

Knife Tips #5



by Keith Pascal

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This book is designed to provide information about knife self defense. It is sold with the understanding that neither the author, the publisher, nor anyone involved with the book is engaged in the rendering of legal advice, or advice and expertise for your specific situation, environment, or set of circumstances.

Picking up a knife in a fight is serious business. Such an action could result in legal consequences. You'd also have to live knowing you may have maimed or killed another individual.

Services of competent professionals should be sought, to help you gain more expertise in judging self-defense situations and appropriate reactions.

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First Step, Cut the Swing Short

As I mentioned, my daughter, Quinn, had her eighth birthday May 13th, 2006.

One of her gifts was a gardening tool set. All in pink, for Quinn.



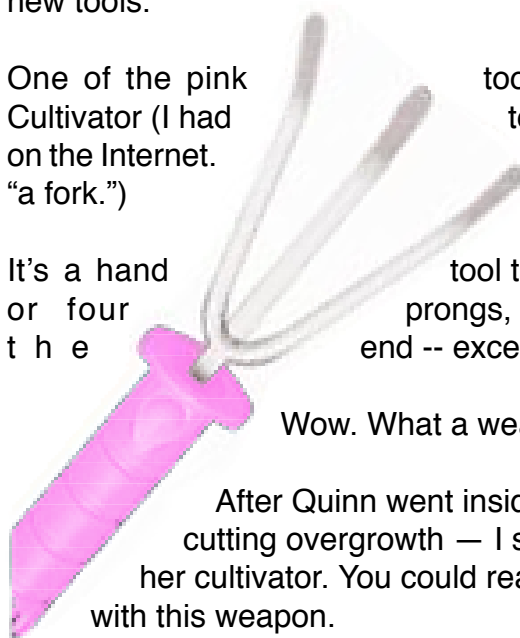
So, yesterday, afternoon, I found myself coerced into doing yard work by my wife — so Quinn could use her new tools.

One of the pink Cultivator (I had on the Internet. “a fork.”)

tools was a metal to look the name up I would have called it

It's a hand or four t h e

tool that has either three prongs, that bend down at end -- excellent to claw dirt.



Wow. What a weapon!

After Quinn went inside — and left me still cutting overgrowth — I started “playing” with her cultivator. You could really gouge someone with this weapon.

(Should I repackage them and sell them to the martial-arts world as “The Pink Tiger’s Claw”?)

Anyway, a quick conclusion I came to was:

I felt more comfortable using the claw with shorter swings. I still practiced a long-reaching strike, but the quicker slashes down and up seemed more efficient.

The way to start practicing a tighter strike is to bring your elbow down closer to your rib cage.

Do this even before the strike. Keep your elbow at your side, instead of raising it up over your head.

Try practicing with your cultivator where you never raise your elbow, or turn it, so it points upward. Keep it low and pointed downward, for this practice.

While you give up some of your reach with this exercise, you definitely are presenting a harder attack to block or counter.

Try it both ways. You'll see the efficiency of a tighter-arc swing.

Second Step, Forward Elbow Means a Tighter Angle

Would you like to make your Tiger Claw swing even better, while at the same time, regaining some of your extension?

Instead of leaving the elbow at the side, bring it forward, slightly in front of your body — about solar-plexus height.



Do all of your fighting with your elbow four or five inches in front of your body.

This will give you an even tighter striking angle.

You'll also present a more 'closed stance.' It will be harder for your opponent to find holes in your defense.

Having your elbow forward works in a neutral stance, where your feet are side by side. It also works in a ready stance where one foot is slightly forward.

End Note:

If your stance is too long, and your arm is almost completely extended, then you are treating your short weapon as if it were a long weapon like a sword. That's not the most efficient use for your claw, unless you are really proficient at moving without telegraphing, and have a keen sense of timing.

Remember, this weapon has a claw, not a blade. This changes the game.

And unless you are a seasoned martial artist, I'd probably avoid the bog wide strikes with such a small weapon. You could end up telegraphing your intent.

Third Step, Plan for the Snag

A pronged weapon, like the cultivator, could snag when you strike with it.

It could catch on clothing ... or get sunk into your attacker's flesh. I know it's an unpleasant thought, but it is a possibility.

Either way, plan for your immediate follow-up.

Imagine facing an attacker -- an enemy with a weapon....

You swing with your tight-arc strike. Score ... and ... snag.

The weapon is stuck.

You need a response, and it has to be a quick reaction. If you take time to think, it will be too late.

As soon as the weapon snags, you react.

Without pausing, think about:

- * letting go of the weapon, as you progress into a fast flurry of straight-blast punches.
- * kicking out the knee as soon as the weapon catches.
- * hitting with the other hand, as you make a quick attempt at withdrawing the claw.
- * throwing your weight into the weapon if it has already punctured your aggressor.

The key is to avoid pausing.

The instant you feel any resistance, you should already be following-up with your next round.

A one-two count is almost too slow.

Think of a quick “ba-da-bum.” Strike-Snag-Strike!

Not Slash and Thrust ... Rather “Slash and Slash”

Are you familiar with the term “Slash and Thrust?”

It’s a great training drill, to start knife-fighting beginners. It’s a very Filipino way to fight. It’s efficient, and it demonstrates how traditional blocking, X-blocks, etc. don’t work in a knife fight.



When I write articles criticizing X-blockers, I always preface my critique with "... against a skilled knife fighter." Someone who knows how to Slash and Thrust would cut a blockers wrists or arms without thinking about it.

The slash happens automatically.

Believe it or not, I'll be the first to admit that Slash and Thrust has its limitations. There are a few holes in the tactic as a system.

(That's why I wrote "10 Days to Better Knife Fighting." I not only teach Basic Slash and Thrust, but 'we' go beyond the exercise and strengthen some of its weaknesses.)

You can make some simple modifications, to make fighting with a garden tool more effective.

Aha! You knew we'd get back to talking about the cultivator — "The Pink Ninja-like, Saber-tooth Tiger's Claw."

The Cultivator has puncture ability, but it doesn't have an edge for cutting.

If you want to apply principles from '10 Days to Better Knife Fighting' to fighting with a claw, you'll have to make a modification or two....

You would think that a puncture would equal the thrust of a blade, right?

Wrong

In this case, eliminate the forward jab (like in a fencing match).

Instead, concentrate on slashing with your short weapon. If you know the figure eight pattern with a knife (pages 104-106 for photos and explanation in '10 Days to Better Knife Fighting'), try it with scraping motions.



Scrape on both the downward strike and the upward return. (Imagine how nasty it would be to claw someone with your cultivator, scraping upward from below. Ouch!)

When you practice all of the basic slash and thrust drills and the modification drills, make sure you think ...

“Slash and Slash!”

or

“Scrape and Scrape”

or

“Claw and Claw”

or

“Gouge and Gouge.”

End Note:

Remember, I wasn't really limiting my discussion to a garden cultivator.

Also, this was a theoretical discussion. I don't expect, nor do I encourage, anyone to start carry a garden cultivator as his (or her) weapon of choice.

At this point, I feel obligated to remind you that clawing someone's eyes out and gouging their skin into permanent disfigurement, could have legal consequences.

This was a discussion only. Got it.

On the other hand, if you are ever attacked while working in the garden (with your wife and/or daughter), I would expect you to defend your family. (With no liability to this ezine, of course. Read the disclaimer at the bottom.)

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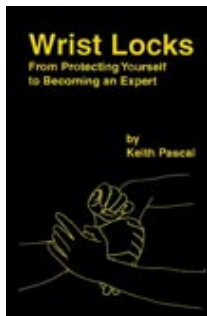
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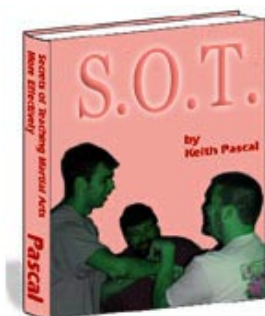
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