



About The Principles of Running and Martial Art

One normally wouldn't think of running as a martial art. And yet...

What is "martial"? – of or having to do with battle. What is "art"? – one definition is "quality of communication." So, a fist or elbow to the face, a kick to the shin is a communication, all right. Not the preferred type, but still a communication. The only kind some people understand... and the quality depends on the skill of the fighter.

No question it has to do with battle. And what about running? Is it a tool in battle? The Art of War teaches us that a battle never fought is a battle won. So, if you're in the mindset to fight in order to humiliate or beat up your opponent, forget it. Otherwise, read on.

So, running is an art. But to be an art, skill must be present. Great artists of the past could impress by their technique itself, message or no message. And yet, up until recently there was no standard for a running technique:

"There is no commonly accepted running model which will suit everyone" (Nytro, 1987).

"No, there is no correct running form, and you couldn't learn it. Form is God-given. If you systematize it, you destroy it." (Wallack, 2004).

There is a gold standard to a meter, being kept in France. There is a standard in a legal system; there is a standard in figure skating. Any good boxer can tell a good punch from the bad, right? So why not in running?

A Russian scientist, athlete, and track coach [Dr. Nicholas Romanov](#) asked himself the same question on his route to developing the Pose Method of Running. Let's look at some of the concepts.

First, why Pose? In traditional martial arts as well as ballet, movement is taught through poses, or positions. Well – same in running. There is a key pose that every runner goes through and by understanding the pose and its elements, running can be much simplified. In fact, it's from that pose that the runner can tap into the most powerful force he can use...

In Aikido and Hapkido, one uses the opponent's strength to overcome him. In running, we sort of do the same. [The force of gravity](#), the most powerful mechanical force on Earth, is not at all our opponent, but if we tap into it, it is our best friend. Talking about opponents – it's only if we fight gravity that we get into trouble. Think about it: what hurts more – a direct block or a redirection of a punch? – Exactly. So we get one basic rule of running – don't stop movement. If you stop an enemy's fist with your face, you have a bruise. If you try to stop your body's movement in running, you get knee pain, shin splints, stress fractures, etc.

So, we know we have to use gravity, but how? Do we really want to fall face flat on the floor? No, but we do want to fall. In my first Hapkido class, to much surprise, we learned to fall. Not punches, kicks, or locks, but falls. It seems running is not so different after all. Except, in running,

the fall never ends. “**Motion is created by the destruction of balance**” said [Leonardo Da Vinci](#) and so it is. A quote from a British scientist Graham Brown is of a similar mind: “It seems that the act of progression itself – whether it be by flight through the air or by such movements as running over the surface of the ground consists essentially in a movement in which the centre of mass of the body is allowed to fall forwards and downwards under the action of gravity, and in which the momentum thus gained is used in driving the centre of mass again upwards and forwards; so that, from one point in the cycle to the corresponding point in the next, no work is done (theoretically), but the mass of the individual is, in effect, moved horizontally through the environment.” A lengthy quote, but what it really says is that we move by falling...so let’s move on.

In boxing or in any other martial art, what is a good punch?: one that reaches the target and jumps back instantly to protect the body, or one that leaves the hand at the opponents mercy? Easy answer, right?

Well, same in running. We already have the two elements of the Pose Method: **Pose and fall**. The third is **Pull**. It is by pulling the support foot from the ground that we allow the fall to reoccur, and we pull it quickly and on time, thus not leaving it to the “mercy” of ground impact....

In the movie “The Chronicles of Riddick”, he killed an enemy with a tea cup. The second enemy ran away before Riddick killed him with a hair pin. Why was he so feared? He knew how to use any tool to reach his end. That is, in fact, the **definition of skill: using all available resources to reach a goal**. So whether your goal is to run fast, to minimize your energy expenditure in running, to make recovery easier, to save your joints and muscles, to run away from unpleasant company late at night, to catch a robber, to catch a football, to run a marathon, to run a 100 yard dash – what have you, the Pose method works. Why? It maximizes all the resources available to you.

Surely, this isn’t much information on such a vast field. However, I thank you for your attention. More info as well as video clips and exact drills to learn the method can be found on www.posetech.com

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