

The Tang Soo Do Hook Kick: Yup Huryo Cha Gi



By Kerin S. Lee

Yup Huryo Cha Gi is a fast, powerful and versatile kick. The Tang Soo Do Hook Kick is an excellent technique to use in both sparring and self defense situations. It is considered a more advanced kick due to the complexity of delivering it accurately and effectively.

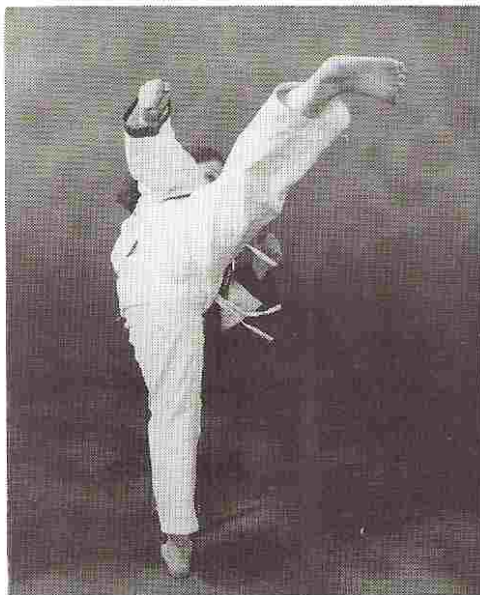
The hook kick is primarily used as a lateral strike to the head or body as well as to block an opponent's guard to create an opening for subsequent strikes. The versatility of this kick allows it to be thrown in several different ways: with the front leg, the back leg, skipping in, spinning or jump spinning. There are several aspects of the hook kick that are fundamental to its delivery regardless of which variation is done.



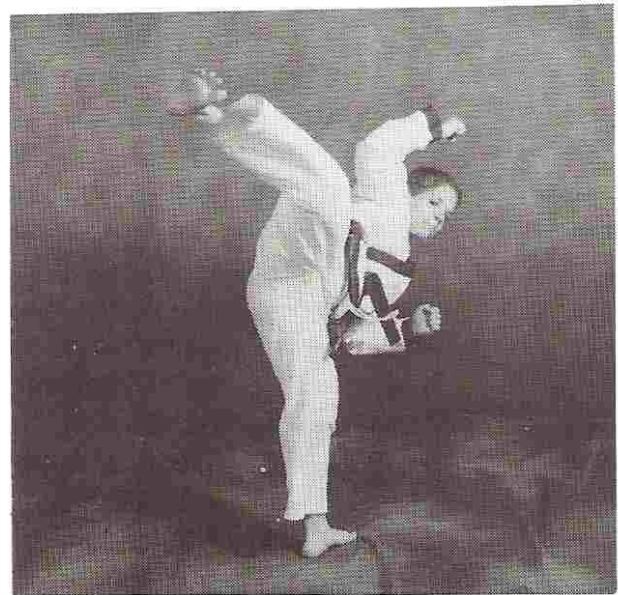
When first learning to throw a proper hook kick, practice from a fighting stance with your kicking leg in the rear.



As you transfer your weight onto your front foot, load your kicking leg by bringing your knee as high as you can across your body. The foot you are kicking with should remain positioned under your knee as though you were loading for a side kick.



From the loaded position, start to throw the kick like a short side kick at a 45 degree angle.



As the leg extends forward, use leg and hips to carry the kick across your body in a whipping motion. The heel of your kicking foot should strike the target first as your knee and thigh follow through for power. The kick should reach maximum power at your midline and end as your knee approaches forty-five degrees in the opposite direction from which the kick began.



Once the kick is delivered, return the leg to a loaded position at the center of your body and step forward.

It is important to maintain proper body alignment when throwing a hook kick. The upper half of your body should always move together along the same plane with the lower half. Your head should remain upright, looking towards your target. Your shoulders should follow the direction of your kicking hip and leg, never leaning forward or back. Arching your back slightly ensures that your hips remain over your standing leg. As you deliver the kick, your standing foot can pivot slightly, but no further than it would for a side kick. Be sure to pivot on the ball of your foot rather than the heel.

A strong hook kick should be thrown slightly wider than the width of your shoulders from beginning to end. One common mistake that people make when throwing a hook kick is relying too much on using the kicking leg from the knee down while not utilizing the knee, thigh and hips. This often occurs when one concentrates solely on the whipping action and forgets to follow through with the knee and leg for power. This makes the kick short, weak and ineffective. Another common mistake is not loading properly. If

the kick is thrown from the floor without a proper load, it is easy for your opponent to detect and react to. In addition, you lose the ability to initiate the kick powerfully. A third very common mistake is kicking down at an angle rather than across a straight horizontal path. Remember that the hook kick is used for lateral strikes. If you kick down, the kick's energy follows that course instead of directly into your intended target.

Once you are able to successfully throw a proper hook kick with the rear leg, you can modify the delivery to achieve more speed and power. This can be done by throwing a skipping hook kick, a spinning hook kick or a jump turning hook kick.

A skipping hook kick is thrown very similar to the traditional standing kick. The primary difference is that the kicking foot starts in front. As you skip forward the front leg is loaded and the kick is delivered in the same fashion as a standing hook kick. The skipping action allows you to cover more distance and uses your momentum for additional power. It is most successfully used when your opponent is slightly outside of your kicking range.

Spinning backwards adds increased speed and power to the kick. Begin in a fighting stance with the kicking leg in the rear. The power for the turn and the kick comes from your back leg as you push off with the ball of your foot, your quadriceps muscles and your hip. As you spin, load your kicking leg like you would for a side kick. It is critical that the pivot point for the turn is the ball of your standing foot, not your heel. From there, throw the kick out at a 45 degree angle, striking with the heel and following through with the knee, leg and hip. Let the kick come all the way around, pull it into a loaded position and return it to the rear in a fighting stance once again. A spinning hook kick can be used when your opponent is within your kicking range or as a counter technique.

Adding a jump to the spinning hook kick significantly increases the level of difficulty as well as the speed and power of the kick. Again, start with the kicking leg in back. The power for the jump requires you to use legs and hips as well as your upper body. As you jump up, use your kicking leg, shoulders and head to complete the turning action. Once in the air, the kick is

thrown like a spinning hook kick. Load like a side kick, throw the kick out and let it come all the way across your body until it lands back in the original position. The kick should be thrown and completed while you are completely off the ground. As you land, the both legs should return to the ground at the same time.

When using any form of the hook kick for either sparring or self defense, there are several possible target areas which to strike an opponent. Typically the kick is intended to strike the temple, base of the skull, face, ribs, kidney, knee or solar plexus. It can also be used to strike down your opponent's guard for a kicking combination such as hook to round kick. In a sparring situation, it is considered a point if a hook kick clears your opponent's guard and is delivered with control across their shoulder or to the head without contact.

The hook kick is very versatile as it can be used effectively in sparring with a combination of other kicks ie: sidekick to hook kick, hook kick to round kick and back kick to hook kick.

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Side Kick to Hook Kick

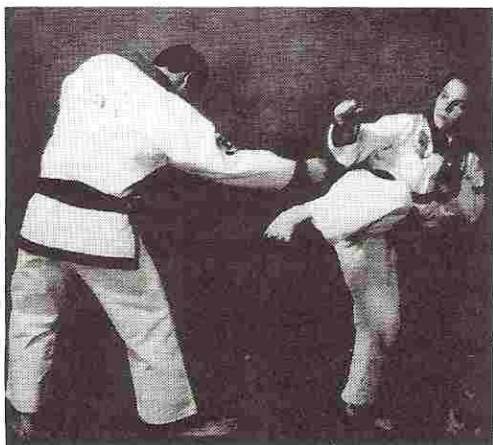


Proper load for a side kick

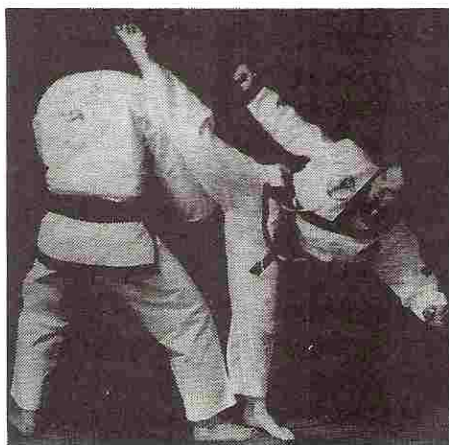


Side kick to the solar plexus

Side Kick to Hook Kick (Continued)

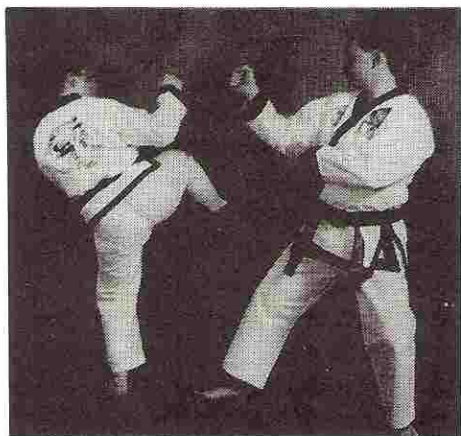


Reload same leg after side kick

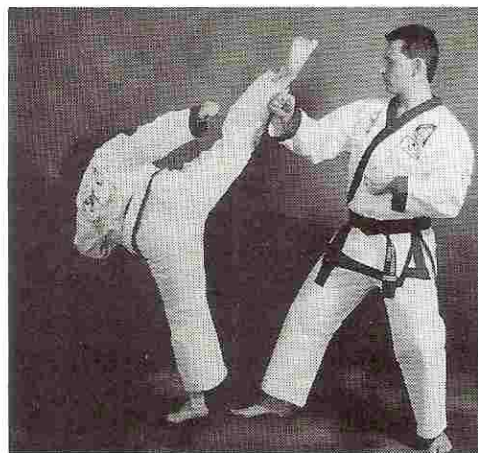


Strike opponent's head with hook kick

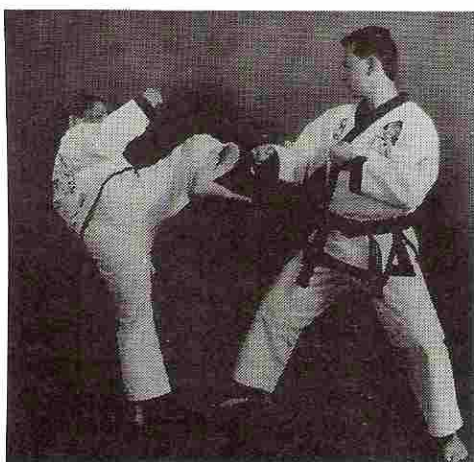
Hook Kick to Round Kick



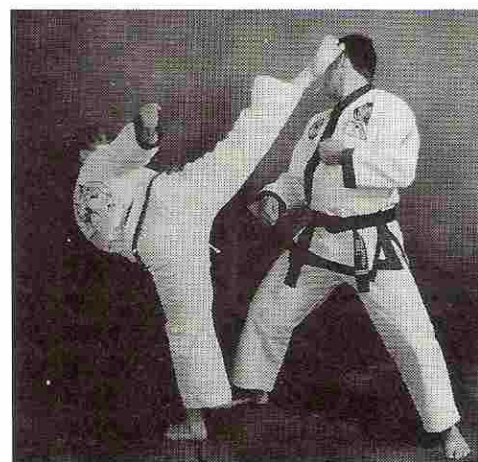
Load Hook Kick



Throw Hook Kick



Keep knee high as you prepare to throw round kick



Deliver round kick to opponent

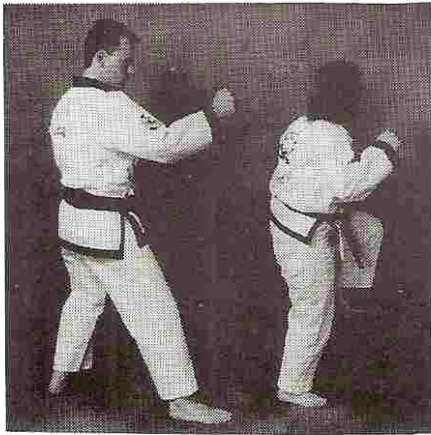
Back Kick to Hook Kick



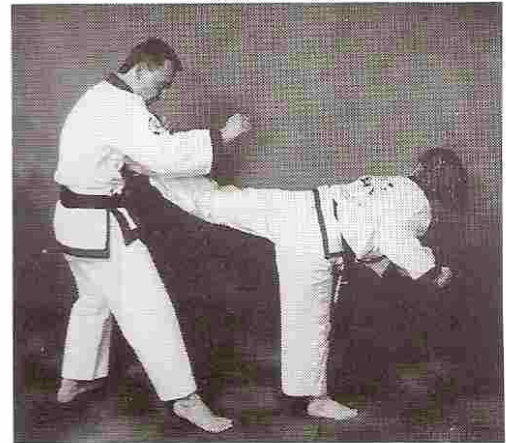
Right Fighting Stance



Turn to deliver back kick



Load left leg for back kick



Throw back kick to opponent's solar plexus



Return leg to load

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Back Kick to Hook Kick

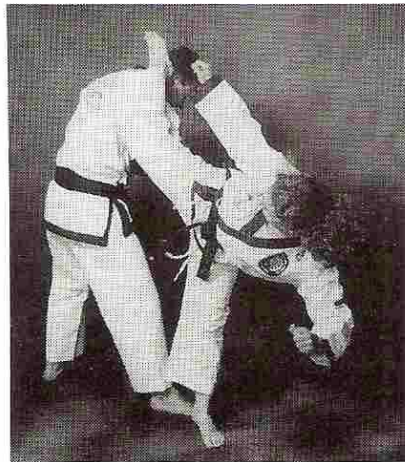
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Turn and land forward with left leg



Load right leg



*Deliver hook kick with right leg to
opponent*

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The power of a properly thrown hook kick allows for a fast, powerful and damaging blow. Its versatility allows you to apply it successfully in a variety of situations. It is a kick that every Tang Soo Do practitioner should work towards perfecting and applying in his or her training.

Kerin Lee is currently a third Dan who recently tested for her Master's. She trains in North Reading under Master Mitchell and teaches Tang Soo Do in Lynn, Massachusetts.