

Profiles of Martial Artists with Disabilities

WELCOME TO THE PROFILES OF MARTIAL ARTISTS WITH DISABILITIES BLOG

I hope that this blog will inspire other people with disabilities to enter into the martial arts. In addition, I encourage instructors and school owners to use this blog as a resource for their existing students with disabilities, or to bring in new students.

This blog is by no means complete. I would appreciate hearing about new nominations, organizations, articles, links, etc. to be added. Please send me an email to info@not-me.org regarding what you would like to see added to this blog.

All the martial artists are listed alphabetically.

Sincerely,

Erik Kondo

BILL AUVENSHIRE



HOMETOWN: Auburn, IL
TYPE OF DISABILITY: paraplegic from a car accident.
AGE: 53
OCCUPATION: Martial Arts School Owner
PERSONAL: Married
MAIN STYLE OF MARTIAL ART: Tae Kwon Do
SCHOOL AFFILIATION: Auvenshine's School of Taekwondo
CURRENT RANK:
TIME INVOLVED IN THE MARTIAL ARTS WITH A DISABILITY: 25
WEBSITE: <http://www.auvtkd.com>
VIDEO LINK:
OTHER ACTIVITES:
CONTACT: info@auvtkd.com

Auvenshine is a bit of an oddity in martial arts. In December of 1995, Bill had an encounter with an unseen patch of ice and a power line pole that left him paralyzed from the waist down. Even that did not dissuade him from following through with his plans to open a dojang. Though Mr. Auvenshine teaches from a wheelchair, his students are of a high caliber. In keeping with the idea of "giving back", Mr. Auvenshine teaches his art to those with serious disabilities at no charge.

BOB BANHAM



HOMETOWN: Norwich, England
TYPE OF DISABILITY Multiple Sclerosis
AGE:
OCCUPATION: Owner/Chief Instructor of Martial Arts School
PERSONAL: Married
MAIN STYLE OF MARTIAL ART: Hanmudo
SCHOOL AFFILIATION: Chilsong Martial Arts
CURRENT RANK: 6th degree black belt
TIME INVOLVED IN THE MARTIAL ARTS WITH A DISABILITY: 22 years
WEBSITE: < <http://www.disma.co.uk/>
VIDEO LINK: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BuKBK-SoxwQ>
OTHER ACTIVITIES:
CONTACT: mail@chilsong.com

Bob Banham started martial arts in 1967, at the age of 14. He was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 1986 and although he now uses a wheelchair, he holds a 6th dan in Hanmudo and a 4th dan in Taekwondo and still practices and teaches at Chilsong Martial Arts, Norwich UK where he is headmaster.

JOE BEIMFOHR



HOMETOWN: Alexandria, VA
TYPE OF DISABILITY Double Leg Amputee
AGE: 31
OCCUPATION: Retired Military
PERSONAL: Married
MAIN STYLE OF MARTIAL ART: Dan Zan Ryu Ju-Jitsu

SCHOOL AFFILIATION:
CURRENT RANK:
TIME INVOLVED IN THE MARTIAL ARTS WITH A DISABILITY:
WEBSITE: <http://www.myspace.com/ablewarriordefense>
VIDEO LINK:
OTHER ACTIVITIES:
CONTACT:

Joe is a retired Army Staff Sergeant who was severely injured while fighting in Iraq.

He is the co-founder of the Able Warrior system. The system is in its infancy, and it will continue to be developed and perfected over time. Joe is committed to teaching people who have various disabilities that self defense is possible. He has taught soldiers who have amputations of the legs, arms, and even some who are blind how to defend themselves. His mission is to show people that self defense can be learned by anyone.

CARLITO BONJOC JR



HOMETOWN: Stockton, CA
TYPE OF DISABILITY Spina Bifida
AGE: 46
OCCUPATION:
PERSONAL:
MAIN STYLE OF MARTIAL ART: Phillipino Martial Arts
SCHOOL AFFILIATION: MATA SA BAGYO
CURRENT RANK: Master
TIME INVOLVED IN THE MARTIAL ARTS WITH A DISABILITY: 40 years
WEBSITE: <http://bagyo.net>

VIDEO LINK: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k--LYB-vb-k>

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

CONTACT:

Guro Bonjoc was born in the Philippines where he began his martial arts studies at an early age. Under the tutorage of his father Grandmaster Carlito Bonjoc Sr., young Carlito was taught his first Filipino martial arts system. This was his family's system known as the Cadiz-Lapu Lapu Escrima system.

In 1979 Carlito Jr. was introduced to the distinguished Grandmaster Angel Cabales. With his father's approval, Carlito learned the Cabales Serrada system. In June of 1983 Carlito Jr. obtained an advanced degree in the Cabales Serrada system. After this achievement, Grandmaster Cabales continued to instruct Carlito privately in the finer points of the Serrada system. Due to this training, Carlito became a knowledgeable and respected Guro in the Angel Cabales Academy.

Today Master Bonjoc continues to teach the Filipino martial arts as he was taught by his masters. Through videos, group instruction, seminars and private lessons, Carlito hopes to share this aspect of Filipino culture with all who wish to learn.

YVES SOUTY BONNOT



HOMETOWN: France

TYPE OF DISABILITY Paraplegic from a motorcycle accident at age 18.

AGE: 35

OCCUPATION: Business

PERSONAL:

MAIN STYLE OF MARTIAL ART: Tae Kwon Do

SCHOOL AFFILIATION: academie de taekwondo claud perdigon
CURRENT RANK: 1st degree black belt / National arbitrator
TIME INVOLVED IN THE MARTIAL ARTS WITH A DISABILITY: 17 years
WEBSITE: <http://www.taekwondo-brie.com>
VIDEO LINK: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8nl607s7gyY>
OTHER ACTIVITIES: self-defense, stick fighting, nunchaku, hapkido
CONTACT: galerietkd@warp.fr

DUSTIN CARTER



HOMETOWN: Hillsboro, OH
TYPE OF DISABILITY: Qaudruple amputee from a blood infection at 5 years old.
AGE: 18
OCCUPATION: High school student
PERSONAL: Single
MAIN STYLE OF MARTIAL ART: Wrestling
SCHOOL AFFILIATION: Hillsboro High School
CURRENT RANK:
TIME INVOLVED IN THE MARTIAL ARTS WITH A DISABILITY: 5 years
WEBSITE: <http://www.bizzyblog.com/2006/02/15/positivity-if-you-think-hes-different-you-dont-know-dustin/>
VIDEO LINK: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zvxc8S5ybS4>
OTHER ACTIVITIES:
CONTACT:

Carter, 18, is a 103-pounder whose legs end at his hips, whose right arm stops just after his elbow and whose left arm is even shorter. He had the rest taken

from him at age 5 because of a blood infection that required extensive amputations.

His life is not easy, but he gets by just fine – particularly on the wrestling mat. His scream was his guttural recognition that he had earned a berth in the state’s Division II wrestling tournament, finishing third in his region and carving out his place among the best wrestlers in Ohio. On Thursday in Columbus, he won a match in triple overtime to reach the quarterfinals.

KEN CHUN



Currently holds a Blue tip belt in Trident Defense System, which is a combination of the arts of Muay Thai, Inosanto-Lacoste blend Kali, and Jun Fan Gung Fu/Jeet Kune Do Concepts under Sifu Pat Tray.

HOMETOWN: Woodbridge, VA

TYPE OF DISABILITY Spina Bifida

AGE: 37

OCCUPATION: Assistant Office Manager

PERSONAL: Married

MAIN STYLE OF MARTIAL ART: Trident Defense System

SCHOOL AFFILIATION: Trident Academy of Martial Arts

CURRENT RANK: Blue Belt

TIME INVOLVED IN THE MARTIAL ARTS WITH A DISABILITY: 25 years

WEBSITE: http://inosanto.com/pages/mawd_biographies_kenchun.html

VIDEO LINK:

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

CONTACT: kjchun@comcast.net

Ken has been actively studying different martial arts since 1983. The two that he considers to be his main styles in his background are Shindokan Tozan-Ryu and the combination of the arts of Muay Thai, Filipino Martial Arts, and Jun Fan Gung Fu/Jeet Kune Do Concepts that he currently studies at Trident Academy of Martial Arts. Along the way he has dabbled in basic joint locks, pressure point applications, and anything else that he finds useful for self-defense from a wheelchair.

Ken also has a line of clothing called "Wheeled Warriors". To take a look or to buy goto: <http://www.cafepress.com/wheeledwarriors>

BAXTER HUMBY



HOMETOWN: Los Angeles, CA

TYPE OF DISABILITY: Born with only one hand.

AGE: 36

OCCUPATION: Kickboxing competitor

PERSONAL: Single

MAIN STYLE OF MARTIAL ART: Muay Thai

SCHOOL AFFILIATION:

CURRENT RANK: Black Belt

TIME INVOLVED IN THE MARTIAL ARTS WITH A DISABILITY: 19 years

WEBSITE: <http://www.baxterhumby.com/>

VIDEO LINK: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SAkPnsMKmVw>

**OTHER ACTIVITIES:
CONTACT:**

Baxter Humby was born in Winnipeg, Canada, in 1974. Known as "The One Armed Bandit" because he has no right hand. It was amputated at birth, just below his elbow, after becoming entangled with the umbilical cord.

Baxter is the current IMTC (International Muay Thai Council) World Super Welterweight Champion. He holds a number of different title belts including IKKC USA Kickboxing Champion, IMTC World Middleweight Champion and IKBA International Kickboxing Champion.

His interest in sports led him to take up running at age 11 and martial arts at 17. He ran for the Canadian National Track Team in Barcelona in 1992 and in Berlin in 1994.

He won the Canadian Super Welterweight Kickboxing Championship in 1996, and afterwards, in 1997, moved to California to pursue a professional kickboxing career.

JASON KEATON



HOMETOWN: Elizabethtown, KY
TYPE OF DISABILITY: Legally Blind

AGE: 28

OCCUPATION: Mixed Martial Arts Competitor

PERSONAL:

MAIN STYLE OF MARTIAL ART: Brazilian Jui Jitsu

SCHOOL AFFILIATION: Cyclone MMA

CURRENT RANK: 1st Degree Black Belt

TIME INVOLVED IN THE MARTIAL ARTS WITH A DISABILITY: 24 years

WEBSITE: [http://profile.myspace.com/index.cfm?](http://profile.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=user.viewprofile&friendID=100100958)

[fuseaction=user.viewprofile&friendID=100100958](http://profile.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=user.viewprofile&friendID=100100958)

VIDEO LINK: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wW6KesVaHJg>

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

CONTACT:

ELIZABETHTOWN, Ky. -- In an interview, nothing seems unusual about Jason Keaton. The 28-year-old mixed martial artist is 5-foot-11 and 190 pounds of mostly muscle on a wiry frame. He has short-cropped blond hair, glasses and is well-spoken, with a voice that sometimes betrays the passion he feels for his sport and way of life. He is courteous and patient with newcomers asking questions.

But his nickname is "Blind Fury" for a reason. Keaton is legally blind.

Keaton's sight is not an issue. He rarely brings it up himself and, as his opponents will note, is not totally blind, only legally.

Asked how he survives in the ring, he said his opponents have to be close enough for him to see them to strike.

"You learn to keep your hands up," he said

ERIK KONDO



HOMETOWN: Lexington, MA

TYPE OF DISABILITY: T(4-5) complete spinal cord injury from a motorcycle accident at age 19.

AGE: 43

OCCUPATION: Real Estate and Business

PERSONAL: Married with three children

MAIN STYLE OF MARTIAL ART: Jujitsu

SCHOOL AFFILIATION: New England Small Circle Jujitsu, Woburn, MA

CURRENT RANK: 2nd degree black belt

TIME INVOLVED IN THE MARTIAL ARTS WITH A DISABILITY: 13 years

WEBSITE: www.not-me.org

VIDEO LINK: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oUZ4-2uXvro>

OTHER ACTIVITIES: Handcycling, Scuba Diving, Working out, Skiing

ALMA MATER: Bates College

CONTACT: info@not-me.org

Founder of NOT-ME! Inc. a non-profit organization that provides education on self-defense to at-risk individuals. The main focus of NOT-ME! training is "what it takes" to survive aggression and the mental and emotional aspects of self-defense as illustrated by the NOT-ME! strategy of DECIDE DETER DISRUPT DISENGAGE.

BOB KUNKEL



HOMETOWN: Niagra Falls, NY

TYPE OF DISABILITY: Fused leg from Vietnam war injury.

AGE:

OCCUPATION: Retired Military

PERSONAL: Married

MAIN STYLE OF MARTIAL ART: DanZan Ryu Jujitsu

SCHOOL AFFILIATION: Kin-Tora Fitness Center

CURRENT RANK: Renshi,rank yodan in DZR with AJJF and sandan with Shoshin Ryu

TIME INVOLVED IN THE MARTIAL ARTS WITH A DISABILITY:

WEBSITE: <http://www.geocities.com/kintora/danzan.html>

VIDEO LINK:

OTHER ACTIVITES:

CONTACT:

Bob Kunkel served in Vietnam and spent a year and a half at Fort Devens Army Hospital in Massachusetts where he was put back together. He has put his “experience” with pain and injury to good use with trips to Walter Reed over the past four years. As a sensei in Jujitsu Bob knew that one of the issues an injured warrior faces is the feeling of being unable to defend yourself or your loved ones. Through hands on jujitsu lessons he teaches anyone who wants to learn how to be powerful again.

DAVID LEE



HOMETOWN: Enfield Middlesex (UK)

TYPE OF DISABILITY: Paraplegic from a car accident.

AGE: 52

OCCUPATION:

PERSONAL:

MAIN STYLE OF MARTIAL ART: Taekwondo

SCHOOL AFFILIATION: Ultimate Strike & Disability Martial Arts Budo Academy

CURRENT RANK:

TIME INVOLVED IN THE MARTIAL ARTS WITH A DISABILITY: 17

WEBSITE: <http://www.disabilitymartialartsassociation.co.uk/>

VIDEO LINK:

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

CONTACT:

David now 52 has been involved in martial arts since he was 9 years old. David also runs the Disability Martial Arts Association, the first martial arts charity. They have set up a data base of Martial Arts Academy's School's and Club's in the U.K. that will teach people with all types of disabilities and their families. When people phone them they will then be able to give them a telephone number of the said organisation. David said they are trying to help people with all types of disabilities into martial arts to help them get fit, and lead a better way of life.

JOHN LIBUTTI



HOMETOWN: Hoboken, NJ

TYPE OF DISABILITY: Single leg amputee and paralysis of one arm from a motorcycle accident.

AGE:

OCCUPATION:

PERSONAL:

MAIN STYLE OF MARTIAL ART: Goju Karate

SCHOOL AFFILIATION: ShobuDo GoJu Jitsu Kai

CURRENT RANK: 3rd Degree Black Belt

TIME INVOLVED IN THE MARTIAL ARTS WITH A DISABILITY: 18 years

WEBSITE: <http://thatsmysatori.blogspot.com/2007/09/osu-yes-it-would-appear-that-my-old.html>

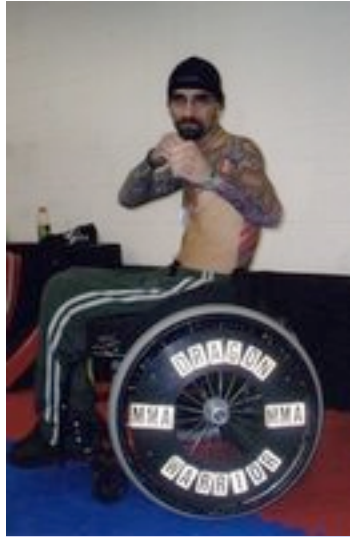
VIDEO LINK: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SWTs1qTXdNE>

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

CONTACT: <http://activerain.com/blogs/homebutti>

John LiButti is an above knee amputee and has a paralyzed left arm as a result of a motorcycle accident 18 years ago. John died at the scene of the accident but was given a second chance, which makes him a "lover of life." John teaches and trains in karate, jujitsu, akido and self-defense. He holds the title of Sempai Shodan (assistant instructor) and is a first-degree black belt. John trained with Grand Master Ted Vollraft, a double amputee who taught out of a wheelchair, and founded Martial Arts for the Handi-capable. John is a certified peer visitor with the Kessler's Institute Amputee Peer Support Group. John practices karate three times a week, weight trains, and enjoys yoga. John is a Real Estate agent specializing in water front properties in Hudson County, New Jersey.

STEPHEN PENTO



HOMETOWN: Woburn, MA

TYPE OF DISABILITY: L1 incomplete spinal cord injury from a car accident at age 20.

AGE: 37

OCCUPATION: Trainer and martial arts school owner

PERSONAL: Single

MAIN STYLE OF MARTIAL ART: Mixed Martial Arts

SCHOOL AFFILIATION: Dragon Warrior Mixed Martial Arts

CURRENT RANK: 6th degree black belt in Shodakan

TIME INVOLVED IN THE MARTIAL ARTS WITH A DISABILITY: 17 years

WEBSITE: www.dragonwarriormma.com

VIDEO LINK:

OTHER ACTIVITIES: Working out, Pool, Tattoos, Foosball

CONTACT: dragonwarriormma@yahoo.com

Sensei Stephen M. Pento from Dragon Warrior trains Mixed Martial Arts. He is a 6th degree black-belt in Kenpo, a 6th in Shotokan, a 4th in Jujitsu and a 3rd in Judo. Steve began his training in 1984 when he was 13 years old. Four days before his twentieth birthday he was involved in a tragic car accident and broke his back. From his wheelchair, he retrained himself and started teaching MMA (mixed martial arts). Stephen currently has four students who hold black-belt ranks. He has 48 students and 10 registered, licensed fighters in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Stephen, and two of his instructors, are

also licensed corner men. He and his students have participated in various tournaments. Recently, at the Methuen Classic, Steve and his students took home seventeen trophies including the championship. Stephen took home a first place in the black belt weapons division. Also, he just placed 3rd in flyweight novice at Grappling Quest 10

IAN ROSE



HOMETOWN:

TYPE OF DISABILITY Visually Impaired

AGE:

OCCUPATION:

PERSONAL: Married

MAIN STYLE OF MARTIAL ART: Judo

SCHOOL AFFILIATION:

CURRENT RANK:

TIME INVOLVED IN THE MARTIAL ARTS WITH A DISABILITY:

WEBSITE: http://www.sportingchampions.org.uk/sc2/champions_profile.php?champion_id=83

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

CONTACT:

After taking up Judo for self defence, Ian swiftly changed from being a shy seven year-old who was teased about his thick glasses into a world-class Paralympic champion. His story is unique because he reached the pinnacle of sports success while building up a successful career. Ian enjoys sport but he is foremost a dedicated family man, with two children and a very supportive wife - the perfect team.

In sport he gained his black belt at 17. In the same year, (1989) he was selected to fight his first Visually Impaired (VI) European Championships, winning bronze. From that point Judo became a way of life. He succeeded in both fully sighted and VI competitions and has been selected for four Paralympic Games.

RON SCALON



HOMETOWN:

TYPE OF DISABILITY: Paraplegic from automobile accident at age 9.

AGE:

OCCUPATION:

PERSONAL:

MAIN STYLE OF MARTIAL ART: Kung Foo San So

SCHOOL AFFILIATION:

CURRENT RANK: Master

TIME INVOLVED IN THE MARTIAL ARTS WITH A DISABILITY:

WEBSITE: < <http://upbeat.net/ROLLING/ROLLING.HTM>

VIDEO LINK:

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

CONTACT:

JURGEN SCHMIDT



HOMETOWN: Ashville, NC

TYPE OF DISABILITY: Paraplegic

AGE:

OCCUPATION:

PERSONAL:

MAIN STYLE OF MARTIAL ART: Combat Hapkido

SCHOOL AFFILIATION: International Disabled Self-Defense Association

CURRENT RANK: Master

TIME INVOLVED IN THE MARTIAL ARTS WITH A DISABILITY:

WEBSITE: www.defenseability.com

VIDEO LINK: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ux_JWl3AWLE

OTHER ACTIVITIES: Watercraft

CONTACT:

Master Schmidt developed the IDSA Defense-Ability Combat Hapkido, Self Defense for the Disabled Martial Arts style and produced several instructional programs for individuals, instructors and healthcare professionals.

DON SITTERS



HOMETOWN: Minnesota

TYPE OF DISABILITY

AGE:

OCCUPATION: Martial Arts Instructor

PERSONAL: Single

MAIN STYLE OF MARTIAL ART: Karate

SCHOOL AFFILIATION: Sanano Martial Arts

CURRENT RANK: 2nd Degree Black Belt

TIME INVOLVED IN THE MARTIAL ARTS WITH A DISABILITY:

WEBSITE: <http://www.myspace.com/wheelsffs>

VIDEO LINK:

OTHER ACTIVITIES: Co-capt of Team Apocolypse Mixed Martial Arts

CONTACT:

SHAWN WITHERS



HOMETOWN: Scarborough, ME
TYPE OF DISABILITY Stroke
AGE:
OCCUPATION: Martial Arts School Owner
PERSONAL: Married
MAIN STYLE OF MARTIAL ART: Broken Wing Kempo
SCHOOL AFFILIATION: Natural Motion Martial Arts
CURRENT RANK: 3rd degree black belt
TIME INVOLVED IN THE MARTIAL ARTS WITH A DISABILITY:
WEBSITE: < <http://www.naturalmotionmartialarts.com>
VIDEO LINK:
OTHER ACTIVITIES:
CONTACT: contact@NaturalMotionMartialArts.com

Shawn Withers, a certified instructor, holds a 3rd degree Black Belt in Broken Wing Kenpo and a 2nd degree Black Belt in Shaolin Kenpo. He also holds a Black Belt in O-Ki-Tao and has earned the rank of Canemaster from Grandmaster Mark Shuey. Mr. Withers, a stroke survivor, has worked with a variety of students both disabled and non-disabled. He has extensive experience working with disabled students making him a pioneer in the field of teaching martial arts to the physically challenged. Mr. Withers is a 2005 inductee into the USA Martial Arts Hall of Fame and a 2007 inductee into the Universal Martial Arts Hall of Fame. He is coauthor of BROKEN WING, an autobiography to be published in January, 2008.

COLM WHOOLEY



HOMETOWN: Ireland
TYPE OF DISABILITY Paraplegic from a motorcycle accident
AGE:
OCCUPATION:
PERSONAL:
MAIN STYLE OF MARTIAL ART: Jun Fan Jeet Kune Do
SCHOOL AFFILIATION:
CURRENT RANK: Trainee Level 2 Instructor
TIME INVOLVED IN THE MARTIAL ARTS WITH A DISABILITY:
WEBSITE: <http://www.wheelchairjkd.com>
VIDEO LINK:
OTHER ACTIVITIES:
CONTACT:

THE MARTIAL ARTISTS

[Bill Auvenshine](#)
[Bob Banham](#)
[Bob Kunkel](#)
[Carlito Bonjoc Jr.](#)
[Colm Whooley](#)
[David Lee](#)
[Don Sitters](#)
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[Jason Keaton](#)
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<http://www.martialartsplanet.com/forums/forumdisplay.php?f=64>

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DIRECTORY OF MARTIAL ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

http://www.dmoz.org/Sports/Martial_Arts/Organizations/

ORGANIZATIONS THAT ARE SUPPORTIVE OF MARTIAL ARTS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

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Disability Martial Arts Association of UK

<http://www.disabilitymartialartsassociation.co.uk>

Chilsong Martial Arts

<http://chilsong.com>

Inosanto Academy M.A.W.D. (Martial Artists With Disabilities)

http://www.inosanto.com/pages/mawd_index.html

International Disability Self-Defense Assoc.

<http://www.defenseability.com/>

Martial Arts Association of the Deaf

<http://www.amaad.com>

NOT-ME! INC.

<http://www.not-me.org>

Terry Taylor Organization

<http://www.btaconsulting.co.uk/twt/>