



The Bulletin

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In this edition - Dr Llŷr Jones has sent us a contribution from Professor Carl De Crée and himself on the *Gō-no-kata*.

News - This year we celebrate the Olympics in London and many *jūdōka* will be visiting from all over the world—so an ideal time to see some more articles by active *jūdōka*! Again we remind you that we have quite a collection of video material now and would be happy to arrange showings for clubs. Remember you can buy copies through the website. Sets of Bulletins may also be purchased on CDs.

The Kano Society

Gō-no-kata: The “lost” Kata of Kōdōkan Jūdō? By Carl De Crée and Llŷr Jones

Background

Kata are formal pattern exercises containing idealised model movements to illustrate specific combative principles. They can be thought of as representing the grammar of *jūdō*, and Jigorō Kanō himself stated that the proper study of *jūdō* had to involve both *randori* and *kata*.

Over the last five years or so the international *jūdō* community has witnessed a renaissance in *kata* practice, driven largely by the increasing organisation of international *kata* championships. Notwithstanding this recent upturn in interest, the true educational cohesion between *randori* and *kata* has been largely lost during the progressive ‘sportification’ of *jūdō* — which is now often reduced to a crude conglomerate of isolated throws merely based on power, endurance, and athletic achievement.



Figure 1—The ‘tenth’ *kata*, *Gō-no-kata*



Figure 2 - Toshiyasu Ochiai-sensei, 8th dan

There are ten *Kōdōkan*-recognised *kata* in *jūdō* today, this is despite most popular sources wrongly claiming that there would be only seven or eight or nine official *Kōdōkan kata*. They are as follows:

1. *Nage-no-kata*: Forms of Throwing;
2. *Katame-no-kata*: Forms of Controlling;
3. *Kime-no-kata*: Forms of Decisiveness;
4. *Kōdōkan goshinjutsu*: *Kōdōkan* Self-Defence;
5. *Jū-no-kata*: Forms of Non-resistance;
6. *Itsutsu-no-kata*: The Five Forms;
7. *Koshiki-no-kata*: The Antique Forms;
8. *Sei-ryoku-zenyō Kokumin-Taiiku*: National Physical Education According to the (Principles of) Best Use of Energy;
9. *Joshi (jūdō) goshinhō*: Methods of Self Defence for Women;
10. *Gō-no-kata*: Forms of (Proper) Use of Force.

In recent years, the 'tenth' *kata*, *Gō-no-kata* [Figure 1], has become the subject of renewed interest within *jūdō* circles. However, finding accurate information on the *Gō-no-kata* or locating a skilled teacher for this form is very difficult with, until recently, enquiries to the *Kōdōkan* resulting in no response, or a response stating that *Gō-no-kata* does not or does no longer exist, would have been discarded by Kanō and should not be studied. A further complication is that much of the information in circulation on the *Gō-no-kata* is ambiguous or wrong. This is due mainly to modern *jūdō* authors failing to recognise important mistakes contained in early Western *jūdō* books, as well as the fabrication in recent years of a hoax *Gō-no-kata* containing blows, and allegedly based on a fusion of *jūdō* and *karate* techniques.

	剛の形 GŌ-NO-KATA
一	背負投 SEOI-NAGE
二	後腰 USHIRO-GOSHI
三	袖投 SUKUI-NAGE
四	左背負投 HIDARI-SEOI-NAGE
五	浮腰 UKI-GOSHI
六	襟絞腰挫 HADAKA-JIME-KOSHI-KUDAKI
七	飛越浮腰 TOBI-KOSHI-UKI-GOSHI
八	大外腰 O-SOTO-OTOSHI
九	後腰 USHIRO-GOSHI
十	肩車 KATA-GURUMA

Figure 3 - The Ten Techniques of the *Gō-no-kata*

Inter alia these factors have led many to believe that the *kata* had been lost.

Despite being popularly thought of as defunct, the *Gō-no-kata* survives today, having initially been preserved in Tōkyō by a small group of senior *jūdōka*, and now also by a handful of experts abroad. To be particularly credited for the preservation of *Gō-no-kata*, are Yoshiyuki Kuhara-sensei, 9th dan (until his death in 1985), and more recently, his nephew Toshiyasu Ochiai-sensei, 8th dan [Figure 2]. Evidence also that the *Kōdōkan* is now moving slowly to recognise *Gō-no-kata* as a legitimate and existing *kata* comes via Toshiro Daigo-sensei, 10th dan's broad multi-part article on *kata* — "*Kōdōkan jūdō Kata ni Tsuite*" ("About the *Kata* of *Kōdōkan*



3 更に左自護体となり、同様押し合う



左背負投！ 双方自護本体で対立し、両手を組み合わせ押し合い



4 取は押し負け左一本背負投の形に極める



2 右自護体になり、両手は天地にして押し合う

Figure 4 - *Hidari-seoi-nage* (From De Créé & Jones, 2009, page 89, figure 6, with permission of the publisher of the Archives of Budo, International Scientific Literature, Inc., USA)

jūdō) — which was serialized in seven parts in the contemporary *Kōdōkan* periodical “*jūdō*” from the last months of 2008 until the first months of 2009.

We aim in the present article to remove the confusion and mystery which surrounds the *Gō-no-kata*. The material that follows is a summarised synthesis of our more extensive work on this topic published elsewhere, and which was based on careful critical analysis of the available literature and rare source material on this *kata*, as well as interviews with top-experts.

Gō-no-kata

The *Gō-no-kata* was created during the period of transition from *jūjutsu* to *jūdō* and is a consolidated set of primitive *jūdō* forms practised in a defensive *jigotai* position. It is loosely derived from techniques in *Kitō-ryū* and *Tenjin Shin'yō-ryū jūjutsu* that Jigorō Kanō *shihan* had studied and is also among the oldest of the *Kōdōkan kata*. Initially called the *Gō-Jū-no-kata* and designed to complement the *Jū-no-kata*, the *kata* consists of ten techniques [Figure 3] whereby at first both (*Tori* and *Uke*) confront each other with force against force (*gō*), but later *Tori* makes best use of *Uke*'s force (*jū*) for a decisive move (*kime*) [Figures 4, 5 and 6].

The *Gō-no-kata* provides a framework for the correct learning of the basics of *jūdō* without throwing. It teaches *Tori* to use force effectively — without ever relying on force as the primary means to overcome *Uke*. Additionally, the *Gō-no-kata* teaches the precision use of one's body — especially how to use both focused strength and yielding at critical timings during *jūdō* techniques. The *Gō-no-kata* also serves as an intense *jūdō*-based exercise to foster will (*shi*), spirit (*ki*) and strength (*ryoku*).

Original comments provided by Kanō-*shihan* in an early *Kōdōkan* periodical, “*Yūkō-no-katsudō*” show beyond any doubt that the *Gō-no-kata* was and is a special and never completed set of ten exercises for two people:

“Gō-no-kata or at times called Gō-Jū-no-kata, I remember having taught it some time in the past but my study was not complete; three or four out of the total ten forms in it, I did not like. I had thought of reviewing it but left it as it was.”



Figure 5 - Ushiro-goshi - Makoto Hoshina (*Tori*) & Toshiyasu Ochial (*Uke*)



Figure 6 - Precursor movements to Hidariseoi-nage - Makoto Hoshina (*Tori*) & Toshiyasu Ochial (*Uke*)



The Kano Society

PO Box 45408
London SE26 6WG
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The Bulletin



In this kata, at first both [Tori and Uke] will push, pull or twist each other hard and in the end one [Tori] will win by surrendering himself to the force.

I am thinking of completing it in future and teach it in the Kōdōkan. As for now, you may study it or not study it, which is up to you."

Kanō-shihan's own writings therefore indicate that he was not entirely satisfied with some elements of the *Gō-no-kata* and so abandoned, or at least, delayed its final revision. Kanō-shihan died before having been able to rework, revise or expand the *Gō-no-kata* — however, he never rejected the *kata* or its practice and it would be overstating the case to suggest otherwise.

Concluding Remarks

The evidence at hand confirms that *Gō-no-kata* is neither lost, nor a *kata* of blows resulting from a fusion of *jūdō* and *karate* techniques, as has been suggested previously. Rather, *Gō-no-kata* was designed by Jigorō Kanō-shihan to provide useful insights into the theoretical fundamentals of *Kōdōkan jūdō* (the basic principle of conquering force with giving way) as well as a training exercise for improving fitness and core strength.

The reader interested in learning more about the *Gō-no-kata* is directed to a trilogy of papers written by Professor De Créé and Dr Jones and published in 2009 in Volume 5 of the "*Archives of Budo*" — an online international peer-reviewed journal covering various aspects of education and research in martial arts, combat sports, and related areas — and the references therein.

Reference

De Créé C., Jones L.C.: *Kōdōkan jūdō's elusive tenth kata: The Gō-no-kata* — "Forms of Proper Use of Force" (Parts 1-3). *Archives of Budo* 5: OF55-95, 2009. (Downloadable from: http://www.archbudo.com/abstracted.php?level=4&id_issue=834879)

Note

Japanese names in this article are listed by given name first and family name second, instead of traditional Japanese usage which places the family name first.

The Richard Bowen Collection



In 1949, Richard Bowen began judo training in London at the Budokwai, of which became Vice-President. He lived in Japan for four years to deepen his studies. A former British International, he fought in the first ever World judo Championships in Japan in 1956. He was the author of more than eighty articles. Richard Bowen built up an extensive judo Library in the course of research for his articles and books, and he kindly donated it to the University of Bath Library. Items in the collection are for reference use only (not available for loan). Items can be viewed between 9am-5pm. If you would like to look at an item from The Richard Bowen Collection, please contact the Subject Librarian, Peter Bradley. +44 1225 384784

A copy of the video 'An Interlude with Richard Bowen' has also been donated to the collection.

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