

The Box Theory of the EBMAS Latosa Weapon System

Based on the concepts of Grandmaster Rene Latosa

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The Box system is indigenous to the EBMAS Latosa Weapons System. The concepts really revolve around the idea of “less is more”. Within the Box system there are only 5 blocks (attacks) used with different concepts. Also indigenous to the EBMAS Latosa Weapons System is the fact that there are no numbered hits. It is general practice that Filipino Martial Arts systems use numbered hits to describe the angles / levels of attack or defense. We do this so that there is not a collection of different concepts for different area of attack or defense. In order to be effective, simplicity is the key. The less complicated the concept or movement is the easier it is to apply, therefore we simplify the idea of blocking and attacking into one in the same. We use one idea to accomplish our goal, not two movements.

For the sake of simplicity, we will cover the “Box System” with 3 major distances.

1. **Short** – Direct
2. **Medium** – Stick to Arm
3. **Long** – Stick to Stick

In order to deal with opponents within these 3 distances we will use the **straight line** as our connection to the opponent (otherwise known as **the point**). Referring to the previous statement, “blocking and attacking into one in the same.” We always attack our opponent vs. block. By doing this we take away the chasing or reactive phase. We pay attention to the angle of movement that our opponent uses, and we attack on that line, therefore being proactive. Our point will always extend to the open targets of the combatant, but because we travel on the same line, our weapons always shield us. Our goal is to hit. However, since we are traveling on the same line as the other person, there is the possibility of an interference strike between weapons. This is what most people will confuse for a “block”, when in fact it is really an attack that was intercepted. Thus the term “interference strike”. Broken down further an “interference strike” is when something gets in your way while connecting to "the point" or "straight line" to your opponent. Similar in concept to a “block”, but better described as an attack.

The term **“Block”** is an old school term one that people use for explaining protection of oneself from harms way against an excellerated object. However, this also indicates that one must chase to protect against an object, vs. nullifying what controls the object. My Si-Fu always says, “Since when does the bone ever chase the dog?” He’s right... So, I will use the term “attack” in place of “block”.

Here are some examples of how “interference strike’s” are used within the EBMAS Latosa Weapon System -Box System.

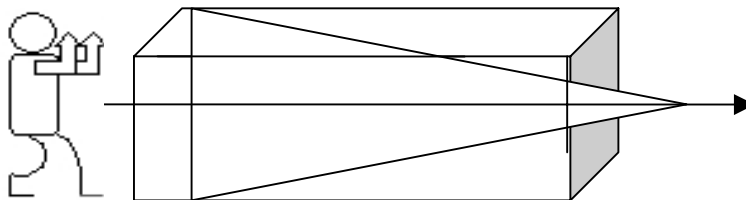
- **“Roof Attack”**: This is the **top** of “the Box” and is a projection of power coming forward with a high backhand strike and an interference strike in the middle. Therefore protecting the Defender’s head.
- **“Cross Attack”**: This is **one side** of “the Box” and is formed with the stick straight up and pushing across the body with a medium level forehand strike.
- **“Side or Shoulder Attack”**: This is **one side** of “the Box” and is formed with the stick straight up and pushing forward with a medium level forehand strike.
- **“Down or Bottom Attack”**: This is the **bottom** of “the Box”, opposite of the Roof Attack – attacking at the waist level with a low backhand strike.
- **“Stab Attack”**: This is the **middle** of "the Box", very similar to a **“Down or Bottom Attack”** same type of backhand movement is made.

It should be stated at this point that each of these "**Attack**" concepts are meant for striking the attacker either on the hand, limb, body or head. If contact is made stick to stick, it generally means that the defender was hesitant, late or just slower in movement.

Note: Every time you pull your stick back to strike you lose distance. To compensate for "cocking the stick" – step forward at the same time to keep pressure on the opponent. This will make up for the lost distance.

In order to achieve maximum power in each of the listed instances, you must stay frontal to your opponent and keep your shoulders facing forward to the other person. Creating a triangle, facing the point on them and the base to your self. The front knee should be bent pointing to the person and the rear leg bent and up on the toes also facing the other person. Everything must be projecting forward to your target at all times connecting that imaginary triangle.

Here is a subtle point that most people miss. "The Box" is the base of the triangle (or pyramid); therefore the straight line that we discussed earlier within "the Box" when traveled becomes the tip of the triangle/pyramid or "the Point". So you always have the straight line connected to your adversary, but are protected by the box which also projects forward to your opponent as well. It is preferable to have your opponent in your Box, but not be locked into his.



Referring to the use of the term "attack" in place of "block", as well the statement of "interference strike" when something gets in your way while connecting to "the point" or "straight line" to your opponent. There seems to be some confusion on most students' part on what this means. You always hear the questions:

- What if the attacker changes directions in mid-swing?
- What if the guy faints?
- What if he's faster than you?
- What if he's stronger?
- Ect....

Please bear in mind that "the Box" is but one tool simple in concept, but sophisticated in application. Within these stated concepts there is an underlined tone. One that it has not been actually been stated, but absolutely inferred. It is one of the absolute cornerstones of the EBMAS Latosa Weapons System and truly makes it a unique system unto itself. The "**So What**" Theory.

The "**So What**" theory answers all of the listed questions with a simple concept. It states: "No matter how big, fast, strong, tricky, ECT... "So What" if you have not been hit - hit him first. This will take away all of the erroneous concerns our doubts that may be in play. If the opponent is now the victim of the attack, he no longer has the opportunity to use his speed, strength, and faints, Ect. He is now trying to save his own hide from your attack and is removed from his game. Therefore "So What!!!"

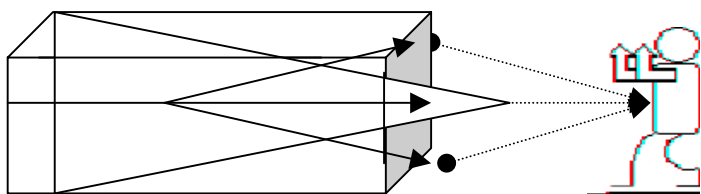
After the concepts of "the Box" and the "So What" theory are taken into consideration then the ranges of combat must be taken into account. There are 3 major distances.

1. **Short** – Stick to Body or Direct. Able to hit the body or direct to the target.
2. **Medium** – Stick to Arm. Closer to body, able to get past the stick to strike an arm or hand.
3. **Long** – Stick to Stick. Outside the range of your opponent. Not able to get past the stick.

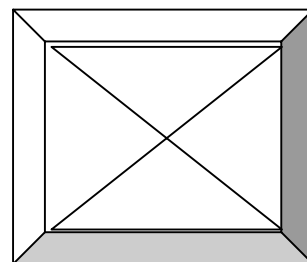
Note: There are actually 5 distances. The next two would be throwing and grappling. However, I will leave it to 3 **stick distances** for the sake of simplicity.

The reason these ranges must be taken into context is that no opponent will stay perfectly still and dummy for you while you hit them. They will move around as well as forward and backward. Consequently, footwork must be taken into consideration within "the Box" theory. This is really the second part of the concept.

We must consider footwork as a tool for "bridging" the distance in between the 3 Major distances. We can travel on a straight line and connect the point. We can travel off line and connect the point off line. Or we can travel off line and connect the point on line. The ingredients stay the same for "the Box": Connect the triangle from yourself to the opponent. Regardless of whether you are on the same angle to your opponent or at an off angle, the concepts remain constant.



The Box faces the opponent demonstrating off line concept while keeping the opponent in the Box.



How the Box would look
As it faces the opponent.

Within the 3 Major distances as they randomly change we do not. Our Box is always pointing at our opponent and the Triangle / Pyramid simply expands or contracts in depth, that is the distance between your opponent and yourself. Additionally the point may move up or down, this tracks the varying height or levels that your opponent moves on. However, the base never shortens in height or width as that stays constant with you own frame. This ensures that you will always be covering the angle geometry that the other person moves on. This is important, as his body frame size can never change to you, as he would have to relocate his limbs, which is an absolute impossibility. Once you can establish a lock on you opponent with your Box, at that point there are only 4 sides and a center that the person may move in on regardless of his angle of attack.

1. **Top**
2. **Left Side**
3. **Right Side**
4. **Bottom**
5. **Center**

Once this is recognized, the need for a collection of different concepts for different area of attack or defense in order to be effective simply goes away. To restate my opening statements: "The less complicated the concept or movement is the easier it is to apply", therefore we simplify the idea of blocking and attacking into one in the same."

The Box offers a multitude of securities that could be the topic of several papers and years worth of training material. However, it's safe to say that the basic concepts of personal protection through attacking vs. blocking are quite sophisticated and **very** effective.

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