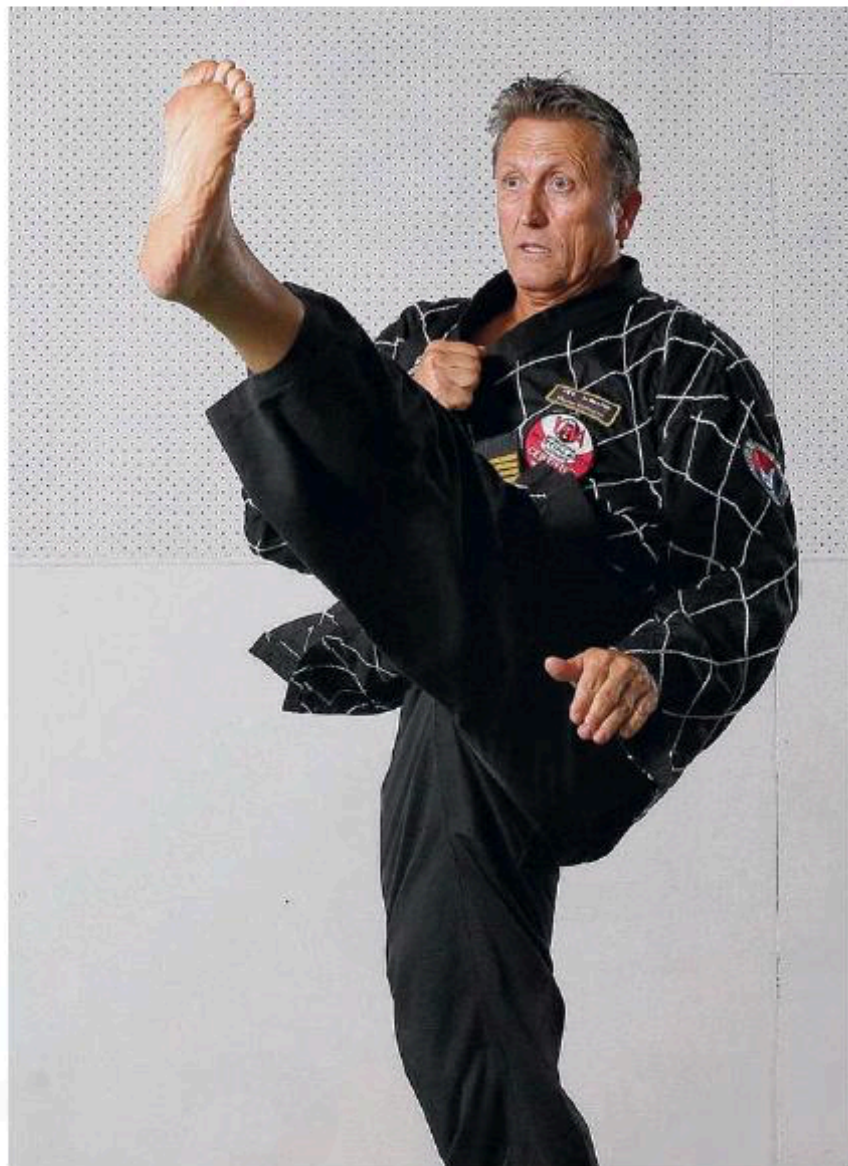


Martial arts to movies



Martial artist John Gill at his studio.

Picture: Adam Ward

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Action star wins studio contract, hopes to fulfil acting ambitions

HE IS renowned on the north shore for teaching self-defence, but John Gill could be set for a career change.

The Chatswood native scooped the Action Star Competition in Homebush on Sunday, claiming the prize of a guaranteed movie contract with Anima Studios and opening the door to stardom. Being a movie star is something that has always been on his mind.

"It's always something I've wanted to do, but what was I supposed to do, ring up an American producer and say 'Here I am'?" he said.

"This is it; the competition could be picked up as a reality TV series in America or Asia as well."

Gill, a 13 time world champion, struck a deal with his Action Star final opponent Carl Claassens to ensure a shot at his dream. "We did a pact before we went on. I said

whoever wins should ask for the other guy to be in the movie too," Gill said. "He's got really good kicks ... If I got a main role, he'd be really good coming at me."

However, Gill said he'd prefer to stick with his self-defence moves, rejecting gun and knife violence.

"I'd prefer not to have killing or guns in the movie; I'd prefer to disarm them. I want nonviolent self-defence, like if I lock someone up or hold them or throw them," he said. "That's what was in my routine the other day. I went nuts on punches only when they pulled a knife on me — it only escalates when it gets serious."

However, if Gill's name goes up in lights, his pupils needn't worry. He said: "Whatever happens, I want to keep teaching. If I do make it, or make some money, I want to teach for free."