



THE DOJO CONNECTION

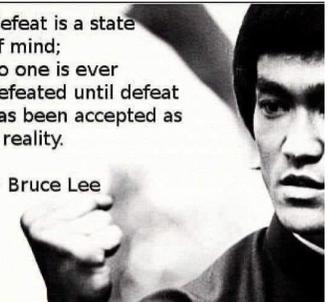
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS OF BLACK HILLS BUJIN KI RYU JUJITSU DOJO



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

Defeat is a state of mind; no one is ever defeated until defeat has been accepted as a reality.

~ Bruce Lee



Myths and Realities of Jujitsu Training

By Mutch Usera, Hanshi

When I decided to train in Jujitsu as a young teen, I had several questions that I needed answers to as I felt some things might have been just a myth or a reality for training in Jujitsu or any other martial arts. During my years of training and becoming an instructor and owner of a dojo I realized that I will be answering those questions someday. Today those same myths are around and answering them has not changed much during my years of instructing. Here are some common myths that you may have heard from family, friends, coworkers or maybe yourself at one time or another:



- ***I have to be a good shape to train in Jujitsu.***

This was probably the first thing I thought before imaging in training martial art. I was not too concerned being 15 years old and in very good physical condition, but I still imaged that martial artist were like Bruce Lee. That myth went away once I observed the variety of students and physical condition some were. One of the first thing my Sensei said to me is that "training in Jujitsu will help you get in shape and you will feel stronger and more confident the more you train." If you are concerned about your physical condition prior to training in Jujitsu or any martial arts, it may be best to consult your personal physician. Otherwise, training in Jujitsu class begins at a slow pace along with warmups, group workouts, and conditioning needed to meet specific belt requirements.

- ***Training in Jujitsu is not a family participation activity.***

One of the most rewarding benefits of training in Jujitsu is the opportunity to train along or with family members. This is based on the age requirements of the class. However, if you are an adult or teen and your kids or siblings are much younger, sharing what you have learn from your class session is fun and also allows you to communicate about something in common. That type of quality time brings family close and also fun when training at home.

- ***Martial Arts training uses military style training discipline.***

Martial Arts style of training and discipline may sometime feel like a military style training. Some dojos follow specific training procedures that may come from the military. This is due to some individuals that were once in the military have trained in martial arts styles that originated from Asian countries. Those individuals combined their military training into their martial arts skills. However, most dojo today have incorporated their individual style of teaching and focus on the cultural martial arts that are true to the style being taught.

(Continue on page 2)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Myths and realities of Jujitsu Training	1
Belt & Rank Promotions	3
Black Belt Promotions	4
ISKKF Martial Arts Camp	5
Achieving a Black Belt	6
Master Series Martial Arts Camp	7
Martial Arts History	8
Foundation of Bowing	9
Tournament of Blades	10
The Oi Zuki (Lunge Punch)	11
Bits & Pieces	12



Myths and realities of Jujitsu Training

(Continued from page 1)



Black Hills Bujin Ki Ryu Jujitsu Affiliated Dojos

When you travel for business or vacation, be sure to stop by these Dojos to get in on some training. These Dojos are part of our martial arts organization and the training is complimentary as a member of Black Hills Bujin Ki Ryu Jujitsu:

Budokan Martial Arts Honbu Dojo, Palm Coast, FL

George Alexander, Hanshi,
10th Dan, and president of
ISKKF, OHKA, and ISJF
Phone: 518-567-7382
alexeyama@mindspring.com

Minnetonka Martial Arts, Minnetonka, MN

Allen Horner, Shihan, 8th Dan
Phone: 952-938-6765
eclecticmatialarts@comcast.net

Dynamic Martial Arts of Sioux Falls, Sioux Falls, SD

Joe Herreman, Kyoshi, 6th Dan
Phone: 605-370-0085
jherreman@dmaofsiouxfalls.org

Northern Hills Bujin Ki Ryu Jujitsu Dojo, Belle Fourche, SD

Eileen Miller, Renshi, 4th Dan
Phone: 605-210-2909
nhbkrjujitsu@outlook.com

- ***It will take a very long time before I'm able to perform basic techniques.***

Learning techniques in Jujitsu or any martial arts may sometimes feel like it takes forever to get good at it. However, once students learn specific fundamental movements and coordination the techniques develop quickly. Performing techniques require repetition and focus which creates a timeframe that may vary based on the difficulty of the techniques.

- ***There is relatively high risk of injury.***

Statistically speaking, more people are injured playing golf than practicing martial arts. However, it is important to locate a school that emphasizes safe training. That is why instructors should ensure that students wear protective equipment and are adequately prepared prior to engaging in contact activities. They should also monitor exchange drills and train on a cushioned floor or matted area when teaching ground techniques.

- ***It will take years or even decades to earn my Black Belt.***

Earning a Black Belt is not based on time, but more on the individual training hard and dedicated time at the dojo. However, there are average timeframes that students are required to spend in specific areas of their belt requirements. This may vary from one style to another. Jujitsu styles may range from 3-6 years in receiving a Black Belt. Age requirements are also a part of the Black Belt requirement. Most important is understanding that martial arts is not a seasonal art or sport, but something you may commit to for a life-time.

- ***I'm too old to train in Jujitsu.***

You are never too old to train in martial arts or Jujitsu. However, no matter what your age may be, it is important that you are physically and mentally able to train and perform techniques. With that said, meeting with your personal physician prior to joining a martial arts program is advisable and required in some Dojos.

- ***I have to compete in tournaments as part of earning specific belt rank.***

Some martial arts clubs and styles may require you to compete as part of your belt advancement. This may be true in training in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu or Tae Kwon Do Karate. However, our dojo does not require you to compete in tournaments. However, we recommend doing so as part of your martial arts training experience and as an instructor when you become a Black Belt.



STUDENT PROMOTION & RECOGNITION



Pictured above: Broady Jones and Jace Watson promoted to Purple Belt in the Youth Jujitsu Class.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Averie Wheeler, Youth Class
 Shayne Payne, Youth Class
 Grace Erickson, Youth Class
 Noah Erickson, Youth Class
 Callaghan, Youth Class

STRIPE PROMOTIONS

White Belt:

Kodi Ladd, 2nd Stripe
 Joyce Thompson, 2nd Stripe
 Dancing Big Eagle, 2nd Stripe
 Eyohila Big Eagle, 2nd Stripe
 Aubrey Mangubet, 2nd Stripe

Yellow Belt:

Kayla Bender, 2nd Stripe
 Rick Alderson, 2nd Stripe
 Chris Johnson, 2nd Stripe
 Tatum Mitchell, 2nd Stripe

Orange Belt:

Juelia Styles, 3rd Stripe

Green Belt:

Lennon VanVlack, 1st Stripe
 Marceline Luna, 1st Stripe
 Matt Sedlacek, 1st Stripe
 Keian Ladd, 1st Stripe
 Alex Gomez, 2nd Stripe

Blue Belt:

Rob Usera, 1st Stripe Lucas
 Wheeler, 1st Stripe Nick D/
 Alessandro, 1st Stripe Joseph
 Hammer, 1st Stripe

Purple Belt:

Karisa Bellipanni 2nd Stripe



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

June:

- 6/5 Jackson Weiler
- 6/11 Jace Watson
- 6/14 Koltyn Usera
- 6/15 Jarrett Breuninger
- 6/23 Dominick Lunn
- 6/25 Amelia Cherry

July:

- 7/7 Shayne Payne
- 7/20 Mutch Usera
- 7/23 Ellie Wheeler
- 7/29 Kenny Sedlacek

August:

- 8/1 Michael Hill
- 8/14 Olivia Cherry
- 8/16 Noah Usera
- 8/23 Dylan Martin
- 8/23 Karisa Bellipanni
- 8/26 Rick Alderson
- 6/26 Khai-Lia Junk

STUDENT PROMOTION & RECOGNITION

BELT PROMOTIONS

Blue Belt:

Dreagan Smith, Adult Class

Purple Belt:

Jace Watson, Youth Class
Broady Jones, Youth Class

Black Belt:

Eileen Miller, Yondan
Jonathan Usera, Shodan
Noah Usera, Shodan
Thad McKenney, Shodan
David Dague, Shodan
Andy Anderson, Shodan
Ashlynn Terhune, Shodan



Pictured Right: Noah Usera and Jonathan Usera promoted to Shodan-1st Degree Black Belt at Black Hills Bujin Ki Ryu Jujitsu Dojo



Pictured Left: Andy Anderson, Thad McKenney, David Dague and Ashlynn Terhune promoted to Shodan-1st Degree Black Belt at Northern Hills Bujin Ki Ryu Jujitsu Dojo.

Eileen Miller Promoted to 4th Degree Black Belt in Shorinji Ryu Jujitsu

Eileen Miller, Renshi, was recently promoted to 4th Dan in Shorinji Ryu Jujitsu by Usera Hanshi and also recognized by the United States Jujitsu Federation for her 4th Dan. Sensei Miller has studied Jujitsu for over 20 years under Bob Duemig, 4th Dan (Retired) and currently trains under Usera Hanshi. She is a Master Instructor (Renshi) and owner of Northern Hills Bujin Ki Ryu Jujitsu Dojo located in Belle Fourche, SD. Sensei Miller is the highest female Black Belt in Bujin Ki Ryu Jujitsu and Shorinji Ryu Jujitsu.



PHOTO GALLERY:

Hanshi George Alexander ISKKF Martial Arts Camp



June 5-7 brought Black Belts from across the country participated in training that included Shorin Ryu Karate, Shoinji Ryu and Bujin Ki Ryu Jujitsu, Kamagata Ryu Kenjutsu, Kobido and Hakutsuru Kenpo Karate. The camp held at Palm Coast, Florida also included Black Belt promotions in Matsumura Shorin Ryu Karate, Kobudo and Hakutsuru Kenpo. Hanshi Alexander leads the session each day and share his knowledge in history, legacy and techniques from all of the systems instructed at the Camp. Next year Camp will be held June 11-13, 2026. Special thanks to Hanshi George Alexander and his wife, Susan for hosting this annual event.



Achieving A Black Belt in Martial Arts

The black belt in martial arts typically refers to a level of proficiency within various martial arts disciplines. Achieving a black belt is often seen as a significant milestone, representing years of training, dedication, and skill development.

Here are some key points about black belts and martial arts:



1. Significance of the Black Belt: A black belt symbolizes a student's mastery of fundamental techniques and an understanding of martial arts principles. In many styles, it also indicates that the practitioner is ready to start a deeper exploration of the art.

2. Martial Arts Styles: Many martial arts disciplines have a black belt ranking system, including:

- Karate (e.g., Shotokan, Shorin Ryu, Go-Ju Ryu)
- Japanese and Brazilian Ju-Jitsu
- Taekwondo
- Kendo
- Kobudo
- KenJitsu
- Judo
- Aikido
- Krav Maga

Each of these styles has its own criteria for achieving a black belt, including time spent practicing, skill demonstrations, and sometimes even teaching abilities.

3. Grading System:

- Most martial arts employ a belt ranking system to indicate a student's level. The progression typically goes from beginner levels (white belt) through various colored belts before reaching black belt.
- After earning a black belt, practitioners may continue to advance through higher degrees (e.g., 1st Dan, 2nd Dan, etc.), with some arts offering up to 10th Dan.

4. Philosophy and Values:

- The journey to black belt often emphasizes personal growth, discipline, respect, and perseverance.
- Many instructors incorporate life lessons, teaching students about humility, responsibility, and self-control.

5. Benefits of Training:

- Physical fitness and coordination improvements.
- Boost in self-confidence and self-discipline.
- Development of self-defense skills.

6. Continuing Education: Achieving a black belt is not the end of training; many black belts continue to learn, refine their skills, and may choose to become instructors themselves.

HANSHI MUTCH USERA
**2025 MASTER SERIES
 MARTIAL ARTS CAMP**



WHEN
OCTOBER 10, 11 & 12, 2025

WHERE
BLACK HILLS
BUJIN KI RYU JUJITSU HONBU DOJO
UPTOWN RAPID MALL, RAPID CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA

PRICE
\$85 PER PERSON - FOR ALL THREE DAYS

CAMP SPONSORS
LAQUINTA / 605-718-7000
1416 N. ELK VALE RD, RAPID CITY, SD

WATIKI WATER PARK
580 WATIKI WAY, RAPID CITY, SD

UPTOWN RAPID MALL
2200 N. MAPLE AVE, RAPID CITY, SD

**REGISTER AT THE DOJO DURING CAMP
 OR MAIL TO:**
MUTCH USERA, HANSHI
5624 VILLAGGIO LN, RAPID CITY, SD 57702
EMAIL: JMU8DAN@GMAIL.COM
CALL: 605-863-2378



TRAINING INCLUDE:

- BUJIN KI RYU JUJITSU
- SHORINJI RYU JUJITSU
- TAIHO JUTSU
- OKINAWA SHORIN RYU KARATE
- KAMAGATA RYU KENJUTSU
- OKINAWA HAKUTSURU KENPO
- CHINESE KENPO
- JEET KUN DO
- KOBUDO



MARTIAL ARTS HISTORY:

Vintage Jiu-Jitsu Techniques That Still Dominate Modern Combat

These old-school (early 1900's) Jiu Jitsu techniques are rooted in battlefield-tested self-defense. Each move emphasizes efficiency, balance, and control over brute force. Whether used in training or real-life scenarios, they remain incredibly effective for anyone serious about protecting themselves.

Pull Right Arm & Kick Ankle:

As your right foot steps forward, pull the opponent's right arm to off-balance them while kicking their ankle to sweep or trip. This is a fast, direct takedown ideal for surprising an attacker.

Rear Choke Hold Defense:

Drop your weight and twist to break free from a rear choke. Grab the attacker's arm, step behind, and throw them using leverage. This counters one of the most dangerous holds from behind.

Front Choke Hold Defense:

Trap the attacker's arms, step to the side, and use a hip toss or elbow strike to break free and gain control. Timing and quick reaction are key.

The Devil's Handshake:

As someone grabs your hand, rotate and pull your arm inward while stepping offline, and counter with a strike or takedown. It's designed to turn a deceptive gesture into a counterattack.

Action Against the Throat:

When attacked by a two-handed choke or lapel grab, step to the side, raise your arm through their grip, and strike or throw using body momentum.

Throw Right Foot Over, Twist, and Throw:

Used in a clinch situation. Hook your leg around the opponent's leg, twist your torso, and throw them to the ground. This uses leverage over strength.

Pull Right Arm, Yank Right Knee Up, and Lift:

This is a classic lift technique. Pull their arm across your body, slide in, lift with your legs, and toss them over your hip or shoulder.

Action Against the Elbow:

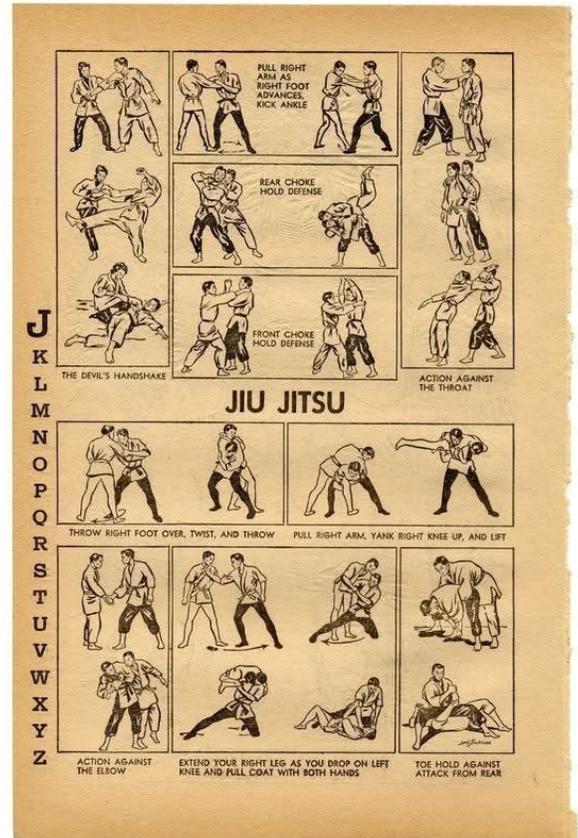
A joint lock defense. Grab the opponent's wrist and elbow, then step and turn to apply pressure, forcing them to the ground.

Extend Your Right Leg and Drop on Left Knee:

Pull your opponent's coat or shirt with both hands as you extend your leg and drop to the knee—this sweeps them off balance for a clean takedown.

Toe Hold Against Rear Attack:

When attacked from behind, hook the attacker's leg or foot, trap it, and twist into a toe hold to break their balance and apply a joint lock submission.



Mastering Ritsu-rei & Seiza-rei: The Foundational Bowing Techniques of Martial Arts Discipline

Ritsu-rei (Standing Bow) and Seiza-rei (Kneeling Bow) are not physical combat techniques, but they are essential self-defense principles rooted in martial arts etiquette, awareness, and respect. These bowing forms are more than rituals — they build your mental posture, humility, and readiness, which are critical in every self-defense scenario.

Ritsu-rei is the standing bow performed at the beginning and end of training, matches, or when greeting an opponent. It reflects respect, focus, and preparedness. The practitioner stands upright, heels together, hands at the side, and bows from the waist with the back straight and eyes slightly lowered — never losing awareness of their surroundings.

Seiza-rei (or Za-rei) is the formal seated bow, done from a kneeling position (Seiza). The hands move in a circular motion, touching the floor as the forehead lowers, showing deeper respect to teachers, the dojo, or tradition. While it seems purely ceremonial, this position trains posture, calmness, patience, and situational sensitivity.

How to apply these techniques in self-defense context:

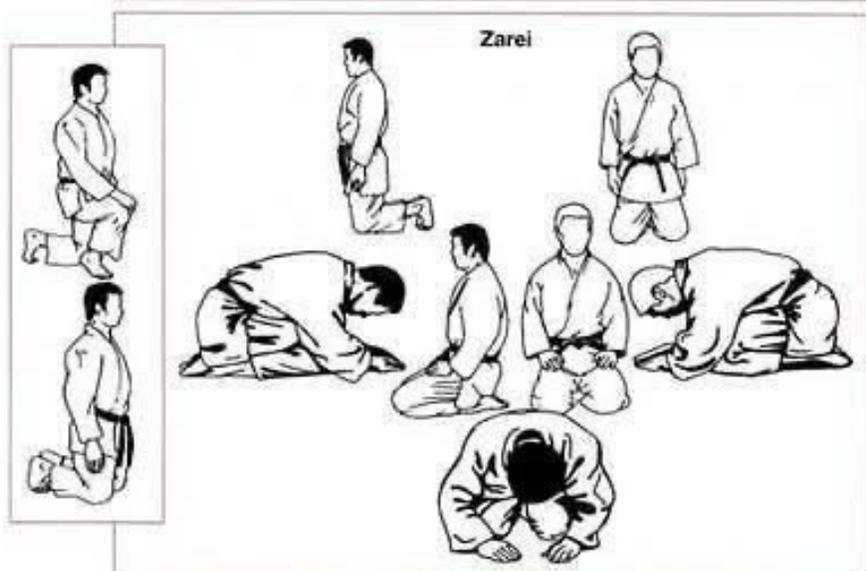
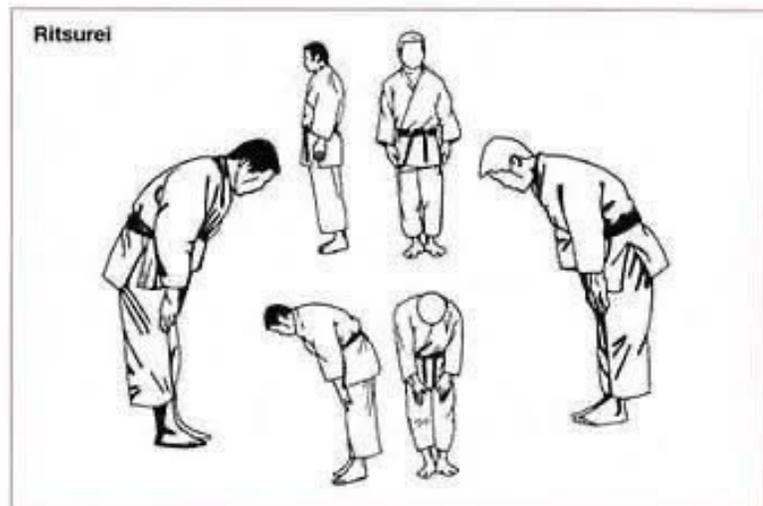
1. Mental Readiness – Through disciplined bowing, practitioners sharpen their awareness, patience, and ability to control emotion — vital for facing real-life threats calmly.

2. Situational Awareness – Bowing with the eyes lowered without fully disengaging from the environment trains awareness, helping you maintain perception under pressure.

3. Respect & De-escalation – These gestures remind martial artists that self-defense is not about aggression, but restraint. Many conflicts can be avoided or de-escalated through the humility and respect instilled by these traditions.

4. Body Control & Posture – Practicing Ritsu-rei and Seiza-rei daily enhances balance, posture, and controlled breathing — all key for stable movement during defense.

5. Building Martial Spirit (Reigi) – True martial mastery is not just physical. These bows embed discipline, respect for others, and peace-first mindset — making them the foundation of ethical self-defense.



The 1st Annual Sioux Falls Tournament of Blades Set on July 19

By Joe Herreman, Kyoshi, Dynamic Martial Arts of Sioux Falls

The countdown is on—the first-ever Sioux Falls Tournament of Blades is almost here, and divisions are starting to fill up! Interest from outside schools is picking up fast, and we want to make sure our own students show up strong and take the spotlight in every ring. If you've been thinking about signing up, don't wait—once a division hits capacity (32 competitors), it's closed.

The Tournament of Blades is a full-day event hosted right here at DMA. It brings together martial artists of all styles who train with edged weapons—from longsword to katana, épée to padded fencing. Whether you're brand new to competition or experienced, there's a division for you. We're breaking competitors into brackets based on both age and experience level to make sure every match-up is as fair and fun as possible. Whether you're brand new to competition or have been fencing for years, you'll be facing others with similar skill sets. No one is getting thrown to the wolves, but the more competitors we have the easier it will be to make fair divisions especially for our beginners. This is the perfect chance to try something new in a supportive, structured environment. Our goal is to create a high-energy, respectful, and welcoming tournament for everyone.

Here's what you need to know:

- **Date:** Saturday, July 19
- **Location:** DMA of Sioux Falls – 1516 S. Sycamore Ave
- **Registration Deadline:** Wednesday, July 16 at 5:30 PM
- **Register at:** www.tourneyofblades.com

Registration Fee (through July 5):

\$20 competitor fee + \$20 per event

After July 5, it increases to \$30 + \$30 per event

Spectator passes available at the door – \$5 per person / \$20 per family but are limited to immediate family of competitors and coaches. We don't have room for a lot of spectators at this event.



Here's a closer look at the divisions:

- **HEMA – Longsword:** We have both synthetic and boffer divisions for this so even if you lack armor you will still be able to fight. (Note if you ordered gear and it is not here yet, sign up for synthetics and we will move you if it hasn't come in by day of the event.)
- **Épée:** We will use the electronic scoring for this division. Coach Jesse has blades for we will loan you for this if you do not own one.
- **Kendo:** You need a shinai and armor for this division. We have some loaner sets as you know, so talk to Sensei Jesse if you need to borrow one.
- **Padded Fencing:** Great for beginners and youth. This is our most accessible fighting division—minimal gear required, and ideal for students looking to try competition for the first time.

Open Blades Forms (Kata/Patterns): Perform any edged weapon form from your style—longsword, katana, sabre, staff with blade, or any traditional form you've learned. Judged on precision, presentation, and control. Every fighting division is set to be double elimination so we can get you as many bouts as possible. Also, if there is time, we will add a free division of sword and buckler for anyone that wants to try it!

Need gear? No problem!

If you're one of our students and don't have the required equipment for your division, we'll loan you what you need. Just let us know what you're missing so we can set it aside for you. This is shaping up to be an incredible day of martial arts—don't miss your chance to be part of the inaugural Tournament of Blades. Let's make a strong showing for DMA and SFSA and have some fun doing it. If you have questions or need help choosing a

Unlock a Cornerstone of Self-Defense: The Oi Zuki (Lunge Punch)



The Oi Zuki—Lunge Punch is one of the most effective punch for achieving distance and power. This punch, at times, have been under-rated by some martial arts styles. But Karate and Jujitsu have found this Punch to be an important tool in self-defense and counter striking.

Here is a detailed explanation of the powerful Oi Zuki, or lunge punch, a fundamental yet devastatingly effective technique in Karate. As the image suggests, practicing this within your self defense application or karate kata is key to perfection.

What is Oi Zuki?

Oi Zuki translates to "lunge punch" or "chasing punch." It's a powerful, direct strike where the punching arm is on the same side as the forward leg. Its strength comes from the coordinated movement of the entire body, driving forward from the ground up.

How to Execute the Technique:

- **The Stance (*Zenkutsu-Dachi*):** Begin in a solid forward stance. Your front leg should be bent with the knee directly over the ankle. Your back leg is straight and strong, pushing your energy forward. Your feet should be shoulder-width apart, providing a stable base.
- **The Power Generation:** The punch doesn't start with the arm, but with the legs and hips. As you step or lunge forward, drive off your back foot.
- **The Hip Rotation:** Twist your hips powerfully towards the target. This rotation is the engine of your punch, generating immense torque and power.
- **The Punch Itself:** The fist travels in a straight line from your hip (a position called hikite) to the target. As your arm extends, rotate your forearm so the palm is facing down upon impact. This corkscrew motion adds to the penetrative power of the strike.
- **The Impact (*Kime*):** At the very moment of impact, tense all the muscles in your body for a split second. This is kime, or focus. It concentrates all the energy of your movement into the target, maximizing the effect of the blow. The other hand should be pulled back sharply to the hip, aiding the rotation and balance.

Self-Defense Application:

The Oi Zuki is one of the most practical techniques for a self-defense situation. Its linear, direct nature makes it incredibly fast and difficult to see coming. It's used to create distance from an attacker, disrupt their advance, and deliver a powerful blow to vital targets like the solar plexus, ribs, or face to neutralize a threat quickly. Practicing it correctly through kata builds the muscle memory needed to execute it effectively under pressure, without hesitation.



International Shorinji Ryu Jujitsu Federation

The *International Shorinji Ryu Jujitsu Federation* (ISJF) is recognized as a worldwide martial arts organization and is a member of the World Martial Arts Federation. The ISJF is a world leader in organizing and presenting the art of Jujitsu to the public.

Lead by Hanshi George Alexander, 10th Dan, Chair of the Board, the International Shorinji Ryu Jujitsu Federation (ISJF) is dedicated to teaching its members and educating the public about the art of Japanese Jujitsu.

All students are encouraged to become a member of the International Shorinji Ryu Jujitsu Federation. Hanshi Usera is a life-time member and Director for the ISJF. Annual membership fee is \$45. To enroll as a member of the ISJF, simply pick up a ISJF membership form at the dojo or contact Hanshi Usera.

BITS & PIECES...

LEAVE OF ABSENCE: *Members participating in other activities during the year*

If you or your child plan to participate in other sports and may need to take time off from Jujitsu Class, please be sure to notify us at least **one month** in advance so we are able to process postponing your membership payment from the month they depart until when they plan to return. Payment postponement through **Leave of Absence** are good for up to three months. You can pick up a **Leave of Absence** form at the Dojo and email to jmu8dan@gmail.com or deliver to Hanshi Usera or contact Char Usera at 605-381-8470.

Update your membership information

As we move into a new month, please be sure to check your membership information for updates that need to be sent to Char Usera. This includes payment information, home address, phone number and email address. You can contact Char at 605-381-8470 or email her at charleneusera@gmail.com.

It's Finally Here!
BudoTV.com

This video library hosts some of the best martial arts training videos, featuring top martial artists from around the world. Get started today with our ever expanding library of martial arts knowledge.

\$ 7.99 per Month

Count to 10 in Japanese

- 一 **Ichi** ●
- 二 **Ni** ● ●
- 三 **San** ● ● ●
- 四 **Shi** ● ● ● ●
- 五 **Go** ● ● ● ● ●
- 六 **Roku** ● ● ● ● ● ●
- 七 **Shichi** ● ● ● ● ● ● ●
- 八 **Hachi** ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●
- 九 **Kyuu** ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●
- 十 **Juu** ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

PROUD MEMBER OF:



Black Hills

Bujin Ki Ryu Jujitsu Honbu Dojo

Mutch Usera, Hanshi, 10th Dan & Co-Owner
 605-863-2378 / jmu8dan@gmail.com

Char Usera , Co-Owner & Business Manager
 605-381-8470 / charleneusera@gmail.com

Website: www.bujinkiryujujitsu.com