



meadhurst club

JuJitsu Club

here at the Meadhurst

If you are Interested in JuJitsu,
then call or Email Alan
on...

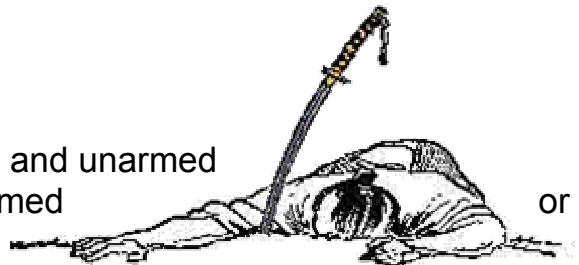
Thursday Evenings - 20:00 – 22:00

Phone: 07828660628

Email: alansmurf@stainesjujitsu.co.uk

History of Ju Jitsu

Ju Jitsu has been described as "various armed and unarmed fighting systems that can be applied against armed or unarmed enemies". That's it, in a nutshell.



One of the important pre-modern forms (c.1185-1600 AD) was sumai (lit. "to struggle"). The combat techniques developed from sumai were the predecessors of all Japanese empty-hand martial arts. One of these styles became yoroi kumi-uchi ("grappling in armour"). This style involved techniques by which two warriors clad in full armour could do battle if they somehow lost their weapons. As empty-hand strikes would have been ineffective against someone so protected, the system used a variety of throws and holds which would allow one to use a special dagger to kill his opponent. Of course, to the bushi, the warrior class, who never let his sword leave his side, jujutsu was the very last resort; thus it was relegated to a relatively minor position in the overall canon of techniques.

Early schools of jujutsu, such as Takenouchi ryu, were a very eclectic group. There were at least 179 groups with names such as kogusoku, hobaku, taijutsu, wajutsu,

torite, kenpo, yawara, and they dealt with small weapons and empty hand techniques, as well as swimming and horsemanship. Many schools specialised in one or two areas, such as striking, throwing, joint locking etc. Much of the practice was both dangerous and brutal, as E.J. Harrison in *The Fighting Spirit of Japan* recalled of his experiences in turn-of-the century Japan: "in those days the contests were extremely rough and not infrequently cost the participants their lives. Thus, when I sallied forth to take part in any of those affairs, I invariably bade farewell to my parents, since I had no assurance that I should ever return alive".

With the opening of Japan by Admiral Perry in 1868, martial arts was one of the many Japanese arts that gradually became known to a few in Europe and America. The famous Yukio Tani, admittedly no master of ju jitsu, was a hit in the music hall entertainment of Victorian England. One can also imagine with delight the antics of wing-collared Victorian gentlemen being awed by the "tricks" shown to them at the Japan Society in London by Mr Barton-Wright and his Bartitsu, which included the art of fighting with a walking stick.

Unfortunately jujutsu schools became synonymous with ne'er-do-wells and thugs and lost popularity with the Japanese public towards the end of the 19th century. Dr Jigoro Kano had to overcome great obstacles to gain the acceptance of his art of Judo as a way of moral development in 1882. His early students had to pretend they were taking English lessons, but by 1911 Judo was compulsory education in schools.

Dr Kano originally had just three colours of belts, white, brown and black, but by the 1920s the rainbow system of colours had developed, and was quickly adopted by other martial arts.

In his book *"The Fighting Spirit of Japan"*, E.J. Harrison believed that "karate is not qualified or at all likely to challenge judo in its popular appeal". How wrong he was! His opinion was that "only spectators possessing some prior knowledge of the art would be interested in a demonstration (of karate)" whereas "Judo ... thanks to the spectacular nature of its methods ... will always attract a crowded house". His main criticism of the karate he witnessed was that "only experts can safely demonstrate karate in public since every blow ... must be halted by the assailant a fraction of an inch before landing ... on the victim's body".

Martial arts were officially banned after the end of World War II, but gradually there was a revived interest in judo, karate, aikido and ju jitsu which has reached pretty well every town in every western country today.

In Japan today there are relatively few who study martial arts. More choose baseball, golf and even ping-pong as a recreation. Martial arts are more popular outside Japan.

<http://www.stainesjujitsu.co.uk/frameset.htm>

