

Jitsu Canada

Newsletter
May 2010



- * Farewell Session
- * Upcoming Events
- * Watching Jiu Jitsu
- * Why I Don't Use Yoko Shiho Gatame
- * How to Be a Good Uke
- * Happy 6th Anniversary Jitsu Toronto
- * Featured Technique: Kote-gaeshi

FAREWELL SESSION "SMASHING" SUCCESS



On April 27th, 2010, the Kingston YMCA Jiu Jitsu club said goodbye to its founder and instructor of the last five years, Mark Yorkevich Sensei. In characteristic Jitsu Canada fashion, practitioners from all over the Province (including Gibb Sensei, Brooks Sensei and Dobie Sensei) made the journey to see him off and celebrate the occasion with throws, chokes and juji-gatame. This event marked two quite important notes in the career of Yorkevich Sensei.

Firstly, the YMCA, with the help of club funds, was recently able to purchase enough Tatami to ensure the club has an ideal training surface for years to come. Yorkevich Sensei was able to helm a transition from start-up (training on spare gymnastics mats) to fully-fledged Martial Arts club, worthy of considerable investment by the host organization.

Secondly, the event marked Yorkevich Sensei's move from Kingston to Toronto, where he will be working with fellow Jujitsuka in the area to establish additional training locations.

It is no exaggeration to say that many students training in Kingston will sincerely miss Yorkevich Sensei's charisma, commitment and unique approach to the order in which the syllabus is taught. And while students of the YMCA will be sorry to see him go, they can at least be glad that they'll get to do a lot more groundwork under their new instructor, Cooke Sensei.

Everyone in Kingston wishes you all the best in Toronto Mark. Come back to visit soon!

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Boot Camp

May 28th to 30th, Collins Family Hunt Camp, Kinmount. Open to everyone; Cost \$45

Don't let the name fool you - this is an excellent and fun weekend. This multi-style event provides an opportunity for students of different martial arts to train and socialize together in a co-operative and non-competitive manner.

Training is mostly in two styles of jiu jitsu although a variety of other martial arts may also be taught. There are also a number of other activities - including cutting practice - and of course, swimming in the lake.



If you wish to arrive on Friday night feel free to show up, set up your tent and socialize (there is a large cabin for the evening). After breakfast at a nearby restaurant, training officially starts at 10am on the Saturday. Lunch and dinner is provided on the Saturday, as is breakfast and lunch on the Sunday.

Training runs all day Saturday and Sunday morning. Training outdoors provides a new perspective and is an excellent experience.

You should bring camping gear (tent, sleeping bag, mess kit, etc.), food to barbeque for Friday night if required and money for breakfast on Saturday morning, drinking water, sunscreen, bug-spray, old clothes for training, and a towel and swimsuit. BYOB for the night-time campfires.



Anyone wanting to attend must register with their instructor at least one week before.

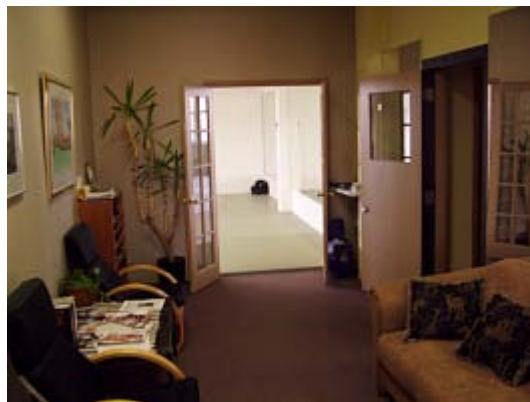
Tameshigiri (sword cutting practice)

We are pleased to once again provide this activity. David Burke will kindly provide cutting swords for practice and will provide basic instruction in cutting targets with the sword. Anyone wishing to participate will need to pre-order cutting mats. These are available at a cost of \$10 each, or \$20 for three. You should get about five cuts per mat.



NEW VENUE - OTTAWA COMMUNITY CLUB

Steve White Sensei and his students are happy to announce that the Community Jiu Jitsu Club in Ottawa now has a new location! The new venue for the club is the Ottawa Aikikai at 203 Catherine St. For anyone thinking of visiting, the club trains on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7.30 - 9.30pm and on Sundays from 1-3pm.



WATCHING JIU JITSU

~ Matt Derr, Sensei ~

I did not feel comfortable demonstrating Ganseki-otoshi until I was injured and forced to watch the 15th Anniversary Jitsu Canada course. I never understood the throw. I was always lost searching for the throw's kuzushi whilst asking myself "What do my arms do?" "What direction do I turn?" However that particular day I saw three Dan's demonstrate the throw in three ways. There were similarities between the lessons and there were differences. While watching, something clicked in my head and I finally realized that the throw looked very similar to Seoi-nage. The following week I asked someone if I could try it out, and it worked! It is ironic that I have attended numerous classes where Ganseki-otoshi was the technique taught, but somehow it constantly eluded me. It took me watching a class – Sitting not training - to finally feel comfortable with the throw. This made me realize how important it is to watch Jiu Jitsu.

Obviously I will not argue that watching a session verses training in a session is better. However watching a Jiu Jitsu class can be very beneficial. From my experience I have made a list of pointers. Obvious ones like, "Make sure to find a good spot," will be

excluded.

(1) **Do not be discouraged.** Chances are if you are not training that day you are probably injured. Injuries come and go. Take your time to heal and enjoy yourself. Nothing is wrong with watching Jiu Jitsu. When you are injured it is natural to feel discouraged, but it is safer to watch a session injured than to train injured. Why make your injury worse?

If anyone has been following me this past year they would know that I have been prone to injury. The injuries have varied from mild to the extreme. Trust me when I say "You will return to the mats one day from your injury." Try not to be filled with too much envy towards your fellow Jiu Jitsuka. Be happy with the fact that you are still watching Jiu Jitsu therefore you are still learning Jiu Jitsu.

(2) **Focus.** You should also take this word with you once you step on the mats. It is alright to relax and enjoy the fact that no one will be telling you to do push-ups if you are unable to find a new training partner fast enough. However this enjoyment should not sacrifice the reality that your purpose as an audience member is to learn and absorb as much information as

possible. Everyone on the mats is focused on training and you should be too! Although you are not physically training it is good to come into the dojo with a training mentality.

Specifically when I advise you to focus and arrive with a training mentality, I mean to imagine yourself training, and ask yourself how you would do a technique shown that day. Whether it is ukemi, or leg locks imagine that you are training. Personally I find this allows you to be aware of the factors that allow the technique to be successful.

(3) **Listen.** Let's be honest, your mind will probably wander when all you are doing for a few hours is watching Jiu Jitsu. I find that if you carefully listen to the Instructor's explanation for a technique it helps reinforce the old points that you already know, or may have forgotten. For example an instructor demonstrated Osoto-gari and emphasized body control by planting your elbow on the Uke's chest, which is something I had forgotten.

Also new elements to a technique you thought you knew inside and out may draw your attention. The very same day the instructor was teaching Osoto-gari he showed how easily you can perform it from an outside block. I honestly never knew that, but now I do. Additionally listen for figures of speech, or analogies that an instructor may use for a technique. Once Kenn Gibb *Sensei* described Ashi-guruma in terms of bowling. He compared the throw to that of a bowler – sweeping one foot in a large circle behind the other. Listening to figures of speech and analogies helps us to understand a technique in terms that are non jiu jitsu related, which enable us to make connections to physical activities we already know.

(4) **Watch Everyone.** From the Novices to the Dans, you should observe everyone. Do not just focus all your attention on the Senior Grades. Everyone has different body types, and how we might throw one Uke differs from person to person. The movements of a Tori who is throwing a larger Uke could be important to your understanding of Kuzushi. This is also true between different grades. A Dark Blue would look different when compared to an Orange performing Osoto-gari and vice versa. You can learn from watching everyone.

(5) **Identify and Reflect.** Identify for similarities and differences between throws shown. In other words search for the similarities the technique has with the techniques you already know. For example I felt very comfortable with Ippon-seoi-nage and while watching the 15th Anniversary course I identified that the two throws were similar.

This might just be a personal belief, but I always find that when I am watching a class I can always reflect better on my training. In regards to training (Especially when I began) everything is go, go go! I sometimes feel there is no time to think about my body movements, which I was, told is the whole point (i.e. muscle memory). However when I am sitting and just watching a class I am able to reflect, and realize what changes I can make to allow my technique to better. Allowing time for reflection allows you to try something totally new when you thought it was just a standard throw. (e.g. Osoto-gari from an outside block).

I am not encouraging you to sit and stare into the rising sun reflecting on your Jiu Jitsu, but after watching a class it might be beneficial to make a mental/written note of what techniques were covered. That way you can recall what you watched from that day.

(6) **Try it out.** There is no point watching a class and not attempting what you saw. Ask another Jiu Jitsuka if you can borrow them before, or after class. There is always downtime during those periods so instead of socializing opt instead for some light training. From the day you watched a class recall what you learnt. Ask the instructor for advice on the technique that you observed from that day.

Hopefully if you ever watch a class you will formulate your own pointers. It may allow you to study a technique in your own way besides the ones that are listed here. Unable to train does not mean you stop learning Jiu Jitsu. For everyone, watching Jiu Jitsu is another way to learn Jiu Jitsu because it is a different perspective besides physical training. Watching Jiu Jitsu means you are still involved with Jiu Jitsu. Sooner rather than later you can try out what you are watching!

HOW TO BE A GOOD UKE

~ Chris Brooks, Sensei ~

We all put a lot of hard work into learning jiu jitsu but I think we sometimes take for granted the importance of uke's role in that learning process. The practice of jiu jitsu is after all a partner-based activity. I hope that you will read this article carefully and give some thought to how you interact as an uke.

If you think about it, the role of uke in jiu jitsu is twofold: at times it is uke's job to work cooperatively with tori to help develop a better understanding of the movements and techniques. In other instances it is uke's responsibility to give tori some resistance so that he/she can learn how to apply the techniques under pressure. The key, really, is knowing the distinction between these two functions and understanding when it is appropriate to 'assist' or to 'resist'.

Assisting

To 'assist' tori means to provide a clear attack but to withhold any resistance after the attack has been made. Everybody needs a chance to go through the steps of a technique (many times in fact!) before they can get a good grasp of how the mechanics work. Giving resistance too early offers no benefit to tori's learning and in most cases will result in frustration over not getting the technique to work. This kind of frustration can discourage someone from wanting to train with you and can even lead to unsafe situations where tori resorts to "forcing" the technique.

Another way you can assist tori is by developing your ukemi (breakfalling). Learning to fall confidently does take practice but it also takes courage and commitment. Individuals who consistently resist being thrown because they dislike landing will probably find that they get hurt more often. Learning to relax and "go with the flow" will generally result in a more comfortable landing and will do wonders for tori's technique.

There is also such a thing as assisting too much – i.e. collapsing before the balance is broken, jumping out of throws, not punching on target, leaving punching arms extended – these actions can be just as disadvantageous to the learning process because tori never gets the chance to practice the technique correctly.

Lastly, in your effort to assist, your role as uke should NOT be to coach your training partners while you are practicing with them. Providing occasional advice can be helpful, but keep these considerations in mind:

- Providing constant feedback will frustrate your partner
- Most people learn better by doing (and by being allowed to make mistakes)
- You could be giving incorrect advice
- It is your instructor's job to provide feedback and corrections on the mat
- (Higher grades, these considerations apply to you also!)

Resisting

To 'resist' tori means to inject some realism into the situation. Real life attackers rarely make good uke because they are actually trying to hurt you and will do everything in their power to stop you from hurting them. In order to be able to apply jiu jitsu in a real situation, students must learn to deal with uncooperative partners. Grading examinations are a good example of where this kind of practice is common. However, resistive training needs to be controlled. Providing the right level of resistance is crucial but it does take time to learn how to do it well.

During resistive practice, uke needs to listen very carefully to the guidelines communicated by the instructor. It is the responsibility of the sensei to clearly identify the level of resistance for the students. A sensei will often define the level of intensity he/she wants... "25%, 50%, 100% resistance". The type of resistance should also be made clear... "try to step out of it; pull your arm back and hit them again; counter the throw if you can; take them to the ground if you can". Stick to the instructions you've been given.

Uke should always be attentive to tori's response to the level of resistance and vary it accordingly. If tori is clearly being overwhelmed, then the level of resistance should be reduced. Lastly, your role as uke is NOT to employ resistance to prove that certain techniques don't work on you, NOR to make yourself appear tougher than your training partners. This is a very unconstructive attitude to bring into the dojo.

It is really important to remember that as uke you will learn just as much from having techniques done to you as tori will from performing them. Uke has as much influence on the quality of the training experience as tori does. Always be mindful of your attitude and actions when participating as an uke.

Some additional tips on how to be a good uke:

- Always attack with intent, even when the pace is slow, so that tori has something meaningful to work with.
- Respond to well-placed weakeners.
- Minimize talking or joking...stay focused on your training.
- Wash your gi and keep your finger and toenails cut short.

SUMMER TRAINING

Dark Blue & Above Course

19th June, Peterborough, Ontario (11am - 2pm)

Guest Instructor: Jules Robson Sensei,

Chief Instructor, Jitsu Foundation New Zealand

Summer Gradings

*Yellow to Green: 19th June, Peterborough, Ontario
(2.30pm - 6pm)*

*Purple to Brown: 17th July, Peterborough, Ontario
(During the Summer School.)*

Summer School

16th, 17th & 18th July, Peterborough, Ontario

A great weekend of training, including the Friday night. Details to come, however we should have international guest instructors. Check <http://www.jitsucanada.com> for updates.



Jitsu Toronto Summer Course and Annual Throw-a-thon

*June 26th, 2010, 12:00 – 5:00pm
Kageyama Dojo
87 Wade Avenue, Toronto*

Course will include Shuriken instruction by Greg Tremblay Ninjutsu Sensei. Additional details to follow. If you are interested in attending please contact a club instructor or Joanna Yu Sensei directly.

WHY I DON'T USE YOKO SHIHO GATAME

~ Gerry Taillon~

Position before submission. It's basically the golden rule of submission grappling of any description. You need to be in at least a neutral (ie guard) or better still, a dominant position (mount, side mount) before you start working for submissions. Don't reach into someone's guard, don't go for collar chokes when you're mounted. If you do those things against a skilled opponent, you will likely lose. Like every rule, there are exceptions....which is why I don't like to use yoko shiho gatame (side four corners hold). It's a position that leaves you susceptible to submission from the bottom without giving up dominant position.

Without further ado, here's a technique that I've used to counter yoko shiho gatame without the hassle and aggravation of actually doing something to improve my position. Sorry about the stupid look on my face as I perform the technique, I was directing photography.

First, we see that Jared has me in a 'nice' yoko shiho gatame.



I move Jared's arm lower on my leg to just above my knee and chamber my leg.



As powerfully as I can I drive my leg straight to break Jared's grip on my sleeve.



Quickly, I use my left hand to push his head into position to trap his head and right arm between my legs.



I throw my left leg across the back of Jared's neck.



Now I lock in an inverted sankaku jime (triangular choke) by locking my right leg over my left ankle. I can pull on his right arm with my left to tighten the choke if required.



If the sankaku jime does not work I still have another submission option from this position. In the picture I have released the choke, since I'm pretty sure Jared wanted to remain conscious throughout the demonstration. In reality, keep the choke in place.

Jared's right arm and head are trapped, and his left arm is right there for me to take. I grab his left wrist with my right hand.



I reach my left arm over his upper arm, grab my wrist, and shift my body to be a little more perpendicular to his and apply gyaku ude garami (reverse arm entanglement).



If your opponent attempts to roll out, you can either grab their near (left) leg with your right arm to prevent the roll, or if you're in the process of applying the arm lock you can roll up with them. This will put

you in a modified side mount with gyaku ude garami in place and your foot stepped over their head. This is a powerful position to finish the lock or you could change to ude hishigi ude gatame (arm lock) if you really wanted to be fancy about it. Or you could just keep the choke on. The choice is yours.

Any time on the ground that you have one arm between your opponent's legs and one arm out you are vulnerable to sankaku jime. I'm sure there are those out there who can apply this hold down without it being broken, but why put your arm in there in the first place. Mune gatame (chest hold) offers similar control but gives you many more options. You can easily transition between mune gatame and kuzure kesa gatame (broken scarf hold) until your opponent exhausts themselves. You can advance to tate shiho gatame (lengthwise four corners hold). You are free to go for submissions like ude garami (arm entanglement) and gyaku ude garami, or the kata gatame (shoulder hold) choke. In my personal ground game, yoko shiho gatame is for demonstration purposes only. I was obviously happy to see mune gatame appear in the yellow belt syllabus.

I had mentioned this particular counter technique to a number of people at the Provincials, and they had expressed interest in seeing it demonstrated. To those people, I hope this article does the trick. This is not a particularly groundbreaking technique, nor is it likely to improve your fundamental understanding of Jiu Jitsu. But it is kind of fun to catch someone with when they think they are dominating you on the ground. Give it a try, then see how much you like to use yoko shiho gatame.

HAPPY 6TH ANNIVERSARY JITSU TORONTO!

~ This one's for you Dudeweather. From all Toronto Jitsuka, past and present ~

While every year marks an anniversary for a club, this year was particularly special for the Kingston Jiu Jitsu Clubs. Recently, the Kingston YMCA celebrated their 5th anniversary and Queen's University celebrated their 10th anniversary with a lovely night out in Kingston. Toronto Jiu Jitsuka would like to congratulate both clubs on such a wonderful achievement and extends their congratulations to all other clubs for the anniversary year that they will be celebrating this year.

Sadly, due to our eagerness and enthusiasm to train, train, and train, Jitsu Toronto's 5th anniversary passed by quietly. As such we would like to celebrate our 6th anniversary which was this past April by dedicating this series of short anecdotes to Alex Fairweather Sensei who founded our awesome club at Kageyma Dojo.

~

Jon Thompson:

My favourite Jitsu Toronto moment, from now until the end of time, will be when the following exchange took place in the Carleton University Athletics Centre's Men's Changeroom at provincials one year:

(Jon, who is concerned about Team Toronto staying hydrated, hands Trevor a bottle of water)

Trevor: What's this?
Jon: It's water, Trevor.
Trevor: I know, but what's it for?
Jon: ... you drink it, Trevor.
Trevor: I know, but why are you giving it to me?
Jon: BECAUSE WE'RE FRIENDS, TREVOR. IT'S WHAT FRIENDS DO.

(Jon walks away, shaking his head.)

~

James "Bang" Bruce-weather:

"Bang" (yelled in a British accent) as I strike dangerous part number one to the head.

"Bang" (cried out in a British accent) as I finish uke off on the ground with a kick to the floating ribs.

"Bang" (exclaimed in a British accent) as I hit the start button on the microwave.

(Note: While Fairweather Sensei used "Bang" for demonstration and teaching purposes, Fairweather Sensei is also capable of a KIAI loud enough to shatter a mirror. James is currently practicing and developing his kiai.)

~

Trevor Kempthorne:

One of the most memorable things about Fairweather Sensei, for me at least, is how he tried to instill a sense of self-confidence in all of his students. Under no circumstances whatsoever would we ever be allowed to show that we were unhappy with our performance on the mats. I can't even count the number of times I was given pushups for a wayward glance to the ceiling or a self-deprecating grimace. His philosophy seemed to be that yes the technique wasn't perfect, but very few people are ever completely happy with their throws even after years of training. And even then, it is a dangerous mind set to have because once you can't find anything wrong, you stop advancing. Always focus on what you are doing right, worry about the rest later.

~

Jennifer Higgs, Sempai

This must have happened about a year ago, as Jon Carey and I were training together for our grading and Curtis Templeton had just joined the club fairly recently as an orange belt. Joanna was teaching judo rolls in the small dojo, and to aid Curtis in his attempts at this strange and unfamiliar breakfall, she instructed all of us to tap our back legs as we took off for the roll to remind ourselves to keep said leg straight. I was at the head of the line, being a dark blue belt at the time; one of the senior belts, always serious and always setting the proper tone for the rest of the class. ...Or not. Instead of quietly, discretely tapping my back leg mid-thigh as taught by Sensei, impulse took over and I wound up and smacked my own butt before take-off-- a resounding "Who's Your Daddy" whack that resounded through the tiny dojo. I launched myself into the roll and Jon Carey followed suit before Sensei called a halt to our shenanigans and had us start over properly. A couple hours later on the patio at Ciro's, the Toronto club watering hole, Joanna demanded to know why we were "taking the piss out of Curtis" with our breakfalling goofballery, and certain confusion ensued. From Joanna's view, we must have been poking fun at the poor new orange belt just joining us for the summer. In my mind, Jon and I were... well, just doing what we always do around each other, being goofballs. Either way, for months afterwards, I had to will myself not to repeat the self-butt-smack any time we did judo rolls again, and I'm very glad that Curtis didn't take the incident as a sign to never ever train with the Toronto club again. I wasn't making fun of you, Curtis; I love you.

~

Trevor Kempthorne (Again)

One of the more interesting aspects of the Toronto club is its location in Toronto as well as the Dojo itself. When people come to visit our Dojo for the first time, more often than not they're confused and

wondering if they got off at the wrong subway stop. Landsdowne is not the most auspicious of areas at first glance. I remember my first time I spent a good 2 or 3 minutes staring at the building before working up the nerve to try the buzzer. However, appearances are deceptive and once I was inside I was greeted with a very welcoming club and top-notch training facilities (Queen's students beware, these are real Tatami mats!). There's something to be said for training in a beautifully decorated, dedicated Japanese martial arts studio owned by a 10th Dan Ninjitsu instructor. And of course the food/drink at Ciro's (which is just an easy stumble from the subway), is some of the better food I've had in the entire city.

~

Joanna Yu, Sensei

I hope you have enjoyed these handful of memories from the years that have passed as much as we have. Someone give us a heads up for when we hit 10 years please.

Cheers to all the future years of Jitsu Toronto that lie ahead of us!

FEATURED TECHNIQUE: KOTE-GAESHI

~ Chris Brooks, Sensei ~

Kote-gaeshi is a very popular wrist locking technique in many martial arts, particularly jiu jitsu and aikido. In Shorinji Kan Jiu Jitsu it is one of the first wrist locks you will learn and is more commonly known as wrist lock #1. Kote-gaeshi is very much a “bread and butter” locking technique because it provides very firm control of an attacker’s wrist and can produce devastating results in application. Because of its ability to completely disable the wrist joint, it can be especially effective against weapon wielding assailants. This article will suggest some tips on how to improve the efficiency of your practice and application of kote-gaeshi.

Mechanics

Since kote-gaeshi can be applied in many different situations, this section will not focus on any particular scenario, but rather highlight some key points on how this wrist lock works.

Hand position

Your outside hand is the anchoring hand. Your fingers should grip around uke’s (the attacker’s) thumb, on and beneath the knuckle. Your thumb should press against the back of uke’s hand, towards the last two knuckles. This will maximize your control of uke’s hand. (See Figure A)



(Figure A)

Your inside hand is the power hand that directs the force of the lock. There are two principal ways of gripping with the inside hand as shown in the photos below. Figures B & C show a popular style of grip where both of tori’s (the defender’s) thumbs press into the back of uke’s hand. While this grip may appear to offer more support to tori, it is actually more vulnerable to being countered because it relies primarily on the strength of the thumbs for control. In Figures D & E, Tori reinforces the lock with the palm turned out and pressing against the back (near the edge) of uke’s hand. This enables tori to bring the full weight of his/her body onto the lock making it much stronger and more effective against resistance.



(Figure B)



(Figure D)



(Figure C)



(Figure E)

Fundamentally, once the grip is in place, kote-gaeshi is executed by turning the wrist outwards and against itself, which results in considerable pain in the joint and along the forearm. However, there are a couple of things you'll want to watch out for. First of all, make sure that uke's arm is bent. When uke's arm is straight, it actually provides some reinforcement to the wrist making the joint a little more resistive to the lock. (See Figure F)



(Figure F)

Secondly, avoid bringing uke's hand up too high. (See Figure G) This will reduce the lock's efficiency and if uke has a weapon in hand it could come dangerously close to your face or neck! Always keep uke's hand as close to belt height as possible.



(Figure G)

Here is an important tip that will help you overcome the two obstacles above, while reducing uke's ability to resist you. Once you have established your grip, before turning the wrist outwards, fold the wrist forward as though trying to drive uke's fingers into his/her shoulder. (See Figure H) This movement will generate pain in the wrist causing uke to relax and the arm to bend. This motion also helps to bring the wrist low and will begin to unbalance uke making it more difficult for him/her to resist. Now turn the wrist outwards into kote-gaeshi. (See Figure I)



(Figure H)



(Figure I)

Alternative hand position

Depending on the situation, it may be preferable to grip uke's hand a different way for kote-gaeshi. Figure J shows tori gripping uke's hand with only the inside hand. Tori's fingers are around the back of uke's hand and thumb is underneath at the fold of uke's wrist. Tori's outside hand is anchoring at uke's elbow to help provide bend to the arm and support to the lock.



(Figure J)

This one-handed grip does lose some of the support offered by a two-handed grip and it can result in uke's hand coming up higher than normal. However, the anchoring hand at uke's elbow does offer better control of uke's arm and can be a strong device against resistance. Generally, this method of kote-gaeshi would be preferable in a resistive scenario where tori does not have the opportunity to transition both hands to uke's wrist.

Leg and body position

When executing kote-gaeshi, it is important to be conscious of the position of your legs and body relative to uke. Whether stepping forwards or retreating backwards, your inside leg should always be in front to protect your groin. This will also enable you to bring more body weight into the lock. (See figures K & L)



(Figure K)



(Figure L)

As with most techniques, keep your posture upright and your knees bent so that you have a strong supportive base in the event uke tries to resist. Also make sure that your hips are aligned towards the direction of the wrist lock. Each of these principles will enable you to channel more force into your technique. Lastly, synchronize your body movement with the execution of the lock. Your technique will be much more powerful if your whole body moves at once (rather than the legs first and then the hands or vice versa).

Application

While locking techniques like kote-gaeshi can be very effective, they can be equally difficult to apply against a fiercely resistive attacker (in particular one who has strong wrists!) Unless your skill and timing are superb, you may need to rely on a weakener to “soften” your uke. Strikes can be a good way to accomplish this and when employing strikes, be sure to make them quick and choose targets that will maximize discomfort to your opponent (i.e. face, neck and nerve points). Just a caution though when using strikes: if you utilize one of your hands to deliver the strike your grip on uke will be temporarily weakened; likewise if you lift a leg to deliver a kick or knee strike your balance could become compromised.

Perhaps a more effective method of delivering a weakener is to utilize another locking technique as a transition into kote-gaeshi. Depending on your position, an arm lock may offer a weakener that will not compromise your hold on uke or your balance. Figure M shows tori utilizing arm lock #2 to off-balance uke. The pain generated in the elbow helps to relax uke as tori then transitions into position for kote-gaeshi by pivoting on the inside foot and drawing the outside leg back (see Figure N). The great thing about this combination is that it employs natural movement; without having to relinquish the grip, tori is able to move freely from one technique to the other while keeping uke in an uncomfortable position throughout.



(Figure M)



(Figure N)

As mentioned earlier, kote-gaeshi can also be very useful against weapon wielding opponents. When applied full force, this lock can render not only the wrist unusable, but also the forearm and elbow. During training be mindful of the type of weapon being used (i.e. is it blunt or sharp?) and keep aware of its whereabouts at all times. Do not become overconfident ESPECIALLY against knives or other sharp weapons. Like every technique, kote-gaeshi is by no means fool-proof!

In the real world, many attackers will not have trained in the martial arts and so may not respond to a successful kote-gaeshi by collapsing or “diving” to the ground...your opponent may now have a broken wrist, but be prepared that the fight may continue.

However, if uke does collapse under the pain of the lock, the technique should not stop there. There are a number of restraint techniques that can be transitioned to from kote-gaeshi to ensure that your opponent remains fully under your control. (Restraint #3, for example, is shown below in Figure O) Tips for the restraint techniques are beyond the scope of this article however I wanted to highlight the importance of maintaining control of your attacker even after kote-gaeshi has been applied.



(Figure O)



Diving out of kote-gaeshi

Finally, one more tip and this one is directed at uke. Kote-gaeshi is a powerful lock so when you are having it done to you make sure you TAP early (waiting for sharp pain to set in will most definitely result in damage to your wrist!) For more experienced uke, kote-gaeshi presents an excellent opportunity to practice your “over-the-belt” dives. Just make sure that tori executes the lock at a pace you can safely dive out of. There are many tips for diving out of locking techniques, but perhaps I’ll try to persuade Gibb Sensei to touch on some of these in the next issue of the newsletter! ;-)

** Questions or comments about this article can be directed to me at pchrisbrooks@gmail.com
Thanks to Kim McFadden and Joseph Kim for being my uke in this article!*

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