



Jitsu Canada Newsletter

January 2006

Return of the newsletter

After several years absence, I have decided to resurrect the Jitsu Canada newsletter. The newsletter is designed to keep members apprised of happenings within Jitsu Canada, our member clubs, and other associations with which Jitsu Canada has links. I also hope there will be frequent articles which members will find of interest. Contributions are welcome (and encouraged) from all members, and should be e-mailed to andydobie@jitsucanada.com. These articles may be anything relevant to the martial arts or our members.

Black belt promotions



Congratulations to the candidates from the 2005 black belt grading!

Ben de Witt and Brent Stamplicoski attained the rank of *Shodan* and Kieran Parsons attained the rank of *Nidan*.

Thank you to everyone who participated.

Our friends from *Chokushin Aikijujutsu* held their black belt grading the same weekend. Congratulations to Karen Partington on attaining *Mokuroku* (2nd level black belt).

Calgary news

The Calgary University club, our first out of Ontario, has recently completed it's first year of operation under the instruction of Ben de Witt *sensei*. The club began with informal sessions late in 2004, and officially began in January 2005. The club has held three grading examinations, the first of which also saw a large number of Ontario senior grades and instructors making the trip to Calgary. In December the club held it's first assistant instructor course. At the end of 2005 the Calgary club also became a member of the Alberta Jiu Jitsu Association.

New Club

2005 saw the opening of the Kingston YMCA club under the instruction of Mark Yourkevich *sensei*. Congratulations to Mark for all his hard work and determination paying off with the establishment of the second Kingston club.

New venue

The former Ottawa YMCA club moved to it's new location in 2005, and became the Ottawa (Gladstone) Jiu Jitsu Club.

Canadian JiuJitsu Council (CJC)

As of 1st January 2006 all Jitsu Canada clubs and their members in Ontario also became members of the CJC. The CJC is a not for profit association of jiu jitsu clubs, associations and styles dedicated to the furtherance of jiu jitsu in Canada.

Club websites

A number of clubs have their own websites:

Trent University	www.jitsucanada.com/trent/index.html
Peterborough YMCA	www.jitsucanada.com/ptboy/index.html
Toronto West-Central	www.jitsutoronto.com
Queen's University, Kingston	www.jitsucanada.com/queens/index.html
Ottawa	www.jitsuottawa.com
Calgary University	homepages.ucalgary.ca/~bjdewitt/index.htm

Events happening in 2006

The format for courses has changed for 2006. The complete timetable of events can be viewed at www.jitsucanada.com/events/timetable.html This event listing is updated regularly so please check back frequently.

Green & above courses

Two green belt & above courses will be held this semester. These courses are designed to provide more focused training for senior grades, and to allow senior grades to train with their peers from other clubs. Details are:

Sat January 21st in Peterborough; &

Sat February 4th in Ottawa.

If you are green belt or above, please make every effort to attend these courses.

Club courses

Senior instructors will be visiting various clubs to teach courses on regular training nights. It is hoped this will make courses more accessible to students as these courses will not require travel and weekend time commitments. Courses will be held:

Toronto	Jan 30 th
Trent University	Jan 31 st
Carleton University	Feb 13 th
Queen's University	Feb 15 th

Ontario Provincial Course

This is the one event this semester which is open to all members of Jitsu Canada. Two days of training with what will surely be a memorable social event in the evening.

March 4th & 5th 2006 - Kingston

Autumn 2005 was our biggest and best provincial course ever, let's try and beat that with this one!

Mixed events

Looking ahead to May, we will once again be combining forces with *Chokushin* for the annual Boot Camp. This outdoor training camp is always a great success.

Building upon the success of boot camp, this year we will be adding to the timetable a mixed training session with the *Chokushin* group – most likely to be held at one of the Peterborough dojo.

Jiu Jitsu

B de Witt, Sensei – University of Calgary Jiu Jitsu Club

I find it very hard to articulate the reasons behind my initial interest in the martial arts, *Jiu Jitsu* in particular. I find it even more difficult to put into words why I continue to train and teach within the style of *Shorinji Kan Jiu Jitsu*. I have always taken pleasure in very physical and aggressive activities, and to some degree this influenced my decision to seek martial art instruction while attending university. Whatever the motivation, I was probably drawn to the martial arts for the wrong reasons. However, I am very lucky to have been guided by some exceptional teachers. Through them, I learned that the physical and mental benefits provided by martial arts, regardless of style, are many and varied. Martial art training has a great potential to change a person physically, psychologically, and emotionally in a very positive way. These changes can be of great benefit to both the person and to the society to which he/she belongs.

I began my *Jiu Jitsu* training in January 2001 at the Queen's University *Jiu Jitsu* Club, and was taught by Chris Brooks *Sensei*. I gradually progressed through the grades, and eventually reached a level where I was qualified to run my own *Jiu Jitsu* club. I moved to Calgary in September 2004 and with permission from Andy Dobie *Sensei* (Director of *Jitsu Canada*), I founded the University of Calgary *Jiu Jitsu* Club. In January 2005, the club officially opened its doors to the public. The club has been successful, and celebrated its one-year anniversary on January 10th, 2006.

A great deal of anxiety and doubt haunted me when I first began teaching. My main worry was not being able to live up to the fine example set by my previous teachers. This was coupled with the fact that I now lived 4,000 km west of the closest *Jitsu Canada* dojo. I recognized for the first time how truly talented my previous teachers are. A deep feeling of isolation settled in.

Although I did not appreciate it at the time, this situation was the best thing that could have happened to me in terms of my development in the martial arts. I could no longer easily direct my questions to my peers or teachers - and it certainly was not financially feasible to attend every technical seminar offered at *Jitsu Canada* clubs in Ontario. For the first time, I was forced to actually *really* think about *Jiu Jitsu*¹. However, I should not portray the situation as being too dreadful - quite the contrary. I was, and still am, incredibly lucky to be surrounded by a group of my own students who are good-natured, sociable, loyal, and very dedicated to learning *Jiu Jitsu*.

As fate would have it, I was also very fortunate to receive a warm welcome from the *Alberta Jiu Jitsu Association* (AJJA). I was immediately relieved knowing there was an organization in Western Canada with similar objectives to *Jitsu Canada* - the

¹ *Jiu Jitsu*, as an art, is elusive and deceptive - it contains rather harmless-looking techniques that carry enormous hidden potential. The idea of "appearance masking inner strength" (hidden power) applies to *Jiu Jitsu* techniques. I am now convinced that techniques were originally designed in such a way that only the most dedicated students would learn what their hidden potential had to offer.

promotion of high-quality *Jiu Jitsu* instruction. With this objective in mind, I respectfully and humbly offer my own perspectives on teaching *Jiu Jitsu* in this article.

Historically, the instructor's method of teaching *Jiu Jitsu* has been more visual than written or verbal. The term "instructor" is probably not the most suitable – I feel the term "teacher" is more appropriate. Strictly speaking, an "instructor" is simply a passer of information. The "teacher" also does this, and additionally builds the character of his/her students. This implication extends beyond merely providing technique and includes that realm of *Jiu Jitsu* beyond the physical, and brings *Jiu Jitsu* within the sphere of educational values. If an educative effort on the part of the instructor does not cause positive changes to occur in a student, then it does not have educational value.

In my experience, it is very difficult, albeit impossible, to really "teach" anyone anything – all we can do as teachers is to provide circumstances to which the student may respond in some way. When students respond, they learn. It is my feeling that the main purpose as a *Jiu Jitsu* teacher is to lend the student assistance in this effort - learning. If the situations presented are meaningless to arouse the student to some sort of response, then our efforts are failing, for there can be no learning without some response.

To get favorable responses, I have found that I must promote activities in the *dojo* that are, in themselves, interesting. The exercises must be carefully planned and explained, while at the same time arousing feelings of strong motivation in the student. If we want our efforts as teachers to produce results, we must therefore arouse intense interest and help the student to see the relation between all the techniques we teach. If we teach mechanically, as opposed to intelligently, we then fail our students by isolating our art from them.

My first interest in *Jiu Jitsu*, and all martial art for that matter, was based upon curiosity and misunderstanding of the aims and abilities of proponents skilled in the art. Most, but not all, beginners have the same feelings when first being introduced to *Jiu Jitsu*. Yet, from this seemingly trivial motivation, true interest may be developed or destroyed – it all depends on the "impressions" made by the teacher. I believe that the "impression" we leave our students with is most vital in terms of their future attitudes and mind-sets with respect to martial art, regardless of style.

I was left with a first-class impression of the new students and teachers while attending Provincials in November 2005. I feel very honored and privileged to have the University of Calgary *Jiu Jitsu* Club included as a member of *Jitsu Canada*. I look forward to working, training, and learning from all members of *Jitsu Canada*, students and teachers alike.

See you on the mats!

Ben de Witt

Brian Graham *Shihan* 1935 - 2005



Brian Graham *Shihan* was the founder and Head of Style of *Shorinji Kan Jiu Jitsu*.

Born in Keighley, West Yorkshire, England, he learned his jiu jitsu skills in Australia in the 1960's. Brian's jiu jitsu instructor was Matthew Komp *Shihan*, who still teaches today near Melbourne, Australia. Brian was a uniquely talented martial artist who developed his own system of jiu jitsu based upon Komp's teachings and influences from a number of other martial arts instructors.

When he returned to the UK in the late 1960's, Brian opened the first Samurai Jiu Jitsu club, in Keighley. His technical ability and enthusiasm produced a number of instructors - most notably the late Peter Farrar. Under the leadership of Brian and Peter, the style spread rapidly throughout the UK and other countries.

Brian will be remembered for his straight talking style of teaching, his enthusiasm and his incredible ability. He was a supreme exponent of jiu jitsu and motivator of instructors who strove to attain his level of skill. His down to earth approach to life and his unique sense of humour will be sorely missed.

Brian was inspirational in the founding of Jitsu Canada, and travelled to Canada on a number of occasions providing the benefit of his vast martial arts knowledge and experience. As he has done for the past fifty years, Brian was actively teaching jiu jitsu up until his recent brief illness.



Brian Graham explaining details of technique to Andy Dobie, 1986



Brian Graham and Chris Brooks during Brian's last visit to Canada in 2004.

Brian Graham throwing John Molyneux during his visit to Canada in 1997.



Brian Graham in the UK, 1980's.

