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USJA Coach Certification Level I Coaching Manual

Introducing Novice Players to the Sport of Judo

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USJA National Coach Certification Committee

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Chairman USJA Coaching Education and Certification Program

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Course Instructions

Welcome to the USJA Level I Coaching Certification Correspondence Course. Your choice of entering this course demonstrates your strong commitment to improving and better understanding your Coaching Skills.

Not a Pass or Fail Course

This is not a course that the candidates either pass or fail. The candidate may accomplish the Work Book exercises as often as necessary to meet the Certification Requirements. However, there will be an additional \$5 charge, for postage and processing, when your Work Book needs to be returned more than twice.

Level I, General Requirements

- A. Be a USJA senior member
- B. Have not less than one year active Judo experience
- C. Complete the USJA Level I Coaching Course
- D. Demonstrate the ability to teach elementary techniques
- E. Be able to demonstrate a fundamental knowledge of USJA rank requirements through 4th KYU
- F. Have a basic knowledge of contest rules
- G. Demonstrate a fundamental knowledge of Judo techniques
- H. Demonstrate a working knowledge of player safety
- I. Be familiar with hygiene and nutrition
- J. Have a fundamental knowledge of First Aid

Fulfillment of these requirements must be verified and signed off by your Coaching Skills Reviewer.

Level I, Course Requirements

80% Question Score

The first portion of the Work Book contains 44 questions. You must answer 80% of the questions correctly before you will be eligible for USJA Level I Coaching Certification.

Average Coaching Review Rating

The required Coaching Review Exercise has 17 Coaching practices that you will be rated on by an observer. The rating range for each practice is from 1 to 10. You must have an minimum average Coaching Review Rating of 7 for Certification to Level I.

Automatic Returns

There are two occasions that will result in an automatic return of your Work Book for your corrective action.

Questions;

There are questions in the Work Book that must be answered correctly. If you incorrectly answer any one of these questions your Work Book will be returned for your correction.

Coaching Review Exercise;

A rating of lower than a 3 (three) in any one category of the Coaching Review Exercise will result in the return of your Work Book. If your Work Book is returned due to a rating of lower than a 3 (three) you will be supplied with a second Coaching Review Exercise and be required to complete the exercise again. You will be required to complete a second Plan of Improvement only in the areas that received the rating of 3 (three) or lower.

Steps to Course Completion

Completion of this course can be accomplished in 3 (three) simple steps.

Read the Text

Take the time to read and understand the text. The Level I Coaching Certification text offers many new ideas for your consideration. The text holds the answers to the Review Questions. The text also suggests Performance Goals to help improve your Coaching Skills. Without Reading the text before attempting to complete the Review Exercises you will give yourself a serious handicap to the completion of this course.

Work Book Exercises

When you have finished reading the text there are 3 (three) exercises to be completed.

Answer the Questions

This course contains 44 review questions for you to answer. Carefully read each question and write the answer in your workbook. Before you submit your Work Book for review check your answers for accuracy. If necessary find the answer in the text but check your answers before sending the Work Book off for review.

Coaching Review

You will be responsible for finding a person, or persons, to perform a Coaching Skills Review during one or more of your Coaching sessions. You may have a single reviewer if the reviewer's Judo rank is higher than yours. You will be required to have 2 (two) reviewers if you cannot find a reviewer of higher rank. If 2 (two) reviewers are used one, of the reviewers must be of equal rank and the other may not be more than one rank below yours. No reviewer may be used that is not of at least Shodan rank.

Your reviewer, or reviewers, will be required to observe while you Coach one or more training sessions. Your reviewers will be observing the training session to rate you in the use of your Coaching Skills, in general, and your use of the Conditions of Learning, specifically. Instructions, to the reviewers, are included in the Work Book. The reviewers must have the instructions, for their review session, not less than 24 (twenty four) hours prior to the scheduled Coaching Review Exercise.

You, as the Coaching Certification Candidate, should read the reviewers instructions and plan your Coaching Skills Review Training Session so that all necessary Coaching areas will be presented. If you do not believe that all areas can be covered in one training session make arrangements with your reviewers for a second session.

Time Limit

You must complete this course, in not-less-than, six months from the time of receipt.

Fill Out all Forms

In the Certification package there are three (3) forms to be completed before your certification can be processed.

USJA Coaching Certification Level I Approval;

This form requires information provided by the Coaching Certification Candidate as identification etc. The lower portion of the form is to be completed by the USJA Coaching Certification Committee member that will review your Work Book Exercises for fulfillment of all requirements.

USJA Coaching Certification Level I Review Verification;

This form is the information supplied by your reviewer as regards his, or her, identification information and verification of review of your General Certification Requirements as outlined earlier in this Course Introduction.

USJA Coaching Certification Level I Course Critique;

This form offers the candidate an opportunity to critique this course. Complete the form and return it with your completed Work Book. Candidates will not be eligible for certification if the Course Critique is not included with the completed Work Book.

When you complete Your Work Book

The completion of your USJA Coaching Certification Workbook demonstrates your strong dedication to being the best Judo Coach that you can be. You should be very proud of your accomplishments. There are a few more steps that have to be completed before your USJA Coaching Certification Level I can be registered with the USJA Central Office.

Photocopy everything

Before you send your written test and Coaching Review Exercises off to be reviewed make a photocopy of the exercises and all forms that you and your reviewer have filled out. In case there is a problem with the mail you will have a backup copy that will keep you from having to do the whole thing over again. Be sure to file the photocopy in a safe place until you receive your USJA Coaching Certificate from the USJA.

Where to mail:

When you have completed your Coaching Review Exercises collect all originals (not the photocopies);

- 1) All forms filled out and signed by you and your reviewer
- 2) The written test
- 3) Your Coaching Review Exercise
- 4) Your Self Improvement Plan response to your Coaching Skills Review
- 5) A check for \$5 payable to the name listed below.

Place the materials in a large envelope and mail it to;

George Weers
USJA Coaching Certification Chairman
335 W. Olive St.
Canton, IL 61520
Phone 309-647-1179

Please allow four (4) to six (6) weeks for your USJA Coaching Certification to be processed.

There is \$5 processing fee required for the review and mailing of your materials. Make your processing fee check payable to the person whose name appears in your Course Instructions. When your Coaching Certification Exercises have been processed they will be returned to you with appropriate comments. If your exercises need more work they will be returned to you with an explanation of the necessary improvements. Please make the needed improvements and return the entire package to the above address.

Introduction

This is not a how to do Seoinage type book. This book is about developing young people into Judo players. The difference with the approach discussed in these pages is that I am not talking about taking a Green Belt or Brown Belt, someone with experience and knowledge of techniques, and training them to use Judo skills. I am talking about focusing your players training in the skills that they will need and teaching them in the way that these skills will be used from the first time that a new player steps on your mat. Please notice that I did not specifically say competitive skills or kata skills. Learning the skills of Judo, whether those skills are applied to kata or shiai, should take place in an environment that promotes the ability to be able to use the desired skills as quickly and as efficiently as possible.

This approach may be revolutionary or maybe, just maybe, it's very logical. After all, if we are Coaches we should Coach. We should not waste our time teaching our players things that they will not be able, or want, to use. As Coaches we must cut to the heart of the matter and spend our time on the skills that allows our players play better and learn more efficiently.

However, until we recognize the types of skills needed and how those skills are used we will not be able to Coach Judo efficiently. Here is the real challenge, to analyze Judo skills and recognize just what is going on! What are the players doing out there? Are they going out, bowing and politely taking grips? No! Do the defenders take a nice clean fall to their back whenever the attacker decides that it's time to throw? No! Is this the way that your players practice their throwing skills throwing a cooperative partner? After teaching them to only how to fall on their backs do you tell them not to fall on their backs just as they go to meet an opponent? I certainly hope not!

Geoff Gleeson, British National Coach and one of the foremost thinkers in Judo, suggests that we teach the Tactical Situations of Judo play to our players first, then we can teach the skills that work in the situation¹. But what are the Tactical Situations of Judo play? Coach Gleeson did not go so far as to define the Tactical Situations. Perhaps he wasn't sure himself, perhaps he wants you, and I, to decide what we, as thinking, creative hard working Coaches, see as the Tactical Situations of Judo play.

The goals of this course are;

- 1) To help you, as the Coach, recognize practical application of Judo skills and identify the Tactical Situations of Judo play.
- 2) To suggest a practical method of Coaching Judo from your players very first time on the mat.
- 3) To give you, a thinking, hard working, creative Coach something to think about and improve upon.

Facts

What actually happens when a throw takes place? Which Direction is the defender moving before the attack? Which way will the defender be thrown in relation to his Direction of Travel? What is the best grip to have for your favorite throw? How many times during a match can your players expect to engage in ground play? You may be able to offer an answer to these questions but can you prove your answer or are your answers something that you believe to be correct from experience and observation?

The difference between believing something and being able to prove it is worlds apart. The first time that I began working on this text I realized that I could not prove anything that I wanted to talk about. So I stopped and thought about how to support or disprove my beliefs, about Coaching Judo, before going any further. I came to the conclusion that in order to find out what I wanted to know I was going to have to research the subject of competitive Judo.

¹ Geof Gleeson, Judo, 1988 A&C Black Ltd. pg#15 "teach situation first and technique second"

I felt that in order to study competitive Judo a researcher should use the best examples available. I got hold of video tapes of World and Olympic Championships as well major international events of the past several years and started watching. I was not just watching to be watching. I viewed the action looking for answers to specific questions. The action would be viewed in slow motion and stop action, time and again, until I was able to determine, not just what I thought was happening but exactly what happened. This data was put into a computer which made graphs and charts which I was able to study in detail.

The statements in this work concerning;

- ◆ Directions of throws
- ◆ When to use which types of throws
- ◆ How often a specific type of event might take place

are the result of this research. The statements that deal with this material can be statistically supported to not-less-than 95% accuracy. The research, undertaken prior to this writing, is exactly what makes this work different, and more accurate, than any work previously available.

Opinions

This book also offers two radical suggestions.

- 1) A method of classifying throwing types to help Coaches.
- 2) Coaching by teaching Practical Situations.

These ideas have come from the observations and insights gained while performing the research for this book.

The suggestions offered here are, what I believe to be, a logical approach to Coaching Judo. Even if you decide not follow these suggestions they are here for your consideration.

From Player to Coach

You might say that there is an apprenticeship program that perpetuates Judo. We all start out as white belts. We are all taught, basically, the same introductory skills. We all participate in randori and eventually give competitive Judo a try. As we learn and mature we might drift off into the specialty areas of Kata or Shiaii or some of us just kind of hang around enjoying the exercise. All in all, it's a pretty good system, after all Judo has become one of the largest sports in the world with this system. On the other hand the system has short comings.

We don't make any effort to help people to get into the specialty areas of Judo. Everybody goes through the same training and if you stick around long enough you discover that you want to train in one area or the other, that's fine. If you don't then you drop by the way side, that is not so fine. Perhaps the worst part of this system is that nobody gets trained to take over the role of Teacher and Coach.

A player competes until it is time to stop competing and then what? Is he, or she, expected to help prepare the next Judo generation or are old players expected to quietly fade away?

Now the awful truth comes home. Your playing skills don't have much to do with Coaching. If you want to Coach, you are going to have to grope in the dark for teaching methods, search for Coaching role models and find some way not to disappoint the players who now look to you for guidance.

There is help! The United States Judo Association (USJA) offers Judo Coaching education courses. The American Sport Education Program (ASEP) offers courses and certification in sport science that are becoming recognized as the national standard of Coaching education. A combination of USJA and ASEP courses can earn you certification as a USJA Coach. The help is there, it remains for you get busy and take advantage of it.

Conditions of Learning

Flowers need the right soil conditions to grow. Learning needs the right conditions to take place. Very logical, but what are the right Conditions For Learning?

The dictionary tells us that a condition is a restricting or modifying factor. Just as the amount of water and fertilizer are restricting or modifying factors in the growth of a flower the way a skill is presented, practiced and feedback given to your students performance are restricting or modifying factors to learning.

The Conditions of Learning any activity, or subject, should be what, best, presents your material as nearly as possible to the way it will actually be used. In other words, if you are going to teach Kata your players need to understand controlled movement and cooperation. If you are going to teach competitive Judo, movement, controlling grips and quick attacking skills are the order of the day.

The USJA Coaching Education and Certification Program has identified 13 Conditions for Learning Judo. The Conditions of Learning are;

- ◆ Performance Goals
- ◆ Movement
- ◆ Activity
- ◆ Simplicity
- ◆ Transference
- ◆ Foundation
- ◆ Meaning
- ◆ Satisfaction and Enjoyment
- ◆ Form
- ◆ Series and Sequence
- ◆ Reinforcement and Feedback
- ◆ Cooperation
- ◆ Creativity

Each of these conditions are important to developing a Learning Environment for your players and each will be discussed in detail.

We will begin our discussion of the Conditions of Learning with Performance Goals because the proper use of Performance Goals is a very strong method of developing success, satisfaction and self worth.

I have suggested Player Performance Goals for all Mechanical Principles and all of the Practical Situations of Judo. I have also suggested a Coaching Performance Goal for each of the Conditions of Learning.

Performance Goals

Using Performance Goals as a Condition of Learning is important because Performance Goals give you and your players a way to measure progress in the ability to use Judo skills. Performance Goals are simple keys to how to do, or perform, your Judo skills. These simple keys need to be emphasized during demonstrations of new skills. When you emphasize these key points you are giving your players a simple point to focus on during the practice of a new skill.

The single point that you choose to emphasize must be an important key to executing the skill, or skills, being practiced in order for your players to succeed in learning the skill. Being able to perform the simple key, to the skill, becomes a Performance Goal for your players. The focus on, and execution of, one simple key leads to the ability to perform the larger, more complicated, whole skill.

The idea of a simple key, or Performance Goal, works even more effectively when applied to the larger and more complicated situations of demonstrating Kata or competing in Shiai. Your players need something to focus on when faced with the intimidating situation of an audience or aggressive opponent. That focus, that Performance Goal, must give the player a key to dealing with the situation.

For Shiaii I have players concentrate on Grips and Gripping control over the opponent. The Shiaii Performance Goal, for my players is to;

Drive the Sleeve End Down

In Shiaii it is not enough that the player drive the Sleeve End Down. There have to be attacks and defense and all the rest that goes to make a Judo contest. First, my players, have to know how to control their opponent. The attacks and everything else comes because the player is able to Drive the Opponent's Sleeve End Down. The attacks, etc., follow the Sleeve End Control because that's the way we practice. We have set our Performance Goal and we practice to be able to use the Performance Goal in Practical Application.

I am not offering a Performance Goal to the demonstration of Kata because that is not my area of study. However, the idea of using a Performance Goal for the demonstration of a Kata is none-the-less valid. Kata demonstrators need a focus as much as, if not more than, Shiaii competitors. If your area of specialty is Kata then it is your responsibility to develop Performance Goals for your players.

Performance vs. Outcome

Performance is what a person does. Performance does not take into account the way things turn out, which is called the Outcome, because the performer does not have control over Outcome. Outcome is influenced by things such as the Referee, the opponent and all the other little things that go into making a contest or performance of Kata unpredictable. The performer only has control over his Performance, the things that he, or she, actually does.

Performance Goal Requirements

As stated above, performance goals are simple keys to accomplishing a task. Your performance goals however need to fulfill certain criteria in order to be effective. The components of an effective performance goal are;

- P**erformance Oriented
- S**pecific
- M**easurable
- A**chievable
- R**ealistic
- T**imely

Performance Oriented

Performance Goals absolutely must depend on a player's Performance. The result of a match, or whether the opponent is thrown for a score is not performance. Winning or losing a match or making a scoring throw depends on other factors such as the skill level of the opponent or the officials being in the right place.

Making a certain number of attacks or keeping the elbows in tight depend on your players performance.

When Performance Goals are set you must be very, very, careful that Goals such as doing your best, beating a certain player or winning a Championship are not allowed. These are things that depend on Outcome, and Outcome is a naughty word to Coaches. They are also, very heavily, influenced by outside conditions. Remember, if the performer does not have complete control over the Goal then it is not a Performance Goal and is not acceptable!

Specific

Remember, also, to keep the Performance Goal specific to the skill being practiced or the situation that the skill will be used in. Tucking your head and executing a shoulder roll is an excellent Performance Goal for a competitive Uchimata but I don't believe that a Kata Judge would appreciate the creativity of the performance. Be sure that you and your players understand how their skills will be used before deciding on a Performance Goal.

Your player's Performance Goals also need to be understandable. If your player does not understand what is expected to be done then he, or she, cannot be expected to do it!

Measurable

You must be able to measure Performance Goals! If performance goals are set that have no way of keeping track of what is supposed to be performed, by your player, how will you know when your players have done it? You can't know when you have accomplished a goal that can't be measured. Doing your best can't be measured, counting attacks can. Moving every time you Touch your opponent can be measured. What the attacker does when he grabs the opponent's Gi can be measured. The defensive reaction to an attack can be measured. Keep Performance Goals measurable! If goals can't be measured neither can success.

Using Performance Goals as a Condition of Learning is important because Performance Goals give your players a way to define and measure progress and success.

Achievable

If performance goals aren't achievable then your players will never succeed. Performance goals must be clearly defined so that your players understand exactly what needs to be done and how to go about doing it. If the task is clearly defined then the task can be achieved. Be careful to set goals that can be reached. If the goals are challenging beyond your players abilities they may get frustrated and seek their challenges else-where.

Realistic

When you help your players set their first Performance Goals you must help them to keep the goals realistic. It is not realistic for a beginning player to have a goal of qualifying for the Olympic Games. What is realistic, for a new player, is to remember to move every time that he, or she, touches the opponent. If a goal is not realistic it cannot be achievable. If a goal can't be achieved frustration is imminent.

Timely

When choosing a performance goal be sure that your players are ready for the challenge. A young brown belt may be ready to attack every randori partner five times with his, or her, favorite throw. For brand new player it may be enough just to get his hands on the opponent. Carefully consider what development stage your players are in.

Performance Goal for Coaches

The Coaching Goal for using Performance Goals, as a Condition of Learning, is to;

Give your players a Performance Goal for every Situation.

Every Performance Goal that you or your players use must meet the requirements that have been discussed here. Remember, as long as the requirements for Performance Goals are met you will be using one of the strongest Coaching tools at your disposal.

Using Performance Goals

You must make a practice of reminding your players of their Performance Goals just before entering the situation where they will use those Performance Goals. While your players are actually in the situation where they need the Performance Goal you need to remind them of what needs to be done. It also a good idea to remind your players of their Performance Goals as soon as possible after they are out of the situation. In other words they have finished the drill, or the match is over.

For example;

A Performance Goal for learning a specific skill;

- 1) Before the players begin practicing explain the Performance Goal for the skill and how you will measure success with the Performance Goal.
- 2) As the players practice remind them of the Performance Goal that they are trying for.
- 3) Immediately, the players finish practicing the skill, remind them of the Performance Goal that they were striving for and ask them if they achieved the Performance Goal.

A Performance Goal for Shiai;

- 1) As your player prepares to go on the mat review his, or her, Performance Goals.
- 2) Before the opponents come to grips remind your player of Performance Goals.
- 3) Every time there is a break in the action remind your player of Performance Goals.
- 4) As soon as your player comes off the mat remind them of the Performance Goal that they were striving for and ask them if they achieved the Performance Goal.

Performance Goals for the demonstration of Kata should be reviewed before the player goes to the mat and immediately after the demonstration.

Movement

Judo is Movement! All effective skill is based on the need for your players to apply attacks in a moving and changing environment. Movement must be present in all elements of training. From the first contact with a partner to ground play exchanges.

Large Movements First

Players should be introduced to large free movements from the very beginning of training. When you teach skills as large movements you are making it easy for your players to imitate what they see. As the player gets to be familiar with the movement requirements of a skill the Coach will be able to help the player refine his, or her, movement and develop a personalized form of the skill.

Developing Movement

Movement is not difficult to develop if you, as the Coach, keep in mind that everything happens as a result of something else happening first. In other words, Judo is a game of causes and effects.

- ◆ In Kata action begins when Uke grips or strikes at Tori.
- ◆ In competitive situations, throws take place because the defender is trying to avoid the attacker's controlling grips or the defender attempts to maneuver into position for his own attack.
- ◆ Ground Play takes place because of throwing attempts.

These are examples of events that happen and cause other things to happen. You, as the Coach, must keep in mind that whatever is being practiced or demonstrated happens because of something else being caused to happen by the reactions of one player to the other's moves. You should use this cause and effect approach when you demonstrate skills. You should also emphasize the cause and effect in your training drills to help develop your player's understanding of Movement.

For example, when you demonstrate skills;

- ◆ Show a gripping exchange before a throwing attack.
- ◆ Use throwing skills to lead into Ground Play.
- ◆ A throwing attack can be the Cause before learning a Counter Throwing skill.
- ◆ Counter throwing attacks can be turned against the counter thrower by using a combination of throws skills.
- ◆ Above all make sure that your players understand that nothing will happen by itself!

You have two choices for the Coaching Performance Goal of Movement;

Always use a skill to lead in to your demonstration

or

Use the Touch and Move Rule

If you always use another skill to lead in to the skill that you are demonstrating you will set a good example for your players as well as fulfill the Movement, Condition of Learning, in your demonstrations.

Using the Touch and Move Rule, which is described later in the text, is also a good idea because it is one of the suggested Player Performance Goals. Besides, using the Touch and Move Rule during your demonstrations teaches strong gripping skills.

Activity

Learning physical skills requires physical experience. You, as the Coach, need to make sure that your players are spending their time doing what they are on the mat to learn. You also need to know what is going to be learned from the drills and demonstrations that you are presenting.

You must be careful that throwing demonstrations do not begin with you, or your demonstration partner, standing still. Throws do not happen that way in Kata or competition. You should not lecture while you have a grip on your partner. If you want to discuss the skill, to be presented, discuss it before the skill is demonstrated. You may point out important points as the demonstration is being done but keep the verbal portion to a very minimum. If you want to discuss the skill further, or take questions, release your partner to speak. When you are done talking you may return to demonstrating.

Class time should be kept to 20% lecture 80% activity.

The Coaching Performance Goal for Activity is;

Keep you demonstration to less than one minute at a time

By keeping your demonstrations short you must limit the technical content that you demonstrate. This is good! You won't be running the risk of confusing your players with more than they can handle at one time. You can use several short demonstration which;

- 1) will keep the class moving
- 2) prevent basic problems because you can see them more easily when the players are kept to small technical advances each time
- 3) keep your players very interested

Simplicity

It's great to be in front of an audience that hangs on your every word and is impressed by anything that you do. It is so easy, in this situation, to want to show off and really impress everybody with the skill you have worked so hard to develop. This is, of course, a very serious Coaching error.

The demonstration of any skill must fit the technical ability of your audience. Coach must take time to;

- 1) decide how much your audience understands
- 2) decide what large movements are needed to make the skill work
- 3) decide how best to demonstrate so that those large movements are emphasized
- 4) point out the large movements during demonstration
- 5) reinforce the large movements during practice

This means that you should demonstrate a very simplified version of the skill. A simplified version gives your players a good example of large movements that make the skill work. More importantly a simplified demonstration gives your players an example to imitate that has lots of room for variation and success.

Form should be taught in a progression from the simplest to more difficult. The first version of any skill should be made of large free movements. The first version of any skill should be nothing more than a very general form of the skill being taught. As your players become familiar with moving and applying skills while they are moving you can work to refine skills.

The Coaching Performance Goal of Simplicity is to;

Emphasize Large Movements

When your demonstrations emphasize large movements you are giving your players room to;

- 1) experience success, because you have given them a task that is understandable to them
- 2) be creative and exercise individual traits

Transference

Skill transference refers to the ability of a skill to be used in different situations. In the case of Judo skills the different situations for using our skills is in practice sessions and actual competition. Judo skills are learned through practice and drills. However, these same skills are actually intended to be used in competition. This is the reason that the skills and the way that you practice these skills must have Transference.

The way to develop skill transference is to practice under conditions as close as possible to the conditions that your players will encounter during competition. Some of those conditions are;

Movement;

The player and partner should move about a great deal during practice and drills. In randori your players should move about the entire mat area and not restrict themselves to one small corner. In Kata the partners should go through the full range of movement that goes with each of the skills.

Cause and Effect;

No event takes place by itself! Something is done by the attacker which causes the defender to react which creates a new situation, etc., etc., etc.. The "something" which causes the defender to react, might be a preparation move, a throw that leads to ground play or an attack feint. Whatever causes the opponent's reaction is a very important part of competitive Judo skill and must be practiced as much, if not more than, our other skills. When you demonstrate a skill you must include the preparation moves that lead into the skills, about to be practiced. During practice you must be sure that the preparation is practiced as much as the skill.

Defensive opponent;

In Kata the defender's role is clearly defined and must be practiced accordingly. In Shiai or Randori the defender's role is not so clear cut but must be practiced all the same. Competitive opponent's are defensive by nature. In order to provide for competitive conditions partners should offer some, pre-determined level of defensive response. The degree of defensiveness must be determined before starting a drill or practice session. However, a competitive defender should always train to avoid being thrown to his back or prevent ground play attacks. If you keep this in mind and allow defensive maneuvers as a response to offensive moves you will provide defensive skill training along side offensive skill training.

The best way to be sure of skill transference will be to ask yourself; "Can this skill, as it is taught and practiced, be applied to the practical situation that it is intended to be used in?". If the answer is no find a way to get practice conditions closer to actual conditions.

The Coaching Performance Goal for Transference is;

Always teach skills as they will be used

Foundation

Every skill, taught today, is going to be improved, added to and act as the Foundation for the skills of a mature player. You must be sure that you do not teach, today, what your players will have to unlearn tomorrow. Two examples of this problem are;

Static Uchikomi:

Static Uchikomi is the practice of two players standing in one place while one of the partners makes only part of an attacking move. The defensive partner is expected to stand there as stiffly as possible. There is no Foundation or Transference to this practice because there is no movement, from either player, the skill does not have a preparation maneuver, the opponent is not offering defensive resistance and the skill is not taken to it's conclusion.

Static Uchikomi will be as destructive to Kata skills as to Shiaii skills because both types of skill requires that players be MOVING!

Falling on the back:

When a person falls on his, or her, back during competition his opponent is awarded a score. So why would a Coach teach his player's to give the opponent free scores? The answer is, of course, that the Coach will tell his player not to fall on his back during competition. Now, it will not matter if the only response that the player knows, to a throwing attack, is to fall on his back, Coach will still expect him not to fall on his back. Even though Coach has never taught his players any other falling skills.

Back Falls vs. Acrobatic responses to throws:

The controversy of teaching or not teaching your competitors to fall on their backs is, probably, the oldest in modern Judo. I do not teach players to fall onto their backs. My players are conditioned to turn to their hands and knees or stomach, as their response to a throw by the opponent, from the very first lesson. Our team has not experienced injuries from this practice. If you, as the Coach, are uncomfortable with the idea of not teaching methods of falling onto the back then, at the very least, teach your players both methods of back falling and acrobatic responses. This way your players will be familiar with avoiding scores prior to entering the competitive arena.

This is Foundation! If you don't want them to do it later don't teach it today. If you want your players to be able to do something, down the road, give them a simplified version and build on the Foundation.

The Coaching Performance Goal for Foundation is nothing more than asking yourself this question before teaching;

Can this Form be built upon to create a fully functional skill or will this training need to be unlearned before moving on?

Meaning

Your players want to know why they are doing what you are asking them to do. Knowledge develops self worth and gives your players incentive to work harder. You do not need to, indeed should not, go into technical discussions and explanations. Give your players an explanation that they can understand and use when practicing their skills. Remember, when your players can understand Why, they will be more willing to work on the How.

The Coaching Performance Goal for Meaning involves your understanding of what your players are getting from your demonstration or discussion;

Encourage Questions!

Ask for questions before a demonstration to be sure that no one is confused about anything before you move on. Ask for questions after a few repetitions of your demonstration. Demonstrate a few more times and ask for questions before allowing practice of the skill. If there are further questions be sure to demonstrate the skill a few more times before having the players practice.

Perhaps, more importantly, you should ask questions of your players to be sure that they understand what you are asking them to do. Remember it is very easy to say you understand because you don't want to stand out in the group. To be certain that your players understand ask questions about the Performance Goal, about the skill, or about the general movements.

Satisfaction and Enjoyment

If your players are not having success with the skills that you are asking them to perform they are not going to be satisfied and enjoy Judo. You, as the Coach, must be very careful about how, and what, you ask your players to perform.

- 1) Remember to keep skills to the level of performance that your group is able to meet.
- 2) Start out very simply and build in difficulty as your players gain confidence.
- 3) If your players are having problems with a skill, it might be necessary to go back and make the skill more simple.

An alternative to consider; If your players are confused and getting frustrated with a skill, **MOVE ON TO SOMETHING ELSE**. Whatever you move on to, make it extremely simple, make it extremely fun. Just get away from the trouble and come back at a later time.

Ask yourself; can our group experience immediate success in performing the skill being practiced? If there is no success there can be no satisfaction!

Your Performance Goal for Satisfaction and Enjoyment is to;

Present your players with skills that they can do on the first try!

This Performance Goal is very easy to measure. All you have to do is present a skill and watch the results. If your players can produce a fairly close imitation with one or two attempts then you are doing very well. On the other hand if they are having trouble beyond two or three tries you need to simplify your demonstrations.

Form

The form, the way the Judo techniques look, in text books or on video tapes, should be used as nothing more than a Coaching guideline and reference. Technical Form, the way a skill is done, is a very individualized matter and changes with each player as well as several other factors.

Some factors influencing Technical Form;

- ◆ Form changes with movement.
- ◆ Form changes with the technical ability of the group.
- ◆ Form changes with the individual player.
- ◆ Form changes with the practical situation.
- ◆ Form changes with the level of fatigue.

The question of correct Form is very simply answered. If a player's attack, or skill, works against an opponent the Form is good!

The Coaching Performance Goal for Form requires that you ask of your player's performance;

Did the skill work?

You must ask yourself this question before stepping in to correct a player's Form. If the Mechanical Principles were solid and the defender fell down or was pinned then the Form was good. The particular Form may not work for anyone else but for this particular player it is good Form.

This measure of practicality holds true for Kata skills as well as shiai. There is latitude in Form, although not as much as with Shiai skills, in Kata Skills. You, as Coach, must allow as much individuality as possible, in all performances.

Series and Sequence

Skills are made of a Series of moves that build on each other to get the job done. Example;

- 1) We are able to get a controlling grip due to foot work.
- 2) We influence the opponent's mobility from our grips.
- 3) The opponent's mobility indicates which of our attacks will work.

We need to keep this in mind when teaching and demonstrating. Every skill that you teach should be part a larger design to build a Series of moves that will develop a complete series of skills.

Here is an example of a Series of moves designed to build a competitive Taiotoshi;

First move in the Series;

Cross Sleeve Grip:

The attacker makes his first gripping contact by taking any grip available. In this case we will start with a Cross Sleeve Grip.

Second move in the Series;

Back Grip:

After the first gripping contact is made our attacker improves his gripping control by taking a Back Grip.

Third move in the Series;

Kosoto Gake:

We have a controlling grip so we must attack! The reason for the attack is to make the opponent react.

Final move in the Series;

Taiotoshi:

When the opponent reacts he will expose himself to further attack. This Series of moves is finished with a strong Taiotoshi.

A Series of skills should be arranged in a logical sequence that best covers all learning considerations. The Sequence must also promote optimum performance in both offensive and defensive roles of the situation. In other words both players have to be considered in the Sequence of events.

Example;

- 1) Throw: Using the Taiotoshi series from the example above, our player makes a throwing attack.
- 2) Turn-out: The defender responds by Turning Out of the throw to avoid a score.
- 3) Transition: The attacker continues his control by following right into Ground Play.
- 4) Defensive Ground Play Posture: The defender attempts to protect himself by a defensive ground play posture.
- 5) Turn Over: The attacker applies a Turn Over skill.
- 6) Hold Down: The attacker keeps his control, which was started in the Turn Over skill, and drives directly into a Hold Down skill.
- 7) Escape From Hold Down: The defender escapes from the Hold Down and the players return to the starting position. This time the players change roles, the defender last time is the attacker this time.

The Coaching Performance Goal for Series and Sequence is;

Build a chain of events with the skills that you teach.

All you have to do is make sure that each new skill can be, logically, connected to the skill that came before it.

Reinforcement and Feedback

Giving players praise for what you want them to perform or correcting them when they perform in a way that you would rather not have them perform is reinforcement. When you praise or correct you are reinforcing the performance or behaviors that you want to see.

It is important to help your players to feel that they are accomplishing something by telling them that they are doing a good job. So long as a player is making an honest effort to perform the skills that you are teaching, then the results that he, or she, might attain CANNOT BE WRONG. It may need improvement but it is not wrong.

Every time a player does what you want him, or her, to do praise that person for it. This is reinforcement. Reinforcement helps your players to feel good about working hard and doing what you have asked of them.

Be lavish with your praise, at first. Remember, that your players are trying to learn skills that are unfamiliar to them. Any attempt that comes close to what you want the person to perform should be praised. As the person becomes more comfortable with the skill then begin limiting your praise to attempts that look more like what you want your players be doing. Finally, when your players begin to get a grasp of the skill praise only the very best performances.

Be careful not to leave the praise at just saying good job or way to go! You must be specific about what is being praised. If you are praising the placement of a Driving Leg then say, good Driving Leg Placement.

On the other hand, if you do not like the Driving Leg placement, then tell your player. "Your Driving Leg Placement needs to be improved." However, you must never simply say, bad Drive Leg placement and leave it at that. Tell the player;

- 1) That you don't like the Driving Leg Placement.
- 2) Why you don't like the Driving Leg Placement.
- 3) How to improve the Driving Leg Placement.

This is Feedback. Reinforcement and Feedback go hand in hand to build a player's confidence and skill.

Your Performance Goal for Reinforcement and Feedback is to;

Always use because.

Whenever you offer praise or criticism of a performance the player must know what was right or wrong about the performance. If you make a habit of using BECAUSE when offering comments your players will always know WHY they are being praised or corrected. If you make a habit of using HOW when offering comments your players will always know HOW to improve.

Cooperation

Judo is a competitive sport and we, as Coaches, are developing competitive spirit in our players. Unfortunately the competitive spirit may occasionally get out of hand during drills and training sessions. Players need to understand that a certain degree of resistance and competitiveness should be used in practice situations. However, the competitiveness must not get to the point that partners are putting more effort into overcoming resistance than executing the skills being practiced.

Cooperation may range from full cooperation in Kata to utter chaos in randori. You need to explain the degree of resistance and cooperation expected in each practice situation and then keep an eye on your players to be sure that the resistance does not go beyond allowable limits. If competitiveness goes beyond what is expected you must stop the players and remind them that learning will not take place without Cooperation.

The Coaching Performance Goal for Cooperation is to;

Establish the level of cooperation before each drill

When you set the level of cooperation before the drill, or practice of skills, begins you will save yourself frustration and your players potential injury.

Creativity

Creativity in training sessions is the responsibility of the Coach. Each session should be fun and have variety.

The ability to play in a Creative way is, probably, the most important quality that a player can ever have. The development of creative play is a partnership between Player and Coach. The more the player is challenged and allowed to experiment the more creative he, or she, will become. The more creative your players become the more they will be able to cope with competitive situations.

Encourage your players to experiment. Encourage your players to have fun. Encourage your players to make mistakes! Mistakes are the only way we learn things. If we are not making an occasional mistake then we are not taking any chances and we are certainly not learning.

The Coaching Performance Goal for Creativity is to;

Allow your players to Experiment!

Allowing your players to experiment is nothing more than standing back and letting them work out minor problems. You should remind your players of the Performance Goal of the skill, that they are attempting, but stand back until they ask for help. You may be surprised how creative young players can be.

Mechanical Principles

Body mechanics, how and where the arms and legs are placed, for the best result, are the things that make Judo skills work but are seldom discussed. This is a Coaching error! Players should be taught how and why skills work, to the point that the knowledge helps them to develop a basic understanding of how to get the job done. You must be careful not to get carried away and give your players more information than they are looking for.

There is an old joke that illustrates this point well;

One day little Jimmy comes home and asks; "Mommy where did I come from?" Now, the mother had known this was going to happen sooner or later but, still, she dreaded having to explain the facts of life. On the other hand, Mommy recognized her duty so she sucked it up and told it like it is. This lady left no detail to the imagination, her son was going to understand, even if it killed her. An hour later she asked the boy, "now do you understand where you came from?" His reply; "that's all very interesting Mommy, but Billy comes from Chicago and wanted know where I come from."

The moral of the story is, keep your players informed but don't burden them with more than they need to know.

Mechanical Principles of Throwing

The Mechanical Actions of Judo are using your body parts, arms, legs, hips, etc., to make your skills work. Mechanical Principles are the fundamental rules that show the best way to use mechanical actions.

You, as the Coach, need to understand Mechanical Principles in order to be able to teach skills in the most efficient manner, possible. A knowledgeable Coach also uses the Mechanical Principles as a basis of recognizing errors or strong points in a players skills. Players need to have an understanding of the Mechanical Principles;

- in order to understand what the Coach is trying to say
- as a basis for future development of skills
- as a basis for self analysis

You do not need to make a lengthy discussion of the Mechanical Principles of a skill that is being demonstrated or discussed. The Mechanical Principles should be pointed out as important parts of the skill during demonstration and referred to during review of skills or analysis of errors. Remember, the point of demonstration is to give players a good image of the skill not to confuse them with too much information.

As your players become familiar with a new skill they will begin to recognize the role of the Mechanical Principles of the skill. Which, in turn, will help in understanding and mastering the skill.

It is important to recognize that Mechanical Principles are not specific to any technique or skill. The principles behind the placement of the Power Hand or Drive Leg, etc., apply to Osoto Gari, Tomoenage or Seoinage. These same principles also apply to the skills being used in Kata or Shiaii. The principles apply to all skills and all skill levels in such a way that a good foundation of understanding, laid during a player's early development stages, will serve him, or her, throughout a competitive career and on into a Coaching career.

Balance

Good balance comes from good posture. In order to be a balanced player a person should;

- keep your weight evenly distributed
- keep your shoulders back and your chest open
- keep your elbows held into your sides
- keep your weight on the balls of your feet
- keep your head level and centered over your shoulders

The Performance Goal of Balance is to keep your head level and centered because your body follows where your head points.

Gripping Skills

The Power Hand

Your Power Hand is usually the highest hand on your opponent. Your Power Hand holds the opponents upper body in place while the power, of the throw, is applied.

The term Power Hand is not accurate. You don't actually use a Power HAND you use the whole upper portion of your body to push the opponent into the mat. The Power Hand side of your body, drives the opponent's back toward the mat during a throw.

The hand and arm, on the Power Hand side of the body does not actually push into a throw. The Power Hand, and arm, holds your opponent's upper body in place while you execute your throwing attack. The rotation of your throwing action turns the opponent's back toward the mat while your hand and arm on the Power Hand side of your body remains in position. (The weight of the opponent's falling body may pull your Power Hand away from your side but the Power Hand must not push out intentionally.)

The Performance Goal of the Power Hand is to;

Keep Your Power Hand Elbow Pushing Against the Opponent!

Keeping your Power Hand Elbow pushing against the opponent provides maximum control and power during throwing attacks.

Many players develop a habit of placing the Power Hand in the same area for every throw. This is a mistake! The position of the Power Hand needs to be placed in different places to meet the changing needs of force in the different throwing skills.

Generally;

- ◆ Skills that require a low level of pushing force, such as the Foot Sweeps, require a high grip.
- ◆ Moderate force skills, Osoto Gari, Taiotoshi etc. should have the Power Hand placed in upper half of the opponent's torso; that is his, or her, chest or upper back.
- ◆ The highest effort throws, Uranage, Kosoto Gake etc., require a Power Hand placed in the lower portion of the torso, near the belt.

In other words, the higher the effort needed to execute a throw the closer the Power Hand should be to the opponent's belt.

The Locking Hand

With the Power Hand as the supplier of rotation for the throwing action, there needs to be something to prevent the opponent from simply running away from your throwing force. The Locking Hand holds the side of the body, that the throw is pushing toward, in place while the throwing action takes effect. If the Locking Hand is loose, or, worse yet, lost, your opponent will be able to run away or Turn Out.

The Performance Goal of the Locking Hand is to;

Keep Your Locking Hand Elbow Tight to Your Side!

By keeping the elbow of the Locking Hand tight to your side you extend the opponent's arm. The more you are able to extend the opponent's Locked Arm the more mobility that you are able to take away from the opponent.

Sleeve and Collar vs. Less-than-traditional grips

The common Sleeve and Collar grip offers a very clear cut picture of Power Hand and Locking Hand in throwing actions. When a player executes a throwing skill, with a Sleeve and Collar grip, it is obvious which hand turns the back to the mat (the Power Hand) and the role that the other hand (the Locking Hand) plays in the skill. Unfortunately the role of the hands is not so clear cut in throwing actions such as Ippon Seoinage, Sode Tsurikomi Goshi, Leg Pick Ups and the wide variety of creative throws being invented in modern play.

No matter what a throwing skill looks like, there is still a Power Hand and still a Locking Hand in there somewhere. No matter what a throwing skill looks like, the roles, of the hands remain the same as their roles in all throwing skills. If necessary, to address and correct a player's technical problems, decide which hand is performing which role and work from there. Remember the Performance Goal of Power Hand is to push against the opponent and the role of the Locking Hand is to keep the elbows tight. If your player is meeting these Performance Goals, and a technical problem still persists, look somewhere other than the grips.

Defensive Suggestions

Sun Tzu, one of histories most respected authorities on the Tactics and Strategies of Warfare, tells us that;

"Invincibility lies in the defense, the possibility of victory in the attack"²

This suggests to me that players need to practice defensive gripping skills as much as, if not more than, offensive gripping skills. As we discussed in the section on the Locking Hand, the Locking Hand holds the defender in place for the throwing action. Defenders should practice stripping a Locked Hand or Arm away from an attacker as-well-as practice not allowing the opponent to extend his, or her, arm to be Locked into a attacking action.

Gripping, a Whole Body Experience

The grip is the first point of contact between competitors. The grip establishes control for throwing and holding. The grip keeps the opponent at a defensively safe distance.

Gripping is a Whole Body Experience!

- Use your Hands as meat hooks to hold the opponent in place.
- Use your Shoulders to adjust the Space between yourself and your opponent.
- Your Elbows block and lock.
- Your Hips generate rotational thrust.
- Your Legs provide and adjust height.
- You can use your Head to block grips or trap a hand or arm.

Many of these aspect of Gripping are actually inherent skills and we don't realize that they can be used in the gripping process. We, as Coaches, must recognize what is happening in the skills and situations that our players are being placed in. Only by understanding all of the aspects of gripping skills can those skills be understood and put to use in the manner that your players are intended to use them.

Power Development

The Driving Leg

The Driving Leg is the leg that pushes in the direction of the throwing attack. The Driving Leg supplies the force for the throwing skill. There are two factors that determine where to place your Driving Leg.

Line of Attack;

The Line of the Attack is where the defender is being thrown to. In other words, an attack may throw the defender to his right rear or left front corner. In order to make the defender fall in the proper direction your Driving Leg must be placed on a line directly opposite the place where the throw is going. i.e. If you are throwing to the defenders right rear corner the Driving Leg must be placed close to his left front corner.

² Sun Tzu, THE ART OF WAR, Chapter IV Verse 5; Translation by Samuel B. Griffith, Oxford University Press, 1963

Angle of Attack;

The Angle of an Attack is how far the attacker reaches back with the Driving Leg and drives into the defender. The more force that is needed, to execute a throwing skill, then the further back, or deeper, the Driving Leg is placed.

The Performance Goal for the placement of the Driving Leg is to;

Set your Driver in line with where you want to throw.

Determining the Dominant Leg

Throwing to the right or left side has nothing to do with being right or left handed. The source of throwing force comes from the throw's Driving Leg. For this reason you need to know if a player is stronger with his right or left leg. Once the stronger leg is determined your players should concentrate on throwing skills that use the stronger leg as the Driving Leg.

One simple method to determine the players stronger or Dominant Leg.

- ◆ Have your players close their eyes and stand on one leg.
- ◆ Don't give any instructions, other than, "close your eyes and stand on one leg". The person will use his, or her, Dominant Leg automatically.
- ◆ Tell your new players to push against a wall, or other immovable object, as hard as he, or she, can.
- ◆ The person will set the dominant leg back and push. After determining the dominant leg make a note of it and explain to the player which leg he should use to push with during his throwing skills.

Throwing Rotation

Throwing skills are completed by two different types of throwing rotation;

Vertical Rotation;

Vertical Rotation is the turning of your head and shoulders in the direction of the throwing action. Vertical Rotation turns the defenders upper body into the throw.

Horizontal Rotation;

Horizontal Rotation is the action of bending at the hips during a throwing action. Horizontal Rotation directs the defenders upper body towards the mat.

A common problem with inexperienced players is using only Horizontal Rotation or bending at the waist to try to force the defender down. In other words all bend and no twist. Horizontal Rotation by itself will not turn the defender's back toward the mat. Horizontal Rotation by itself will usually cause the defender to do nothing more to be driven down to his knees or onto his face.

The Performance Goal of Throwing Rotation is to;

Look Where You Are Throwing.

Turn your body so that you can clearly see the place on the mat where your opponent will fall. When you look in the direction you are throwing your body will rotate enough to finish your attack.

The Free Leg

- ◆ The Free Leg is the leg that might do one of the following things, during a throwing attack;
- ◆ Hook one of the defenders legs
- ◆ Push the defenders foot, or feet, out from under him
- ◆ Knock the defender's legs away
- ◆ Nothing at all

The role of the Free Leg is different in each throwing skill. Whatever the role in the skill, being worked on, be sure that your players understand what to do with the Free Leg.

Perhaps the most difficult role of the Free Leg is when it has nothing to do during a skill. Examples of this is action are most of the Hip Blocking throws, Seoinage, Tsurikomi Goshi etc. With these skills players should practice getting the Free Leg out of the way when the skill is executed.

Pushing Into your Throws

The Performance Goal of any situation where the player needs to use force is to;
Get into a position where you PUSH your opponent.

Your body is designed to push forward much harder than it is able to pull an object toward it. In every throwing or ground play skill you need to get yourself so that you can push right to the end of the attack. Getting into a pushing position allows you to make the most of your ability to exert force on your opponent.

In some skills, such as Foot Sweeps or Tomoenage, it may not be obvious how to push into the attack. With a little thought, maybe some video tape viewing and experimentation the best Pushing positions can be found.

Types of Throws

Do you understand what classifies Morote Seoinage as a Hand Throw and Tsurikomi Goshi a Hip Throw? After all they are practically the same throw! Can you explain the difference to your beginning players without confusing them?

I would like to suggest a throwing classification system using the Mechanical Actions of the attacker as the basis of the classification. Classifying throws in this manner we are;

- 1) addressing what makes the throwing skills work
- 2) matching Performance Actions to Performance Goals

I feel that this system will be easier for a Coach to use because it is easier for players, especially novice players, to understand. It also refers to the action the player is trying to make in his throwing skills. Suggested throwing classifications are;

Blocking throws;

Blocking throws obstruct the travel of the opponent's hip area and turn the opponent's upper body around or over the obstruction. Examples of Blocking throws are Seoinage, Taiotoshi, Uchimata, Tomoenage, etc.

Hooking throws;

Hooking throws trap the opponent's Weight Bearing Leg by hooking with the attacker's Free Leg and driving the opponent down over the trapped leg. Examples of Hooking throws are Osoto Gari, Uchi Gari, etc.

Trips;

Trips are throws that catch your opponent's foot with the foot of your Free Leg and pull the foot out from under the opponent or immobilize the opponent's foot and drive him, or her, into the mat. Examples of Trips are; Kouchi Gari, Sasae Tsurikomi Ashi, Kosoto Gari, etc.

Body Throws;

Body throws are the result of the attacker wrapping his torso tightly against the opponent and projecting both bodies to the mat. Examples of body throws are Uranage, Sumigaeshi, etc.

Momentum throws;

Momentum throws take advantage of your opponent's inertia and pushes him, or her, into an unstable position. Examples of Momentum throws are Ashi Barai, Uki Otoshi, Sumi Otoshi

Classifying Throws

How you choose to classify throwing skills is, entirely, a personal matter. You have to decide what will work best for you and your players. If your players have no problem understanding Te, Koshi and Ashi Waza then, by all means, stay with what works for you. On the other hand, if your players are having trouble understanding how or why throws are being classified as they are then you are not fulfilling the Condition of Learning of Meaning for your players. It is your responsibility to be sure that your players understand what you are teaching them so choose how you classify skills accordingly.

Attacking the Weight Bearing Leg

If you want your throws to have a chance to work you must aim your attacks at the leg is that supporting, or is about to support, most of the opponent's weight. As we are moving about the mat most of our weight is placed on one leg while the other is being moved into position. The Leg that is moving is the Mobile Leg the leg that has the weight on it is the Supporting Leg.

You must attack the Supporting Leg. The opponent's Mobile Leg is capable of being moved, very quickly and easily. Since the Mobile Leg can be moved out of harm's way with little, or no effort, then attacking a moving target, is a bit, silly. When attacks are aimed at the defender's Mobile Leg he is able to move the leg or make a counter attack of his own. When attacks are aimed at the Supporting Leg the defender has to take the time move his weight from the Supporting Leg to the Mobile Leg before the Supporting Leg can be moved out of the way. This is what gives you enough time to execute your attack.

During movement, your opponent shifts his weight from one leg to the other. The faster your opponent moves the more difficult it is catch his weight on the Supporting Leg, long enough to launch an attack. This is where skills such as the Foot Sweeps (Momentum Throws) come into play. Foot Sweeps attack the Supporting Leg as the weight is being transferred. In the Momentum Throws, the leg that the defender intends to shift his weight to is taken away by your attack as the leg is about to support the defender's weight.

Mechanical Principles of Newaza

Body Parts

It would be, practically, impossible to discuss the role of Arms, Legs, Hands and Head in every possible Ground Play situation. A Ground Play exchange is, or should be, dynamic, with the players moving constantly. As, even the smallest, changes are made, during Ground Play, the mechanical requirements, of the situation, can change completely. For this reason we will keep our discussion of the use of body parts, in Ground Play, very general.

Hands and Arms

Whether you are standing or in Ground Play your hands are seldom more than hooks that capture exposed bits and pieces of the opponent or his uniform. Your arms, on the other hand, play a very big part in Judo play.

Whether you are the attacker or the defender your arms must not be extended. When arms are extended a weakness is created and the arm is exposed to attack. Not only is your arm exposed but the whole side of the body, that the extended arm is on, becomes weak. The Performance Goal of using your hands and arms in Ground Play is to;

Keep your arms in close and fight with your elbows.

Instead of reaching out to grasp with a hand, move your body so that the part of the opponent, that you want to take a hold on is within your reach. You can also use your arms like the pincers of a crab to trap the opponent with your elbows and armpits.

When you are in a defensive position your arms should be used to create openings between you and your attacker. Your arms can also be used to keep the opponent from getting into a controlling position. Putting an elbow in the attacker's ribs or placing your forearm under his jaw will keep him from getting too close. Placing your arm in a space, where the attacker wants to control, can keep him from entering the area and give yourself time to move.

Legs

In Offensive Ground Play situations you will have a Driving Leg, which is set to exert force against the defender much as in throwing attacks. Your other leg is left without a clearly defined job. However, the leg that is not driving should never be left doing nothing! The non-driving leg should be used to help control your opponent's movement.

Your non-driving leg can be thought of as your Controlling Leg in Ground Play skills. Your Controlling Leg can be used like the pincers of a crab to grasp and hold an arm or leg. Your Controlling Leg can also be used to pry open a space or block a hole that your opponent is trying to use.

Ground Play Mobility

Above all, you must keep your legs in position to push and move. This especially true if you are in a defensive role during a ground play situation. There is very simple rule about Ground Play Mobility, if your legs are extended you are in trouble! Keep your legs under you, with your toes dug into the mat, so that you are ready to push and move quickly.

Whether you are in Ground Play or standing;

Your first line of defense is ALWAYS MOVEMENT!

In Ground Play, your second line of defense, is to keep your legs between you and your attacker. This is called the Legs Around Bottom position. Some players are very good at defending in this position. The problem with Legs Around Bottom is that it is not difficult to get past the defense of a Legs Around Bottom player if you keep moving.

The least desirable defensive maneuver, in Ground Play, is to scissors one of your opponent's legs with your legs. This is called Leg Entanglement. Leg Entanglement will stop time on a Hold Down, BUT, when you entangle legs with your opponent you are giving away your own ability to move. When you entangle legs you also put your attacker in a position to attack you with Arm Locks or Shime Waza, while you can't get away.

Using Your Head

Your head can have a very active part in ground play. Offensively the head can be used to trap an exposed hand or arm. Your Head can also be used as a lever to push and pry on an arm, leg, or the defender's head.

Defensively, you can use your head to block strangulation attempts, trap an exposed arm or hand, as a wedge to create space or even as a block to prevent being rolled over.

Judo players must NEVER use their heads to bridge their shoulders off of the mat!

Bridging on your head is an extremely dangerous practice that could lead to serious neck injury, paralysis or even death! **Bridging on the head must never be condoned by a Coach.**

The alternative to head/neck bridges is a shoulder bridge. The shoulder bridge is desirable for two reasons;

- Shoulder bridges do not expose the neck to injury.
- The action of a shoulder bridge, the strong leg drive and torso twist, is exactly the action that it takes to escape from most Hold Down situations.

A Mobile Posture in Ground Play

Whether you are standing or in Ground Play your most important consideration must be your ability to move. Whether you are standing or in Ground Play the ability to move comes from proper Posture.

Sato Nobuyuki, twice World Champion, 1974 All Japan Champion and Coach of Yamashita Yasuhiro, tells us that the best posture for ground play mobility is;

- ◆ Head Above Your Belt
Keep your head higher than the level of your hips. In this position your head and shoulders can move freely. With the hips kept lower than the head your body is position to thrust forward.
- ◆ Keep Your Toes Alive
Keeping your toes alive means to keep your toes dug into the mat and ready to push.

Points of Ground Play Control

There is no Hold Down skill, Arm Lock or Strangulation that cannot be escaped from! So long as a defender does not stop moving then the attacker will not be able to get into position to use one of his Ground Play skills. The most highly skilled Ground Play specialists know that the only way to control a defender is to take any controlling advantage, that can be had, and gradually improve on it.

The Performance Goal of Ground Play Control is to;

Control only one small part of the opponent at a time.

Ground Play Control should be aimed at only one part of the opponent's body at a time. You should work to control either;

- ◆ The Opponent's Head
- ◆ Either shoulder, or
- ◆ Either hip

By working to control a single part of your opponent you are able to focus your energy. More importantly, with a single Point of Control, you know, exactly where the defender has to go and what he has to do to escape. When the defender moves to free the area being controlled the skilled ground player simply moves to the next Point of Control.

Types of Ground Play control

There are two methods of applying controlling pressure to the Point of Control;

1) Direct pressure over the point of control:

Get right on top of the Point of Control and push into it! This is probably the most common method of applying Ground Play Control Pressure.

2) Indirect pressure:

You can very easily gain control of area by being on the other side of the defender's body and pushing toward your Point of Control. This is the same thing as pushing an object from behind so that it will move forward. An attacker can be at the defender's hip but pushing so that the opposite shoulder is driven down, it is the same idea. We see this type of control often in Turn Over skills and Hold Downs where the attacker exerts a lot of force with his Driving Leg and pushes across the defender's body.

Developing Power in Ground Play

Developing power in ground play is much the same as developing power in a throw. You need to decide where you want to push to, get your body in line to push in that direction and then do it. The difference between standing attacks and Ground Play is that when you throw you are moving the defender's body, in Ground Play you want to keep the defender's body in one place in order to keep the opponent from getting away.

Drive Leg Placement

The Driving Leg in ground play provides Immobilizing Force against the defender's body. In other words the force of the Driving Leg helps to keep the defender in one place. Ground play Driving Leg placement works in exactly the same way as placing a Driving Leg for a throwing attack. Decide where you want to push to, which will always be pushing to put pressure on your Point of Control, and place the Driving Leg in direct line with that point.

Blocking Movement

There has to be resistance to develop force. If you push against an unresisting object it will move. If you were to push against an opponent, that was not prevented from moving, he would slide across the mat. You would look just like a bulldozer moving a load of dirt. This is where your arms, and in some Ground Play skills your Controlling Leg, come into play. Your arms, or a leg, should be placed in line with the Driving Leg, but on the Far Side of the opponent's body away from the Driving Leg. This will give the resistance necessary for your Driving Leg to develop Force.

Once the resistance is set, dig your Controlling Arm, or Leg, into the mat so that you can keep the Far Side of the opponent from sliding with the push of your Driving Leg. In this blocking position you are squashing, and squeezing, your opponent into your attack. To increase your force pull the opponent back into your own chest.

Wedging

Wedging is a simple process of using a hand, arm, leg, foot, knee or even your head to;

1) Prevent movement;

When the defender opens a space for himself to turn into you should stick a body part into that space. This will close the space which will, in turn, force the defender to go to the effort of opening another space somewhere else.

2) Make a small space bigger;

a) Offensively;

When the defender leaves a small opening wedge a body part in and pry open enough space for your attack.

b) Defensively;

When the attacker closes in on you, during an attempt to control or attack, wedge a body part into the space he is trying to control. Once your wedge is in place keep prying and twisting until you are free.

Offensive Movement in Ground Play

In Ground Play, if you don't keep pressure on your opponent he is going to run away. This means that, in order to be successful, from the instant you begin a throwing attack to the conclusion of your Ground Play you have to exert control over your opponent. Control in Ground Play means pushing some part of your opponent toward the mat!

This is not difficult! All you have to do is form a habit of taking whatever part of your opponent that is nearest and pushing down on it. Once you have control it's time to think about working to improve your Control. Ground Play Control doesn't get improved just because it's the right thing to do! Ground Play Control has to be improved a little bit at a time.

Improving your control is more than a matter of moving to a stronger position. Your movements have to be planned and then executed. Being able to move and push down, or exert Ground Play Control, at the same time is done in a sequence of five steps;

- 1) Control where you are.
- 2) Decide where you want to go.
- 3) Push so that you are exerting pressure towards where you are going.
- 4) Make a small movement towards where you want to be.
- 5) Control where you are and repeat this sequence until you get where you are going.

Defensive Movement in Ground Play

Your first line of defense, whether you are standing or in Ground Play, is to keep moving. Do not stop to see what the opponent is going to do. Never think that you are strong enough to block attacks, because you aren't. You must run away from your opponent's attacks! If you run away you create space between yourself and your attacker. Maybe you can use the space to make an attack of your own but you will not get a chance if you do not get away first.

Defensive movement in Ground Play must be quick and small. If you make big movements you will leave an opening to be attacked.

Defensive Ground Play movement also needs to be planned. Even if your attacker has you in a very uncomfortable position, take the time to decide;

- 1) what part of your body can be moved,
- 2) where is the best place to move it to.

The Performance Goal of Defensive Ground Play Movement is; **Think before you move!**

The three steps of Defensive Ground Play Movement are;

- 1) Decide where to go.
- 2) Plan how to get there.
- 3) Execute your plan in small, quick, movements.

Mechanical Principles in Practice

All skills of Judo have a common basis in the Mechanical Principles and a player that uses sound Mechanical Principles can acquire any skills that are needed to learn a new competitive skill, learn a Kata or develop a strong personal attack system. However, the Mechanical Principles have to be practiced to be useful.

Coaches need to discuss the Mechanical Principles when introducing and demonstrating skills. Coaches need to make sure that the Mechanical Principles are applied properly during training sessions. Coaches also need to take the time to discuss the Mechanical Principles during performance feedback and praise the correct use of the Mechanical Principles as reinforcement. When correcting errors in the Mechanical Principles be sure to explain;

- 1) How the Mechanical Principle effects the skill.
- 2) Why the proper use of the Mechanical Principle is important.
- 3) What needs to be done to correct the Mechanical Principle.

Remember, a player without solid Mechanical Principles has no chance to progress and you, the Coach, are responsible for developing the Mechanical Principles in your players.

Philosophy

The First Lesson

There is only one thing that each new player must learn from his, or her, first experience on a Judo mat. It has nothing to do with being able to take a fall properly or how to throw or bow to the teacher or any of that extraneous garbage that so frequently occupies half of your first time on the mat. That one thing is very simple and will stay with your new student for the rest of his life. The simple lesson is that; JUDO IS FUN!

If your players don't learn this little tidbit their first time out the chances are that you won't get a second chance to teach them anything else.

So roll around, fall down, throw somebody and make lots of noise. Judo is supposed to be a recreational sport not some secret activity that we don't want anybody to know about. More importantly, have some fun yourself, Coach. If you don't, it's not likely that your players will either.

Inherent Skills

True or false; The first time new students step on the mat they have no Judo skills?

Of course this is false! Young people have all sorts of skills that are used in Judo. Every day roughhousing and play teaches kids how to;

- 1) Trip another person
- 2) Throw somebody to the ground
- 3) Counter or block a weak throwing attempt
- 4) Take an aggressive grip
- 5) Catch yourself on your hands and knees to avoid a fall
- 6) Hold down a resisting opponent, and
- 7) Get out of that Hold Down

These are skills and experiences that every active kid gets as part of his, or her time on the play ground.

Admittedly, some of these skills may not meet the standards necessary to use in Judo competition. On the other hand, some of these skills may be as strong as any you will ever be able to Coach into a player. You must avoid the prejudice of thinking a skill does not exist just because you didn't teach it to a player.

The grips, trips and throws of the play ground are an excellent foundation for building more complicated Judo skills. While these simple Inherent Skills serve to give your players early success in their new game of Judo you, as the Coach, will have a Foundation of Satisfaction to build a better player on.

You should learn to present your Coaching material in a way that takes advantage of the skills that are already present in your future champions. By building on existing skills you will make your Coaching job more successful and make training sessions more enjoyable to your players.

The Bird Shooter Approach

So, how are we going to use these inherent skills to make Judo players?

There is a Chinese fable, written by Ai Qing, that tells of a young man that wanted to learn to shoot birds. The young man went to the best hunter in his area and asked him if he could teach him this very difficult skill. The old man agreed but the youngster was a terrible shot, he couldn't hit a bird sitting on a branch let alone one on the wing. So the old man took a large sheet of cardboard and instructed his pupil to shoot it. When the young man had complied the teacher went and drew a bird around each hole.³

The obvious sarcasm notwithstanding, this is, actually, an excellent approach to Coaching beginning players. It is the job of the new player to deal with complex skills. It is the job of the Coach to make complex skills as simple as possible and to encourage your players to work toward skills that work for them.

This is exactly what the old hunter was doing. He found out what the skill level, of his pupil, was and proceeded improve from there. In other words, he ascertained the inherent skills and used them as a foundation.

You can do this by using three tools;

- 1) Inherent skills;
Focus your Coaching on the things that your players can do, already. As your players gain confidence you can move to more complex skills that are based on the skills that the player brought to the mat.
- 2) Very broad performance goals;
The old hunter, with his cardboard, gave his student a simple task. When the simple task was accomplished he showed what had to be done next by making the target a little more specific to the goal of shooting birds. As the student progressed the goal was adjusted closer to the desired performance.
- 3) Finally, you must encourage your players to recognize their accomplishment of each performance goal. As each simple performance goal is met then the performance goals can be made more challenging and the skills, being practiced, can made more complex.

Safety

The single most important consideration of a Coach has to be SAFETY of his, or her, players! You must take every precaution that your players have the safest possible conditions to practice Judo. You must also ensure that players are not allowed to perform any skills that might cause injury to themselves or their partners.

While teaching Judo skills there are two Coaching principles that maximize a safe practice environment. These principles are Progression and Cooperation.

Progression

Progression is the practice of learning skills by starting with the simplest possible form and progressing to the more complex forms. When using the principle of progression safety is also served. Your players should also be learning the safest possible version of a skill when they are practicing the simplest version. If there is an element of danger, that your players may not be ready for, then you need to break the skill down further. When your players are comfortable with the safer version of the skill then you may progress to a more complex form of the skill.

³ Christopher S. Wren, *The End of the Line*, Simon and Schuster, 1990
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Throwing

A safe progression to throwing is very simple.

- 1) Begin with a simple push down
- 2) Gradually improve your players use of the Mechanics Principles until a competitive level is reached.

Falling Methods

A safe progression to falling methods follows the same principle of a safe throwing progression.

- 1) From a simple push down the defender can sit down and roll to his back for a simple fall or sit and turn to catch himself on hands and knees. The defender should practice both methods, back falls and acrobatic turn out skills, before progressing to a more complicated falling situation.
- 2) As the defender becomes comfortable with falling safely the attacker may progress to slightly more speed and force in his attacks.

Hold Down Skills

Beginning Hold Down skills should be limited to the attacks that put pressure onto the defender's torso. In some of the Hold Down skills the attacker can twist the defenders neck or squash the defender's face. Don't teach these skills until;

- 1) your players are able to recognize when they might be causing injury to the defender
- 2) your players are able to avoid hold down attacks through ground play mobility

Escaping Hold Downs

Escaping from Hold Down attacks can be a very dangerous situation if your players are not taught to;

- 1) Avoid placing any pressure on their own neck when making escape maneuvers.
- 2) Properly place their legs and arms to push during the escape maneuver.

Far too often we see players that bridge high onto their necks in an attempt to escape a Hold Down. This is a wrestling maneuver and must not be allowed in Judo play. A high neck bridge does nothing more than raise the shoulders from the mat. This position does not break a Hold Down! This position places the neck in serious jeopardy and must not be allowed.

Placing your arms and legs in the strongest possible position to push, in the right direction, is the most important step of escaping Hold Downs. It is also a detail that beginners have problems with understanding.

When your arms and legs are placed in a mechanically strong position you can push without unnecessary strain. Progression from a simple Hold Down Skill with a simple escape gradually teaches your players to get into a mechanically strong position before an escape is possible.

Counter Throwing Skills

The progression of Countering Throwing skills should be the same as other throwing skills. A slow and easy push down progressing to smooth execution will teach both attacker and defender how to deal safely with the situation.

Cooperating for Safety

If partners do not cooperate during training sessions someone is going to get injured. You must be sure that your players know exactly what is expected of them during a drill or skill practice session. Then you must be sure that the players do what is expected. Keep in mind that we are training players in a competitive sport. It should be expected that players are going to be competitive during practice sessions. As the Coach you have to keep watch that the level of resistance does not escalate beyond a safe condition.

General Safety Considerations

Equipment and the Playing Area

Fortunately, Judo equipment offers a minimum of safety concerns.

- 1) The mats need to be smooth without tears or holes and they must be clean.
- 2) The practice area should be without obstructions or protruding objects that players might fall into. If there are hazards that cannot be removed cover them with some type of padding and restrain access to that area as much as possible.
- 3) Uniforms should be clean and without tears.
- 4) Any type of jewelry violates the playing rules of Judo and must not be allowed.

Hygiene

Hygiene can be a very awkward subject but it is your responsibility to set and enforce hygiene standards and be prepared to discuss problems with young players. General hygiene concerns include;

- Finger and toe nails being kept short
- Oral hygiene
- Bodily cleanliness
- Proper wear of under clothing, male and female
- Menstrual cycles

If you have a problem in any particular area then ask for help. Do not, however, allow hygiene problems to go unresolved because you find the subject difficult to talk about.

Observing Players

One of the easiest safety mistakes to make is placing yourself in a position where you cannot see all of your players at the same time. Right in the middle of the mat seems like a great place to stand because you are close to the action. There is, however, a problem with your position. No matter where you look you have to turn your back to some of your players.

It is much safer, because you can keep an eye on all of the players, to walk around the edge of the mat while your players are practicing. From the edge you'll be able to concentrate on one pair, if necessary, and keep the remainder of your players in view.

Matching Players

One of the most important decisions that you will have to make is who works out with whom. Partners should be matched as equally as possible at all times. When pairing players you must consider;

- ◆ Age
- ◆ Weight
- ◆ Experience
- ◆ Maturity

Any time that you allow a mismatched pair to practice the weaker player is at risk of injury. You must supervise mismatched pairs very closely or simply not allow the pair to practice together.

Dangerous Skills

If you or your players feel that a skill is dangerous don't do it! Safety cannot get simpler or more efficient than that.

If a skill cannot be broken down into small, safer, skills there is no reason to take a chance. Remember, Judo is supposed to be fun not dangerous!

Safety and Fun

Safety and fun are not mutually exclusive. You can have fun and play hard while still being safe. The real safety rule is to have fun and play hard but when an activity becomes unsafe stop, explain what is unsafe and get back to the fun of Judo.

How To Teach

Approaches to Instructing Judo Skills

We are going to discuss two approaches to Instructing Judo Skills. The traditional method of Judo instruction and Coaching by Practical Situation. The traditional instruction method is technique oriented. In technique oriented instruction;

- 1) The Coach introduces the technique to be learned through demonstration.
- 2) The technique is then practiced as an isolated event in closely controlled conditions, i.e. the opponent does not resist.
- 3) The athlete is then placed in a situation, usually Randori (free play), and is left to his own devices to discover methods of applying the newly learned technique.

What's wrong with this picture!?

- 1) Perhaps the most important point to remember when instructing Judo Skills is that nothing happens by itself. The opponent does not become vulnerable to a throw simply because he places his feet in the wrong place. A player does not become liable to be pinned because it seemed like a good idea to lie down. No! The defender reacts, and places himself in jeopardy from throwing or ground play attacks because he is attempting to avoid something that the attacker did, or is doing.
- 2) There is very little learned, in the technical oriented instruction method, that is actually used in Practical Application. When you practice skills as they will actually be used you are using Transference. When you use Transference it means that your players should be taught in as close a way as possible to what they will have to do when using their Judo skills.
- 3) If the conditions, under which the new skill was practiced, are not as near actual conditions as you can make them, then your players may never have a chance to apply the skill as it was learned!
- 4) Technically oriented instruction very seldom, if ever, addresses the role of the person that is being thrown, or held down etc. (We could liken this to a swimming Coach telling half of his athletes to practice swimming while the other half practices drowning)
- 5) It can be very confusing for a player to have to attempt to translate a non-moving, static, technique into a freely moving, dynamic skill.

Practical Situations and Applicable Skills

An alternative to Technique Oriented Instruction is to introduce your players to the situations that they will be placed in, during Judo competition, and then teaching your players the skills for coping with the situations. This is Coaching by Practical Situations.

A Practical Situation is nothing more than a chance to use your Judo skills against your opponent. The catch is that the right skills need to be used to fit the practical situation that you are in. Which skills, fit which situations, is exactly what is learned by using a Practical Situation focus to your Coaching. The strong points of this approach are;

- 1) Players practice the skills in the way that they are to be used.
- 2) Creativity is being encouraged.
- 3) Training by practicing Practical Situations builds player confidence because;
 - a) what he, or she, experiences in competition has already been practiced in the gym.
 - b) players are allowed to find their own solutions to problems presented by the Practical Situation.
- 4) The role of the defender can, and should, be part of the Practical Situation being practiced and the role of either the attacker or defender can be emphasized in order to develop the desired skills.

Coaching by Practical Situation

Coaching with a Practical Situation focus is a very simple process.

- 1) Start your players moving about.
- 2) When they have a chance to use a Judo skill, stop and discuss the situation.
- 3) Practice the proper skills for the situation.
- 4) Move on until your players come to the next Practical Situation.

It is absolutely essential that you realize that all Judo skills, that means all Practical Situations, come about because of the MOVEMENT and REACTIONS of the two players. One movement from the attacker leads to a chance to use a defensive skill, in other words a defensive Practical Situation. The reaction of the defensive skill leads to a chance for an offensive skill. This action, reaction, chain keeps repeating itself until the end of the match. When Judo skills are viewed as links in a chain of events Coaching a player to use his, or her, skills becomes a definable task that can be understood by player and Coach alike.

After you decide to Coach with a Practical Situation focus you need to make two further decisions;

- 1) Which Practical Situation to begin Coaching with.
- 2) A Performance Goal for each Practical Situation.

Where to Start?

The choice of where to start can be determined by a simple question; What Situation offers the first chance to use a Judo skill? I think the answer is very obvious.

Nothing can happen in a Judo contest until the players come to Grips. Grips are the first contact between players, Grips are the most influential factor in controlling the opponent's movement and Grips control the Space that you have to travel through to make an attack. I believe that these points make Gripping the most important skill in Judo play as well as the logical place to begin Coaching a player.

Defining Practical Situations

There is one minor drawback to the Practical Situation approach to Coaching. That is that the Practical Situations of Judo play have not been clearly defined. Well, I'm going to attempt to correct that problem and list what I believe to be the Basic Practical Situations of Judo Play.

I have made a list of, what I believe to be, the Practical Situations of Judo. Their definitions and suggested methods of using these situations, in training a group of players, follows.

Grips

There are two reasons that make Gripping the logical situation to begin training with;

- 1) Gripping is the first point of contact between players.
- 2) Gripping skills influence the opponent more than any other aspect of play;
 - a) Grips create reactions from the opponent that leave him vulnerable to attack.
 - b) Gripping skills can prevent the opponent from getting close enough to make successful attacks.

These same reasons are exactly why a strong training system practices gripping skills as often as possible.

Although there are as many approaches to strong gripping skills as there are top players, there is one thing that top Judo players absolutely do not do when taking grips. Top players do not politely walk over to their opponent and gently take a sleeve and lapel grip. No! Top players offer their opponents a choice of either defending themselves against strong gripping maneuvers or be thrown. At the same time the top players are preventing the opponent from taking a dominant grip. This is how the big boys, and girls, do it and this is the way that your players should learn to grip from the very start. The question is, what is it that gives strong control to gripping skills and how do we introduce new players to aggressive gripping skills?

Elite players take any grip that they can get and improve it!_ This is "Climbing Into Your Grips", because you grip by pulling yourself into a strong position hand over hand, always moving closer to your target. When you get your grips where you want them attack!

The Performance Goal of Gripping is to take a grip on the nearest exposed portion of the opponent's jacket and pull yourself closer.

Once you have made your first gripping contact place your other hand in a strong gripping position and pull yourself in closer still. Now move the hand that took the first grip and move it a little closer to the gripping position that you are aiming at. Keep Climbing In until you are in the attacking position that you want. Once that you have Climbed Into your gripping position, ATTACK!

Learning Mobility and Footwork

Mobility is being able to Move and doing it! The ability to Move is the most important part of Judo play that a player can have. Mobility should be practiced in every possible aspect of play. Movement puts the attacker into position and it allows the defender to avoid being scored upon. Gripping, as-well-as all other practical situations, should have Movement and Mobility taught as a natural part of the situation.

Mobility in Offensive Judo Play

Mobility and Foot work can be practiced by setting a simple rule for your players. All you have to do is make a rule that says, every time you place a hand on your opponent you must move your feet under that hand. This is the Touch and Move Rule. As your players learn to move their bodies, to their gripping point, begin to emphasize the idea of pulling themselves to the next grip. The Performance Goal for Gripping is to;

Touch and Move

By practicing Touch and Move two important aspects of play are being learned;

- 1) Your players are learning to control their opponents through mobile gripping skills.
- 2) Your players are learning footwork patterns, through practical experience, that place him, or her, in position to attack.

Defensive Mobility and Footwork

The Touch and Move Rule also applies to Defensive Mobility. As the defender you must move every time the attacker touches you or tries to take a grip.

The Performance Goal of the defender is to keep facing your opponent and to keep the space between yourself and your attacker at about arms length.

Throwing Opportunities

Anytime that your opponent supports his weight on either of his legs, long enough for you to get into position to attack, you have a chance to use a throwing skill. There is one rule that must be applied to all throwing skills in order to have any chance at success. Your attack must be directed at the leg that the defender is supporting himself on. Your attack must also be able to prevent the Supporting Leg from getting away from your throw. The Performance Goal of all throwing attacks is to;

Attack the opponent's weight bearing leg.

Research has revealed that there are only three ways that a person places his Supporting Leg that puts him, or her, in danger of being thrown. Each of these placements, of the opponent's weight bearing leg, is easy to recognize and each one has a distinct type of attack that will work in the situation.

The Supporting Leg Forward

We will begin with the opponent's Supporting Leg Forward, or Exposed, for three reasons;

- 1) Statistically, the Support Leg is forward of the defender's body more frequently than the other two positions.
- 2) The throwing actions needed to be used in this Situation rely, primarily, on skills that are inherent to new, or less experienced players.
- 3) Beginning players feel that this type of throw is easier to do.

The chance to use a throwing skill, in this situation, comes when the opponent places his weight;

- 1) on the leg farthest away from the attacker (this is the Far Leg)
- 2) with the Supporting Leg slightly in front of the defender's body.

The Performance Goal for a Supporting Leg being placed Forward is for the attacker to;

Catch the Supporting Leg and hold it in place while the opponent's body is driven over the Supporting Leg to the rear or side.

A Forward Supporting Leg can be trapped in position with your leg or hand. Some of the standard Judo throws that meet these requirements are the Hooking Throws which include; Osoto Gari, Kouchi Gari, Taiotoshi, Kosoto Gake, Hand Assisted Leg Pick Ups etc.

The Supporting Leg to the Rear

We can say that the opponent's Supporting Leg is Hidden when it is the leg on the opponent's farthest side from the attacker and set out of reach, to the rear. Because the Supporting Leg is Hidden away, to the rear, you are not be able to get to the leg and hold it in place for a throw. There are two points to keep in mind when attacking a Hidden Supporting Leg.

- 1) The Supporting Leg is set in a Rear Corner. That means that here is nothing to hold up the defender's front corner if the defender cannot move his leg forward.
- 2) If the defender's upper body is pushed forward and the Supporting Leg cannot be moved in the same direction the defender will be thrown.

It is difficult, and even dangerous, to reach for a Hidden Supporting Leg because the attacker has to move through the area that the defender can control with his Free Leg. Since we cannot get to a Hidden Supporting Leg to block or trap it the Performance Goal, with the opponent's Supporting Leg Protected to the Rear is to;

Block the Defender's Hips and push him into the empty area at his front corner.

Blocking Throws are needed when the defender tries to hide his Supporting Leg behind his torso. Throws that block the hips and push into the front corner are; Seoinage, Tsurikomi Goshi, Uchimata, Harai Goshi, Tomoe Nage, Sasae Tsurikomi Ashi etc.

The Supporting Leg Between the Players

When the opponent's Supporting Leg comes into the area between both players conditions are very much the same as when the Supporting Leg is being Exposed on the Far Side. The differences, in chances to use your throwing skills, are;

- 1) Where you are going to throw the defender.
- 2) How long you have to get the job done.

Players learn quickly that it is dangerous to place the Supporting Leg close to the opponent. Still, in order to move about we have to place the Supporting Leg somewhere close to the opponent if only for a very short time. When the Supporting Leg comes close, within reach of the attacker's Free Leg, it has to be trapped and the defender's torso pushed down onto the Supporting Leg. The Performance Goal for a Supporting Leg between the players is;

Trap the Supporting Leg, and drive the opponent's body Down onto it.

When the leg comes within reach hook it, grab it or kick it away! You want to throw your opponent by twisting his body over the place where the Supporting Leg is, or was if you moved it out from under the defender.

Throws that trap the Supporting Leg or kick it away and drive the defender down are the Momentum Throws and Body Throws; Kosoto Gari, Kosoto Gake, the Foot Sweeps (Okuri Ashi Barai, Deashi Barai etc), Uki Waza, Ura Nage etc.

The factor that decides whether you should attack with a Momentum or Body Throw is the rate of defender's travel, or Tempo. Quick Tempo indicates the use of Momentum Throws. As the defender's Tempo slows use the skills that you wrap your body tight to the defender's, Body Throws, and then throw the mass of the both of your bodies to the mat.

Countering Throwing Attacks

An attacker gives his opponent a chance to counter attack any time that he attacks a defender that is ready to move. Counter throws happen because the attacker makes his move when the defender is standing with his Supporting Leg in a very mobile position. If both of the defender's Legs are set directly under his upper body; not forward, to the rear or coming into the area between the players, then your opponent is standing in a Square Mobile Posture. **WHATEVER YOU DO, DON'T ATTACK!**

A defender Standing in a Square Mobile Posture can simply get out of the way and Push you Down before you know what happened. Which is just, exactly, what the Performance Goal of the chance to make a counter throwing attack is to;

Get out of the way, of the attack and PUSH!

You must learn to recognize when the Supporting Leg is in one of the three Positions that give you a chance to use a throw. If the opponent is not in one of these positions then don't attack!

In order to learn counter throwing skills your players should practice taking the Square Mobile Posture and exploding into a counter throw every time an attack is made.

The Importance of Countering Skills

No offensive skill should be taught without teaching the countering skill in the same lesson! To do so would be the same as asking a swimmer to practice drowning while his teammates practiced their strokes. A complete training sequence, that includes countering skills, should be;

- 1) Introduce the new skill and have players practice,
- 2) When the players are familiar with the attacking aspect of the skill teach the countering maneuver to the skill and have them take turns practicing.
- 3) The final step is to allow Free Play with random attacks and Countering skills.

Transitions

The skill of getting from a standing position into Ground Play is the skill of making a Transition. Transitions are a skill that is partly throwing and partly ground work. Transitions are, basically, Control of the opponent begun in the throwing action and finished by beginning the ground play attack while the attacker and defender are traveling toward the mat.

The Transition Performance Goal, for the attacker, is to;

Keep tight contact, right down to the mat.

As might be expected, the Transition Performance Goal of the defender is to;

Create as much space between yourself and your attacker as you can while the throw is taking place.

Transition skills have to be practiced in order to be improved. A simple Transition drill is to;

- 1) place your players in pairs
- 2) the thrower attacks with his, or her, favorite throw and
- 3) rolls directly into a Ground Play attack.

To practice defensive Transitions;

- 1) the attacker uses his favorite throw and
- 2) the defender rolls with the attack and
- 3) pushes his own chest toward the mat while twisting his hips in the direction of the throw

Traditional Falling Methods

Many Coaches take time to teach their players the traditional, mat slapping methods of falling before they will allow players to learn to throw. This is, presumably, because these Coaches believe that the player must learn safety measures before taking any falls. Attention to safety is of the highest importance but separating falling skills from throwing skills may, actually, increase the risk of injury.

In contest, or during practice sessions, when the attacker makes a throw the defender has to go down to the mat. The two actions cannot be separated. So, why not take the opportunity of teaching rudimentary Falling Methods as part of the rudimentary throwing methods?

As beginning players learn how to throw the defender may also be taught to fall. So long as the Coach, and his throwing partner, provide a demonstration, of the throwing and falling sequence, to fit the level of players being instructed, there will be no risk of injury. The point here is that;

- 1) The players must be given a clear picture of what is expected of them.
- 2) You must be sure that the players understand what to do.

A nice easy throw and rolling finish will give a very easy fall. The combination of learning falling and throwing, at the same time, will allow both players a simultaneous chance to learn the skills needed to be used in this situation, cut down on the time taken to learn the two skills and avoid boredom.

Acrobatic Falling Methods

The drawback of traditional falling methods is that the defender falls on his back. In contest an attacker scores by throwing his opponent onto his back. Presumably, when you Coach players for Shiaii, you do not want your player helping the opponent to win the contest. If you teach your beginning players to fall onto their backs you will have to un-teach the back falling before your players can become effective competitors. There is an alternative.

Instead of teaching your players back falling methods why not teach modified cart wheels, jumping around throws or falling to their stomach first? These defensive maneuvers will allow your players to avoid throws safely and avoid putting themselves into a position of being scored against at the same time.

Acrobatic falling methods can be learned in the same manner as described for introducing traditional falling methods. Start with a good demonstration of the desired throwing and Turn Out skills to be practiced. As your players get better at the acrobatic moves, speed may be increased in the throwing attempts. Your players should be allowed to gradually increase their attacking speed until they have developed full Acrobatic Falling skills.

Acrobatic Falling Skills are, generally, called Turn Outs from Throws. As skill is developed with Turn Outs you should design drills that allow the defender to Turn Out and return with his own attack while the attacker is recovering from the missed throwing attempt. These drills should include situations where;

- 1) the players do not go into a ground play position and the defender attacks with a throw immediately on recovering from his defensive move
- 2) situations where the players go to the mat and the defender gains the advantage due to his Turn Out.

Ground Play

The Performance Goal of Ground Play is to take away the opponent's ability to move while being able to move yourself. This is nothing more than knowing and practicing;

- 1) what makes a player mobile, in Ground Play, and
- 2) how to control the opponent's mobility.

Ground Play Mobility

The first order of business, in Ground Play is to get yourself in a position where you can move quickly and easily. This is establishing your Ground Play Mobility. The Performance Goal of Ground Play Mobility is to;

Keep you head higher than your belt and your toes dug into the mat.

This Performance Goal holds true for a player on Hands and Knees, on his stomach or on his back. Raising your head allows you to turn in any direction, your lowered hips allow power development through the legs and toes digging into the mat provide strong traction for movement.

Ground Play Control

Ground Play Control is gained by getting the opponent's head so that it is lower than his belt. Obviously, the Performance Goal of Controlling your opponent during Ground Play is to;

Force your opponent's head lower than his belt!

When the head is lower than the belt a player cannot move freely and must, first, get into a mobile position before being able to attack or defend.

Meeting Defensive or Offensive Performance Goals for Ground Play Control does not just happen! When you are the defender you should get into a mobile posture quickly and get as far away from your attacker as possible. When you attack take any control that you can get by grabbing anything that the defender has left exposed and drive down. Once a little control is gained gradually work your way toward the opponent's head until you can force it down.

Starting Positions

Two out of three times that players begin ground play they will start with one person on his hands and knees and the other player attacking from above. This is the Hands and Knees Bottom against a Hands and Knees Top, Ground Play position. One time in four Ground Play will begin as a direct continuation from a throwing attack. One out of ten Ground Play situations start with the defender lying on his back and attempting to keep the attacker away with his legs. This situation is called Legs Around Bottom against a Legs Around Top Ground Play position.

Knowing how often a player will have to deal with a starting position should give the Coach an idea of the amount of practice that each position should be given. During practice sessions you should vary the beginning ground play position that your players take when making a transition. When your players practice in this way the attacker and the defender gain experience in reacting to the different starting positions. By varying the starting position your players also learn how to move into a Mobile Ground Play Posture, or lower the defender's head quickly.

Ground Play Skills

Dealing with Defensive Postures

Dealing with an opponent in a strong defensive position can be a very frustrating situation. In fact the majority of players use ground play defensive postures as a way to rest and waste time_. In fact, the best method of dealing with a strong Ground Play defense is to try one or two strong attacks and if you cannot break through the defense simply stand up and walk away.

Turn Overs

Turning an opponent from the Hands and Knees Bottom Position or breaking through a Legs Around Bottom defense is accomplished by following the Performance Goal of lowering the defender's head. There are simple steps to lowering the head in either situation.

A recent study of how elite players deal with the Hands and Knees Bottom position has revealed that the attacker has specific measures to Lower the Defender's Head. All successful attacks against the Hands and Knees Bottom position had one common factor. In all scoring attacks the attacker drove one of the defender's elbows towards the defender's ear (the ear on the same side as the elbow that was being driven forward). In fact 94% of the scores against the Hands and Knees Bottom position, in this research, came by first finding a way to pry one of the opponent's elbows toward his ear!

A very important point of mechanics must be kept in mind when attempting to pry an elbow towards the ear. The you must keep your body in position to PUSH against the elbow. When you attempt to pull the elbow you are;

- 1) Restricting your own Power
- 2) Limiting your Mobility
- 3) Putting yourself in position to expose your own back to the mat.

It is interesting to note that there were several incidents where the attacker would pry an elbow free and attempt to drive it across the defender's back. It didn't work! Even World Champion and Olympic Medallists were unable to score against less experienced opponent's by trying to pry an arm out and force it towards the defender's hips.

The point here is to impress upon your players that the Performance Goal, when attacking against Hands and Knees Bottom is;

Drive an elbow to the nearest ear!

Legs Around Bottom position happens in 9.68% of Ground Play exchanges. It can be confusing to try and get around the legs but it is not difficult if you remember the Performance Goal for dealing with the Legs Around Bottom position.

The Performance Goal in dealing with Legs Around Bottom is to;

Drive your weight into the defender's legs.

You can grab one or both legs and push them out of the way, pull on them or roll over them. By driving into the legs the defender's hips and back, are driven into the mat and he, or she loses the ability to move away. Once the defender is trapped it is easy to get around Legs Around Bottom.

Holding the Opponent Down

The Performance Goal of Hold Down Skills is to;

Always be ready to change to new holding position.

Hold down skills are not the ability to crush the breath out of your opponent. The ability to hold your opponent down is the ability to move and change from one holding skill to another. Any hold down skill can be escaped from so long as the defender takes the proper steps to prevent the attacker from moving into a different skill. When you apply a holding skill with strength and no movement, or loses the ability to move at any moment, you only help the defender to escape.

Escaping from Hold Downs

There is only one way to make sure that you do not get held down by your opponent and that is not let him get into a position to use a Hold Down skill. This means;

- 1) practicing moving on the mat and
- 2) not exposing your back to the mat

Unfortunately, sooner or later someone is going to catch you in a Hold Down skill and you are going to have to know how to use your Ground Play skills to deal with the situation of escaping from a Hold Down.

Two Parts to Hold Down Escapes

There are two Performance Goals to escaping from Hold Down attacks. Both Goals must be met and they must be performed in sequence or you will not be able to get out.

The first Performance Goal of escaping from a Hold Down is; **Lower your attacker's Head!**

Before you can lower the opponent's head you have to make a hole for the head to be lowered into. This means deciding where you are going to push the opponent and then getting your body out of the way. As you move your body out of the way, your legs are being set in position to push the opponent and lower his head.

In order to get enough control to Lower Your Attacker's Head you might wrap an arm around his neck, grab his belt and use your upper arm against the back of his head or pull on his shoulders. Whatever you do to control the head you must move the attacker's head toward the mat. In some cases, when your attacker is sitting, in a Hold Down position, with his back very straight and his head held high the you can push the attacker backwards. This is a very simple and direct method of Lowering the Attacker's Head.

When you, as the defender, lower the attackers head you are doing two things;

- 1) You are taking away the attacker's ability to move
- 2) You are creating a space to escape through.

Once the attacker's head is lowered you have to use the second Performance Goal of escaping from Hold Downs; **Raise your attacker's Hips!**

Raising the attacker's hips usually means nothing more than making space between you and him. As long as you have accomplished the first Performance Goal of escaping Hold Downs by Lowering your attacker's head moving your body away from him will pull his head lower. As the head comes down the hips raise.

You can make the job of escaping easier by propping your opponent's hips up with your knee, elbow, foot or anything else that will do the job. Once he is propped up get your legs into position to Push Your Attacker's Head Down further. As long as you prevent your attacker's hips from moving, while you are lowering his head, a Space will be made for you to escape through.

If the Escapee will keep pushing, even after he is out from under his attacker, he will be able to turn his escape into a Ground Play attack of his own.

Four Steps To Making Your Escape

The procedure for escaping from a hold down skill can be summarized in four simple steps;

- 1) Trap the opponent where he is,
- 2) Make a hole to push your attacker into, (You make a hole to push the attacker into by moving your body parts out of the place where you are going to push the attacker's head)
- 3) Get all of your body parts ready to push in the same direction
- 4) PUSH!!!

Shime Waza

Your opponent is open to Shime Waza attacks any time he lifts his chin. The successful execution of Shime Waza skills relies on;

- 1) Recognition of the chance to use Shime Waza attacks
- 2) Practice of getting smoothly and quickly into attacking position
- 3) The creativity to see which direction to move the in order to execute your attack.

Shime Waza is applied by;

- 1) Pulling the opponent's neck toward your own body.
- 2) Pushing the defender's head away.
- 3) Blocking the opponent's shoulders so that they cannot turn into your pull.

All three of these actions must be going on at the same time or your Shime Waza will not be effective.

The Performance Goal of Shime Waza is to;

Control the opponent's head by Pushing, Pulling and Blocking

Escaping from Shime Waza

Escaping from Shime Waza is a simple three step process.

- 1) Pull down on the ELBOW of the choking hand.
- 2) Turn your head away from the choking pressure.
- 3) Move your hips away from your attacker.

The most important point to remember about Shime Waza is that if you realize that you are being strangled then the attack is not very effective. The attack may be uncomfortable but there is no reason to surrender.

Take your time, decide which hand is actually causing the pressure. The pressure applying hand is called the Working Hand, in Shime Waza, and is generally, but not always the highest hand on your neck. Once you have found the Working Hand execute the Performance Goal of Pulling Down on the Elbow of the Choking Hand. If the pressure does not decrease then you have the wrong elbow. Move your pulling hand to the opponent's other elbow and pull down. After the strangulation pressure is decreased move your hips away from the attacker.

Arm Locks

Arm Locks are complex skills and probably should not be practiced by beginning players but left for later skill development. Beginning players should, however, have a basic understanding of the key points of the Arm Locks.

The key point of the Cross Arm Lock (Juji Gatame) are;

- 1) Control the defender's Torso and Near Shoulder with your legs.
- 2) Squeeze the elbow, of the arm that you are attacking, with your knees.
- 3) Pull, or push, towards the little finger of the arm being attacked.

Key points to the Bent Arm Lock (Ude Garami) are;

- 1) Keep the elbow of the attacked arm immobile near 90° to the upper arm.
- 2) The thumb of your hand, that is holding onto the opponent's wrist, points to the direction that you need to push, or pull, the attacked arm.

Key points of the Straight Arm Lock (Ude Gatame) are;

- 1) Cup the elbow of the attacked arm with your hands
- 2) Make an open space, between your body and the defender's, to pull the arm, that you are attacking, into
- 3) Pull, or push, the attacked arm towards the thumb of the hand on the arm that is being attacked

Escaping Arm Locks

Although Arm Locks are intermediate level skills your players should learn to defend against and escape from Arm Locks. Just as in other ground play skills the first line of defense is Movement. In other words, not getting caught in the attack! This means practicing lots of movement in ground play situations.

If you do get caught in an Arm Lock there are two Performance Goals to be met;

- 1) Move your body to the Attacked Arm.**
- 2) Turn until your chest can touch the palm of the hand on your Attacked Arm.**

By moving your body toward the attacked arm you take control of the arm away from the attacker. When you turn until your chest and the hand of your attacked arm are together you turn your Arm Lock escape into a Ground Play Counter Attack. A simple drill of lightly applying an Arm Lock and then escaping will develop the Arm Lock escape skills.

Sankaku, Triangulation Locks

The Triangulation Locks are very specialized, but devastating, skills when performed successfully. Sankaku are difficult to execute and very easy to avoid and should be left to advanced players. A beginning player should have a brief introduction to Sankaku and understand how to avoid these attacks.

Most players become victim to Triangulation maneuvers because they do not keep moving when they get into ground play. In order for Sankaku to work the defender has to be immobile long enough for the attacker to gather the defenders head and an arm in with his legs. If the defender will keep moving, Sankaku is very difficult to get.

Ground Play Defensive Mobility

The first rule of Judo play is to never stand still.

The second rule of Judo play is to never break rule number 1.

This could not be more true in ground play defense! Players need to practice the movement skills of ground play such as;

- 1) Not turning their back toward the mat.
- 2) Moving away from the opponent.
- 3) Getting to hands knees as quickly as possible.
- 4) Ducking your head when a Shime Waza gets close
- 5) Snatching your arm away from a potential Arm Lock

Your list of ground play defensive movement skills can be as detailed as you are willing to make it. The point is that movement, on the ground or standing, is the first and most important line of defense! Movement not only keeps you out of harms way but it also creates opportunity for you to attack. The only problem is that you have to decide what types of movement are important and then see to it that these movements get practiced.

A Sample Lesson Plan

Presented, here, is the introductory lesson plan from the training system that I have worked with and refined over several years. This lesson plan is the material presented in the first training session, or sometimes first two training sessions, of my brand new Judo players. A detailed explanation of what skills are being used, the reason the skills are being used in the initial stages and the intended long range effect follows in the section "Comments on the Sample Lesson Plan".

Training Block One

General information for new students

- A. class starting time etc.
- B. class behavior
- C. safety rules etc.

Determine the Dominant Leg

General Mobility Movement

- General Jumping Around
- Shoulder rolls

The Touch and Move Gripping Rule:

Every time you touch your opponent you must move your feet!

The idea is to get your first hold on your partner, move, improve on your grip and move. This Touch and Move Tactic helps to keep the opponent in a position of needing to prevent being controlled by your grips while you gain control through your gripping and movement.

Introduction of a Gripping Skill;

The Wrist Drag

- A. You, the attacker, are standing directly opposite or slightly outside the arm to be gripped.
- B. Take a Cross Sleeve grip on the Arm that is to be controlled .
 - 1. Take your grip at the Sleeve End
 - 2. Drive the Sleeve End down between yourself and the defender
- C. While driving the sleeve down
 - 1. Take a step, with the leg that is to be your Driving Leg, toward the arm that is being gripped.
 - 2. Take a Standard Sleeve Grip with the outside hand.The attacker now has both hands on the same sleeve.

Power Hand Placement from a Wrist Drag

- A. Take a step toward the side of the defender's body that you will place your Power Hand.
 - B. Take a Lapel Grip with your Power Hand.
- Be sure to keep;
- 1. The Power Hand Elbow tight to your side.
 - 2. Your Head placed over your hips during movement.

A Throwing Attack from the Wrist Drag;

Kosoto Gake (Small Outside Hook)

- A. Key Points
 - 1. Wrap the defender's arms tight
 - 2. Push into the attack with your chest
 - 3. The Transition Move is to drive the Free Leg Hip to the mat.

Ground Play

The Ground Play Rule is to Think and Move!

When players are on their feet much of their attacks and defensive reactions have to be automatic or the skill will not work. In fact, the opposite is true in Ground Play. You must stop and think about what you have to do in Ground Play situations. Take the time to decide what has to be done and plan how to do it. Planned movement is the key to successful Ground Play.

The first Hold Down Skill; Kuzure Yoko Shiho Gatame (Irregular Side Hold)

1. Kuzure Yoko Shiho directly attack from a throw
2. Kuzure Yoko Shiho used from a Turn-Over skill.

The steps to Escaping from Hold Down skills

1. Trap the attacker so that he can't change his Hold Down
2. Make a hole to push the attacker's head into.
3. Get your legs and arms ready to push their hardest.
4. Push the attacker's head into your hole.

Alternative Ground Play Skills

1. Introduce the first Turn-Over skill; The Far Lapel and Sleeve End Turn Over
2. The first Shimewaza skill; Far Lapel Wrap From the Front
3. Teach escapes from the Turn Over and Shimewaza.

Counter throwing Skills

The key to Counter Throwing Skills is to get out of the way before trying to use a counter.

Countering the Small Outside Hook

1. Lift your Attacked Leg and Push Down on the attacker's chest.
2. Turn towards your own stomach
3. Push right into a Hold Down attack

Throwing Skill Variations

Picking up the attacked Leg during the Kosotogake

1. Secure a High Power Hand Position
2. Release the Sleeve grip
3. Drop into the opponent's Near Leg and grasp it at the knee.
4. Hook the defender's Leg, that you have grabbed, with your Attacking Leg.
5. Push into the defender's grabbed Leg with your chest and Sit Down right from throwing into Ground Play.

Comments on the sample Lesson

This training block is written as an introduction to the Sport of Judo. We are working under the assumption that the players are on the mat for the first time and know nothing of Judo or it's requirements. The training block is written to be flexible enough to be able to be broken into two, or possibly three separate lessons. If the block is broken into lessons the Coach must be careful to ;

- 1) keep related material together
- 2) make sure that all players practice both offensive and defensive roles of the situation

Introduction

During your introduction the new players should be told;

- 1) Your name, how to address you etc.
- 2) Location of rest rooms
- 3) The rules of expected behavior and the consequences for breaking the rules
- 4) Safety Rules
- 5) Class hours and practice days

Determining the Dominant Leg

Being right or left handed has nothing to do with which direction a player will be strongest in using his, or her, Judo skills. The power for Judo skills comes from pushing with your legs and, just as one hand is dominant, everybody has one leg that is stronger or dominant over the other. Your stronger, or dominant, leg is the leg that should be used for pushing in the majority of your Judo skills. That's why it is, so very, important to determine each player's Dominant Leg during the first session on the mat. The Dominant Leg determines which direction, to his left or right, the player will push in order to execute his skills. Use one of the tests mentioned earlier, tell each player which is his, or her Dominant Leg, and write down the Dominant Leg for each player in your notes. Then you must make sure that your players practice their skills using their dominant leg as the source of power.

General Movement

The Coach, or his assistant, should lead the players in Large Movement Exercises. Some simple exercises that help to develop, Judo related, large movement patterns are;

- 1) Making big jumps from one leg to the other.
- 2) Jumping into the air, from the Dominant Leg, turning in mid-air and landing on the other leg.
- 3) Jumping, turning and executing a shoulder roll or somersault.

These exercises and movement patterns are;

- 1) Light exercise made of sport specific movements.
- 2) Some of the basic movement patterns used in entering into throwing positions.
- 3) The basic movements in avoiding throws.

By practicing these moves your players are laying a foundation for development of future skills because your players are learning important basic movement patterns.

The First Skills

The first contact between players is through gripping skills. In a Judo contest the strongest grip fighter will be the one to control the opponent and the match. For exactly this reason aggressive gripping skills should be the first skills introduced to your players.

Touch and Move Rule

There is a very simple rule to successful gripping skills;

Every time you touch your opponent you must move your feet!

A player needs to make his first gripping contact, move his feet, improve the grip and move his feet again. This Touch and Move Tactic puts your opponent into a defensive position while you gain an advantage with your grips and movement.

The first gripping sequence that is taught to our players is called a Wrist Drag. The sequence is called a Wrist Drag because the attacker begins by taking a grip on the sleeve end or the wrist and Push the Wrist Down.

Kosoto Gake (Small Outside Hook)

A Chance To Attack With A Throw, a Practical Situation of a throwing opportunity, happens because of the attacker's aggressive gripping. Because of the attacker's pull on the defender's sleeve end the defender's Supporting Leg is, probably going to be set in the space between the two players. The Performance Goal for the opponent's Supporting Leg being placed between the two players is to trap the Supporting Leg and drive the defender over the Supporting Leg. In this first chance to use a throwing skill I prefer to have beginners use a Small Outside Hook because Kosoto Gake;

- 1) Uses a simple tripping action to execute the skill.
- 2) Is easy for the attacker to control.
- 3) Takes a big reaction from the defender in order to avoid the attack which provides opportunity for combinations of skills.

Key Point

With each new skill you, as the Coach, should give your players a key point to work on. This key point could also be the Performance Goal for the skill being practiced. The key point for this first throwing skill (Kosoto Gake) is to; **Push the defender's arms down.**

The goal of the attacker should be to push the defender's arms tightly into the defender's chest as the attacker steps into throwing position.

Different Reactions From the Defender

The partners should be allowed to practice different ways for the defender to react and experiment with using the same throwing skill against the different reactions. Keep in mind that an important Coaching goal is to allow players to develop their own skills. In other words let the your players find ways to throw the opponent using the guidelines of the situation and don't worry about your preconceived notions of technique.

Throwing Results

The result of a successful throwing attack is that the defender is going to fall down and the attacker will follow right into Ground Play. This gives your players three chances to use his, or her, Judo skills in quick succession. The skills that can be used are;

- 1) A Transition (The skill of getting from standing to ground play)
- 2) A fall to the mat.
- 3) Ground Play

When the players get to the mat they must be prepared to control, or get away from, the opponent.

Transition Move

Transition Skills, getting from standing skills to Ground Play skills, are a type of skill in themselves. You and your players must be aware of this and make the practice of Transition Skills a regular part of your practice sessions. Give your players a key point, or Performance Goal, for the Transition Skills of the throw being practiced. The key point of the transition for the Small Outside Hook is;

Push Your Hooking Leg Hip to the Mat.

The attacker should hook with his attacking leg and push himself into a sitting position on the hip of the Hooking Leg.

Turn Out or Break Fall?

You, as the Coach, must decide whether to have your defending players perform a simplified version of a break fall or Turn Out to hands and knees as the response to these first throws.

An important point to remember is that 66.36% of all ground play exchanges begin with players in a Hands and Knees Ground Play position, compared to 23.96% of Ground Play exchanges beginning with the defender falling directly to his back. These statistics show very good reason why your competitive players should practice Turn Outs more than back falling.

Before moving on to Ground Play Skills allow your players to practice as both thrower and defender. When your players are comfortable with both roles you may move on to Ground Play Skills.

Ground Play

There is one important rule to follow when you have a chance to use your Ground Play Skills.

Think and Move!

Throwing situations demand instant responses. In Ground Play there is time to think about where we want, or need, to go in order to get the job done that we have set out to do.

The Turn Over

When the defender is on his hands and knees we need to get him onto his back in order to get Hold Down time to start. The first Turn Over should be simple and easy to understand. Use any Turn Over skill that you feel comfortable with but keep in mind that the first Turn Over will be tried on every opponent that your players meet for a long time. In other words it had better be fairly effective or your players will get frustrated.

The Hold Down

Any young person can invent a way to hold someone on his back so that he can't get up. That's all Hold Down Skills are, holding your opponent on his back so that he can't get up! After the Turn Over, tell your players to hold his, or her, opponent down. Explain the idea that the defender should have most of his back on the mat and then stand back and watch the interesting hold down skills develop. Your players should use their hold down skills;

- 1) As a following attack from their Turn-Over
- 2) As a direct attack from the throw

I prefer to have players practice Turning the defender over into a Hold Down first. During practice of counters or variations of the throw we will practice throwing directly into a Hold Down.

Escape from the Hold Down

After the attacker has applied a Hold Down it is wrong for the defender to be allowed to simply get up and walk away. While the players are in the Practical Situation of a Hold Down it is time to learn the defensive skill of escaping from Hold Downs. Escape from any Hold Down is accomplished by four simple steps.

- 1) Trap the attacker.
If the attacker is able to move and change his Hold Down skill the defender will not be able to escape. The first step of escaping Hold Downs is to keep the attacker where he is.

2) Make a hole to push the attacker's head into.

The Performance Goal of Ground Play Control is to keep the defender's head lower than his hips. When you are being attacked with a Hold Down before you can lower your attacker's head you have to make a place to push it into. To make a Space all you have to do is move your body out from under your attacker. When you make the Space you are;

a) Loosening your attacker's control

b) Getting your own body into a strong position to push your attacker off.

3) Place your Driving Leg so that it can push towards the hole, or Space, that you made by getting out from under your attacker. Remember to;

a) Dig your toes into the mat.

b) Pull your legs under your hips.

c) Point your knees in the direction that you want to push.

1) Push your attacker's head into the hole.

The harder you push the more you have to turn your body in the direction of your the push. Your pushing action keeps the attacker from being able to move to a stronger holding position while your turning action takes you right out from under the attacker.

Newaza Alternatives

After both players have practiced the role of Attacker and Defender you should give them a chance to use different kinds of skills to practice in the Practical Situation of Ground Play. Your players could practice a different Turn Over, A Shime Waza skill or entering a Hold Directly from a Throw.

Counter Throwing Skills

You should never teach a skill without teaching a Counter Attack to it! You must also be sure to teach countering skills in the same training session as the skill that is being countered. By teaching countering skills in the same session with offensive skills you will build strong, well rounded, Judo players.

Counter throwing skills are the most effective throwing skills in competitive Judo with over 50% of counter throws resulting in scores. Every time you are attacked you have a chance to use a countering skill. Your players must be aware of the chance to use countering skills, both Standing and In Ground Play, and they must know how to take advantage of the opportunity to counter an attack.

After both partners have had a chance to learn the skill being practiced, as the attacker and defender, it is time to move on to the counter throwing skills that go with the skills being practiced. Have the players begin the throwing sequence and then show them how to use the counter throw as a response to the attack. The defender, after counter throwing, should drive right into a Hold Down skill or Ground Play sequence.

Counter throw against Kosoto Gake

The countering throw against the Kosotogake is very simple; Lift your Attacked Leg and PUSH your attacker Down! Key points to counter the Kosoto Gake;

1) Relax the Leg, that is being attacked.

2) Step away from the attacker's hooking leg.

3) Wrap the attacker tightly in your arms.

4) Turn so that your chest is against the attacker and pushing towards the mat.

5) Push right into a Hold Down.

Making a Counter Throwing Transition

All throwing skills, if they are an outright throw or a countering throw, have a Transition Move that gets the attacker into ground play with the most control, possible. It is important that your players understand the transition skill and how to apply it. The key points of the Transition are;

- 1) Snap the driving Leg into place.

The leg that was being hooked, by your attacker, in the Kosoto Gake is going to be placed as your Driving Leg in the countering throw. That leg should be snapped down hard, onto the mat, to give the defender throwing power.

- 2) Turn towards your own stomach.

As you execute the countering throw turn towards your own stomach. Keep turning right into a Ground Play Attack! This turning action provides strong control through-out the countering skill into a Hold Down without interruption.

Variations

When the players have had a chance to practice both offensive and defensive roles in the counter throw it is time to explore variations of the throwing skill that you were working on, in the first place. Two or three variations, to the basic skill, will offer your players material to develop creative moves of their own. Don't forget to be sure that the new variations have a counter move!

The First Performance Goal

How do you know when your Judo Skills are improving? Is it because you can suddenly throw every body else on the team. That measure may work for some but what about your players that are smaller or have not matured as quickly as his classmates. Your players, the you the Coach, need a way to monitor progress and know when and how much improvement is taking place. You should also be able use your monitoring method to encourage your players by letting them know how much they have improved and at the same time challenge them to greater improvement. The one tool that will accomplish this task is the setting of Performance Goals.

The first Judo lesson is the place to introduce your players to the skills that they will use to define success and be able to know when they are improving. Setting Performance Goals gives your players a goal to work for and helps to define what success really means in the practice as well as the competitive arena of the Olympic Sport of Judo.

I consider the Touch Move Rule to be the most important playing tool that I will ever give my players. If my players move every time they touch the opponent they are avoiding being attacked, constantly forcing the opponent to react and always looking for a better position. For this reason we use a simple first Performance Goal of; **Say the word MOVE every time that you Touch your opponent for a Grip.**

Every time that you touch your opponent, should say the word MOVE, loudly. By saying MOVE you will be reminding yourself that you need to move in order to improve their position.

Say MOVE Not Less Than 50% of contacts.

The measurement of the goal is to announce the MOVE not less than half of the times that you touch your opponent. Training partners keep track of each other's performance.

Lesson Plan Progression

In this first Judo lesson, all of the Practical Situations of Judo competition have been covered. In other words my players have been introduced to all of the different forms of Judo skills and given chances to use the skills. My players have been introduced to aggressive gripping skills, offensive and defensive throwing, how to get to the mat and use Ground Play skills. Obviously, these skills must be refined in order to be able to be used in Judo competition but the players have been exposed to all of the Practical Situations of Judo play.

Every training block, in the rest of my training system, uses the same pattern as used in this first training block. The players begin with gripping, progress to a chance to throw which leads to a chance for ground play etc., etc.. Each new throwing skill however is introduced in a special way.

The first training block, as will all of the training blocks, ends with the players learning the counter throwing skill for the throw learned in the block. The counter is learned by the attacker attempting the throwing skill and the defender applying a countering skill. The next training block will begin by reviewing the skills from the training block before. Instead of having the defender complete a counter to the throwing attack the defender will begin his counter attack and the attacker is taught to use a second throwing skill in a combination of attacks to catch the opponent as he tries to use his countering move.

The skill sequence is;

- 1) Aggressive grip
- 2) The defender reacts to the grip
- 3) The attacker uses a throwing skill
- 4) The defender attempts to counter the throwing attack
- 5) The attacker switches to a second throwing attack
- 6) Transitions and Ground Play

As more throwing skills are learned the players add them to a long attack and counter attack exchange. I use a training system that teaches eight throwing skills;

Taiotoshi		
Ouchi		Gari
Seoinage		
Kouchi Gari		
Osotogari		
Sasae	Tsurikomi	Ashi
Uchimata		
Tomoe Nage		

Each new throw is learned as a reaction to the defender's attempt to counter a previous throwing skill. Each new throw is learned as an addition to the chain of throwing attacks that has already been learned. Each new throwing skill is practiced as a new link in a chain of throwing skills. In other words, when the time comes for Osotogari you will attack with;

- 1) Taiotoshi and the defender will attempt to counter.
- 2) You counter the counter with Ouchi gari and the defender will attempt to counter.
- 3) Counter the counter with Seoinage and the defender will attempt to counter.
- 4) Slip into Kouchi Gari and the defender will attempt to counter.
- 5) Nail him with Osotogari!

There is one other detail. Seoinage and Kouchi gari are attacked on the opposite side as your Taiotoshi and Ouchi Gari. In other words Ouchi gari is done to the right and Seoinage on the left, or vice versa, depending on your Dominant Leg. You switch back to your first attacking side from Kouchi Gari to Osotogari. Finish with Sasae, Uchimata and Tomoenage on the same side.

This is the Long Link. Practicing throwing skills this way develops;

- 1) Gripping control
- 2) Offensive movement skills
- 3) Defensive skills
- 4) Creativity

Perhaps most importantly, practicing throwing skills in this manner lays a strong foundation for players to develop a personal attacking system. A strong foundation is laid because players are exposed to a full range of skills in a short period of time and are allowed to experiment and find skills that they feel will work for them.

Teaching Methods

Whole, Whole-Part-Whole, Repetitive-Part, Part-Whole and Backward-Chaining; these are names of Teaching Methods. These methods and strategies, for presenting complex skills, have been researched and categorized by experts in the teaching field. All of these methods have a common basis in breaking skills down into understandable and do'able chunks and then reassembling the chunks into a complete skill.

Some skills are too complicated for a player to be able to perform or understand all-at-once. When skills are too complicated to learn all-at-once you need to find a way to break the skill into smaller, easier, pieces. The smaller pieces, that you break the skills into, must be able to;

- 1) Allow your players to have success with each part of the skill as-well-as,
- 2) Have success with the whole skill when it is assembled or reassembled, depending on your approach.

The technical names and intricacies of the Teaching Methods should not be of major concern to a Coach. What is of major concern is finding a way to present the skills that you want your players to perform. You should take your time, break the skill down into chunks that are as small as possible.

Breaking a skill into very small chunks may take a little extra Coaching time. There is nothing wrong with taking extra Coaching time so long as your players are kept active and the desired skills are developed. What is wrong, is making your skill chunks too big for your players to use successfully.

My approach to teaching a throw is;

- 1) Teach a gripping sequence.
- 2) Allow a reaction, from the defender, to the gripping sequence. (Allowing a natural reaction, from the defender, instead of teaching a reaction provides variety in skill application)
- 3) Practice the gripping sequence and reaction.
- 4) Teach the attacker's preparation footwork.
- 5) Allow the defender to react to the footwork.
- 6) Practice the gripping and footwork sequence with reactions.
- 7) Teach the throwing skill
- 8) Practice the whole skill from grips, to footwork, to throw with all appropriate reactions.

This is known as the Repetitive-Part method of teaching. The method works for me in the way I Coach. I did not discover this method while looking for a better way to Coach, I developed this method through trial and error over years of Coaching. You, also, will have to develop your own teaching methods. Fortunately, there is comprehensive information available, through the ASEP Master Course, "Teaching Sport Skills". I highly recommend taking advantage of the ASEP resources.

Conditioning With Drills

The traditional methods of conditioning Judo players are;

- ◆ Skill practice with a cooperative partner.
- ◆ Preset, formal exercises.
- ◆ Free Play (Randori)

These methods are fine if you want to learn Judo as a noncompetitive recreational activity. However, if you are training players for competitive Judo these methods have serious short comings.

The traditional Judo training methods lack Specificity! Specificity is the quality of actually practicing what you are going to do. At the very least Specificity means practicing your skills as close to the way you are going use them as you possibly can. In other words if you plan to compete, in Judo, get as close to Judo match conditions as possible during practice.

Randori comes close to competitive conditions, but randori on it's own has short falls;

- 1) During randori stronger players are not forced to work to their full effort.
- 2) Weaker players are often placed in a position of merely surviving.
- 3) Neither partner has to work any harder than they want to.
- 4) Randori cannot be controlled by the Coach.
- 5) Because the Coach lacks control of a Randori session there is a potential lack of safety.

Training drills, on the other hand, can be designed to meet very specific competitive conditions as well as place specific physical demands on your players.

A training drill is a pre-arranged sequence of skills specifically deigned to meet training needs. The training needs may be broad, such as designing a drill to improve stamina, or the drill may address very specific needs, such as executing or countering one particular skill.

The difference between the pre-arranged formal forms and a pre-arranged training drill is that partners are given a degree of freedom in their reactions to attacks in training drills. Creativity is developed in your players because drill training partners are given the freedom to react naturally. Natural reactions challenge the partner's skills within the limits of cooperation set at the beginning of the drill.

Drills constructed to meet specific conditions;

- 1) Can provide maximum safety in practice of all skills.
- 2) Ensure that all players work to the desired level.
- 3) Ensure that players practice both offense and defense of the situation
- 4) Can be controlled by the Coach to fulfill any conditions.
- 5) Can be adjusted to fit needs as they may arise.
- 6) Most importantly, Training drills fulfill the Conditions of Learning.

These benefits cannot be claimed by the traditional methods of training.

With all of the benefits of drill training there is one argument that is very difficult to get around. Randori is still the most fun part of a training session! Reduce randori time in favor of drills and use randori as a special occasion or reward. In this way you and your players will come to enjoy randori even more, have safer practice sessions and maximize your training specificity.

Playing the Game of Judo

Quickly, in twenty five words, or less, explain all about the Olympic Sport of Judo. Now, here's the catch, make your explanation simple enough so that;

- 1) A complete stranger to Judo will get a clear picture of what the players are trying to do.
- 2) A beginning player could play Judo successfully just by doing what you describe as the objective of the game.

Sounds like a tough assignment, but this is exactly what every beginning player, their families and friends want to know! Just what is my little darling Johnny, or Janey, trying to do out there? To make things challenging, remember, that if you confuse the issue you just might lose your audience.

The Objective of the Game

So, very simply, what is the objective of the game of Judo?

The objective of the game of Judo is to put the opponent's back on the mat!

You must ask yourself two questions;

- 1) Does this objective give a clear picture of what two players are trying to do to each other?
- 2) Could a new player experience success by doing nothing more than trying to put his opponents back to the mat?

In my opinion trying to put the opponent's back to the mat is exactly what a pair of players is trying to do! Even when players have gained experience and use submission skills, such as arm locks or strangulations, they try to gain control by turning the opponent toward his back.

Can a player experience success by doing nothing more than trying to put the opponent's back to the mat? I believe that turning the back towards the mat is the purest form of our game and if you do nothing more, you will be a great player.

Simplifying and Defining Our Game

Why should we try to make the definition of Judo play so very simple? Because a lack of understanding gets in the way of enjoyment. By keeping a very simple objective we are able to define exactly what a player should be doing and allow him, or her, to have fun without being occupied with details.

Promoting Creativity

More importantly, we promote CREATIVITY when we define a simple objective. Our players can go out, have fun, experiment and find ways to put the opponent's back on the mat that the old Coach never thought of.

You, the Coach, the guy that's seen it all, can have a whole new way to look at Judo skills. You can ask yourself, will this skill really put the opponent's back to the mat efficiently, or is there a better way? You can watch new players and see old skills in a new light. You can use this creative approach because you have gotten away from complicated ideas and have learned to look at Judo skill as a very simple objective.

Keeping Score

The next obvious question is, how do we keep score in Judo? Again, very simply;

You earn scores by putting the opponent's back to the mat.

In Throwing skills; The closer you come to making the opponent's shoulders touch the higher your score will be. If you throw your opponent directly to his, or her, back the match is over.

In Hold Down skills; The longer you keep the opponent's back touching the mat the higher your score. If you keep his back touching for thirty (30) seconds the match is over.

We can also make the opponent surrender but these are advanced skills and will be learned later. (Remember, our audience is a group of beginners.)

Recent changes in how to construct the score board , for Judo contests, has simplified keeping track of the match score for spectators and made explaining scores much easier for Coaches. With the new score board configuration all we have to do is tell spectators to read the score as a three digit number. The player with the highest number is the player in the lead.

Rules of the Game

We know how to play Judo and how to keep score of the match, so, what are the rules of the game?

There are three basic rules to the game of Judo;

- 1) Don't do anything that will hurt your opponent!
- 2) Don't step out of bounds!
- 3) Keep active during the entire match!

The details of these basic rules are subject to change and should not act as a burden on our novice players, who have enough to worry about on the mat. So long as a player does not violate these general principles he, or she, will not get into any trouble.

Following Procedures

There is a very specific procedure for players to follow in beginning and ending a contest. Do you know what it is? How do you know that the procedure has not changed recently?

Contest procedures, the way contests are started and ended, and all of the other details that our, hard working, dedicated, Referees have to know, are an awful lot to remember your first few times on the contest mat. A simple approach is to familiarize your players with the contest procedures and then have your players tell the Referee that they are new to competition. I have not met a Referee that is not, more than, happy to help a beginner through his first few contest experiences. When your players ask for help they avoid the embarrassment of blundering through an unknown procedure and they help the Referee to avoid frustration.

Language of the Game

Judo contests are conducted using Japanese terms. You know that, but, can your players remember all of the terms? Probably not, so, what's the minimum number of terms that a player needs to get started with?

Hajime starts the contest, it would be a really good idea to know that one. Matte, maybe even more important, a player needs to know when the Referee wants play to stop. Sore Made? Well not as important as Matte, but a good one to know. The scoring terms? As your players develop experience they will learn the scores so maybe the scores are not very important in early training.

Whatever list of terms, that you decide is necessary, for your players, you should use the terms during every training session. When the terms are used during training they become familiar quickly and will not be a distraction during competition.

Measuring Coaching Performance

Measuring our player's Performance and Progress is a very simple process. All you have to do is set a measurable Performance Goal and compared the player's performance to the Performance Goal. This technique works for Kata, Shiaii or learning new skills. The question is, how can you measure your Coaching Performance and Progress.

Measuring your performance during training sessions is as simple as setting Measurable Goals for your use of the Conditions of Learning and then measuring your Performance against your Goals with the help of an observer. It gets a little more difficult if you want to measure how you are doing along the lines of preparing your players to use Judo skills in Practical Application.

The real difficulty lies in the fact that when you prepare your players to demonstrate a Kata or enter Shiaii you are preparing them for an activity that you will have no influence or control over during the actual event. Whether your players win or lose a match is not a measure of your Coaching abilities. Winning, or losing, depends on the outcome of matches and you, as a spectator to the match, have less control over the outcome than your players do. The way your players Perform, how they use the Judo Skills that you have prepared them to use, is how you can Measure your Coaching Performance.

This brings us right back to how we measure our players Performance.

Set Measurable Goals and Measure Performance against the Goal!

The measurement of your player's Performance against his, or her, Goals will tell you two things;

- 1) If the player's Performance Goals were Realistic.
- 2) If your players practiced properly to meet their Performance Goals.

There is a five step review that must take place each time a player performs His, or her, Judo skills in a practical application.

- 1) Review the Performance;
You must decide if the Performance Goals were met by measuring Performance against Performance Goals.
- 2) Review the players Performance Goals;
Now you must decide if the Goals were Realistic and Challenging. If your players met their Goals very easily then the Goals were not Challenging. If the Goals were not met at all the Goals were, obviously, not Realistic. If the Goals were fulfilled to between 80 and 90 percent then you have done a good job of Coaching.
 - 1) Set new Goals;
If your players were below 75 percent of fulfilling their Performance Goals then you should consider lowering the Goals. A Performance Goal fulfillment of 90 to 100 percent calls for more Challenging Goals. A performance of 80 to 90 percent, Performance Goal fulfillment, suggests that you know the abilities of your players and you are Challenging your players to high levels of Performance. When the Performance is in the 80 to 90 percent range you should increase the Challenge, in the Performance Goals, but be careful to keep the Goals within Realistic reach of your players.
 - 2) Plan for the fulfillment of the new Goals;
Now that the Challenges have been set, how will your players reach those Challenges? These are the decisions that you have to make in your lesson plans and drills.
- 5) Practice your Plan;
The best planning in the world won't do a bit of good if your players don't practice the way you plan to reach their new Performance Goals.

Coaching is nothing more than a cycle of searching for excellence. You have to know where you are, you have to decide where you want to go and you have to plan how to get there. Once you plan you have to get out and follow your plan. The only way you will know if you are getting close to where you want to be is to have a way to measure your progress. Once you get close to your destination the cycle begins anew. Plans and Measurement, Measurement and Plans these are the necessary compliments that comprise the Coaching bailiwick.

Conclusion

So what is being said here? Just what were the points being made and what Coaching suggestions were offered?

There were four basic points and suggestions offered in this course;

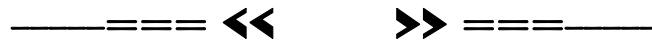
- 1) For learning to take place your material has to be presented to meet certain conditions that promote the learning process.
- 2) Learning of Judo skills must be based on sound Mechanical Principles which are understood and used by both player and Coach.
- 3) Learning to compete at the Olympic Sport of Judo can be best done by;
 - a) First learning to recognize the chances that you have to use your Judo skills.
 - b) After being introduced to the chances to use your skills learn and experiment with skills that fit the situations when they arise.
- 4) You must give your players keys to performing their skills and a way to recognize their successes through Personal Performance Goals.

You now have two tasks before you;

- 1) Complete the workbook that accompanies this course. This is the easy part.
- 2) Decide what parts of this material you can use to improve your Coaching and then decide how best to implement them into your Coaching methods. This second part may not be so very simple but it will certainly be worth your while.

USJA Coaching Certification

Review Exercises



The Review Procedure

There are four steps to the USJA Coach Certification Level I review procedure;

- 1) Answer the Review Questions
- 2) Complete the Coaching Skills Review
- 3) Accept the Self Improvement Challenge
- 4) Fill out all forms;

All necessary forms will be found on the last pages of this USJA Coaching Certification Review Exercises Book.

Questions

The Review Questions immediately follow the Candidates Instruction section. Make sure that you answer all questions and check your answers before submitting your Review Exercises for certification.

Coaching Skills Review

It is your responsibility to make arrangements for your Coaching Skills Review.

- 1) Contact your Coaching Skills Reviewer and confirm all arrangements when they are made and a day or two before the review is scheduled to take place.
- 2) Arrange for your reviewer, or reviewers, to confirm your general certification requirements, as outlined in the Course Introduction.
- 3) Arrange to discuss your coaching Skills Review with your reviewer immediately after the review is complete. If the review takes more than one session be sure to discuss the review after each session.

Your Self Improvement Challenge

After your Coaching Skills Review you should write a Coaching Skills Self Improvement Plan. You do not have to write this plan by yourself! You may seek help from any person or source that you deem necessary. The point of the exercise is to examine your current Coaching Skills and improve what you need to improve.

Explanation of the Scoring System

This review exercise is based on the Conditions of Learning, which are discussed in the text. Your reviewer has observed your Coaching Skills to see how well you follow the Conditions of Learning. The scoring procedure, used in this review, is very simple, low ratings should receive more attention.

What You Should Get Out of This Exercise

Feedback and Reinforcement are essential to being able to improve any activity or endeavor. Your Coaching Review exercise has given you an opportunity to get Feedback and Reinforcement for your Coaching Skills from a second party.

You should not view this exercise as a critique of your Coaching style or practices. This exercise is designed to help you see where your Coaching can improve by placing emphasis on the Conditions of Learning. After discussing your Coaching Review with your observer you will need to sit down and write out a plan of how to improve in the areas where you need improvement and how to maintain your high level of proficiency where you are already strong.

How can you improve in each area?

In each area, of the Coaching review, you received a score. That score reflects your use of the Condition of Learning that is associated with the score. How could you have improved your score or use of the Condition of Learning that the score reflects?

Your assignment is to sit down and write a brief plan for improvement in your use of the Conditions of Learning. Pay particular attention to any areas that you may have scored a five (5) or less.

Set Your Goals For Improvement

After your improvement plans are written your next step is to write Performance Goals for yourself that will take you to the desired improvement in each area. You need to take the time to break your plans down into steps. Each step should be challenging, realistic and measurable. These steps will be your Performance Goals toward improved use of the Conditions of Learning.

Measuring Your Progress

Performance Goals must be measurable. For example you might set a Performance Goal of keeping your skill demonstrations to less than one minute each. By comparing your Performance to your Performance Goal you will be able to measure your progress toward your Goal.

How do you plan to measure each of your Performance Goals? Include the way that you intend to measure your performances in your Response portion of the Review Exercise.

Review Your Progress

Now that you have outlined a plan of improvement it is up to you to see to it that your plan is followed. This is where your dedication to be the best Judo Coach that you can be comes into play. You might invite your Coaching Reviewer to observe further training sessions or you might use video tapes to be able to critique yourself during training sessions. Whatever method of progress review that you choose keep in mind that you cannot improve if you do not review your progress on a regular basis and compare your progress to your Performance Goals.

USJA Coaching Certification

Level I Review Questions



1. What is the difference between the Mechanical Actions and the Mechanical Principles of Judo?

2. List five (5) components of good balance.

3. What does the Power Hand side of your body do during a throw?

4. What is the Performance Goal of the Power Hand during a throwing attack?

5. The level of force, to complete a skill, changes with each situation and different skill. List the general Power Hand placement position for a throw that requires;

a) A low level of force

b) A moderate level of force

c) A high level of force

6. What is the role of the Locking during a throwing attack?

7. What is the Performance Goal of the Locking Hand during an attack?

8. List the roles of the following body parts during gripping.

a) Hands

b) Shoulders

c) Elbows

d) Hips

e) Legs

f) Head

9. What is the role of the Driving Leg in a throwing attack?

10. List and explain the two factors that determine where to place your Driving Leg for an efficient attack.

11. What is the Performance Goal of the Driving Leg during a throwing attack?

12. List and explain the two types of body rotation used in throwing attacks.

13. What does your Free Leg do during a throwing attack?

14. Should you push or pull your opponent to the mat to complete your throwing attack? Explain your answer.

15. What is the Supporting Leg and why is it important?

16. What is the role of your Hands and Arms in Ground Play?

17. What is the Performance Goal of Your Hands and Arms during Ground Play?

18. What are the roles of the Legs in Ground Play?

19. What is the First Line of Defense?

20. When should a player use a neck bridge?

21. What are the points of a Mobile Ground Play Posture?

22. What are the three, general, Points of Control in Ground Play?

23. What are the two methods of applying Ground Play Control Pressure to an opponent?

24. Where is the Driving Leg placed in Ground Play attacks?

25. What does the Driving Leg provide in Ground Play?

26. What is Wedging? What two uses does the action of Wedging have in Ground Play?

27. What are the five steps to Offensive Ground Play Movement?

28. What is the Performance Goal of Defensive Ground Play Movement?

29. What is the first lesson of Judo that must be learned during a new player first visit to the mat? Why?

30. What are Inherent Skills? Why are they important to Coaching?

31. What is the most important consideration for a Coach?

32. Who's responsibility is it to develop the ability to play Judo Creatively?

33. What are the components of a successful Performance Goal?

34. What is a Practical Situation in Judo Play?

35. What is the most important aspect of Judo Play?

36. What type of attack has to be used against a Supporting Leg that is Exposed?

37. What type of attack has to be used against a Supporting Leg that is Hidden?

38. What type of attack has to be used against a Supporting Leg that is set between the players?

39. Is there a situation when you should not make a throwing attack against your opponent? If so, what is the situation?

40. What is the Performance Goal of Ground Play?

41. What is the simplest way to deal with a strong Defensive Ground Play Posture?

USJA Coaching Certification



Level I Review Exercise

Reviewers Instructions

Thank you for giving your time to help improve American Judo. The Coaching Review, that you are about to participate in, is an important step in helping Coaches improve their effectiveness.

Pass or Fail

This is not a pass or fail test, for the Coach that you have agreed to review. This is an exercise that is designed to help the Coach improve his, or her, Coaching effectiveness, with your help. By reviewing the Coach's behaviors, during Coaching sessions, you are helping him, or her, to discover areas that may need improvement and Coaching Skills that are already strong. Coaching Skills that need work are important because we all need to know where to improve. The areas that are strong are important because it's important to know your strengths.

Required Time

This review exercise may require more than one session to complete. That's all right! Remember that you are helping to improve Coaching skills. Through the improvement of the Coaching skills you help to build a stronger American Judo. I believe that it will be time well spent.

Review Procedure

There are two parts to this Review Procedure. The first part of the review is to verify that the Coaching candidate meets the general requirements listed in the preface of the course text. When you have verified that the candidate fulfills these requirements initial the appropriate statement on the Level I Review Verification form.

The second stage of the Review Procedure is very simple. All that you have to do is sit back and watch your Coaching Certification Candidate conduct a training session. As the training session progresses you will be observing his or her Coaching behaviors for the characteristics outlined in the Coaching Review Exercise. You are responsible for rating the candidate in each of Coaching Skills characteristics using a scale of 1 (one) to 10 (ten) points. A rating of 1 (one) indicates a poor use of the characteristic where a rating of 10 (ten) indicates a very strong ability to use the Coaching Skills characteristic during training sessions.

Each area that you are to rate is listed with rating guide lines. Read each of the rating areas prior to arriving at the Review Session so that you have an idea of what you are looking for.

Do not wait until the end of the training session to fill in the Coaching Skills Ratings! As the training session progresses rate the Coach when feel that the requirements for the Coaching Characteristic are met. Mark the rating in the box provided for each characteristic.

The Coaching Review Exercise lists a brief guideline for the lowest and highest possible rating of each Coaching Skills Characteristic. It is your responsibility to decide where the middle ratings of 3 (three), 5 (five) or 7 (seven), etc., might fall between these guidelines and rate the candidate accordingly.

Review Your Material

Before you arrive to conduct the Coaching Review you should read and understand all of the areas that you will be reviewing. If you have questions check with the Coach, or contact the person listed in the Introduction of this course, before starting.

Coordinate Class Content With the Coach

There are specific areas that are to be reviewed during your Coaching Review session or sessions. Be sure that you coordinate with your Coach that he, or she, will include material in the lesson plan so that each area can be reviewed.

Sit Back and Watch

One of the most important things that you will have to do is sit back, quietly, and observe the class session. Keep in mind that you will, probably, make the Coach self conscious or uncomfortable if you remind him, or her, of your presence.

Discuss Your Observations

As soon as possible discuss your observations with your Coach. Refer to the scoring sheet that you fill in during the observation session. Explain to the Coach why you scored areas as you did and answer all questions that the Coach may have.

Do not change your scores. Your scores are based on your impressions of the Coach's behaviors, during the Coaching session. Since this is not a passing or failing situation, it does not make any difference what the scores are. Your scores serve to give the Coach an indication of Coaching Skills that need to be improved and to reinforce the Coaching Skills that are already strong.

Complete and Sign;

After you have completed the Coaching Review session complete and sign the USJA Coaching Certification Level I Review Verification. This form is the information supplied by you as the Coaching Skills Reviewer as regards your identification information and verification of review of the candidate's General Certification Requirements as outlined in the USJA Coaching Certification Level I Course Preface.

Give the signed forms to the Coach to be mailed in with his Coaching Certification package.

Coaching Review Exercise



Movement

Movement is the most important tool that a player can have. Movement, however, has to be taught, practiced and encouraged. You should observe the Coach while he is demonstrating skills to see if the skills are demonstrated while moving or with the Coach standing still. You should also watch to see if the players move around while practicing skills. Finally you should notice if the Coach focuses the players on large general movements or many small movements of the skill.

On a scale of one (1) to ten (10) Rate the Coach on how much movement he, or she, uses when demonstrating Throwing Skills for the group.

Rate the Coach one (1) if; demonstrations are performed from a position of standing still.

Rate the Coach ten (10) when; the Coach is moving continuously while demonstrating;



Movement in Newaza

On a scale of one (1) to ten (10) Rate the Coach on his use of Movement during demonstration of Ground Play skills.

Rate the Coach one (1) if; Ground Play demonstrations do not involve Movement by both Attacker and Defender.

Rate the Coach ten (10) when; Ground Play demonstrations have both Attacker and Defender moving about while getting into position.



Movement in Training Drills

On a scale of one (1) to ten (10) Rate the players on their use of Movement during skill practice or drills.

Rate the Coach one (1) if; the players remain standing in one small area of the mat during skill practice or drills.

Rate the Coach ten (10) when; the players moved about the whole mat area during skill practice or drills.



Movement in Skill Demonstration

On a scale of one (1) to ten (10) Rate the Coach on the type of Movements being emphasized during the demonstration and learning of new skills.

Rate the Coach one (1) if; the Coach points out very small points about the movements of a particular skill.

Rate the Coach ten (10) when; the Coach points out only one or two general body movement patterns, such as "roll your shoulders in this direction".



Linking Skills

No Judo skill takes place as an isolated incident. Something happens that gets the opponent to move in a certain direction or react in a way that makes him, or her, vulnerable to attack. It is extremely important that players recognize the relationship between different skills and understand that one skill or attack invariably leads to the possibility of using other skills. This is best and most easily learned if the Coach demonstrates skills as a natural extension of something that has already been practiced by the players.

You will be observing the Coach to see how he, or she, explains and demonstrates how new skills can be used with previously practiced skills. You are also looking to see if the Coach teaches Ground Play Skills as a natural continuation of Throwing Skills.

On a scale of one (1) to ten (10) Rate the Coach on the use of explaining and demonstrating how new skills can be used with the skills that the players have already learned.

Rate the Coach one (1) if; the Coach demonstrates a new skill without having the players lead into it from another movement or skill.

Rate the Coach ten (10) when; Coach makes each skill appear as a link in a continuous chain.



Linking Tachiwaza to Newaza

On a scale of one (1) to ten (10) Rate the Coach on his, or her, use of demonstrating and making Ground Play skills a continuation to Throwing Skills.

Rate the Coach one (1) if; the demonstration partner is asked to lie down so that Coach can show a Ground Play skill.

Rate the Coach ten (10) when; Ground Play skill demonstration and practice begin with an easy throwing skill and continue into the Ground Play attack.



Success

If the Coach is not giving his, or her, players skills that they are able to do, in other words making skills too complicated for the class, then the players are going to get frustrated and find an activity that is fun. Coach has to make sure that players experience success with the skills that are being practiced. To experience success the skills have to be demonstrated and explained at a level that the group can imitate and understand.

You will be watching to see if the players are able to understand the Coach's instructions. A good indication of player's understanding is their ability to do what the Coach has asked without having to stop the practice session and go over the demonstration again.

On a scale of one (1) to ten (10) Rate the Coach on the ability of the players to be able to execute the skills that the Coach demonstrated without having to go through additional discussion.

Rate the Coach one (1) if; the Coach has to stop class and go through the demonstration again and again.

Rate the Coach ten (10) when; everyone in the class is able to do the skill on the first try without difficulty.



Practical Situations

Simply teaching skills, without giving the skills a way to be used, gives the player a very serious handicap to overcome. All Judo skills have a specific situation in which they work best. It is the job of the Coach to explain the situation and demonstrate the skills, in the circumstances that they work under, when introducing or practicing skills.

During your observations ask yourself if the Coach is presenting the skills in the way that they will actually be used by the players. In other words, a competitive Seoinage and a Seoinage used in Kata are completely different, the skills must be presented and practiced in the manner in which they are intended to be used.

On a scale of one (1) to ten (10) Rate the Coach on his, or her ability to explain and demonstrate new skills in the way that these skills will be used.

Rate the Coach one (1) if; Coach simply shows a skill with no explanation of how, or when, best to use the skill in an actual situation.

Rate the Coach ten (10) when; Coach explains that when the opponent does such-and-such he is open to be attacked with thus-and-so and then goes on to demonstrate the situation.



Offensive and Defensive Application

On a scale of one (1) to ten (10) Rate the Coach on whether or not the players practiced the skills in the way that these skills would be used in competitive situations.

Rate the Coach one (1) if; Attackers practiced the new skill while the partner offered absolutely no resistance.

Rate the Coach ten (10) when; Coach assigned one player the offensive role and one a defensive role and the players traded roles and practiced as both attacker and defender.



Activity

Keeping the members of a group active is one of the most important jobs that faces a Coach. Coach should strive to have his players actively practicing Judo not less than 80% of the class period. This is not difficult but it does take planning and practice on the Coaches part. Observe the session to see how long the players are working out as opposed to how long they listen to lectures or stand around waiting for Coach.

On a scale of one (1) to ten (10) Rate the Coach on his, or her, ability to keep the players active.

Rate the Coach one (1) if; demonstrations or lectures take more than two minutes at a time.

Rate the Coach ten (10) when; Demonstrations and group discussions are kept between 20 to 30 seconds. A three to five minute lecture or discussion at the end of the training session is perfectly acceptable and should not be considered as taking away from the activity time of the group.

Give a rating of zero if the Coach allows any one player to stand around while others are training. The only acceptable exception to this is an injured player that is attending class to observe.



Reinforcement and Feedback

In order to improve, players need to know if they make mistakes. They need to know specifically what mistakes were made and they need to know about the mistakes as soon as possible after making them. More importantly, in order to enjoy their Judo experience as-well-as to promote development in the desired directions, players need to know when they do something right. They need to know specifically what they did correctly and they need to know as soon as possible after they have done it.

You should closely observe the Coach's Reinforcement and Feedback, to his players, for being SPECIFIC. Whether the Coaches comments are directed at correct or incorrect performance the players need to know exactly what is being commented on.

On a scale of one (1) to ten (10) Rate the Coach on the types of behaviors the Coach made comment, to his players, about.

Rate the Coach one (1) if; The comments were directed at only mistakes or only at correct skill execution but the Coach did not comment on both mistakes and correct actions during the training session.

Rate the Coach ten (10) when; Comments were equally distributed to players about their errors and correct behaviors.

Give a rating of zero if the Coach was abusive in any way when giving comments on behaviors or skill errors.



Specificity of Feedback

On a scale of one (1) to ten (10) Rate the Coach on being specific when he told a player that he was doing something right or wrong?

Rate the Coach one (1) if; Comments about performance were something like "Good Job" or "No That's Wrong" without saying what was good about being done or what was wrong with a performance.

Rate the Coach ten (10) when; comments always address a specific point in the behavior or execution. Such as; "Good Turn Out, Mary" or "Mike, Your Power Hand Is Too High".



Timeliness of Feedback

On a scale of one (1) to ten (10) Rate the Coach on how promptly he comments after a performance is given.

Rate the Coach one (1) if; Coach holds his comments until the end of the training session.

Rate the Coach ten (10) when; comments are given immediately as the performance or behavior has taken place.

Safety

Safety of his, or her, players should be the most important consideration that a Coach has. Injuries and accidents happen in any contact sport but the chance of them happening can be greatly reduced by the Coach keeping a close eye of the players.

If unsafe conditions are observed you should interrupt the training session and have the problem corrected before proceeding.

On a scale of one (1) to ten (10) Rate the Coach on how well Coach kept the players in his view during class.

Rate the Coach one (1) if; Coach had more than half of the group out of his direct sight at one time during the training session.

Rate the Coach ten (10) when; Coach kept himself in a position to see the entire training area during most of the training session.

Give a rating of zero if at any time the Coach did anything that you know would risk injury to himself or the players.

Performance Goals

Judo skills can appear to be very complex. The key to overcoming this problem is to give the players a simple key to performing each skill. These keys are Performance Goals. Performance Goals allow the players to concentrate on one simple task that will lead to success in a complex skill. Performance Goals need to be simple. Performance Goals need to be challenging but not so challenging that they cannot be done with honest effort. Players also need to be able to know when they have done the Performance Goal, so their Goals need to be Measurable, as well.

As the Coaching Skills Reviewer you should be watching for the Coach to give his players simple keys to the skills that they are practicing. The Coach should also remind his players of this key regularly.

On a scale of one (1) to ten (10) Rate the Coach on the use of one simple Key for the players to concentrate on during their skills practice.

Rate the Coach one (1) if; Coach emphasized more than 3 (three) Performance Keys during demonstration and discussion of new skills.

Rate the Coach ten (10) when; During demonstration the Coach kept repeating the same detail, i.e. Turn Your Head; for the players to see, understand and practice.

Performance Goal Reinforcement

On a scale of one (1) to ten (10) Rate the Coach on his, or her, efforts to remind the players of this simple key.

Rate the Coach one (1) if; The players are not reminded of the Performance Goal or Key while they were practicing the skill.

Rate the Coach ten (10) when; The players are reminded of the Performance Goal or Key before they start to practice the skill, while they are practicing Coach reminds them repeatedly and after the practice session is completed the players are reminded of the Performance Goal to this skill.



Creativity

An environment of allowing mistakes and encouraging experimentation is the most important tool that a Coach can have for the development of individual talents and propensities. Players cannot learn what works for them if they do not make mistakes. It is the job of the Coach to give players an idea of how the skills work, explain the situation where the skills can be used and allow the players to experiment during the practice sessions.

During the Coaching Skills Review you should note whether or not the players were allowed or even encouraged to make errors.

On a scale of one (1) to ten (10) Rate the Coach on the willingness to allow his players to make a few errors before offering help.

Rate the Coach one (1) if; at the first error Coach would go to a player and attempt to correct the problem.

Rate the Coach ten (10) when; Coach observed players making mistakes and would remind them of the Performance Goal and then allow the players to experiment until a solution was found or help was requested.

USJA Coach Certification Course



Registration and Critique Forms

USJA Coaching Certification

Level I Review Verification

Reviewer's Name _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Reviewer's Judo Rank _____

Were you given time to study the Review Procedure? _____

Date that Review Procedure was given to you . _____

Initial the areas that you covered during the Coaching Review

Knowledge of Judo Skills through Yonkyu _____

Discussion of Coaching Skills Review _____

I have performed a Coaching Skills Review for the above named candidate as outlined by USJA Coaching Certification requirements for USJA Certification Level I.

Signature of Reviewer

Printed name

Review date and location

Use a separate sheet for your remarks

USJA Coaching Certification

Level I Approval

Code I

Candidate's Name _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Date you started this course _____

Candidate Review Ratings

Rating Area	Required	Awarded
Written Test	80	_____
Coaching Skills Review	Average of 7	_____

The above named candidate has fulfilled USJA Coaching Certification requirements for USJA Certification Level I.

Signature of Certifying Official

Printed name

Certification date

USJA Coach Certification Level I Course Critique

Mark the response that fit reflects your feeling about each area.

Text and Examples					
Clear	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
Understandable	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
Meaningful to you	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
Reinforcement for you	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
Creativity Encouraged	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
Your satisfaction	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
Your Opinion of Specific Areas					
Principles of Judo	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
Skill Development	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
Help in player development	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
Your Overall Evaluation of the Course					
Course organization	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
Informational Value	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
Motivation to further study	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
Value of this course to your coaching	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent

Please offer further comments in the space below.