

# WHAT IS JUDO?

THE BJC PERSPECTIVE



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英国柔道協會

## **WHAT IS JUDO? - THE BJC PERSPECTIVE**

*(By: Robin Otani - President - January 2007).*

Judo is a Japanese form of 'one-to-one' wrestling, it originated from the lethal Japanese form Jujitsu that was practised for centuries in Japan as a self-defence and unarmed combat. The word *Judo* translates as the "gentle" or "supple way".

In my opinion Judo is a form of real competitive fighting skills that qualifies as both an Olympic Sport and Martial Art.



Jigoro Kano 1860-1938

In the late 1800's a Japanese man called Jigoro Kano having studied various forms of Jujitsu devised a new form with all the lethal and maiming techniques removed from combat practice, some he retained in 'demonstration form' known as Kata.

He named this form or style as 'Judo' and in 1882 established his own school, which he called Kodokan from which the name 'Kodokan Judo' evolved.

This safer style enabled full competitive combat to take place without risk of deliberate permanent injury to either contestant.



Jigoro Kano

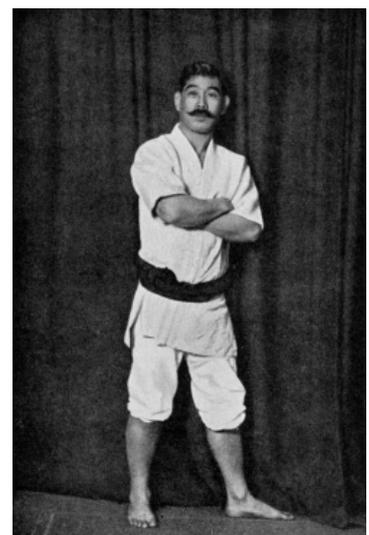
In the 1930's Jigoro Kano visited England and the resident jujitsu teachers, Yukio Tani, Gunji Kozumi and Masutaro Otani were awarded Kodokan grades and thereon were committed to promote judo.



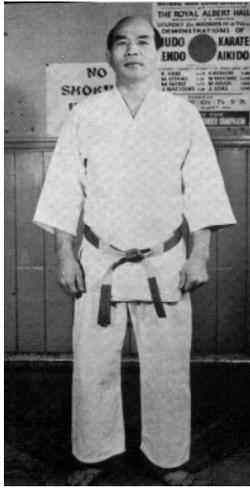
Gunji Koizumi 1885 - 1965



Masutaro Otani 1886 - 1977



Yukio Tani 1881 -1950



Kenshiro Abbe

In 1955 Kenshiro Abbe came to England and had a profound effect on British Judo and Japanese Martial Arts in the UK.

1958 Kenshiro Abbe founded the British Judo Council.

Additionally Abbe Sensei founded British Karate, Kyudo, Aikido and Kendo Councils and also the International Budo Council (IBC).



Kenshiro Abbe 1916 - 1985

In 1962 Akinori Hosaka came to England as a Coach to the British Judo Association. Today Hosaka Sensei is Chief Examiner and Technical Advisor to the BJC with a deep commitment to promoting 'Ippon Judo'.

Mrs. Michiko Whyman is a specialist in Kata and a Technical Advisor to the BJC.

Robin Otani has been the current President of the BJC since 1977 as a 5th dan but, by choice, now holds no grade. Presented with a red and white belt without grade by Mr. Hosaka.

G.R. Mealing 7<sup>th</sup> Dan BJC Vice-President is a long serving trusted aide of the President.



Akinori Hosaka  
Kodokan 8th Dan



Miichiko Whyman  
Kodokan 6th Dan



Robin Otani  
President BJC



G. R. Mealing  
Vice-President BJC

## The physical objectives of Judo.

The objectives are, whilst standing to throw your opponent cleanly on their back, part back, or side with impetus and control; this will score Ippon (full point).



O Soto Gari



Ura Nage



Seoi Nage

Obtaining a submission from an applied arm lock or strangulation whilst standing or during groundwork can also score an Ippon. *(It should be noted that joint locks are restricted to the elbow joint).*

Additionally in groundwork Ippon can be scored by one of the contestants controlling the other largely on their back, for an agreed period of time in a recognised hold-down.

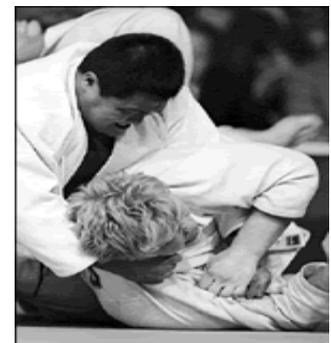


Neil Adams - Juji Gatame

Both arm locks and strangles are applied to the point of submission and no further.



Neil Adams- working for Juji Gatame



Yamashita - Shime Waza

A typical judo club training session would comprise:

- i) General warming up exercises
- ii) Breakfall practice
- iii) Judo specific exercise
- iv) Judo specific technique coaching
- v) Free practice - standing and groundwork (competitive exploratory free fighting)
- vi) General cool down exercises

In competition a contest is won instantly by a score of Ippon (full point). If a bout continues for the full-specified duration (usually 3-5 minutes) the lesser scores are taken into account to enable a decision winner.

## Competition Judo



A vigorous attack

Judo is now established as an Olympic and International Competitive Sport governed by the Rules of the IJF International Judo Federation a World organisation in which Japanese Kodokan judo has only a partial voice.

It is my opinion International Competition Judo diverges from Jigoro Kano's original concepts of Judo as an education for everyone, of any ability, to improve their physical and mental health.



Kyuzo Mifune

The British Judo Council believes that Educational Judo should be the fundamental basis of learning judo and this is how judo should be promoted at club level. Competitive bouts are a vital part of a student's progress in judo and safe competition can take place at club level if judo skills and techniques are made the priority over winning.



Udo Quellmalz -Ippon

Tactical winning judo should have no place at normal club practice and students should be encourage to take a safe breakfall or submit against worthy techniques. Of course Grading and Championship Contests will require a stronger resolve to win and this is also a very important part of judo

When students reach the age of sixteen years or when they are ready for adult competition then, at this stage, the strategic, tactical and novelty techniques, of modern International Judo needs to be introduced to those who wish to pursue a Judo competition career to 'Elite' level in the World Arena.

Modern Tactical Judo has many hazardous risks of personal injury, in particular, finger damage due to grip breaking, knee injury due to leg grabbing and knee drop techniques and shoulder injuries due to avoidance and twisting out of being thrown

Fundamental Judo skill have to be learned at the beginning of a judo career they cannot be acquired after a student develops a reliance on tactical winning methods which can be acquired quickly and easily.



Yamashita - Ippon

Judo is traditionally fought without weight categories but in most modern competitive judo, i.e. International, Olympic and World Judo, Weight Categories are stipulated. In some competitions the use of a blue judo suit for competitors is a requirement.

The British Judo Council however promotes the traditional plain white judo suit for general use by everyone but coloured suit are permitted by special permission for certain International events.

Grades in Judo

The British Judo Council uses the following system of denoting Grade. This may vary with other Judo organisation but the Black belt system is generally the same Worldwide.

PRIMARY (5 to 9 year olds)

- White belt with 1, 2 or 3 Red stripes
- White belt with 1, 2 or 3 Orange stripes
- White belt with 1, 2 or 3 Green stripes
- White belt with 1, 2 or 3 Blue stripes
- White belt with 1, 2 or 3 Brown stripes

JUNIOR (10 to 15 year olds)

- White belt with 1, 2 or 3 Yellow stripes
- Yellow belt with 1, 2 or 3 Orange stripes
- Orange belt with 1, 2 or 3 Green stripes
- Green belt with 1, 2 or 3 Blue stripes
- Green belt with 1, 2 or 3 Brown stripes
- Green belt with 1, 2 or 3 Black stripes

SENIOR (16+ year olds)

- 6<sup>th</sup> Kyu White belt
- 5<sup>th</sup> Kyu Yellow belt
- 4<sup>th</sup> Kyu Orange belt
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Kyu Green belt
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Kyu Blue belt
- 1<sup>st</sup> Kyu Brown belt

- 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Dan Black belt
- 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Dan Red and White belt
- 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> Dan Red belt
- 12<sup>th</sup> Dan White belt
- Note: 10<sup>th</sup> Dan is the highest Judo grade ever awarded by the Kodokan in Japan.

Kata (demonstration forms)

For veterans, the less active enthusiasts and indeed many contest grades, an interest is found in practicing and achieving competence in the various forms of Judo ‘Kata’ (Set demonstration techniques). I believe Kata can help to improve, balance, posture and correct judo movement in the young contest person. All Kata, except as indicated, originate from Jigoro Kano’s judo school, The Kodokan in Tokyo, Japan.

The sets of forms are as follows:

- Nage-no-Kata 15 formal throws – performed to the left and right.
- Katame-no-Kata 15 groundwork techniques - 5 hold-downs, 5 strangles, 4 arm locks and 1 leg lock.
- Kime-no-Kata 20 Self-defence techniques - historically based on Jujitsu with 8 kneeling and 12



Hane Goshi

standing, defences against attacks with blows, kicks, dagger and sword.

Goshin-Jujitsu

21 Self-defence techniques - a modern form based on Jujitsu with standing defences against attacks with blows, kicks, dagger, stick and pistol.

Koshiki-no-Kata

21 Self-defence techniques - Ancient, based on Jujitsu when clad in armour (not worn for kata) with standing defences against various grappling attacks.



Jigoro Kano

Kaeshi-no-Kata

10 Throws and counter throws - this Kata originates from Yukio Tani and early British Judo Master (not a Kodokan form)

Gonosen-no-Kata

12 Techniques and Counter Techniques. Not defined as a Kodokan Kata and depicted in M. Kawaishi's book 'The complete 7 Katas of Judo'. Attributed to the Waseda University it is also reputedly to have been devised by Kyuzo Mifune

Ju-no-Kata

15 Techniques - a symbolic kata, demonstrating the principles of attack and defence, utilising an opponent's force and balance to counter-attack.

Itsutsu-no-Kata

5 Techniques - a symbolic kata, demonstrating the principles connected to the forces of Nature.

### How Judo compares with other Martial Arts

Kenshiro Abbe introduced most martial arts to the United Kingdom. He observed that Martial Arts were developed from the natural order of battle with judo/ujitsu being the final conflict. The sequence of fighting was according to distance of opponents i.e. horseback and archery, spear, sword, dagger, bare-hand at a distance and then finally contact with judo/ujitsu.

Abbe Sensei maintained every martial artist who wished to become truly proficient in his discipline should have competence in Judo up to the level of black belt. For any new student the minimum degree of judo knowledge should be green belt (3rd Kyu). This is because that apart from the fighting aspects, judo gives an essential opponent awareness, balance and body co-ordination that cannot be gained in any other martial art.

Many of the Martial Arts assess and award all grades throughout on a 'demonstration' system of technique or Kata (set Forms), taking into account other non-contest factors. Most techniques are performed with little or no contact of the partner and only Judo, Kendo and full contact Karate or Kick Boxing have true competitive contest bouts.

Judo is a full contact discipline and whilst adult Judo participants up to Green belt (3rd Kyu) are assessed mainly on theory and demonstration; from Blue belt (2nd Kyu) onwards they have to win with real techniques against a contest adversary also determined to win. Both utilise their acquired judo skills and both resist with their strength and body weight.

In the demonstration of techniques the partner gives no resistance and thus the forms shown gives an ideal image of the throw or movement.

Judo grades become harder to achieve as the student progresses to higher levels. Combative contest examination in the British Judo Council is required for women up to the ages of 30 years and for men up to the age of 35 years. The BJC also has a non-contest curriculum for assessing people who do not have full physical ability or, are past the age of contest.

In my opinion, executing a technique in real combat is a thousand fold more difficult than demonstrating a technique with a co-operating partner.

Because Judo is a strenuous activity with true combative skills, many modern adults find it both too hard and demanding to progress and so turn to other Martial Arts where the proof of fighting ability is less apparent and thus progress through the grades is considerably quicker.

However it is well known that the more you put into something the deeper the satisfaction and I believe there is no harder Sport/Martial Art than Judo and therefore no deeper satisfaction with a lifetime, and beyond, of learning and lasting varied interests.

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