

Martial Art

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ARTS

OCTOBER 1988

\$2.95



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by Bob McCauley

- TOM MUZILA - TOUGHEST MAN IN THE WORLD?

Before we get in an argument about who's the toughest man in the world, let's first look at Tom Muzila's resume. He was in the Green Berets and 101st Airborne Division of the Army. He graduated from airborne, ranger, jungle warfare, special forces, light and heavy weapons courses, mountaineering, pathfinder desert survival, cold weather survival, sniper, scuba, visual tracking, demolitions and ski schools. He was on the 101st Airborne Division Boxing Team, and has held a fourth degree black belt in Tsutomu Ohshima's Shotokan Karate Organization since 1977. Note that this is equivalent to 9th degree in other styles, since the grandmaster Ohshima, along with the founder, Gichen Funakoshi, attained only a 5th degree rank. Additionally, he was involved in armed combat in Bolivia (don't ask why!), where he was wounded in action.

Now, let's talk about Muzila's physical accomplishments. First, he has completed 51 Special Training camps conducted by Mr. Ohshima. These training camps are best described as a 6 week Marine Corp. boot camp packed into four days. They involve fighting up to 200 opponents in one hour period, squatting in horse riding stance for 90 minutes, and running barefoot over acorns and gravel. These camps start out with a warm up each morning of a 5 mile run at 5:30 AM and continue for 9 hours. Tom would get so psyched up that he could not stop working out. After each training camp, he would reach to greater dimensions of physical endurance. Executing kicks and punches for hours at a time stopped being a chore and became an obsession. Call it "chi" or adrenaline, something began to drive Tom to superhuman feats of physical endurance.



ABOVE: Muzila uses Sumo workout techniques to strengthen all parts of his torso. He feels that the likelihood of a fight ending up in grappling maneuvers is very high, so practicing on kicks and punches is not enough.

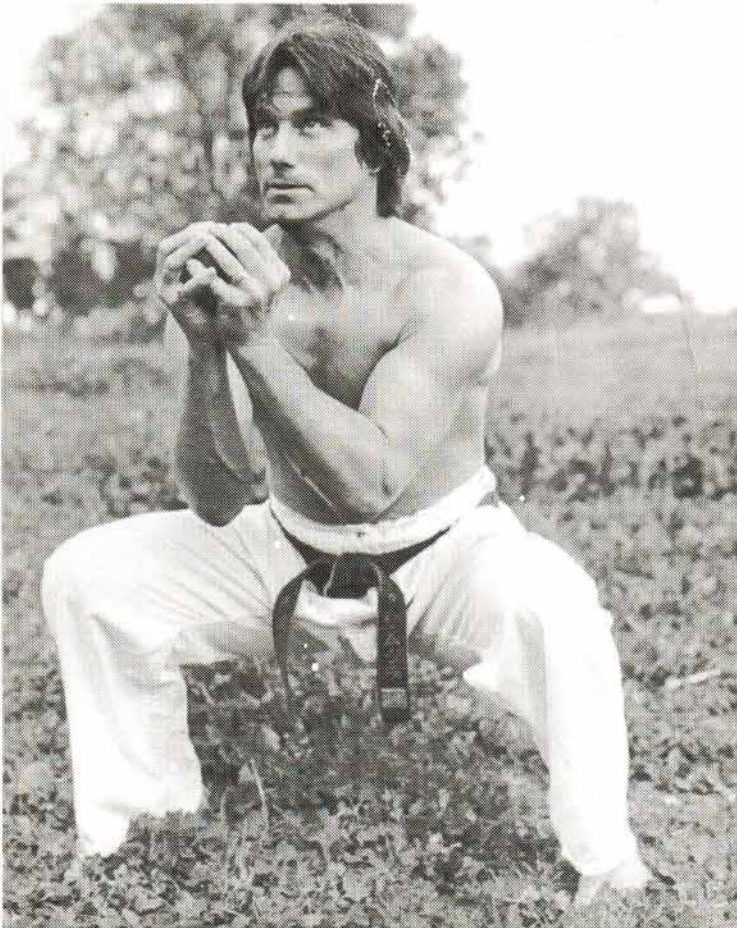
The List Goes On!

He practiced for 24 hours continually in 1975 and performed 1000 Heian katas continuously during a 7 hour period. He executed 10,000 front kicks during a 6 hour period in 1978 and performed 10,000 iron ball squats during a 2.5 hour world record breaking period in 1983. In 1978 he worked out for 9 hours per day for 21 consecutive days and during the same year stood in horse riding stance for 3 hours. The list continues: 14,000 front punches in 1978, 10,000 reverse punches in 1979, and 24 hours of front punches in 1980. He has run races of 26 miles, 30 miles, and 50 miles.

Who's the Toughest of Them All?

Now, let me confess that I really can't verify that he is the toughest man in the world. However, I can come pretty close by analysis. First, let's look at athletes with size. Sgt. Slaughter and Hulk Hogan would present no problems. Tom would first destroy their knees and then go for a soft spot such as the throat or groin. Boxers would not present problems, either to Muzila or to any other reasonably talented karateka. A front kick to the soft spot in the lower stomach would drop Mike Tyson. Amateur wrestlers would present the strongest opposition to any karateka. However, Tom would allow them to go for a take down and quickly deliver an elbow strike to the middle of the spine, and then compassionately administer CPR until the iron lung arrived. But what about semi contact fighters like Nasty Anderson or Billy Blanks? Tom would go for the eyes or knees or anything illegal and unfamiliar to their defense. The same would apply for full contact or kick boxers. Fighting Muzila would be like fighting someone high on PCP. Due to his non stop marathon workouts, he is able to dish out pain and mayhem.

You might ask, if he's so good, how come I haven't heard about him before. First, Tom never touts his own ability. Another reason is that he's on the intelligent side. Almost every issue of Black Belt magazine contains one of his articles. He's a prolific writer who has designed, written and taught courses on weapons, bodyguarding, survival and mercenary fighting. But don't let this fool you. Tom is trained at defending himself in real life situations, which, with his ability and unmatched physical attributes, makes him a formidable opponent. If you know of anyone that comes close, send the information to me for a future publication.



ABOVE: Muzila shown during a marathon session of squatting 10,000 times with an 8 pound iron ball. PHOTOS BY ROB GOLDMAN