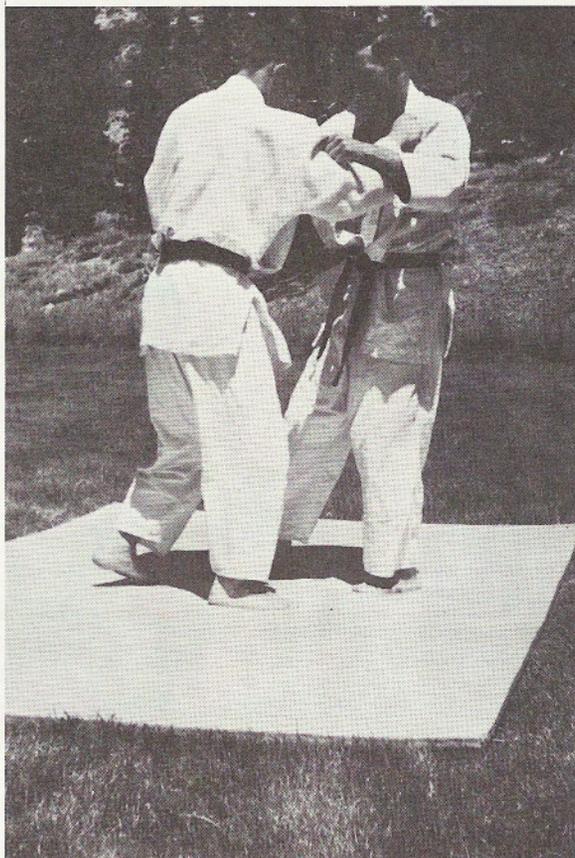


Sasae Tsuru Komi Ashi-Foot Stop



General Introduction

There are five foot or leg techniques in the first Kyo of the GoKyo No Waza. Three of them are minor foot techniques, and two are major techniques. Try as you will, there are very few Judoists who can tell you what the difference is between a major and a minor technique. Actually, it is not all of the nage waza or throwing techniques that are broken down into major and minor, but only the foot techniques because all of the minor techniques are foot techniques. So when we speak of minor techniques, we should probably say minor foot techniques.

The difference between the minor techniques and the major is very simple. All of the minor techniques are those which include a forward movement of the foot and leg. All other techniques are major; it's as simple as that. But there is a further breakdown in the minor foot techniques which is very important, because it tells us something about the

way the throws can be made and countered.

Four Types of Minor Foot Techniques

There are in general four types of minor foot techniques, the first two are sweeping foot techniques and swinging foot techniques. The second two are reaping foot technique and hooking or dashing foot techniques.

Sweeping Foot Techniques

We mean by sweeping foot techniques those in which the thrower uses his foot as a broom to sweep his opponent's foot or feet out from under him. In this category are de ashi harai, ko soto gari, okuri ashi harai, nidan ko soto gari, and harai tsuri komi ashi in one of its forms. It is very important to realize that the action of the thrower in these techniques is to keep his body fairly close to his opponent's and by lifting and sweeping at the same time, rotate his opponent's body like a propeller around his waist to level him out in the air as he is thrown. The object is always to go to the opponent with the sweep and

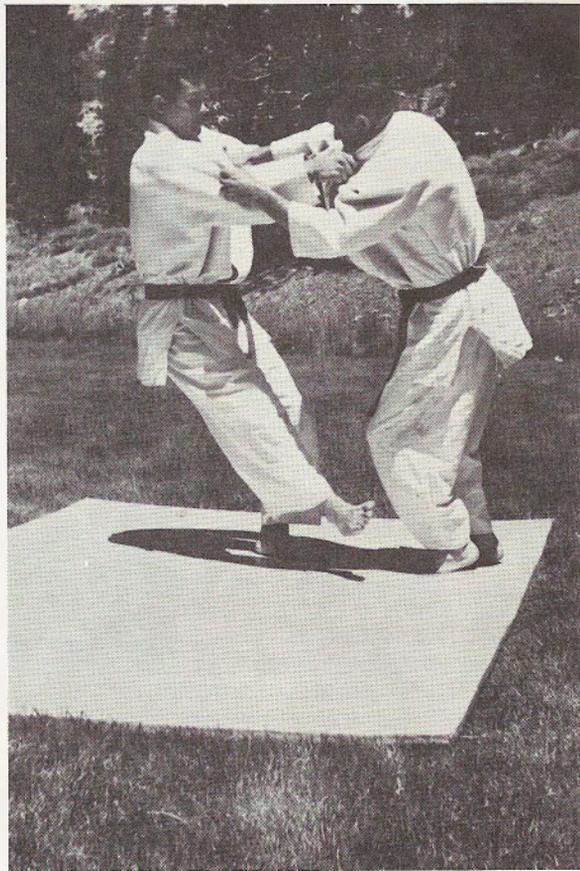
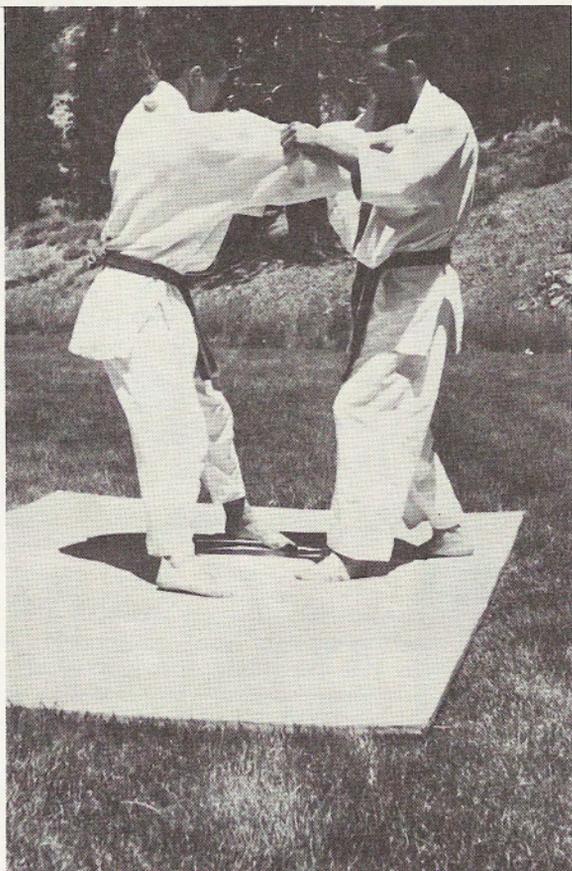
drive his foot out from under him. This is not the case in the swinging foot techniques.

Swinging Foot Techniques

By the swinging foot techniques we mean hiza guruma and sasae tsuri komi ashi (covered in this series). They are called swinging foot techniques because the thrower holds the foot or leg of his opponent still on or near the mat and swings him around over it. Remembering that sasae tsuri komi ashi is a swinging foot technique will help you to understand and learn it.

The Players

Sasae tsuri komi ashi in this photo sequence is demonstrated by two outstanding young American Judists. The thrower is Rene Zeelenberg, who placed in the National AAU Championships' Light Middleweight Division in 1965 and 1967. Rene is in the Air Force stationed at Travis AFB, California. He who is thrown is Len Carter, top lightweight Judoist of the Southeast from Charleston, S.C.



Beginning the Off-Balance

In the photos above Rene (left) is just starting the movement which will off-balance Len for the throw. He is pushing with his left hand and starting a big step around to the side with his left foot to make Len step back with his right foot.

Circling or Swinging

In the two photos above you see clearly the action of the thrower in circling around his opponent to the left so that he can swing him around in a circle and overbalance him. In the left photo Rene is just finishing his left step. Note carefully how his left foot is turned in. This will allow him to turn or swing his body much more during the throw. Rene's grip is slightly unorthodox, as he is gripping both lapels, his favorite method of holding. There is absolutely no reason why this should not be done. World Champion Anton Geesink holds exactly the same grip when throwing with his left sasae tsuru komi ashi, his most important and reliable

throw. He has won many contests with it, including throws against Kaminaga in both of his victories in the 1964 Olympics. As long as the pull of the thrower's right arm is up and around hard enough, any grip that works is satisfactory.

Body Twist for Off-Balance

Comparing the two photos above will show the twist Rene is using to make the off-balance (kuzushi). Notice that you can see his back in the left photo, but just a split second later in the right photo you see much of his front. It may even seem that he isn't pulling at all, when in reality he is almost snapping Len off his feet.

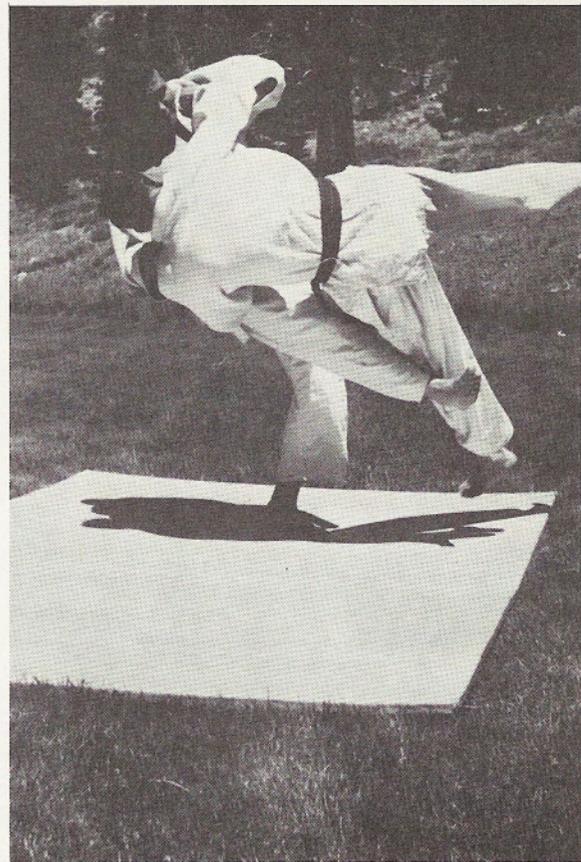
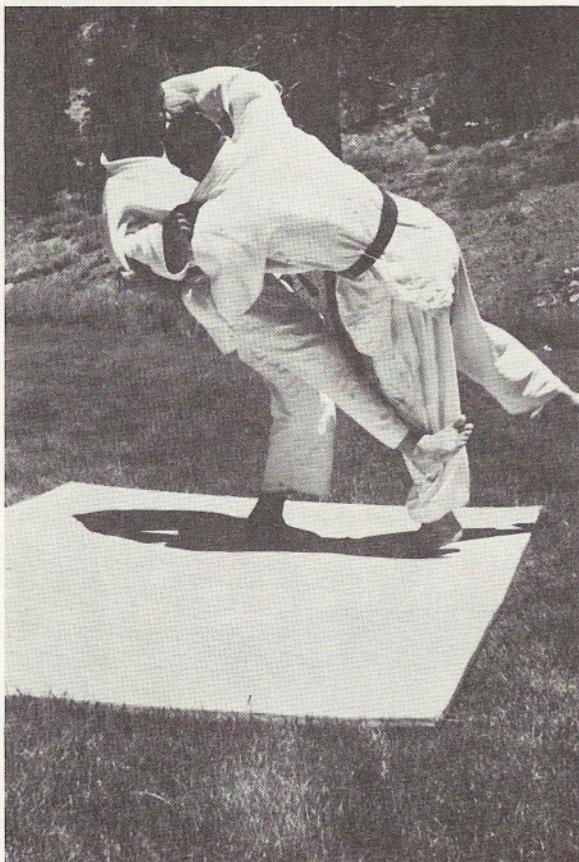
Starting the Entry

With his left foot firmly planted and his left leg bent to give him spring and mobility, Rene is driving in for the entry in the right photo above. His first action not only forced Len to step back with his right foot, but his left foot stepped back slightly too, as you can see in the right photo. Now that the big pull to his left front has

started, Len tries to step forward to recover, but it is too late. His advancing left foot will run smack into Rene's holding or blocking foot, and he will tip forward over it.

Swinging Through

Sometimes it is said in sasae (as this throw is often called by experienced Judomen) that you just get out of the way to the side and then throw your opponent through the hole or space where you just stood. This action is well demonstrated in the two photos above, and it is a good way for you to think of making the throw. The idea is to step to the side quickly when your opponent is coming forward, and the swing him straight forward the way his toe is pointing, block his foot and throw him right where you just stood. The foot action is complemented by a swift twist of the body, and a swinging pull of both arms and hands. You may be able to get a better pull in sasae by making believe that your arms are in a cast and you can't move them without swinging



your body. Remember that you'll never get a strong pull with your arms alone, you must swing your body. You should also think of throwing your opponent up and over your left shoulder.

Completing the Entry

In the two photos above you'll see the finish of the entry and the start of the kake or execution. In the left photo the inside of Rene's foot is just making contact with Len's shin. The contact is a little high, but remember that these are sequence action shots, not posed step by step. You may have noticed in the technical series on *hiza guruma* that Allan Coage's foot is a little high. This is not to say that foot placement is not important in all foot techniques; it is very important. However, at times the thrower's foot actually makes contact in one place and it is photographed a little higher. This is the case in these photos. Rene's right foot is swinging through very rapidly. It is very low in the right photo on the

left page, and has slid up the opponent's leg slightly in the left photo above. In fact in the right photo above the foot is still following through in excellent form with the toe pointed.

Continuing the Pull

As the entry is completed and contact is made to hold the opponent's foot still while you swing him over it, you must keep twisting your body and pulling very hard. Note in the left photo above how Rene's right hand is still pulling Len up and through into the throw. By now Rene's left hand, although you can't see it, is bent and is pushing more across Len's chest toward the direction of the throw.

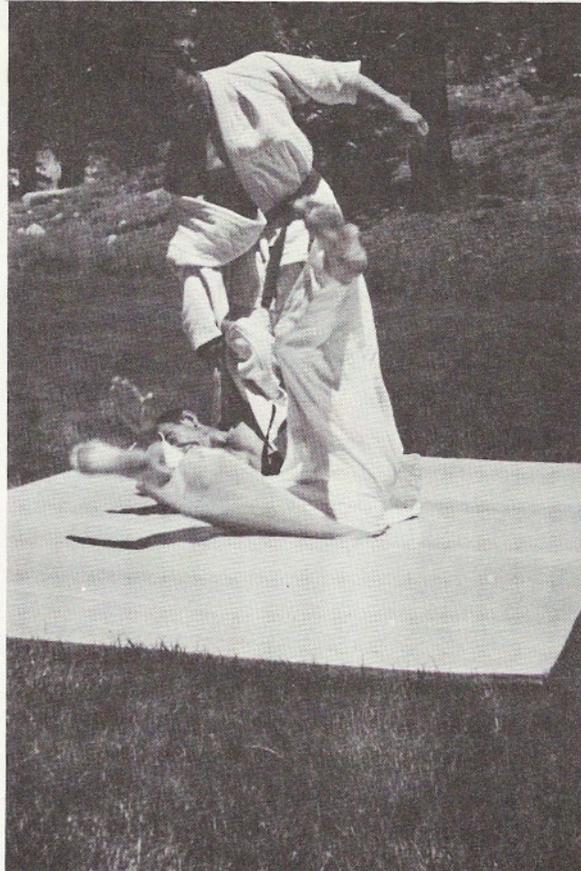
Movement of the Arms

It may seem from the photos and from what we have said that the thrower's arms are just the means of holding the opponent while the twist of the thrower's body does the work. If this were true, then a man with artificial arms could do the Judo throws. And this is true, to some degree. We know that there is a black

belt Judoist in the US with one artificial foot and part of the leg, and he does *harai goshi* with that artificial leg. Perhaps the most important part of the throwing action is the twist of the body, but the arms must be used too. Note that the arms of the thrower are almost straight in the left photo on the last page. In the right photo they are starting to pull in and bend slightly as the body twists. In the photos above they bend more and the left hand starts to push across rather than pull. Then in the photos on the next page the arms straighten again, and thus pushing power is gained. What we mean to say is that although you should not over-emphasize the action of the arms, as most beginners do, don't completely neglect it either.

A Straight Body

One of the excellent features of this photo sequence is the very correct body position that Rene holds throughout the throw. Note that his body is straight from foot to shoulder



in both of the photos on the last page. From this straight body comes the speed of turning and the power that makes this throw devastating when done correctly.

Follow Through

As the thrower completes sasae, he should turn with his opponent so that he is facing his side as he lands on the mat. In contest situations he can simply hold firmly to his opponent with both hands and go directly to the mat with him. Although not strictly a maki komi action (maki komi means winding or binding pull), this will insure that the opponent does not turn his body in the air to escape from landing on his back. As Judo becomes better and better throughout the world, Judoists are training themselves, like Shiro Saigo of old, never to land on their backs even if they are thrown through the air. Thus you may have to follow your man clear to the mat to pin him down. If you do, never fail to take a mat hold even if you feel you have scored a point. Take it and then let the referee signal

the point and break your mat hold if necessary. So many times we see victories slip away because (1) the thrower did not follow through to drive his opponent firmly to the mat for a full score, or (2) the thrower, having done his best to get a full point, doesn't, but lets a mat-work chance slip through his fingers by hesitating just a second before he grapples. Don't let that happen to you.

Drills for Sasae

One of the best drills for self-defense, for learning falls, and for building skill in sasae is throwing out of a blow. To do this you stand facing your opponent and let him drive a straight right hand punch at your face, stepping forward with his right foot as he does so. Your hands are at your sides. Just as he punches, you slide forward and to the side with your right foot, your whole body opening like a gate and avoiding his blow. At the same time, while his striking arm comes forward you swing your left arm up under it, grasp his sleeve and pull him straight forward. As you do

this your left foot blocks his right and you throw him with sasae with the left hand only. (this is of course for drilling on sasae on the right side. The photos in this sequence show sasae on the left side).

Alternate Attacks while Circling

Another excellent drill for sasae, which can be practiced for minutes on end without stopping, is alternate attacks while circling. The two players take their grip and then the first swings his opponent in a circle, making him take a big step out with his right foot. The first thrower then steps out with his own right foot around to the side to attack with sasae, but not hard enough to throw. The second player then recovers his balance a little, steps out with his right foot further and executes sasae in turn on the first player, as his right foot is already extended. Take time between attacks to set up the correct movement. Practicing these drills will help you polish the throw in realistic situations. •