Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu: Much More Than Wrestling

by Paul Halme

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Most fights end up on the ground. This is not a broad generalization, this is a fact. Unless one of the first few strikes thrown is so well placed that it is completely debilitating, people almost always end up grabbing and taking each other to the ground. Itâ€™s a natural and almost irrepressible instinct to grab your opponent, and for obvious reasons it; it stops them from hitting you anymore.

Just look at professional boxers. After a couple rounds and a few solid blows to the head, they will start automatically trying to lock arms with each other despite the refâ€™s rushing to pull them apart as soon as they do. Trust me, if the rules in that ring had been different, Mike and Evander would have ended up rolling around on the ground.

This particular fact is always cited by proponents of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and other martial disciplines that have particularly strong ground combat techniques. If you canâ€™t fight well on the ground you canâ€™t really fight, that boxing is great in a gym but will only take you so far in a street fight. And there is almost nothing as effective on the ground as Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu.

Jiu-Jitsu is a precise and scientific discipline. It is all applied physics; an opponentâ€™s own weight, momentum, and center of gravity can be manipulated easily to put you in a favorable position both while standing and on the ground regardless of their strength or size. I have seen a 120 pound female yellow belt student throw a 6â€™7 220 pound man over her hip like he was a rag doll after only a few months of training.

And, with countless joint manipulations, locks, and, if the situation demands it, breaks, Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu is more than just a sport like wrestling or boxing, it is a fully functional, battle-tested, cage proven form of combat that is as useful in a ring as it is on the street in a real kill or be killed situation.

There is however one horrible misconception about Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, and then by extension all forms of Jiu-Jitsu, that it is concerned only with grappling and ground combat. This is completely bogus.

Jiu-Jitsu is the complete bujutsu, or science of war. Karate, Judo, Aikido are all forms of Jiu-Jitsu that focus on one specific aspect of the whole science. Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu contains all of the locks and throws of Judo, all of the momentum/weight and joint manipulations of Aikido, and all of the blocks and strikes of Karate plus many of the old ground techniques from Japanese schools along with some very effective new ones developed by the Gracie family over the last century.

This broad range of applications is exactly why elements of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu are standard for police and military training, as well as security and prison guard training. It is capable of debilitating opponents completely or simply restraining them without having to inflict undue harm as might be necessary in the case of security and police officers.

Good schools like Peak Performance Martial Arts out of Keller, Texas, provide safe and friendly environments where people of all sexes, ages, and fitness levels can study the ancient art and improve their fitness, self esteem and confidence that they can protect themselves. This training ultimately helps level the playing field and creates safer happier communities for everyone.

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