

Midori Yama Budokai: *Hanshi's Corner*
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Ichigo, ichi e: One life, one meeting

Yoshin Ryu Jujutsu: School of the Willow Heart or School of the Willow Spirit

Historically, *Yoshin Ryu Jujutsu* was said to be founded by Yoshitoki Akiyama Shirobei, a physician from Nagasaki, and is one of the Edo-period *jujutsu* schools. This style or *ryu* dates back to sometime before 1671. Yoshitoki had traveled to China to learn medicine and also the Chinese method of self-defense. Yoshitoki felt that the techniques he had learned in China, and now referred to as *jujutsu*, were not sufficient in number, so he retreated to Tenmangu Shrine, where he devoted himself to meditation for one hundred days. During this time he developed 303 techniques of his own. One snowy day when Yoshitoki Akiyama was still at Tenmangu Shrine, he happened to notice a willow tree on the shrine grounds. Despite the recent heavy snows, this willow, unlike some of the other trees on the grounds, did not have even a single branch broken. The Willow branches simply yielded and allowed the snow to fall off, thereby saving the tree. This yielding principle became an essential element of the warrior arts of ancient Japan. Otsuka Hironori of *Wado Ryu* was a member of *Shindo Yoshin Ryu jujutsu*, which was founded in the late Edo period and was an offshoot of *Tenjin Shin'yo ryu*.

Shin no Shinto Ryu

Shin no Shinto Ryu (*Shin no Shindo Ryu*) was created by a palace guard at Osaka castle named Yamamoto Tamiza Hideya, circa 1550. He created this style of *jujutsu* to deal with the issue of restraining Samurai of higher rank. He had studied *Yoshin Ryu* before implementing changes in the curriculum and paring down the system to 68 techniques. Prior to this, the system consisted of one-hundred, sixty-six techniques. *Shin no Shinto Ryu*, specialized in striking techniques and in techniques that involved "immobilizing or paralyzing with a grip or hold." Consequently, the style had a myriad of restraining techniques and also *shime waza*.

Tenjin Shin'yo-ryu

Tenjin Shin'yo Ryu literally means Divine True Willow School, and is classified as a traditional school *koryu* of *jujutsu*. It was founded by Minamoto no Masatari Iso Mataemon in the 1830s. *Tenshin* (*Tenjin*) means the style was divinely inspired. *Shin* is from the *Shin no Shinto Ryu*, and *Yo* is from the *Yoshin Ryu*. Originally, *Shin* was written with the character for new. Later, the character was changed to mean True, but was still pronounced *Shin*. It was once a very popular *jujutsu* system in Japan, and was studied by Kano Jigoro and Ueshiba Morihei. *Tenjin Shin'yo Ryu* is the amalgamation of two separate systems of *jujutsu*: the *Yoshin Ryu* and *Shin no Shinto Ryu*. The distinctive feature of this particular school is the use of *atemi* or strikes to disrupt the balance of the opponent. In addition *Shin no Shinto Ryu* used a more flexible and flowing movement of the body than seen in some older schools of *jujutsu*. *Tenjin Shin'yo Ryu* was developed after the period of civil war in Japan. Consequently, the movements emphasized were faster and more strikes were incorporated, primarily aimed at human vital points and meridians, which were exposed due to the lack of armor. He then went on a warrior's

quest throughout the country where he engaged in various competitions, and it is said that he was never beaten. Tradition states he was once involved in a fight involving one hundred assailants. It was this experience that further solidified the importance of atemi waza, or striking techniques, in his system, which also included throwing and strangling techniques common to other systems of *jujutsu*.

From: *An Encyclopedia of Judo* by Ron Rogers – Part Four of Six
Kumi kata

- 2.2.2.1 ***Jigotai no kumi kata*** or methods of gripping from the defensive posture.
- 2.2.2.1.1 ***Jigohontai no kumi kata*** or methods of gripping from the basic defensive posture. As for *shizenhontai no kumi kata*, these are usually dual grips. In general, it may be assumed that a defensive grip, combined with a dual grip, is strictly defensive and is used mainly as a stalling technique.
- 2.2.2.1.1.1 ***Ryo sode jigohontai no kumi kata*** or gripping both sleeves from the basic defensive posture. As the distance between *tori* and *uke* is so great, coupled with (usually) a low sleeve grip, this position definitely is used for stalling! Very few attacks can be made legitimately from this position.
- 2.2.2.1.1.2 ***Ryo eri jigohontai no kumi kata*** or gripping both lapels from the basic defensive posture. Although limited because of the freedom of both *uke*'s arms, this is a **more** "offensive" posture, in that the distance has been lessened between the two bodies. *Tomoe nage*, *ryote jime* and a few other techniques are possible, though blocked relatively easily.
- 2.2.2.1.1.3 ***Ryo waki jigohontai no kumi kata*** or gripping both armpits from the basic defensive posture. Due to the lifting power, and the relative closeness between *tori* and *uke*, this is the strongest of the basic defensive postures. It still has the inherent weakness of having both of *uke*'s arms free, however.
- 2.2.2.1.2 ***Migi jigotai no kumi kata*** or right defensive posture gripping. Except that *tori* and *uke* stand in *jigotai* and have slightly higher grips on the sleeve, this is the same as for *migi shizentai no kumi kata*. Although strong defensively, this – as all *jigotai* – does not lend itself to swift attacks due to the distance which must be covered. It is primarily useful for counter attacks and some sacrifice techniques against *uke*'s right side.
- 2.2.2.1.3 ***Hidari jigotai no kumi kata*** or gripping from the left defensive posture. This has the same advantages of *hidari shizentai no kumi kata* for the left-handed, or ambidextrous, person. As for *migi jigotai no kumi kata*, it makes swift attack difficult, but is useful for counter-attacks and some sacrifice techniques.
- 2.2.3 ***Kenka yotsu*** or fighting holds or grips (opposing grips). Although any of the applied grips may be used as fighting holds, there are some (also called *tai no henka*) which are more specialized in their use, and are designated as such. Six such methods are given and illustrated below. There are many more and are limited only to the *judoka*'s imagination. The following are to be considered examples only.
- 2.2.3.1 ***Yotsu kumi kata*** or locked gripping methods. This is also referred to as *yotsu gumi* or "locked gripping." This method of gripping was based on *chikara kurabe* in which unclad opponents were unable to secure a normal grip due to lack of garments. This permitted armor-clad opponents to engage without

standard gripping. Proper distance had to be maintained to prevent the tangling and snagging of armor if their bodies pressed together.

- 2.2.3.1.1 **Migi yotsu kumi kata** or right locked gripping method. Both forms of *yotsu* are done from *jigotai*. *Migi yotsu* is done from *migi jigotai* and is the form of gripping used in *Nage no Kata*. This position derives from the old combat grappling while dressed in (bamboo) armor. This method of “gripping” actually is done without taking hold of the *gi*! The right palm is applied flat to *uke*’s left shoulder blade from beneath the left armpit. *Uke*’s right upper arm, just above the elbow, is cupped in the palm of *tori*’s right hand. **There should be no contact between the upper bodies!** There should be a **slight** tension, maintained by a light pulling action as *uke* and *tori* gaze over each other’s right shoulders. The application of this hold is shown as *tori* throws with a loin technique (*koshi waza*).
- 2.2.3.1.2 **Hidari yotsu kumi kata** or left locked gripping method. This is the reverse form of *migi yotsu*, and as such is done from *hidari jigotai*. *Tori*’s left arm is threaded under *uke*’s right armpit and the palm placed flat against *uke*’s right shoulder blade. *Uke*’s left upper arm (just above the elbow) is cupped in the palm of *tori*’s right hand. Tension is maintained by a **slight** pull backward as *tori* and *uke* gaze over the left shoulders of each other.
- 2.2.3.2 **Gyaku no kumi kata** or gripping in reverse stances (*gyaku gamae*). The actual grips taken may be of any variation. The reason the grip is referred to as reversed is that *tori* stands in *migi shisei* and *uke* stands in *hidari shisei* or vice versa.
- 2.2.3.2.1 **Migi gyaku no kumi kata** or right reverse stance gripping. The example has *tori* with a two handed lower sleeve grip on *uke*’s left sleeve – note that the reverse stance is named after the position of *tori*’s feet. *Tori* is in a right natural stance and *uke* is in a left natural stance –the reverse of *tori*.
- 2.2.3.2.2 **Hidari gyaku no kumi kata** or left reverse stance gripping. In this example, *tori* is in *hidari shizentai* and *uke* is in *shizentai*; *tori* has a side lapel grip and *uke* has a high sleeve grip.

NOTE: The *gyaku no kumi kata* may be done with both *tori* and *uke* in *shizentai*. It may be done with both in *jigotai*, and with one in *shizentai* and one in *jigotai*. It may be done with one in *shizenhontai* or *jigohontai* and the other in *shizentai* or *jigotai*. The distinguishing feature is that *uke*’s feet are in a position opposite or neutral to those of *tori*.