



Only One Waza

A young boy had lost his left arm in an accident at a very young age. He managed pretty well without it and did most things that other boys his age were able to do.

About the age of 15 he decided he wanted to learn Judo. Many people discouraged him. "You can't do that with one arm!" they would say. His parents, who always pushed for normalcy, were determined that if he wanted to do Judo, they would find him the best Judo Sensei available.

The young man started his lessons. Sensei showed him one waza and had him practice it over and over. After awhile the young man asked, "Don't you think you should teach me some more techniques?"

In a firm tone, Sensei replied, "When you have mastered this one, you will learn more techniques!"

They kept up the training and the young man was getting pretty good. Sensei worked on his conditioning, endurance, balance, stability and all manner of things using this one technique as the foundation.

One day, Sensei thought he was good enough and it was time to test his skill. He entered the young man in a local Judo tournament. To the

young man's surprise, he won the tournament. He still only knew one technique.

They entered another tournament. This one was bigger and Sensei asked a lot of questions he couldn't hear, while he was getting registered. He competed in a higher rank and skill level, after Sensei promoted him on the spot. It wasn't much of a problem for him to win this one. They went to another tournament a few months later, he was promoted again and competed against higher and higher levels of skilled competitors. He won this one too.

Now he had reached the BIG tournament. This one was the BIGGEST and the BEST. The competition here would be very good. The young man made his way to the finals. Now he was facing the best. His opponent had several years of experience on him. The match began and the one-armed young man realized he had finally met a worthy opponent. He was getting beaten pretty handily. He was losing for the first time. Feeling concerned for the one armed young man, the referee stepped in and was about to stop the fight. Sensei jumped into the ring and asked the referee to please let the young man finish the match. Against his better judgement the referee agreed to let the match continue. A minute later his opponent made a small mistake. With the only technique he knew he defeated his opponent.

On the way home the young man was trying to figure it all out. He said to Sensei, "How did I win the Championship with just one technique? They all had many more years of training and many more techniques. I just don't understand."

Sensei replied, "There are two reasons you won that tournament. First of all, you have almost mastered the hardest technique in Judo. Second, when performed properly, the ONLY defense against that technique is for your opponent to grab your left arm."