



Jitsu Canada Newsletter

April 2006

Brown Belt Grading Results

Congratulations to the following new 1st Kyu:

Andrew Stewart (Kingston)
Bernard Cheng (Kingston)
Joanna Yu (Toronto)
Julie Helferty (Kingston)
Chris Olsen (Ottawa)



Summer Events

26th - 28th May: Spring Boot Camp
Sat 24th June: Chokushin / Shorinji Kan Course
Sun 25th June: Grading
14th - 20th July: Calgary Summer Events
8th - 10th Sep: Autumn Boot Camp
16th - 17th Sep: International Summer School
Sat 23rd Sep: Course & Grading

Timetable and details
online at:
www.jitsucanada.com

Spring Boot Camp 2006

26th to 28th May, Kinmount ON.



This weekend course provides an opportunity for students of all styles to train and socialize together in a co-operative and non-competitive manner. Training is mostly in two styles of *jiu jitsu* (*Chokushin* and *Shorinji-kan*) although a variety of other martial arts are also often taught. Training outdoors, often on uneven ground, adds a valuable new perspective to training. There are also a number of other activities - rock & tree climbing, knife throwing, and of course, swimming in the lake for those who are brave enough.

Participants are welcome to show up on the Friday evening to set up camp. After breakfast at a local restaurant, training starts at 10am on Saturday. Lunch, evening meal, and breakfast and lunch on Sunday are provided. BYOB for the Saturday evening camp-fire. Cost for the weekend including meals is only \$40.

Please e-mail Andy if you will be participating. This is a really enjoyable weekend event which shouldn't be missed.



Calgary Summer Events

14th to 20th July, Calgary AB.

Students and instructors from Ontario are invited to attend the summer events in Calgary. We have the opportunity to attend the "**Camp of Combat Arts**" (14th – 16th July) hosted by the **Alberta Jiu Jitsu Association**. This is an excellent event with some senior instructors from across the country:

Steve Hiscoe Shihan, 7th Dan, Can Ryu Ju-Jitsu (British Columbia)
Kevin Lintott Sensei, 4th Dan, Can Ryu Jiu-Jitsu (Alberta)
Ray Martin Sensei, 4th Dan, Shindo-Ryu Ju-Jitsu (Saskatchewan)
Andy Dobie Sensei, 3rd Dan, Shorinji Kan Jiu Jitsu (Ontario)



This is a weekend of camping at Clearwater Tepi Park just outside Calgary. Spaces can be reserved in one of the camp's permanent Tepis for those not wanting to bring tents.

Schedule:

Friday 14th: Set up camp and evening social
Saturday 15th: Drive to the dojo for a full day of training, followed by an evening BBQ and campfire back at the camp (BYOB)
Sunday 16th: Training outdoors, then leave camp after lunch.

This will be a great opportunity to meet students and instructors from other styles of jiu jitsu.



Camp of Combat Arts 2005

There will also be a course held the evening of Tuesday July 18th at Ben de Witt's University of Calgary Club, as well as the summer grading for his club on Thursday July 20th, and time for a visit to Lake Louise & Banff in the Canadian Rocky Mountains.

Anyone interested in attending should please contact Andy by e-mail for further details and pricing.

Chokushin / Shorinji Kan Course

Saturday 24th June, Peterborough ON.

A combined course with Jitsu Canada and *Chokushin Ajki-jujutsu*.

For many years, Jitsu Canada and Chokushin Aiki-jujutsu have held the annual Boot Camps. This year we have decided both associations should get together 'on the mats' in addition to the camps. Open to all members of both associations with instruction in both styles - an indoor version of the boot camp!



Tentative schedule will be:

12 noon to 2.30pm	Training in Chokushin Aiki-jujutsu
2.30pm to 3.00pm	Break
3.00pm to 5.30pm	Training in Shorinji Kan Jiu Jitsu

Training will be followed by an evening BBQ & pool party (BYOB). Cost is to be finalized but will be minimal. Accommodation will be available in Peterborough.

Please e-mail Andy if you are able to attend.

The Jitsu Foundation International Summer School

16th & 17th September, Amsterdam, Holland



Held every three years, the international summer school will be held 16th and 17th September 2006 in Amsterdam, Holland. This will be a great opportunity to meet students and instructors from our style of jiu jitsu from other countries, and will no doubt be even more memorable than the 2003 event hosted in Canada.

It is hoped that students & instructors from all member countries will be present. Due to the proximity to the UK, numbers are expected to be high for this event - we are anticipating around 400 participants.

Anyone interested in attending is recommended to fly to England and spend a few days there, before flying from the UK to Holland. Accommodation with Jitsu students can be arranged in England, hotels will be necessary for Holland. There are no training fees for participants from North America, and flight prices are reasonable from Toronto to London (and really cheap from London to Amsterdam).

There will be a contingent from Canada attending this event. Anyone interested, please contact by e-mail Andy for more information.

Jitsu Canada Gi Badges



The recent supply problems with Jitsu Canada gi badges have been resolved. Badges are now available from your club instructor.

Jitsu Canada

In September 2005, Jitsu Canada celebrated its twelfth year anniversary. For over a dozen years our organization has been promoting *Shorinji Kan Jiu Jitsu* in Canada and has offered *jiu jitsu* instruction to hundreds of students and instructors. Like many martial arts organizations, Jitsu Canada sprang from very humble beginnings. In the fall of 1993, Andy Dobie Sensei, who had recently immigrated to our country, opened the first *Shorinji Kan Jiu Jitsu* club in Canada at Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario. Very shortly afterward, Dobie Sensei established a second club at Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario and taught both clubs concurrently in spite of a three hour distance between the two cities. Since then, Jitsu Canada has seen the establishment of several other clubs across Ontario and most recently a club in Calgary. With well over twenty brown belts and black belts and nearly a hundred and fifty active members, our organization has sewn a strong foundation and is currently on the brink of a very promising expansion.

The style of *Shorinji Kan Jiu Jitsu* was founded by the late Brian Graham *Shihan*. Graham *Shihan* had studied *jiu jitsu* in Australia for several years under Matthew Komp *Shihan*, though his study of the martial arts was not exclusive to *jiu jitsu*. In the late 1960's, Graham *Shihan* returned to his home in Keighley, West Yorkshire, England and established his first *jiu jitsu* club. An extremely talented and enthusiastic instructor, it took little time for his style to develop and spread across the UK. Originally known as the National Samurai Jiu Jitsu Association (NSJJA), Graham *Shihan*'s organization was renamed The Jitsu Foundation and after twenty seven years of growth now boasts well over one hundred clubs across the UK and thousands of practicing members. Andy Dobie Sensei began his study of *jiu jitsu* in 1985 in Plymouth, England, with the NSJJA. In August 1993 he moved to Peterborough, Ontario, Canada and established the beginnings of Jitsu Canada. Brian Graham *Shihan* was actively involved in the development of Jitsu Canada until his untimely death in the spring of 2005, at the age of 70 years old.

Shorinji Kan Jiu Jitsu embraces many of the classical principles of the martial arts. While a curriculum of techniques serves as the basis for our style's teachings, a much greater emphasis is placed on the concepts of movement, timing, awareness and attitude. Students learn a wide variety of techniques including joint locks, throws, strikes, ground holds and weapons defences. Classical training methods such as *kata* and *randori* also form an integral part of our style's practices. Like most styles of *jiu jitsu*, *Shorinji Kan Jiu Jitsu* employs a yielding approach to an attack, rather than meeting force with force. Students learn how to blend with attacks and utilize the opponent's force against him/her. Initially, the focus is placed on understanding the mechanics of the techniques as well as how to control and manipulate the incoming force. However, as students begin to refine their skills, the focus begins to shift to a much more internal process. At the highest levels of practice, the *jiu jitsu* practitioner devotes his/her efforts to ensuring his/her own stability in the face of incoming forces and in the process sets up the circumstances for the opponent to become unbalanced or disabled. In other words, the technique is no longer the goal and neither is the defeat of the opponent...these are simply by-products of the *jiu jitsu* practitioner's efforts to preserve his/her own balance, posture and relaxed state of mind.

One major component of our curriculum is the emphasis it places on instructor development. We believe that teaching is by far one of the most successful methods by which to learn and that the nurturing of skilled and competent instructors will ensure the growth and preservation of the style and the organization.

An important component of the development of Jitsu Canada is the interaction we have had with other similar organizations across the country. We are very pleased to have had the opportunity to develop firm and positive relationships with other styles and associations whose attitude and approach mirror our own. We have for a few years been associated with the **Canadian JiuJitsu Council** and have for a long time maintained a very close relationship with the members of the **Chokushin Aikijujutsu** style in Ontario. More recently, with the establishment of the University of Calgary Jiu Jitsu club, we have been very fortunate to have become members of the **Alberta Jiu-Jitsu Association**, an organization that has proven a kindred spirit in the pursuit of martial arts excellence. Jitsu Canada and its members look forward to many opportunities in the future to exchange ideas and experiences with the members of the AJJA and its affiliated clubs.

Yours in *budo*,
Chris Brooks, *Nidan*

Black belt ranking system

Most Japanese martial arts use the black belt ranking system known as the dan system. This consists of ten levels (or steps) denoted 1st dan through to 10th dan. Although some styles use the black belt to denote all dan ranks, and some styles use different combinations of red, black and white for higher dan grades, the most commonly used system of belt colours is the system used in Judo, where dan grade belt colours are:

1st degree	shodan	black belt	
2nd degree	nidan	black belt	
3rd degree	sandan	black belt	
4th degree	yondan	black belt	
5th degree	godan	black belt	
6th degree	rokudan	red and white belt	
7th degree	shichidan	red and white belt	
8th degree	hachidan	red and white belt	
9th degree	kudan	red belt	
10th degree	judan	red belt	

Theoretically, this system also includes 11th dan and 12th dan, with these being denoted by a white belt. The founder of Judo, Dr Kano, is the only person ever awarded 12th dan by the Kodokan and no-one else in reality ever grades above 10th dan. The attainment of the black belt represents a significant achievement, however, as all first dan ranked practitioners quickly learn, it also represents the initial step in a path to even higher awareness and greater achievement, one which may take a lifetime to pursue. Attaining legitimate high dan grades is extremely rare and involves a lifetime of study.

History of the dan ranking system

In the days before Jigoro Kano created Judo, there was no kyu/dan ranking system or wearing of coloured belts in the martial arts. Kano started the modern rank system when he awarded shodan (first degree black belt) to two of his senior students in 1883. Even then, there was no external differentiation between *yudansha* (black belt ranks) and *mudansha* (those who hadn't yet attained black belt ranking).

Kano apparently began the custom of having his *yudansha* wear black obi (belts) in 1886. These obi were not the belts jiu-jitsu wear today - Kano hadn't invented the gi (uniform) yet, and his students were still practising in kimono. They were the wide obi still worn with formal kimono. In 1907, Kano introduced the modern judogi and its modern obi, but he still only used white and black belt ranks. The *kyu* coloured belts originated in 1935 when Judo began being practiced outside of Japan.

The Judo practice uniform and belt system eventually spread to many of the other martial arts including jiu jitsu.

Teaching licences

Many martial arts styles also use a system of teaching qualifications/titles interspersed within the dan system. Under these systems, senior instructors are required to demonstrate increasing teaching proficiency before progressing to a higher dan level. These teaching titles (or licences) are:

Renshi: advanced instructor (usually 5th or 6th dan).

Kyoshi: master instructor (usually 7th or 8th dan).

Hanshi: senior instructor of instructors (usually 9th or 10th dan).

The title ***Shihan*** is sometimes used to denote a 'senior instructor of instructors' in systems where the teaching licences are not used.

The title ***Soke*** (loosely translated as 'inheritor of the system') is sometimes used to denote the head of a martial arts style, although this title is frequently misused in modern martial arts systems.

Menkyo ranking system

A more traditional method of recognizing progression, which pre-dates the dan system, is the ***Menkyo*** licensing system. This system involved the presentation of scrolls, often with the secrets of the school inscribed. Under this system, rankings progress through *Chuden/Kirikami*, *Okuden/Mokuroku*, *Menkyo*, and ultimately, *Menkyo Kaiden*, the last meaning literally "license of total transmission".

The finer points of *kouchi-gari* (from a punch)

Kieran Parsons, Sensei

Kouchi-gari (minor inner reap) is one of the first throws that *jitsuka* learn after their yellow belt grading, but it's a tricky one. If you've ever had the experience of reaping *uke's* leg only to see him/her just hopping about on one leg, or if your reap seems ineffective, then this article may help. It is not meant to instruct how to do the throw for the first time, but to help those who have difficulty with it. For those who have *kouchi-gari* down pat (not me!), there are a few more advanced topics thrown in.

Movies demonstrating correct and incorrect ways to do the throw can be found at <http://www.jitsuottawa.com/gallery/newsletter/April2006/ko-uchi-gari/>

Basic throw (left-sided punch example)

My preferred method of entering into the throw is to step forwards with the left foot, cross-block the incoming punch with the left arm, guiding the punching arm downwards, and immediately transfer control of the punching arm to the right hand, moving the left hand to start taking the head backwards (quite a lot to do already!).

Step the right leg around to end up in a "T" position with the left hip close to, but lower than, *uke's* groin. Then take a small step with the left foot between *uke's* legs while the right arm keeps control of his punching arm and/or his lower back (pulling forwards). The left hand/arm is used to extend *uke* backwards and up (not downwards). Continue taking the balance and then reap his front leg with the left foot sweeping across you. He ends up on the mat after a backwards break-fall; you end up standing above him. Or that is the plan anyway.



Cross-block



Transfer hands (watch for a punch)



Move up to the head



Start taking head back



Extend head, also taking hips forwards



Continue and throw

Common problems with kouchi-gari

The initial mistakes that beginners make relate to common throwing errors of not being low enough, not taking the balance sufficiently, or not being in a "T" position. But, if you have all those things just about right and the throw is still not working for you, what is going on?

1. Uke stays on his feet (or foot)

Probably the most common occurrence is for everything to seem perfect (you have *uke's* balance, you reap the front leg away) but you find him still upright hopping on one foot about to punch you in the face. This is normally due to taking his balance in the wrong direction. Where is the point of balance for this throw? Typically it will be taught as backwards over the heels, and later perhaps towards the back corner (the official *Kodokan judo* direction). Assuming a right-sided punch, the most likely error is that the balance has been taken over the left back corner (*i.e.*, less weight on the foot you are trying to reap) instead of the heels (same weight on both feet) or the right back corner (more weight on the foot you are trying to reap). Since most of the weight is not on the foot you are trying to reap, when you do reap it, *uke* can stay on his feet. The standard way to correct this is to turn more into a "T" position or even slightly over-rotate.



Looks OK so far.



Incorrect – *Uke's* balance is being taken towards the rear leg, lightening the foot about to be reaped.



The reap does not work and *uke* recovers his balance.

2. Ineffective reap

Another possible problem is that you try to reap, but your foot just stops when you hit *uke's* leg, or the throw is only marginally successful. This may be due to how you have taken his balance – you will know if you check how his knee and ankle are aligned.



Incorrect – Knee is in front of the ankle, which will make the reap difficult.



Correct – Knee is behind the ankle.

If you are correctly taking someone's balance to the rear (or back corner), you will notice that the toes almost start to come off the mat and the knee is behind the ankle. But if *uke* is able to bend his knees, it's possible for him to really be on balance even when you extend him a long way backwards. This can be seen by the knee being in front of the ankle. In this case, reaping the leg will not be effective, as in reality you do not have *uke's* balance. This problem is often due to trying to push *uke* down towards the mat, instead of extending him almost upwards and backwards. The root cause is often not being low enough compared to him, which forces you to push down instead of up.

3. *Uke* steps out of the throw

Another problem relates to *uke* stepping backwards with the foot you are attempting to reap. This may be related to (2) above (the knees bending), or may be due to not having *uke* bent over backwards in a nice arc. This throw is not done just by taking the head backwards, but also by taking *uke's* hips forwards, producing an arc in the back. From this position, it is much more difficult to step.

If *uke* does step out of the throw, you can move his balance again over his heels (you will have to move!) or back corner (leading-leg) and throw in *ouchi-gari*.

Counters to ko-uchi-gari

There are a large number of counters to this throw (so watch out!). Often the easiest way to counter the throw is to step the foot that is about to be reaped backwards (but watch *ouchi-gari* on your other leg as described above).

Counter throws (*gaeshi*) rarely turn out to be an elegant version of a throw, but they work. In general the group of counter throws to *kouchi-gari* are termed *kouchi-gaeshi*, but there are a number of recognizable throws that I have also included here. Here are a few to try (in increasing difficulty):

- *Kosoto-gake* (Minor outer hook)
- *Kouchi-gaeshi* (Minor inner reversal)
- *Uki-waza* (Floating technique)
- *Tani-otsohi* (Valley drop)
- *Yoko-gake* (Side hook)

Recap

For a successful *kouchi-gari* remember that the point of balance must never be over *uke's* rear leg, if you plan on reaping the front leg. The way to take the balance is for you to be low and extend the head backwards and upwards, not downwards, and the hips forwards to form an arc with the back. Occasionally check to see if *uke* can bend his/her knee over the ankle.

Hopefully this has provided a more detailed understanding of the throw. Much of what has been said here applies to other throws, particularly *ouchi-gari*, of course.