

# Tsutsumi Ryu

With the advent of the Steven Seagal movies the attention of the martial arts fraternity has come full circle, away from the so-called "eclectic" systems back towards the more traditional arts, in particular Aikido, Aiki-Jutsu and Ju-Jitsu. With this kind -of attention comes many questions often answered by those unqualified to do so.

One common misconception is that Ju-Jitsu is a grappling art. Another, that it is an outdated art superceded by the "more scientific" Judo. A third is that Aikido requires a skill level far in excess of the "brutish manipulations" of the Ju-Jitsuan.

*So, what is Ju-Jitsu?*

A grappling art? No. Ju-Jitsu employs many techniques outside the ran\_\_ of grappling, including the use of weapons.

An art outdated by Judo? No. Judo is a sport put together by Professor Jigoro Kano eliminating many of the more dangerous combat-oriented techniques still taught in Ju-Jitsu schools today.

A system relying on brute strength? No. The "gentle art" is a system of combat as efficient for the 5ft housewife as the 6ft Aussie Rules player. Aikido, the renamed system of Aiki-Jutsu and Ju-Jitsu techniques, differs from its parent arts mainly in its underlying motive - away from combat and towards reuniting with "the universal". Uyeshiba held menkyo kaiden (teaching licence) in Daito Ryu Aiki-Jutsu and two schools of Ju-Jitsu - Teijin Shinyo Ryu and Yagyu Shinkage Ryu. When first taught Aikido contained many atemi techniques and in fact Uyeshiba's dojo was so tough prior to the 2nd world war that it was known as Jigoku - "Hell dojd".

*So then, what is Ju-Jitsu?*

Tsutsumi Ryu Ju-Jitsu, as taught by Shihan Jan de Jong, is a contemporary yet traditional combat oriented system of self defence. It is a system that maintains its efficiency at any range, be it punching, kicking or grappling. Included in its weapons syllabus is the Jo, the Tanbo and Katana (Ken-Jutsu and Iai-Jutsu).

The master of Tsutsumi Ryu Ju-Jitsu may at one moment resemble an Aikido-Ka and the next a practitioner of "hard" Karate, his technique chosen by the type of attack, number of opponents, positional relationship, environment etc. '

Tsutsumi Hozan Ryu was founded in 1658 by Tsutsumi Yama ShironQrakami Hozan, a master of Takeuchi Ryu, at Niigata on Honshu Island. Believing that kata training would not develop the ability to respond rapidly to attack he tried to introduce a method of training the reflexes.

Meeting with resistance within the Takeuchi Ryu Tsutsumi left in order to further develop the art and incorporate Reflex Training. To date students of Tsutsumi Ryu are still promoted according to their performance on Reflex gradings.

Tsutsumi Masao, the last Tsutsumi Grandmaster, died in 1898. Among his students were Higashi. K, Saito. K (7th Dan) and Saito. S (8th Dan). Tsutsumi and Higashi were involved in the development of Kano Ju-Jitsu, the precursor to Judo. Professor Kands original intention being to bring together into one system the best of the Ju-Jitsu schools, Tsutsumi contributed greatly to the expansion of the Kano Ju-Jitsu system. Higashi coauthored a book with Irving Hancock entitled "The Complete Kano Ju-Jitsu".

The Saito brothers were Shihan Jan de Jong's teachers.

"Jan de Jong has been teaching Tsutsumi Ryu Ju-Jitsu in Perth since 1952. In that time the total number of Black Belts coming through the system is 15. In many schools the Black Belt signifies a student of advanced standing. Being a very traditional school the Black Belt in Tsutsumi Ryu signifies a master of that system. The average time taken to grade Shodan is 10 years, Nidan 15 years after that.

The grading system is very strenuous as de Jong sensei's approach is to produce professional teachers of Ju-Jitsu. The first 3 gradings enable students to learn the basics and give them their first taste of reflex before moving on to full reflex gradings. Starting off with 5 techniques in the first grade to some 500 techniques in Shodan the student is required to respond with a particular defence against a particular attack, unaware of the order in which the attacks will-come or whether it will be a left or right-handed attack.

Each grading consists of two parts (until 1st kyu, when the number of parts rise dramatically) the second being the Kata Competition. This section looks for perfect demonstration of technique. Within the competition there are 4 groups each dealing with one set of attacks:

Group 1 - Hand attacks

Group 2 - Kick and Punch attacks Group 3 - Grabbing attacks Group 4 - Weapons attacks

As Director of Coaching for the Australian Ju-Jitsu Association Shihan Jan de Jong devised the Kata Competition in an attempt to form some common ground and help maintain a high level of skill within the member schools.

*By Les Pereira*

JU-JITSU AUSTRALASIA - Page 29  
Issue No 2

[Home](#)