# NEWSLETTER

**24/1 – 21st April 2024**




## Report on Kobujutsu Taikai in New Zealand – Mika Kuukkanen



Hanshi Dave Butler of Samurai Arts over the weekend of 6th and 7th April organized a Hokutoryu training camp in the city of Rotorua. Hanshi Butler, 8th dan, is the New Zealand representative for Hokutoryu and the World Federation of Ju Jitsu. Dave was a student of the late Soke Morris and has therefore been an acquaintance of Soke Niiniketo for nearly 40 years.

The camp instructors were Soke Auvo Niiniketo 10th dan and Hanshi Risto Väntär, 8th Dan. Sensei Mika Kuukkanen 2nd dan and Jani Heikkinen 1st dan from Riihimäki also attended, who had the honour of acting as Niiniketo and Väntäri's uke's for both days. The camp attendees were experienced and high-quality instructors of ju-jutsu and martial arts from all over the country. The camp focused on different variations of Hokutoryu ju-jutsu, self-defense, competition and military jutsu, as well as security guard and police ju-jutsu. Experienced, professionals in the field were interested in all areas, but Väntär's session on use-of-force training for local security personnel received a lot of attention.

New Zealand is a country of good and strong fighters and friendly people. Our cooperation with them will continue and intensify. We will certainly see New Zealanders in our camps in Finland in the near future.

## NZJJF 2023 AGM

Do you want to take up a position on the NZJJF committee and give back to the Ju Jitsu sector by tackling Sport NZ and create cohesive strategies? Want to know more? Want to be involved? The NZJJF 2023 AGM is scheduled for Sunday June 16th, 2024, at 8pm via ZOOM. Contact the chairman for more information, the agenda and a copy of the 2023 Annual Report.



## 2024 Competition Circuit



The Oceania Open Ju Jitsu Championships were held on the weekend of the 13th and 14th April at Barfoot and Thompson Stadium in Kohimarama, Auckland. Another awesome tournament event organised by the NZ Grappler team and a huge congratulations to everyone that competed.

A round of applause has to go to Gledson Cigano, who dominated the Black Belt Absolute divisions in both Gi and No-Gi, showcasing exceptional Ju-Jitsu skill and determination. Also, a big shout out to the Oceanside team from Christchurch, who had travelled with a huge team of over 50 competitors flying all the way from the South Island.

- TOP ACADEMY GI AWARD went to Daredevil Jiu Jitsu and Clinton Terry for nurturing such talented athletes. Your hard work is clearly paying off!
- TOP ACADEMY NOGI AWARD: went to Oceanside Jiu Jitsu. Your effort and spirit was truly inspiring!




Massive respect to the fantastic NZ Grappler team who worked tirelessly over two days without a single complaint, handling every challenge with grace. A colossal thank you to the NZ Grappler referees, who are the backbone of these sporting events, the New Zealand Jiu-jitsu sports sector is immensely grateful for your dedication and your continual work behind the scenes up skilling.

## Brazilian jiu-jitsu as social and psychological therapy – Tony Blomqvist

This systematic review of evidence is the first to assess the therapeutic properties of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu (BJJ) systematically. This unique field of psychological study currently suffers from a lack of theoretical consideration and methodological caveats within its research. Consequently, this review further explores and emphasizes the mechanisms at play that make BJJ a suitable form of therapy and looks to alternative theoretical explanations and more rigorous study designs. Nevertheless, this review also shows that BJJ holds great promise as a sociopsychological intervention; it is consistently associated with low levels of aggression, development of resilience, and the possibility of extending one's social network. In other words, BJJ may constitute a community that can buffer against

mental illness and promotes well-being. This goal has direct implications for social workers, psychologists, and physical therapists that seek to combat public health issues. Additionally, considering the recent pandemic and the mental illness it has brought with it, along with decreases in physical activity, practitioners and policymakers will need to address how to go from here to re-establishing a healthy baseline of physical and psychological standards. BJJ seems appropriate to achieve these outcomes.




Reference: Blomqvist Mickelsson, Tony. (2021). Brazilian jiu-jitsu as social and psychological therapy: a systematic review. Journal of Physical Education and Sport. 21. 1544-1552.

## NZJJF Black Belt Register

Our public register currently has **272** validated and certified black belts from the styles of Hapkido, Brazilian Jiu Jitsu and Japanese Ju Jitsu in New Zealand.

The Black Belt Register is kept for the purpose of assuring the public that black belt grades claimed by Ju-Jitsu practitioners in New Zealand are valid and reasonable. The NZJJF provides verification of this in accordance with it's national policy. Black belts of Member Clubs may apply to have their grades recognised by the NZJJF.




On passing of verification by the NZJJF and acceptance to the Black Belt Register on our website, the NZJJF will issue a dan grade recognition certificate, along with the congratulations in the next NZJJF Newsletter.

## How to safely add strikes to your Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu training – James Duscio




Let's be honest, the creation of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu was to defend against violence, violence from a street attack, violence from a bigger, stronger, aggressive opponent and violence from weapons. It was adapted for the military, air marshals and law enforcement. It has been proven in no rules contests with no weight limits or time limits. Today we have a lot of BJJ practitioners that can't stop a punch, that can't close the distance, can't stop a takedown, can't do a takedown, don't have any weapons training offensive or defensive, can't control an opponent's posture without

using the Keikogi, or even stop a head butt. There is a reality of violence in today's world, yet the BJJ training has gotten very soft and not effective in the way it was intended for.

Don't get me wrong, there are exceptions to this rule, the Gracie Brothers in Torrance are bringing back the effectiveness of BJJ by including the street ready self-defence. Rickson Gracie started the Jiu-Jitsu Global Federation to bring back the true effectiveness of the art. Eddie Bravo has started competitions that take away the dogi and now include hand slaps to simulate strikes. Tim Kennedy is teaching the way of the Sheepdog with BJJ that deals with today's reality of violence. But those are the exceptions. Most schools do little to no takedowns, little to no strike defence, little to no weapon defence, only tournament rules, starting on the knees and playing 5-minute rounds of grips on the keikogi.



The reality is BJJ is one of the most effective fighting arts in the world today. But this fact is on the path of becoming less true. We are following the patterns of the other martial arts, "Once upon a time effective, but over time less effective, watered down while reflecting nothing of reality and only sport".

The solution is simple. Start adding drills that include striking offense and defence, and remember, it doesn't have to be all out sparring with risk of concussions. Add a few rolls a month with MMA gloves on and do light tapping to simulate when your vulnerable to strikes. Warm up the classes with takedown drills with little to no resistance, clinch drills, closing the distance drills, kicking defence drills and self-defence drills, etc. It beats the same running in circles and hip escapes for 30 minutes that we have done for years. Throw a training knife into the roll occasionally so you know how to control two on one while not letting them hand off the knife and stab you. Practice getting up from all positions in 30 secs or less, because sometimes we should not be on the ground. The variations of effective training are endless.

The bottom line is that we have two choices, train what's comfortable and pretend it's good enough or see reality for what it is and make sure our training reflects that. Is training sport BJJ better than nothing for self-defence? Yes, but look how bad Marcelo Garcia did in his only MMA fight. That X guard got him in serious trouble with strikes to the face and he is a multiple time world champion. So, when you're bowing out of class about to step off the mats, ask yourself, am I prepared to stop a larger guy mounted on top throwing punches down on my face?



If the answer is no, fix it. If you need tips and ideas on how to incorporate this, follow Rickson Gracie, the Gracie brothers in California, the Cascao BJJ association, or Tim Kennedy's Sheepdog Response team. Just keep your training effective for reality. It may seem intimidating to train with more violence in mind, but there are ways that make it approachable and safe.

## NZMAHOF 2024

The next New Zealand Martial Arts Hall of Fame event is scheduled for the Matariki Weekend on Saturday 29th June 2024 to be held in Wellington, at the Ricoh Sports Centre, 237 Taita Drive, Lower Hutt. This will be an exciting event, with an Inductee Awards Ceremony on Friday night and a Masterclass Summit on Saturday. You can choose to attend one or both events over the weekend. The Awards Ceremony will see new Inductees recognised for their commitment, sacrifice, and contribution to Martial Arts in New Zealand, receiving their award and place alongside the other inductees in the New Zealand Martial Arts Hall of Fame. This is a formal event and includes dinner and entertainment.




The Masterclass Summit will have several New Zealand's best Martial Artists showcasing and teaching their style in a workshop/seminar style event. The Masterclass Summit is open to the public. Your ticket will give you full access to all the seminars and displays throughout the day.

The Facebook link for the event can be found HERE and tickets can be bought from HERE.

## ALL our NZJJF Coaching Course are NOW AVAILABLE on-line!



All of the NZJJF Courses are now available via our online learning platform. Our C1 Assistant Coach through to our C4 Advanced Coach courses, along with our extension modules on coaching Tamariki, Rangitahi and Coaching for Inclusion are now delivered via Thinkific®. The link to the Thinkific® courses can be found via our NZJJF website coaching page or by clicking on the link; https://new-zealand-ju-jitsu-federation.thinkific.com/

## CONGRATULATIONS:

The NZJJF wishes to congratulate the following people on their well-deserved success. Your hard work and perseverance have paid off and New Zealand Ju-Jitsu is proud of you.

### NZJJF Coaches Register up to the end of April 2024

**Qualified C1 Assistant Coaches**

Paul Neumann, New Plymouth MMA – 08/01/2024
Craig Pollock, Seishinkan Bujutsu – 11/02/2024
Javier Zaya, Hamilton Goshin Ju Jitsu Academy – 14/02/2024

**Qualified C2 Club Instructors**
Garth Amrein, Global Jiu Jitsu Academy – 27/12/2023
Chris Scrimgeour, Hamilton Goshin Ju Jitsu Academy – 31/03/2024
Andrew Cook, Hamilton Goshin Ju Jitsu Academy – 31/03/2024

**Qualified C3 Advanced Instructor**
Cameron Edmunds, MAI Dojo – 18/11/2023

### NZJJF Black Belt Register up to the end of April 2024

Congratulations to the following approved, up till the beginning of May 2024, for the Black Belt Register:

**Monte Robinson (3D)**
**Kody Andrews (2D)**
**Jason Homes (2D)**
**Craig Scrimgeour (2D)**
**Benji Kney (1D)**
**Paris Brady (1D)**
**Ken Palepoi (1D)**
**Shaun Harpur (1D)**

