

NAGE NO KATA IN THE CURRENT COMPETITIVE JUDO

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ABSTRACT. In the context of current judo coaches focus on exceptional tactical and physical training, but omit one of the main aspects in full and complete fighting techniques, namely Kata. Approaching strictly *shiai* techniques has many negative results. From small or large accidents to abandon sports activity, capping being the main cause. In recent years Japanese judo school has addressed Kata with great seriousness as a form of technical training. Taking the example of *Kodokan Judo*, federations around the world have begun to pay increasingly higher importance to Kata, which led to organizing national, continental and world championships. In Romania, Kata is practiced at a high level also. Our athletes, couple *Surlă* and *Fleis*, trained by the reputed professor *Alexandru Chirila* (5 Dan) won all European and World Championship titles in the last six years. Sports Club "*University Dinamo Cluj*" coach - assist. univ. dr. *Barboș Ion Petre* (2 Dan) has achieved remarkable results in the past three years (2010-2013) at the national level, with over 10 medals (gold, silver and bronze) won by athletes at *Nage no Kata*, *Katame no Kata*, *Ju no Kata*, *Kodokan Goshin Jutsu*. This article attempts to highlight the overwhelming importance of addressing *Kata judo* in training juniors, seniors and veterans judo athletes.

Keywords: *Judo shiai, kata, Nage no Kata, kyu, Shisei, shizentai, jigotai, Ma ai, Kodokan Judo Kata Kum, Kasumi, Mae-Mawar-sabaki*

REZUMAT. *Kata în Judo competițional actual.* În contextul judo-ului actual antrenorii pun accent pe pregătirea tactică și fizică de excepție, dar omit unul dintre principalele aspecte ale realizării depline și complete a unei tehnici de luptă, și anume, *Kata*. Abordarea strict doar a tehnicilor de *shiai* are numeroase rezultate negative, de la mici sau mari accidentări până la abandonul activității sportive, având ca principală motivație, plafonarea. Școala japoneză de judo a abordat în ultimii ani cu mare seriozitate *Kata*, ca formă de pregătire tehnică. Preluând exemplul *Kodokan Judo*, federațiile din întreaga lume au început să acorde o importanță din ce în ce mai mare acestui model (*Kata*), ceea ce a dus la organizarea de campionate naționale, continentale și mondiale. Și în România *Kata* este practicat la un nivel superior. Sportivii noștri, cuplul *Surlă* și *Fleis*,

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antrenați de reputatul profesor Alexandru Chirilă (5 Dan) au obținut toate titlurile de campioni europeni și mondiali din ultimii 6 ani. La clubul sportiv "Universitatea-Dinamo Cluj", antrenor - asist. univ. dr. Barboș Ion-Petre (2 Dan), s-au obținut rezultate remarcabile în ultimii trei ani (2010-2013) la nivel național, prin cele peste 10 medalii (aur, argint și bronz) câștigate de sportivii prezenți la *Nage no Kata*, *Katame no Kata*, *Ju no Kata*, *Kodokan Goshin Jutsu*. Acest articol încearcă să evidențieze importanța covârșitoare a abordării Kata în pregătirea sportivilor judoka juniori, seniori și veterani.

Cuvinte cheie: *Judo shiai, kata, Nage no Kata, kyu, Shisei, shizentai, jigotai, Ma ai, Kodokan Judo Kata Kum, Kasumi, Mae-Mawar-sabaki*

Introduction

One of the most common questions of current judo is "With what technique should start a beginner?" Many researchers have raised arguments pro and cons the hazard that may occur in premature approach of some of the fighting techniques (Gleeson, G. R., 1957).

Even the Japanese, "the parents" of judo have made mistakes approaching techniques, apparently simple, which proved to be not only dangerous, but also deadly. In 2013 *Kodokan Judo* was sued by an organization of parents who have lost children due to fatal accidents in judo halls. Coaches have used *Ashi* (foot) techniques and practitioners have fallen on head on the mat and made cerebral concussion (*Ryo Uchida, 2010*).

The Federations around the world have proposed a number of techniques (40) to be gradually approached, having different levels of difficulty (www.judoinfo.com). But coaches are still facing the same question, because the very busy competitive schedule does not allow them to wait nearly three years of preparation for completing the 5 Kyu (classes), which would allow, in theory, a judoka to accumulate a number of sufficient techniques to be successful at national championship contests.

A solution can be *Nage no Kata*, the three forms (Te-waza, Koshi-waza, Ashi-waza), not only for the advanced level, but for the beginner also.

Principle of judo in Kata versus Shiai

Is it possible that *Nage no Kata* to be taught at the beginner level? Obviously giving consideration to the falls school (*ukemi-waza*). *Nage no Kata* addresses from the beginning very carefully the principles of judo.

Shisei - Body attitude

The body position is the beginning and the end of a fight. Depending on how judoka is positioned in front of the opponent, may or may not, execute a technique. *Nage no Kata* has two positions, two attitudes that we can also find in *shiai* (contest) (Inogai, T., Habersetzer R, 1998):

1. *Shizentai* - natural position
2. *Jigotai* - defensive position

In *Shizentai* judoka is in a waiting attitude, peace and tranquillity, when the danger is not present.

In *Jigotai* judoka enters in preparation for battle. The legs are opened apart for a better balance. It is moment when the mind and body of judoka is on alert.

These two elements are at the beginning of a *shiai* when both judoka are facing *tatami* (mat) waiting for the entry and greeting, the moment of the attack.

In *Nage no Kata* we find these two positions at the beginning and the end of *Kata*.

The importance of positions (Kazuzo Kudo, *Dynamic Judo*, 1967) – By the body attitude judoka secures himself a stable position and he can execute the technique in equilibrium.

Ma-ai - fighting distance

A technique can be done properly only if an optimal distance of action. The fact that a judoka has the physical qualities necessary to throw an opponent on the mat does not provide the safety of success when fighting with a partner that takes account of distance (*ma-ai*).

Koshi techniques (hip) will be executed mostly at small and very short distances (*chikama*), while *Te* (arm) techniques will be executed at long distances, and the *Ashi* (foot) ones only on the displacement and at small and medium distances, with a few exceptions.

Nage no Kata gives the distance between the two judoka highest importance. The two are in a continuous and permanent "fight" to keep optimal distance. While Uke is trying unbalance backward or forward, right or left, Tori withdraws or move forward to get Uke out of his balance. (*Kano, Jigoro - Kodokan Judo*, 2013).

If *shiai* allows static moments, *Nage no Kata* cannot accept stop moving. The two judokas are perfect harmony regarding both, distance and displacement.

Kumi Kata - Grip

Nage no Kata preserves classic *Kumi Kata* from times of the master Jigoro Kano, during which the sleeves (*sode*) of kimono were long only to the elbows. The grip was done by hand directly on the arm of partner (*Scott, S., 2011*).

Shintai – The moving

The current judo competition almost eliminated movements, preferring static positions. Traditional Judo is based on movement, so all the techniques of *Nage no Kata* are executed on movement. No matter which of the two forms we refer *shiai* or *kata*, movements are either *ayumi ashi* (moving with normal step) or *Tsugi ashi* (moving with added step). The directions are forward, backward, left side and right side.

Shintai seeks to break Uke's balance while Tori is at a good enough distance (*ma-ai*) to perform the technique.

Ikioi - Momentum

It refers to time that Uke initiates the attack, the moving and the gripping. To perform an attack, Uke makes use of force which Tori, by sensing *Kasumi* (the time) returns it in favour of him. *Ikioi* is the most often used in *shiai* and represents the moment when one of the combatants attacks to recover the time or the number of points. It is chaotic, uncontrolled and rarely bring any positive result (Barbos, I.P., 2014).

The *Nage no Kata* we find *Ikioi* at Uke's attack with *shomen uchi* (strike with the fist from up to down) from *Te waza* and *Yoko Sutemi waza* (side sacrifice art).

Kasumi – The moment

The action time. If Tori does not feel the right moment to input technique, then the chance to throw becomes invalid. *Kasumi* is the time of initiation and execution of a technique and does not require a very large force (Barbos, I.P., 2014, p.25).

Tai sabaki – Turning the body

It is one of the most important principles of judo. It is "the beginning and the end of Judo²". *Shiai* ignore this important principle, which leads implicitly to hinder and delay in execution of a technique. *Nage no Kata* focuses on two major forms of *Tai Sabaki*:

1. *Mae- sabaki* – body pivoting forward (*Ippon-seoi nage*, *Tsuri-komi-goshi*, etc.)
2. *Yoko sabaki* - body pivoting sideways (*Uki Goshi*, *Harai Goshi*)

Kuzushi – Unbalancing

² These words were spoken by Japanese master *Kyuzo Mifune* (1883-1965) 10th Dan, and written in Mahito, O. (1972) - *Judo. Grundlagen-Methodik*, Falken-Ferlag. Niederhausen (n.a)

The execution of an unbalance is based on the principles listed above, to which are added the force (as a form of specific physical preparation). *Kuzushi* is actually what is seen from "outside", the physical side. It is getting Uke out of his balance, until he is brought the level where the two combatants forces equalize, allowing Tori to execute the technique more easily (Mahito, O., 1972).

Both the *Shiai* and *Nage no Kata* aim the unbalance to occur in the shortest time. In *Nage no Kata* is desired that it be enforced to maximum level that Uke can keep lowest balance. *Harai goshi* runs when Uke is heavily unbalanced toward his small toes fingers and he cannot perform any other step to rebalance (Sacripanti A, 1987).

Kuzushi involves bringing Uke in what the Japanese call "*Kuzure no Jota* ", which is *the state of unbalance*. Sometimes, as in the case of sacrifice techniques (*Sutemi-waza*) Tori is one who reaches for *Kuzure no Jota* while throwing Uke.

Conclusions

By analyzing the principles of judo listed above it is recommended to practice *Nage no Kata* at all levels of sports training. This will provide judoka the basis of technical training required in combat situations.

Nage no Kata offers injured athletes an alternative in their further sports activity. *Shiai* loses the "aesthetic quality" while the *Nage no Kata* may miss at first glance the energy consumed during *shiai*.

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