



Episode 15 – Master Fred Forsberg | [whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com](http://whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com)



**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Hello everyone and thanks for tuning in to episode 15 of [whistlekickMartialArtsRadio](http://whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com). I'm your host Jeremy Lesniak and I'm also the founder of whistlekick, the best place to get your sparring gear if you're tired of it falling apart. If you're new to the show, you can learn more about our products at [whistlekick.com](http://whistlekick.com) and you can learn more about the show including all of our past episodes show notes for this episode and a whole bunch more at [whistlekickmartialartsradio.com](http://whistlekickmartialartsradio.com). You may notice that my speech sound's a little bit off, I apologize I bit a whole in my tongue yesterday, I tried to let it heal up as much as I could before having to record this intro but alas it's there so my apologies but you won't hear any of that in the episode that you're gonna listen to because it happened before I forgot how to chew and on today's episode we have Master Fred Forsberg. He's a Taekwondo practitioner from Vermont as with a lot of the guests you've heard on the show. I know Master Forsberg pretty well cause we train in the same group of Taekwondo schools but as for the most people, there's a lot more to who they are than the bit they share on a daily basis and Master Forsberg was no different. He welcomed me into his home and shared his stories as openly and honestly as anyone has. Again, as with the other guests we see how martial arts training has helped him through some difficult times so here we go.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Master Forsberg welcome to [whistlekickMartialArtsRadio](http://whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com).

**Fred Forsberg:**

Thank you so very much, pleasure is mine to be here.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

The pleasure is mine. \*\*\*\*\*overlapping audio\*\*\*\*\*

So, let's get into it here how about you start by telling everybody a little bit about your history with the martial arts.

**Fred Forsberg:**



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Well I started with Taekwondo back in April of 1994 with my instructor Master Leonard Yordan who has been my one and only instructor for my entire career up to this point so far. I can't really say that I had any really big wonderful reasonings for starting I was just a young kid, loved the old martial arts movies particularly teenage mutant ninja turtles, that was one of my favorites and you know being as young as I was, I wanted to do that. I wanted to be able to jump and kick and punch and one day in the mailbox my dad got an open house flyer for Yordan's black belt academy and he took me down and been doing it ever since.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Cool. So, I'm not trying to give away your age now but hopefully people will do that math cause it's weird to ask people their age of course but how old were you when you got started?

**Fred Forsberg:**

I was a couple of months shy of my 8th birthday so I was 7.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Okay so young and you know think back to your time that at 7, 8 getting into it what did you enjoy about it.

**Fred Forsberg:**

Back then the kicking, paddle kicking, target kicking, just learning the kicks that was pretty rigorous when I started you know as most things were and just you know the paddle kicking and everything along those lines I wasn't really into the patterns at that point or the walking stuff, I just wanted the hit stuff for a lack of better term.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

And it's pretty typical I think of most kids that age I certainly look was like that when I was younger. So, you started young and you one of the things that's come up a couple of times through interviews that we've had has been that kinda adolescent phase a lot of people go through where they take a step back you know you mentioned that you would listen to episode 8 earlier today and then that was something that Eddie and I talked about was his time stepping away from martial arts and you've never had a point where you stepped away.

**Fred Forsberg:**

No

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Why? Cause that seems to be the exception rather than rule, any chance you could shed some light on that.

**Fred Forsberg:**

I wasn't what you would call a very outgoing person when I was younger, you know if you look up the term introvert in the dictionary and I would be very 04:11 to have my picture next to it. I wasn't really into team sports, I didn't like you know I enjoyed watching baseball and what we did in gym I enjoyed it but you know the sign up for baseball or basketball or whatever you know intramural sports and activities that were wasn't really for me. So, Taekwondo was great because it was just something I could focus on do 2, 3 nights a week and never had to worry about if something I did was a failure or what not. I didn't have to worry about failing the rest of the team so to speak.



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**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Okay.

**Fred Forsberg:**

So.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

It was the place where you felt confident and comfortable.

**Fred Forsberg:**

Absolutely, I wasn't very I wasn't even very good at it at first obviously I wasn't what you call a natural athlete and those. Everything I had, I had to work for and work for hard but yeah.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Okay good that's great insight, that's you know hope trying to bring that stuff out in the hopes that excuse me people can learn from these discussions and we can get more people into the martial arts ultimately and keep them there because you know I'm sure you're on the same side of the table I am figuratively anyway.

**Fred Forsberg:**

Yeah.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yes, we're on opposite side of the table right now as we talk. 05:28 You know about the benefits the martial arts has especially for children and especially for children that sound like you and I were pretty similar as kids you know I'm not really taking the team sports, not really having a space where we felt that confidence and that comfort and being able to get kids in the martial arts and keeping them there for those benefits. Cool. So, I know you've got a lot of stories and heard you tell a lot of stories in the past so, I think I'm just as much interested to hear which one you're gonna pick, with this next question. What is your best martial arts story?

**Fred Forsberg:**

So many to choose from, I think it really depends on you know the demeanor of the crowd and you know what they're looking for, best martial arts story as in best success or most horrific fall or you know whatever it might be but I think as I progress more and more in rank you know obviously the higher you get in rank the more responsibilities you have to take on especially if this is something that you wanna view as a something that you do with your life and this is my life. Martial arts is my life, I foresee myself doing it until you know as long as I possibly can. Probably, one of the best I have is when I was around second degree black belt and I was slowly but surely starting to do more and more instructing. I had to do some you know calisthenics and warm up for Master Yordan as he'd go and you know talk to new students or whatever. But one night he came up to me on a Friday and our schedule at the time was Monday, Wednesdays and Fridays and he comes up to me and he was like Fred come over here for a second and I'm like yes sir, I need to tell you something I'm like what's that sir? He was like Monday night I am not going to be here. I want you to run all three classes, Kevin 07:30, Mr. 07:30 he's going to be here and he is going to be videotaping you for all three classes. So, I'm looking at him as he's saying this and I think you know him knowing me from when I was a little kid you know I just went paler than I already am and my eyes kinda went wide I'm like okay sir? He's like you're gonna be fine. I just want this



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to be something where a learning tool more or less. I want you to just do what you do just don't just imagine that he's not here videotaping you I obviously won't be there and I'm gonna look at the tape and we're gonna sit down together and we're gonna talk about what you did, what you can do better and the things that you didn't do quite so well.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Sure.

**Fred Forsberg:**

So, needless to say it was a wonderful thing to hear on a Friday night so I could clamor about it all weekend. So, Saturday and Sunday you know hardly slept and Monday I was like Oh men I gotta get up and go to school and then I gotta go home and do my homework and then I gotta go to class and try to figure out what I wanna do with all the students while I'm getting videotaped. Yeah, that was needless to say a teeth clattering experience for lack of a better term. So yeah that was.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

How did it go?

**Fred Forsberg:**

I think it had mixed results. He was looking for something very specific you know. Certain nervous ticks I had, certain things I said when I couldn't think of something to say. The students themselves seem to like it because I just went along with what I always enjoyed doing. Lots of calisthenics and lots of kicking drills.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah

**Fred Forsberg:**

And you know everybody loves the kick, so in that respect it went well but you know the next day or Wednesday night's class he comes in with what look like a 2 or 3 pages worth of notes he was like alright you sit down. I was like oh men, that should be interesting.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

You know it's interesting, I don't know if it's gonna come through on the audio but I could see the change in your face as you brought yourself back there and just it was very clear how nervous I mean it's been years?

**Fred Forsberg:**

Yes

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

7, 8 years if I'm doing the math, right?

**Fred Forsberg:**

Oh, probably longer.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Okay.

**Fred Forsberg:**

Yeah.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**



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Since this has happened and you're still nervous thinking back to that and I think we can all relate to something be it the first time we're asked to go teach something to a lower rank or at the first time we're expected to perform something in front of the class while everyone watches and hear your stories is about having to not just take one class but to take 3 classes and with very little notice and of course you cared so much, you know if you didn't care you wouldn't be nervous but it sounds like you did a great job and what do you think of teaching now?

**Fred Forsberg:**

Oh, I love it now, it's very, very easy for me. Like I said I'm you know pretty introverted you know for lack of better term shy but when I get in front of the class and I got start going through the you know beginning speeches, you know talk about upcoming events at that point I'm getting into my zone and by the time I have them lined up and have them started it's you know second nature to me at this point.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Cool.

**Fred Forsberg:**

It's definitely something I love to do, I enjoy teaching for Master Jordan. I love every single one of his students they're all awesome. So, you know it's definitely something I would love to pursue you know down the road.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

A teacher or school of your own.

**Fred Forsberg:**

Absolutely yes.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Okay great, so if you had to say that that experience gave you one thing what would it be?

**Fred Forsberg:**

Confidence, confidence is the number one thing. Confidence in you know knowing what I was doing and to be able to you know control the class and give them something fun and also informative at the same time and teaching became much, much easier after that, cause obviously I've had to do it a lot more since then and you know I guess with the lack of the camera staring at me and it just became easier.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I'm gonna guess that you know, your instructor was using this experience as a teaching tool knowing that you would succeed you know one of my favorite things in the martial arts is that in I don't know if I wanna say most but in most of the schools I have at least been part of, you test for your next rank when the instructor is pretty sure you're gonna pass. You know they don't throw you to the wolves expecting that you're going to fail, they expect that you're going to pass and that the test is really more personal and internal, do you know that you're gonna pass or you gonna make sure that you do and so this was kind of your test in a way that will sounds like you applied the same things so that's really cool. So, I want you to think about the path your life may have taken if you hadn't been involved in the martial arts. You know you got started pretty young so it's hard to say what, who you were with I know it's too much without the martial arts but think about where you would have been, think about where you are





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now. How are you better, how are you improved through your time in the martial arts, how has it made you a better person? You know if that's how you wanna put.

### **Fred Forsberg:**

It's honestly a tough question for me cause you know as you said I started very, very young and you know I have wonderful parents, I had a wonderful upbringing. I love my mom and my dad both very, very much but you know that can only go so far you know they are not there when you're in school learning, they're not there when you're you know getting an interview for your first job you know as much as you want them to be there you know to hold your hand and help guide you through, they can't be there and in Taekwondo and martial arts in general I think the biggest thing that it helped me was is my confidence, confidence level is you know I couldn't imagine even being able to sit here talking to you right now if I wasn't in the martial arts you know all things considered. I don't think I could get in front of a group of people and talk to them. I don't think I can do any of those stuff, I'm really not sure. It's just instilled so much in me in terms of that confidence that I really would know how else I would be.

### **Jeremy Lesniak:**

Okay fair enough and I'd say just from the bit that I've known you, you know I don't know I know you kinda well I wouldn't say I know you really well but when you're suited up and that belt's on when you are Master Forsberg there is no hint of a lack of confidence when I think back to meeting you and I remember the first time I met you is that my instructor's tournament the last year you win the tournament at Vermont Technical College. I heard of you, I know who you were but you there was a presence about you that carries through now whenever I see you within a martial arts capacity you are very confident very strong and it's something that when you talk about having a school of your own I have no doubt that if you want to you will and you will be successful because that's something that the good martial arts instructors that I've met over the years have. They have that presence I guess that's the best way to put it. So, let's switch gears, I just gave you a bunch of compliments and now we're gonna.

### **Fred Forsberg:**

Well I appreciate the compliments very much by the way, thank you.

### **Jeremy Lesniak:**

You're welcome, we're gonna go into something that I think is a little more rough. I want you to think about a time in your life where you know things weren't quite so rosy and how your martial arts training and experience was able to help you move through that and past that.

### **Fred Forsberg:**

The darkest point in my life up to this point was in January of 2005 and probably the 9, 10 months before that and March of 2004 my dad was diagnosed with Mesothelioma, malignant it's a rare cancer. typically cause by asbestos exposure so he was diagnosed in March and this was after a couple of months of what he thought was just a chest cold and he had to go get it checked and they biopsied it and you know found out to be much worse than it actually was. So in May of that year he had a Pleurectomy, where they removed his lung and the pleura lining around the heart and then they started him on chemotherapy and you know with most you know cancer stories you know it all seem to be going well you know he was recovering well but in November he took a turn for the worst and started



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getting sick again in December and the week before he passed in January you know they took him to the hospital for you know pneumonia and bronchitis and the Friday that we brought him home you know on a side note Vermont was the third coldest place in the world behind Antarctica and Russia I think. But you know we took him home and we made him comfortable and you know that following Monday a couple of days later he passed in the morning and you know that was very, very hard. Like I said before I love my family very much and you know to watch him you know succumb to the cancer was rough. So, I had to you know get back into professionalism and I had to call up everybody you know I had to call up my works say hey I'm not coming in. I had to call Master Yordan tell him that I wasn't coming in to help him with the school program that I told him to help, I was gonna help him with and you know it was very cold that day and my sister who also trains at the time, who trained at the time we were out doing some things for my mom and then we stopped to get gas and I looked at her and I told her I was like I don't know if I wanna go to class tonight and she's like I am 18:26 she's like yeah I think I need to and I was like okay, oh okay so I'm gonna go with you. So we went down to class and I still hadn't intended up doing anything that night but you know I walked in and you know the first thing Master Yordan did was call another black belt to run class and he came over and he gave us both a real big hug and he 18:48 said something's to both of us that you know will stay in between us but they were very encouraging and uplifting and he announced it to the class and I think one of the great things about martial arts and I've heard it in all the interviews that I've heard with you is that it's really a big family and you know he announced it to the class and everybody was so supportive and encouraging and helpful, you know coming up giving you hugs, giving words of encouragement that was just it was definitely what we needed. So, we ultimately both me and my sister, ultimately decided to take class and Master Y made it as cathartic as we needed. I mean we did some warm ups, made sure everybody you know just you know properly warmed up ready to go and it was just paddle kicking shield kicking, target striking for the entire night and you know nothing constructed just you know hit it and hit it as hard as you can. So, he knew we needed that release, to release that negative energy that had pent up the whole day. We were hitting the heavy bag, the standing heavy bag and we have probably close to 300 pounds of sand in it so it's hard to move and I was just trying to knock it over with ridge hands and ultimately pulled my pectoral muscle but it didn't matter. It was just the release that we needed that night for sure and ever since then, it's just been you know a healing process every single day because there's not one day goes by where I don't think about it and I don't think about my father and you know whenever I start to head down that path towards the negative thoughts martial arts has helped guide me back on to the right path that I need to be. whether it's just talking with someone, sitting down, doing a pattern or not sitting down but you know doing a pattern or you know calling up a buddy and say come over I need to hit something and you know get together and spar or hold targets for each other it's just been, it's been great, it's been wonderful to help me through that process cause I don't know if I could've by myself.

### **Jeremy Lesniak:**

It's not something everybody should have to go through by themselves of course and something we wish nobody would ever have to go through of course it's gonna happen to everybody you know if we're fortunate, we're a little bit older of course when you lost your father there's an opportunity when something like that happens to really find out who you are, what you're made up of and you found that



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you are part of the martial arts family you know probably 21:53 knew that you were part of that group but maybe you didn't realize how tight you were and I'm guessing you know, you know you described yourself as shy a couple of times so to know that you really had these people on your side and that's pretty great and you know can I, I'm gonna speculate that there are probably been some other things probably much more minor but other things that have popped up and probably had no doubt that you had that group to lean on after having this first occurrence to find out.

### **Fred Forsberg:**

Yes absolutely, absolutely my best friends in the world are all from martial arts classes you know obviously I had my friends from school but most of them did Taekwondo with us at one point or another so absolutely there's not a single person that I don't think I wouldn't be able to rely upon if I needed to ask of them. So, it's been good, lots of great people.

### **Jeremy Lesniak:**

Good. So, this question might be a little easier for you as this is the point where I ask people to name someone other than their instructors that has been really influential in their martial arts career and of course the first place we all go is our instructors. You've had one really true core instructors, you got all these other people to 23:29.

### **Fred Forsberg:**

Right absolutely.

### **Jeremy Lesniak:**

That you don't have to really exclude so who is that other person for you other than Master Yordan that's really helped you along?

### **Fred Forsberg:**

His instructor, GM Rick Dunlavy, going back to the situation with my father when he passed, GM Dunlavy who had always known of me up to that point because when Master Yordan opened the school it was his first school and Master Dunlavy will come down every once in a while, to check in with him to see that he is you know progressing on the right path and he really went above and beyond to help me out after my father passed. I remember a couple of weeks later at tournament that we went to he came up to me and he came right up with a piece of paper with his email address and his phone number on it and he says if you ever need to talk you let me know and I'll be glad to do that and which I think after that point we got closer much, much closer than we had been before and we have many wonderful conversations now about anything be at martial arts be about life, food whatever.

### **Jeremy Lesniak:**

Guns

### **Fred Forsberg:**

Guns yes with GM Dunlavy guns is definitely a good subject, definitely a good subject so he has been a major, major influence on me ever since so I would have to say GM Dunlavy.

### **Jeremy Lesniak:**

Cool, good.

### **Fred Forsberg:**

Which is great because it stays right in the family, cause that is our lineage it's GM D and Master Y, us so.





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**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah, it's nice when you can have that extended family and I think you can draw some parallels between the beauty of that and then you know the kind of the way a typical family was assembled on years ago you know parents, children usually the grandparents living in the house or at least next door or you know that kind of thing and all the benefits that come from that, you get that in the martial arts that's really cool.

**Fred Forsberg:**

Yes.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Now you mentioned competition so I don't have to ask you if you've participated in competition in fact I know competition has been kind of a big thing for you in the past so I'll just open this one up and let you say what you want about competition.

**Fred Forsberg:**

Well competition didn't start out as something I enjoyed doing. We were, when we were still very young when I was still very young Master Yordan told us to you know try to attend a tournament see what we thought so you know my dad took me up to a tournament up in New Port at the time and went out and absolutely hated it but like I had said you know what I was, What's that?

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Do you remember what you disliked?

**Fred Forsberg:**

Number 1 being nervous as all heck about it because like I had said before you know very shy young individual and not very confident at all to go up and you know perform what you thought was your best and you know not see anything out of it, you know looking at all these other kids you don't know getting these medals and me getting a participation ribbon which I think are horrible and I'm glad we don't do those anymore for the, this generation of young kids. So, after that I went home balling I know some of my classmates who are similar age went home balling it was just a very negative experience overall. so, for many years I didn't even think about competing didn't want to till around red belt when Master Yordan had an in-club tournament which was just a you know event to try to get the students interested in competitions and you know went there, didn't like it either. I did not, still wasn't something for me I was like nope I can't do this so another couple of years went by and probably around '99 I was you know first degree black belt he announce to the school that he was starting a competition team and what the competition team got you was a competition team uniform which I thought was wicked cool I mean cause back then we wear all traditional uniforms it's like oh you get to wear black pants, I'm like sweet sign me up and so we got the uniform and we got you know once or twice a month specialized competition team classes which were all very, very difficult, intense plyometric, cardio, calisthenics to get you, you know physically set you know to be able to spar you know to win that round.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Sure

**Fred Forsberg:**



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Or whatever it might have been or to talk about the presentation aspect behind patterns you know when to bow what to say you know don't turn your back on the judges panel, things like that nature. Those things, the uniform and the classes were appealing enough to me that I could justify the requirement that you had to attend 5 to 7 tournaments out of the year. So, the workout were awesome you know it was great to have the uniform, first few tournaments still hate it. Still hate it and at that point.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

For the same reasons?

**Fred Forsberg:**

For the same reasons, yes but at that point I was in the black belt division so you know to really cut your teeth in competing with black belts was something that didn't really make it much easier so I just remembered that the moment that it really started clicking for me was I believe in February of 2001 at that point you know I had done several tournaments and we were bracketed off there was 5 people in the division and I was one of the 2 unlucky souls that didn't get the bis and you know for those who aren't familiar with the bi-system when you have 5 people there's three bis and the first two have to fight in and whoever loses they're done you know you just take your gear off you know have a drink, watch them take off whatever you gotta do. I was paired up against someone that I was having difficulties with in competition you know I had one here and there but this one kid I could not 30:16 four times I had sparred him, four times I had lost and this was the fifth time and I got paired up with him and I'm like, I'm like this is over before it even started and Master Yordan comes over to me and he's like you're against 30:34 I'm like yes sir he was like and he just looked at me he just gave me this look and he walked away. Like that look I'm like oh men I might just get a good ear tune if I don't beat this kid so you know we set up we spar and I ended up being successful and beating him 3 to 2.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Okay

**Fred Forsberg:**

and at that point you know he just Master Yordan looked at me again and he gave me the same look and he just nodded and he walked away and that was that and at that point I ended up still taking second that day you know losing another sparring match but the big hurdle had him crossed. This kid I think was you know the hurdle I had to beat him and at that point it just became a lot easier and then tournament after that, a double gold and you know lost out in the grand championship but you know it was a slow progression but after that point it became much much easier and then slowly but surely started to enjoy it and then you know 2002 rolls around I know it's a couple of years down the road I finally won my first grand championship, 2 of them on the first day to be honest with you so that was were pretty cool and after that it was just I had a blast with it. It just became so much easier and the people that you compete with you know a lot of them you see every single tournament and instead of just being those strangers that you have to do your pattern and spar against they became friends and you know we'd chat you know before the tournament, you know chatted up we joke with each other you know during the actual match you know you kick him and say oh nice kick you know and they tap your glove and you know back and forth so it became I guess I would say it became easier because the whole thing became friendlier



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**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Okay and was that the friendlier atmosphere was that because you were approaching something differently or because of some other reason I mean, there's potentially a chicken and egg thing here with you enjoying it more because you did better or you were doing better because you enjoyed it more and I'm wondering if you have any insight.

**Fred Forsberg:**

I think the combination of the confidence you have to mention confidence that I didn't have when I was younger, gaining that along the way and just kind of opening up to you know the crowd to the people that just and you know I guess to be perfectly honest because I was getting more successful you know it just became more enjoyable you know to be in there and to be a legitimate contender as opposed to just the cannon fodder that you know would just get swept out the door in the first round so as my confidence grew and you know my ability grew just became more fun.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

So how about those times cause you kinda skipped through sounded like there were a number of tournaments you attended where you still dislike them because you were still not seeing you know as you would term it success. What kept you going back?

**Fred Forsberg:**

Well the competition team number 1

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Okay

**Fred Forsberg:**

I had to attend these events and compete if I wanted to stay on the team and that I wanted the workouts cause for me especially when I was younger it was just about performing the art, doing the art not necessarily you know going to see how well I stack up against other people but you know in that couple of years span I'm assuming you meant between 2000 and 2002 34:28

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah, we kinda went from you know you joked you were on the team, still hating it but you were still hating the competition aspect but enjoying you know the additional learning opportunities and wearing black pants which I remember what it was like when I got to wear black pants you know growing up that was awesome that was the best cause it didn't get dirty in 5 seconds.

**Fred Forsberg:**

Right absolutely.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I mean that was half of the advantage up to the point where you know you're starting to see some results in your eyes for the efforts that you're putting in so you it was the time that you were putting in, all that period was 2 years 10, 15 tournaments or so just being on the team is that all it took?

**Fred Forsberg:**

Well I guess well like I said after I overcame my hurdle with this kid that I had a hard time with it became more enjoyable during that span I guess I just kinda got ahead of myself and skipped the 2002 because that was the first grand championship that I was able to win.



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**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Okay, I understand.

**Fred Forsberg:**

I had been in the running for those previous 2 year but you know as you may know and you know black belt competitions you know could be a you know first degree black belt, first tournament in your first match could be against a seventh degree black belt one that has many, many years of experience so it was tough to get that next step so you know getting past the hurdle of disliking the competition to winning that first gold to winning that first grand championship was multiyear process for me but after that it was just you know I had to be very injured or very ill not to compete after that.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

So, the turning point was really that smaller victory, words, that smaller victory with this kid, your nemesis in a sense and finally being able to step past him that's what really did it for you.

**Fred Forsberg:**

Yes

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Okay

Absolutely

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

So I think there's an interesting take away there for those of us working with younger students maybe you know sometimes the participation ribbon isn't the best option cause it doesn't help them see success, it doesn't help them see that they've accomplished something, they've shown up okay that's good they participated, that's healthy but it sounds like the moral of your story here is that if we can give kids people you know not just younger people but give anyone something that they can look at and understand hey I got through X you know I did this, this was hard and now I can do it you know it can really break down doors and give them options. Would you say that's fair?

**Fred Forsberg:**

Absolutely.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Okay

**Fred Forsberg:**

Yes

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

That's what I was hearing in your story a while ago, wrap it up and put a ball on it. If you could train with any martial artist at all living or dead who would it be and why?

**Fred Forsberg:**

I'd probably have to borrow an answer from a previous episode, not necessarily like you know Chuck Norris, Bruce Lee but maybe either of my main instructors, Master Yordan and Master Dunlavey when they were younger and in their prime. I want to see how they differed in terms of their teaching style to be able to watch them in their heyday when they competed and when they actually performed on a nightly basis. I think that would be really really cool.



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**Jeremy Lesniak:**

What would you expect to be different about them?

**Fred Forsberg:**

With Master Yordan, probably not much. He's always been a terrific guy. He's you know down to earth, very very friendly, very open in many ways as far as you know being able to he can walk into a room and tell a joke to a thousand people no problem that's you know that's him, that's not me but he was always been very friendly but I do recall, you know when we started, when I started you know he wasn't as forgiving for lack of a better term.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Okay

**Fred Forsberg:**

You know, a little bit more rough and you know he was learning too at the time.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Sharper edges.

**Fred Forsberg:**

Sharper edges right, you know one of my favorite stories you know he'll probably share the same thing at some point is he has an old testing tape on VHS of us when we were going for like yellow belts and you know he asked everybody it was like a trick question you know and he asked you know me and I was and I gave him an answer and he's like okay what do you think, and what do you think and what do you think and we all you know gave our answers and he was like yeah, you're all wrong, that's all he said, that's how he finished it, it's like this is the answer he doesn't do that now, he tries to take anything that is negative out of the art, it's all about positivity and you know giving everybody that experience that they need to encourage them and to grow, not necessarily to beat them down, if you know what I mean. I remember you know once again paddle kicking if you hit the paddle holder, it was you know x amount of push-ups, if you didn't gi up it was x amount of pushups so if you didn't gi up and hit the paddle holder oh man you're pushing floor for a while so we don't do that anymore cause you know push-ups are you know an exercise that makes you stronger it helps you, you know with your core and your upper body and he didn't want them to think of it as a punishment or something negative so with him I would say just you know positivity as a goal 40:27 you know he still is you know fantastic dynamic instructor and presenter as he's always been, it's just more positive now and I would probably have to say you know I can only expect GM Dunlavey was the same you know as he gained an experience he realized that certain things you didn't have to do to get your point across the students. As they've said to me countless times, you know the information is the same but the instructors have gotten better.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Hmm 40:55 way to put it, cool. Do you have a favorite martial arts movie?

**Fred Forsberg:**

Tons, tons I could I list them off you know obviously the classics like you know Enter the Dragon, you know big favorite for me as far as Bruce Lee is concerned. Jet Li's stuff is fantastic, like Fist of Legend which I believe was a remake of one of the Bruce Lee films. I think it was game of death but I'm not too sure.





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**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I'll look that up, if that's true I did not know that.

**Fred Forsberg:**

Yeah, you know Jackie Chan stuff is fantastic but I like the more mainstream stuff with him like you know Rush Hour, his movie with Chris Tucker there but you know his old stuff like you know Legend of Drunken Master was fantastic as well. I really could go on and on on those so I couldn't really pick an absolute favorite out of them but you know they're all fantastic Tony Jaa you know he's a recent 41:56 one that came out and you know Ong Bak and The Protector are both fantastic films as well.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Those are all good ones for sure, and of course I'll have links to all those in the show notes at least of the IMDB pages so people can read a bit more about them and see if they wanna watch them.

**Fred Forsberg:**

Awesome.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Do you have a favorite actor?

**Fred Forsberg:**

I can't really say that I do you know all of them are fantastic and all of them have their you know strengths and their weaknesses and you know they've all put out fantastic films so you know I guess when I was younger I would probably have to say Ernie Reyes Jr because he was in you know he was Rafael in Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 2 and he was also Keno the pizza delivery boy in that film and you know his stuff was just fantastic. In fact, I dare say, better than the actual turtle's martial arts in that movie but you know what do you expect being encumbered with a 45-pound rubber turtle suit, you know probably can't do much with it so and

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I remember, we'll throw this, these interviews usually involve very little about me but once in a while there's an opportunity to share something that's appropriate. I don't remember what year it was, it must have been '94, 5, 6 somewhere in that range, my martial arts school we had a float in the holiday parade the 4th of July parade and well not 4th of July but anyway four of us the four high rank students were dressed up as the turtles and we only had paper mache shells on and what not and just doing basic forms was a nightmare in that so I can imagine a 45-pound rubber suit.

**Fred Forsberg:**

Oh yeah.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

As you were sharing I was reminding me back to that and the copious amounts of green paint that were on my body that day.

**Fred Forsberg:**

That was probably the hardest part to get rid of.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Washing off like for an hour.

**Fred Forsberg:**



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Hopefully the lake was warm.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah by that time of the year it was, how about books?

**Fred Forsberg:**

The I have a couple that come to mind immediately, the killing art, I can't recall the author's name but that was a really interesting read into the lesser known back story about how Taekwondo developed and how it came to be and the politics that they went through, that was really interesting.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Before we go on to your next one I do wanna throw out to listeners this is at least the third if not the fourth time this book's come up.

**Fred Forsberg:**

Oh no kidding

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah, so I know you're not picking it just because it was chosen before so basically if you have not read this book you need to whether or not you're a Taekwondo practitioner just keeps popping up it's a pretty great window into something that we don't normally get to see from anything let alone martial arts. So please continue.

**Fred Forsberg:**

The other one was actually recommended to me by GM Dunlavy, during one of his summer camps. Everybody was off to in their 3-mile run and I was standing on the beach with him and he told me to pick up the book of five rings by Miyamoto Musashi. You know far considered the greatest you know Japanese swordsmen of his time of anytime and it's a very interesting and his look into a strategy and his development as a martial artist so I highly recommend that as well. It's a short one too so it's a very quick read.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Oh, interesting okay, that one I have not read but I think that one popped up at some point with another episode. It's hard the more of these that we do and the harder it is to remember back what people were saying.

**Fred Forsberg:**

Absolutely.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I have to have some reference guide or something. Alright so kind of the last and the big one, any goals?

**Fred Forsberg:**

Well number one eventually, one of these days I would like to have my own program I totally see myself doing that in my future. Obviously not at this particular point because I absolutely love what I'm doing, helping with my instructor and the people that we get to work with on a nightly basis and the second one is kind of up in the air as far as competition goes I have taken a little bit of a break from it since 2010 was the last time I competed but I know a few students have asked me rather constantly are you gonna do it again? are you gonna do it again? and I told them we'll see in November so we'll see if I can get the spark back for it



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**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Cool

**Fred Forsberg:**

Coming up here

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I was speaking at someone who has seen you compete I hope that you do and I know it's very motivating to others around you.

**Fred Forsberg:**

Oh, thank you

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Awesome, anything else you wanna share?

**Fred Forsberg:**

For those you know that are currently training you know obviously stay at the course and always train for the right reasons and for those who you know might be new to martial arts that are listening to this whether you're nervous or afraid to do it or unsure, take that step, try it out you never know if you could just absolutely change your life.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Very good words, I agree whole heartedly. Well cool thank you. Yeah Master Forsberg I really appreciate you coming on talking to me and sharing your stories, they're wonderful and I appreciate being on [whistlekickMartialArtsRadio](http://whistlekickMartialArtsRadio).

**Fred Forsberg:**

Well thank you so very much it was a pleasure to be here.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

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