



Episode 28 – Mr. Mike Chat | whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com



Jeremy Lesniak:

Hey there everyone and thanks for checking us out it's episode 28 of [whistlekickMartialArtsRadio](http://whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com), the only place to hear the best stories from the best martial artists. Like today's guest Mr. Mike Chat. I'm your host Jeremy Lesniak and I'm also the founder of whistlekick, makers of the world's best sparring gear as well as some awesome apparel and accessories all for traditional martial artists. I'd like to welcome our new listeners and thank those of you coming back to the show. So don't forget our great products like our line of the light weight sparring gear, you can find more information about our sparring gear and the rest of our products over at whistlekick.com and all of our past podcast episodes show notes for this one and a whole lot more can be found over at whistlekickmartialartsradio.com and while you're on our website why don't you sign up for our newsletter, we've got some good stuff in there and we promise not to spam you or sell your address to anybody. So now to today's episode, on episode 28 we're joined by Mr. Mike Chat a lifelong martial artist and the founder of XMA. Mr. Chat has succeeded in all the ways a martial artist could ever hope to from competition to movies television and business. Despite all the success Mr. chat stays incredibly humble and throughout this episode he's constantly giving credit to those around him. I have no doubt that there's a lot more in store for this man and so with that Mr. Chat welcome to [whistlekickMartialArtsRadio](http://whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com).

Mike Chat:

Thank you so much for having me, excited to be here.



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Jeremy Lesniak:

It's an honor to have you on the show and of course I know a lot about you from some of your time on camera and I'm sure a lot of the audience does as well but what I'm gonna guess a lot of us don't know is how you got started in the martial arts so why don't, why don't you go way, way back and tell us how that got going?

Mike Chat:

Oh, that's an easy one. I grew up in the Chicago land area and my dad and I used to watch on Sundays, Samurai Sunday. It was in one channel I don't even remember what it was it's all day Sunday from the time I woke up so you know anytime, that they had kung fu movies and still you know the Sunday morning routine was to get up do the art work if we went to Church that day we could [02:31](#) night and then it would sit down Samurai Sunday, ramen noodles for lunch and it was like martial arts movie marathon and so that was it. Ever since I can remember we used to watch that film and that's all I wanted to do was just be able to do martial arts like that, fly through the air with weapons and do a million kicks and lands [02:57](#). so that's how I got started and you know it was years of that and then my parents said okay when you're 8 years old you can start they thought I think they thought that I would forget about it or lose interest because they thought it was too dangerous, they didn't want me doing it so 8 years old I was like [03:17](#) and we enrolled.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Cool. so, did your, was there any martial arts in your family was there something that you shared with you I think you said your dad like you know what's the connection there?

Mike Chat:

Yeah actually my dad was a martial art movie fan, he did some Muay Thai because my parents were Chinese Thai mix but grandparents [03:39](#) Thailand and so my dad grew up he did some Muay Thai but he wasn't [03:45](#) he came to the United States and he was just a martial arts movie fan so that was it really no other [03:55](#)

Jeremy Lesniak:

Okay but you probably picked that up from him we owe your you know your career at least in part to his training his love of the arts.

Mike Chat:



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Yeah absolutely.

Jeremy Lesniak:

I'm gonna guess cool. Okay so here you are you get started you're 8 years old you've been training for quite a long time and now you've done a lot. You've done a lot of great stuff, you've had the type of martial arts career that most of us would only dream of and I'm sure you've got an absolute ton of stories, great stories but if I had to force you to pick one and tell us what would it be?

Mike Chat:

[04:30](#) the most memorable story that stands out of my mind is when my manager at the time were working with you know the legendary Sammo Hung and he came to the United States to work on CBS martial arts, they had it on TV show. [04:51](#) to meet him work with [04:55](#) so I actually got to train with him and he trained me to double him on the show and so it was literally I was living the dream, I was living what I used to watch on TV what does every kung Fu movie have in it, it's you know kung Fu fighting and then there would like eat and prepare meals and so while we were training in Sammo's living room or in his backyard, he would be cooking and preparing lunch and it was dumplings and noodles and soup and like it was like a movie and then he would either yell out the window or [05:42](#) and say okay okay you know very good now try this one and then he would give us another move or stunt to follow [05:49](#) and it was [05:51](#) training and then we would eat lunch everyday for a month [05:56](#) filming for the show so I literally got to live out my dream and what was delicious is that you know I'm a huge Hong Kong you know film fan myself and so I grew up watching things Jackie Chan, Sammo Hung, [06:14](#) and then fast forward many years later here I am you know being trained by Sammo and he's literally cooking me through [06:26](#) it doesn't get any better than that.

Jeremy Lesniak:

That's gotta be quite a surreal moment to be in Sammo Hung's back yard and practicing moments he's given you and have him yell through the window that the lunch is ready. Did you have moments where you just kinda looked around and thought is this really happening is this a dream.

Mike Chat:

Oh yes absolutely, it's like we would drive there and then there was a point where I had a student with me who was also is competing at the time [06:52](#) and you know Sammo said [06:55](#) for the summer and training and Sammo said yeah bring [06:59](#). So I had a student with me as well who got to experience it was just like wow amazing. So yeah and you know that part is there is this hot sauce [07:14](#) he's like this one is the best one and he would always bring different hot sauce and he's like no no no no no but this



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one's the best one and then he would run out of the hot sauce and it was always about Chinese [07:30](#) hot sauce.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Do you remember what kind it was?

Mike Chat:

Yank Sing hot sauce there's is a famous restaurant in San Francisco called Yank Sing and they have the hot sauce and that's the one it was and so if I go to cabinet right now I've got 2 jars of hot yank sing hot sauce in my cabinet you go to XMA and the cabinet of XMA we've got a jar of yank sing hot sauce and it's like the family favorite

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah so is it really the best?

Mike Chat:

Absolutely, I mean for us I mean the flavor has got like many great hot sauces but this one is outstanding.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah cool awesome, I'll have to see if I can find it over here on the east coast.

Mike Chat:

Yank Sing they have it in like here they have 99 [08:26](#) market they have it in many different Asian markets but I don't know if it's [08:33](#) out there but it's quite popular. Well I'll I mean this will be the first hot sauce to make into the show notes. I'll see if I can find and post the link for everyone.

Jeremy Lesniak:

There you go.

Mike Chat:



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Well that's a great story and it's you know a lot of our guest tell stories that I said here and I'm a bit envious of but that's certainly one cause I remember that show. I remember watching Martial Law with my mom when I was a kid

Jeremy Lesniak:

Oh yeah

Mike Chat:

And I'd started martial arts by that point but just you know I remember he was a legitimate martial art and he was on TV and had a series and you could see the realism of you know the technical accuracy of what he was doing and that's what I remember being [09:15](#). So that's pretty great that you got to train with him for sure.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah. So, you've had a lot of paths, a lot of maybe tangents through the martial arts and you're at a pretty amazing place right now with what you're doing with XMA and traveling and then I'm sure you're doing a lot of traveling I see you on social media you're bouncing around but how would you say the martial arts has impacted you as a person?

Mike Chat:

Such a general question martial arts is my life. I don't know what I would be doing if there's not martial arts it was something that ever since I can remember within it was in my mind because of the movie that watched with my father and so it's just part of me everything for you know we tell our students if parents bring their kid to martial arts so that so that [10:13](#) strong, physically mentally emotionally and socially. We teach that now in our leadership program and so in every aspect from the way you know how I compare from my day the night before you know the very [10:28](#) and structure that's organized with the militaristic side and then [10:34](#) how I run my business [10:37](#) deal with people there is the mix of everything that we do it's not just about kicking and punching obviously you know truly it's a way of life and then how we not just improve and better ourselves but then how respect other people you know that our awareness that our society and our community and then you know the world around us it's just you know it just extends out. Everything that we do in martial arts starts from inside it goes to the outside whether it's the technique that we're comparing or where you know showing you know self-esteem and confidence in ourselves and our ability to then help others or train others or lead others and it always goes from the in to the inside. So, you know that's something that you know is probably the most important you know part of what we do. Self-development and then helping others.



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Jeremy Lesniak:

Great, so I can't imagine that your life has been all roses you know we all go through tough times we all have rough points and I'm wondering if you'll share one of those with us and how your foundation in the martial arts helped you move through it.

Mike Chat:

Absolutely, to make this one a quick one cause it was a very low point in my life I created XMA, married, 2 kids you know the house, cars you know living the life and doing very very rough just moved back from New York city and sold our condo there and then I went to a divorce and it was one of the things where we had mutually decided that you know hey we had been married for 15 years and we tried many different things and we were very diligent about trying to resolve our issue and we you know had been friends for you know 3 quarters of our lives at that point and so you know we decided maybe there's another way and you know we're both very very creative and so we decided well maybe being together wasn't the best way to do this raising our kids, the businesses everything cause everything was together so we decided to go down a different path and at that moment it was all about you know my failed failure department, failure as a husband, failure as a leader to be able to keep everything else going and together in my life but yet my own personal life I couldn't keep that together and I couldn't structure that I couldn't find the balance you know everything in martial arts that we do I was not doing in my personal life it was totally out of balance and you know we had both recognized that we had goals and that we wanted to take risks and make sacrifices but I did not have the foresight to see that even though we both agreed okay we're gonna sacrifice this in order to go after this. Then you know that's what's where things were out of balance and I was not you know experience enough to see those things coming so for me that was very difficult. The martial arts helped me to realize that even though this was not conventional even you know there was not conventional so then you know give up right, what do we say in martial arts never give up persevere

Jeremy Lesniak:

Right

Mike Chat:

You know you get knocked down you know failure is not a [14:20](#) get back up but we're trying to keep that going so everything in my mind you know about going the path of divorce was contradictory to everything that I believed in and everything that I taught in my life and so coming to terms with that was very difficult as you can imagine and then realizing through my martial arts and my position as a leader was that well the divorce rate was already 50% in the United States at the time, in Los Angeles it crept



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up to over 75% of people getting divorce and so maybe there was a new way and new opportunity to lead and to show you know what I can still be a leader for those who are married, those who had gotten divorced, those who are thinking about it by leading in a very positive way. My ex-wife and I 15:16 up after of 8 months of mediation we were able to work out the majority of our issue that we could not through marriage. We were able to work and not do divorce and so we worked very well together 15:30 you know inside XMA to this day she's one of the co-founders of the XMA world headquarters you know her name appears on our website and as a co-founder I give her credit 15:45 as my former partner and you know the mother of my 2 kids and we're doing it like our lives are very you know simple and smooth in that way we work very well together and support each other at that way and you know we are able to be very strong role models to others. So that's how the martial arts helped me through that so that's I mean you can imagine being a leader and seeing all of these things of you know perseverance and never giving up and you know finding solutions you know to have to go through that for me that was the most difficult moment of my life.

Jeremy Lesniak:

That's some pretty heavy stuff and I wanna thank you for being so open in sharing that, now was there do you think there's a lesson in there for people that that people could apply to their broader life you know about transitioning what might initially look like a failure to something else.

Mike Chat:

Absolutely, I have 16:46 marriage because that's very complicated but this thing that you know astounded me is doing the same thing over and over and over expecting a different result and at one moment you know it's all about having that self-awareness and recognition. When you recognize that something is not changing then you need to recognize number 1 and then make a decision either you kept thinking bad about it, whine about it cry about it complain about it or you can fix it, that's it. You have 2 choices because if you wanna feel bad about it go ahead see what happens right or 17:29 and surely the moment that you put your mind to finding a solution it starts to explore all of the 17:39 and then you start talking to people to put it out there 17:42 giving feedback and help and direction and guidance in a way that you never imagined but when you're still stuck in that mode of feeling bad and whining complaining about things it's such a negative state of mind that you close yourself off to the possibility of getting out of that 18:01 mentally and physically. So, number 1 it would be just recognition and most people don't have the awareness to just recognize that the 18:13 negative state you know even when people tell them, they deny it, they go into that denial stage first, what are you talking about, no I'm not, no I don't and coming to terms with that is the most difficult thing so really being aware and then from there there's a chance you know that you can change what's happening in your life.



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Jeremy Lesniak:

So, you've had your hands your feet figuratively and literally around a lot of great people but if you had to pick one of them that you would say was the most influential for your martial arts training who might that be?

Mike Chat:

Well that's my instructor Sensei Sharkey for short without a doubt he was like a second father to me and he is the reason why I was able to do everything in my martial arts life. He supported me he basically you know if I wasn't home he was the one that was raising me and [19:13](#) with opportunities and you know trained me created a community of support around me you know from the moment I started training with him to you know even when I left for college and [19:27](#) in California you know he's been an integral part of my life you know he's my oldest son's godfather you know we have I actually I just did an event for him at his school Sunday and you know after being [19:45](#) you know by far I owe everything that I've ever done in my life starting at 9 years old when I started the training with him you know to him. He is the single most important person you know outside of my parents that has helped me.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Wow that's you sound pretty fortunate that this was the gentleman that you started with

Mike Chat:

Absolutely.

Jeremy Lesniak:

That you started your training with you know a lot of the guests that we have on the show bounced around that they eventually a lot of us find that person, that person that not only is an instructor but is so foundational and so transformational

Mike Chat:

Yeah

Jeremy Lesniak:

But we don't all have the luck of starting with them so that's fantastic and even more so that your still in



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touch with that man that's still in your life.

Mike Chat:

Absolutely.

Jeremy Lesniak:

It's quite an honor.

Mike Chat:

I was very lucky, I'm very lucky to have him you know we are family and I mean I have many mentors in my life but without him nothing would have been possible you know I have you know I work with the American Taekwondo Association, ATA Martial arts, many organizations but with like in the ATA Chief Master Clark is the one who brought me in to the ATA. There would be no XMA ATA extreme without Chief Master Clark and then my current partner Chief Master Von Schmeling you know I would not have XMA and victory life skills and then the leadership program without my current partner Chief Master Von Schmeling but without Mike Dillard there would be no XMA he's the one that we partnered with to even create the extreme martial arts program so Mike Dillard , David Walsh, Frank Silverman the director of MAIA Mike Metzger over at MAIA these guys you know these guys are the reasons why you need to know about XMA so

Jeremy Lesniak:

Right

Mike Chat:

You know so yes it all started with Sensei Sharkey and then from then on now I have many many people in my life that helped mentor me and lead me so you know my chances of doing well are much greater than most because I have so many great people in my life to help me but I definitely feel very grateful and fortunate to have them.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Absolutely yeah and I think that any of us that have done anything in our life if we look really hard if we're honest with ourselves that success came because of the support of other people and I like the way you put it there you're more likely to be successful because you've had so many wonderful people at



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your back.

Mike Chat:

Yeah for sure there so many people and again we talk of school owners [22:29](#) okay who are you working with who is your mentors blah blah most people don't have one or they have and maybe that's in business or maybe they have a martial arts instructor but they don't have to manage a business and you know I have many mentors that helped me in you know my personal life, you know with my family business, martial arts training you know and so financially and then when you have people that can help guide you that know much more that are at a higher level then it just allows you better chances of doing the things that you wanna do reaching a lot of what you want because you have guidance versus [23:09](#) there's type of people that go on YouTube and they're trying to learn martial arts on their own some random people on YouTube versus actually having someone there that they can go train with and communicate and interact with you know to actually learn it in person, much different.

Jeremy Lesniak:

That's a great comparison and it's one that I hope those people that are listening you know those of you that are school owners that are you know even outside of martial arts that have businesses will take that advice to heart because it really really makes sense. All of the coaches that I have have coaches.

Mike Chat:

Yeah for sure even at the highest level when you go to the Olympics, Olympic athletes they have coaches standing right there next to them while they compete you know and you know the most successful business people in the world they all have mentoring and coaching. Yeah in every area of life people have that.

Jeremy Lesniak:

So, let's talk about your time in competition, there are a lot of guests that we have on the show that you know I can say Oh did you ever compete you know of course you competed I know you were pretty successful and a lot of what you've done has come out of the connections I'm sure that you made competing but rather than just run down a list of your accomplishments what was it about competition that you loved?

Mike Chat:

What I love about competition was pushing myself, challenging myself and then that's really the



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biggest 24:41 of competing is to test your 24:44 to test your limits and you know to do it for yourself. People that do it for other, their dad their mom their family their friends you know ultimately there's a point where you just cannot push yourself you know to a level to the highest level when it's not personal to you and so for me it was all about you know challenging myself to the highest level that I wanted it. I wanted to see how far I 25:15 I wanted to see how many times that I could win and how many places all over the world and you know how many years in a row. That's why I competed for 13 years nonstop, none of the competitors that I competed against that became famous along with me and are known in the martial arts worlds to have been part of the beginning of extreme forms and competition in that way, none of them competed stayed through they all took a break at some point, 1, 2 to 3 years off and then they came back as adults but I just kept doing it cause I loved it and that's why you know I became so good and that's why you know I was able to use it for so many other things in my life.

Jeremy Lesniak:

What do you think was different about your approach or your attitude that you were consistent for 13 years?

Mike Chat:

I believe I just loved it. I loved it so I wanted to do it and then my instructor created a community and environment and along my parents had the same philosophy so I was getting this support from all of the people around me where it's all about pushing yourself to reach the highest level, never giving up, working hard, going after the things that you want in life you know by earning them and you know when you don't win when you fall short you go back, you work harder and then you try it again and so it you know it was never about you know do I wanna take a break it was always about how far do I wanna take it and so there was never an ending point for me. There wasn't okay I'm gonna do this for 2 more years and take a break it was always about how far do I wanna take it and always about hey when I'm done to being as a junior then I wanna do the same thing as an adult. I just couldn't wait to get to the adult division at 16 cause there was 15-17 and at 18 you go to adult at 16 years old I wanted to jump to the adult division.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Why?

Mike Chat:

I wanted to start competing as an adult, well because I was been winning you know number 1 in the 16, 17-year-old division at 16 and then you know winning most of the tournament not all of them but most



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of them and so I just wanted to you know I wanted to compete against adults cause I thought I could beat them. You know looking back now I realized that no I wasn't good enough to compete versus the adults but my mindset was so strong and my training was so so so good for my instructor and my peers that they trained me and taught me and my parents taught me you know that I could do it if I [28:15](#). All I have to do is set my mind to it so my mind I thought I could beat all these so and then fast forward to first year of competition I had a rude awakening and I lost the first tournament and that motivated me I lost the second, the third, the fourth, the fifth tournament and then the 6th tournament of the year the US Open I won and I won the whole tournament and it was amazing I beat all of the adults I don't know how I did and then so that's through the year I've lost every tournament every single one. So, for me you know coming up as an adult you know thinking that I was gonna be you know the number 1 guy and it would give me such a smooth transition you know the reality was that even though I thought I knew that I could, the reality was I wasn't good enough but that made me work so hard that in year 2 you know it was much much much better but you know that was a result of my parents my upbringing and my instructor and the community that they created for me.

Jeremy Lesniak:

So, I know it's going back a couple of years but what was your emotional state like coming off of being such a dominant competitor in the youth divisions and then that first year you know other than the US open not performing to the level that you were used to. what was it like being 18 which you know I was an 18-year-old once a lot of the audience was 18-year-old man once you know we tend to have a fair amount of ego at that point.

Mike Chat:

Let's see here, you can interview Chris Casamassa and so and you can ask him how I was. I will describe myself as humble and respectful like like 1% of the time and then arrogant and cocky and way over confident the rest of the time and although I was extremely respectful to people to those who I was competing against that I wanted to be I was not so nice and it was motivating to me it was frustrating and motivating but it wasn't until after I won the US open and then I lost again you know I remember thinking back I'm like okay how could I just win the whole US open tournament and then lose right after and then lose again and then lose again like maybe I'm not doing something right, maybe they're doing that's much better than I am like I need to figure out real fast because I don't like losing and so it was a tough transitional year for me but you know extremely humbling and what I would like Chris Casamassa and I are good friends. We've kept a great relationship over the years, fast forward we went on to do [31:32](#) Masters together you know we're both from Los Angeles so you know I've been out to his black belt testings to help support his people you know we work together on ESPN doing commentary for the US open, we have a great relationship and you know I've told him I said you know I apologize for you know being such a punk kid when [31:54](#) behind it like yeah I remember you know calling him out and



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say you better be ready and it's you know I look back right now and it's like oh my gosh what an idiot I was. But we all have those moments I guess I just had it at that stage or moment.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah wow that's you know that wasn't quite where I expected you to go with all that but I'm glad that you did and I think it gives all of us some different perspective and it makes where you're at now that much more incredible cause you don't have that kind of reputation you know throughout the martial arts community and through none of our conversations you know on this call now and when we spoke in prior have I got an even a lick pf that in speaking to you it sounds like you flipped that 99% 1% around.

Mike Chat:

Yes, that was a brief one year hopefully it wasn't a year maybe it was just 6 or 8 months and not a year but yeah, I admit it I'm coming clean I have that moment that's for sure.

Jeremy Lesniak:

The confessions side of the martial arts area. So, if there's somebody that you could train with that you didn't get to that you know or haven't yet maybe it's a better way to put it you know and we'll even open that up somebody that's passed on or someone that is still alive who would you wanna train with?

Mike Chat:

Well that's easy all of the martial artist that have come in the past you know from you know Bruce Lee to now because I work so heavily with the American Taekwondo Association the Eternal GM H U Lee I became very very close to his son Master [33:54](#) Lee and he built this organization a master coming from Korea in Omaha Nebraska started with one little school and fast forward 40 years later they had over 1400 schools around the world over 250,000 members worldwide and there's a reason for that there's a reason you know that you know one man along with his partner at the time Master Richard, Richard Reed he created this organization from nothing and it has grown and you know withstand the test of time even long after he passed you know this organization is still growing so you know that would be someone that I would love you know I could go back and spend that moment an hour of training with somebody it would be nice.

Jeremy Lesniak:

That's a great answer so now to some of the lighter questions that we have those are all pretty heavy, I'm sure you're a movie guy, you've been in movies so you gotta be a movie guy. Do you have a



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favorite martial arts film?

Mike Chat:

Well I have to say pass you know, you know that's like the toughest question to ask for martial artist

Jeremy Lesniak:

Absolutely that's why it's the most fun.

Mike Chat:

You know 35:07 of course Bruce Lee, Jackie Chan cause I had 8 of my students do films with Jackie and not just stunt but actually have roles in the film. Jackie Chan, huge huge fan 35:22 you know Jet Li grew up 35:25 China movies but I have a personal relationship with Sammo Hung and I have to say that my favorite movie in martial arts is Painted Faces and he's done so many great movies and 35:45 but Painted Faces where this film as he did was he'd played the director of the painting opera and he trains you know in the movie it's 36:05 Sammo or him Jackie and 36:07 in the painting opera and Sammo played the director but I experienced some of that picking up a training when I was training with Sammo in his backyard. So, when he showed me that movie that was the most meaningful to me because you know of you know his role in my life in training me and then seeing how he trains and 36:33

Jeremy Lesniak:

Cool so would you say he's your favorite actor Sammo Hung?

Mike Chat:

Martial arts actor yeah absolutely.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah

Mike Chat:

I mean you know I love Jackie and Jet and now of course Donnie Yen 36:45 great you know amazing new martial artist and you know 36:49 coming out and Sammo's in the trailer so of course you know super excited to see that.



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Jeremy Lesniak:

You know who else is in that trailer that's kinda got some people pumped up

Mike Chat:

Oh, Mike Tyson

Jeremy Lesniak:

Mike Tyson

Mike Chat:

Well I don't have any personal connection with him I'm sure there's many people that are fans yes, yes Sammo and Donnie Yen you know for sure they're the big ones for me.

Jeremy Lesniak:

It's gonna be a great movie. I'm really excited for it for sure. How about books any inspirational books or educational books anything martial arts related you'd recommend to us?

Mike Chat:

Well when you say martial arts related books I think there are many books out there that are important for martial artists to read. So, if you ask any successful business person then they're gonna say what, they're gonna say you know [37:58](#) people. The greatest gentleman who wrote you know 7 habits of highly effective people you know everything from you know [38:11](#) books you know Larry [38:15](#) is a good one, you know the bible it's understanding you know the bible and many things that come out of that. So why does that apply to martial artist it's because you know martial artist you know you train in martial arts and it's supposed to be a lifestyle. So, living the lifestyle that you want also involves how to get the things that you want in life. So being happy with the people that around you socially and then what you do for your work you know to make money and your career you know how you're going with your family and then you know in the end what is it that you wanna pass on when you're done you know from for people it's either money or legacy you know most martial artist would agree that it's not necessarily about the money it's about living a legacy behind and so you know how to treat people and how to navigate this world I think is very important. So those are the books that stand out of my mind and you know obviously because I am an entrepreneur and have business experiences and I have very successful people around me and that way then those would be the go to books that I would start with



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versus any martial arts based book.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Okay those are great books absolutely we'll have those listed out at the website whistlekickmartialartsradio.com. So, what's keeping you going? do you have any goals anything driving you towards more success? What are you reaching for.

Mike Chat:

Well, that would be an entirely separate interview if you wanted to talk about all of the different goals that I have but what's in the immediate future is our expansion here in Los Angeles so fast forward we just opened up our second XMA victory location out in 40:08 hills, we got our world headquarters here so that's the second location and we're looking to do many more. On the entertainment side there's some acting project and then projects that I'm in the process of developing and producing and then long term you know the goal is to just continue to spread martial arts and to help schools better their business work more professionally so that way we can continue to creative positive impact in you know in our students in our communities to really grow you know there as the martial arts industry is struggling right and has been for the last you know 10 years and you know more schools are closing than are opening and this is because martial artist you know they the natural progression is to teach but martial artists aren't business people and so many of them open up schools but they're not necessarily versed in the business and then when they go to view the business you know they don't enjoy it and they just wanna teach but they cannot just teach cause they have to run the business and then that's where the disconnect and the breakdown as in they struggle and then they eventually have to close or sell their school.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah

Mike Chat:

So we're really focused on helping school owners to learn how to 1 better teach what they're teaching and then 2 you know learn how to how to run a business you know with it because you know many martial artists especially traditional ones you know they feel bad charging for what they're teaching you know they don't feel like they should be compensated well you know they feel they should just be compensated but not well and you know it's a mindset that we have but you know we help more students and more people you know than many doctors. You know many people that are out there we help them in so many ways we're in touch in a communication with them on a much more consistent



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basis and we do really great work and so you know we're in a reeducation phase right now with the industry you know to get them on board with seeing themselves as highly valued and then being able to charge for the services so that way they can do what they love because if they cannot attract new students and keep them then they will not be able to teach martial arts [42:25](#) have to do it on the side and that's okay but many martial artists [42:31](#) for a living and there's a way to do it you know so that's our mission is to really help school owners and martial artists do what they love if that's what they wanna do for their career.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Those are wonderful goals, absolutely and if people wanna follow you and learn more about how they can do that, how would they do that, how would they stay in touch with you and XMA?

Mike Chat:

Oh they can always get in contact, yeah they can contact me directly, my email address I'm sure you'll put it up chat@xmahq.com, you type an XMA and then you search address you know you'll be able to find that, through our social media channels we post a lot and what many people don't realize is that pretty much anything you wanna learn in martial arts technique, [43:18](#), forms, weapons, tricks, acrobatics you can learn on YouTube for free, you can get it all for free already if you look at our social media posts you'll see what we do at events and you'll see how we do it you can just copy it we post it for a reason one to highlight the students and 2 for other people to see what we're doing and then just copy it. We just posted you know videos from the last event and we did a balloon drop and inside the balloons were discount coupons, why did I post the balloon drop like what relevance does that have in a martial arts even well it's because cause we help school to generate revenues so that way they can reinvest it in training in their instructors buying new equipment update their facilities, that's important. Is it about the money in that moment yes, it's about generating cash but why? It's not about the money it's about reinvesting and bettering the services that we offer you know. So, it is and it isn't about the money but just having a better understanding and just to show the excitement of how students get so excited just by dropping balloons from the ceiling, it's crazy how excited they get and then they walk away having such a great experience, is there anything wrong with that? No is there anything wrong with having your students walk out of a school so excited you know saying wow that was amazing that was the best event ever and then they wanna go home and practice and they'll say they're so excited to come back to class the next week, nothing wrong with that and so you know that's why we do things like that so even just following you know follow me on twitter you know [@mikechat](#), and you know [@xmachat](#) for Instagram on my Facebook page and then watching what we do sure if you wanna go to another level and actually you know do trainings with us you know then absolutely we have trainings all over the world you know I'm going to Europe in a couple of weeks and I'll be in Barcelona [45:16](#), Lisbon, Portugal, Germany, Italy and you know we're out there helping people so you know whether it's here in



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the United States, whether it's in you know Orlando Florida, whether it's internationally there's always the opportunity so whether it's with myself with my partner, the ATA there's great opportunities out there now for education.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Good absolutely and of course everything that you just mentioned your twitter account, Instagram, email address those are all gonna be over the show notes so no worries if anybody's listening and they they're scrambling to wrote that stuff down. So, as we finish up any parting advice for those listening?

Mike Chat:

Any parting advice yes, I would say we talk about it all the time you know if you think you can't and if you think you you're right. Focus on you know we say focus 5% on the problem, 95% on the solution right. Acknowledge things for what they are and not worse than they are and when there's a problem, when there's a mistake when you fall down you know when you get trapped in a point in your life, physically mentally you know emotionally whatever it is you know you have 2 choices you can either feel bad about it or you can fix it and that's it you look it in black and white terms that makes it so much easier you know it's when you complicate things by over thinking it then it makes it really difficult. So, whatever the goal is that you have whatever it is that you want in life, just focus on that and when there's a problem, when there's a challenge just keep focusing on what you want. Talk to people you know find people that can help you lead you and mentor you you know put it out there to the universe and just keep focusing on it you know and then as long as you have you know beliefs and you have strong people around you that will support you then you know you can achieve the things that you want whether that's happens whether it's financial whether it's you know a competition goal or you know anything else then just keep focusing on the things that you want and then going after that and you know find people to help you don't try to do everything on your own that's the most difficult part trying to do it on your own.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Very well and an excellent point to end so I really appreciate you being here.

Mike Chat:

Absolutely thank you.

Jeremy Lesniak:



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