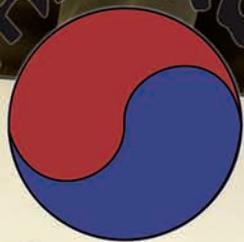




HWARANGDO



화랑도

GM T



Question: You are the son of the Founder of Hwa Rang Do® and will carry the legacy as the heir to the art. That is a big burden to carry. What significance does this hold for you and how do you feel about the immense responsibility?

To most, the idea of inheriting a legacy might seem attractive and a blessing. However, the reality is far less romantic and ideal. I am not naïve to think that my future is secured by such a position. In fact, it is a huge burden and the perfect setup for self-destruction. Let me put it this way. Who do you remember in history for being in second place, what silver medalist? In fact, no one remembers who was ever second in anything. No matter what it is, the first, the originator, the creator, the founder are remembered and the one who proceeds them are usually known to have been worse than the first, ruining what was created

Knowing this even at an early age in my teens, I made a promise to my father that I would strive to acquire the position as the next heir.

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taejoon Lee



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However, he never promised it to me or anyone else. Contrary to some people, he did not practice nepotism and it was not my birthright. The title of Do Joo (Owner of the Way) would be given to the best Master who would prove their worthiness. He always announced publicly that only the best would become the heir and although I was his son, he would not give any favoritism. In fact, he was most critical of me and expected always for me to be at my best, which also meant he disciplined me most severely. I spent all of my life training, practicing, bettering myself to prove to him my worthiness.

This meant I had to sacrifice much of my childhood and assumed the position as teacher, leader, and master early on in my life. I gained the rank of Black Belt at the age of 7 and I started teaching at 13 years old out of my garage, which was converted into a dojang where I taught the friends of my sisters. I had my first official school at the age 16 and achieved the rank of Master level. Since then, I have not stopped training, teaching, and working on behalf of Hwa Rang Do and my father, my teacher and martial arts master.

I committed to Hwa Rang Do with all my mind, strength, and heart as I felt that I could add something to improve what was, as we should all live our lives with the belief that we have the potential to improve and better the world somehow. I am not my father and I can never be him nor do I want to. I am most grateful



GM T

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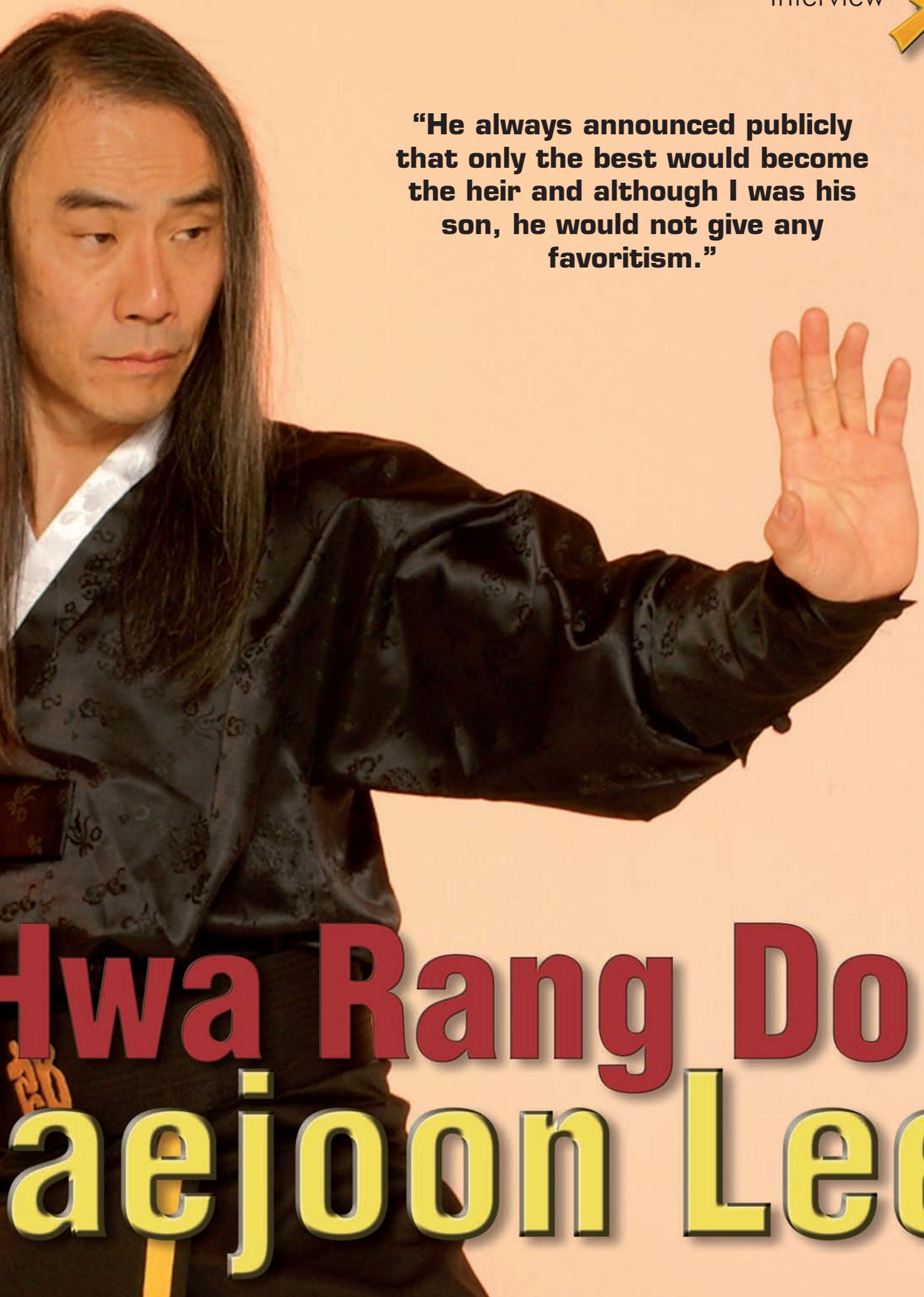
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Interview



“He always announced publicly that only the best would become the heir and although I was his son, he would not give any favoritism.”



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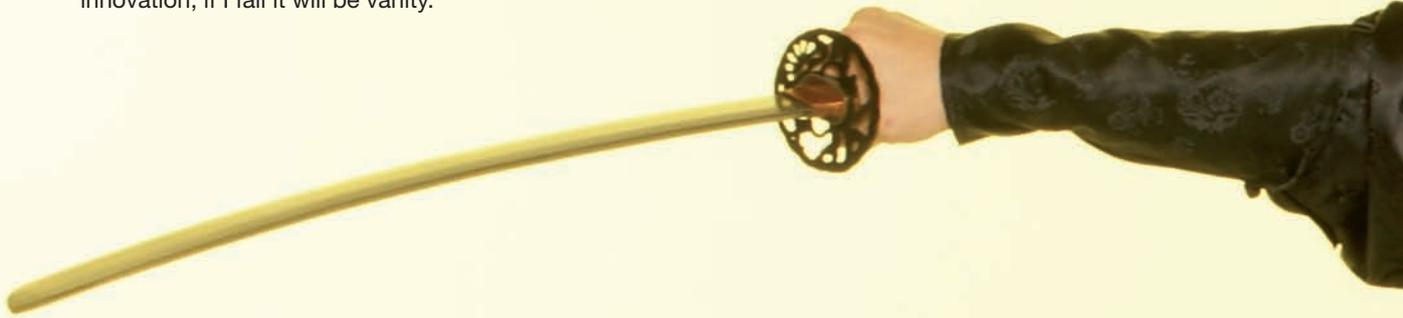
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Hwa Rang Do

to him for all his teachings, for without him I would not be who I am today, but most of all I thank him for being the greatest dad one can have. I will always strive to improve upon what he has built and to work toward the fulfillment of his dream of creating a Hwa Rang Do Academy/Sanctuary where we can preserve the knowledge of the Hwarang, creating strong world leaders of tomorrow. Furthermore, I am committed to teaching and raising the next Dojoo, who must be better and do better than me in order to continually thrive through the ages. As teachers, as parents that is our most important task to make the next generation better than ours.

Only history and God will determine how I was - if I succeed, it will be remembered as innovation, if I fail it will be vanity.



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