



KOKORO

Vol. 22 #3, March, 2015
e-mail: senseigk@budoshin.com

Questions are an integral part of learning. They help me realize areas of study that require clarification. Here are more questions from BJJY members.

Also, none of the question responses, opinion, or editorial content provide any legal advice in any form or manner regardless of how qualified or experienced the author may be. Always consult a qualified attorney if you need legal advice.

Q: As my training partner has wisely pointed out to me, I need to slow the technique down when testing. I get used to executing self defense moves from all the Martial Arts I practiced in a fast pace because that was how I trained for street defense mode, but these are exam presentations and not a bar fight so I need to mentally keep that in mind. 012015

A: Although I look for correct execution on techniques, you should realize that your speed will improve as your quality and smoothness of execution improves. "Forced" speed make work on a short term basis, but it won't hide flaws. So when I say slow down, it's not that I really want you to demonstrate the technique slower, but, that by slowing down the technique execution will flow more smoothly and that will ultimately

allow you to execute techniques faster and with less effort.

It's a given that in a street situation, technique or form will suffer to some extent. However, the more proficient you are in correct execution, the better your odds of correct execution and survival on the street.

Q: My wife and I have been living in the Dominican Republic for nearly three years, working as volunteer teachers. I want her to stay safe, so we have been looking at various methods of instruction. Obviously, the home-instruction Budoshin system seems like an ideal fit for us. Already, we have taken some "self-defense" courses, but are looking for something a little more comprehensive.

My question is: Are you still providing the full at-home program? There is probably a great deal we can learn from the DVDs and books, but I feel that the video reviews provide the greatest opportunity for feedback and critique. Are these still available, with the opportunity for belt promotions? 012115

A: The answer to both of your questions is yes. More information about my program can be

Would you like to write an article for the next issue of Kokoro?

If so, either e-mail it to me or send it to me as an e-mail attachment in a format that MS Word or Publisher can read—or in pdf format. All articles are subject to editing.

I am not responsible for any content, suggestions, recommendations, viewpoint, or suggested, advocated or recommended actions presented by the author of any article written/published or made in a written inquiry, statement or viewpoint which becomes part of the Kokoro newsletter.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

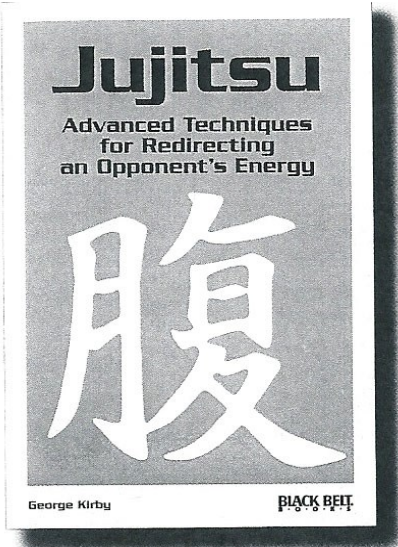
BJJY Summer Camp

Mid-August, 2015

Santa Clarita, CA

Contact: senseigk@budoshin.com

Check out www.americanjujitsuassociation.org for AJA Calendar of Events



Jujitsu

Advanced Techniques for Redirecting
an Opponent's Energy

This latest volume presents the parts of jujutsu that are hardest to learn because they are the hardest to see — the skills of unbalancing and energy flow that seemingly exist more in the mental world than the physical one, but become easier to perceive and apply as a result of this book. Highly recommended!

—Bruce D. Clayton, author, *Shotokan's Secret*

If you are a student of jujitsu, judo, aikido, or karate, or a fan of the martial arts, this book by George Kirby will help you connect the dots between concepts and techniques. You will learn how to use an opponent's momentum against him in devastating fashion through the appropriate application of his and your *ki* [energy], *kuzushi* [off-balancing] and proper positioning of your *saiki tanden* [center]. Maximizing the elements of circular movement in using an opponent's energy against him results in fast an effective control during an attack.

224+ pages with 300 pictures, 20 line drawings, and 2 charts.

Retail Price: US\$19.95

ISBN: 9780897502092

Available in May, 2015

Cover design, title, & book description subject to change.

JU-SHIN INSTRUCTOR UPDATE REQUEST

If you attended last year's summer camp and received a certificate indicating that you would be willing to teach Ju-Shin in the future will you please send me an email indicating who you are.

I misplaced the list of who certificates were issued to & would like to get my records straightened out.

All you have to do is email me at senseigk@budoshin.com

Thank you.

quickly learned that if I made all the info about what & how I was teaching available to my students up front they were ultimately more successful. It also allowed me to work closely with the kids on an individual basis as a guide rather than as a "talking head".

Q: I just want to ask because the biggest challenge for me will be to find a training partner. If my partner can test too? I mean can we share the video and then if my partner will be a BJJY member can he take the test as we'll? 012615

A: You are correct. Getting a reliable training partner will be your greatest challenge. No, he doesn't need to purchase his own videos unless he really wants to. However, he must be a BJJY member if he wants to be tested. If he doesn't want to put out or can't afford to put out the \$\$ then you might consider paying his initial BJJY fee – just to get him on board. The worst a potential training partner could say is "no".

Q: Please forgive my not knowing, but what does "ju-shin" mean please? 020115

A: Ju-Shin transliterates to gentle-spirit. It's a form of exercise based upon basic movements in jujitsu.

However, it is not that simple. There is ju-shin, referring to center of gravity, and ju-shin, referring to gentle spirit. Although Ju-Shin [gentle spirit] is the name of the exercise, ju-shin [center of gravity] is essential for the success of the exercise.

found at www.budoshin.com .

My apologies if it seems like there's a lot of information. However, as a school teacher I

TEACHABLE MOMENT!

By George Kirby

Note: A couple of sensei asked me to start a series on how to improve teaching skills and student learning—as it applies to the dojo. This is now part of an ongoing series.

Obi Musubi: The “Death Knot”



This may seem like an innocent question but, is your obi tied correctly? I've looked at my white and green belts in class & occasionally wondered how many ways are there to tie their obi. When that occurs I'll either work with

individual students before class or take a few minutes during class to reteach and have every-one retie their belts correctly. I know that the lower ranks will eventually get it right, but sometimes I wish it wouldn't take so long.

Then again, newer students do try to tie the obi correctly. However, they may also wonder why sensei makes such a big deal about such a small thing. After all, as long as the obi holds the gi top together that's what's important. Right?

Wrong!

The belt knot [obi musubi] is a symbol of the dojo and the art. It's a representation of doing things right, whether it be how your gi is cared for and worn or how serious you are about learning the art [learning the basic movements correctly]. However, tying the obi musubi correctly is far more simple than learning basic movements correctly, which can take weeks or months or years. [I'm still learning that.]

Tying the obi musubi correctly is even symbolic to the general public; much like your gi. They look at you. They look at your gi. They look at what's on your gi and where. And they look at your obi. If everyone looks the same it looks impressive. It shows that the students are proud of

themselves, their dojo, and the art. If there are differences among students appearances it does not convey a sense of unity and pride.

I have walked into some dojo, seen students lined up, and it looks like a menagerie of different uniforms, colors, patches, belts [or lack thereof]. It's chaos. And that's what the general public sees too. That's sad, because it affects the instructional program negatively. The sensei and the art may be terrific, but . . . In all fairness though different martial arts and even different ryu within the same martial art may use a different knot than the knot used in Budoshin Ju-Jitsu. There is nothing wrong with it. It represents their ryu or their dojo. The point is that everyone in the dojo should be wearing the same knot.

If you're a member of a dojo you have an obligation to meet the uniform standards of the dojo. That's a sign of respect to yourself, your sensei, your dojo, and the art. Believe it or not, it's also very encouraging & inspiring to the sensei to see all of his students looking as if they respect the dojo and the art. It conveys the attitude that we are proud to be here and respect ourselves as members and positive role models of the dojo. The general public also sees that too.

All of this from a simple knot?

Yes!

So, what's with the “death knot”?

I actually ran into this term when I was doing a seminar at a karate dojo back east many years ago. There was some concerned mumbling going on among some of the participants. I asked them what their concern was and one of them finally asked, “Why are you wearing the death knot?”

Whoa! The “death knot”?

This was the first time I had ever heard of the term. However, as a high ranking sensei wearing this particular musubi, I knew I had to come up with a logical and acceptable answer - - - fast. I explained that this was the knot the Seki Sensei expected us to wear in his dojo and that

it indicated commitment; the commitment to defend ourselves to the best of our ability. It was an extension of the days of the samurai when they would defend their lives and their master to the death, thereby bringing or maintaining honor to their family name.

Believe it or not, they accepted my explanation. [After all, being a high-ranking sensei, I should know what I'm talking about. :)] It also made sense to me. After all, when you defend yourself from an attacker you must do so with full commitment. You cannot successfully defend yourself if your attitude is "maybe." You will either be successful or unsuccessful at defending yourself. You either win or you lose. There is no middle ground. That's why you have to commit yourself to success.

The obi musubi [belt knot] we use symbolizes that commitment. It also symbolizes commitment in another way. By wearing the musubi as we do we are saying that we will commit ourselves to seriously learn the art and we will respect the other members of the dojo who are

also committed to learning the art. It also says that we respect ourselves, our commitment to the art, the rank we have earned, and continuing our growth in the art.

So, is our obi musubi really the "death knot"? I don't know. It may be part of the martial arts mythology or it may be based on fact. However, if you're a Budoshin Ju-Jitsu student that's the knot we use and you're expected to tie your obi correctly. If you want to impress others with the mythology that's up to you. My concern is that you respect your belt, as you respect everything else [including yourself] and tie your obi correctly.

There are pictures in the student handbook or you can go online to www.budoshin.com/BeltTie.pdf for directions on how to tie your obi.

Oh . . . and by the way, the obi is supposed to hold your gi top together too. However, it shouldn't be worn so tight that it won't slip over your hips.

That little knot means a lot.

Center of gravity:

重心

Gentle spirit:

柔心

It's amazing how different kanji can change the meaning of a word/phrase with an identical pronunciation — and yet both remain related.

I hope to have more info on Ju-Shin readily available in the future.

Q: I've herd that you're coming out with a new book. Can you give me the title and any details? 020615

A: I'm not sure what the title will be so I can't answer the first part of your question.

As far as the second part of your question is concerned, generally it will center around using and redirecting your opponent's energy. Essentially, with this book the best analogy

would be that I will be building a house from concept, to foundation, framing, and completion. So it'll have a theory & application approach to help you build solid execution of jujitsu [& other martial arts] techniques. The skills presented, from both an "eastern" and "western" perspective, will help you improve your execution while you put out a lot less effort. After all, your goal is to use your attacker's ki, not yours. Plus it will have about 15 new techniques shown at the end that can serve as additional examples of the ideas and concepts presented in the book.

That's about all I can say without going into a lot of detail. For more details you'll have to get the book. I'll let you know when it's available — probably some time in May.

Q: Why do you use Hightail [Dropbox service] to send is large files rather than just sending them as email attachments? 020715

A: I use Hightail to send you large files for three reasons: First, because some "free" email services [gmail, Hotmail, yahoo, etc.,] sometimes have attachment download size limitations. So rather than having to deal with unknown varia-

GET YOUR BJJY MEMBERSHIP!!

12-Month BJJY U.S. Membership*, normally \$38,

ONLY \$30 the first year [& \$33/year thereafter]

if you sign up for automatic renewal and you don't have it already.

Foreign membership is \$40 [\$43/year after 1st year] under this plan for the first year.

[You can cancel automatic renewal at any time].

MEMBERSHIP PACKAGE SPECIALS: 5-YEAR 2015-2019 BJJY Membership* ONLY \$125 [U.S.] or 1-year BJJY Membership* plus 8-dvd Home Study Black Belt series ONLY \$114.95 [U.S.] plus s&h, & choose any single dvd or mp4 video set for **FREE with either purchase!**

You can also pay for your 5-year membership in 5 easy monthly payments of just \$25 each or you can choose PayPal's 6-month no-interest payment option for either "package".

Get someone else to join & 1/3 of their fee [1 or 5 year] will be refunded to YOU or you can choose any single dvd or mp4 video set for **FREE!**

Go to www.budoshin.com/membershipreq.htm & scroll down the page to get or renew your BJJY membership online using PayPal or send a check for the correct amount, payable to "Budoshin Ju-Jitsu", to BJJY, P.O. Box 801854, Santa Clarita, CA.

Questions: email me at senseigk@budoshin.com .

bles after the fact, it's easier just to let Hightail send them to you. This is easy for me to do as when I click "send" on your email a Hightail pop-up will appear [if total attachments exceed 1mb] & ask me if I want to send the attachments by Hightail. All it takes is one click by me and the deed is done.

The second reason I use Hightail is because downloading at your end is faster, especially if there are multiple downloads or large.

Third, unlike some other dropbox services [even "free" ones] you do NOT need to sign up or register with Hightail in order to download files I send to you. Nor do you need to register or pay for Hightail in order to send me large files. It's a service I pay for to benefit BJJY members.

Q: You recently sent out copies of the Black Belt Handbook to a number of black belts and asked for suggestions/modifications to the current Black Belt Handbook to make it more user friendly. Since, I'm not a Budoshin Ju-Jitsu black belt, do you still want me to make suggestions/modifications or was the handbook sent to me by mistake? 0207015

A: I did send some copies of the Black Belt Handbook to non-Budoshin Jujitsu yudansha because I am hoping for some "outside" input. Although "listening to the choir" is nice, outside input can stimulate thinking and create potential alternatives. As a school teacher I periodically had my "kids" [junior & senior high] evaluate my teaching and materials. They even developed questions [scary at times :)] to be included in my teacher evaluations. So, your input is welcome as it can give me a different perspective.

Q: In looking through the Black Belt Handbook I noticed that you require First-Aid, CPR, and concussion awareness training for black belt grades. Why do you require them? They don't seem to have anything to do with becoming a black belt or moving up to higher black belt levels? 020715

A: I require them for a number of reasons. First, since all black belt grades are teaching grades, a black belt is responsible for the safety of mudansha. So, it is reasonable to require this outside training for black belts. Second, if an injury does occur in your dojo, or at a demo or other

event outside of your dojo, you need to know what to do — or what NOT to do — until proper help arrives to take over the care of the injured student.

Third, first-aid, CPR, and concussion awareness training are good skills to possess just as a responsible adult. Most states have “good Samaritan” laws. Also, being able to help an injured person or prevent an injury is a matter of being a decent, compassionate and responsible human being [at least in my book].

I’ve had enough experiences as a sensei, school teacher, backpacker, parent and spouse, to know that all those skills are necessary in an emergency and, at some point in your life, **they will become a necessity.**

So, as the Boy Scout motto says, “Be prepared!” Get that training. You could save a life!

Q: Why is rolling the gi up properly and tying your obi in a certain way part of the green belt test? Should either of these really matter? 020915

A: To answer the second question first: yes. It matters. It’s a sign of respect to the art, yourself and to your “uniform. It’s also part of learning any martial art.

Rolling the gi up properly [and tying it tightly with your obi using the same knot as when you tie your obi around your waist] keeps it neat and easy to store. Your gi sleeves will have a crease that will cause people to wonder if you starch and iron your gi [I hope you don’t]. Although hanging your gi on a clothes hanger is also nice, it’s difficult to transport that way. Rolling and tying it up keeps everything together and it’s easy to put in a gym bag. Wearing a crumpled or dirty gi just looks disrespectful. Seki would joke that if you rolled up your gi properly you could play catch with it — although he’d probably “kill us” if he caught us being so disrespectful to our gi. Nor would he let us on the mat with a dirty gi.

As far as tying your obi a certain way, almost every dojo has a standard way and expectation as to how belts are tied. So the same standard exists in Budoshin Ju-jitsu. [If you need some reasonably good pix on how to tie your obi go to www.budoshin.com/BeltTie.pdf .]

Just as an FYI, your question regarding the obi kick-started this month’s “Teachable Mo-

DVD's ALMOST GONE Mp4's SELLING WELL

Just a heads up to let you know that my inventory of dvd sets of seminars & camps is dwindling fast. As of February the only dvd sets left are Summer Camps 2007, 2010, 2011, 2012, and the Quick Takedown dvd.

All of the summer camps and seminars ARE available as mp4 files. Mp4's have lots of advantages:

- no shipping charges
- usually sent to you online within 24-48 hours.
- can be saved on any medium:
 - = save on any hard drive
 - = save on a memory [thumb] stick
 - = save on a tablet or smart phone
 - = burn onto dvds
- can play on TV, tablets, smart phones, etc.

To order your dvds' before they disappear or to order your mp4's [which won't disappear]. go to www.budoshin.com/dvdcnd.htm .

BTW: You can get a **FREE** dvd or mp4 set if you purchase a :

- 5-year BJJY membership
- 1 year membership plus my 8-dvd home study set
- get someone to join the BJJY

Just go to www.budoshin.com/membershipreg.htm to get your BJJY memberships or www.budoshin.com/BJJhomestudy.htm [& scroll down to the bottom of the page.

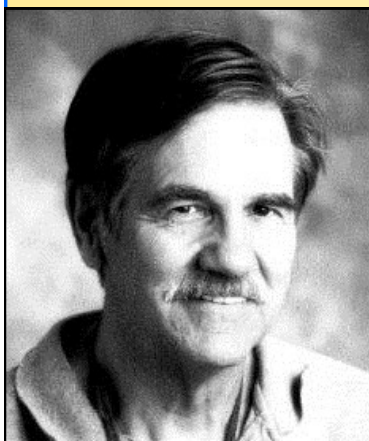
ment” editorial. So thank you for your question and the inspiration that resulted.

Q: You’ve had some “long-winded” discussions in the past few issues of Kokoro. While they do sometimes convey a lot of information, they are just too long sometimes. Is there any way you can edit them down? 020915

A: They **were** edited down, some considerably.

WELL PRACTICED UKEMI: THE POWER TO RISE

by Jess Strom



"...He floats through the air with the greatest of ease, that daring young man on the flying trapeze..."

George Leybourne,
1867

The words of the old circus refrain from "Man on the Flying Trapeze" vividly portray graceful movement in action.

Through our mind's eye, we envision a young man whose mastery of the dynamics of gravity and motion propel him through the air, seemingly at will, beyond the fear of falling. So too in jujitsu, to realize our full potential we must overcome the fear of falling. We do this through learning the power of ukemi – controlling the fall.

The Power of Defense.

Ukemi is pure self-defense in that it is meant to protect the head, the limbs and body from the harm of a fall generated by an attack. Generally speaking, injury during a fall is caused by hitting one's head on the ground or extending one's limb(s) to reach for the ground to stop or slow the downward motion of the fall. Well practiced ukemi develops the reflexes so that while one's head is safely tucked and "reaching for the ground" is not an automatic action. Thus, one falls with the limbs protected, reducing the possibility of head, limb or body injury. When one is falling, ukemi then becomes the body's first defense.

The Power to Fall.

Imagine being on the receiving end (Uke) of a powerful takedown like the Inner Thigh Reap (Uchi Mata) or being slammed by a Double Leg Reap (Morote Gari) or even hitting the ground as a result of the rotational force of a hip throw like Tsuru Goshi or Uki Goshi. According to the History Channel's series "The Human Weap-

on" - an inner thigh reap can deliver up to 5,000 pounds of force: the Double Leg Takedown, given the Uke is raised to maximum level, drives the opponent in the ground with an impact up to 3,500 pounds: and the rotational force of a hip throw coupled with gravity propels the Uke at a speed of up to 8 miles per hour. Crippling injury could be result. Yet the actions within ukemi combined with the padding of the mat provide the means to absorb energy so that the body is able to withstand the shock of the fall. Ukemi enables the person receiving the fall (Uke) to withstand the fall over and over again without injury. In this manner, the person committing the throw (Tori) is able to experience the full range of motion of the technique. As correctness of form and familiarity of motion accumulate, control of movement and confidence build. The Uke's body experiences the motion necessary for protection as it floats through the air like the man on the flying trapeze.

The Power to Rise

As the practice of ukemi becomes a bit more advanced, it is practiced without maintaining a stationary position at the end of a fall and one can roll through to disperse the energy. Specifically, in jujitsu the backward roll and forward roll is practiced so that the practitioner rises from the fall assuming a defensive posture - falling then rising in one seamless motion.

The Power to Reverse Attacks

Through ukemi, one learns the dynamic elements of control so that it is possible to weaken the opponent's attack and turn the tables on the attacker. For example, if an attacker (Tori) attempts a 'body drop' (Tai Otoshi) the person being thrown (Uke) can adjust causing a self-controlled landing in front of the attacker and change the execution though a "floating drop" (Uki Waza) or "side wheel" (Yoko Guruma). Should the attacker not have good control of the Uke, the Uke can simply sit backwards extending a leg behind the attacker to counter with a 'valley drop' (Tani Otoshi). In either case, the initial thrower becomes the throwee and the initial throwee becomes the thrower; hence for Tori and Uki the tables are turned. Well practiced ukemi gives the Uke the power to control movement at will beyond the fear of falling.

Ukemi from Fall to Rise

Ukemi, then, as a practical matter gives us the power to defend our bodies, the power to fall, the power to rise, and the power to reverse attacks hence the power to fly through the air with the greatest of ease.

The spirit of ukemi is best exemplified by the Japanese proverb: "Fall seven times and stand up eight." We do not practice ukemi to remain the victim. From the fall, we learn to rise. In this regard, the power to fall begets the power to rise.

From every fall, may you always rise.

Jess Strom holds a shodan in Taiho Jutsu, awarded by Professor Bruce Jones [now retired], from the Reston YMCA Budoshin Dojo, Reston, VA. Jess is continuing his studies under Sensei Kee, who has taken over the program for Professor Jones.

However, I do understand your concern and agree with you. Maybe, in the future, I'll have the person rewrite their thoughts into an editorial format. It may result in more concise and readable presentations.

Q: I have been looking around for a good system of martial arts to study. There are schools here, but they all are consumed with sport tournaments. I have trained in a few different variations of karate, so I have fallen in love with Japanese oriented martial arts. I need a good system to study so I can improve my self defense. I would like to know some of the basics and how this system works. 020915

A: Thank you for your inquiry. I will do my best to summarize. However, I strongly recommend that you go to my website, www.budoshin.com and more specifically www.budoshin.com/yudanshakai.htm and www.budoshin.com/beltreq.htm but don't let the information intimidate you.

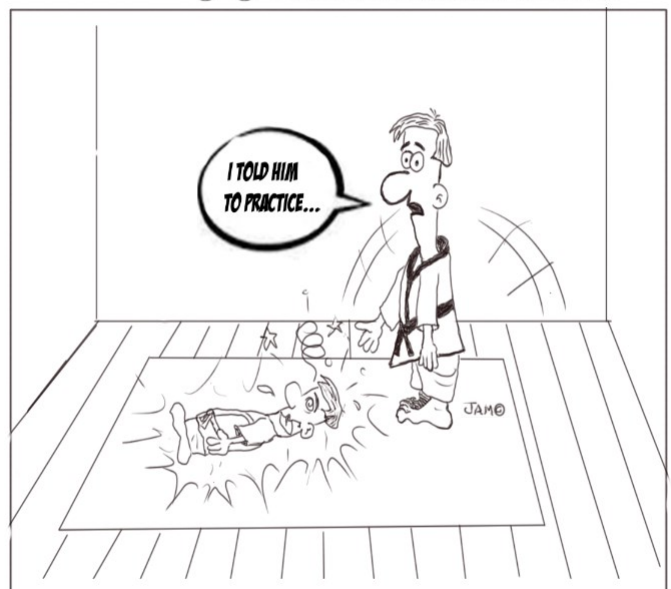
Essentially the home study system is based on the 8-dvd Black Belt Home Study course combined with the Student Handbook. [You can either order these on their own or as a package which includes BJJY membership for 1 year.] There are more techniques presented on each belt dvd than what are actually required on

any particular belt exam so be sure that you're following the Student Handbook requirements. You will need a training partner and mats. You can proceed at your own speed, submitting videos of you doing techniques as requested on the belt tests in the Student Handbook, all the way up through 4th kyu. You can send me the video on a dvd by snail mail or your BJJY membership will allow you to send me the video via Hightail [a dropbox service I use]. I will respond with an audio evaluation. BJJY members currently can get up to 4 free belt evaluations per year as part of their BJJY membership. Starting at brown belt the tests are more formal and there is a negligible fee as I have to set up the test even though it can still be done via video.

The 8-dvd set can actually take you almost all the way up through Nidan [2nd black belt] in Budoshin Jujitsu and testing at all ranks can be done via video. The belt rank requirements for all ranks are specifically stated in the Student Handbook. Once you get to 2nd or 1st kyu I will then send you the Black Belt Handbook which will guide you through the black belt grades.

Always feel free to contact me whenever you have any questions or concerns. If you have any more specific questions please feel free to ask. This is a totally transparent program. There are no secrets and no surprises for students.

Punch gag Martial Artwork By JAMtoons Studio 2014



I have also attached a couple of recent issues of Kokoro, my Q&A newsletter for BJJY members. They will probably be sent to you via Hightail. You do NOT have to register or sign up with Hightail to download the newsletters. I will also be adding you to my secure email list to receive Budoshin-Online, my monthly general announcement newsletter. If you do not want to receive it please let me know or you can self-delete at any time with 1-2 clicks by following the directions at the bottom of any issue.

I'm looking forward to hearing from you and working with you.

Q: Thank you, so when I test for a belt. Will I be sent a sheet of required or specific techniques needed for that level?? Or is it more of just a random thing?? 020915

A: The actual tests are in the Student Handbook.

Below brown belt [6th-4th kyu] you just follow the sequence specified in the Student Handbook in the order specified. Starting with the brown belt [3rd-1st kyu] I will select random techniques from the list in your Student Handbook. You will need to know all the techniques, along with their Japanese names by that time, as that is how the requested technique will be called out. The actual testing procedure, starting at brown belt, is quite secure and you will not know which techniques you actually have to do until they are called out by a person serving as the "examiner" - all recorded on video.

On all tests, starting at brown belt, I will ask for a limited number of kata and waza - specified for each test - from the lists in the Student and Black Belt Handbooks. You will never be asked to demonstrate every kata & waza listed. It's too exhausting and doesn't serve any real or positive purpose.

Please be aware that I am looking for two things on every test: growth/progress in

technique mastery and quality. I never look at speed [which will come naturally as quality and mastery improves.

Most of this should make more sense once you have the Student Handbook in your possession. I have attached a copy of the 6th kyu exam FYI. Please note that the Japanese names are given on all kata even though both the Japanese and English names are called out on all exams below brown belt. You don't need to know the Japanese names of techniques at this level, although if you do it will make the learning process easier as you grow in the art.

Q: In looking through the Student Handbook I noticed a "Freestyle Kata" requirement to be used against random street attacks for Ikkyu. What is freestyle kata? 021215

A: "Freestyle kata" basically means that you may use whatever techniques you have learned in any combination necessary to deal with random street-type attacks from your uki for 30-60 seconds. It's like the sequence that each of my Black Belt Home Study Course dvds start out with. That sequence was not rehearsed or pre-planned. The attackers attacked randomly and continuously.

This is different from kime-no-kata [or prearranged forms] where you've worked out a routine with your partner ahead of time.

With freestyle kata there is no planned routine. You just respond, as you would on the street, but with control. You won't know what the attacks are ahead of time and your uki will not know what your responses will be. This is why you both must be familiar with this format and both use self-control.

Again, speed is not of the essence here. Although quality will suffer a bit in freestyle kata, you should be able to maintain control of the mat.

There is also very little, if any, active thinking going on during freestyle kata. It's all unplanned reactions to random attacks; mushin in practice!

Freestyle kata is about as close as you can get to a "street" situation without going into randori, which is an entirely different format & has a high injury rate in the best of circumstances.

The examiner is essentially looking at four areas when you are doing freestyle kata:

HIGHTAIL IT TO ME!

Just a reminder. You can now send large files [up to 2gb/file] to me via my Hightail "dropbox" at <https://www.hightail.com/u/Budoshin> . Just go to the website & follow the directions. You can send belt evaluation/test videos to me a lot faster [total time] & postage free this way.

your initial response to the random attacks, your form, the variety of defenses you demonstrate, and your appearance/demeanor. The examiner is NOT looking at how fast you can execute techniques — although you will move faster if you your techniques well because your execution will be smoother.

You should be practicing freestyle kata during every class if you can. I usually start up my classes with “warm-up throws” where students randomly attack each other & respond with whatever jujitsu techniques they know. I may also have a more formal approach towards the end of class where teams are lined up & I show a random attack to be done by the uki, and the tori does whatever response he or she knows. If properly supervised and students use good judgment, these are very safe activities.

Q: As we both my training partner and I have extensive martial arts experiments, and probably are familiar with a lot of the techniques in the Budoshin system or at least the principles behind them, is it okay if we just send in videos performing the requirements for each belt as soon as we work through them, or is there any kind of predefined time period that we have to wait between each time we want to grade regardless of previous experience or of how fast we learn the technical curriculum? 022115

A: There is no time in grade requirement until you get into the black belt grades & then the time in grade requirements are a guide more than carved in stone.

You can send in videos of belt exams [in the Student Handbook] at your own rate up through 4th kyu. Once you get to testing for sankyu [3rd brown] testing is more formal. [There is a very strict & secure process to follow and belt tests are different for each person.] When practicing/testing at any level do not try to demonstrate how fast you can go. I'm looking for quality. Speed will come naturally. So take your time demonstrating requested techniques. Also,, to save you time, postage, and trouble, your test videos can be sent to me as a video file via Hightail [a dropbox service I use & pay for]. This gets you a faster evaluation too.

Q: Is the videos locked to region one only, or will they play fine in DVD-players and computers in Norway(region 2)? 022115

A: I don't think there are any problems with the DVDs. I checked back through all back issues of Kokoro [to 1994] for any similar dvd inquiries. I have shipped dvds to New Zealand & Australia [region 4] and Italy, Great Britain, Israel, and other European countries with no problems. The problem seems to be how the dvd player is locked, not that the dvd is locked.

Q: Does the four free evaluations each year include the gradings, or does the grading costs come on top of this? 022115

A: There is no charge for gradings below brown belt. Starting at sankyu [3rd brown] there is a US\$25 fee as I have to set up the test for you and send it to you via regular mail - for security reasons. I do not charge for BJJY certificates. However, even though you are in Norway, I will offer you AJA membership and certification starting at Brown Belt. AJA membership is around US\$20-25/year & there's a minimal fee [I think it's \$7-10] for AJA rank certification. AJA ranks [& probably BJJY] are recognized by the EJJU [European Jujitsu Union] and the IJJO [Intercontinental Jujitsu Organization].

Q: As starting a club at some point in the future would give us access to a lot more training partners, and also give us the opportunity to develop our own understanding of the system further through teaching, we are considering this as a serious possibility. At what dan level do you consider it okay to start to teach? 022115

A: Officially I'd like to see you at shodan before you start teaching as black belt grades in traditional ryu of jujitsu are teaching grades. The reality is that I can't prevent you from "training together with other people and helping them learn the art." The BJJY does have a formal process for instructor certification in between shodan & nidan and is a nidan prerequisite. Please be aware that there are no "official BJJY dojo" in the U.S. for liability reasons, but you're not in the US so that probably isn't an issue.