

THE THROWS & TAKE-DOWNS OF

JUDO



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SUMMERSDALE

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Introduction

There has been a lot said of late about the art of grappling or, more specifically, the art of ground fighting. The grappling arts are enjoying a well-earned and long-awaited revival. Grappling was in vogue in the early part of this century, a period known as the Golden Age of Wrestling, but its popularity waned just before – and probably due to – the Great War, only to be reborn post-war as ‘show grappling’. It would seem that grappling has always lain hidden within the shadow of contemporary combat, probably due to its unembellished demeanour. Its devastating potency is often hidden (to the uninitiated) by its lack of obvious aesthetic; people have been drawn instead to the superfluously spectacular kicking arts. However, the world of combat, and more specifically the world of martial arts, has now evolved and many of the more spectacular systems have failed the acid test of time and the pressure test of reality. They have crumbled under the weight of contemporary violence like a paper house in a hurricane. The prettier systems that originally

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drew thousands like summer moths to a flame have balked at the obstacle of practicality, proving to be little more than showy glitz. The fundamental movements of the grappling arts, so often ignored due to the ‘ugly duckling’ syndrome, have risen above the maelstrom; the swan of real combat has blossomed leaving the ‘flash’ dead in the water.

Due to the well-publicised rise of the UFC (Ultimate Fight Competition) – cage fighting, reality combat and extreme fighting, everybody suddenly wants to fight on the floor, often to the detriment of all other ranges. I can understand this, ground grappling has been missing from martial arts for so long, and the UFC-type tournaments advertise grappling supremacy so well, it is only natural that people want to fill their baskets with the ‘missing range’. Suddenly everyone (and his dog) is desperate to make up for their lack and learn the art of ground fighting. And so they should. I’ve been trying to tell people this for the last ten years. Having worked as a nightclub doorman for nine years I always knew that grappling was a vital part of the martial armoury. But this is where the

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problems begin. Whilst it is important, even imperative to include grappling on the curriculum it should not be to the exclusion of the other ranges. Martial artists are abandoning their base style to become grapplers. This will do little more than move their weak link from one section of the martial chain to another. They become very good at the match-fight scenario where grapplers rule supreme, but wholly inadequate when it comes to anything involving the other ranges.

My speciality is adapting combat techniques to the street scenario, making it work outside the chip shop and for street-defence, specifically 3-second fighting and ambush fighting. Grappling can be very weak in this arena due to the four B's: biting, butting, blinding and buddies. You have to know grappling of course; you need a map around all of the combat ranges even if it is only to enable you to avoid the traps, but don't make this one range – or any range for that matter – your be all and end all. I have become a good grappler so that I can anti-grapple, and in a worst-case scenario so that I can

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escape from a bad position on the floor should I make a mistake and find myself there. The fighter who becomes a great grappler because he has watched the reality tapes can find himself getting punched out in the bar by a 3-second fighter, or kicked to death by a football fan with not a single day of formal martial arts to his name. So let's keep things in context. Grapple, yes; but never neglect the other ranges that make up the armoury. If one range is neglected then you have a chink in the armour; you may be judged in a real situation on the strength of that one range, as they say, you are only as strong as your weakest link.

Equally with the ground-fighting phenomenon there has been little or no notice taken of the tachi waza, or standing techniques. A lot of what happens on the floor (unless you are an exceptional ground fighter) is wholly determined by how you got there. If you are thrown, dragged, kicked or punched to the floor and end up in a bad position you may never escape, or your opponent may be in a position to stand back up and kick pieces off you while you are on your back.

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When we practise ground fighting we start from a neutral position. Both fighters with an equal start. In a real situation there is no such neutrality and you very much have to make the best of what you are given, that is unless you are the one who controls the take-down. The question that I always ask when watching demos of ground fighting prowess is, 'Yeah, but how do you get to that position from vertical fighting?' Thus my quest to learn the throws and take-downs from as many systems as possible began.

In this volume we will look specifically at the basic throws and take-downs of judo. Having studied this system for quite a chunk of my life I can vouch for the potency and dynamism of this much-underrated art.

As with ground fighting, don't make the throws and take-downs the be all and end all. Many opponents in a live scenario will not allow you to throw them cleanly, they will grip you like their very lives depend upon it and drag you to the floor

with them and if you don't know how to fight on the floor then you are up the proverbial creek.

As I have said in all of the books and videos that I put out, please don't rely on this book, or any other for that matter, to teach you, it must be used in combination with a good class or a good training partner. There is nothing like a real opponent to perfect the physical technique; I'd go as far as to say that it cannot be learned properly by book alone. Learn the fundamentals of the technique, and then put it under the pressure of a non-compliant partner to perfect it. Once you can work the technique on someone that doesn't want to be thrown, then you know you've got it off.

Compliance kills!

Compliance in training is only of use when first learning the fundamentals of a technique; once learned, an opponent should offer 100 per cent resistance. Taking the randori (free-fighting or sparring) out of a system is effectively taking the

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