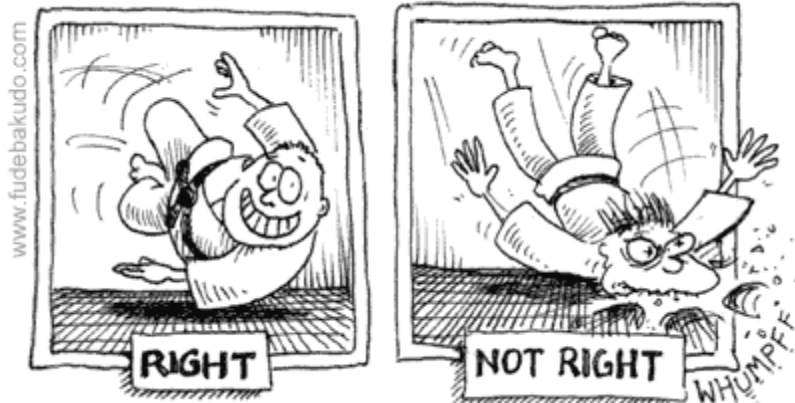


Ukemi by Sanjay Kabir Bavikatte

Ukemi a Japanese word used in Akido, Ju-Jitsu and Judo for the method of falling without getting injured. Uke is the person who “receives” the technique that is performed by the nage, tori or shite - the person who performs the technique.

One of my Judo teachers was also a master of the Japanese tea ceremony, an impossibly intricate art. This suited him well, he being fastidious to a fault. He made me practice nothing but falling for six months, correcting every infinitesimal detail. He would sense my frustration when he caught me wistfully looking at the other judoka. They would be performing their techniques



and sparring while I rolled for hours on the mat, with my teacher sometimes deftly throwing me to demonstrate a nuance I had missed. He would then remind me that the art of falling was the foundation of good Judo. I didn’t understand why he referred to falling as an art until much later. I was under the impression that competent judoka avoided getting thrown and falling was a functional skill, quickly learnt on the way to more interesting techniques.

As my Judo progressed, I began to grasp why falling was so important. My teachers would constantly tell me that I needed to relax more during randori (sparring) and my techniques were stiff and seemed forced lacking sensitivity. This came as a surprise to me since I was feeling rather smug about getting thrown a lot less than I used to be.



One day the head teacher, a seventy-year-old eighth Dan judoka, legendary for his insightful teaching called me aside after a randori. “How can you do beautiful Judo if you don’t risk falling?” he asked. I was taken aback. I thought the whole idea of a randori was to avoid getting thrown. He continued, “A lot of judokas don’t like to fall, so they try to avoid it at all cost. By doing this, they get tense, their techniques become wooden and their Judo lacks zest.” Seeing he had

piqued my interest, he went on, “Real Judo is like life. The little losses and gains don’t count for much. What matters is whether you lived beautifully, with courage and joy. For this, you must learn not to fear falling or failure and welcome it like a friend. Because only when you learn to love it, then can you really live to your full potential.”

I felt like a switch had flipped in my head. Our lives are contoured by fears rather than opened by joy. We live in quiet desperation, avoiding losses, hoarding gains, and all the while short-changing beauty from our days. We teach kids that life is a scoreboard rather than a grand experiment. We school them on how to run and succeed, but never on how to fall safely and bounce right back. We make them brittle by denying them the gift of resilience that comes from knowing how to fail well. We love telling stories of success but are ashamed of stories of failure. In short, we create a pervasive fear of failure, which paradoxically denies us what we sought to achieve in the first place- a beautiful life.

Judo's founder Jigorō Kanō also had a successful career as an educator. He first worked as the Director of Primary Education in the Ministry of Education and later as the President of Tokyo High Schools. Kano always spoke of Judo not just as a martial art but also as a path to truth and beauty. In developing Judo, he foresaw the psychological value for students to learn to fall safely and overcome the fear of failure. Ukemi to him meant more than just falling, in its essence, it constituted receiving an attack gracefully, like a gift to be honoured.



He once wrote:

As I have often said if one hates to be thrown, one cannot expect to become a master of the art. By taking throws time after time, one must learn how to take falls and overcome the fear of being thrown. Then one will become unafraid of being attacked and be able to take the initiative in attack. Only by following this manner of training can one learn true Judo.

As Kano would say, as in Judo, so in life- one cannot expect to master the art of living unless one learns to fall and overcome the fear of being thrown. As the old proverb goes: The one who sleeps on the floor, doesn't have to worry about falling off the bed.

American Top Team is in New Zealand by Krissy Hunter

Thanks to the working relationship between UFC fighter Mark Hunt, his ground coach Steve Oliver and ATT's Ricardo Liborio, the ATTNZ partnership was made possible.

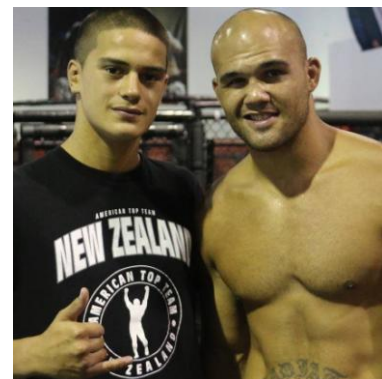
ATT is the biggest MMA club on the planet with over one hundred professional fighters, with more than 30 of those fighters in the UFC. ATT is also world renown for the ability and experience of its coaching staff which through this new partnership NZ has unlimited access to.

Recently two ATTNZ athletes have been sent over to ATT in Miami setting in stone the partnership that was forged in May this year.

ATTNZ is already well established with around 18 clubs involved already and growing.

ATTNZ affiliation structure works around each club a small affiliation fee into a New Zealand pool which then a large portion is allocated to stand out talent who is then 'funded' over to ATTHQ in Miami to be guided and trained by people with the ability to put them in the best MMA shows on the planet.

This is a massive opportunity for New Zealand which struggles with our isolation on the world MMA stage.





National seminar and 2015 AGM

The 2015 Annual Seminar and AGM is to be held on the 22nd August at the NZJJS Dojo, 902a Norton Rd, Hastings. 11am-4.30pm.

Teaching at the seminar are Doug Bailey OSA, 5th dan (randori), Dave Butler, 7th dan (jujutsu), Rob Pointon, 5th dan (chin na), and Sten Olivecrona, 5th dan (tanto grappling). The 2015 AGM is set to follow.

To register email: registrar@nzjif.org.nz, and pay by cash on the day, cheque or bank transfer into the NZJF account 03-0179-0280064-00 (use your name / club as an identifier).

C2 Coaching Course is NOW COMPLETE!

The C2 Club Instructor course has been completed. This is a comprehensive course that covers physiology, psychology, communication, coaching, risk management and governance.

NZJF believes that C2 is the minimum qualification that club instructors should hold in order to be coaching safely using up-to-date theory and methodologies. Having all club coaches attain C2 status would bring New Zealand in line with many other countries - particularly our Australian neighbours - which have strict sports coaching criteria and mandatory registration. For the martial artist who believes in continuing self improvement, the C2 course is a great way to improve your knowledge.

Completion of the C1 introductory course is a pre-requisite except where members can demonstrate that they have sport science qualifications from tertiary providers or similar. For further information please contact Simon Ogden on coaching@nzjif.org.nz

NZJF Black Belt Register

The Black Belt Register, together with the Instructors Register, makes up the Public Register of Ju-Jitsu Instructors and Black Belts.

The Black Belt Register is kept for the purpose of assuring the public that black belt grades claimed by ju-jitsu practitioners in New Zealand are valid and reasonable. NZJF provides verification of this. Black belts of Member Clubs may apply to have their grades recognised by NZJF and entered on the Public Register.

Details about the process of black belt recognition and the NZJF procedure can be found on the NZJF website in [Notice 15-2](#)

Please contact Doug Bailey on registrar@nzjif.org.nz for further information.

2015 Membership

Individual (\$10) and Club (\$80) Memberships for the 2015 year are due. Cheques made out to 'NZJF' can be sent to 902 Norton Rd, Hastings 4122 or deposited to:

NZJF Westpac 03-0179-0280064-00 ([use your name / club as an identifier](#)).

CONGRATULATIONS ...

NZJF C2 Club Coach Award.

Congratulations go to **Paul Huston** of Jitsu New Zealand, Wellington, on successfully completing the NZJF C2 Level (Club Coach) Coaching Qualification.