

The Sport of Catch Wrestling



The Certified Catch Wrestler™ Handbook

The Sport of Catch Wrestling: The Certified Catch Wrestler Handbook™

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About the Author

Jake Shannon has been a student of wrestling since 1977 when, at the age of 4, his mother decided he needed the exercise and discipline found on the wrestling mat. Growing up Mr. Shannon persisted in his study of grappling despite suffering gangrene poisoning, cancer (Hodgkin's lymphoma), and a broken neck.

He attended the **University of Colorado, Boulder** on a leadership scholarship as a part of the University's **President's Leadership Class** and in 1995 he graduated with a bachelor degree in *English*. Mr. Shannon received his *Master of Science degree in Financial Engineering* from **Golden Gate University** in 2002.

Over the years he has held a variety of positions; he was the *Manager of Shipping* for **Laissez Faire Books** in San Francisco, California; an *Associate Statistician* for **Abacus-Direct** in Broomfield, Colorado; a *Professional Wrestler* for the **Van's Warped Tour** and **Incredible Strange Wrestling**; a *Derivatives Specialist Manager* for **Financial Engineering Associates**; and the *Manager of Modeling* for a leading reverse mortgage specialist. Mr. Shannon currently lives in Costa Mesa, California. He and his wife Sondra had their first child.

Currently, Mr. Shannon is the Executive Director of Scientific Wrestling Online (www.ScientificWrestling.com) and has produced several DVDs starring the world's greatest grapplers as well as published several highly acclaimed books on Western Martial Arts including:

- **The Authoritative Encyclopedia of Scientific Wrestling, Volumes I – IV**
- **The Classical Pugilism and Bare-Knuckle Boxing Companion, Volumes I & II**
- **An Introduction to Vintage Jiu-Jitsu**
- **The Handbook of Authentic Indian Club Swinging**

Beyond grappling, Mr. Shannon has studied tae kwon do, judo, boxing, Brazilian jiu-jitsu, and Professional Wrestling. Mr. Shannon has single-mindedly devoted his grappling training to the deliberate study of authentic professional catch-as-catch-can wrestling since 1998.

About Scientific Wrestling

Scientific Wrestling was established in 2003. An independent association of grappling and Catch Wrestling practitioners, historians, and enthusiasts, its members include some of the all time greats in the sport of wrestling including Olympic champions, Mixed Martial Arts champions, and World-Record Holders as well as grassroots level practitioners and enthusiasts.

In just 4 years, *Scientific Wrestling's* membership has expanded worldwide and has made available instructional and educational material that was once either unavailable or exceedingly rare to both its members and the public at large.

Scientific Wrestling's mission is to be the leading professional association for Catch Wrestlers, managed for and by competitive Catch Wrestlers and dedicated to the advancement of Catch Wrestling through education, training, and the promotion of the rules of Catch Wrestling globally.

In fulfillment of its mission, *Scientific Wrestling* offers the **SW Certified Catch Wrestler™** program, the world's leading certification program for professional Catch Wrestlers. With the guidance of the esteemed *Scientific Wrestling Board of Advisors*, the **SW Certified Catch Wrestler™** designation is considered the benchmark for Catch Wrestlers globally.

For further information about Scientific Wrestling, the **SW Certified Catch Wrestler™** program, and the **SW Toe-Hold Club™** go to Scientific Wrestling's website at www.ScientificWrestling.com.

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Preface

The Sport of Catch Wrestling: The Certified Catch Wrestler™ Handbook provides the core body of knowledge for Catch Wrestlers. The institution of Catch Wrestling has rapidly evolved over the last century and has become widely recognized as one of the all-time great repositories of grappling knowledge.

This Handbook was originally written to provide support for candidates taking the *SW Catch Wrestler Audit™* administered by Scientific Wrestling. As such, it reviews a wide variety of practical topics in Catch-As-Catch-Can wrestling in a consistent and systematic fashion.

Scientific Wrestling's formal mission is to be the leading professional association for Catch Wrestlers, managed for and by competitive Catch Wrestlers and dedicated to the advancement of Catch Wrestling through education, training, and the promotion of the rules of Catch Wrestling globally. As part of delivering that mission I have authored *The Sport of Catch Wrestling: The Certified Catch Wrestler™ Handbook*.

The **SW Certified Catch Wrestler™** designation has been engineered to be the official quality-control benchmark of knowledge, performance, and coaching for the sport of Catch Wrestling. This program is the culmination of many years of studying the sport, science, and art of Catch-As-Catch-Can Wrestling. As much as possible, the material provided herein has been fortified with the advice and extensive consultation from legitimate expert Catch Wrestlers from yesteryear, as well as those modern experts that trace their training lineage back to Catch Wrestling.

Finally, in creating this manual, I wish to express my gratitude to:

Mr. Karl Gotch for your input, your patience and your understanding of my pursuit of information about Catch. Thank you for the countless hours you have spent educating this “dumkoff” about wrestling. If not for your persistence and integrity, our grappling world would look very different today. Thank you for everything you have done.

Mr. Billy Wicks for the help in figuring sorting out the real deal in Catch. Pops, you have been a tremendous help, even from a distance I have learned a ton from you. Thank you.

Mr. Dick Cardinal for sharing his time and efforts in the quest to keep Catch Wrestling alive (also for teaching me the elusive “West Point Ride”!). I feel very lucky to have picked your brain and learned from you. Thank you.

Mr. Frank Cain for sharing my vision to bring back competitive shoots and for sharing his excellent advice, the *SW Toe-Hold Club™* is homage to your teenage exploits. Thank you.

Mr. Yoshiaki Fujiwara for carrying the Catch torch to the next generation of grapplers. Thank you for your studies and pursuit of real submissions. You have influenced many competing today, whether they know it or not. Thank you.

Mr. Josh Barnett for his unwavering support and for flying the flag of Catch Wrestling in the modern Mixed Martial Arts arena, adapting and improvising Catch Wrestling for today's contests. The material on jiu-jitsu as it relates to Catch Wrestling is in this Handbook only because of your great suggestion. Thank you.

Mr. Frank Shamrock for perfecting submission fighting and for sharing your gift for teaching submission fighting as well. Thank you.

Mr. Mark Schultz for his gameness and his faith in Scientific Wrestling™™ and for being a man of honor. Thank you.

Mr. Wade Schalles for his dedication to all things wrestling and his single-minded pursuit of excellence in pinning. Thank you.

Mr. Mark Fleming for the countless time spent helping me get my bearings in a sporting business crippled by kayfabe. Thank you.

Mr. Bill Cogswell for the friendship, integrity, advice, and humor. Thank you.

Mr. Mark Jones for his openness and inquiries with regards to Catch Wrestling. Your efforts are to be applauded. Thank you.

Mr. Nathan Hatton for your research, contributions to everything historical, and your passion. Your help has truly made a difference. Thank you.

Mr. Ryan Hanlon for all the drive and will to succeed that you've shared (as well as bruises and abrasions). Thank you.

Mr. Drew Price for the countless hours of conversation and dedication to learning about catch wrestling first hand from the source. Thank you.

Coach Mark Black for all the help and for your deep commitment to wrestling in all its forms.

The Expertise Theory Researchers that I have cited in this handbook. Thank you for your rigorous study of excellence!

You, for caring enough to learn about Catch Wrestling!

Jake Shannon

October 2006

Dear Jake,

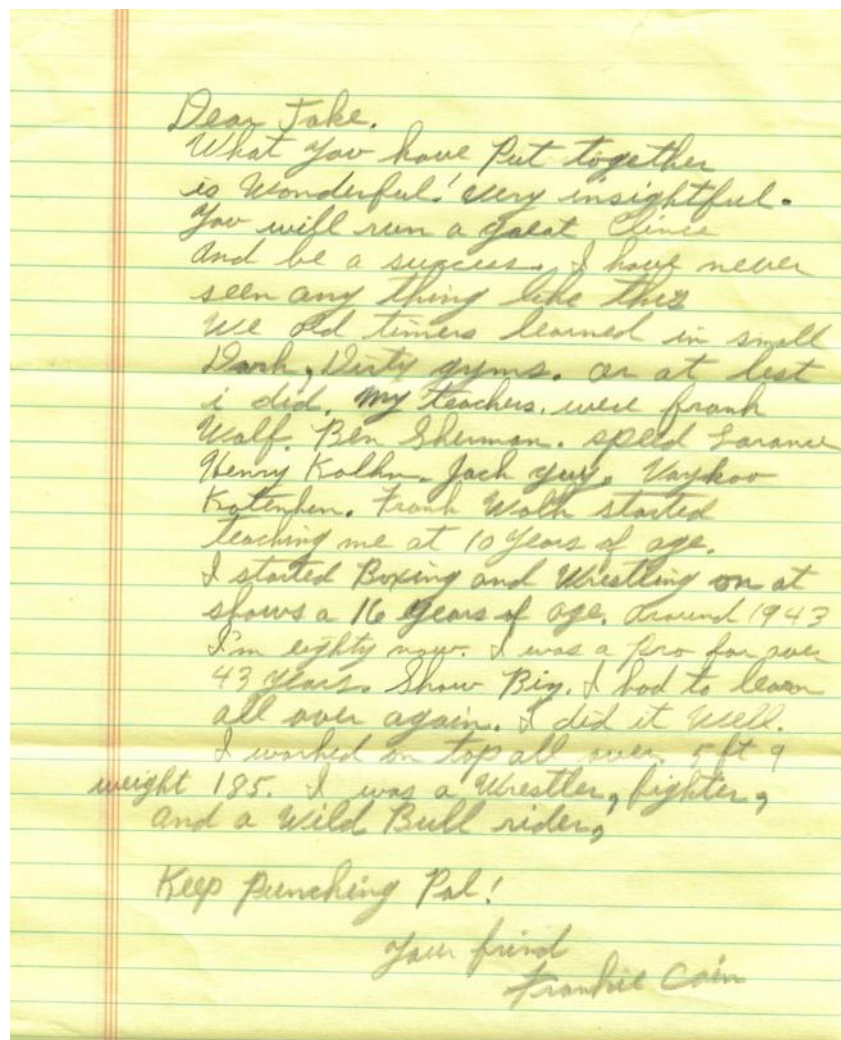
What you have put together is wonderful! Very insightful. You will run a great clinic and be a success. I have never seen anything like this.

We old timers learned in small, dark, dirty gyms. Or at least I did. My teachers were Frank Wolf, Ben Sherman, Speed Larance, Henry Kolhn, Jack Guy, Waino Ketonhen. Frank Wolf started teaching me at 10 years of age. I started boxing and wresting on At Shows at 16 years of age. Around 1943.

I am eighty now. I was a pro for over 43 years. Show biz, I had to learn all over again. I did it well. I worked on top all over. 5 ft 9, weight 185. I was a wrestler, fighter, and a Wild Bull rider.

Keep Punching Pal!

Your friend,
Frankie Cain



Dear Jake,
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is wonderful. Very insightful.
You will run a great clinic
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Introduction



What is Catch Wrestling?

With the recent popularity of Mixed Martial Art/“NHB” competitions, it is important to remember the term "No-Holds-Barred" was originally coined to describe early 20th century American Catch-As-Catch-Can Wrestling matches. In fact, it can be reasonably argued that Catch Wrestling is the direct ancestor of today’s Mixed Martial Arts, Pro-Wrestling, and Freestyle Wrestling:

Catch Wrestling's Influence Upon Freestyle Wrestling

Just as Jigoro Kano removed the dangerous maneuvers from jiu-jitsu to create the safer sport of Judo, so were the more dangerous holds and submissions of Catch removed to allow people to safely participate in wrestling. Hence “amateur” wrestling was born.

Catch Wrestling’s Influence Upon Pro-wrestling

The legitimate contests became "worked" or fixed when greedy promoters decided that scripted matches with predetermined outcomes were more profitable than the legitimate Catch-As-Catch-Can contests. Outraged journalist learned of the fixed fights and this betrayal of the public's trust unfortunately spelled the end of authentic catch wrestling in America. It still attracts unsavory and opportunistic individuals today. The rules you see on today's televised "Sports Entertainment" still reflect the old Catch-As-Catch-Can rules where a pin or submission may win the contest.

Catch Wrestling's Influence Upon Mixed Martial Arts (MMA):

The first modern match between a striker and a grappler happened in 1887 between heavyweight boxing champion of the world John L. Sullivan and Greco-Roman wrestling champion William Muldoon. Sullivan was slammed to the mat in two minutes. The next big match took place in the late 1890s when boxer Bob Fitzsimmons challenged European wrestling champ Ernest Roeber. Roeber took Fitzsimmons to the mat and applied an arm lock, making Fitzsimmons quit. In 1936, heavyweight boxer Kingfish Levinsky challenged professional wrestler Ray Steele in a mixed match that saw Steele win in just 35 seconds.

Fundamentally, Catch Wrestling is a set of rules for grappling competition; you win with a submission or pin, no points determine the winner, and the winner is declared after the best 2 of 3 falls. There are many though that understand Catch Wrestling is something more than the rule set; it is an institution and even a lifestyle.

Catch wrestling has its own history and mind-set and has popularized its own sport-specific techniques and strategies. Granted, there is a slippery slope involved with attaching a particular grappling technique to a particular style since leg bars, toe-holds, double wrist locks, etc. all predate recorded history. However each generation’s athletes make famous their own favorite maneuvers and the generation of Catch Wrestlers that made the style famous in the late 19th and early 20th century was no exception.

The aim of this handbook is to preserve the techniques and strategies of the old-timers while encouraging the open evolution and development of the sport of Catch Wrestling for today's interested grapplers. Just remember, if it is legal under Catch rules, it can be rightly considered a Catch Wrestling technique (the same holds true for the respective sports of Judo, Sombo, Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, etc.).

Because of its stated rules, the sport of Catch Wrestling focuses upon ground wrestling. In the absence of a point system it is impossible to secure a pin while standing and it is significantly less likely to secure a submission win from standing (however, the latter is not impossible by any means).

Toward this end, the Catch Wrestler seeks to use gravity in securing the win. As the old wrestling saying goes; "Bulls get killed on the floor". The Catch Wrestler is confident in knowing that the law of gravity is on their side with regards to taking a fight to the ground so when it does, the Catch Wrestler deftly changes from being as light as necessary while transitioning positions to making the opponent fully carry their weight to effectively ride and control their opponent.



The cultural values prevalent at the turn-of-the-20th century lead Western Civilization to celebrate and honor Catch Wrestling. As such Catch Wrestlers should endeavor to appreciate the values of independence, reason, hard work, and competitiveness.

Independence – Catch Wrestling is not a team sport. One man alone stands atop the mountain of beaten and broken competitors to be crowned Champion. The Catch Wrestler understands when looking in the mirror that he alone is responsible for his successes and his failures.

Reason – Catch Wrestling is a dangerous game of physical chess. The smart player is rewarded and the sport is frequently referred to as a “science” and “scientific”.

Hard Work – Catch wrestlers competed on grassy fields during the Civil War, on gravel covered clearings after working a full day in coal mines or steel mills after the war, and on hard floors covered only with canvas during the heights of its popularity with Jenkins, Hackenschmidt, and Gotch. Wrestling is hard. It takes a special person to show up at the gym, day after day, year after year and push beyond their physical and mental limits.

Competitiveness – These men were filled with pride and motivation to prove their skills. These men literally put their money where their mouths were and were always game.

Unfortunately, there has not been real Catch Wrestling to watch or participate in since the turn of the 20th Century.

SW Certified Catch Wrestlers™ are here to change that...

What is a Certified Catch Wrestler™?

The SW Certified Catch Wrestler™ designation is intended to give candidates the building blocks necessary to put them on the fast track to excellence in Catch Wrestling. The question this designation seeks to answer is:

Are great Catch Wrestlers born or made?



The study of excellence in sports, games, and the arts and sciences has long been an area of intense scrutiny. The first systematic application of scientific method to the study of the general field of human expertise is largely recognized to be the seminal work on chess experts by Adriann de Groot (see his **Thought and Choice in Chess**, 1978).

However, the study of the acquisition of expert performance really didn't mature into its own full-fledged interdisciplinary research program until the economist Herbert A. Simon (one of the principle founders of Artificial Intelligence, a leading researcher and modeler of human cognition, and the 1978 Nobel Prize winner in Economics) turned his eye toward the subject. Simon coined a psychological law, called "The 10 Year Rule" that recognizes that it takes approximately a decade of serious effort to master any field (see his article **Skill in Chess** written with W.G. Chase in *American Scientist*, 1973). Later studies support the application of this general rule to other subjects, including sports (for more, see Bloom's study **Developing talent in young people**, 1985).

According to recent cognitive science research, a strong motivation to excel is far more important than innate "talent" in becoming an expert. It is this motivation that drives the deliberate practice that creates masters.

"Repetition is the mother of skill."

-Aristotle

What is Deliberate Practice?

Leading Expertise Theorist K. Anders Ericsson of Florida State University argues that while experience is important, it is deliberate practice or “effortful study” (by this he means constantly tackling challenges that lie just beyond one’s skill set) that is crucial in the mastery of any particular subject. Such deliberate practice is the difference between the enthusiast that never advance beyond the basics despite spending hours grappling (or playing chess or studying a foreign language) and the properly trained athlete that eclipses the aforementioned in a relatively brief time.

The key that separates “deliberate” practice from non-deliberate practice is concentration. **KEY: The concentration required to master skills initially beyond the realm of competency is the key to mastery.** Repetitive performance, critical analysis, and feedback-based improvements transforms practitioners into masters.

Fortunately, Janet L. Starkes and Nicola J. Hodges at McMaster University, Janice M. Deakin and April Hayes at Queen’s University, and Fran Allard at the University of Waterloo published a chapter in the 1996 compendium *The Road To Excellence: The Acquisition of Expert Performance in the Arts and Sciences, Sports and Games*, edited by K. Anders Ericsson entitled **Deliberate Practice in Sports: What Is It Anyway?**. To answer that question, the authors analyzed the practice activities of skilled figure skaters and competitive wrestlers.

What is relevant to **SW Certified Catch Wrestler™** candidates is that Club and international (both retired and non-retired) wrestlers were polled and asked to share their statistics from their training journals. They reported a number of activities that were not wrestling related that the wrestlers engaged in to maintain conditioning (mostly solo activities, e.g., swimming, cycling, running, weights, diet planning, watching wrestling, mental rehearsal, etc.) and a number of activities that required team practice (coaching, sparring, drilling, etc.)

The authors dug into the microstructure of practice using univariate and multivariate analysis of variance (ANOVA and MANOVA) to determine the difference between the hours spent in practice between the club level athletes and the international level athletes. As expected, the international athletes put in more time with deliberate practice.

While there was no significant difference between the two groups on time spent practicing solo activities, there were differences in the amount *and* quality of time the international level athletes spent with team practice (and this time was mostly spent sparring since it is both task specific and addresses conditioning simultaneously). On average, the international athletes spent nearly 11 hours a week in team practice and the club athletes spent just about 10.

The extra hour a week wasn’t the only difference that separated the two groups; the international athletes had more consistency in their practice too. Also, the skill level of sparring partners on the international level may have a significant impact toward pushing members of that group to higher levels of performance and learning.

Note that the most relevant practice behavior according to the wrestler’s ratings in this study is time spent on the mat working with another wrestler. The second most relevant activity was time spent working with a coach. What this means for the aspiring Catch wrestler is that not only do *you have to put in the time at team practice, you also need to practice with people that are better than you.*

As a **SW Certified Catch Wrestler™** you will be expected to deliberately and consistently practice for competition under SW Catch Wrestling Rules®. Please read the re-certification requirements in the chapter entitled **After The Audit**. We offer this *Certified Catch Wrestler Handbook™* and the **SW**

Certified Catch Wrestler™ designation not as the final word on Catch Wrestling but as the beginning, a road map on the path to excellence in the art, science, and sport of Catch-As-Catch-Can Wrestling.

The idea of deliberate practice is covered in the first book of Martin “Farmer” Burns’ classic *Lessons in Wrestling and Physical Culture*:

Necessity of Actual Work.

You might read all the literature ever printed, and listen to all the lectures ever prepared, and watch the world’s greatest athletes, and all of this would not do you a great deal of good, so far as making yourself proficient is concerned.

ACTUAL WORK IS WHAT COUNTS. In order to develop your muscles to a degree that will be helpful, the student must take up the work systematically. He must not hope to make progress too rapidly, but if the practice is carried on with regularity, and an earnest and determined effort is made, nothing in the world will prevent a normal man or boy from becoming a splendid athlete.

There has been a lot of talk of athletes in various sports “being in the zone” or attaining “flow” since Csikszentmihalyi’s 1990 book *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Performance*. Essentially, the flow state, as commonly understood, represents a state of pleasure, well being or euphoria that occurs when one is performing a task where there is a perfect match between demand and skill.

What this means for the Catch Wrestler’s agenda is that during club practice you want to push yourself just beyond the “zone” or “flow” state (into “effortful study” or consistently tackling challenges that lie just beyond one’s skill set) so that we may achieve a perfect match between demand and skill during competition.

SW Certified Catch Wrestler™ Code of Ethics

- The **SW Certified Catch Wrestler™** designation will not be issued to any candidate who does not complete the *SW Catch Wrestler Audit™* within the allotted time with a passing score.
- The **SW Certified Catch Wrestler™** designation will not be issued to any candidate until all fees are paid in full.
- All candidates and **SW Certified Catch Wrestlers™** will be game, honest, and respectful of others. In particular, any candidate or **SW Certified Catch Wrestler™** that is found to be disrespectful towards *Scientific Wrestling*, its *Advisory Board* or staff, as determined by the Executive Director of *Scientific Wrestling*, shall forfeit all **SW Certified Catch Wrestler™** privileges and their **SW Certified Catch Wrestler™** designation.
- All candidates and **SW Certified Catch Wrestlers™** will not knowingly endanger or injure others unless defending their life or the life of others.
- Any violation of the **SW Certified Catch Wrestler™ Standards and Code of Ethics** may result in revoking certification and any associated privileges.

The Certified Catch Wrestler™ Designation: On the Road to Expertise

To achieve the designation of SW Certified Catch Wrestler™, all candidates must pass the *SW Catch Wrestler Audit™*. The *SW Catch Wrestler Audit™* will center about Catch-As-Catch-Can competition while addressing the very basic proficiencies necessary for CACC practice and teaching others the art. The ultimate aim of this program is to keep the torch of Catch-As-Catch-Can wrestling alive for generations to come, not necessarily to create experts. This is about basic competency in the sport of Catch Wrestling, first and foremost with new Catch Wrestling experts arising as a by-product.



Introduction

This booklet explains the Farmer Burns' School of Scientific Wrestling and Athletics. It shows how men and boys of all ages may train in WRESTLING and SELF-EFFICIENCY under the immediate direction of the "Master Trainer of the World."

The booklet is sent to you at your own request, which indicates that you either want to know SCIENTIFIC WRESTLING or you realize the need of developing a PERFECT BODY in order that you may better enjoy life and back up your efforts in ALL THINGS with the greatest element of all—A STRONG, WILLING AND ATTRACTIVE PHYSIQUE.

The lessons of this school have been tested in all countries of the globe. Great and influential men everywhere are members of the school and unreservedly endorse the systems and methods. If you are in EARNEST then this school offers you the most wonderful opportunity for SELF-DEVELOPMENT that has ever been devised.

Only School of its Kind in the World

This is the only correspondence school in existence de-

FARMER BURNS, MASTER TRAINER
"The best conditioned man of his age in the World."—Physical Culture, Aug. 1909.

The SW Certified Catch Wrestler™ is not the first attempt at educating the interested in Catch Wrestling. The highly successful mail-order course by Martin "Farmer" Burns was the first. However, thanks to improvements in transportation and information since the days of Farmer Burns, we can now reasonably expect SW Certified Catch Wrestler™ candidates to verify their skill by wrestling in front of other Catch wrestlers under standardized and objective methods.



Farmer Burns
The World's Most Scientific Wrestler

This photo shows Mr. Burns at the age of 56. Note the power and strength of character expressed in this picture. He has devoted his entire life to athletics, but is first known to the public as the World's Premier Wrestler. He has wrestled and won far more matches than any other living man.

Wrestling less than 150 pounds, he has wrestled over 4,000 professional matches and won all but seven of them—an almost unbelievable feat. Hundreds of his victories have been over the best known foreign champions that outwrestled him from 50 to 150 pounds.

He forced his way to the very top by winning the World's Heavyweight Championship, defeating all of the World's greatest heavyweights in the face of almost impossible odds in weight and strength.

He has devoted his life to the study of wrestling and physical development and has taught more persons, several times over, than any other man.

He discovered Frank Gotch working on a farm and recognized in him the possibilities of a wonderful athlete. He took Gotch in charge and promised to make him "Champion of the Whole World." He made good his word when, on April 2, 1904, in Chicago, Gotch decisively defeated the Great BISMARCK LION, George Hackenschmidt, in a best-of-three-contest, for the CHAMPIONSHIP OF THE WORLD.

Farmer Burns School of Wrestling

Lessons
in
Wrestling and Physical Culture
OMAHA, NEBRASKA

Book No. 1 Lessons 1 and 2

This course of lessons is PRACTICAL. It is simple, system. The language is plain. The whole subject lays in men when preparing the lessons was made it possible for the student to get results.

There are many methods of physical culture. See the lesson on PHYSICAL CULTURE, and you will see how it is a rule the instructions in these courses are very good and will develop certain parts of the body independently of most of them are too technical.

In this course you studiously avoid all attempts at such philosophy and anatomy. It's not all about terms, words and phrases. It's about RESULTS. It's about PHYSICAL CULTURE, and you will see how it is presented to you in the most simple and effective manner possible. You do not need to read through any other page of useless words and technical terms to find out what the author is trying to get at. You need to be told clearly, but briefly, EXACTLY what to do in order to get a certain result, and this is precisely the plan we follow in presenting you with this highly important information.

You have enrolled in the school to secure more KNOWLEDGE. You do not need a set of big scientific books. The school has no books for sale—it has INSTRUCTIONS. The letters and instructions are presented to you through these lesson-books, with some of splendid and accurate photographs. The printed booklets are available only to receive the instructions. You do not pay an over cent for the books, but for the information only.

If, before we have selected the most effective plan to teach by mail the subject of wrestling and physical culture. You may, therefore, expect our instructions will be repeated for the average student.

We want the name of teaching your instructor's name built your approval, and we believe it will be especially after you have received several of the lesson booklets and get well into the real spirit of the work.

"I want you to become a splendid athlete. I want you to get entirely through with my course, and if you do you are bound to succeed. You have never undertaken anything in your life more important than the work of building up a perfect body. STICK TO IT. BE CAREFUL."—Farmer Burns.

Copyright 1919, by Farmer Burns School of Wrestling



The **SW Certified Catch Wrestler™** designation ensures basic competency while expert designations must be earned on the mat in competition in Catch Wrestling promotions (such as *The King of Catch Wrestling Tournament™* and *Pro-Catch Wrestling™*).

The **SW Certified Catch Wrestler™** designation will prove the successful candidate's proficiency in the following 3 areas:

- 1) **History, Competition, & Conditioning (50 points)**
- 2) **Principles, Positions, & Takedowns/Tie-Ups/Transitions (30 points)**
- 3) **Winning Techniques: Submission Chains & Pinning Combinations (20 points)**

To earn the **SW Certified Catch Wrestler™** designation all candidates must score a minimum of 85 points.

History, Competition & Conditioning

History:

All candidates must pass the written exam. The exam is comprised of multiple choice questions, true/false, recognition questions and short answers. All candidates will have 60 minutes to complete the exam.

All candidates are encouraged to review the following material before the exam:

The Sport of Catch Wrestling: The Certified Catch Wrestler Handbook by Jake Shannon

Milo to Londos by Nat Fleischer

Catch Wrestling by Mark Hewitt

Catch: The Hold Not Taken (DVD)

Reading anything available on wrestling published by EJMAS (Online)

The Life Work of Farmer Burns by Martin Burns

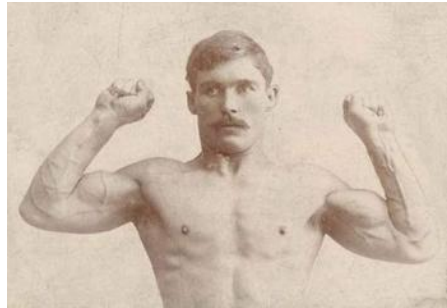
Hooker by Lou Thesz

Interviews w/ *Billy Wicks, Dick Cardinal*

On the Mat and Off by Hjalmer Lundin



Competition & Conditioning:



KEY: The SW Certified Catch Wrestler™ must have the following 5 attributes:

Speed

Agility

Strength

Endurance

Reaction Time

To prove their level of knowledge and level of conditioning, all candidates must successfully complete one SW Catch Wrestling Rules® match before the Audit committee (30 points). Heart and guts will determine passing or failing, not necessarily winning, although winners will automatically score 25 points. Every attempt will be made to match competitors based on experience and weight but cannot be guaranteed. All candidates should be prepared to wrestle outside their weight class.





All candidates will be expected to know the rules of catch wrestling by memory and may be asked to recite them on the spot during the audit (10 points).

SW Catch Wrestling Rules©:

- Submission or pin wins. All submissions are permitted and the pin count is 3 (both scapula must be touching for the full 3 count by the referee). Slamming and strangles allowed.
- All matches are best 2 of 3 falls.
- Win, lose, or draw). No point system used to determine the final outcome. In the event of a draw during tournament play, a rematch is played. In the event of a second draw, both wrestlers will be eliminated.
- 12 minute time limit per fall with 1 minute rest between falls.
- All matches occur in a ring or mat. While any body part on the ropes or out of bounds can break the action, such a break is entirely at the referee's discretion (*this discretionary measure is included to prevent the aggressive wrestler from being punished and to prevent stalling and resets by a passive wrestler going out of bounds intentionally*).
- All referee mandated re-sets start the opponents in center of the wrestling area, with the offending wrestler in the down Par Terre position.
- No striking, biting, eye gouging, hair pulling. Instant disqualification.
- Divisions include
 - Super Heavy Weight (over 225)
 - Heavyweight (over 200 lbs)
 - Light Heavy (180 lbs)
 - Middle (160 lbs)
 - Light (140 lbs)
 - Open



Principles, Positions and Transitions/Takedowns

Section two covers the basics and should not be taken lightly. All candidates will need to demonstrate a sound understanding of the *basic* principles, positions/transitions, and tie-ups/takedowns in Catch Wrestling.



To Whom It May Concern:

You do not have to be an All American or a National Amateur Wrestling Champion to be a good Submission Wrestler. You should know some basic wrestling knowledge, such as sit outs, switches, side rolls, whizzers, takedowns, etc. but you have to remember that submission does not start until you are on the ground or on the mat. That's when you really start to move into your position of advantage like behind your opponent to control him, at the same time using your body parts to punish him. You use your fist, elbows, shin bones, and knees on the sensitive areas of his body. The reason you do this is to get a reaction from your opponent so he will give you an opening for your submission hold.

And you DO NOT HAVE TO KNOW a 1,000 wrestling holds. You should study and practice about 10 or 12 holds and know how to get each one from a different angle or position. Holds like side wrist locks, neck cranks and toe holds.

Conditioning is a different game; you will find that on your own. But the VERY MOST IMPORTANT THING TO REMEMBER IS HOW TO RELAX WHEN YOU ARE WRESTLING. If this was easy, everybody would be doing submission wrestling. It takes a very committed special person to study and learn submission wrestling. Good luck and heads up and elbows in.

Respectfully,

Billy Wicks

Principles:

Since grappling is often times likened to a game of physical chess, it is apropos that we begin our investigation of Catch Wrestling principles with the study of the mental combat in Chess. The formal study of expertise began with De Groot's study of expert and grandmaster-level performance in chess in 1946.

He discovered that, contrary to popular thought, the most skilled players did not actually "think moves ahead" (i.e., utilize "search algorithms") as had been previously thought. Instead, the evidence revealed the importance of *knowledge* and principles to the skilled players' superior performance.

Follow-up research by Simon and Chase (1973) suggested that "chunks" of memory (i.e., conceptual patterns or *principles*) allowed the experts to outperform novices when both were exposed to identical structured chess positions and not a superior IQ or innate "talent".

Likewise in Physics, it has been observed that the representation of an expert physicists' domain is a *principled* one whereas the novices' representations are more situational and less principled (see **Categorization and representation of physics problems by experts and novices** in *Cognitive Science*, 5, by M.T.H. Chi, P. Feltovich, & R. Glaser, 1981).

KEY: A principled approach is the key to excellence in Catch Wrestling. All candidates will be asked to name the following principles and explain them (5 points).

Principle #1) Scientific Method / Gameness:



It is said that the famous Greek philosopher Plato (427-347) was a wrestler in his youth and a double winner of Olympic Pankration.

Generally, the “scientific method” refers to the sum of techniques used in the investigation of claims and in the acquisition of reliable knowledge informed by observable, empirical, quantifiable evidence, evidence which is subject to critical review and logical reasoning (i.e., non-contradictory thought). The concepts of *testing* and *proof* are paramount in science. In this vein, each Catch Wrestling match can be loosely considered a “laboratory” experiment performed on the wrestling mat.

As such, proof of skill is paramount and the phrase “Put up or shut up” harkens back to the true and original American post-Civil War and late 19th Century Lancashire professional style bouts when each fighter would bring a matching purse and the winner would take all. This willingness to put their own money on the line provided unparalleled incentive for hard work for both fighters while also preventing collusion between fighters (i.e., "works" or "dives"). This created the rigorous environment needed for the testing and refining of the techniques and strategies of Catch Wrestling.

Farmer Burns addresses this in book ten of *Lessons in Wrestling and Physical Culture*:

Science in Wrestling

From my various discussions on the subject of speed, time, feint, blocks, etc., you can readily understand what is meant by the term “scientific wrestling.”

When two unskilled persons meet in a rough and tumble mixup, sheer strength will almost always win. In such a contest, the strength is wasted in useless efforts, but in real scientific wrestling, advantage is taken of every opportunity to save strength and trick the opponent, also to wear him down and cause him to expend his energy in a greater degree than you are using your own.

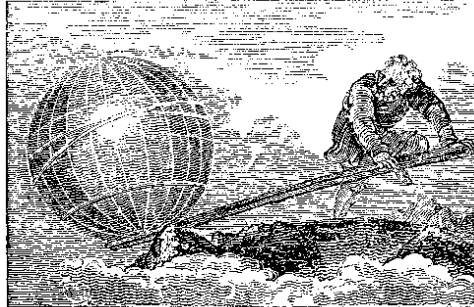
The science of wrestling is so deep that it can not be learned in a few days or a few months, but as you continue the wrestling year after year, you will constantly add to your knowledge and skill until you become a real master of the fine points of the profession.

Use your head fully as much as you do your muscles. Think and plan and scheme constantly while practicing ~~and~~ then when you will get into real contests you will have formed a habit of good generalship.

KEY: Unless you are willing to test it on the mat, you should not call yourself a Catch Wrestler.

Principle #2) Bio-Mechanical Advantage:

Catch Wrestlers must implicitly understand the principles of mechanical advantage as they apply to the human anatomy.



“Wrestling is the opposite of what most people think it is, it is not strength but knowledge, balance, and timing that win in the noble art of wrestling.” -Karl Gotch

In physics and engineering, mechanical advantage is the number of times a simple machine multiplies your effort or force. Simple machines fall into general two camps, those simple machines that are dependent on the vector resolution of forces (the inclined plane, wedge, and screw) and those in which there is an equilibrium of torques (the lever, pulley, and wheel). As a catch wrestler, the simple machines are applied to the human anatomy. In any catch wrestling match, the concepts of the wheel, axle, lever, and pulley are employed in the attempt to pin or submit an opponent. Successful submissions are very much rooted in the principles of classical mechanics.

Applied Bio-Mechanical Advantage & Submission Grappling

Joint/Process	Type	Submission	Simple Machine
Spine	Trochodial	Wrestler's Guillotine/Crooked Head Scissor	Wheel (Torque)
		Boston Crab	Fulcrum (1st Class Lever)
Shoulder	Enarthrodial	Telephone TWL	Wheel (Torque)
		Key Lock	
Elbow	Ginglymus	Short Arm Scissor	Wedge
		Arm Bar	Fulcrum (1st Class Lever)
Knee		Heel Hook	Wheel (Torque)
		Leg Bar	Fulcrum (1st Class Lever)
Ankle & Foot	Arthroidal	Toe-Hold	Wheel (Torque) & Fulcrum (1st Class Lever)
		Achilles Lock	Fulcrum (1st Class Lever)
Breathing	Cardiovascular	Sleeper	Load (2nd Class Lever)
		Front Cravat	Fulcrum (1st Class Lever)

KEY: This understanding of mechanical advantage is what allows the Catch Wrestler to adapt and improvise successfully against a wide array of opponents.

For example, the crooked head scissors uses the torque of the wheel and axel (e.g., their head is the wheel and their neck is the axel) to generate damaging force to the neck; the straight arm bar uses the lever and fulcrum, and the flying mare uses the opponent's arm as the lever (i.e., the moment arm) and your own body as the fulcrum (i.e., the axis of rotation).

Again, we are merely updated an expanding on what Farmer Burns' tried to share in book eight of *Lessons in Wrestling and Physical Culture*:

The students of this course who have followed out the instructions carefully and practiced faithfully, have already learned a great deal about the science of the profession.

If you have been a close student of the lessons and charts you now realize that in order to handle other men positively and easily you must know more about the inside workings of the profession than they do. You realize the importance of SPEED and TIME. You furthermore realize that when it comes to the point of actually overcoming a man by your own power, you must know the value of ANGLES AND LEVERAGE.

If you can secure on your opponent a leverage that gives you a long, powerful stroke against his short resistance effect then you generally have him at a disadvantage. If you wish to move a man's leg when it is in the air, you can do this four times easier by grasping the foot than you will by grasping the knee.

The attachment of the legs and arms represents the fulcrum of a lever and the arms and legs levers themselves. The further out you secure your hold on the arm and the leg the more power you can exert against your opponent.

Make a very careful study of the different leverages that may be employed when working on any and all parts of your opponent's body. By taking advantage of every inch of leverage you will find that you not only obtain better results but what is of equal importance, you exert less of your strength, and hence you will be stronger when you are forced into emergencies.

In catch wrestling, you must impose your will upon your opponent while obeying not just the rules of Catch Wrestling but the rules of physics too. A basic understanding of Stability, Force, Inertia, Work, Levers, Pulleys, Torque, and Gravity will serve all Catch Wrestlers well.

1. **Stability** – The larger your base of support, the greater your stability. Offensively, you seek to destroy your opponent's stability while optimizing your own (e.g. the breaking down of your opponent to the mat). Defensively, you seek to maintain stability despite your opponent's intentions otherwise (e.g., the sprawl)
2. **Force** changes the inertia (resting or moving) of an object.
 - i. Magnitude (How much?)
 - ii. Line of Action (Direction: Horizontal, Vertical, In Between?)
 - iii. Point of Application (Where?)
3. **Inertia**

- i. Newton's 1st Law – A body at rest tends to stay at rest, a body in motion tends to stay in motion.
 - ii. Newton's 2nd Law – the rate of change in the momentum of an object is directly proportional to the amount of force exerted upon the object.
 - iii. Momentum – the product of mass and velocity
- 4. **Work** – the product of force and distance.
 - i. Newton's 3rd Law – the law of reciprocal actions. Objects in contact exert equal and opposite force on each other.
- 5. **Levers** – in the body, bones represent bars, joints represent fulcrums and muscle contractions represent force.
 - i. 1st Class or “Fulcrum” – Like a standard see-saw, a plank with a fulcrum. A perfect example is the way the head balances upon the fulcrum of the neck portion of the spine.

1st Class levers do not produce a great deal of force and hence areas of the body that employ 1st Class Levers are a favored point of attack for the Catch Wrestler

- ii. 2nd Class or “Load” – The object to be moved is placed between the axis of rotation and the point of the application of force.

This sort of lever is used when the forearm is employed as the “load arm” for a sleeper choke.

- iii. 3rd Class or “Effort” – These are the most common levers in the human body, the human arm is perfect example. It is the least energy efficient of the three levers since the input effort is higher than the output load (however the input effort travels a shorter distance than the output load, hence the advantage of a 3rd Class Lever).

As a catch wrestler, we seek to exploit the energy differential between the input effort and output load by grasping the lever arm at the point furthest from the fulcrum (in applying pressure to the elbow joint, for example).

- 6. **Pulleys** – most understand how a pulley works. In the human body, the quadricep tendon goes over the patella and inserts on the tibia bone in the shin
- 7. **Torque** – the magnitude of twist (rotary movement) around an axis of rotation (fulcrum)
- 8. **Gravity** – The Catch Wrestler uses gravity and the ground as a weapon.
 - i. **Center of Gravity** – the point of the human body around which its weight is evenly distributed.
 - ii. **Line of Gravity** – the vertical line straight down from the center of gravity. If this line falls outside of your or the opponent's base of support, then that person will be either in motion or falling.

Principle #3) Conditioning and Wearing Out Your Opponent:



“Conditioning is your greatest hold”

– Karl Gotch

Catch wrestling is a physical endeavor and as such, Catch Wrestlers should possess the exceptional physical conditioning necessary to actively wrestle under Catch rules. Physical conditioning not only serves to win matches and prevent serious injury, but when two wrestlers of equal weight and skill meet it is the better conditioned athlete that will win.

A by-product of superior physical conditioning is the ability to wear down your opponent, both physically and mentally. The Catch Wrestler seeks to create panic, that sensation of drowning or reactive fear, in his opponent while remaining as calm, relaxed, and rational as possible. In this way, the Catch Wrestler seeks to influence both his own nervous system, as well as that of his opponent's, in such a manner as to maximize his chances of winning.

The Catch Wrestler seeks to stimulate his opponent's nervous system to release epinephrine, the hormone produced by the adrenal gland that causes the “fight or flight” response, through aggressive and painful offensive maneuvers. It is important to remember that the Catch Wrestler strives to control his own nervous system to remain calm. He conditions himself to withstand the pain and strain of grappling through the consistent and deliberate practice that drives the necessary neural adaptations. These neural adaptations manifest themselves in the qualities of “mental toughness” and being “in the zone” found in all high level athletes.

Book ten of *Lessons in Wrestling and Physical Culture* drives home this very same point:

Wearing Out Your Opponent

I have touched upon this subject in a previous lesson, but I am afraid that I did not impress upon you the full value of this department of wrestling.

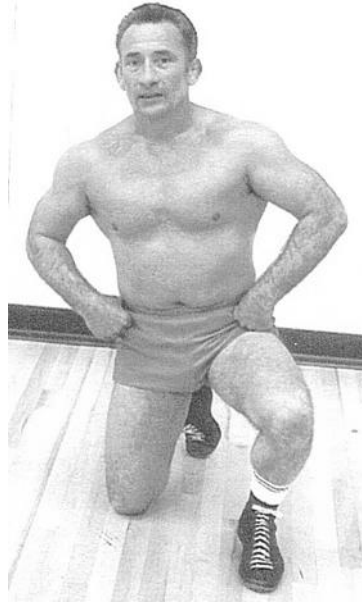
Here are two things to always keep in mind.

First: Save your own strength.

Second: Make your opponent waste his strength.

You save your own strength by resting your body or parts of your body whenever possible. A rest of only a few seconds for an arm or leg will sometimes do a tremendous good.

One of the most effective ways to wear your opponent out is to compel him to carry your weight as much as possible. When standing on your feet or on the mat, throw your weight on his neck and shoulders dozens of times, in fact, whenever you can. Also when working on the mat follow the same practice. Drop your full weight on his back, head or shoulders many, many times, and the effect after 15 or 20 minutes will really be wonderful.



“Catch Wrestlers must exhibit efficiency of execution, movement, and conditioning.”

-Dick Cardinal

Positions & Rides:

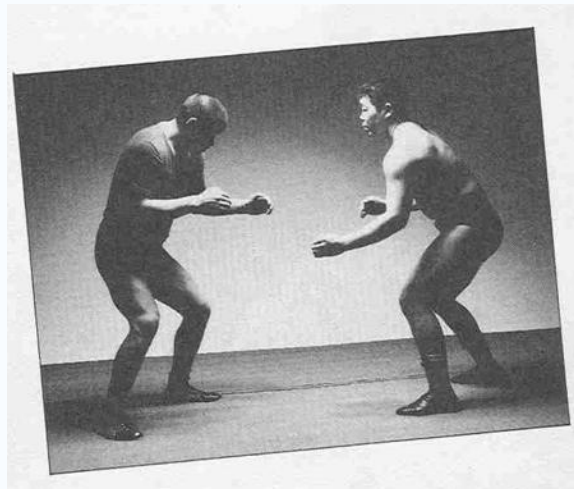
In Catch Wrestling, one must learn to attack and defend from 3 different positions; Standing-up, On Top, and Underneath. Each of these 3 positions has sub-positions that branch from them (demonstrated knowledge of these positions is worth 10 points).

Candidates may demonstrate the following **Positions & Rides, Takedowns/Tie-Ups/Transitions, Pinning Combinations, and Submission Chains** in any combination or order as long as each maneuver listed in the following four sections below is addressed.

Auditors will be judging candidates on not just knowledge of the following **Positions & Rides, Takedowns/Tie-Ups/Transitions, Pinning Combinations, and Submission Chains** but also on the efficiency of execution, movement, and conditioning as well. Creativity in presentation is encouraged and will not be penalized.

KEY: Candidates must loudly and clearly announce each Position, Ride, Takedown, Tie-Up, Transition, Pin, and Submission a moment before demonstrating it for the Audit Board.

1) Standing – The offensive stance is upright, knees slightly bent, head up, and elbows in. The defensive stance is with one side forward, knees slightly bent, head up, and elbows in.



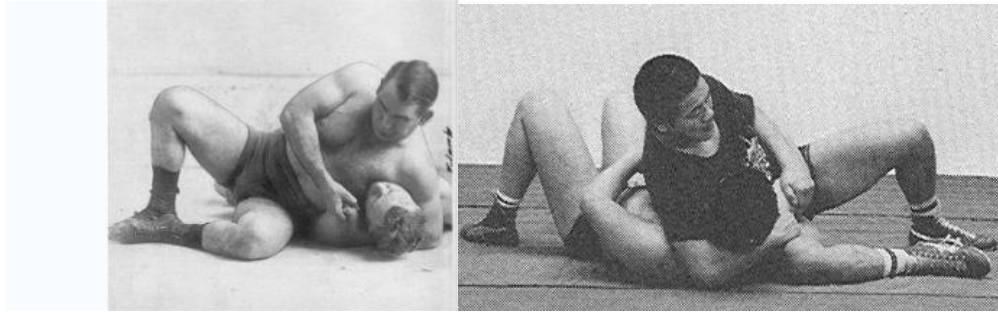
Your goal is to disrupt your opponent's stability and center of gravity and bring them in a controlled manner to the ground while avoiding being taken down yourself (see **Takedowns**).

2) On Top – This is traditionally the winning position for the Catch Wrestler, although it is entirely possible to pull a submission win while not in the top dominant position.

KEY: Make your opponent carry as much of your weight as is possible and economical.

Here are the basic **On Top** positions:

Head Lock and Head & Arm



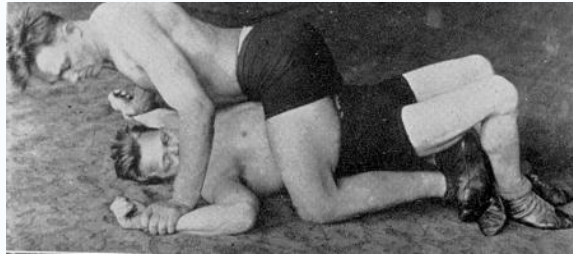
Cross-Body Ride



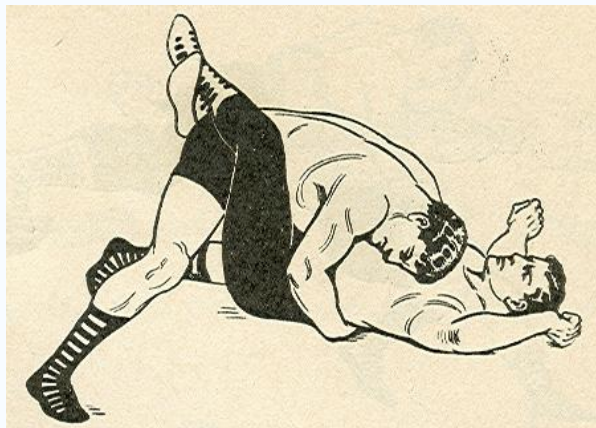
Front North South (i.e., opponent face up, your hip in his face)



Saddle Ride (with or without grapevines. Also shin ride with your shins on your opponent's legs.)

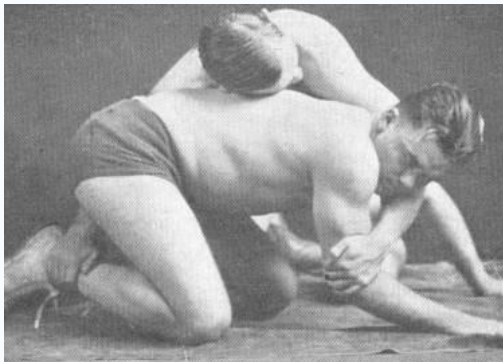


Saturday Night Ride (Catch wrestlers assume this to be a dominate top position and hence the position is described from the perspective of the top man.)



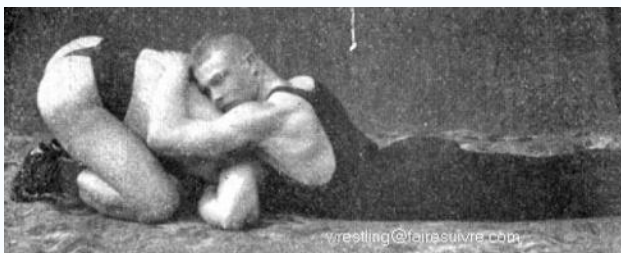
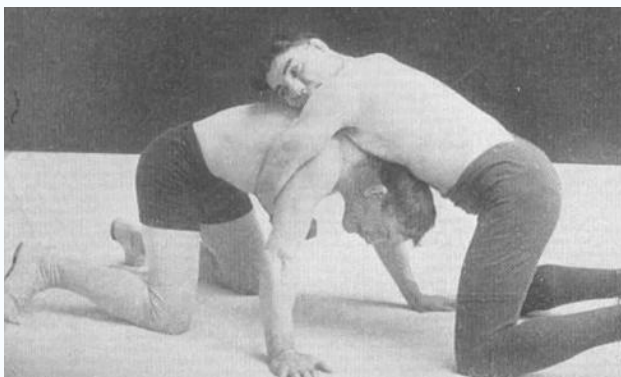
KEY: Control the bottom man's hips. An opponent can be dangerous from this position and may attack from this position. See Appendix 'Jiu-Jitsu As It Relates to Catch Wrestling' for more information.

Rear Rides (includes Single Leg Ride, Ball & Chain Ride, Blanket Ride, Spiral Ride, Crab ride, etc.).



KEY: An effort should be made to make the man carry all the weight in his arms.

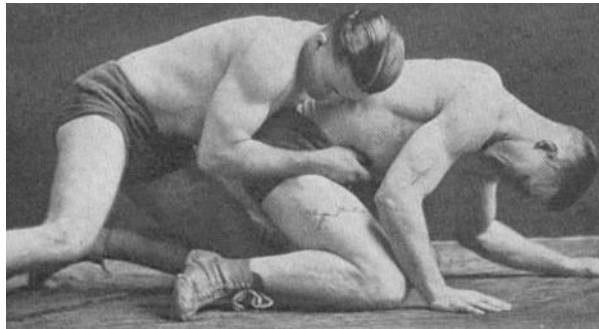
Rear North South (i.e., opponent face down, the back of their skull cradled under your ribcage)



3) Underneath – This position should be escaped from or reverse unless a submission is possible. A focus upon wrist control and getting back to standing is critical to anyone that finds themselves in the underneath position.

All-fours

Key: All your weight should be back off your arms and over your legs to avoid toe-holds, breakdowns, and to make it easier to defend with your arms and stand.



Shelf

Round your back and keep both shoulder blades from touching the mat at the same time. Your knees and elbows should touch and your forearms and shins form a shelf to carry the top man.



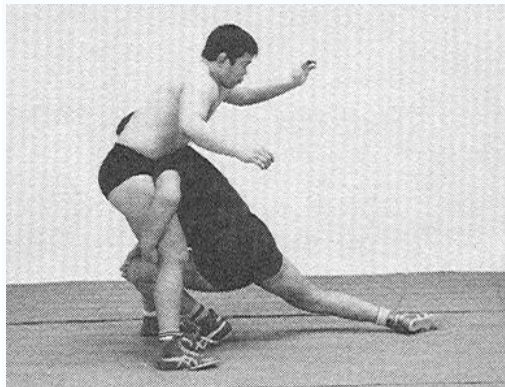
Takedowns/Tie-Ups/Transitions:

A takedown is a transition from the **Standing** position to the **On Top** position. Oftentimes, takedowns are facilitated by use of a **Tie-Up**. A **Tie-Up** is simply the method by which you attempt to control your opponent by placing your hands upon them.

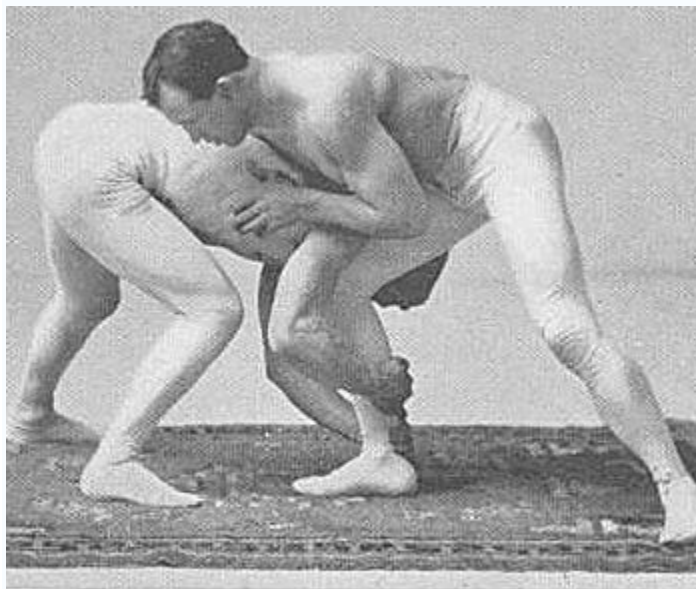
Here are some basics that all candidates must demonstrate and explain (demonstrated knowledge of these basic takedowns and transitions is worth 10 points):

Takedowns

Tackle (aka Double leg)

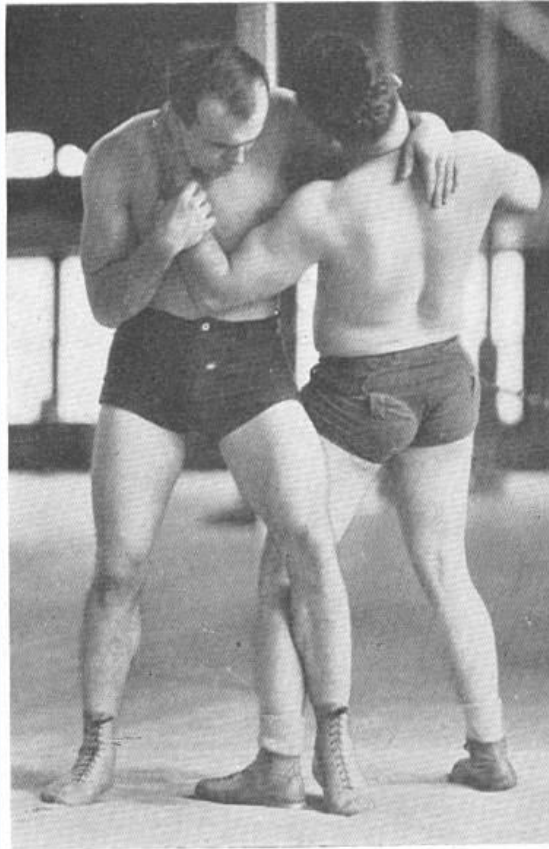


Single Leg Dive

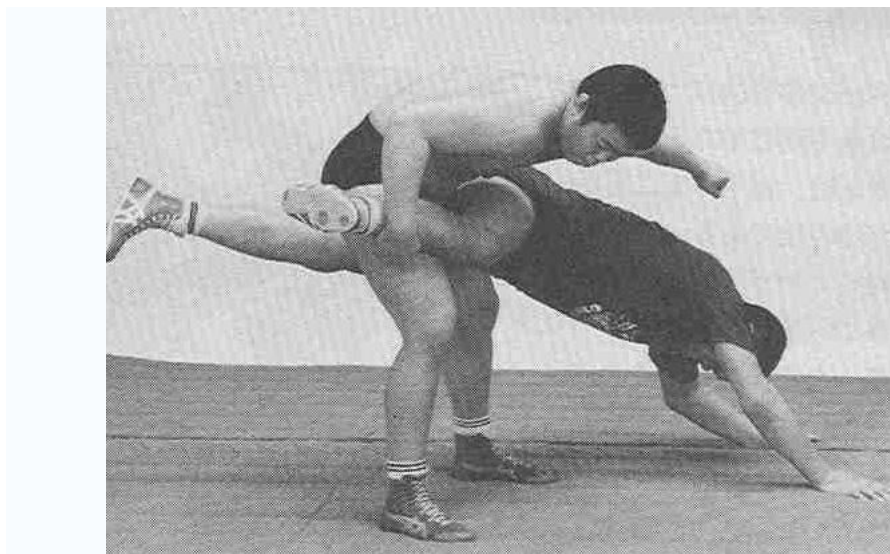


POSITION 104. DIVE FOR LEGS.

Trip (aka Backheel)



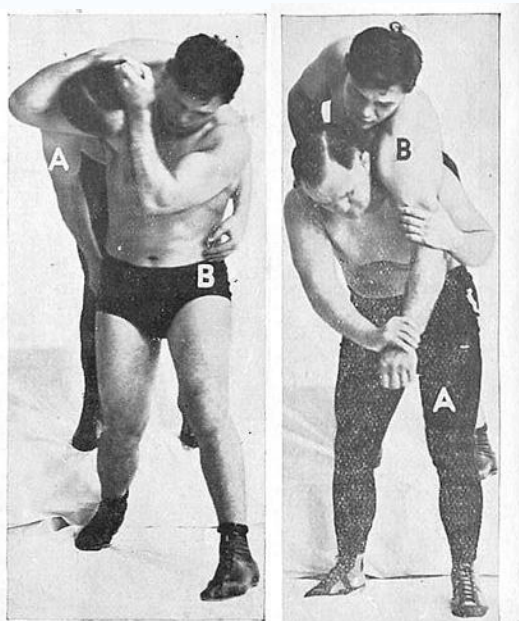
Scissor Takedown



Whizzer



Mare

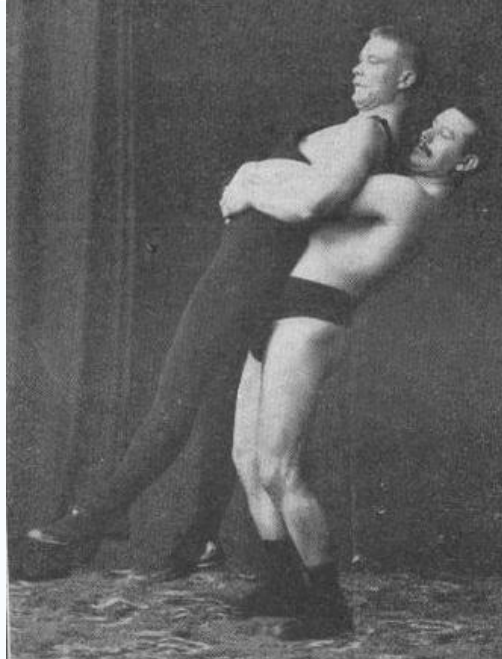


KEY: Use a “hip pop” and punch your opponent’s hips hard with your hips on the Mare, Cross-Buttock Throw, and Suplay.

Cross-Buttock Throw

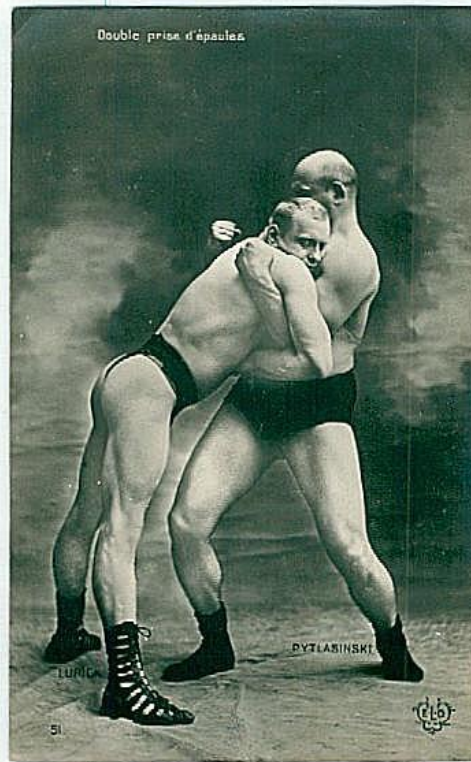


Suplay

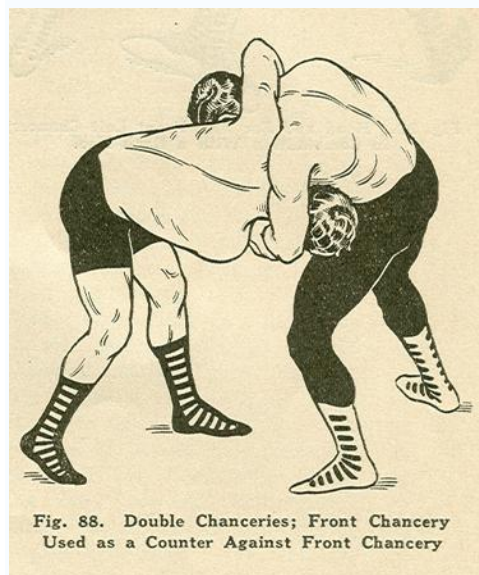


Tie-Ups

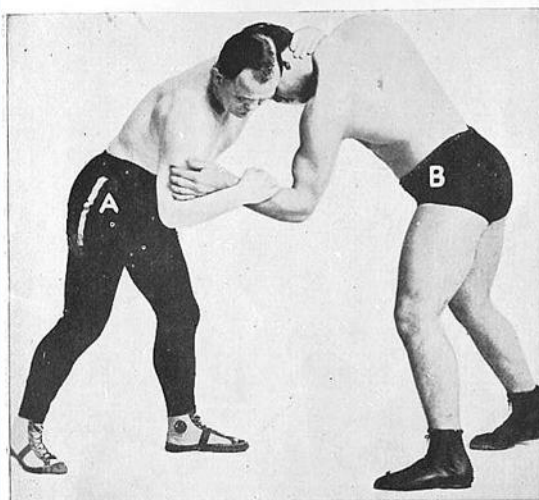
Underhooks



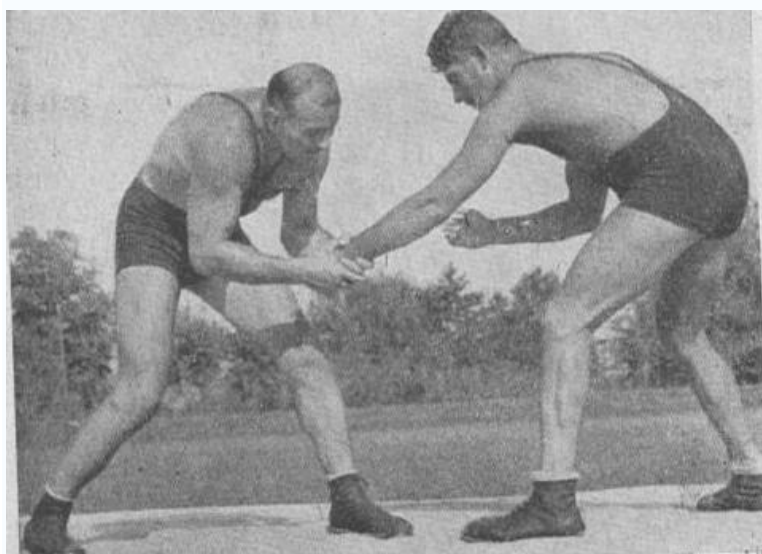
Front Chancery



Collar and Elbow (aka Referee's Hold)



Hand/Wrist Tie-Up



Transitions (includes Escapes and Reversals)

Sit-out

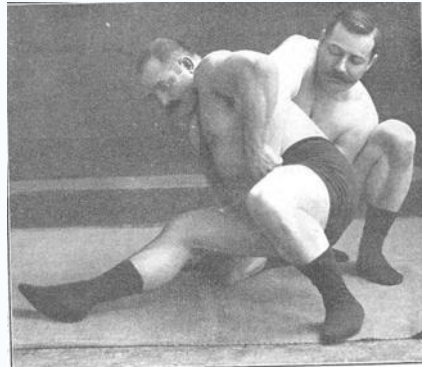
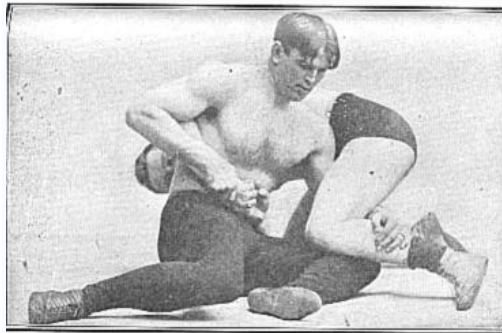


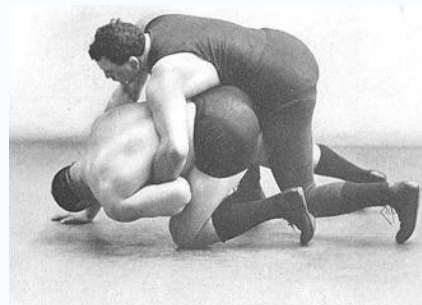
Abb. 129. Omer pariert einen Ausheber im Knien seitens Kochs durch Vorwärtsbringen der Beine und hat Aussicht aufstehen.

Switch



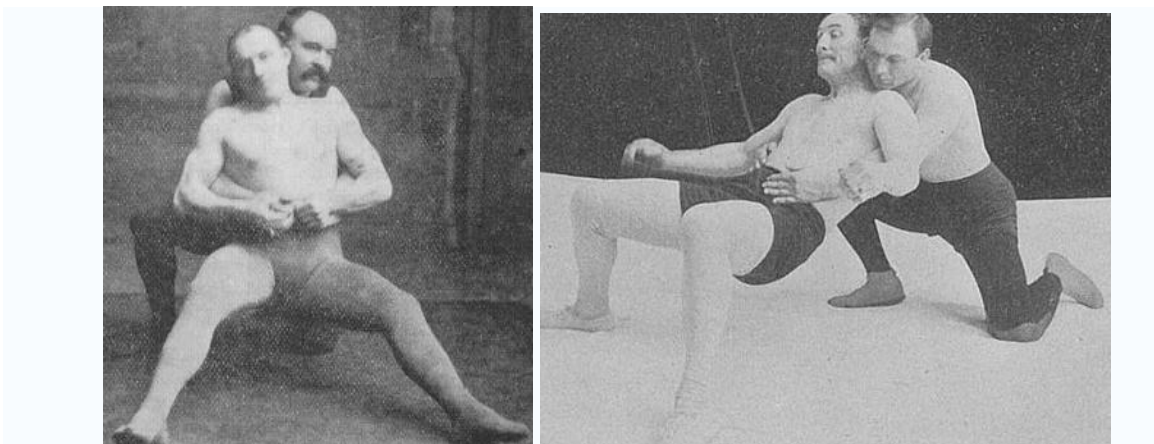
This is a transition/escape from the **All-Fours** position to a **Rear Ride** position

Arm Roll



ARM ROLL UNDER BICEPS

The Sag



Bridging



Winning Techniques: Submission Chains & Pinning Combinations

Pinning Combinations:

Demonstrated knowledge of these pins and pinning combinations is worth 10 points.

Candidates must be able to demonstrate the following pinning combinations starting from par terre position:

Half-nelson and crotch

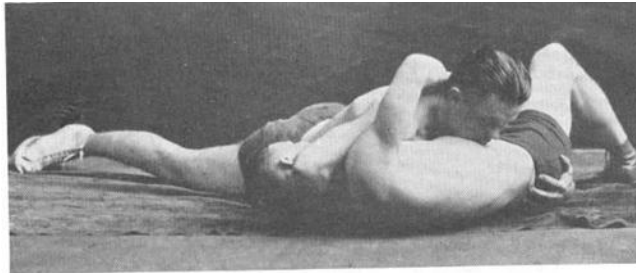


PLATE NUMBER 26—THE INSIDE CROTCH AND HALF NELSON

Cradle



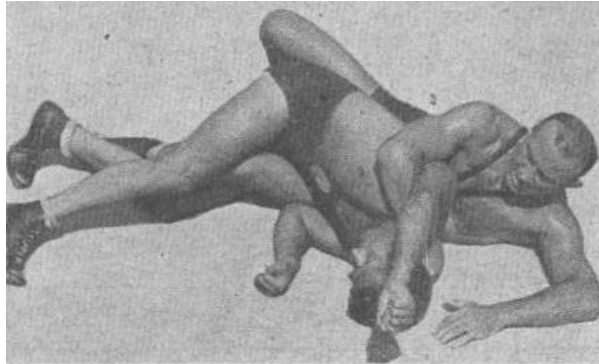
Spladle



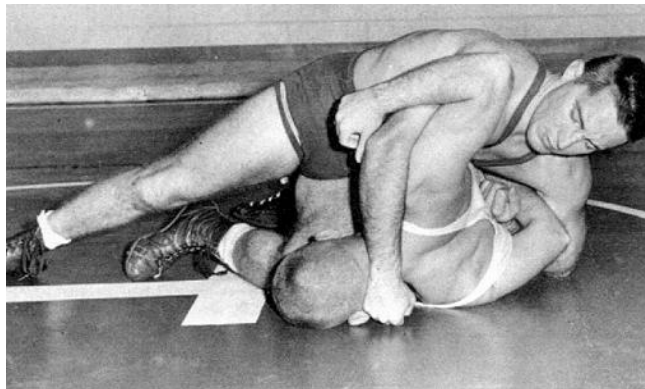
Wrestler's guillotine (aka, "The Twister")



Leg Ride & Further-Nelson



Bar Arm

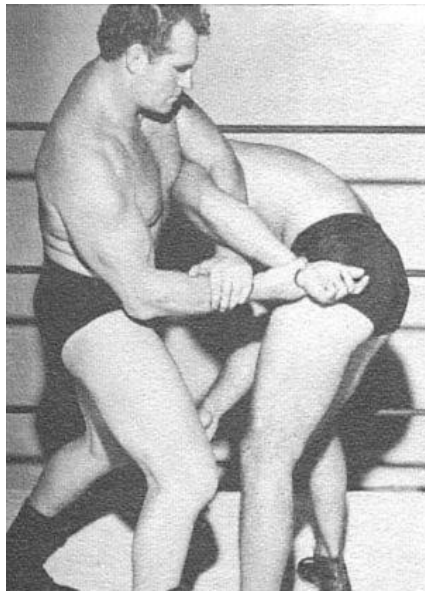


Submission Chains:

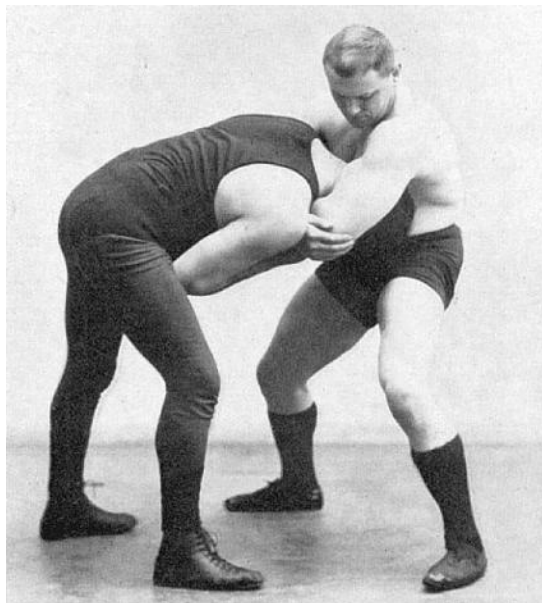
Demonstrated proficiency is worth 10 points. The following submissions must be demonstrated from these positions. All holds must make training partner tap (without injury).

This section will enable the auditors to assess the candidate's proficiency in chaining holds together while transitioning and maintaining appropriate weight on the opponent. This is also known as "lock flow":

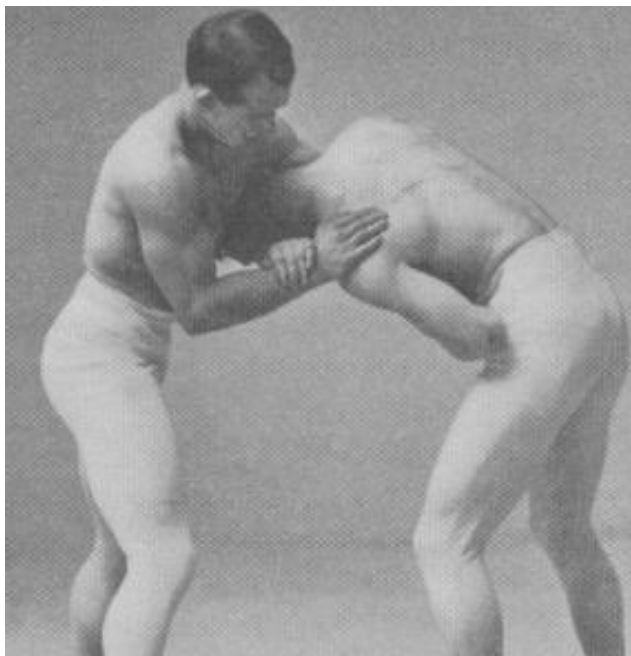
- **Standing**
 - **Standing Double Wrist Lock**



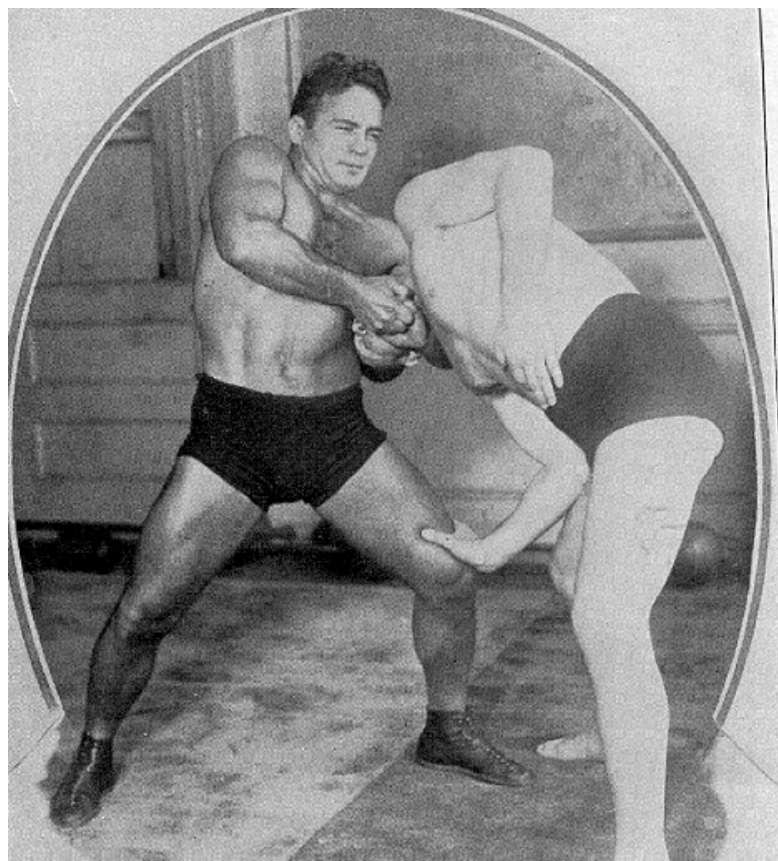
- **Front Choke**



- **Front face lock**



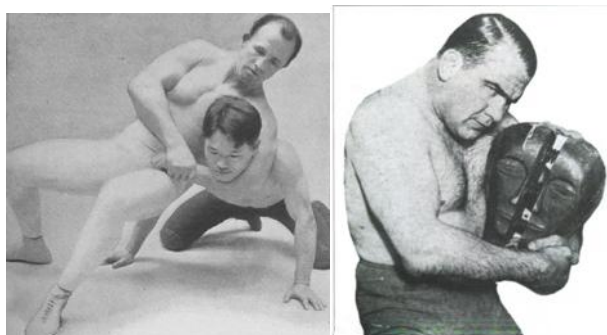
- **Front Chancery**



- **Judo Headlock**

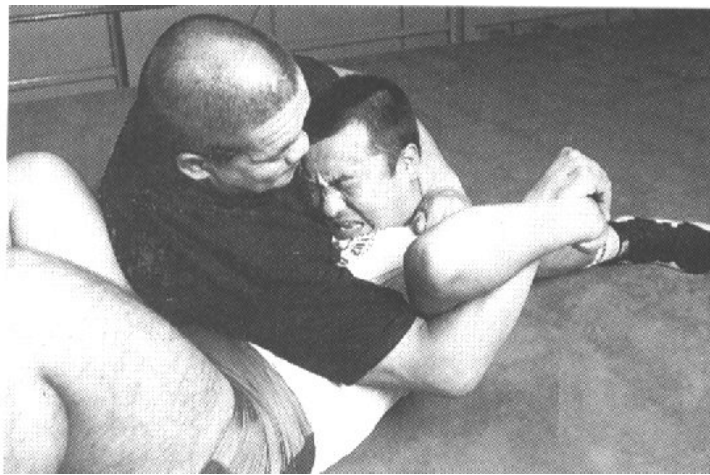


- **Side Cravat**

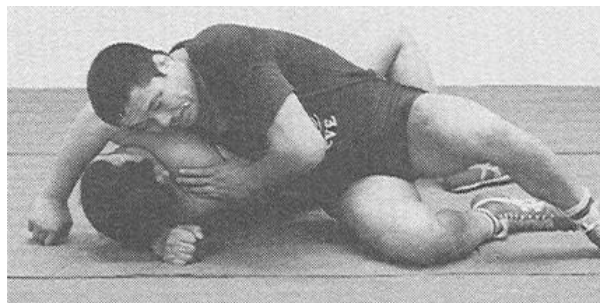


- **Head & Arm**

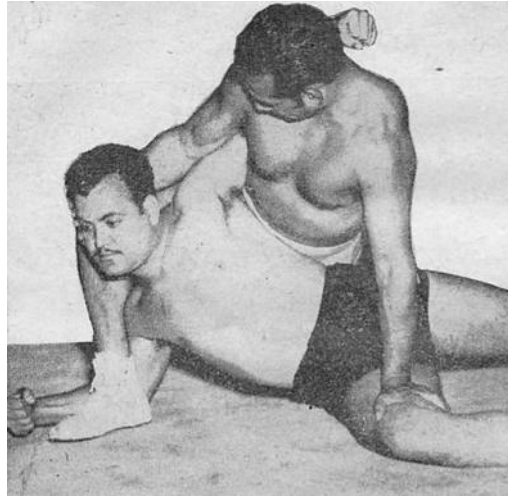
- Telephone Lock & Straight Armbar



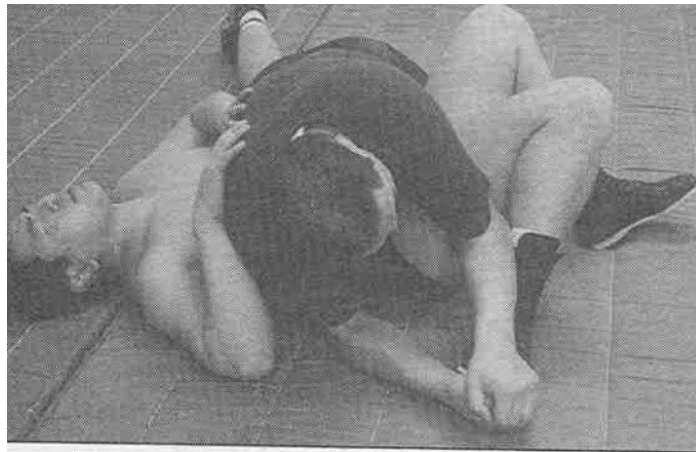
- **Judo Headlock**



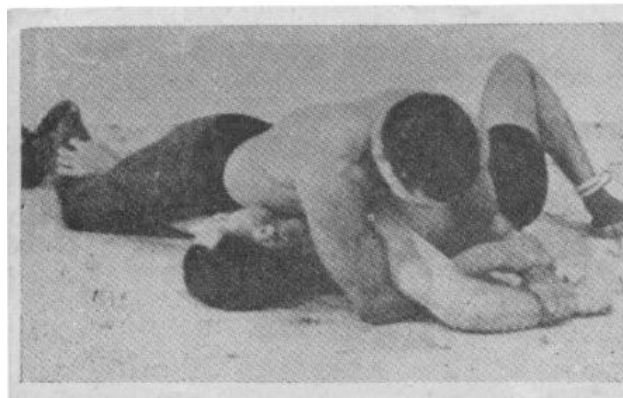
- **Crossbody Ride**
 - **Stockades (any variation)**



- **Outside Toe-hold**



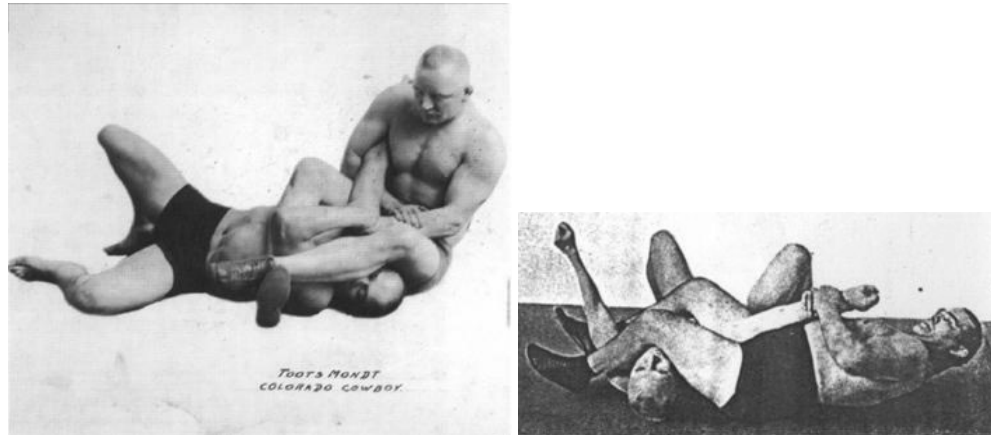
- **Double Wrist Lock**



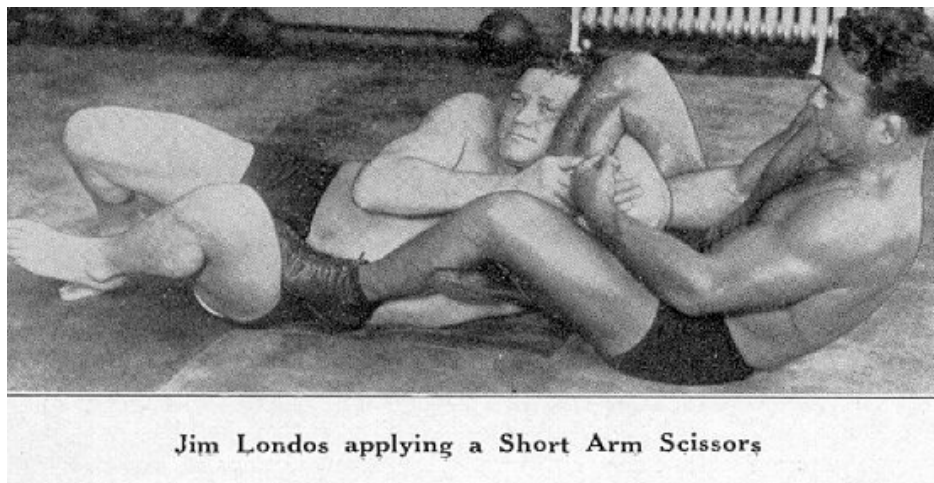
○ **Key Lock**



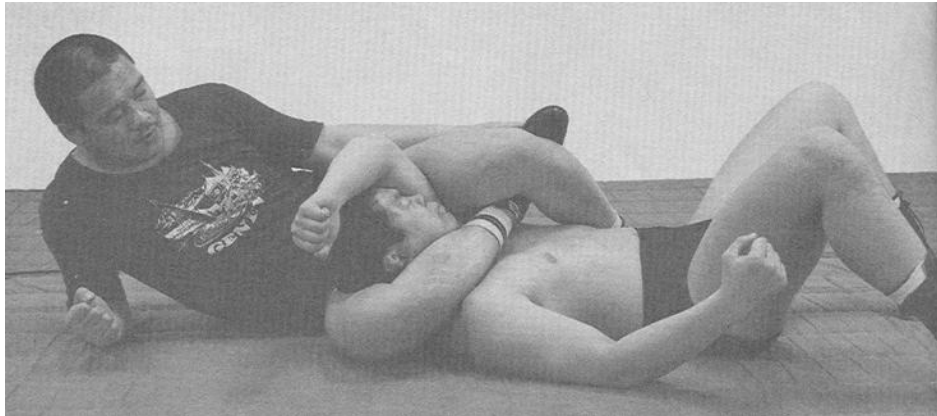
○ **Arm Bar**



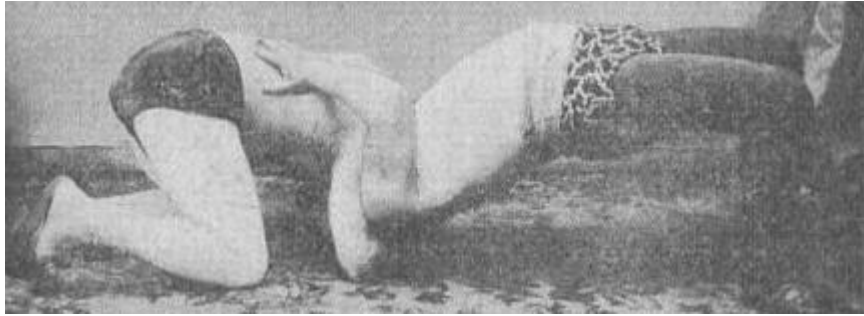
○ **Short Arm Scissor**



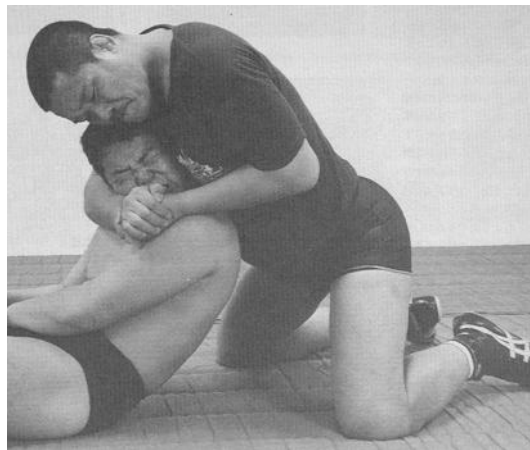
- **Triangle Choke**



- **Front North South**
 - **Dragon Sleeper**



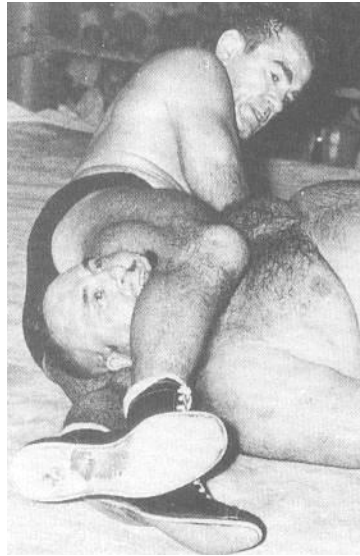
- **Neck Crank**



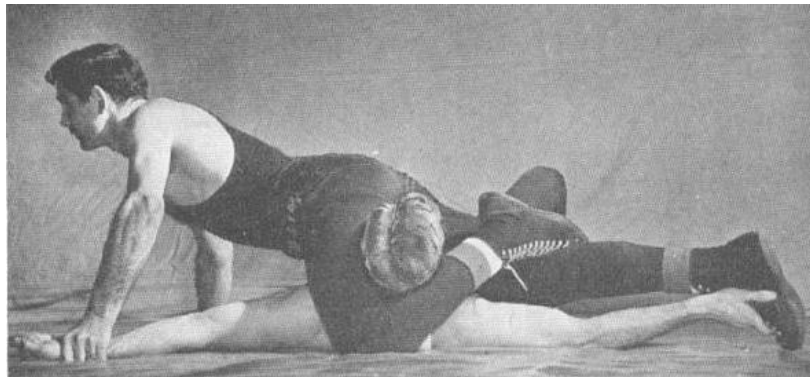
- **Crooked Head Scissor**



- **Straight Head Scissor**



- **Figure-4 head scissor**



- **Saddle ride**
 - Stockades



- **Saturday Night Ride**

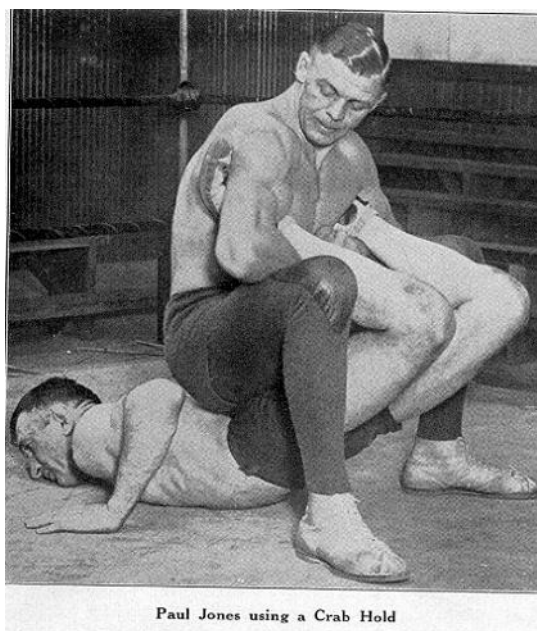
- Cradle



- Ground Achilles / Heel Hook



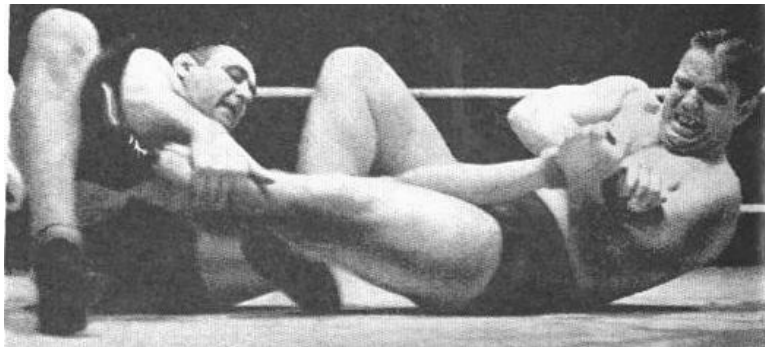
- Steam roller to Boston Crab



- **Standing Achilles**



- **Leg Bar**

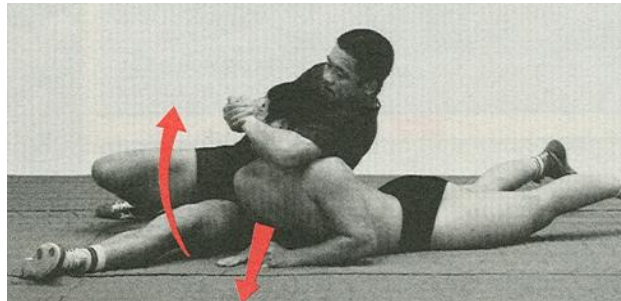


- **Rear Saddle and Rear Cross Body Rides**

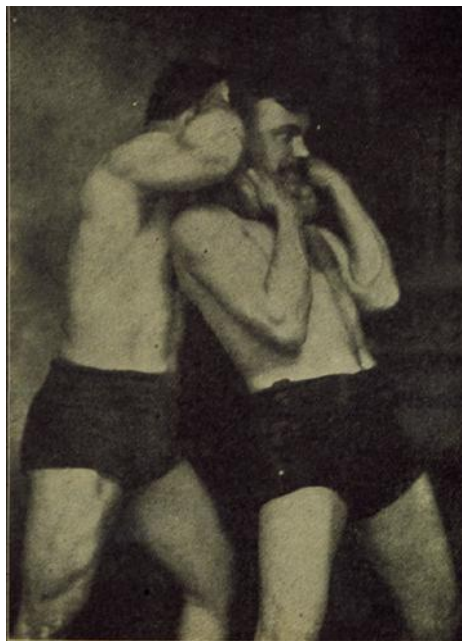
- **Figure-4 Scissor**



- **Crossface Neck Crank w/ Sit-Out**

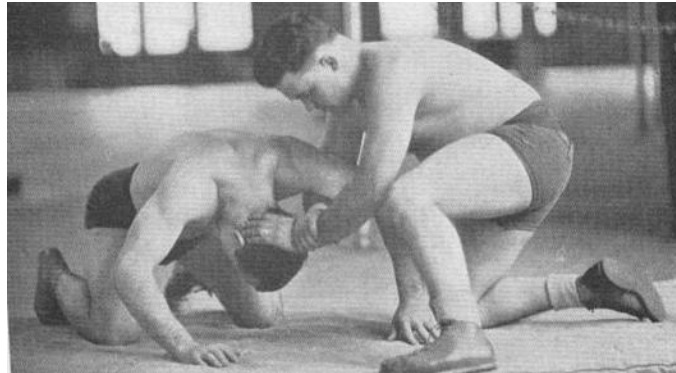


- **Sleeper**

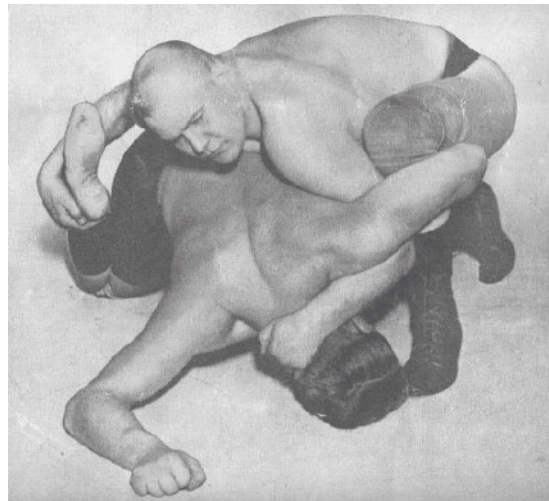


No. 17—Jenkins Applying a Strangle Hold.

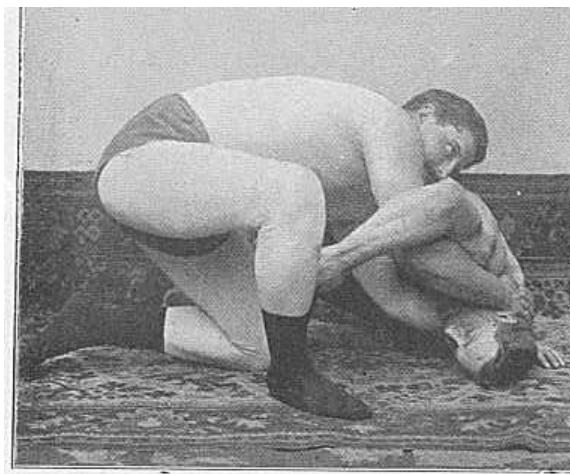
- **Nelsons**
 - **Quarter**



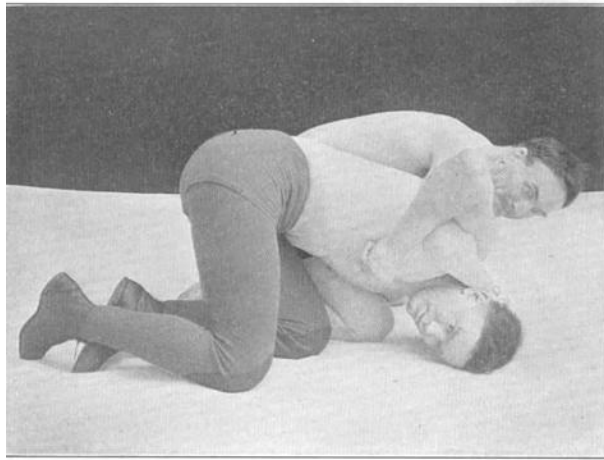
- **Half**



- **Three Quarter**

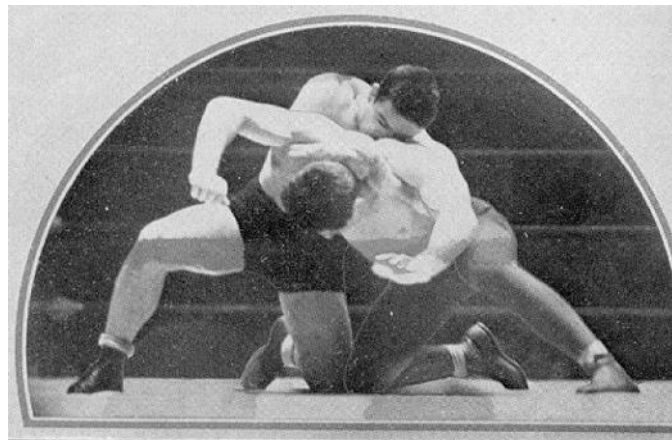


- **Further**



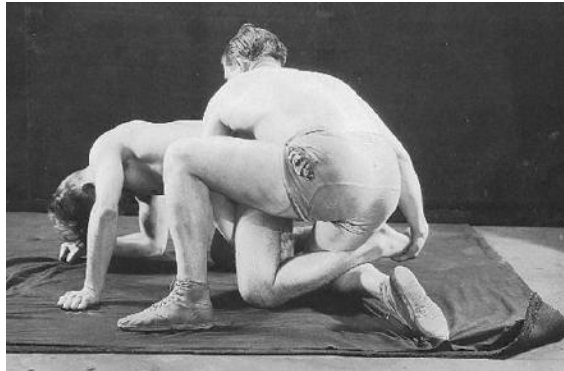
THE RESULT OF THE FAILURE TO PROTECT RIGHT ARM.
Burns, after swinging, uses the further half Nelson, after which with one swing he can make the two shoulders touch, although opponent's body and legs will be over the "Farmer's" back.

- **Full (Front and Side)**

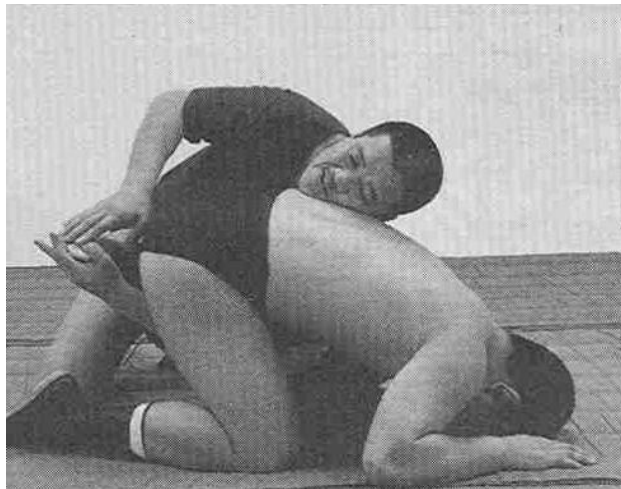


Jim Londos applying a Full Nelson on Szabo

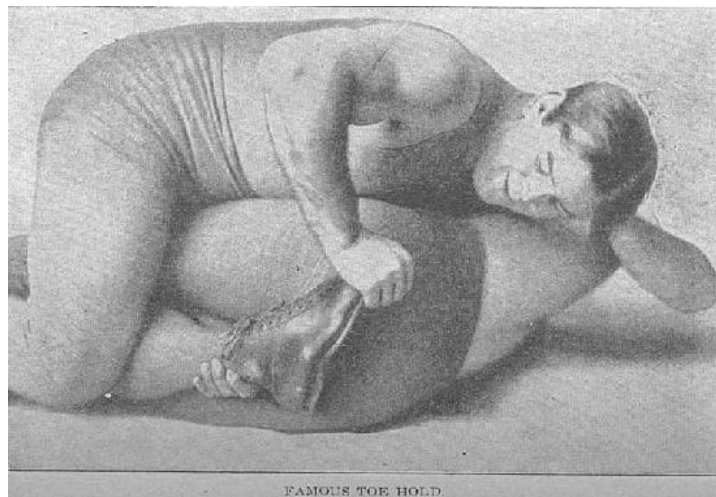
- **Toe-Holds**
 - **Ball & Chain variations**



- **Inside**



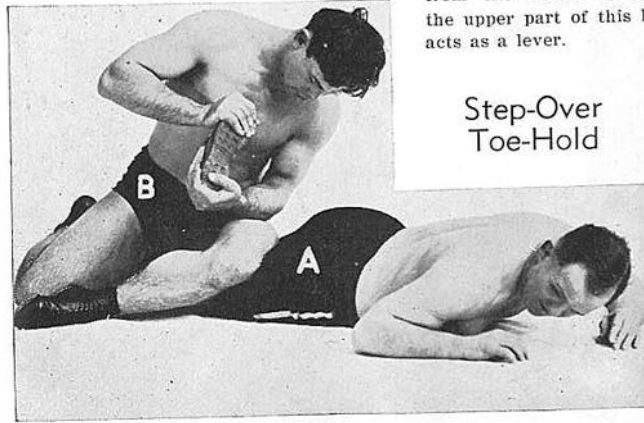
- **Frank Gotch's Famous Toe-Hold**



- **Step-Over Toe-Hold**

(Bottom)—**Step-Over Toe-Hold:** B has forced A's face down on the mat by grasping A's right foot with his left hand at the heel and his right hand at the toe, simultaneously sliding his left leg behind A's knee

from the inside so that the upper part of this leg acts as a lever.

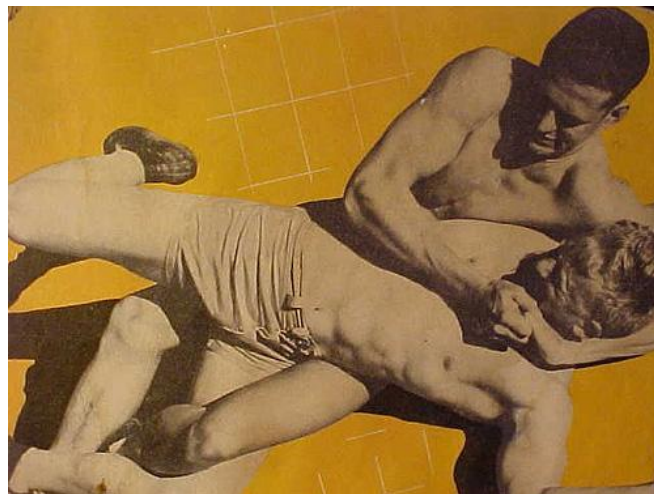


Step-Over
Toe-Hold

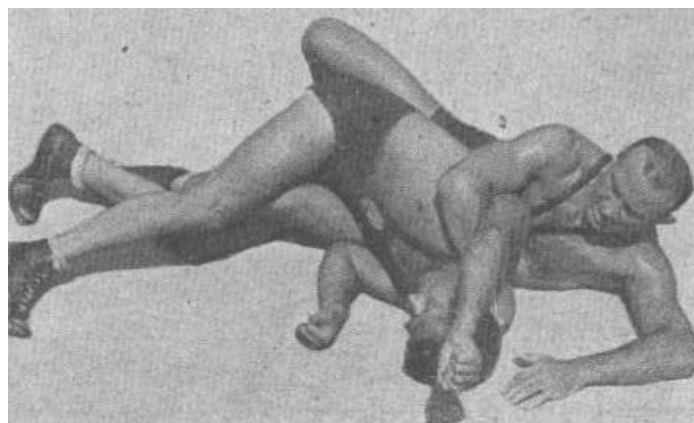
- **Single Leg Ride**
 - **Spread Eagle**



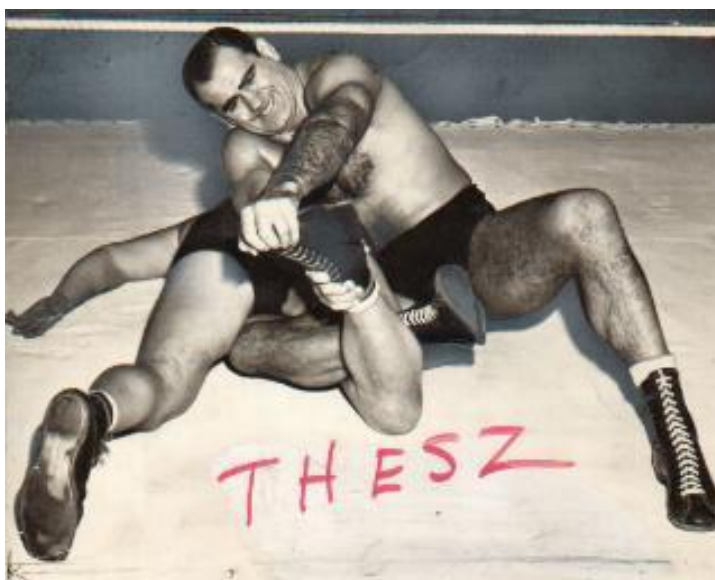
- **Wrestler's Guillotine (aka "Twister")**



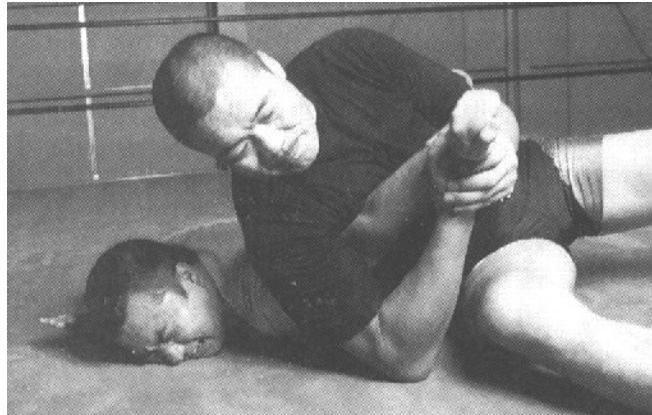
- **Leg Ride & Further Nelson**



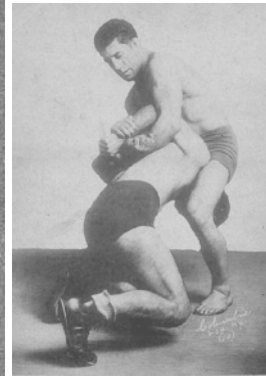
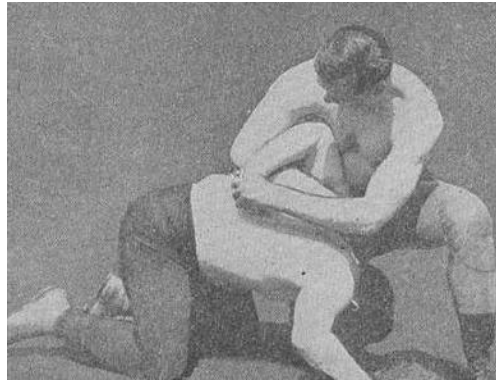
- **Calf Compression**



- **Arm**
 - **Fujiwara armbar**



- **Hammerlock/Chickenwing**



Appendix: Jiu-Jitsu As It Relates to Catch Wrestling

Today, jiu-jitsu is very popular and formidable, especially the Brazilian variation that has recently been aggressively marketed and promoted by the Gracie family. It has been suggested by some that Mitsuyo Maeda, the man that introduced jiu-jitsu to the Gracie clan in Brazil (under the moniker Count Koma) actually honed his personal combative style while competing in Catch Wrestling Tournaments around the turn of the last century. It was during this time that Maeda perfected his methods from fighting from one's back.



Mitsuyo Maeda

This style of jiu-jitsu taught to the Gracie brothers has become increasingly popular due to new fight promotions and booking strategies created to showcase the Brazilian style of jiu-jitsu, primarily in the mid-1990s. Unfortunately, competitive Catch Wrestling languished in obscurity in the United States during this same period.

However, little known to Americans, the Japanese *Pancrase* promotion was derivative of Catch Wrestling and its principals, Masakatsu Funaki and Minoru Suzuki, learned their submission wrestling methods from Yoshiaki Fujiwara and ultimately Karl Gotch. Unfortunately, with *Pancrase* fighters Ken Shamrock and Masakatsu Funaki losing at the hands of Gracie fighters via chokes, it was clear that catch wrestlers must cross-train in other arts to remain viable. Farmer Burns himself studied jiu-jitsu, in book twelve of *Lessons in Wrestling and Physical Culture*, Farmer Burns mentions strangle holds:

Aside from the throat holds and the system of striking sharp blows on certain parts of the body, there is nothing new to be learned in Jiu-Jitsu for the expert catch-as-catch-can wrestler.

What the Catch Wrestlers had to re-learn (the hard way) in early mixed-martial arts competition was that the throat holds were important, one must know how to both apply and defend against them. The first man in our modern Mixed Martial Arts era to consistently adapt Catch-As-Catch-Can wrestling to the demands of Brazilian jiu-jitsu was Kazushi Sakuraba. A Japanese pro-wrestler that had trained in Catch Wrestling while working for the

UWFi professional wrestling promotion in Japan, Sakuraba was able to string together an undeniable winning streak against the jiu-jitsu players.

Keep in mind, that while the UWFi was not a competitive promotion and it employed worked or “fixed” matches, they did bring in men with real Catch Wrestling knowledge like Karl Gotch, Danny Hodge, Lou Thesz, and Billy Robinson. This is where Sakuraba developed his base of Catch-As-Catch-Can knowledge.



Kazushi Sakuraba: The IQ Fighter

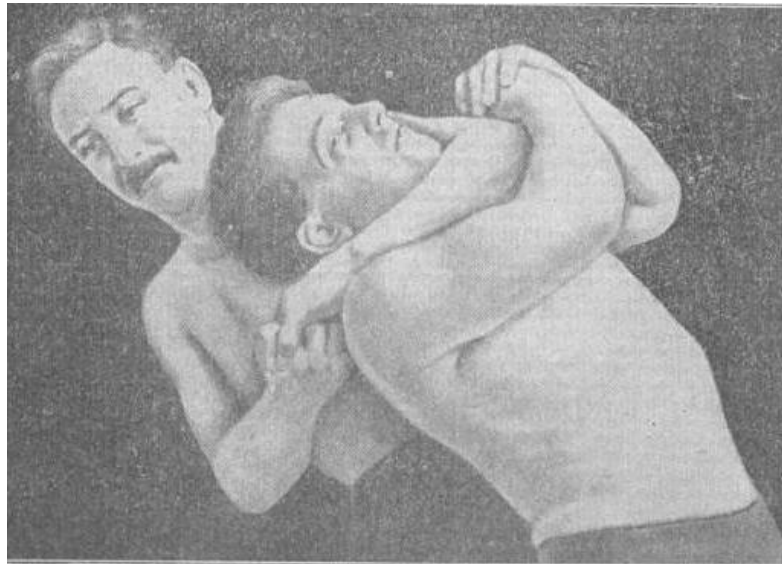
The names that Sakuraba went on to soundly defeat reads like a “who’s who” list of Brazilian jiu-jitsu blackbelts; Marcus Silverira, Vitor Belfort, Royler Gracie, Renzo Gracie, Ryan Gracie, and Royce Gracie. This earned him the nickname “*The Gracie Hunter*” and put Catch Wrestling back on the map. His other nickname, “The IQ Fighter”, is particularly relevant to the science of catch wrestling as Sakuraba epitomizes Karl Gotch’s maxim of “adapt and improvise”.

Recently, Josh Barnett has represented Catch Wrestling well in Mixed Martial Arts competition, having defeated former Pride Fighting Championships heavyweight champion and Brazilian jiu-jitsu blackbelt Antonio Rodrigo "Minotouro" Nogueira. Barnett trained in catch wrestling under both Billy Robinson and *Pancrase* fighter Matt Hume. These recent positive performances from Catch Wrestlers in MMA seem to have redeemed Burn’s opinion from a century earlier:

In my opinion there is very little in the so-called Jiu-Jitsu teaching that is not included in a full and complete knowledge of catch-as-catch-can wrestling. There are, of course, a few holds and defenses, such as the throttle hold, the strangle hold, etc., that are not used in wrestling, yet these holds are generally understood by the thoroughly trained wrestler. As a matter of fact, I have already shown you in some of my wrestling holds a number of methods of making a man powerless that are advocated in Jiu-Jitsu.

Burns went on to say:

The various throat holds, which have been shown you and which will be shown you in this lesson, cover the real valuable parts of Jiu-Jitsu, and while they have several other methods of securing the throat holds, yet all of them except the ones shown you, are easily broken and do not amount to much when used against a trained man. The reason that Jiu-Jitsu has been so much over-rated is because the subject has been advertised and the special points and holds emphasized, while as a matter of fact there is very little new in the subject for anyone who has made a study of Physical Culture, Wrestling and American Self Defense.

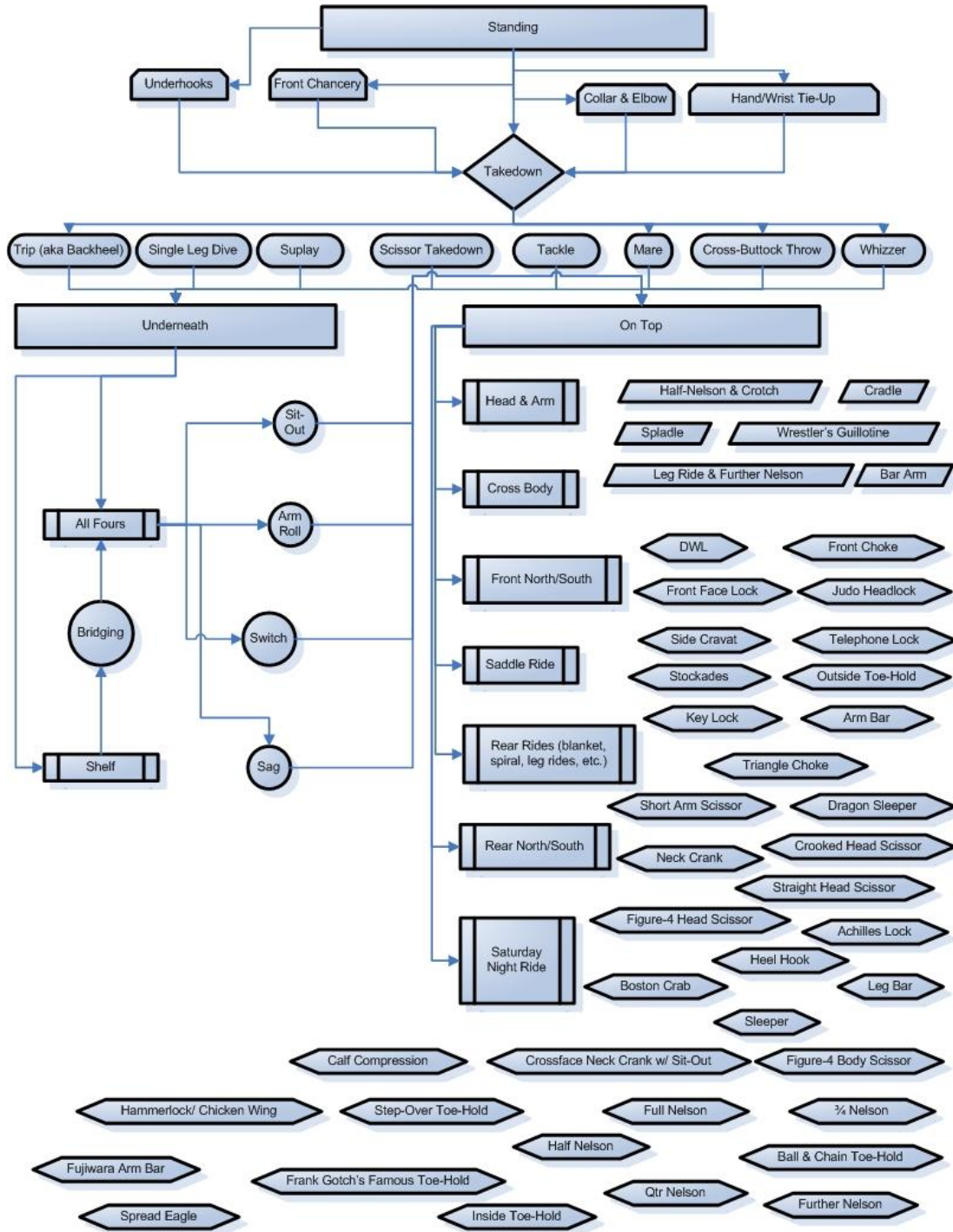


FARMER BURNS ILLUSTRATING STRANGLE HOLD.

Often times this means learning the strategies and techniques of a different style, such as jiu-jitsu, to understand how to defeat it. By adapting and improvising, Catch Wrestling-based fighters went from being strangled by the jiu-jitsu man's uniform (in Ken Shamrock v. Royce Gracie) to using it against them (see Sakuraba's later match against Royce). The *SW Catch Wrestling Rules*® explicitly allow the stranglehold and chokes (the old matches often had strangles but the holds could be barred during match making) so as to adapt Catch Wrestling to the modern MMA arena.

KEY: When entering competitions under rules other than SW Catch Wrestling Rules®, SW Certified Catch Wrestlers™ will endeavor to research methods to exploit the contest's rules so as to leverage their strengths and maximize their opponent's weaknesses.

SW Certified Catch Wrestler™ Technical Flowchart



As you can see, matches start from **Standing** position then move through **Tie-Ups & Takedowns** into either the **On Top** or **Underneath** positions. **Underneath** positions move through **Transitions** into the **On Top** position. Once in the **On Top** position, **Pinning Combinations** and **Submission Chains** (**Submission Chains** are possible from **Underneath** as well) can end the match.

SW Certified Catch Wrestler Audit™ Review and Preparation

Candidates can expect testing to heavily center around live wrestling with the scoring allocated accordingly:

SW Certified Catch Wrestler™ Scoring		
Section	Task	Points
HCC, PPT/T/T, WSP	Written Exam (Level 1)	10
HCC	Live Catch Match (Level 3)	30
HCC	Knowledge of Catch Rules (Level 1)	10
PPT/T/T	Principles (Level 1)	10
PPT/T/T	Positions & Rides (Level 2)	10
PPT/T/T	Takedowns/Tie-Ups/Transitions (Level 2)	10
WSP	Pinning Combinations (Level 2)	10
WSP	Submission Chains (Level 2)	10
Total		100
HCC =	History, Competition, & Conditioning	
PPT/T/T =	Principles, Positions, & Takedowns/Tie-Ups/Transitions	
WSP =	Win: Submissions & Pins	

To earn the SW Certified Catch Wrestler™ designation all candidates must score a total of 85 points.

The SW Catch Wrestler Audit™ establishes the candidate's proven proficiency in Catch Wrestling based upon objective and standardized criteria and upon successful completion of the audit, candidates will be awarded a certificate authenticating their accomplishments.

Upon earning the SW Certified Catch Wrestler™ designation, wrestlers may earn advanced distinctions for competitive, conditioning, promoting, or coaching achievements as well.

Scientific Wrestling™ will videotape and archive all *SW Catch Wrestling Audits™* and Advanced Distinctions, thereby providing objective, third party validation of the achievements and skills required to call oneself a SW Certified Catch Wrestler™.

SW Catch Wrestling Audits™ will be held annually with at least 2 members of the Scientific Wrestling™ Board of Advisors present.

I cannot improve upon Farmer Burns' advice for preparation (from book one of Lessons in Wrestling and Physical Culture) so I will simply let you read it for yourself:

What to Study and Practice in This Lesson

First: Study the pictures and the NAMES OF EACH HOLD until you are thoroughly familiar with it. This is necessary for we refer to the holds very frequently throughout the course, and you must know exactly what we mean when we say "half-Nelson," "grape-vine," "chancery," "scissor hold," etc. There are many, many holds to come later, so learn them thoroughly as you go.

Second: With the assistance of a companion, take these holds one after another until you are entirely familiar with the positions of the entire body when the hold is in force. Remember that the ENTIRE BODY must be in the right position. Every angle must be STRONG, for a good hold is useless unless backed up with forceful angles of the body, the feet, arms, neck, shoulders and legs.

CAUTION—Do not try to do much wrestling at first. Do not use these holds on your companion to the extent of hurting him. Simply practice the holds in order to become familiar with them. The real work will come later.

Third: Have your companion take the various holds ON YOU, to accustom yourself to them. Study the pictures. Let your companion take the holds FIRMLY. You may then try to break the holds, but do not try too hard at first. Simply RESIST, for resistance is the basis of all physical culture. It is just as important for you to be able to RESIST the opponent's hold as it is for you to apply them successfully, for in a real contest your opponent is also trained, and you will change from the aggressor to the defensive many times in an evenly balanced match.

Fourth: Lay the lesson aside and write a list of the holds. This is a splendid way to learn them. If you have time, write the name of each hold and then try to write a description of it. Try to make the description so plain that anyone could understand it without an illustration. This is merely a suggestion for those who have never wrestled and do not know the names of the usual wrestling holds. The amateur or professional will, of course, not find this necessary.

Fifth: Farmer Burns says: "Practice these holds every day. You need not try to throw your companion or have him throw you, but secure the holds and RESIST. Push, pull and tug, that's what does the business. Work easy the first few days. Increase the efforts and power each time, and at the end of two weeks you will be twice as strong as you are now in the muscles used in this practice. BE CAREFUL with the hammerlock and other painful holds, yet put them on as far as you can stand each time. You must be able to RESIST ALL HOLDS, and the way to resist successfully is to train the muscles and harden them by ACTUAL WORK."

SW Certified Catch Wrestler Audit™ Schedule

The current Squad Audit Schedule (time and location) is available by visiting the Event Calendar on www.ScientificWrestling.com. The program is broken into 3 distinct, progressive levels.

What to expect:

Level 1 – Principles and History

8:00 am - Take the Catch Wrestling written exam (90 minutes - 30 points)

10:30 am – Clinic to prepare candidates for Level 2 exam. The remainder of the day will be spent learning Positions, Takedowns/Tie-Ups, Transitions, Submissions & Pins

Level 2 – Positions, Takedowns/Tie-Ups, Transitions, Submissions & Pins

8:00 am - Each candidate will then be called before the *SW Catch Wrestler Audit™ Panel* and asked to physically demonstrate the following (30 minutes – 40 points):

- Positions (10 points)
- Takedowns/Tie-Ups/Transitions (10 points)
- Pinning Combinations (10 points)
- Chaining Submissions (10 points)

Level 3 – Live Wrestling Day

8:00 am - The entire Audit Squad will meet up with their matched candidate (determined by weight class) to square off in Catch-As-Catch-Can rules wrestling matches (30 points). See *SW Catch Wrestling Rules*® for more information.

After the Audit

Candidates can expect the results of their test within 6 weeks following the *SW Catch Wrestler Audit™*. Successful candidates will receive a *SW Catch Wrestler Audit™* DVD and certificate proving that they successfully completed the requirements.

Please keep in mind that due to time and space limitations, admittance to each *SW Catch Wrestler Audit™* will be strictly limited. Each Audit Squad has 16 spots so early registration is encouraged.

SW Catch Wrestler Audit™ fees are non-refundable and non-transferable.



