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STREET SMART THROWING

By Professor Frank E. Sanchez

Although much has been said about the ability of a solid kick or punch to end a fight, there is also something to be said about the advantages of throwing techniques. A good throw, although requiring a little more time to learn than a strike, offers a workable alternative to deterring an attack without the disadvantages of injured limbs and "overkill" associated with striking. It also offers more control over the amount of damage you can inflict. A softer throw can be accomplished by either pulling up on the arm to cushion the fall of the opponent just as his body is about to contact the ground or by coming in a little "lighter."

Conversely, a throw can be made even more "dynamic" or deadly by NOT pulling up on the arm upon impact and by adding one's own weight to the momentum of the technique. Once down, the opponent can be controlled or finished off in whatever fashion the defender chooses. Since we work with balance and the adversary's momentum, throwing, if time correctly, should also require less energy than a punch or kick.

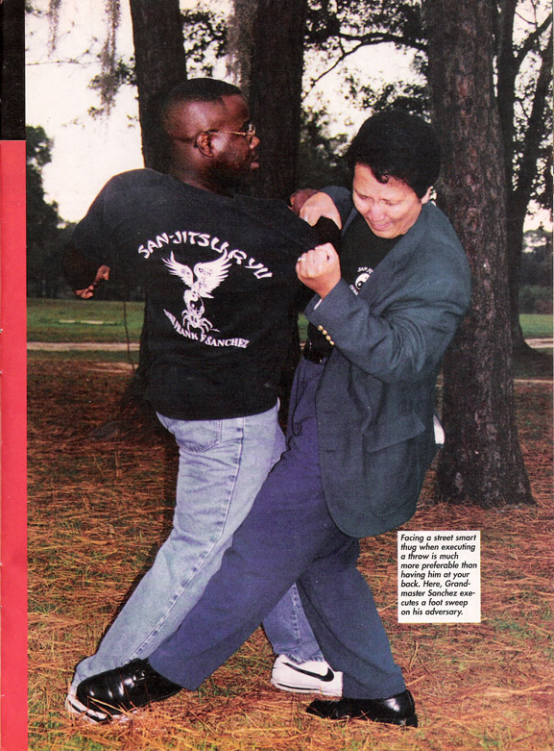
INEXPERIENCED VS EXPERIENCED

In dealing with an inexperienced foe, a quick throw can often end a confrontation before it has time to escalate to a more serious level, particularly when the opponent is not knowledgeable about how to fall and is afraid of falling. The problem arises, however, when you are faced with an adversary who is either "street smart" or has the ability to counter throws. When faced with an enemy such as this, it is best to "change up" on your throwing techniques by varying them so that your chances of success are increased. One way of doing this is to change one's grip so that the technique appears to do something other than what is being attempted. The other way is to vary the technique slightly so that it appears esthetically incorrect although it maintains effectiveness. The third way is to use only those techniques that have the best possible chance of success without creating a position of vulnerability. The idea is to use as little motion as possible to accomplish your aims or to involve different fulcrum areas or the full weight of the body to throw the opponent.



San-Jitsu's Combat Throwing Variation of Uchimata or Inner Thigh Throw

ABOVE: Grandmaster Sanchez executes a normal Uchimata or Inner Thigh Throw that is blocked by the opponent who straightens and squeezes his legs about the leg of the throw so that Grandmaster Sanchez back kicks the opponent's upper thigh or groin, he is able to complete the throw and take his adversary down.



Facing a street smart thug when executing a throw is much more preferable than having him at your back. Here, Grandmaster Sanchez executes a foot sweep on his adversary.

Street Smart Throwing



San-Jitsu's Combat Throwing Variation of Seinage or Shoulder Throw

Grandmaster Sanchez executes a normal shoulder throw with the arm of the opponent over his trapezius. Breaking Sanchez's balance by pulling him backward, the opponent easily wraps his neck from the rear.



Sanchez attacks by grabbing his opponent's arm and executing a strike with his forearm, then by changing the fulcrum from the opponent's upper thigh to his lower leg. Sanchez begins to wheel him to the ground over his extended leg.

STRIKE BEFORE YOU ENTER

Although one could directly begin with a throwing technique when enacting a defense, the chances of the technique being countered are good if the opponent remains cognizant and responsive or if you have lost balance or are positioned wrong for the throw. To aid in its success, you might want to distract the opponent first by "tapping" him in some way so that his mind is occupied with this instead of the ensuing throw, giving you a chance to enter correctly.

Some examples of distracting the opponent might be anything from slapping him in the groin to striking him in the face with your forehead. Another good distraction tool would be a solid elbow strike delivered just before the actual throw. If it disables the opponent, so much the better. Remember that the actual purpose of the blow is to distract and get the opponent's attention away from the throw that is about to be executed.

Another method of aiding a throw is to grab or press into pressure points as you execute the technique. By grabbing or pressing into these pressure points, you are accomplishing two things: hurting

the opposition in such a way that forces him to go with the motions of the throw and keeping him off balance so that a counterattack by the opponent is prevented. In any case, there are any number of ways to distract an opponent before entering, including pinching or biting and, again, this can be done before or while in the actual process of doing the technique.

SECURING THE ARM

Once you have sufficiently distracted the adversary, the next move to consider is how to simultaneously secure the opponent's arm for throwing. Without a good hold on the individual's arm you cannot expect to control his movements. One way to gain control is to grab the wrist. By grabbing the wrist you are negating the use of his hand so that he can't hit you while you are in the process of throwing him. It also effectively eliminates his chances of grabbing or placing his hands together to counter your movements. If you have to grab the sleeve, make sure that you secure the arm tightly against your body so that the opponent can't free his lower arm and strike you.

In all throws involving grabbing the sleeve of the

San-Jitsu's Combat Throwing Variation of O'Goshi or Hip Throw



Sanchez strikes first and attempts to execute a hip throw, or normal O'Goshi, with his hip against the upper thigh of his opponent. He is pulled backwards by his opponent but by changing the fulcrum from the opponent's upper thigh to his lower leg, Sanchez can now wheel his opponent to the ground over his extended back leg.



Soto Maki or Winding Throw

Sanchez is grabbed from the rear and reacts by quickly throwing his weight forward and to the ground in a circular manner as he extends his leg backward into a Soto Maki Komi or Winding Throw. The opponent lands heavily on the ground as Sanchez twists and delivers repeated elbow strikes to the adversary's head. His other arm is controlled with the weight of Sanchez lying on top of him.

opponent, try to "wrap it tightly" so that the arm is secured. If you grab the wrist, you have more control over his arm movement but you have less leverage on the arm because you are grabbing lower than if the sleeve had been secured. You can compensate for this by pulling the arm in a circular motion around you as you begin the throw. The result is that the arm is neutralized while you throw him.

USE A DIFFERENT FULCRUM AREA

Although the "classic" throws used in such sport martial arts as Judo will work effectively in some situations on the street, they are, for the most part, geared for sport competition and might get a practitioner injured in the process of taking the enemy down. A good example of this would be Uchima (inner thigh throw) in which the Judoka dips his head violently to the mat as his leg comes up high between the opponent's legs. On the mat, the Judoka's body is protected by its soft surface. On the street, however, such a movement would be suicidal as the practitioner's head and body contact the ground from the force of throwing the foe.

This movement can also be countered effectively in a variety of ways, including keeping the legs tightly together. To eliminate some of the deficiencies of this throw for street use, you might use pressure points around the neck or jaw to effectively break the opponent's balance and resistance while kicking back into the groin or upper thigh to throw him. This change in fulcrum area, from between the legs to the thigh or groin, should increase its effectiveness. As a rule, always use a fulcrum area to assure that you do not lose your balance against a resisting opponent or that you are not open to a counter. As another example, when doing a Scionage (shoulder throw) to lessen the chances of being pulled backward or choked from behind, you can change the fulcrum area from over the shoulder to over the hip. The opponent's arm is secured in the crook of your arm instead of over the shoulder. By changing the fulcrum area to a lower point, the throw becomes quicker and incurs less resistance. In the case of hip throws, the fulcrum area may be further changed to

the thigh or ankle. The throw may not look attractive this way, but it will bring the opponent quickly and efficiently to the ground where he can be dealt with effectively.

FACE THE OPPONENT

Whenever possible, execute throws that maintain face-to-face contact throughout the movement. In this way you have a much better chance of recovering your balance if there is resistance. There is also less opportunity of being choked since your back is not turned. Throws such as O Soto Gari (calf throw) and Deashi Harai (foot sweep) are good choices to use when your opponent is adept at countering your movements. By continually facing the opponent, your hands, feet and head are always available for a follow-up strike if the opportunity presents itself. You also have a better chance of extricating yourself if your attacking limb is grabbed by the opponent.

USE OF BODY WEIGHT

Finally, sacrifice throws such as Soto Maki Koi (winding throw) are excellent to use in combat, as they not only bring the opponent down with you on top, but also "bind" the opponent's arm underneath your body. The only limitation to using such a technique would be in fighting more than one adversary, in which case you would not want to go to the ground.

It is obvious that there are many more variations that can be made on throws to make them more effective for combat. The variations are endless and can be as subtle as a slight hand change. Experimentation will show you what works best for you. The result should be faster and more leveraged throws that are street deadly and effective. ●

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Professor Frank E. Sanchez is the founder of Guam's first internationally recognized martial art system of San-Jitsu, a street-based Jiu-Jitsu system. His school in Jacksonville, Florida, is also home of the Honbu for the World Head of Family Soikaship Council and American Martial Arts Alliance International. For more information on San-Jitsu, write to 6035 Ft. Caroline Road, Unit 22, Jacksonville, FL 32277 email: san_jitsu@yahoo.com