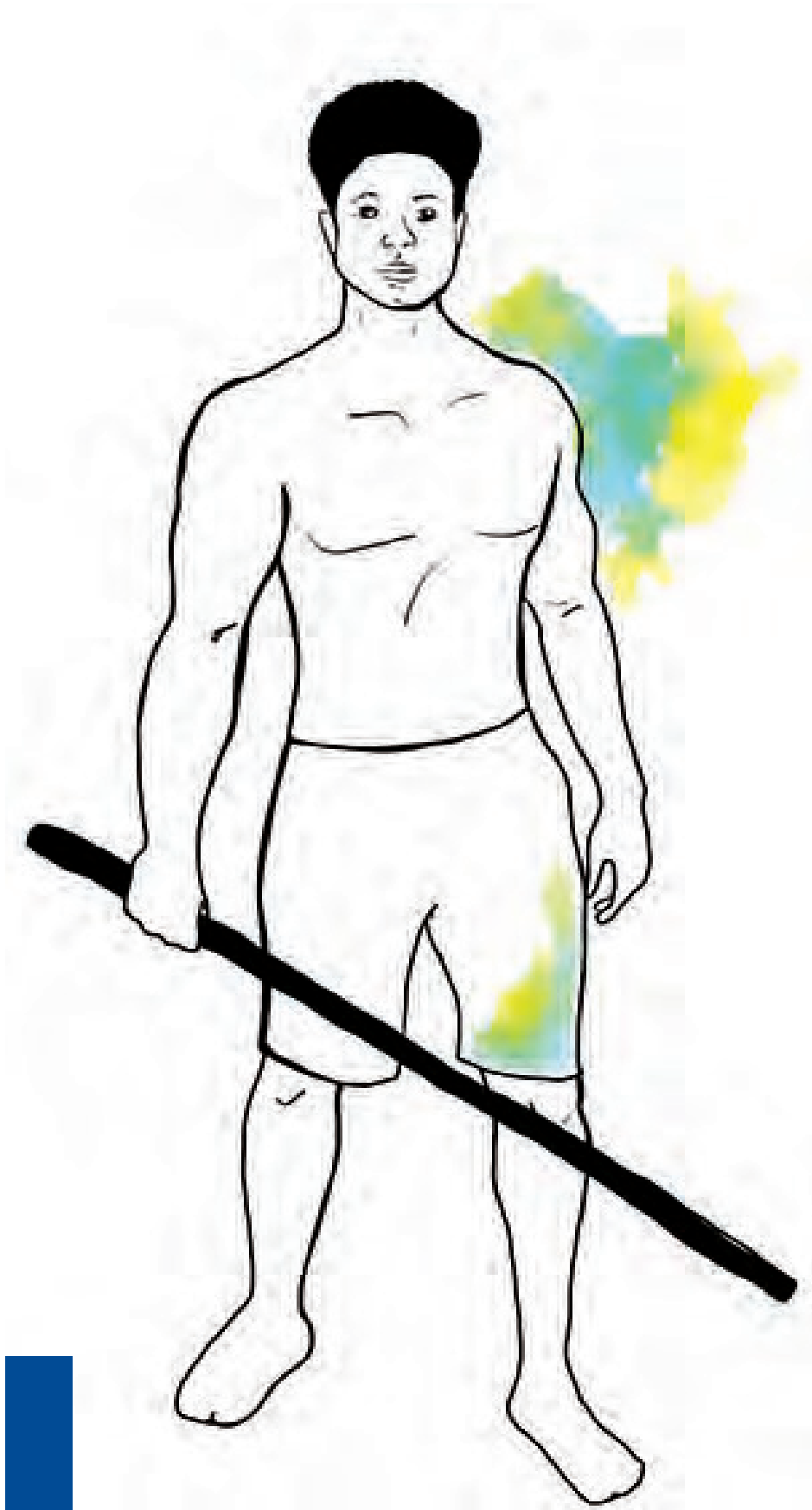


• To block the vertical downward strike to the head, raise the stick until it is close to horizontal just above your head with the tip of the stick slightly lower than the butt. Your upper arm should be parallel to the ground and should form a right angle with your forearm.

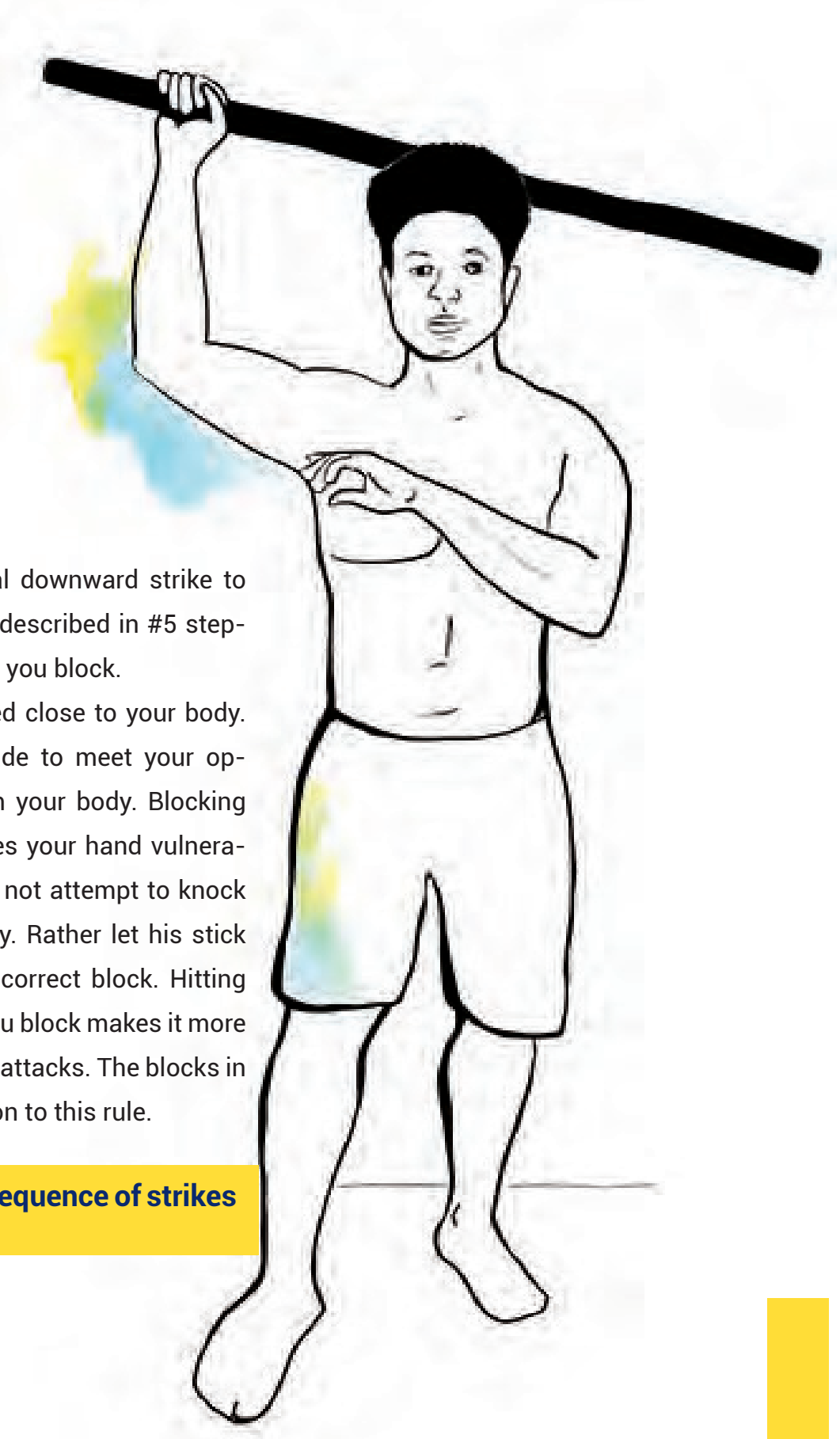

• To block the vertical upward strike to the groin, bring the stick straight down from above the head with your hand fully extended and the tip of the stick hitting the ground. The forward foot (DL) is pulled back just behind the back foot maintaining the shoulder width distance between your legs.

• To block the strike to the left (NDS) side of your face, move the stick from the right (DS) of your body to just outside of your left (NDS) shoulder. Again, keeping the stick close to your body and vertical.









• To block the vertical downward strike to the head, repeat the block described in #5 stepping forward into the BS as you block.

N.B. All blocks are executed close to your body. No attempt should be made to meet your opponent's attack away from your body. Blocking away from your body leaves your hand vulnerable to attack. Secondly, do not attempt to knock your opponent's stick away. Rather let his stick hit yours as you hold the correct block. Hitting your opponent's stick as you block makes it more difficult to block a series of attacks. The blocks in the 4th Cut are the exception to this rule.

**The blocks for the 2nd sequence of strikes are as follows:**



• From the 1st Cut SP, to block the strike to the left side (NDS) of your face, move the stick from the center of your body to just outside of your left (NDS) shoulder keeping the stick close to your body and vertical.





• To block the strike to just under your left (NDL) knee, bring the stick down with a slight bend at the elbow and the tip of the stick almost hitting the ground. The forward foot (DL) is pulled back just behind the back foot maintaining the shoulder width distance between your legs. This block can be used to block any strike to the left side of the body.





- To block the strike to just under your right (DL) knee, raise your hand and the stick from the previous position so that the stick is vertical and just outside your right leg (DL), while at the same time returning the front foot to its original position.

#### The next three blocks

(5, 6 & 7) are the same as in the 1st sequence.

When the above sequences have been mastered, the order of strikes can be changed to teach the 'blocker' to respond to any combination of strikes. This must be done slowly at first with emphasis on correct technique before speed.





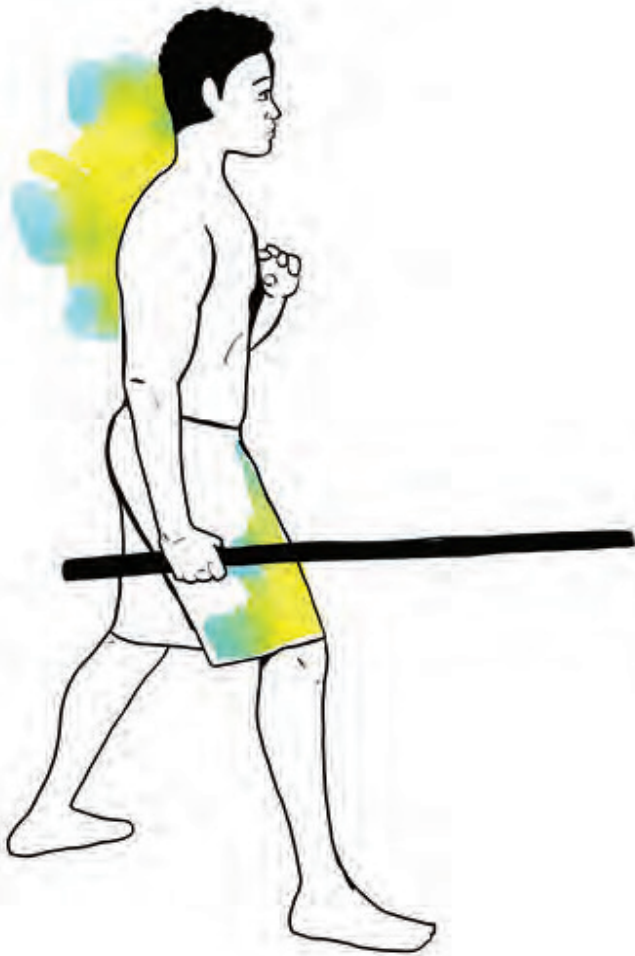
## The 2nd Cut

In the 2nd Cut you learn some strikes to new targets and their corresponding blocks. You also learn what is called the March and Counter March.

**There are four positions in the 2nd Cut. They are as follows:**

- The 1st position is one that is taught but is no longer used. I have included it here for historical reasons.
- The 2nd position is very similar to that of the 1st cut position but with the hand holding the stick in front of the body and about 6 inches away from the body with the stick slanted slightly forward.
- The other two positions are similar to the above position, with the stick to the right and left between your face and the end of your shoulder in both case.

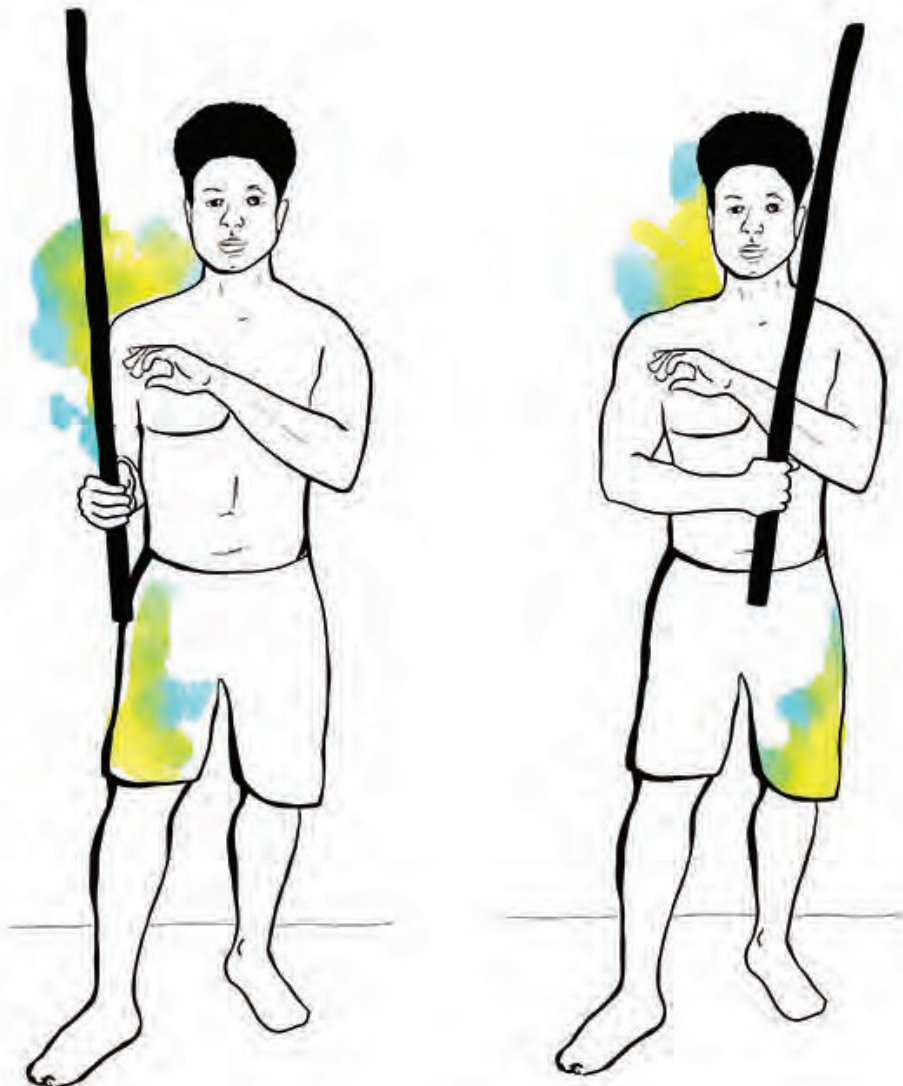




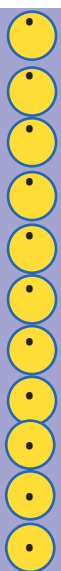
• The 2nd position is very similar to that of the 1st cut position but with the hand holding the stick in front of the body and about 6 inches away from the body with the stick slanted slightly forward.

• The other two positions are similar to the above position, with the stick to the right and left between your face and the end of your shoulder in both case.





The sequence of strikes in the 2nd Cut is done from the 2nd SP described above, and is as follows:



- A horizontal strike to 1.
- A horizontal strike to 2.
- A horizontal strike to 3.
- A horizontal strike to 4.
- A downward vertical strike to 5.
- An upward vertical strike to 14.
- A downward vertical strike to 7.
- An upward vertical strike to 9 or the elbow.
- A downward vertical strike to 8.
- An upward vertical strike to 10 or the elbow.
- A downward vertical strike to 5.





**The blocks for the sequence of strikes are done from the 2nd SP described above, and are as follows:**

The 1st five blocks (1, 2, 3, 4 & 5) are the same as in the 1st sequence of the 1st Cut.

- To block the vertical upward strike to the chin, bring the stick down from above the head straight down to the level of the upper chest.







**7.** To block the vertical downward strike to the right (DS) shoulder, raise the stick until it is horizontal just above your head with the tip of the stick slightly lower than the butt. Your upper arm should be parallel to the ground and should form a right angle with your forearm. Make a slight lateral adjustment with the stick as necessary.

**8.** To block the vertical upward strike to the right (DS) elbow/armpit, bring the stick straight down from above the head to just above the level of the waist.

**9.** To block the vertical downward strike to the left (NDS) shoulder, repeat the block described in #7, making a slight lateral adjustment with the stick.



**10.** To block the vertical upward strike to the left (NDS) elbow/armpit, repeat the block described in # 8, making a slight lateral adjustment with the stick.

**11.** To block the vertical downward strike to the head, repeat the block described in #9, making a slight lateral adjustment with the stick.

The March describes the process of fighting while advancing in a clockwise direction with your right shoulder and hand towards your opponent. This most probably happened when stick licking took place in a circle of spectators. The Counter March refers to occasions during the March when the fighters would stop circling and face each other as they continued fighting.





## The 3rd Cut

It was commonly agreed that when a student mastered the 3rd Cut, he could be considered an SL. In this Cut, you will learn new blocks, new foot work, new stick positions and general fighting strategy.

**There are 4 positions in the 3rd Cut.**

**They are as follows:**

- The 1st is similar to the first 2nd cut SP but with the hand holding the stick a forearm's distance away from your body. That is, your elbow is close to the center of your body, your forearm horizontal and the stick in front and the center of your body. In this position, the feet are in line with each other around shoulder width apart.



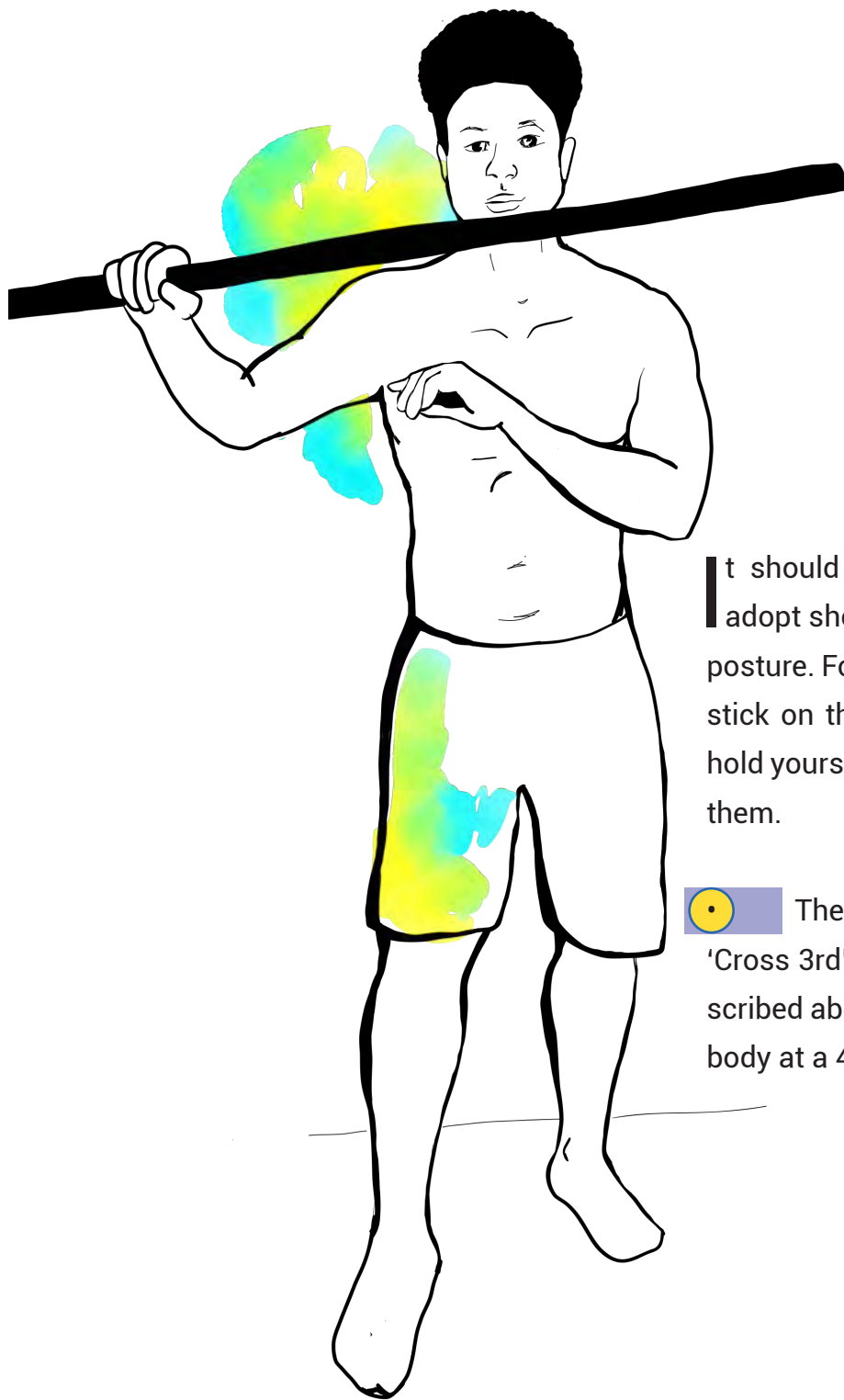
- For the next position the feet are placed as in the BS and the stick just outside of the shoulder corresponding to your DH, with your elbow tucked into your side. Your forearm horizontal and the stick in front and slightly outside of your DS.





• The 3rd position is similar to the second but your whole body is shifted so that the DL is in line with the NDL. Traditionally this position was used to fight a left-handed opponent if you were right-handed and vice versa.



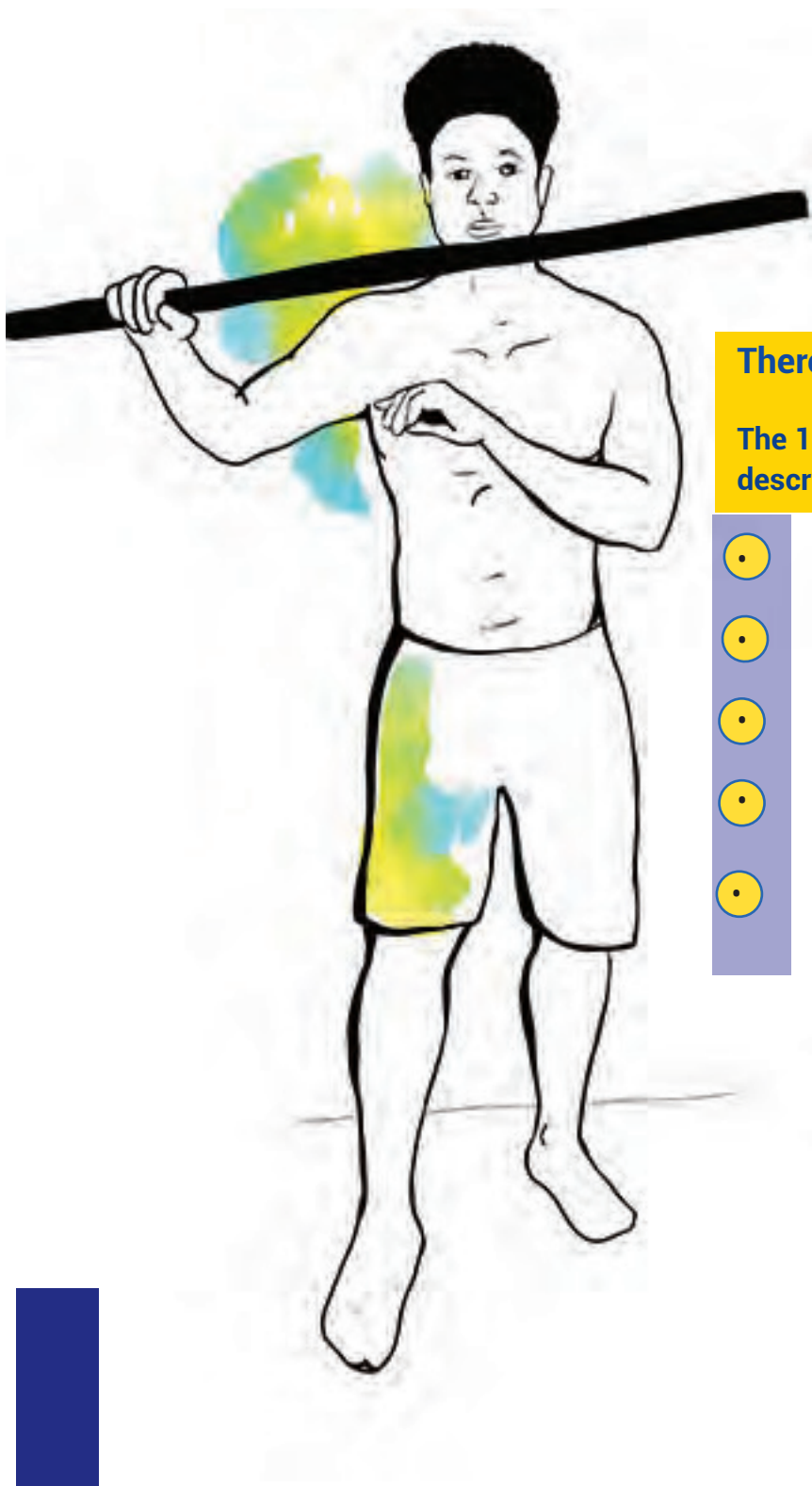


It should be noted here that the posture you adopt should be in response to your opponent's posture. For example, if your opponent holds their stick on the right side of your body, you should hold yours on the right side of your body to match them.



The 4th position in the 3rd Cut is called the 'Cross 3rd'. It's the same as the 2nd position described above but with the stick tilted across your body at a 45-degree angle, or slightly lower.





**There are 2 sequences in the 3rd Cut.**

**The 1st sequence is done from the 2nd SP described above, and is as follows:**

- A horizontal strike to 12.
- A horizontal strike to 11.
- A horizontal strike to 2.
- A horizontal strike to 1.
- A downward vertical strike to 5. •  
A horizontal strike to 4 from your right side (DS).







**The 2nd sequence is done from the 3rd SP described above, and is as follows:**

- A horizontal strike to 11.
- A horizontal strike to 12.
- A horizontal strike to 1.
- A horizontal strike to 2.
- A downward vertical strike to 5.
- An upward vertical strike to 6.
- A downward vertical strike to 5.

**The blocks for the 1st sequence are as follows:**

- From the 2nd position in the 3rd cut, to block the strike to your left (NDS) waist you send the tip of your stick towards the ground while at the same time rolling your wrist up as you push the stick just past your left side (NDS). As you do this, you step straight forward with your left leg (NDL). The stick should now be vertically aligned, just outside your left side (NDS) with your forearm horizontal and just under your chin.



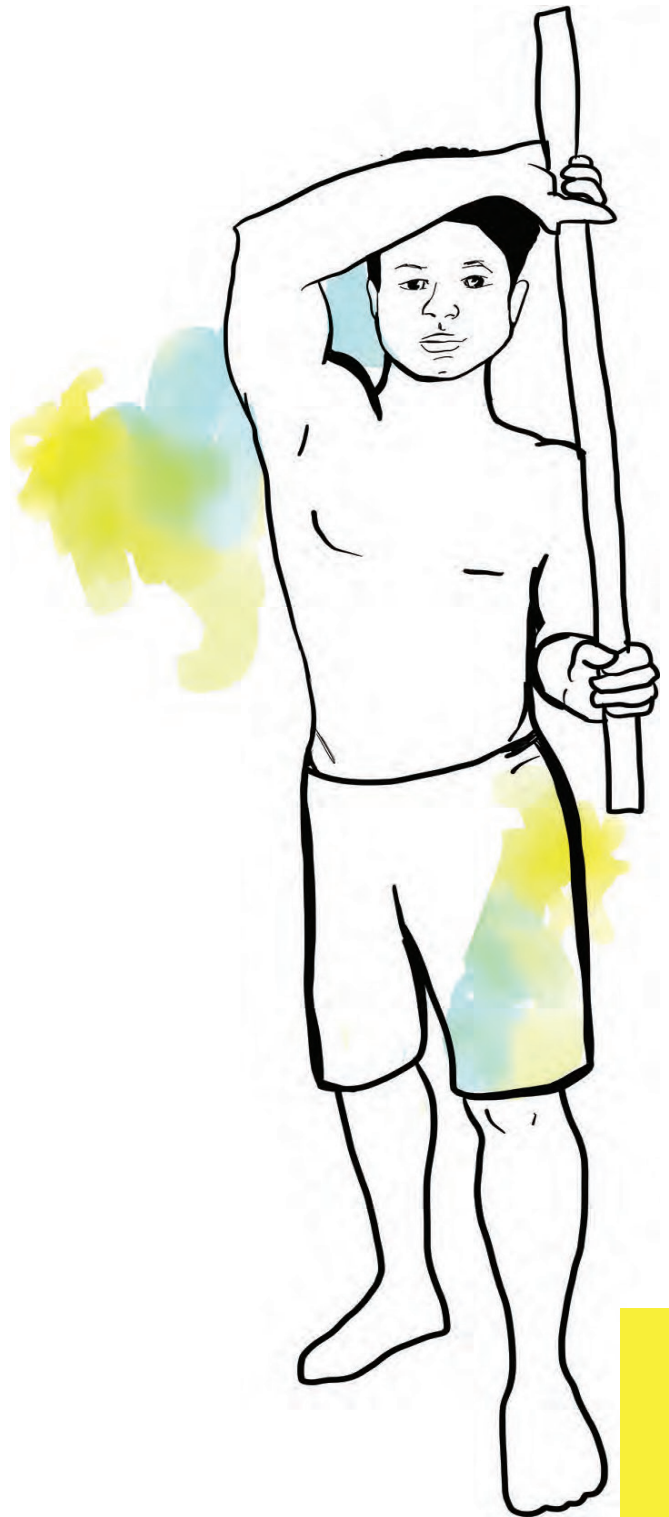
• To block the strike to your right (DS) waist you maintain the position of the stick from the previous block and push it across your body to just outside your right side (DS). As you do this you step straight forward with your right leg (DL).



• To block the strike to the left side (NDS) of your face you maintain the position of the stick from the previous block and push it across your body to just outside your left side (NDS) with your forearm horizontal and just above your head. As you do this you step straight forward with your left leg (NDL).



• To block the strike to the right side (DS) of your face you maintain the position of the stick from the previous block and push it across your body to just outside your right side (DS). As you do this, you step straight forward with your right leg (DL).





To block the vertical downward strike to the head, raise the stick until it is horizontal just above your head with the tip of the stick slightly lower than the butt. Your upper arm should be parallel to the ground and should form a right angle with your forearm.





• As your opponent lashes at your right leg (DL), you pull it back, causing them to miss, and strike them in the head (5) with a vertical downward strike. As you strike, you step forward with the right leg (DL).

**The blocks for the 2nd sequence are as follows:**

• From the 3rd position in the 3rd Cut, to block the strike to your right (DS) waist, you send the tip of your stick towards the ground while at the same time rolling your wrist up as you push the stick just past your right side (DS). The stick should now be vertically aligned, just outside your right side (DS) and your wrist at shoulder level. Your grip on the stick must be very loose to achieve the correct position.

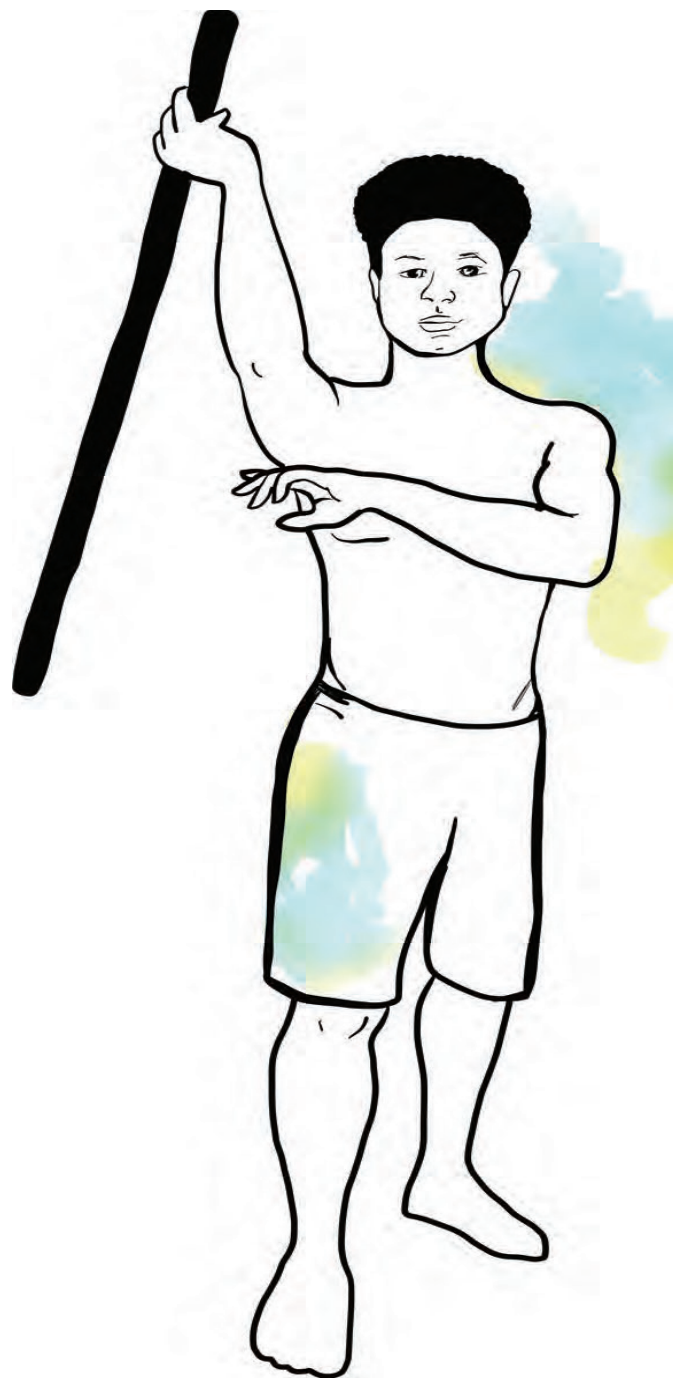
• To block the strike to your left (NDS) waist you maintain the position of the stick from the previous block and push it across your body to just outside your left side (NDS).







To block the strike to the right side (DS) of your face you maintain the position of the stick from the previous block and push it across your body to just outside your right side (DS) with your wrist just above your head.

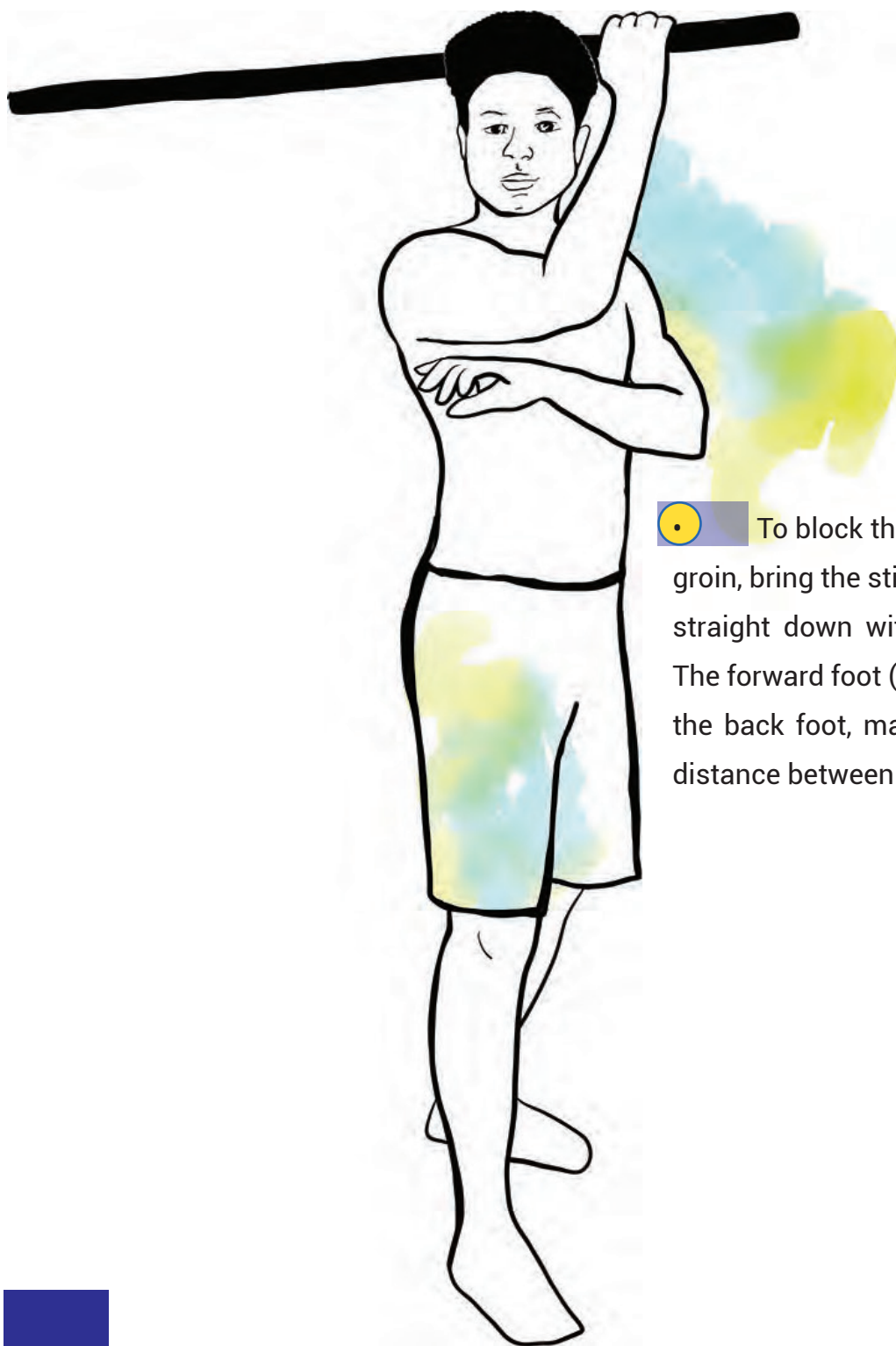




• To block the strike to the left side (NDS) of your face, maintain the position of the stick from the previous block and push it across your body to just outside your left side (NDS).

• To block the vertical downward strike to the head, from the previous block, raise the stick until it is horizontal just above your head with the tip of the stick lower than the butt. Your upper arm should be parallel to the ground and should form a right angle with your forearm.





To block the vertical upward strike to the groin, bring the stick down from above the head straight down with your hand fully extended. The forward foot (DL) is pulled back just behind the back foot, maintaining the shoulder width distance between your legs.





To block the vertical downward strike to the head, repeat the block described in #5 stepping forward into the starting posture as you block.

An important fighting strategy introduced during the 3rd Cut is called repeating (or countering) by the old stick lickers. After blocking a strike from your opponent, the object should be to execute a counter attack immediately, which has the effect of limiting your opponent's attack to a single strike. Allowing your opponent to execute a series of strikes increases the chances that you will mistime or miss a block and be struck. A useful drill is to practice a continuous series of alternating strikes with your opponent. That is, one person launches an attack, which is countered by the other, and in turn is countered, and so on.



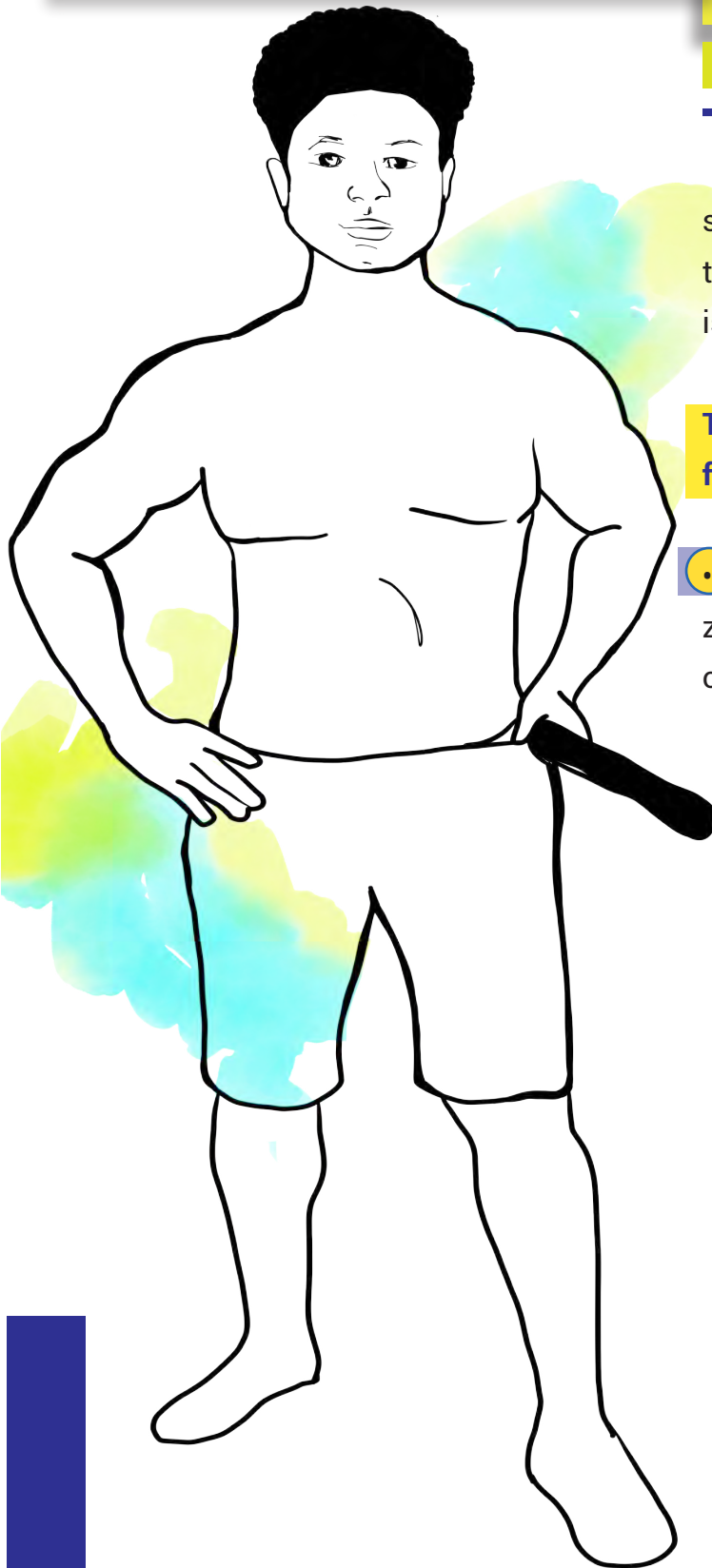
## The 4th Cut

**T**he 4th Cut is called the Sword Cut. Many old stick lickers referred to the stick as the sword. In this cut you learn new blocks and the thrust with the stick (traditionally called a punch) is introduced.

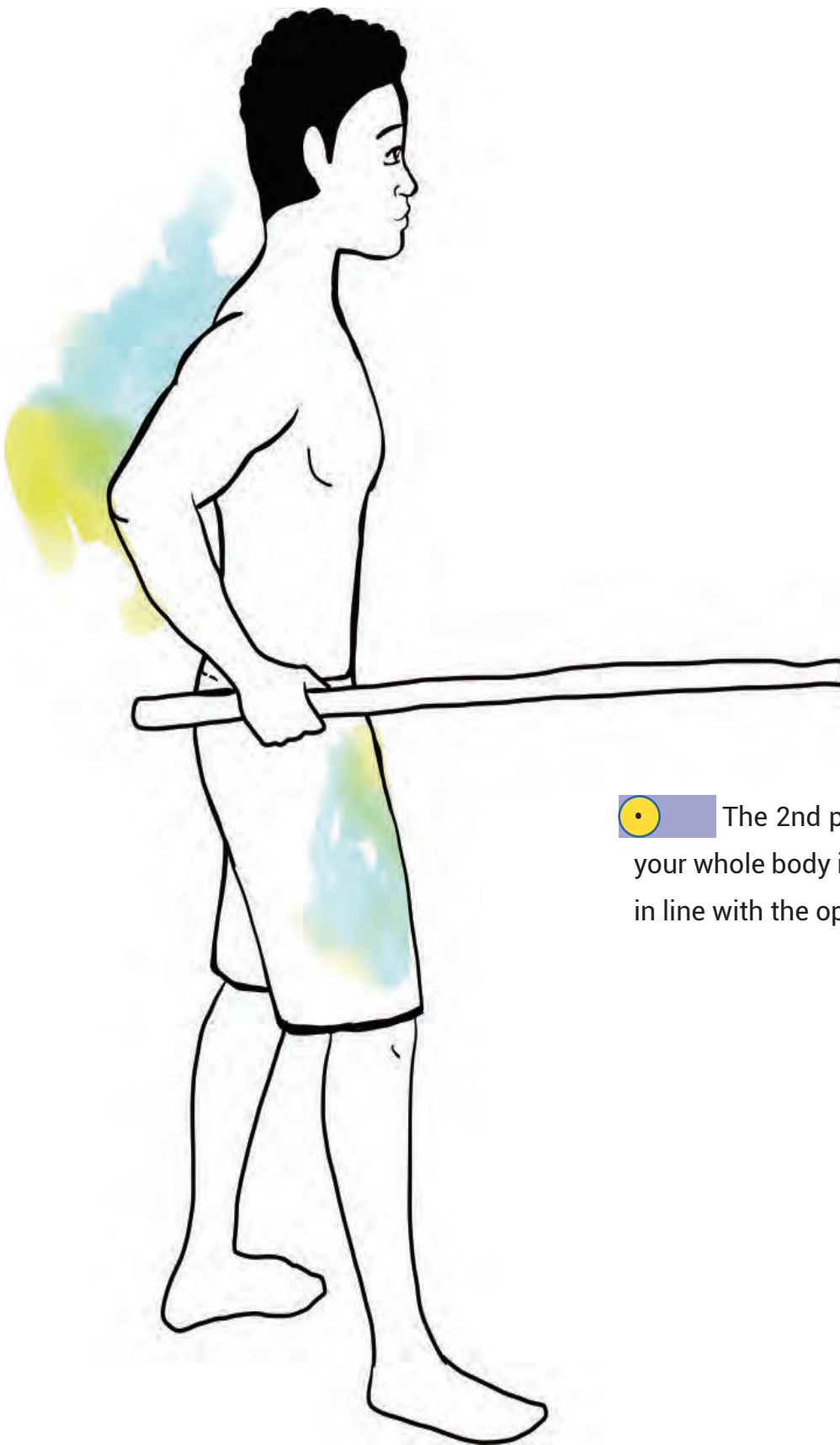
**There are three positions in the 4th Cut, as follows:**



Standing in the BS, the stick is held horizontal and pointing forward at the level of the top of the pelvic bone. Your hand rests on your body.

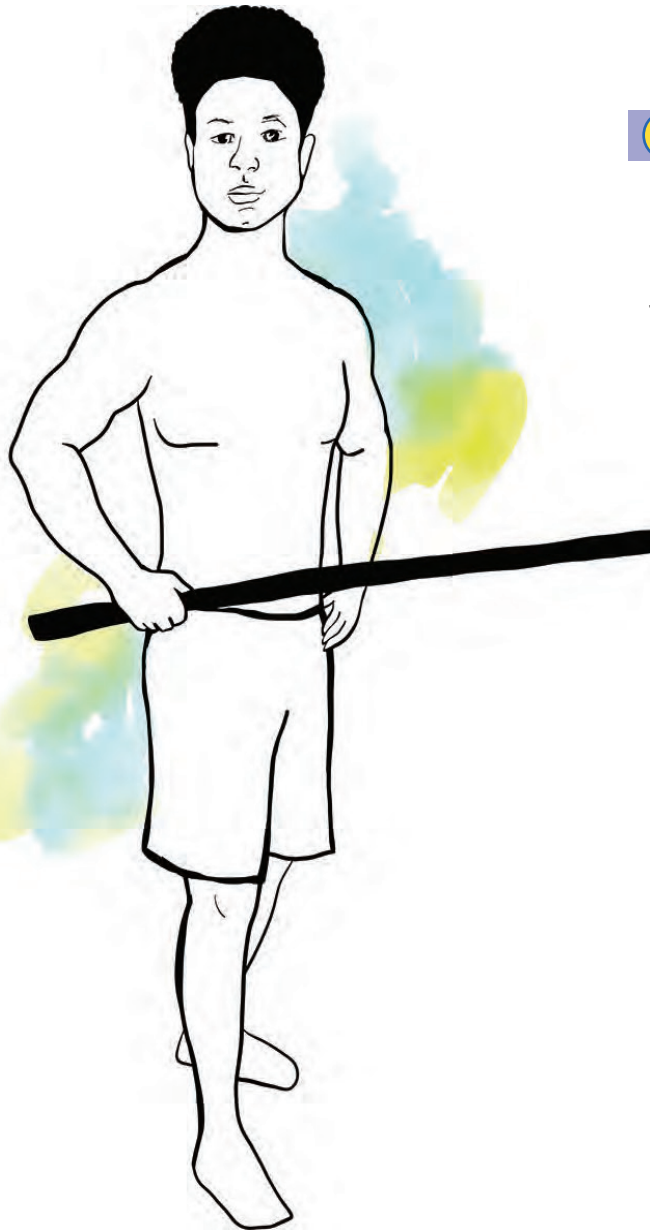




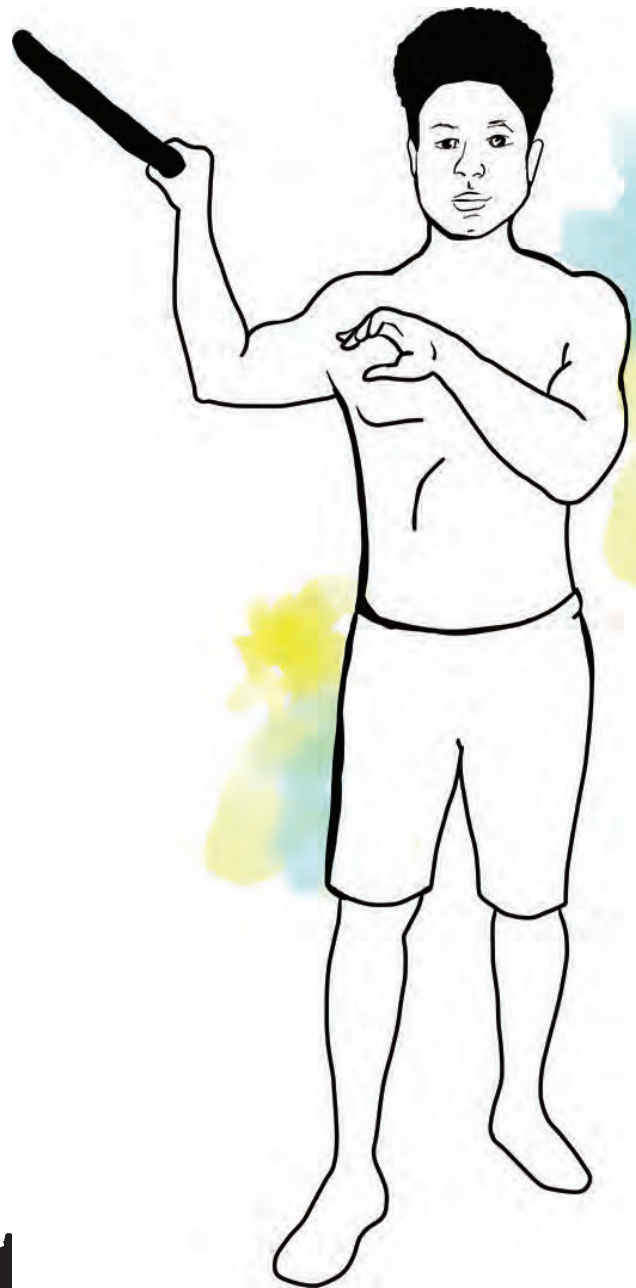


The 2nd position is similar to the first but your whole body is shifted so that right leg (DL) is in line with the opposite (NDS) shoulder.





The 3rd position is best described as starting with the first position of the 3rd Cut but with the hand shifted upwards so that the stick is pointing forward at the level of the eyes.





**There are 2 sequences of 5 strikes in the 4th Cut.**

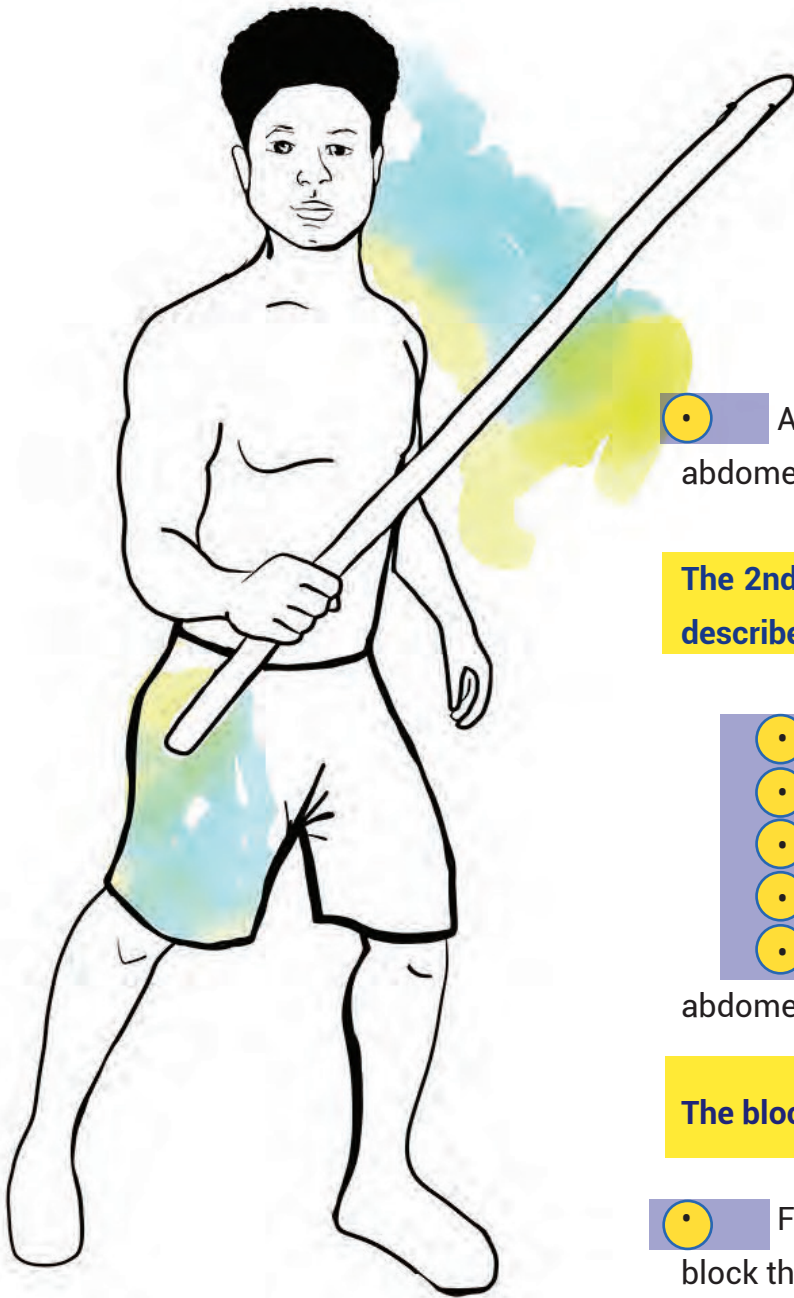
**The 1st sequence is done from the 1st SP described above, and is as follows:**

- A horizontal strike to 2.
- A horizontal strike to 1.
- A diagonal downward strike to 8.
- A diagonal downward strike to 7.
- A trust or punch to your opponent's abdomen (13).

**The 2nd sequence is done from the 2nd position described above, as follows:**

- A horizontal strike to 1.
- A horizontal strike to 2.
- A diagonal downward strike to 7.





• A trust or punch to your opponent's abdomen (13).

**The 2nd sequence is done from the 2nd position described above, as follows:**

- A horizontal strike to 1.
- A horizontal strike to 2.
- A diagonal downward strike to 7.
- A diagonal downward strike to 8.
- A trust or punch to your opponent's abdomen (13).

**The blocks for the 1st sequence are as follows:**

- From the 1st position in the 4th Cut, to block the strike to the left side (NDS) of your face, you hop back and to the right (DS) with your right leg (DL), while raising the stick to a vertical position and to the left (NDS), blocking the strike as though trying to knock it to the ground. This is called 'cutting out' the strike. At the same time, When the strike has been blocked, you step forward with your left leg (NDL).

- To block the strike to the right side (DS) of your face, you hop back and to the left (NDS) with your left leg (NDL), while raising the stick to a vertical position and to the right (DS) blocking the strike as though trying to knock it to the ground. When the strike has been blocked, step forward with your right leg (DL).

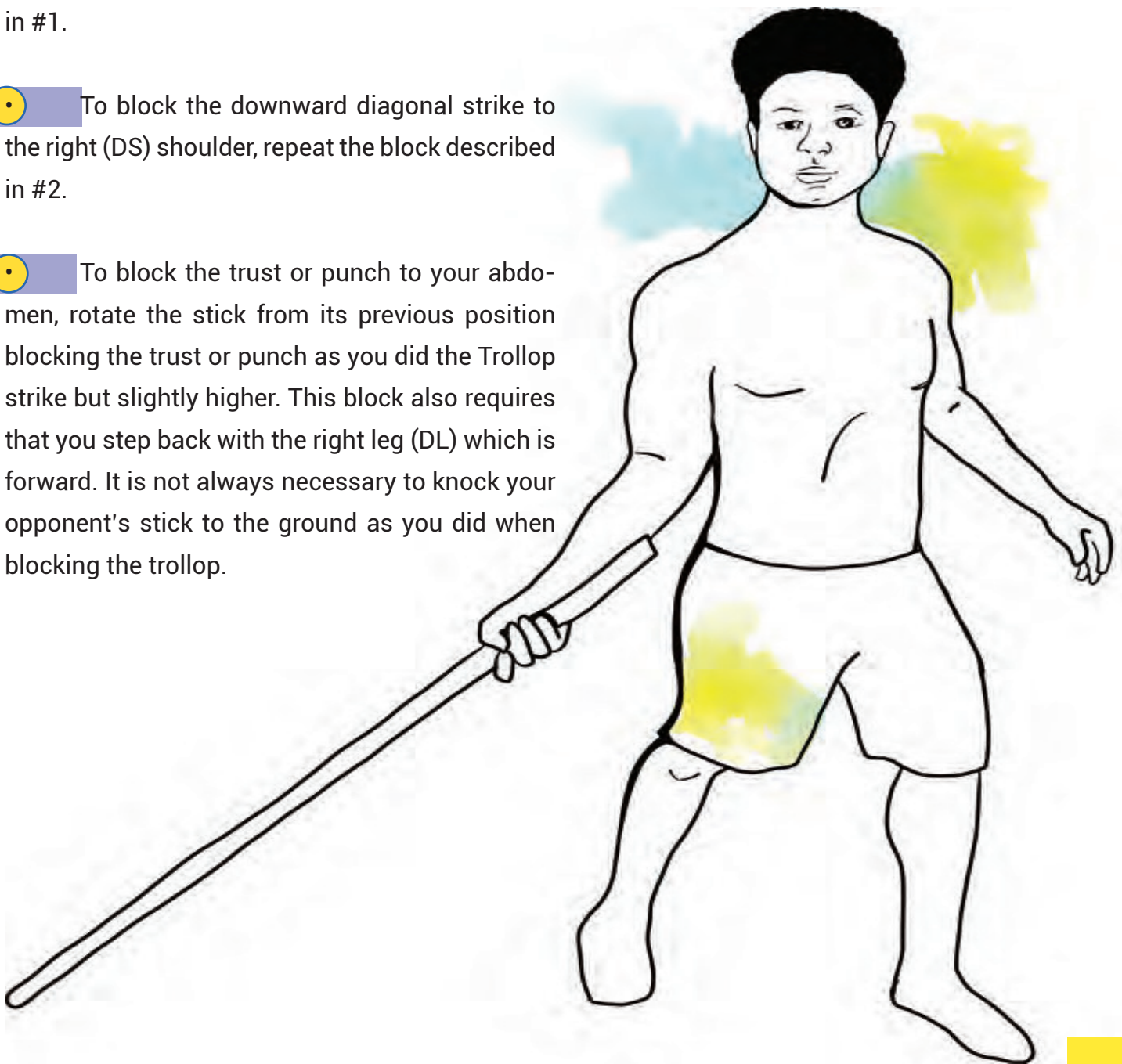




• To block the downward diagonal strike to the left (NDS) shoulder, repeat the block described in #1.

• To block the downward diagonal strike to the right (DS) shoulder, repeat the block described in #2.

• To block the trust or punch to your abdomen, rotate the stick from its previous position blocking the trust or punch as you did the Trollop strike but slightly higher. This block also requires that you step back with the right leg (DL) which is forward. It is not always necessary to knock your opponent's stick to the ground as you did when blocking the trollop.



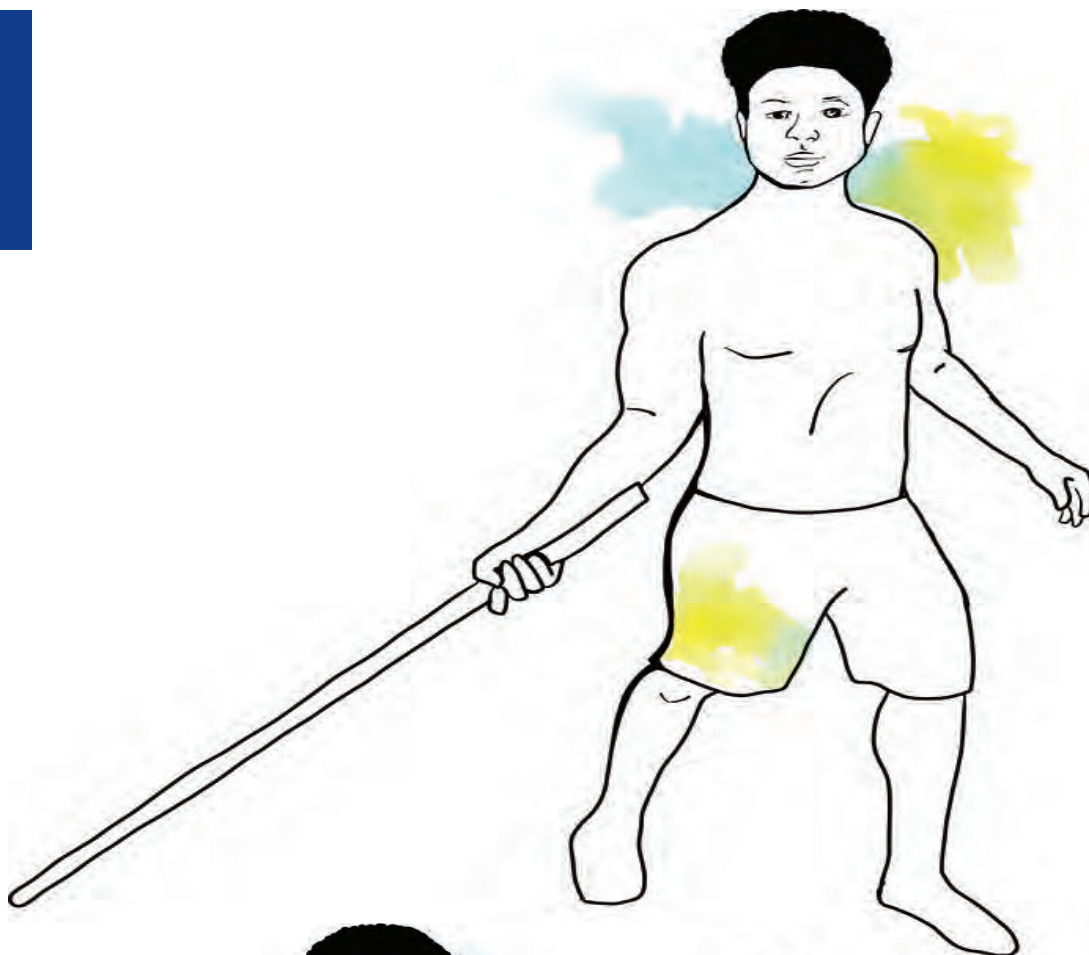



**The blocks for the 2nd sequence are as follows:**



From the 2nd position in the 4th cut, to block the strike to the right side (DS) of your face, you hop back and to the left (NDS) with your left leg (NDL), and moving your right leg (DL) back, while raising the stick to a vertical position and to the right (DS), blocking the strike as though trying to knock it to the ground. When the strike has been blocked, step forward with your right leg (DL).





 To block the strike to the left side (NDS) of your face, hop back and to the right (DS) with your right leg (DL), while raising the stick to a vertical position and to the left (NDS), blocking the strike as though trying to knock it to the ground. When the strike has been blocked, step forward with your left leg (NDL).





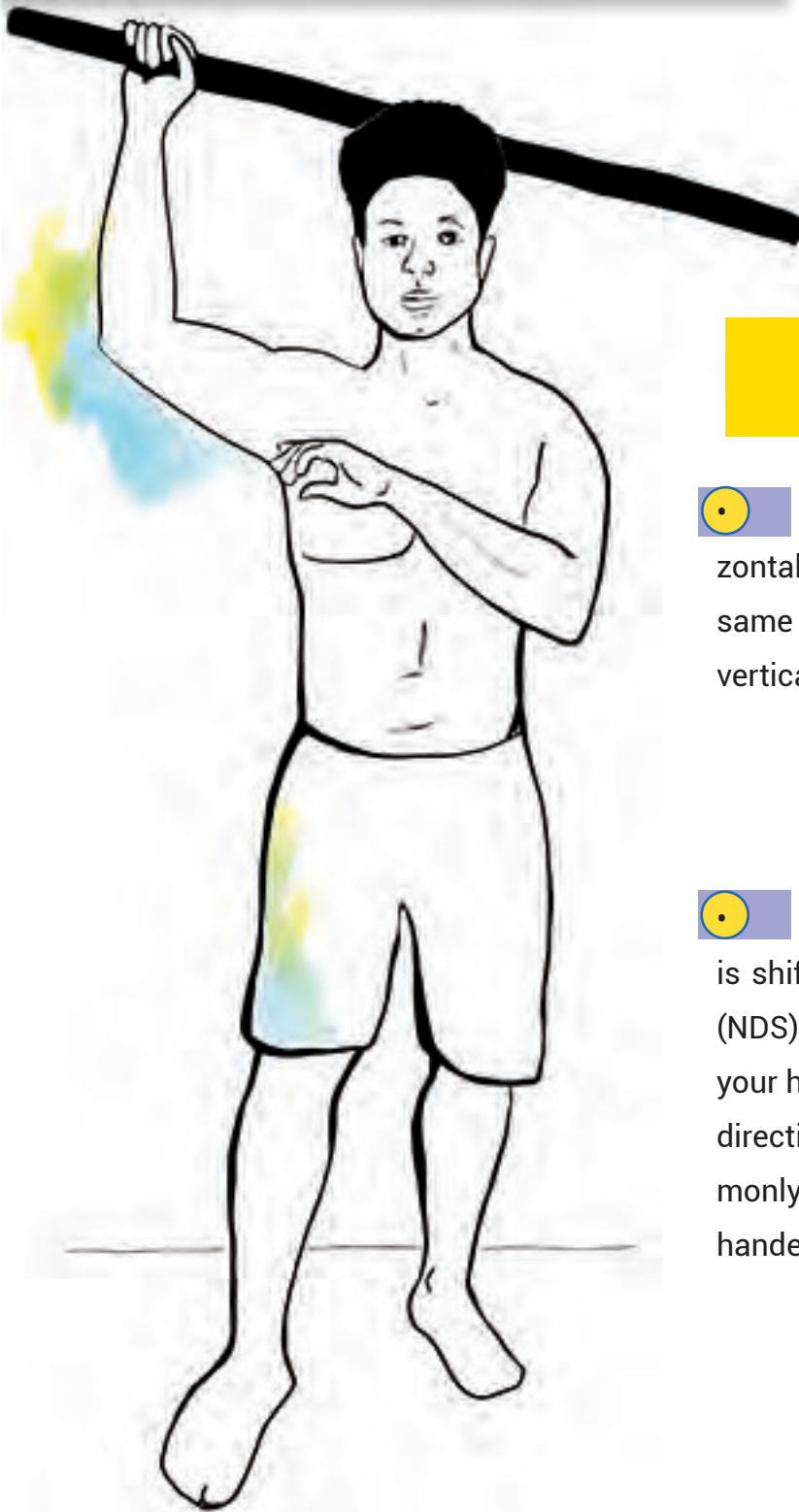
● To block the downward diagonal strike to the right (DS) shoulder, repeat the block described in #1.

● To block the downward diagonal strike to the left (NDS) shoulder, repeat the block described in #2.

● To block the trust or punch to your abdomen, from the position of your stick from the previous block, raise your wrist around the height of your eyes with the tip of the stick pointing down and knock or guide the trust to your right (DS) as you move your body to the left (NDS).



## The 5th Cut



**There are 4 positions  
in the 5th Cut, as follows:**

• Standing in the BS, the stick is held horizontal just above your head. This position is the same as the block described in the 1st cut for the vertical downward strike to the head.

• For the 2nd position, your whole body is shifted so that DL is in line with the opposite (NDS) shoulder. As above, the stick is held above your head but with the tip pointed in the opposite direction to the previous SP. This was not commonly used but is said to be used against left handed opponents.





• The 3rd position is very similar to the 2nd position in the 3rd Cut, except the upper arm is raised until almost parallel to the ground and extended away from your body forming a straight line with your shoulder.







The 4th position is very similar to the 3rd position in the 3rd Cut. The difference is that upper arm is raised until it is almost parallel to the ground.



There is one sequence of five strikes in the 5th Cut.



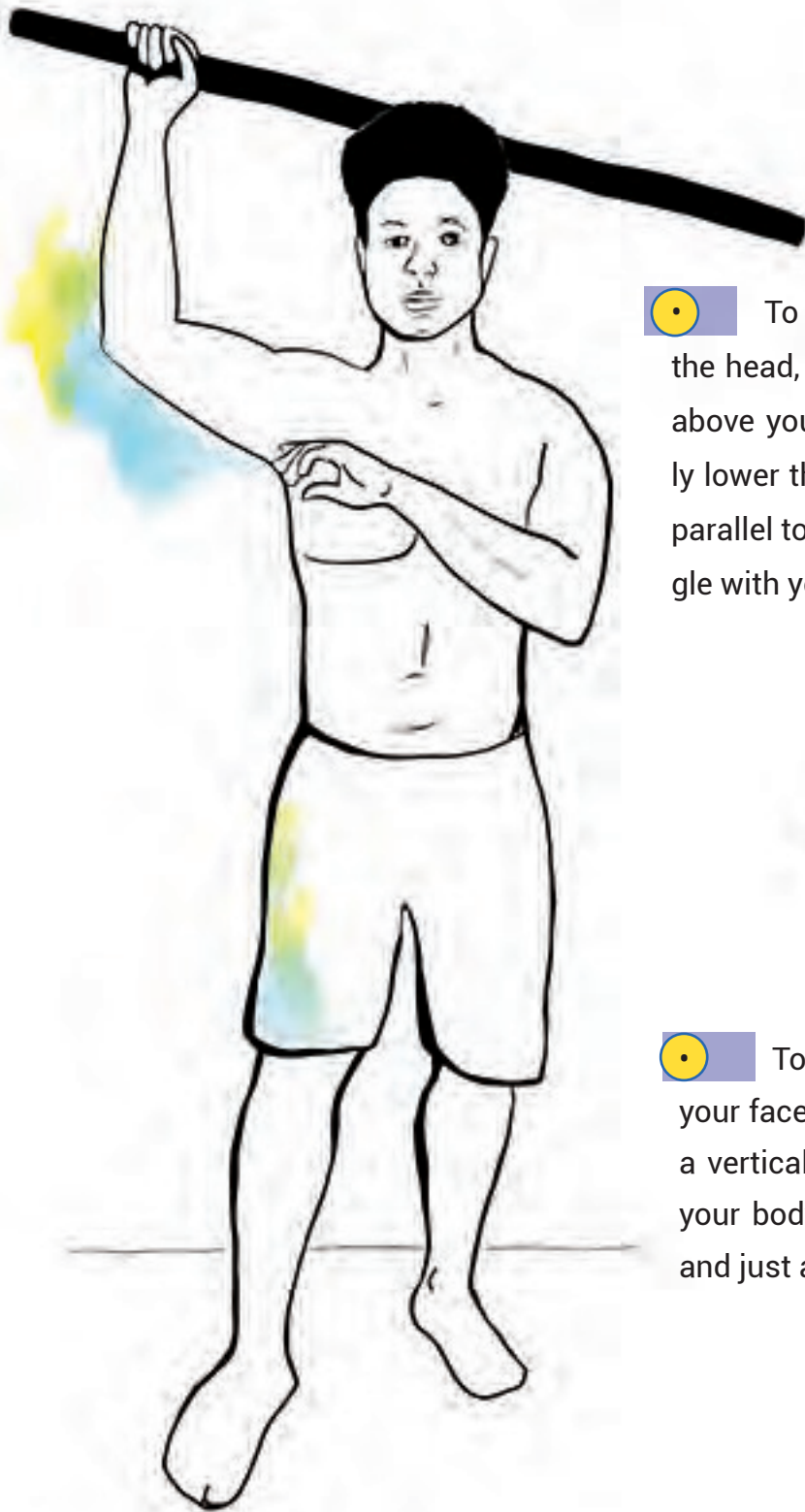
**Here is one sequence of five strikes in the 5th Cut. The sequence is done from the 1st SP described above, as follows:**

- A horizontal strike to 2.
- A vertical downward strike to 5.
- A horizontal strike to 1.
- A vertical downward strike to 5.
- A vertical upward strike to 6.

**The blocks for this sequence are as follows:**

- Starting from the 1st position shown above, to block the strike to the left side (NDS) of your face, you move your hand from above the right (DS) shoulder to just outside your body at the level of the abdomen, bringing the stick to a vertical position just outside the left (NDS) of your body.





To block the vertical downward strike to the head, raise the stick until it is horizontal just above your head with the tip of the stick slightly lower than the butt. Your upper arm should be parallel to the ground and should form a right angle with your



To block the strike to the right side (DS) of your face, rotate your wrist so that the stick is in a vertical position just outside the right (DS) of your body. Your hand remains to the right (DS) and just above your head.





• To block the vertical downward strike to the head, repeat the same block as #2

• To block the vertical upward strike to the groin, rotate the stick so that it is pointing behind you, that is, as though you are preparing for a powerful downward strike, and take a big step back with your front leg (DL) so as to take your body outside of the range of your opponent's strike. Having evaded your opponent's upward strike, step forward with the right leg (DL) as you deliver a downward strike to your opponent.



## The 6Th Cut

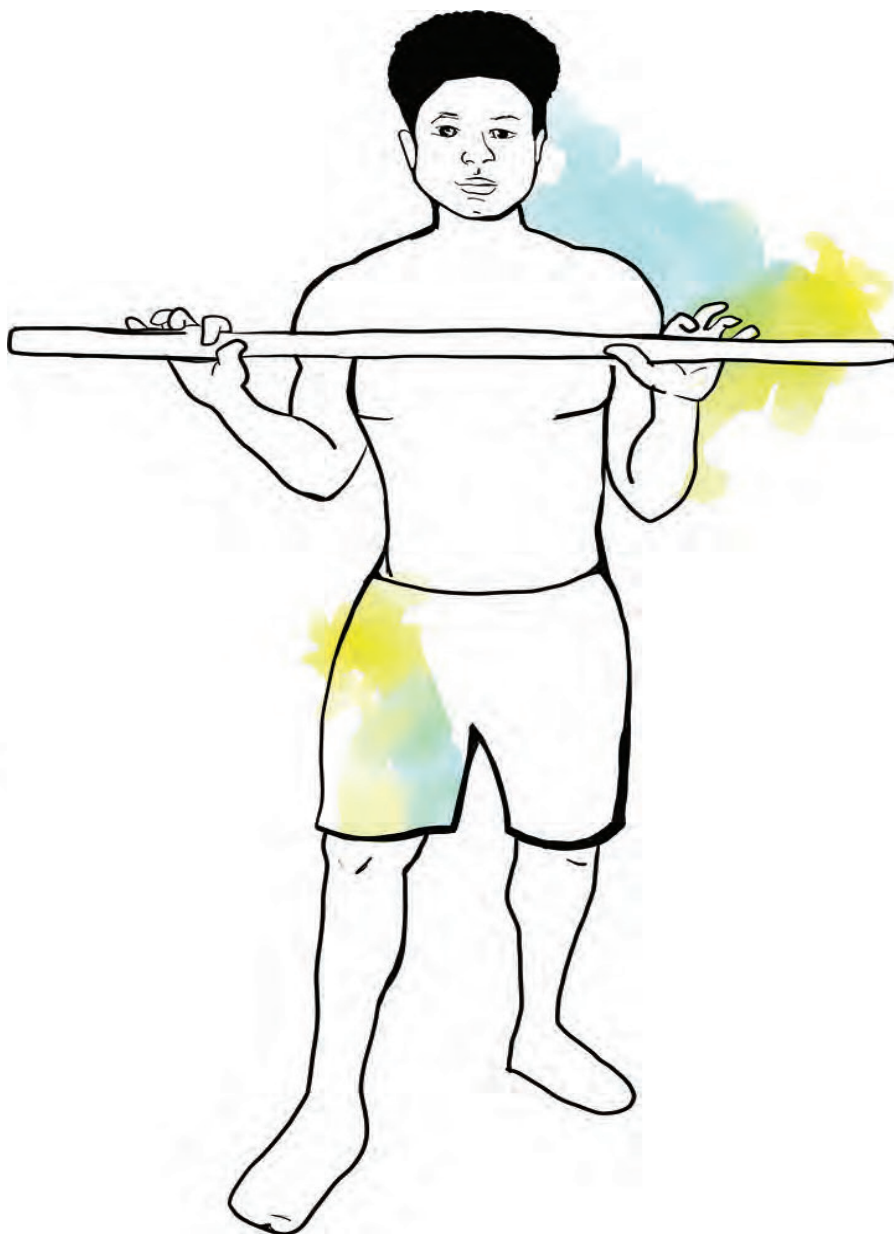
The traditional teaching is that the 6th Cut has no positions. Rather it has 'mixed up lashes'. In an effort to be as comprehensive as possible, I will depart from this tradition and introduce the Double Sword technique here. This technique is usually associated with the Queensberry style.

The benefits of using the Double Sword technique are that the blocks are stronger and that you can easily attack or counter attack with either hand since both hands are holding the stick, leaving your opponent uncertain as to which hand you will strike with. The disadvantage is that it exposes your hand to attack.

The usual fighting posture when using the Double Sword technique is to hold the stick horizontally around chest height.







**There is one sequence of seven strikes in the 6th Cut starting from the SP described above, as follows:**

- A horizontal strike to 2.
- A horizontal strike to 1.
- A downward vertical strike to 5.



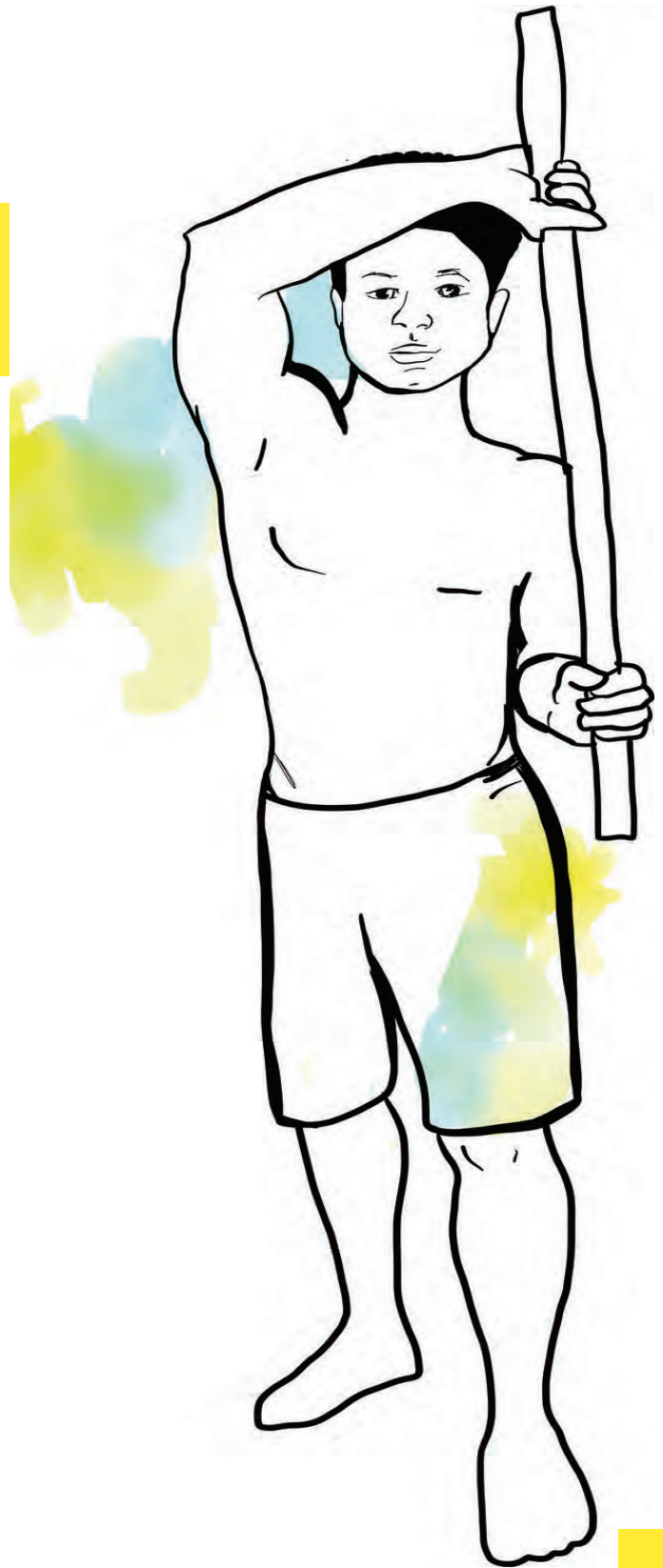


- A horizontal strike to 12.
- A horizontal strike to 11.
- An upward vertical strike to 6.
- A downward vertical strike to 5.

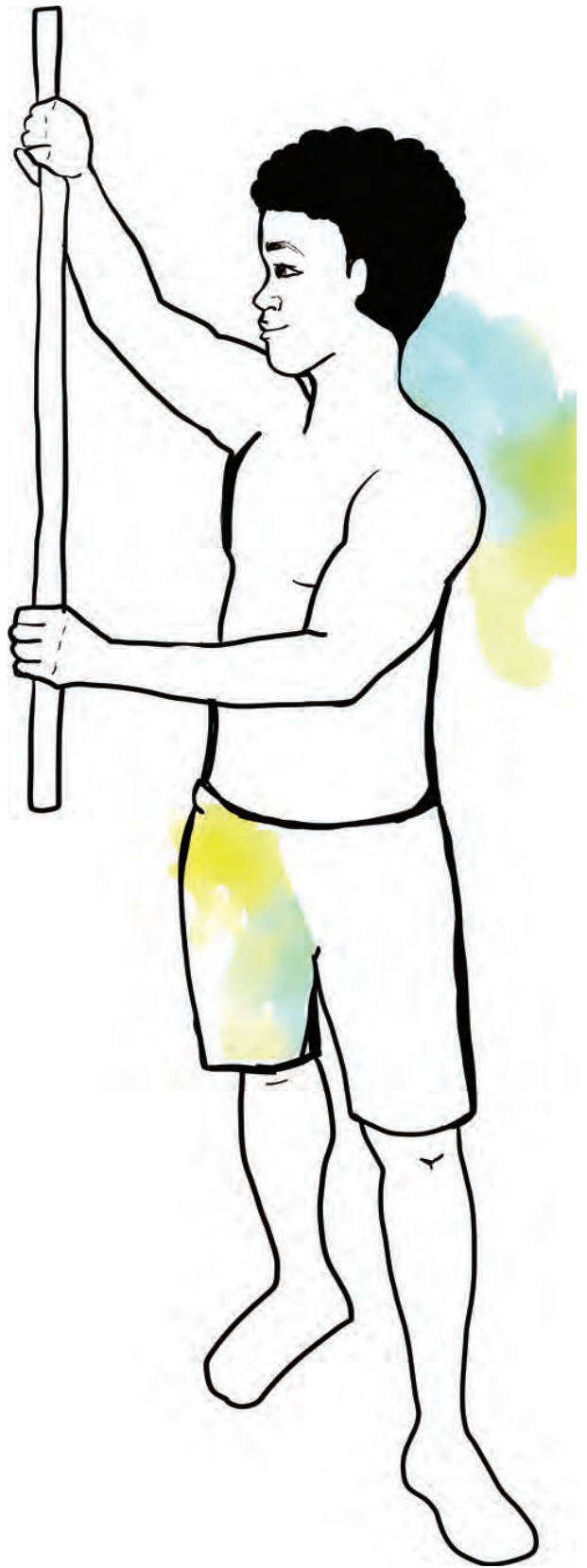
**For the blocks in this cut, the foot positions are not fixed but depend on the circumstance. The sequence of blocks is as follows:**



Starting with the SP described above, to block the strike to the left side (NDS) of your face, raise and push your right hand (DH) to the left (NDS) so that the stick is vertical and just outside of your left (NDS) face and shoulder.



• To block the strike to the right side (DS) of your face, maintain the previous position and push the stick across to your right side (DS) as you twist your body to the right (DS). This twist ensures that the stick protects your elbows.





• To block the vertical downward strike to your head, push the stick up above your head so that it is horizontal.



• To block the strike to the left (NDS) waist, drop and push your right hand (DH) to the left (NDS) so that the stick is vertical and just outside of your left (NDS) chest and waist as you twist your body to the left (NDS). This twist ensures that the stick protects your elbows.



- 
- 
- To block the strike to the right (DS) waist, maintain the previous position and push the stick across to your right side (DS)




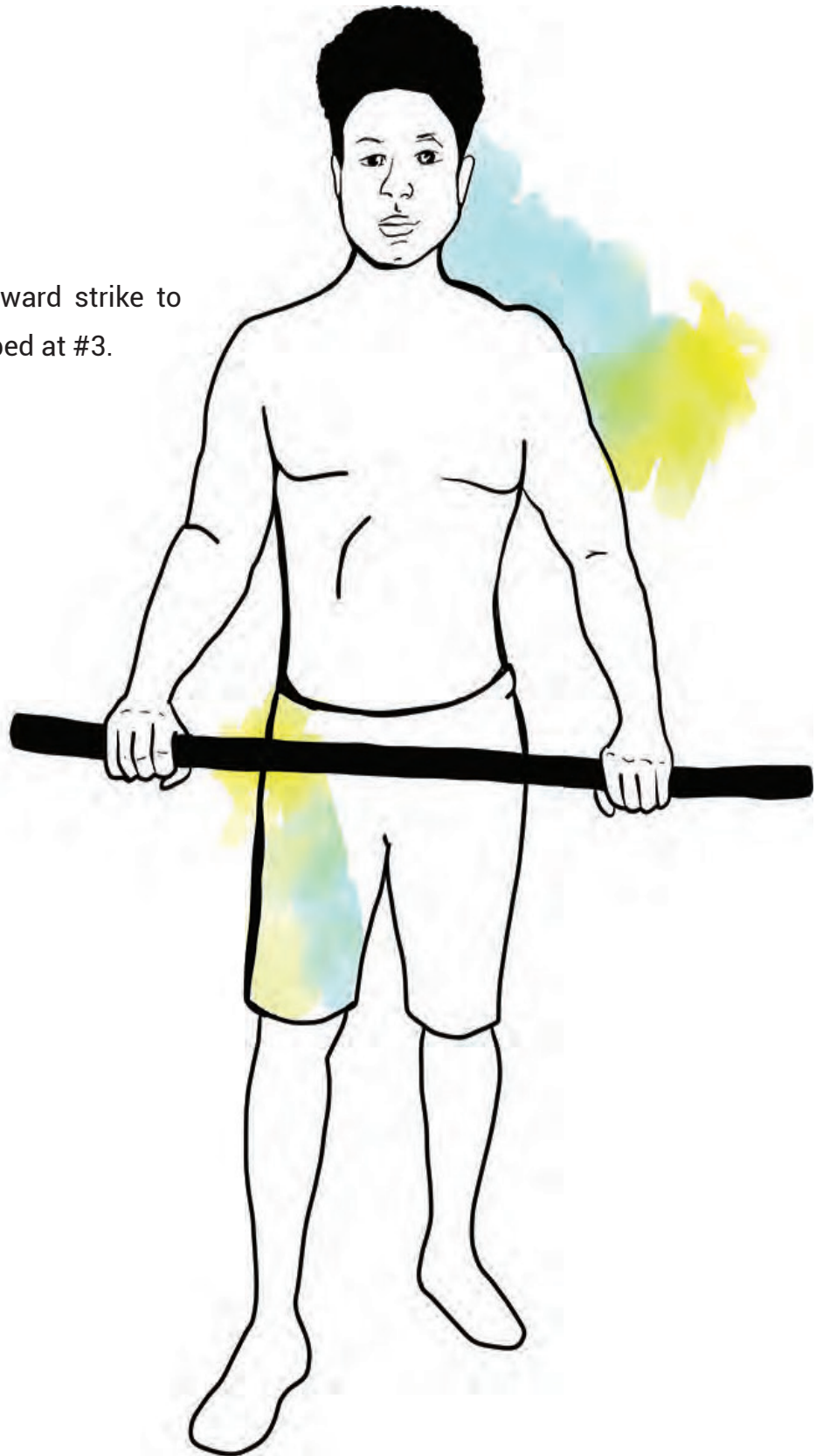




To block the upward vertical strike to your groin, drop your left hand so that the stick is horizontal just below the groin.



 To block the vertical downward strike to your head, repeat the block described at #3.

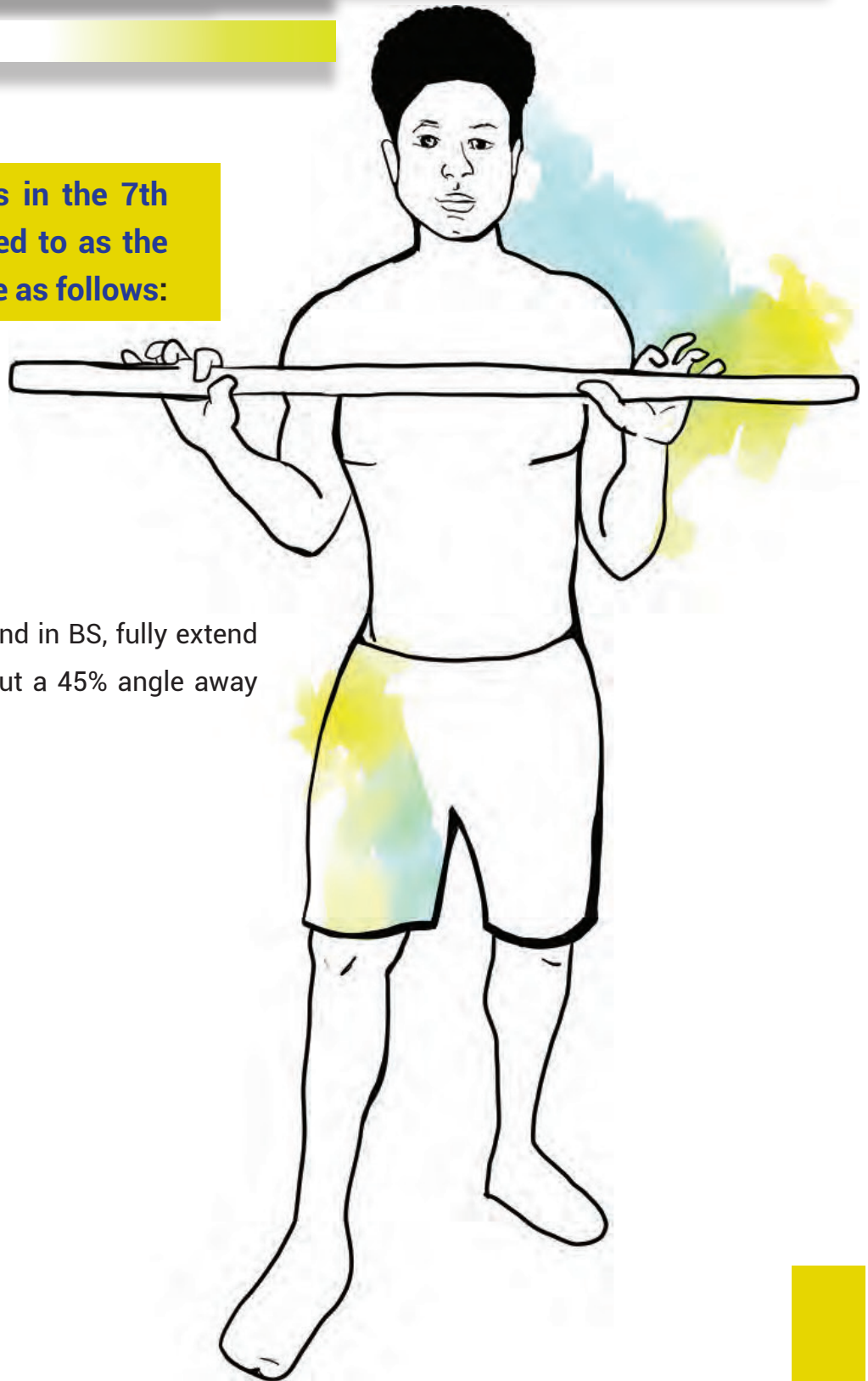


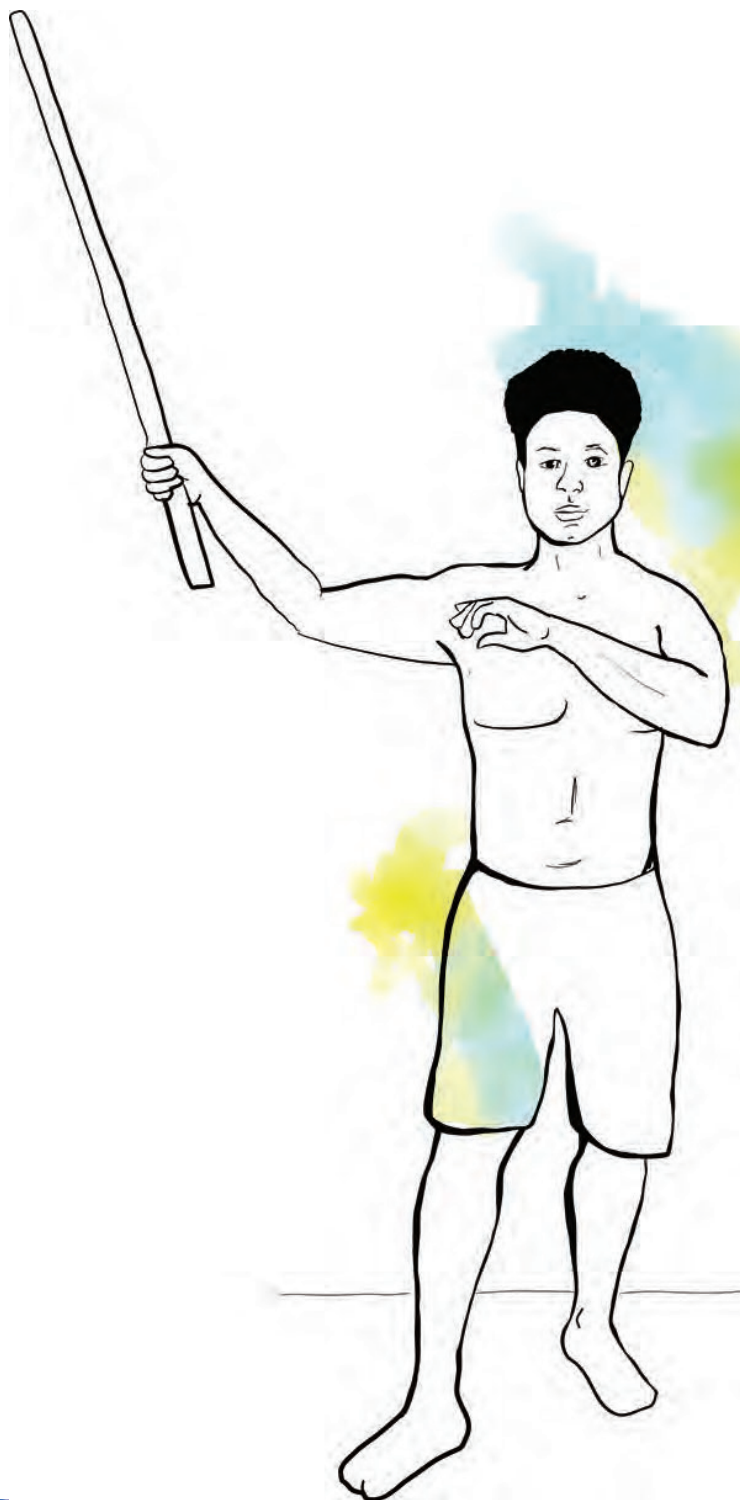
# The 7Th Cut

There are 2 positions in the 7th Cut. These are referred to as the Horse Guard. They are as follows:

:

- For the first one, stand in BS, fully extend your hand and stick at about a 45% angle away from your body.





- The 2nd position is similar to the first but your whole body is shifted so that DL is in line with the opposite (NDS) shoulder. Traditionally this position was used by a right-hander to fight a left handed opponent and vice versa.





Research suggests that this position might have been used against a horse riding opponent as it is close to the hand position used to corral horses.

• Holding the stick in this position is meant to tempt your opponent to attack your exposed body. The blocks are the same as for the 1st Cut but require better timing since the stick is further away from your body.

• As alluded to previously, tick licking can be used in a fight, as a sport or as a leisure activity.

• When used in a fight or self defence situation, a win is achieved by damaging your opponent to the point where they cannot fight or decide to discontinue the fight.

• When played as a sport, stick licking often occurred in a boxing ring with a referee and judges with three three-minute rounds with a minute's rest between rounds. The winner would be the one scoring most points or causing the opponent to discontinue the contest. One point was awarded for every strike that landed and they were some rules. For example:

• The strike to the groin and the trust (punch) were prohibited.

• You could not strike an opponent who had dropped his stick, or whose back was turned, had fallen or was on one knee.

• As a leisure activity, the rules of engagement would be decided by the participants.





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