

Jitsu Canada Newsletter

September 2008



Upcoming Events

15th Year Anniversary Course and Ball

Saturday 20th September 2008, Kingston ON.

The first Shorinii Kan Jiu Jitsu session held in Canada was on Monday September 20th 1993. Exactly 15 years later to the day we will be holding a celebratory course, followed by a ball in the evening. The course will be open to all members (from novice to black belt) and should feature some exciting training as we anticipate most (hopefully all!) of our instructors will be present. The ball will be a semi-formal dinner and dance overlooking the Kingston Harbour.

Admission by advance ticket only - ask your instructor if you have not already purchased.

Regional Grades Courses

Peterborough – 4th October Ottawa - 18th October Kingston – 19th October.

Open to yellow and above, an afternoon of training with senior instructors.

Assistant Instructor & Instructor Courses

Sunday 5th October, Peterborough.

Learning to teach is an integral part of the study of jiu jitsu. Although both being taught and practicing jiu jitsu are essential, you will find when you begin teaching or helping to teach, your depth of understanding of the principles behind the techniques improves vastly. This is fundamental to progression in the art, so much so that completion of these courses is a requirement before progressing to advanced student grades. Registration deadline is September 18th.

Assistant Instructor – open to 6th & 5th kyu. Instructor – open to 4th & 3rd kyu.

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Club Instructor Course

25th & 26th October, Peterborough.

Open to 2nd kyu and 1st kyu. Registration deadline is September 18th.

Ontario Provincial Course

8th & 9th November, Ottawa.

The provincial course is an opportunity for all members of Jitsu Canada clubs to meet for a weekend of training. This course provides students with the chance to train with many different people from the various clubs. The event is open to everyone, from beginner to black belt. Various senior Jitsu Canada instructors will be teaching. Accommodation on the Saturday night is provided by members of the host club, and there is always a memorable social event on the Saturday night.

Autumn Grading Dates

29th Nov Ottawa – candidates for belts up to green 30th Nov Kingston – candidates for belts up to green

30th Nov Senior – candidates for purple to brown (venue: Kingston)

6th Dec Peterborough – candidates for belts up to green

13th Dec Calgary – all kyu grades 14th Dec Burnaby – all kyu grades

First Aid Course

17th & 18th January 2009 (Sat 11am to 6pm; Sun 10am to 5.50pm)

Standard First Aid with Level 'A' CPR. Certification valid for three years (annual CPR retraining recommended). The significantly discounted price of \$55 includes first aid manual and all materials, and is only available to members of Jitsu Canada. Course size is limited to 18 participants and will be filled on a first-come first-served basis. Register through the <u>Jitsu Canada Website</u>.

For members who require CPR recertification only, course times are 11am to 3.30pm on Saturday 17th only. CPR recertification cost is \$10.

Camp of Combat Arts 2008

Paul Fink and Bashir Kazemipur, University of Calgary Jiu Jitsu Club

Tai Lung: The Wuxi finger hold! **Po:** Oh, you know this hold?

Tai Lung: You're bluffing. You're bluffing! Shifu didn't teach you that.

Po: Nope. I figured it out. Skadoosh!

- Disney's Kung Fu Panda

One amazing aspect of the martial arts is how there exists so many different styles, each composed of a wide assortment of schools within the style. With a different focus and approach to combat, only by cross training both in different schools and styles

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can we truly enhance our own understanding of the martial arts. The 2008 Camp of Combat Arts was a great way to experience this.

Saturday morning saw the Todoroki Taiko, a Japanese drumming group, set the energy level for the entire weekend of training. In feudal Japan, taiko were often used to motivate the samurai as they approached the battlefield and set the pace and intensity for the ensuing conflict. Hundreds of years and thousands of miles later, the sounds of the drums still had the ability to get everyone pumped for a weekend of training.

The group of freshly-awakened, adrenaline-filled jiu-jitsuka were then divided up into two sections. Each section had an instructor teach for about an hour. With eight different lessons – five on Saturday and three on Sunday – the gym was constantly filled with the sounds of punching, blocking, throwing, or tapping the mat. When Sensei Dobie was teaching the other mat and said "yamae", we really had to think hard to not stop what we were doing!

Our first lesson was taught by Guro Huncar and, surely, was one of the most unique of the Camp. An instructor in the Filipino art of Arnis, he started by telling us that in Arnis novices begin by training with weapons before moving to empty hands. It was quite amazing to see that everything that applies to fighting with a weapon also applies when you are fighting empty handed. Everyone then picked up two bamboo sticks and began attacking, blocking, and disarming each other using the sticks themselves. We couldn't help but laugh while training with each other because we were so uncoordinated with our attacks and blocks. After accidentally throwing a stick across the mat once or twice, it was time to put them down and grab an intimidating metal knife. The blood really started flowing (no pun intended) when Guro demonstrated several knife defense techniques.

Sensei Dobie was next and he taught an energetic lesson on kouchi-gari, tai-otoshi, and uke-goshi. What we learned from the lesson was simple: if it doesn't work, try something else. Neither of us had ever thought of using tai-otoshi in combination with a failed kouchi-gari. Sensei Dobie ended the lesson by letting us come up with a finishing technique as part of our throwing transitions and we each had a chance to show the group what we came up with. Full of energy and ideas of throws that complement each other, the camp went on.

Sensei Lintott, aside from being the main organizer for the event, taught a great lesson on moving between locks in order to get out of a full nelson. We did a selection of arm locks and wrist locks, focusing on moving from one to the other while maintaining some degree of pain in order to control our assailant. There were differences in each lock and the transitions really opened our eyes to the artistic aspect of Jiu Jitsu. After blocking, locking, and striking our uke's for more than an hour, everyone was ready for a hard-earned lunch.

Since the Camp revolved around the central theme of cross-training, Ninjutsu was a great addition. Sensei Gillis gave us all a brief exposure to this martial art by going over some kata. A fresh breath of air in our circular world of Jiu Jitsu, the precise

angles used to create and close distance exemplified Sensei Gillis' description of his art as "simply a scientific application of biomechanics" with some eye-gouging on the side.

Sensei Bale's boxing background reinforced the importance of the sometimesneglected aspect of striking amidst all our throwing and grappling. It can be taken for granted that your training partner is not fully resistive and needing to be weakened first. We learned to move our heads like boxers and worked in blocks, finally controlling uke with a wrist/arm lock. The energy level really picked up when we began tai-otoshi-ing our partners across the length of the mat.

Building on Sensei Bale's lesson on striking, Sensei Williamson showed everyone the "Seven Point Locking System". What started the seven locks off was the delivering of a solid kick to the groin. It was immediately clear why his students wore cups. The technique was different in that after bringing uke down with pain, we used that same pain in the opposite direction to bring them right back up on their feet. At that point, the world was our oyster in terms of throws we could do. Sensei de Witt, of course, wasted no time in setting up a nasty wrist-locked uchi-mata.

Sensei Heinricks stressed that we should not underestimate the significance of a very important body part: the elbow. To enlighten us on the significance of the elbow, he showed how different someone could look just by their elbow position while they walked. With his elbows pointing out he looked like someone you would not want to mess with but with his elbows pointed in he looked...well, not all that tough. One particular aikido technique stood out among others: locking up two people who each have control of one of your wrists. Amazingly, Sensei Heinricks let us see for ourselves that the stronger your opponent's grip on your wrist, the more effective this two-person lock-up would be!

Sensei Tessier was all about getting off the ground and he taught us four different ways to do so. He made them look very smooth and graceful but when we were trying them out, they were anything but. Each way of getting up had pros and cons in terms of speed, balance, distance, and feasibility. We had a new perspective on forward rolls when we used them to close the distance and throw rather than creating distance after being thrown. This got us thinking as to what other deadly techniques lie within the ukemi-kata we learn at our first session of Jiu Jitsu.

You might be wondering why, of all the age-old martial arts quotes we could have chosen, we started this article with one from Kung Fu Panda. For those that have seen the movie, you might agree that this quote totally captures the spirit of the Camp of Combat Arts. Even amidst eight talented instructors from various styles, the biggest thing we took away from the Camp was to be open. Only by experimenting in different martial arts styles and taking something away from each style can we hope to prevent stagnation. It is events like the Camp of Combat Arts that open our minds to endless combinations of techniques that we don't need to be explicitly taught, but that we can figure out. Skadoosh!

On Style

Stu Cooke Sensei, St. Lawrence College Jiu Jitsu.

Style is one of those subjective words. It can be frustrating to try and comprehend what style really means within the context of Jiu Jitsu. We are told often "now with a bit more style" (well, some of us) but how often do we really understand what is being asked? If style means many different things to many different people, how are we to apply it to something as physically and mentally challenging as a Martial Art? Do individuals have their own unique style? What about how we replicate that style? The easy answer would be to say that our highest grade decides what denotes style and how we should apply it but I don't believe this is the case. Style is determined not by any singular person, but by something far more powerful.

Jiu Jitsu developed on the battlefield, used without weapons, as a method of dealing with aggressive and armed opponents. The phrase "developed" becomes pivotal as we search for insight into the word "style" because that which we're searching and aiming for was not decided upon centuries ago. It continues to evolve, as has the art, into the absolute and complete perfection of technique.

Watch a predator strike and you see style in action. A lion, tiger, or crocodile chasing down their prey use every resource they can. Their entire bodies are applied to the task with brutal efficiency. This is no conscious decision on the part of the animal, but the result of generations of development in the art of the hunt. Their style comes not from attempting to look good but through the execution of their evolved instinct.

The predators are lucky in this regard, for they are born hard-wired with the ability to learn technique. They are predisposed to it and are naturally effective. We have to struggle against our bodies, fight our instincts and study almost endlessly to achieve the same thing. We must work tremendously hard to become predators in our own right. Despite this, a good portion of the work has already been done; for we have instructors to tell us how best to manipulate joints, break balance and defend ourselves using Jiu Jitsu. All we're really being told is how to recognize the potential that exists within all physical interaction, and how to apply it for our gain. Once we've mastered the physics and emotion behind these interactions, we will have mastered the art, and have evolved our own sense of style.

I say our "own" because individuality will have an effect on the way we appear whilst performing techniques. Because Jiu Jitsu adapts itself to the person that is doing it, our movements will look slightly different. However, the confidence, speed and ease that a skilled practitioner possesses will rarely look too different from another of a different size, shape or disposition. They will share that appearance of style that is so easy to recognize but so hard to describe.

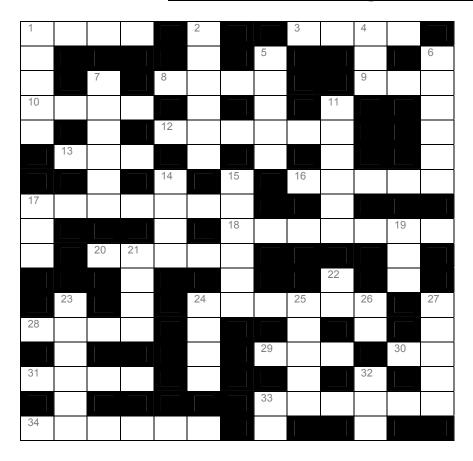
We should also remember that the pursuit of style is not a mental process, for when a technique is performed correctly, there is no thought. What we are looking for will exist when our bodies have surpassed our minds and simply react to the forces being applied

against them. At that point, like the tiger's evolutionary attack, our form will be instinctive, effortless, efficient and in tune with the physics of the human body.

So the next time your instructor asks you to do it "with more style," think not

about making yourself look better, but channel your inner tiger, draw upon centuries of evolved fighting arts, turn to your attacker and perform Jiu Jitsu as it's always been intended; naturally, instinctively and as a reflection of your body and intent.

Test Your Knowledge And Terminology



Across

ACI 055			
1	Mules do this	18	Important when throwing
3	Not the front	20	9 across does this a lot
8	Middle of leg	24	Musashi used this
9	Suffers a lot	28	Japan's national sport
10	Warrior's shout	29	Not the front
12	Type of sword	30	Ueshiba stressed this
13	Drawing a sword	31	Outer
16	Sliding (as in foot)	33	Type of throwing action
17	Senior teacher	34	Control pin

Down

- 1 Reverse
- 2 Senior teacher
- 4 Rank
- 5 Often shouted
- 6 Senior student
- 7 Okinawan art
- 11 Light blue
- 14 Control pin
- 15 Ueshiba's art
- 17 May denote rank
- 19 Signifies agreement
- 21 Founder of judo
- 22 Hand
- 23 21 down's student
- 24 Japanese fighting arts
- 25 Traditional style
- 26 After one
- 27 Sitting
- 32 Informal acknowledgement
- 33 Start of Musashi's book title

Solution: page 13

Book Review

Jeremy Mayer, Kingston YMCA

Kauz, H. (1992). A Path to Liberation: A Spiritual and Philosophical Approach to the Martial Arts.

Often martial arts books present descriptions of various techniques, exercises or kata. Martial arts books that cover more of the transcendental aspects are often from a different era which can make understanding the authors' esoteric thoughts challenging. A passage from Jigoro Kano's *Mind Over Muscle* (pp.82-83) which contains a collection of his writings from the late 1800's and early 1900's illustrates this point: *This principle* (seiryoku zenyo-making the most effective use of one's mental and physical energy) of judo offers a basic principle that can provide a sound answer for every situation and question. The easiest way to master this basic principle is to practice the waza of judo and to embark on the do...Then one naturally learns how to apply this method to every aspect of human affairs...I believe that this basic principle is the most appropriate method for resolving various moral issues.

In *A Path to Liberation*, Herman Kauz uses a more contemporary writing style to share some of his beliefs about non-physical benefits of martial arts practice. Kauz was born in Brooklyn in 1928 (year of the dragon). He graduated from the University of Hawaii in 1954 and obtained a Masters degree from Columbia University in 1962. He has practiced the martial arts for over forty years with experience in Aikido, Judo, Karate and he now teaches Tai Chi Chuan in the United States.

In this book, Kauz describes his thoughts about physical exercise in the martial arts, self-defense, meditation, interactions between teacher and students and among students, actions and attitudes that hinder development, assessing the value of training, health diet and drugs, the ideal dojo and finally, his general approach to training. The goal of this review is not to provide a critique of this book but more a description of some of its main concepts, thus allowing each reader to make his or her own analysis.

The following quotes give a general sense of Kauz's main ideas.

In his introduction, Kauz explains:

Many of us who live in an urban setting...sense that we are living a large portion of our lives in a somewhat artificial environment. We experience the often depressing effect of the paved-over earth, buildings that surround us and shut out the sky, stressful days devoid of physical exercise, conditioned air...and electric lights and midday. Often too...we may feel rootless, cut off from connections with any extended family or a place we think of as home...The question of how to retain one's sanity, to maintain a state of equanimity, and to be optimistic in the face of insoluble problems...has been with us to a greater or lesser degree for thousands of years. Sages have suggested solutions for the problems we face and ways we can change the unwanted conditions

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of our lives...The ultimate counsel seems to be that we must work on ourselves...In many methods of working on ourselves the link between the body and the mind is utilized so that the physical movement required in an endeavor is used to affect the mind. One such approach is Asian martial arts training...This book is about the opportunities for developing ourselves this training can provide.

On the topic of physical exercise, he states:

Some think of martial arts as only or mainly physical. They reject the claims their practitioners make for the qualities of the mind and spirit developed in those who practice the arts. Those who consider the martial arts in this way are almost always people who have no real experience of doing martial arts. Moreover, they are influenced in their thinking by our culture's tendency to divide a functioning whole into parts and to speak of the parts as if they could in some way stand alone and could be understood in this way...The more strenuous martial arts help us to release the tensions we develop in our fast-paced world by draining us of built-up energy or by allowing us to expend it in a controlled way.

With regards to self-defense:

Over the years many students have come to my classes to learn to defend themselves...I have usually attempted to de-emphasize preparation for fighting in favor of other aspects. I have advised engaging in the art for it's own sake, letting it affect all areas of our being however it will...But usually learning a martial art for self-defense-even if we recognize our insecurity, lack of self-confidence, or desire for power over others-is still only a surface expression of deeper needs or problems that require solution. Because these deeper problems are not simply solved by learning self-defense, those who join martial arts classes with only the intention of learning self-defense usually stay for only a short time...

On meditation, he writes:

At first glance, martial arts practice does not appear to be meditation. Kata, or form practice, may look like a dance, and practice with a partner may look like a competition or a violent encounter. What seems to make it actively meditative is the way we use the mind in its pursuit. Thus, where a martial art is taught as a meditative discipline, students are urged to invest their thoughts fully in what they are doing...In practice with an opponent, mental lapses,...are discouraged not only by our attempt to follow instructions but by the knowledge, periodically reinforced, that the opponent's successful attack could bring pain and even injury.

Kauz then goes on to discuss some of his views on interactions between students and teachers which this writer will not comment on in any manner for fear of future burpees and push-ups, not to mention the risk of cancelled pub nights.

In his chapter on actions and attitudes that hinder development, he explains:

When, however, in our early years of training, should we leave our teacher and go elsewhere? ...in such cases, it is really in our interest to give long and careful consideration to the possibility that our decision to leave is based primarily on our reluctance to give up our accustomed but deluded way of thinking and acting...we become defensive and may be disinclined to make changes or to suffer further buffetings. We must realize that the process we are engaged in will, at times, include a measure of pain and discomfort as we must push previous physical and mental limitations.

To assess the value of training, he suggests that:

...we should not compare ourselves with others in terms of innate ability or quality or in the progress we or they are making. Instead, we should determinedly and single-mindedly work on ourselves in line with the principles of our discipline or art. Also, it means that attempts to assess the extent of another's development, or the worth of another system of training, are far inferior to an honest awareness and appraisal of the effect of our training on ourselves.

For the sake of brevity, I will let the potential reader discover the rest of this book. One of the main strengths of *A Path to Liberation* is that Kauz is able to put into words what many of us are likely to experience, think and feel while practicing martial arts. Personally, I have found this book to be an inspiring one and refer back to certain sections from time to time.

Works by Herman Kauz include:

The Tai Chi Handbook, Random House, ISBN 978-0385093705

The Martial Spirit, Overlook, ISBN 978-0879513276

A Path to Liberation: A Spiritual and Philosophical Approach to the Martial Arts, Overlook, ISBN 978-0879514570

Push Hands: Handbook for Non-Competitive Tai Chi Practice with a Partner, <u>Overlook, ISBN 9781585671243</u>

Seoi-otoshi: the unknown throw

Jonathan Jamnik, Sensei.

The first time you get introduced to this throw is usually after your yellow grading. You have just survived a test that was unlike anything you've done before. If you step back on the mats, then you're hooked and want more. As an instructor this is my favorite time, confidence and energy are high. I enjoy teaching tai-otoshi at this point because it's a big throw, requires lots of room, and uke gets lots of air time. When done right, very little energy is required, when done wrong uke still stumbles to the ground and tori uses less energy than a hip throw (in my opinion that's a success).

We tend to teach seoi-otoshi as an afterthought.

I just spent most of the throwing time working on and fixing tai-otoshi. There are 7 minutes until cool down, students are a little bored with tai-otoshi, and I think 'oh yeah, seoi-otoshi'. "Yamae, everyone gather around. Do everything you just did for tai-otoshi, but throw your non-blocking arm under their punching arm". So that's a slight difference to tai-otoshi, enough so that it keeps them occupied until the 20 minute cool down starts.

Three months down the road, yellows are trying to become oranges. The grading panel calls out seoi-otoshi, and everyone throws their non-blocking arm under uke's punching arm and executes a beautiful tai-otoshi. The grading panel calls out seoiotoshi again, and everyone throws their non-blocking arm under uke's punching arm and does tai-otoshi. The grading panel grumbles, and calls out seoi-otoshi one last time and everyone throws their non-blocking arm under uke's punching arm and executes either a hesitant tai-otoshi, or a much more aggressive tai-otoshi. The grading panel picks up a pen, look at each other and call out tai-otoshi. For the most part everyone pulls off a nice tai-otoshi. They just did three, right before, so the fourth one is spot on. The grading panel nods and call out seoi-otoshi and everyone throws their non-blocking arm under uke's punching arm and executes tai-otoshi. The grading panel grumbles a little louder and looks at the grading sheet with pen in hand. They look up, one last chance, and call out the seniors. The grading panel looks at the yellows and says "Watch. Seniors, seoi-otoshi.", and everyone throws their non-blocking arm under uke's punching arm and executes tai-otoshi. The grading panel, visibly agitated, begins writing (not in the yellow part of the sheet, but in the senior part); they look up and tell the yellows to work on it, and then glance over at the instructors in the room.

If this has happened to you, or you do not want this to happen to you, then it is time to learn a new throw. Welcome to seoi-otoshi 101. I know that your tai-otoshi is good, I've seen it. If you don't know tai-otoshi, I recommend that you ask for it, next time you are on the mats and then go home and read Sensei Dobie's tai-otoshi tips, which was in the last newsletter. Now you know tai-otoshi well enough to make it through a grading.

I can not teach seoi-otoshi without comparing and contrasting other throws, most notably tai-otoshi, seoi-nage, and ganseki-otoshi (don't worry if you don't know those, one day you will). This will hopefully open your mind to the concept of the one throw, a topic for another article. Seoi-otoshi in my opinion is a hybrid of tai-otoshi and seoi-nage. It uses the parallel plane of tai-otoshi and then changes instantly into the perpendicular plane of seoi-nage.

Before we start, let us look at the translation of both tai-otoshi and seoi-otoshi. Tai-otoshi means body drop, and seoi-otoshi means shoulder drop. If we look at body drop, tori gathers uke and the action of creating a large elongated stance causes tori's own body to drop. If you have spent any amount of time on the mats, as uke, the feeling of being thrown in tai-otoshi is unlike any other throw. It feels like your body is totally in the air and then plopped (dropped) to the ground, it feels different than being thrown in any hip throw. Now if we look at shoulder drop from uke's perspective, their punching shoulder drops as a result of tori's actions during the throw. Also at the completion of the throw, on the street, tori can aim uke's far shoulder at the ground and drive the entire weight of uke straight down through that shoulder. From tori's view not only does their body drop, but most significantly their leading shoulder drops out and under uke which finishes the throw.

So uke decides to punch you. They give a huge, full energy (haymaker, roundhouse, or drunken) punch. That amount of energy usually begins to compromise their balance, or at the very least makes it much easier for you to compromise their balance. If you get hit you will go down, but to gather that much energy requires a bit more time, so use it to get inside the punch and not get hit. Block as lightly as possible, just enough to get a hold of uke as you are entering the eye of the storm. Glue as much of your upper body as possible to them. Take advantage of that circular like punch and continue its direction. Do not bring the punch down or up, but keep it in a plane parallel to the ground. Your first step gets you in but you must also bring your trailing leg. Your second step brings in your back leg and using proper tai-sabaki (read sensei Dobie's tai-otoshi tips) it steps out as well. You should be in a stance remarkably like a forward lunge in the warm up, facing the way you started. To get into your final stance your body twists (uke punches right) counter-clockwise. If uke is glued to you and if as you were twisting you kept their punch in front of you, they will trip over your back leg and hit the ground. You just did tai-otoshi.

Uke gets up and decides to punch you again. They think they learned something and so don't punch quite as hard. Seeing that uke is not fully committing as much energy, you decide to throw your non-blocking arm under uke's punching arm to help add a little energy. Blocking as you did for tai-otoshi, this time however you step in feet together as if you were attempting a hip throw. Do not pull their punching arm down into your body; for one thing if you try and pull them over, this is a good way to pull something in your back. Also you have none of uke's balance compromised and they will pick you up, slam you into the ground, and beat you up. Instead you should lift their punching arm up, while sinking straight down, and then cast them out in front of you, as if you were fishing. You should feel uke come up over your shoulder and down in front of you as if they were in a plane perpendicular to the ground. That was a good seoi-nage.

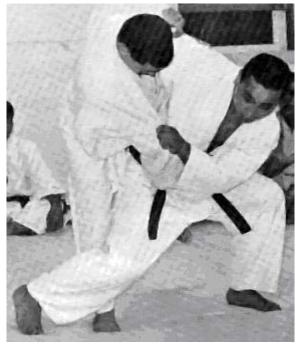
Surprisingly uke gets up again and punches. You block and move as before, throwing your arm under uke's punching arm to provide lift & unbalance. Uke attempts to settle and regain their balance as you turn in to throw. As you feel them try and counter, you step your legs wide as for tai-otoshi, and begin dropping your shoulder (the one glued under their arm) which pulls them ever so slightly across your back extended leg.







You've read in sensei Dobie's tai-otoshi tips not to straighten your back leg so as to pop uke into the air, as this is not tai-otoshi; it is in fact an important component of seoi-otoshi. We used to call it the Molyneux pop. In my younger years sensei Molyneux used to flex his back leg ever so slightly and you would go flying into the air totally unexpectedly. By doing the pop you drastically change the plane in which you are taking uke. Combine that with dropping you shoulder even more and they get slammed into the ground from up high. You just did seoi-otoshi for the first time.



Tai-otoshi

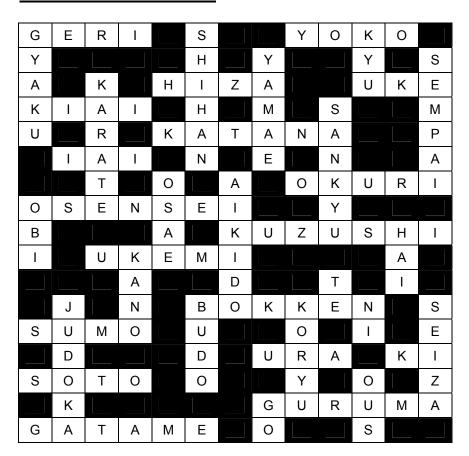


Seoi-otoshi

Uke slowly stagers to their feet, punches, and tries one last time to counter. They ground themselves as you begin seoi-nage and pull their punching arm against your body. Feeling this resistance you immediately (uke punches right) sink your entire right side. In one entire fluid motion you drop your right knee to the mat and aim your right shoulder at the mat while crunching your upper body into a stone. You basically drop under them while they go flying over you, but since you're holding their arm they have no where to go but down hard in front of you. That's ganseki-otoshi and they aren't getting up.

Try seoi-otoshi a hundred times then ask your instructor questions about it.

Crossword Answer



Next newsletter edition is January 2009.

Contributions are welcome and encouraged from all members.

Topics can be about anything related to the martial arts.

Deadline for submissions is 31st December 2008.